UNLOCKING THE GATE:
TEACHING FOR TRANSFORMATION AS
PEDAGOGICAL ARTISTS

by

HELEN ROBERTSON

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1989

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Department of Curriculum Studies
Art Education

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

APRIL 1997

© Helen Robertson, 1997
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of Curriculum Studies

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date April 28/97
Abstract

This research argues in favour of a transformational orientation to art education curriculum. I discuss implementing a teacher-as-artist model in art education as a means to achieve personal transformation. I examine the practices of three art teachers who engage in creating art work themselves as a way of modeling art production and visual problem solving with students, in an effort to facilitate student transformation. As a participant in this process, I retell my own experiences as an artist and teacher, and thus my own personal transformations are identified. Achieving a transformational orientation is not easy and as such, complexities and tensions are identified while sharing authority and leadership in a collaborative way. An action research methodology was chosen as a way to systematically investigate the feminist principles of cooperation, collaboration, and honouring lived experiences which form the pedagogical structures that support teaching in a transformational orientation. However, as the research unfolded, the methodology itself transformed to include my own autobiography. The findings of this study point to the themes of identity, commitment and relationships as indicators of teachers respecting a transformational pedagogy. The research concludes with the original model of teacher-as-artist evolving to a concept of the role of pedagogical artists, as teacher/student relationships are altered to become more caring, trusting, and respectful. Therein lies the
possibility for personal change, thus moving us in a direction towards a societal transformation.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One Stairs of Intention: Teaching Will</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cycles of My Becoming</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-membering the Stairs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Stairs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Ground</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist Pedagogy</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two A Fence of Caring: Teaching Passion</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-considering a Fence</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Fence</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inside the Fence - My Story</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On The Fence - Supporting an Authentic Self</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over The Fence - Other Stories</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beside The Fence - Supporting Each Other</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three A Gate of Reflection: Teaching Desire</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-reflecting Through a Gate</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Gate</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening The Gate</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four An Image of Feminism: Teaching Collaborations</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Re-affirming an Image 68
Images 69
Identity 79
Relationship with Self as an Artist 79
Relationship with Self as a Teacher 86
Relationships with Others as Pedagogical Artists 93

Chapter Five
A Community of Hope: Teaching Transformations 99
Re-creating a Community 101
A Community 102
Findings 103
Implications 114
Recommendations 115
Conclusions 117

References 121

Appendix 1 126
Appendix 2 138
Appendix 3 141
Appendix 4 142
Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals whose support and encouragement have enriched my learning and facilitated in my personal transformations; that is, in my continued becoming:

Dr. Rita Irwin, my wonderful advisor who has guided, supported and encouraged me with care, trust and respect throughout my program of studies and this research. As a pedagogical artist, she has led me to understand courage.

Dr. Kit Grauer, who also shared enthusiastically in the journey of my becoming, continually encouraging me to find my leadership voice. As a pedagogical artist, she has carefully led me to understand that transformation takes time.

Dr. Carl Leggo, whose teaching voice encouraged me to find magic. As a pedagogical poet, who possibly grew up perpendicular on the side of a hill, he has led me to understand innovation.

The three pedogogical artists involved in this research, who share with me the pleasures and passions for art making and teaching.
# List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Returning to Relationships</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remembering the Stairs of My Youth</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconsidering a Fence</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections of a Gate</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaffirming an Image</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreating a Community</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisioning the Future</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dedication

for my mother, Frances, and my daughter, Megan with love

Returning to Relationships
No human action is possible unless galvanized by image, imagination's tool. It is only when will and imagination fuse that we can execute even such a simple operation as opening the door.

Joanne H. Stroud (1994, p.81)
Remembering the Stairs of My Youth
The Cycles of My Becoming

Re-membering the Stairs

At the time I began my art work with female forms I didn't really have a clear understanding of where these images would lead until I carved the stairs. I was trying to understand my personal responsibilities with educational research through which I could engage my will and define my intention. My will! In the world of educational research, why are such emotive words as will, passion, desire, caring, and hope so often left out. Beginning with my memories, I searched my past for experiences during which I had intentionally changed my position. With fondness, I remembered the many stairs of my youth. Metaphorically, I considered these stairs as a starting place, feeling compelled to follow my own footsteps as I went through the process of writing a thesis. Now as I reflect back upon my artwork I wonder why I thought that I must start at the beginning? At the time I had a much stronger image of a fence, framing the stairs. Why not begin again and again at different points along a staircase? You see, it is wonderful to have the opportunity to go back and forth, to revisit ideas. This revisiting is what I love about creating with clay. I can always go back through the processes involved with creating in clay and continue on as I learn more and understand in a more profound way. At last, I felt a sense of ownership over the project. Once I had a number of forms created and permission to explore the idea of embedding my artwork as visual metaphors for my action research cycles, I was ready. It is interesting to experience how motivating and important personal expression and identity are. There is a sense of power and authenticity in such emotions as passion, desire, and hope. Finally, I could proudly call the project mine, something that would be unique to me, something that would echo with my creative voice. I had begun.
The Stairs

A flight of stairs may serve to lead, up or down as it beckons our will to choose. While ascending or descending we may be engaged with an intent to change our position. When I was growing up in a small town nestled in the mountains of British Columbia's interior, ascending and descending stairs was a daily ritual necessary to get from my home to school. Four times a day, along with my friends, I would willfully descend the first flight of two hundred steps leading away from my home in order to ascend the second flight of three hundred steps leading up to the school. With the intention of developing strong and healthy bodies, minds and spirits, over time the stairs became my experience for growth, change, and ultimately transformation, once before school, twice at lunch time, and once after school. Through reflection, I recognize that these stairs provided time for me to think about my learning holistically, and through my body as they connected my private world with my public world during the formative years of my teenage life. Joanne Stroud (1994) discusses intentionality as the human capacity to act upon one's aims or the way in which the soul structures experiences so that they have meaning for us. She suggests that unconscious will shapes our experiences into perceptions that are integrated into our personalities. As she states, "...the crucial question becomes how to free the imagination and the will to be dynamic once more, how to encourage the will to dream" (p. 115).

Statement of the Problem

Introduction

The starting point for this study is to investigate and document the characteristics of teaching and learning in, through, and about the visual arts using a model of a teacher-as-artist. At the beginning of this project three
teachers explored their teaching through what we called a teacher-as-artist model. In this model, a teacher-as-artist is a teacher who produces art work themselves as a way of modeling art making behaviour, stimulating discussion, and demonstrating visual problem solving for students’ learning and growth in an art class. Using a teacher research design, this study will document the experiences encountered by three visual art teachers who will at times collaborate in developing and using a teacher-as-artist model of instruction in their classrooms. In addition, the study will look at the author’s understanding of what it means personally to be a teacher-as-artist. Action research is a responsive research set of methods. Using this form of research allowed me to alter the research questions as necessary depending upon the emerging findings. In addition, I was able to explore my own personal, professional, and political understandings of my teaching, art making, and research through my own action research cycles. As a result of ongoing reflections over the course of the research and the spiraling nature of teacher research, our individual understanding of the wording ‘teacher-as-artist model’ changed. Through my reflections and interpretations of many audio taped conversations, the conception of teacher-as-artist in this study evolved to become the mentoring role of a pedagogical artist. The original research questions which guided the study for each participant individually, and our collaborative examination as a group of pedagogical artists are listed below:

1. What are the reoccurring themes and characteristics of teaching and learning in visual art when instruction is delivered by a teacher-as-artist model?

2. How is the teacher/student relationship altered when instruction is delivered by this model?

3. In what ways is the teaching practice of the teachers involved understood when instruction is delivered by the teacher-as-artist model and action research is implemented?
Each participant also framed their own questions and reflected upon those questions as the cycles unfolded. Although specific answers to these questions were unclear, the participants developed a greater understanding of the questions they were asking of themselves throughout the study. Through the findings of the research in Chapter Five, I will discuss the understandings of the original research questions, in addition to the understandings of each participants individual questions.

**Personal Ground**

As I began my teaching career in the elementary school, I seemed to have a predetermined understanding of what teachers ought to do in delivering instruction in the classroom. Somehow, I felt guilty if I brought any of my personal ceramic artwork into the classroom. Even if I worked on my own artwork during noon hour breaks or after school, I thought this may be interpreted by my colleagues, my administrator, or parents as not ‘doing the job of classroom teaching’. Consequently, my artwork remained for the most part in the silent spaces of my home studio. The longer my artist voice remained silent, the more I began to feel myself less engaged, less passionate, and less enthusiastic about my life; my own becoming. In my reflective moments I would question this marginalization of my artist voice, at times angry and resentful. I wondered if I had become a high school teacher rather than a primary teacher whether my artist voice would be more acceptable in the classroom. Was my personal engagement in art really as important as I thought or perhaps I should just let it go? I seemed to be taking care of my students’ creative well-being while neglecting my own. Would my students value art making as a life long endeavour if they did not see art making modeled? I began to question how my
passion for knowing through my hands and my art production, which gave my life so much joy and meaning, could become more integrated with my teaching voice.

It is my belief that the physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional well-being of teachers greatly influences their teaching performance in the classroom. During my education in art making and art education I remembered having concerns about maintaining my own art production once I was meeting the demands of teaching. This was of concern to me because of my will, passion, and desire to represent my thinking visually. It was only during breaks in the year that I could continue with my art production. As a teacher, I talked about making art. I facilitated the art making of my students. I did not engage in making personally meaningful art as a way of instruction. Thus, after becoming comfortable with the professional responsibilities involved in teaching a primary class, I decided to explore the possibility of engaging in the production of my own artwork as a way of delivering instructions during my art teaching.

When I began to work with visual art preservice teachers, I noticed that those who were most passionate about their art production also had concerns that teaching would interfere with their own art production. At that point in my teaching, I began delivering instruction in ceramics by engaging in my own art making during class time and during open studio time. This strategy was particularly effective in addressing problem solving, risk-taking and self-assessment in art production. When I used this teacher-as-artist model of delivering instruction, students seemed to take risks and solve problems more independently with their own art production. They also saw that my teaching and my art making were not independent of each other, thus giving those concerned artists becoming teachers, inspiration. In addition, I felt that my production was no-longer marginalized or relegated to 'hobby', 'frill', or 'spare
time' status. I wondered what else these students may be learning besides ceramic production. They kept journals throughout the term and I quote from several below:

Every week, there is somebody, other than the instructor working in the studio. Not only do we have good conversations but also we get to share different ideas, approaches and experiences of working with clay and we are able to talk to the instructor alot about our work. I'm learning that we are all in the same boat in that we are trying to conquer our frustration and uncertainty, resulted by inexperience. I do feel safe and comfortable enough to express my thoughts in class. I'm learning to be a part of this community and seeing how I could create such an environment in an elementary school setting.

The amount of problem solving I experienced is amazing and it was a good feeling when I solved something. Experiences and emotions like this I believe are beneficial in developing a person's self esteem and reliance. I believe the problem solving and perseverance I experienced with clay will benefit and transfer to other aspects of my life.

I really appreciate the model of teacher as artist and colleague. It implies, assumes that student and teacher are on a par in terms of art as a process of growth though not necessarily in terms of experience or achievement.

My personal experience with collaborative action research has occurred during the past four years in which I have been involved with six women art educators who have been engaged in an ongoing action research project investigating feminist understandings, art teaching, and art production. Engaging in art production has been a reoccurring theme for this group. Significantly apparent are the challenges that this art production presents in light of the extremely busy teaching schedules; yet each of us has persevered with our commitments to produce art and teach art production. Another important theme has been the commitment to an action research model of collaboration in order to understand and improve our teaching practices.

As a result of being involved in this group, two very distinct changes have occurred in my teaching practice. The first change that I have experienced was a
profound understanding of the importance of my relationship with my students. This was easier to accomplish in a primary classroom for me than in the university context. However, I am aware of increased learning, for myself and for my students, that occurs when I have deliberately engaged in building a collaborative relationship with my students. The second change that occurred for me has been a greater understanding of and commitment to the act of reflection to improve my practice. Upon discussing these two reoccurring themes with three teaching colleagues who were interested in becoming involved with this research project, I discovered a common intent to develop a greater understanding of our teaching practice, a common desire to improve the teacher/student relationship and a common passion to explore art making as a way of delivering instruction.

Background

Historically, a teacher-as-artist model is not new to the field of art education. From the 1920s to the 1940s individuals referred to as artist/teachers believed in the child as artist metaphor, and developed an art education that supported creative self expression in the child. Efland (1990) discusses the history of art education and identifies a belief held by educators such as Rugg and Shumaker that:

the art education of the child-centered school did not come from the professors of art education such as Dow, but from “artist-teachers.” Indeed, most self-expressive art teaching, as they described and advocated it, was by artists who were deeply imbued with the conviction that there is an affinity between the activity of the artist and the graphic expression of the child. (p. 196)

The belief in self-expression through artistic activities was supported by Read and Lowenfeld right up until the 1960s and still holds a place in art education.
Movements in education through this century have had influence upon art education and the concept of a teacher-as-artist. There are repeating patterns in education trends that are influenced by political and economic structures of the time. For example, experiences in art education for the purposes of personal and societal transformation received recognition from the reconstructionist ideology at the beginning of the progressive movement at the turn of the century. The notion of social reconstruction resurfaced in response to the Great Depression of the 1930s. Social concerns became a priority in art education. Dewey’s influential work in education fostered an ideology of art making as a way to solve problems of daily living in the home, school, and community. Similar social concerns were again present in the arts-in-education movement of the late 1960s and the 1970s. The arts-in-education movement again supported the artist/teacher concept in schools, again with the initiatives coming from outside the teaching profession.

Although there may be overlapping in intention, this study of a teacher-as-artist model may be considered different from the artist/teacher or the artist in residence model primarily in that artists working with students in schools may not be trained as teachers. Indeed, successful artists may not be able to teach, and not all successful art teachers are practicing artists. There have been a number of studies done on the artist-in-schools programs. The artist in schools program began in 1969 in the United States and was jointly sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the US Office of Education. The program hired artists to work in the schools creating their artwork; they were not hired to formally teach (Aquino, 1978). Gross (1976) offers some insight into the program in his report on the Artists-in-Schools National Conference. At this conference, artists and educators expressed their concerns about the effectiveness of the programs in their state. Of primary importance to this study are the
artist's ability to communicate with students, the artist's attitude toward teaching and reasons to teach, assess and evaluate procedures, and the continued professional development for the teacher. Smith (1991) supports the concerns raised at the Artists-in-Schools National Conference. He concludes with:

Basically, the artist must become a teacher to be worthy of an educational institution's time and money. To do this, the artist must become educated as a teacher. But if the artist is so educated, then he or she becomes just what the schools have required all along: an art educator following well-thought-out curricula serving the educational needs of all children and youths. (p.246)

The teacher-as-artist used in this study is a concept that will be constructed by individuals who are professionally trained as teachers and are concerned with the attitudes, skills, and knowledge gained by their students as a result of their teaching in, about, and through the visual arts. The teachers-as-artists in this study are individuals with specific knowledge and skills that facilitate their students learning in visual art. Finally, the teachers-as-artists in this study are also individuals who are seriously committed to understanding and improving their teaching practice and to their own art production.

There are other movements in education generally and art education specifically that have occurred since World War II that have had impact upon a teacher-as-artist model of delivering instruction in visual art. The 1950s brought a swing from a preoccupation with self-expression to an emphasis on content of the discipline. With the Soviet Union's launching of the Sputnik, science became the model upon which all curriculum reform was based, including art education. Art education as a discipline began to be explored by researchers. After the Penn State seminar in 1965, a steady examination of art education on a theoretical level suggested changes in the overall importance of artistic activity; that is, the making of art be given less time in practice, making time for art education to be
shared among the disciplines of art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. Practice in the field was slower to respond to the theory. However, this theoretical trend in art education continued through into the 1980s with a movement for excellence in education and in 1983, Discipline Based Art Education was coined. DBAE has held a prominent position in art education ever since, with the focus on art making decreased. Perhaps the end of this century will see a balance within art education towards a recognition of the disciplines embedded to support creative self-expression for the purpose of social reconstruction.

**Feminist Pedagogy**

As I began to research methods of delivering instruction, I found that other educational writers and researchers had also suggested the need for developing alternate models of instruction. I wanted to find ways of teaching that honoured and supported theories of multiple intelligence, including ways of knowing that supported the holistic nature of ourselves and our students; that is knowing through the body as well as the mind (Gardner, 1983). Through exploring my teaching from a feminist perspective, I wanted to discover ways of teaching art that heard the voices of my students as well as provide a space for my voice. Finally, I wanted to create more collaborative ways of coexisting within the teacher/student relationship that would facilitate individual empowerment. Sandell (1991) argues for a feminist pedagogical understanding of knowledge construction through embodied experiences, as well as cognitive experiences. Teacher/student relationships influence these experiences. She suggests that art education ought to apply the feminist principle of collaboration through building a sense of community within the classroom. Furthermore, Sandell (1991) discusses the possibility of a social transformation that may be achieved through an art education program that supports feminist pedagogy. In
addition, Brisken (1992) also supports a feminist pedagogical approach that honours embodied knowledge and collaboration. Using a teacher-as-artist model for instruction, a teacher may position herself/himself along side their students, resulting in a shift in authority and a restructuring of the teacher/student relationship. Indeed, teachers may choose to share their authority in addition to their experience and knowledge in a particular area. Each individual has a variety of experience and background knowledge which they bring to any learning experience. Pinar (1992) writes about the role of self within the daily lived experiences shared in a classroom. Van Manen (1991) advocates a pedagogical caring that is thoughtful or tactful, and discusses the importance of relationships between teacher and students. With the possibility of the relationship between student and teacher becoming collaborative, there is greater opportunity for reciprocal learning. Nellings (1995) argues for the concept of care. Grumet (1988) also supports the notion of caring evident in the relationships shared within a classroom. In keeping with a shift in authority during instructional processes, there must follow a shift in assessment responsibilities, strategies and practices. Objectives must be clearly identified to determine how to assess and evaluate what is being learned and valued. It may be that what we believe we are teaching, is not the only important thing being learned through building caring relationships with our students. Efland (1990) discusses the impact of the artist/teacher throughout his account of the history of art education in the United States. Although I did not uncover any studies that specifically were investigating instruction on art through a teacher-as-artist model, the British Columbia Art Teachers Association dedicated an entire journal to the discussion about artist/teacher; teacher/artist in 1981. The articles in that journal centered around teachers sharing their frustrations with lack of time for personal art making and lack of recognition for
the importance of personal art making. However, the journal did present some possibilities for dealing with these frustrations. For example, Grauer (1981) described the collaborations among teachers in her district with their efforts to facilitate yearly teacher/artist exhibits. This study may broaden the understanding of the importance of supporting teachers in their efforts to fulfill their passions as artists and as art teachers. The feminist movement has had impact upon the field of education with a growing concern for equality between all participants. This study may add to the body of literature in art education that supports feminist pedagogy, critical theory, and reflective practice. Furthermore, this study may support alternate ways of instruction in teaching visual art that may encourage personal and societal transformations.

Brisken (1992) discusses teaching leadership through the teaching of leadership skills and through identifying power relationships. Certainly, the teacher must critically examine the nature of authority and of power, questioning his/her understanding of both. The ceramic studio in which I teach at a post secondary institution supports the teaching of leadership because the nature of the process of ceramics itself involves so many variables that facilitate self reliance, problem solving, and collaboration. In addition I have structured the course over the three years that I have been teaching it to empower the students with personal responsibilities to act as leaders. However, the issue of sharing authority and power is complex and demanding. Although I remain committed to a collaborative model of teaching, I am growing in my understanding of the challenges that exist in determining how, what, when, and where collaborations ought to occur. With this in mind, I approached two secondary teachers and one elementary teacher to work with me in a collaborative action research project. This research will further investigate the teacher/student relationship and the teaching of personal responsibility that is necessary for success in teaching
leadership and in exploring the sharing power when instructing in art through a teacher-as-artist model.

**Action Research**

Through the deliberate and systematic processes of collaborations in planning, implementing, reflecting, and replanning, teacher research as a form of action research, provides a structure for change. Ideally, change occurs first on a personal level and may include changes in attitudes, as well as changes in skills and knowledge. I have chosen action research as the methodology for this project because of its collaborative and reflective structures. When we began, I based my assumptions for each cycle around the Carr & Kemmis (1983) model of posing a question, collecting data, reflecting upon practice, and choosing subsequent action. However, as the research unfolded, I had to broaden my definitions of action research to address my emerging self awareness and social consciousness. Gauthier (1992) raises concerns with the disputes regarding the definition of action research. He suggests that addressing what it can do rather than defining what it is may be beneficial in the debates. In ten daring statements concerning action research he states that action research “can take place anywhere - in one’s office, in one’s mind” (p. 193). Furthermore, for the purposes of this research, I have been drawn to the integration of theory and practice which action research supports.

Bresler (1994) describes a number of concerns central to action research. She discusses the goals of action research in education as the personal understanding of one’s own teaching practice, the environments in which one practices, and the possibility for improving practice. Particular to this project, she suggests that some advocates believe the focal point of action research is empowerment. With a personal stake in their practice and the environments in which they practice, teachers may feel empowered. Reflection and self
assessment may provide insights into such teacher autonomy. As May (1993) suggests, action research is guided by a strong personal commitment to our professional development as teachers and as artists. However, she raises concerns about a focus of action research resting upon change in practice. She suggests that teachers involved in action research may not necessarily have problems to solve or be looking to improve practice, although this may indeed happen. My assumption is that learning in art or the creation of personally meaningful images by students may be enhanced as a result of students observing and interacting with their instructor who is involved in personal art making. Through their involvement in this action research the teachers may realize a deeper understanding of teaching and learning in art. However, critical observation and reflection will be necessary to understand the implications of teaching and learning through this model, if change is to occur. What is noteworthy with this group of art teachers is that each participant shares an interest in approaching instruction through modeling art making, each participant is a committed professional interested in improving his/her practice whenever possible, and each participant is concerned about his/her own art production.

This study will involve the researcher, three teachers, and their students. I, as the researcher, will initiate the project and provide motivation to continue. As a result of being at the university, I have access to the academic theory; thus I will be able to support teachers in planning meetings, in providing supplemental readings, and in collecting observations and data during their teaching practices. In addition, I will be completing a body of artwork that represents my reflections and actions as I work towards my understanding of this action research.

At our first meeting, I provided each participating teacher with a thesis proposal and an overview of what is meant by action research. I helped each
teacher pose their first question to get started. To collect data for these questions, the following data collection techniques were used: observations, interviewing, audio taping conversations and keeping journals. I analyzed the data using interpretive techniques. We completed three cycles of action research over two periods of time. The first time period was May and June of 1996, during which time I visited the schools three times for an entire day. The second time period was from the end of September to November, 1996, again during which time I visited the schools three times for an entire day.

In summary for this study, I intend to describe and interpret the action research cycles of three art educators implementing a teacher-as-artist model of instruction in visual art at two different educational levels, elementary and high school. I also intend to describe my own action research cycles as I worked metaphorically through my art making towards a deeper understanding of my teaching and research. The initial starting research questions are as follows:

1. What are the recurring themes and characteristics of teaching and learning in visual art when instruction is delivered by a teacher-as-artist model?

2. How is the teacher/student relationship altered when instruction is delivered by this model?

3. In what ways is the teaching practice of the teachers involved understood when instruction is delivered by a teacher-as-artist model and action research is implemented?

However, since teacher research involves cycles and individual teachers looking specifically at their teaching practices, each teacher will generate his/her own questions for successive cycles. It is my hope that responses to their questions will address the broad research question. I hope that this study will generate samples of alternative instructional models and authentic assessment strategies that embrace the feminist principles of collaboration, cooperation, and community.
Significance of the Study

Within the field of art education, art teachers bridge the gap for their students between making art and understanding what art is for. Their concern is for learning in art for all students in a society. It is beneficial for an art teacher to know what it is like to engage in making art. Furthermore, if we accept art as a way of knowing self and if self is an evolving entity, then engaging in art making may be a lifelong endeavor, sometimes as teacher, sometimes as student. Self-actualization is an ongoing reflexive process, with a continued and passionate effort put forth to develop and acquire control over our lives. As young inspired artists enter into the business of education and face the demands of teaching, does the result need to be the death of a practicing artist? I would hope not. I hope that our profession draws the very best in artistry and in teaching to provide the best for our students. The role models that we represent, on the front lines in the daily lived experiences shared in the classroom, are the examples of what we value. This study will describe the experiences of three art teachers who are practicing artists. It will provide an example of real lived experiences within the classroom for those artists who are in teacher education programs and are concerned about wearing two hats, that of a teacher and that of an artist. It may help such individuals in making informed decisions about whether or not teaching is a professional choice for them. In addition, this study will provide an opportunity for three dedicated art teachers to investigate their own teaching practice and art production. Through some collaborations, observations, discussions, ongoing reflection and critical theorizing, insights into each participants practice and production may be revealed, providing the opportunity for improvement.

Clearly there is a challenge in art education to meet the diversity of learners in today’s classrooms, in addition to making the experiences in the art
room meaningful to all. There is a need for developing alternate methods of instruction that may support teacher identity and reinforce positive collaborative student/teacher relationships. This study will explore one relatively uncharted model that intends to help students ask questions as well as answer them, construct knowledge as well as learn it, and reflect as well as create.

This study will support alternate models of teaching and instruction through the practice and implementation of a teacher-as-artist model. Through this model, implemented by three teachers, it is hoped that the nature of the teacher/student relationship may be explored by observing and reflecting upon interactions between each. It is important to model for students that which we believe to be important mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. In addition it is hoped that each teacher involved in this action research project will have opportunities to reflect upon his/her own teaching practice and art production in order to gain a deeper understanding of and perhaps to improve in both areas. Furthermore, it is important to investigate and establish alternate teaching strategies that may empower the learner to realize his/her leadership potential and responsibility for lifelong learning in visual arts. Ultimately the goal for this study, implementing a teacher-as-artist model and examining reoccurring themes that may emerge from ongoing reflections upon practice, is the personal transformation of those individuals involved. Personal transformations may provide support for broader societal transformations within the context of teaching and learning in the visual arts.

Finally, this study intends to investigate a model of teaching art that may facilitate empowerment of both students and teachers through personal creative development and through shared experiences within the community of the art studio, rather than relying on an authority-based model. While we construct new ways to coexist within the student/teacher relationship, small communities
of leaders may emerge. As we intentionally ascend or descend the stairs of our teaching journey, engaging our will to open new spaces and create more opportunities for hearing the voices present within the daily lived experience of classroom life, personal transformations may occur. Perhaps we may move in a direction towards a societal transformation that honours equality and empowerment for all.
CHAPTER TWO

A FENCE OF CARING:
TEACHING PASSION

And to stir ourselves, to disturb, to transform. An emotion, a passion can be a transformation of the world. It can break through the [boundaries]; it can open to the power of the possible. It may even render practice more reflective. We need to open spaces for this in education at this time in history, to renew as we reform.

Maxine Greene (1986, p. 81)

Somehow, if we are to remake the democratic culture and if we are to awaken an ethical consciousness, we have to discover how to arouse passion again, the passion that accompanies the belief that things can be otherwise, that everything has not been done.

Maxine Greene (1986, p.72)
Reconsidering a Fence
Re-considering a Fence

I have always been inspired by images of growth...gardens...flowers...seeds...and such. Sometimes as I would go for evening strolls, I’d peer over the fence to see the garden of another, and delight in the glimpses that would appear. However, at that time, I thought about fences as structures that separate and alienate in an unfriendly manner. Later, as I was talking to a friend, she described the fence around her childhood home as a wonderful support that made her feel secure within, as she grew and developed into the person she was to become. I felt a new understanding of a fence which was filled with care and a sense of protection. The more I read about pedagogical tact and thoughtfulness, (van Manen, 1991) the more I felt enclosed or protected by the words of researchers who felt passionate about caring for their students and who had been there before me. As educators, how can we reconsider passion to become a powerful tool for transformation? When I carved away part of a female ceramic form to create a fence, I was thrilled to get glimpses of the other side. I wondered if passion in our teaching might help us to understand the voices and stories on the other side and in the other spaces. I thought about the possibility of communities; communities in classrooms built upon relationships based on respecting each others uniqueness as contexts for transformation; communities surrounded by a protective fence of caring. I was encouraged in my learning and understanding of what needed to be done to continue.
A Fence

A fence may serve to enclose a space, defining it as unique, special, or other. It may separate and alienate or a fence may serve to support and protect that which is inside. In her essay, *Productive Borders*, (Tuija Pulkkinen, 1988) defines a border [fence] as a structure that ought to keep things in movement, ambiguous, and sensitive to difference. Her views give support to my fence metaphor, giving a voice to the place where one meets difference yet does not provide the “final limit, ground, foundation, or truth” (p. 86). Pinar (1992) suggests that metaphor is precisely when meaning is produced out of nonmeaning. Winner (1982) discusses that in understanding metaphors one requires an ability to comprehend and make a synthesis between two dissimilar domains, often transporting one element normally assumed with one to the other. Efland (1990) discusses the structures embedded in artistic inquiry as analogical and metaphorical. Curriculum theorist, Grumet (1988) discusses education:

as a metaphor for a persons dialogue with the world of his or her experiences. Phenomenology seeks to name spaces and give voice to our lived experiences that precede understanding and knowing. Theorizing is not practiced in an abstracting alienating sense, but in a mundane sense of bringing everyday lived experience to reflective awareness in a textual or writing manner. (p. 241)

Although this research project is primarily teacher research with an action research design, it is heavily influenced by phenomenological inquiry which discusses the lived experiences embedded in the daily classroom lives of the teachers involved in this research. For the purposes of this research the fence is a
visual metaphor defining the space and the voice of those educators and researchers who passionately care about thoughtful pedagogy and who are working for improvement and change in the understanding of what may be possible through a transformational orientation to curriculum. The fence, therefore, serves to support and protect ideas in progress, enclosing the spaces and voices of educators and students who are in the process of becoming. For me, as the researcher in this project, the fence also helps to define the lived experiences which are in process of being understood and upon which we construct our knowledge. Looking through the fence offers glimpses into diversities, multiple meanings, and ambiguities that lay on the other side and in other spaces. Such views may inform our teaching as we include all students.

This research project is situated in the passion of the teachers involved. They are exploring their art teaching as it is informed by their passion for art making. The research presents an understanding of our teaching as we try to view our worlds and our humanness through multiple lenses and shifting realities. Through a commitment to critically questioning the structures that give definitions to our ways of knowing and through ongoing reflection and action, we may increase our understanding of our own voices which inform our pedagogy and our teaching.

MacGregor (1995) discusses measures in which power is given back to the individual in a transformative society. He proposes five ways in which art may be useful in this regard. First of all, he supports the primacy of first hand experiences - lived experiences in art making. The second measure, the preservation of a sense of self, is important and may be supported by the art making of the teacher and the students. The third measure is in reflective exchanges between students and I suggest teachers as well. The fourth measure is to extend a comprehensive view of art; that is, to identify with art related
behaviours. In this study this extension is to include the art behaviours of teachers as well as their students. Finally, the fifth measure suggests that there be a trust in first hand experiences with the understanding that technology exists to extend experiences, not to dominate them. Pinar (1992) also writes about the role of self in exploring curriculum as a transformational educational experience, with students and teachers coming to understand themselves through their lived experiences. Doll (1988) advocates for a transformative curriculum based upon an active process of change that is engaged in when we teach and learn with our students. A transformative curriculum shuns a hierarchical structure in favour of a more collaborative model with respect to the teacher/student relationship, particularly through the sharing of power. Both teachers and students must move towards an increased understanding of each other and of the self reflective process. Greene (1986) refers to the reflective process as “the ability to reach beyond, to envisage a wider span of understanding and a better order of things enabling persons to perceive the deficiencies in what exists” (p.79).

Noddings (1995) argues that caring for students must be taken seriously as a major purpose of schooling and states, “that our main educational aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving, and lovable people” (p. 366). She discusses the broad educational purposes of our day as being more concerned with a preoccupation for academic adequacy. She suggests that “we will not achieve even that meager success unless our children believe that they themselves are cared for and learn to care for others” (p. 674).

Van Manen (1991) also advocates a pedagogical caring that he calls thoughtful or tactful, a deep caring for children and students. Thus, the relationships between teacher and students depend on who the teacher is, in addition to what the teacher does and knows. The teacher’s beliefs and values, her/his character, relationship with their world, lived experiences, and
specifically in this project, relationship with art making, must be considered in a
transformational curriculum. Providing space in our teaching for honouring each person’s experience and personal story is necessary for building a pedagogical caring. Giroux and Friere discuss critical pedagogy in their introduction to Weiler’s (1988) book *Women Teaching for Change*. They support the central positioning of voice and relationship between students and teachers in an attempt to make themselves present and active in the production and formation of their own knowledge and values.

As a referent for empowerment, the category of voice interrogates the processes through which identities are ignored, constructed, or experienced; meanings are affirmed, marginalized, or questioned; and experiences are formed within the interlocking and related processes of subjugation, affirmation, and enlightenment. (p.xiii)

Grumet supports the notion of caring situated in concrete human relationships. “For Grumet, attachment need not be the price of civilization; instead, it must be the medium through which civilization is cultivated and transformed” (Pinar & Reynolds, 1995, p. 381). Aoki (1992) also eloquently describes this caring in his story about the monk’s garden:

The monk as a pedagogue taught the lord, a leader of men, what it is to lead—that in a world of beings, to lead is to hearken and to follow the voice of the logos; that he who cannot follow the voice of logos is not an authentic leader; and that what authorized him to be a leader is not so much the title or position, but rather his attunement to the care that silently dwells. (p.13)

Aoki (1992) speaks of the necessity of uncovering the layers of teaching. He describes the first layer as a "black box" which is concerned with outcomes and behaviours of teaching rather than understanding the process of teaching itself. The middle layer seeks to understand teaching as theoretical and scientific, largely ignoring the lived worlds of teachers and their students. The innermost layer is an understanding of effective teaching techniques, strategies, and skills.
Although all three layers have elements of correctness, Aoki suggests the peeling back of all three layers to find what it means to teach. The telling of stories, and the subsequent reflection that may be experienced in the art making process, may be integral to the discovery of what it means to teach. Aoki (1992) describes the meaning of teaching as it resides in the phenomenological wisdom of watchfulness and thoughtfulness.

Weiler (1988) describes a feminist perspective that supports a political commitment to building a more just society for everyone and supports showing care and concern for our students as human beings. She refers to the work of Friere as she describes the need for teachers to respect the consciousness and culture of their students. Teachers must seek to understand their own presumptions and assumptions as they assert their own experiences to produce meaning. As I critically examine how I came to value and learn about art and art education, I feel compelled to examine how I developed a political commitment from my personal understandings of what it means to teach.

Inside The Fence - My Story

The memories I have of my earliest art making are from my mother who taught me to use my hands in many ways to create a host of different images and objects that would enhance my world. I learned to sew, to knit, to weave, to paint, to design, to draw, and to decorate. Indeed, I came to know myself through the things that I made with my hands. However, without a high school art program in the small town where I grew up, I chose to be involved with music. Today, I question the absence of an art program and why students are made to choose between the fine arts, limiting their opportunities for experiencing all of them or any one in-depth. However, when I was in high school, I did not question the importance of creating images and objects, I just continued to make whatever I wanted to at home. Over time, I came to know
myself as ‘a creative person’. My mother was an artist who continually made art as a way of defining and creating our home space from an ordinary place of being into an extraordinary or desired place of being. Her art making was interwoven with her daily lived experiences of creating a home. Watching her, as my first teacher of art making, I learned by osmosis, although at the time I did not understand the importance of this nor did I have the confidence to voice my opinion of its value. Finally when I became a mother, I found myself passing on my limited understanding of the importance of creating an extraordinary home space to my daughter. Together we made many images and objects with our hands, to decorate, to function, and to entertain but more so, to create a desired space and state in which to live. In discussing art education, London (1989) suggests that creativity is natural and inborn and has the potential of transforming and enhancing the quality of life on a personal, communal, and societal level. This is what I was doing and what my mother was doing when at home ‘just being a mom’.

In my early adult life I finally encountered art making taught in a formal way through a visual art studio program at a community college. Being enrolled in this program for two years, my learning continued as I absorbed new materials, processes, and techniques; yet, I did not question the value of what I was doing nor the importance of creating personally meaningful images. I was busy completing projects assigned by the teacher, who I assumed must be a ‘real artist’. However, it was not until the breakup of my marriage when I was emotionally very unstable that I began to deeply understand the power of creating visual representations of my story; indeed, my lived experiences that embodied my thoughts and feelings. Through using my hands and my mind to create images and objects, I began to understand more about my experiences and I eventually healed my broken spirit.
At this point, I decided to become an elementary teacher and I encountered an art educator in the teacher education program who was also a practicing artist. As I observed her participation in making art and in teaching art, she had a profound effect in facilitating my learning. I came to value my strength in visual thinking and to know my personal and social responsibilities. I could see a respect for the art making that was associated with private spheres brought forth into the public arena of the classroom. In my professional growth as a teacher, I felt I had found my way home; I had discovered the classroom as a public space in which I could hear and discover the voice of my becoming. Through my commitment to improving, to understanding, and to ongoing self reflection, I could realize my potential as a human being as I engaged in my passion of art making, and my passion for teaching children. I had begun the process of my own personal transformation by actively engaging in my own power to create the quality of my life and to work towards improving the quality of life for those for whom I taught. Thus, it was the beginning of my political commitment to teach, through art, with an orientation toward a transformational curriculum.

On The Fence - Supporting an Authentic Self

The dispositional well-being of teachers greatly influences their performance in the classroom. Miller and Seller (1990) also support this belief in their discussion of Combs' theory of education based on perceptual psychology. They state that:

in order to encourage a positive student self-concept, the teacher should have a positive view of himself or herself....and that the teacher can use his or her own positive self-concept as an instrument in teaching; as a teacher experiences his or her own uniqueness as a person, the act of teaching is enhanced. (p. 149)
Sumara (1995) discusses classrooms as complex systems of ever evolving relationships between students and teachers, students and students, each in relationship with self and with the skills and knowledge of the discipline, in this case, art. He suggests that when a teacher's passion is withheld, a counterfeit identity suppresses aspects of the self.

It is important for us who stand as teachers in classrooms to understand that what is silenced, what is deferred, what is marginalized and what is invisible is an absence that is always present. Therefore, although we understand that curriculum is something that is meant to provoke, to point out, and to illuminate, it is also something which silences, hides, and covers. There is much which is re-covered during events of curriculum. (p. 119)

Greene (1986, p.70) also questions the degree to which teachers and students are silenced, as she wonders "whether we are distancing teachers from their actual bodies and asking them to treat themselves (as well as their students) as information machines".

During my training in art making and art education I had concerns about how I would be able to attend to my own art production once I was in the classroom and meeting the demands of the regular teaching day. This was of concern to me because of my interest, ability, and need to represent my thinking visually in order to maintain a positive self-concept. Art teachers talked about making art. Did they know what it was like to make art? I questioned why some teachers in the elementary school that I was at could get away without knowing, understanding, and teaching the visual art curriculum. I questioned why this was acceptable or overlooked by the administrator. I wondered why parents seemed so complacent about their child's art education and so concerned about their child's math, science, or computer education. I also wondered why my own reactions to such reflections were so passionate. I felt that my voice, that is, my way of thinking and knowing and my expertise as a teacher, was seen as
marginally important. And yet, I knew that my students were learning and engaged while they were becoming independently responsible for many of their decisions and achievements. My commitment to visual art education became stronger. My political agenda was developing and my personal voice was getting louder as my passion developed to support my students' visual way of representing their thinking.

In addition to what we teach, we must also look at how we teach; that is, the methods and models through which we deliver instruction and the strategies that we engage to facilitate our students' construction of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for learning in, about, and through visual art. With respect to defining curriculum, I am in support of Doll's (1992) definition of curriculum which includes "the formal and informal content and process by which learners gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills, and alter attitudes, appreciations, and values" (p.5). A transformational orientation to curriculum supports a change in beliefs and attitudes, which are the most difficult component in educational change because they are not so obvious and they usually occur slowly over time. In addition, teachers concerned for teaching towards a transformation orientation must be aware of the complexity of change and be prepared to start at a personal level first with the belief that they have the power and the responsibility to create their own lives. They are in a process of becoming which is directly related to self inquiry and identity building. I also concur with Miller's (1988) definition of curriculum which includes "students and teachers biographical, historical, and social situations that they bring to the classroom as well as within the relational classroom experiences that they share with texts, and education structures with one another" (p.11). Personal knowledge is as important as public knowledge in the process of achieving self-knowledge.
Through educational reform, Giroux (1993) challenges educators to be critical of their pedagogy in order to reveal that which is marginalized and that which is political. He argues for shifts in authority that are rooted in democracy and an improved quality of life for all. As I reflect on what I have felt as political interests at work, I recognize that cognitive/rational ways of knowing are valued more highly than emotional/intuitive ways of knowing; authoritative and hierarchical models of teaching are valued more often than collaborative models, I am committed to understand more about my personal agency to make societal changes for the betterment of all. Grumet (1988) advocates for attempts to bring teachers voices to the center of curriculum reform. She states, “As we study the forms of our own experience, not only are we searching for evidence of the external forces that have diminished us; we are also recovering our own possibilities” (p.xv). Peterat (1993) discusses the spaces of marginalization as places for the hope of future possibilities, the hope for changing social networks. Thus in addressing educational reform she posits that “the naming and the concurrent realization of marginality fosters a deeper understanding of social life, of exclusion; it is the seed for transformation” (p.161).

I was feeling and questioning the margins of my own experiences. My art making was separated from my identity as an educator. It seemed to have less value and yet it was something that I cared very deeply about. As my teaching career developed at the elementary level, I hesitated to bring my artwork into the classroom. My assumptions about what constituted legitimate teaching instruction lead me to leave my artwork at home for my ‘spare time,’ while I concentrated my energy upon talking about the importance of making art and facilitating the art production of my students. Over the five years of my elementary teaching career, I noticed my own production began to diminish. I noticed that I was not creating new images or responding to new issues. When I
could get into my studio, I would revert to the tried and true; that is, to what I knew was safe and would work. I began to feel less confident in my ability, less interest in my ideas, and less need to engage in my own visual thinking, risk taking, and problem solving. Indeed, my own art production seemed to be less important, especially to me. I felt my identity as an artist diminish and a lack of self-esteem began to replace my passion for making art.

In questioning the marginalization of my experiences, I began to wonder. If we honour and value visual thinking in our students, then ought we not model our own engagement in that process? If we are asking the students to critically respond visually to social issues and solve problems through art production, then ought we not demonstrate our own critical questioning through visual responses and visual problem solving? If we value the world of the arts as basic to our existence and to our own learning then ought we not demonstrate how this value manifests itself in our own lives? If we don’t, we as art teachers are functioning merely as transmitters of our content knowledge. We may even actively engage our students in art making and art related discussions, but without personal action, reflection, and agency, change is limited. A humanistic orientation supporting the transformational position in contemporary education is based on the assumption that values play an essential role in the learning process and that a coherent value system gives meaning to our students lives (Miller and Seller, 1990). Values of sharing, of caring, of providing spaces for hearing personal stories and sharing daily lived experiences, of building community and collaboration, are important to create a better more humane society. Congden (1996) offers support for deconstructing the art world and educational hierarchy. She supports the value of craft and folk art traditions as being important in the fine art hierarchy. She argues from a feminist position for a shift from competition to community:
Moreover many women artists are asking for a system that values the focus of creativity in a less isolated, competitive manner....These guideposts for daily life and work would enable a society to again create a world where creativity returns to everyday life, where respect for the natural environment is integral to caring about ourselves and others, and where art is understood in the broadest of terms. (p.16)

Even though I was experiencing a loss of identity as an artist, I noticed that my students, their parents, and my colleagues were interested in my artwork if I brought it into the classroom. All were curious about where I got my "creative ideas". I began to understand the notion of developing our visual thinking through actively and persistently engaging in it. I began to look more closely at the students art making in my classroom. I began to bring the unspoken voices of the children's artwork forward with more confidence. I became intrigued by the spontaneous cooperative learning experiences that arise in teaching the visual arts. Particularly, when observing young children working with clay, I noticed how effortlessly the medium seems to facilitate collaboration among children. With clay in their hands each child eagerly worked with a partner or a group to shape forms together, one child rolling, another scoring, another attaching the coils, all to build the same construction. As a result of my observations, I have been very interested in exploring ceramic education in particular, and art education in general to create more opportunities that facilitate meaningful cooperative and collaborative art learning experiences for my students. Thus, my personal and professional experiences were helping to define my sense of self. As I reflect now upon my concerns about my identity, I realize that my understanding of an artist/teacher is expanding to include the personal commitment to and responsibility for becoming an active agent for educational change.

Over The Fence - Other Stories
Recently I have had the experience of teaching university art education courses in ceramics, addressing the needs of preservice and inservice teachers at the elementary and high school levels, as well fine art students. I am excited about the art education that occurs for my students and for myself in the ceramic studio because the nature of the process facilitates collaboration. In addition, I am regularly in the studio engaged in my own art production alongside my students. Although there is a genuine shift in the authority of the teacher and a sharing of power and leadership within the ceramic studio, there remains tensions within the confines of a university setting.

Currently, I am also involved in teaching elementary art education methods to preservice elementary student teachers. The challenges are more difficult with the elementary art methods course due to the structure of the program, the number of students and the limited time frame. However, through modeling the use of my visual journal, I have found a way to deliver instruction through a teacher-as-artist model bringing forth my passion for and commitment to learning through the making of art. I am able to model my own critical thinking about the issues and images that I am exploring and developing. For example, as I worked in my journal and in clay to create the feminist forms for this research, I was able to discuss with the class why emotive words such as passion and desire are left out of much of their preservice training. Often such questions were met with more questions about why things are the way they are, rather than the way they could be. However, hopefully such discussions raise awareness of what may be possible. I am able to show visual evidence of my self reflections concerning a society that is exploitive and oppressive; yet my questioning and the modeling of that, show evidence that with individual empowerment, social change and transformation may be possible. Weiler (1988) supports this possibility.
The empowerment of students means encouraging them to explore and analyze the forces acting upon their lives. It means respecting and legitimizing students' own voices in the classroom. But the empowerment of students also must entail the empowerment of teachers. (p. 152)

In my teaching at the post secondary level, the responses that I have received from my students lead me to believe that for many, a personal transformation has taken place. Through the modeling of making personally meaningful images myself through a number of different strategies, many students have gained a greater understanding of their own visual thinking, particularly through the use of their visual journals in the elementary art methods class. In response to the use of collage in creating personally meaningful images in their journals, a student responded with the following:

The teacher had us complete a collage. I thought at the time, "Oh God, I'm dead!" You see, I feared art! During my elementary school years, I left art behind and pursued other areas in which I could more easily judge my success. It is only now that I have begun to realize a part of my personal growth has been deprived from a whole and complete experience in my lack of art education. Throughout this course, I have been undergoing a transformation. I have been and still am in a period of transition from a committed athlete to a whole person you might dare to say. We as teachers need to participate in constant reflection and self evaluation. But it is not enough to merely recognize our deficiencies or our ineptness, but rather to act in accordance with our life-long commitment to education and to seek the knowledge and training enabling ourselves to tackle our fears.

The students in the ceramic studio have become passionate about their entire experience in the ceramic studio, as revealed in the self-assessments:

I feel that my journal contains a rich source of ideas. It is there that I am free to voice, to experiment, to question, to reflect, and to change my visual ideas. It is here where each stroke of lines, each fragment of images, and each expression of emotion become significant. They are so because I know the potential of the ideas and the values in them. It has been great to have you working alongside us, developing, reflecting, and changing your own ideas and images and encouraging us with our personal images as well as challenging us to be involved as artists in our everyday interactions with the community.
These reflections lead me to speculate that my students will be more passionate teachers of art and will value the art making of their students in a greater way than if they had not shared in the lived experiences of those art education classes and endeavoured to make their own personally meaningful images. As Greene (1986) states:

"To reflect in the course of situated teaching is consciously to attend to what is happening and to those who are present with the teacher in a shared moment of lived life, empowering diverse individuals to think, to be mindful, to make sense, and to reach beyond." (p. 80)

In working with Fine Art students who are becoming art teachers, I felt empathy towards students who felt passionately about themselves as artists and had concerns or anxieties about their decision to become teachers. Again Greene (1986) advises us: "It is difficult to imagine students discovering what they think and what they do not yet know if there is no space of conversation, no space of engagement in diversity" (p.73). I wanted to demonstrate for all my students that art production and art teaching need not be separate issues. In fact, for me they are entwined and integral to the meaning of my life. My art making informs my teaching and my teaching informs my art making.

My students were learning in ceramics and about ceramics through transmissional and transactional orientations. I spent about three months transmitting skills, techniques, and content knowledge, in addition to having the students actively participate with the materials and technologies in the studio. During this time, I made considerable efforts to build and to establish trusting relationships within the ceramic studio. My intent however, was eventually to facilitate their creation of personally meaningful images independently, through the continued questioning of the purpose of their art making. Dissanayake (1994) discusses the notion of why people endeavor to make art in her book What is Art For. She argues that societies represent themselves through art making.
because art making is a human behavior that is fundamentally about human nature and is a broad embracing phenomenon. She suggests that "a knowledge and understanding of fundamental human nature, and a respect for it could guide our behavior and serve as the model for a truly 'humane' - though individually varied - life for all" (p.200).

London (1989) discusses the purposes of art making as transformational on a personal and then societal level. In his book, *No More Secondhand Art* he discusses the conception of making art with the intent that:

what we are and what we were is not yet all that we might become and that the creative process is a powerful vehicle to probe what may lie ahead.....Art today seems primarily in the service of decoration, innovation, or self expression. At the same time, we seem to have lost contact with the earlier more profound functions of art, which have always had to do with personal and collective empowerment, personal growth, communion with this world, and the search for what lies beneath and above this world. (p.4)

I was intending to have my students experience their own personal transformations, through continued questioning, reflection, and action with their art production. With this in mind then, I was hoping to facilitate their own empowerment and leadership skills as art teachers and as artists, to search and discover “what lies beneath and above this world” (p.4). Passionately, Greene (1988) encourages us as educators to become challengers, to take initiatives, and to begin “to create the kinds of spaces where dialogue can take place and freedom can appear” (p.11).

In a community of learners in an art studio, leadership, self-reliance, and mutual respect can replace authority. Brisken (1992) states that in teaching leadership, the importance of leadership for the empowerment of all must be emphasized. Skills for leadership must be taught and power relations must be identified, in order to empower students with responsibility to act as leaders.
The goal of teaching leadership is to increase the power of all. She states that teaching leadership:

names the power differential between student and teacher and seeks to equip students to use power (for those unused to it), to acknowledge their power (for those to whom power has occurred by virtue of their class, race, or gender) and to develop an appreciation of collective power. (p. 451)

However, teaching leadership is a difficult concept. When should teachers abandon their authority and how does one share authority? Irwin (1995) describes how skillfully one fine art supervisor engaged in the empowerment of others. She possesses a vision and was able to communicate her visionary qualities. She was able to create trusting relationships with people who became committed to a collective vision. Indeed, sharing authority and leadership requires a skillful balance of knowing when and how to motivate, inspire, and teach in a non-authoritarian style. Using a teacher-as-artist model, a teacher may begin to teach leadership and share power by encouraging students to develop their own personal responsibilities towards constructing knowledge.

My experiences have lead me to an improved understanding of the complexity of the issue of authority surrounding a feminist pedagogy. Brisken (1992) refers to the rejection of authority in favor of sharing power, and the rejection of expertise in favor of validating the knowledge of students. She states that although this rejection of authority and expertise, as we know it by the more traditional hierarchical model of teaching, does form part of a feminist pedagogy, she affirms my concerns about the complexity.

When teachers make the naive assumption that they can easily share power, they create yet another contradictory message for students: the offer of shared power competing with both the reality of the teacher’s and the differential access of students to power in the classroom. (p. 451)

I understand the concept of sharing leadership and power is in direct opposition to a society with structures embedded with hierarchies. However, as the result
of doing this literature review, I am encouraged by the growing number of concerned educators who also support an orientation towards a transformational curriculum within the contexts of schools and educational change. There is much more to learn before the teacher-as-artist model becomes a standard teaching practice. Although I remain committed to a collaborative model for instruction in art education, I understand that challenges exist in determining what is to be collaborated upon; how, when and where the collaborations are to take place; and in determining the shape of shared authority, leadership, and empowerment. There is a time for authority; everything cannot be perfectly shared. The challenge is to find ways to share our authority in a nonauthoritarian way.

In teaching ceramics, I have been able to increase the level of independence of the students more quickly through modeling my own art making. As I engaged in the production of my own ceramic work, the students could see the necessity of personal perseverance, problem solving, risk taking, and self-reflection. Through critical self reflection, that is, through questioning their personal assumptions, students began to develop images further and explore the question of ‘why?’ in their art making. They began to have a deeper understanding of what I was referring to as personally meaningful artwork. I felt that as I integrated my teaching and my artwork, I reflected an honest portrayal of my identity. Art making and teaching were a part of my everyday professional experiences, part of my becoming, that I shared with my students in the studio. Although the students were beginning to find their voices in clay, I wanted to encourage them to be more critical about what they were trying to say and why their voice was important in a public sphere. I wanted them to ask questions about the educational experiences that they had, and how they may create more collaborative meaningful educational experiences for their students.
I wanted these students to become reflective and critical about the structures and ideologies that had shaped their lives and subsequently their art making ideas. I felt I could address these desires best through modeling, using my own voice in clay. Through the use of their reflections and their visual journals the students supported this approach to teaching through modeling my own art making.

Beside The Fence - Supporting Each Other

As I began to do research on alternate ways of delivering instruction, I found that other educational writers and researchers have also suggested the need for developing alternate models of instruction. Sandell (1991) posits that a feminist pedagogical approach to education supports the construction of knowledge and understanding in the affective domain as well as the cognitive domain. She supports the notion of creating new models of teacher/student relationships. Indeed, she asserts that art education ought to apply some basic feminist principles such as building community through collaboration, sharing power and teaching leadership. An art education program that supports a feminist pedagogy may indeed help to change and transform the marginal status of women, art, and art education. As a result of critically questioning these marginalized spaces and voices, a transformation begins and continues as new critical awareness and action takes place. Sandell (1991) further suggests that a social transformation resulting in a more equal, fair, and just society for all may be achieved through classroom interaction, based on alternative instructional models fostering empowerment, community, and leadership. In addition, Brisken (1992) also supports a feminist pedagogical approach seeking to incorporate the affective, emotional and experiential into the learning process, thus replacing the competitiveness of the classroom interactions with communal, collective and cooperative ways of learning, of knowing, and of being.
Using a teacher-as-artist model for instruction, the teacher may position herself or himself alongside students, resulting in a new way of sharing authority in a nonauthoritarian way. The teacher is no longer the expert, dispensing knowledge to the learners. Rather the teacher may have assumed the position of an equal participant; however, with more experience and knowledge in a particular area. Indeed, each individual has a variety of experiences and background knowledge that they are bringing to any learning experience. We may engage in learning about art through the transmission of content knowledge, and we may learn in art through transactions with materials and processes. However, with the power structures deconstructed, with the active engagement of critically questioning our assumptions and reflecting on our actions, we may learn through art by engaging in an ongoing spiral towards self-actualization and personal transformations, experiencing various levels of consciousness, at different times being teachers, being artists, and/or being students. Hopefully, these experiences are transformational first on a personal level eventually providing the scaffolding for transformations on a societal level. Transformation takes time.

With a collaborative relationship between student and teacher, there is a greater opportunity for exchanges of knowledge. In keeping with a new way of demonstrating authority during instructional processes, there must follow a shift in assessment responsibilities, strategies and practices. Objectives must be clearly identified and personalized to determine how to assess and evaluate what is being learned and valued. It may be that what we believe we are teaching, is not the only important thing being learned. For this reason it is critical that the student and the teacher are both involved in authentic ongoing self-assessment processes. Transformation takes innovation.
I wanted to examine the issues of power and authority more to explore and improve upon my understandings of my teaching. Throughout my career I have felt the marginalization of visual art and I am questioning why throughout my involvement in this research. As a result of being involved in a collaborative group of six women art educators who have been engaged in an ongoing action research project investigating feminist understandings, art teaching, and art production (Irwin, et. al. in press), I have noticed two very distinct changes that have occurred in my teaching practice. The first change that I have experienced is a profound understanding of the importance of relationship with my students. This has been easier to accomplish in a primary classroom than a university context. However, I am aware of the improvement in learning, for myself and for my students, that occurs when I have deliberately engaged in building collaborative relationships. The challenges at the university level are challenges of time, numbers, and structures. I'm learning to get to know my students faster, meaning that I have to expose my thoughts, feelings, and "lived experiences" quicker, which takes courage. Transformation takes courage.

The second change that has occurred for me is a greater commitment to critically examine my assumptions about my world and to actively engage in reflection in order to understand and to perhaps improve my teaching practice. I ask myself why things appear as they do and if there may be other ways of understanding. Through the processes of collaboration in planning, implementing, reflecting, and replanning, action research provides a structure for change, with the assumption that change involves a transformation on a personal level first and then on a communal and societal level. I am drawn to the active engagement of theory and practice giving shape to the educational environment in which I work. Bresler (1994) discusses the goals of action research in education as understanding one's own teaching practices and the
environments in which one practices. She supports action research as an approach to understanding teaching in its assumption that there is more to education than product; that is, what was learned. Education also involves the process of teaching and the processes of learning through examining the contexts in which teaching and learning take place. Through a teacher-as-artist model of instructing that uses reflection and student self assessment strategies, we may provide a detailed description of these teaching and learning experiences. As May (1993) suggests, action research is guided by a strong commitment to understanding our teaching and our learning in art. However, she further comments upon the assumption that teachers involved in action research may not aim to solve problems or 'improve' practice, even though such may happen. It may be that the aim of a teacher’s involvement in action research may be to increase his/her understanding of practice. Through the questions generated by the teachers in this research it may be that they improve upon their understanding of their practice more so than finding answers to their questions. My assumption is that learning in art and the creation of personally meaningful images by students may be enhanced as a result of the students observing and interacting with their instructor in a more collaborative manner in the studio. As such, empowerment, shared leadership and personal transformations are the intended result. Transformations may include changes in attitudes, skills, and/or knowledge.

My objective with this research project is to examine alternate models of teaching and delivering instruction through the practice and implementation of a teacher-as-artist model. The intent of this approach is to facilitate the personal transformation of the teachers involved as they develop a deeper understanding of their teaching practices. Transformations that occur on a personal level first may facilitate, overtime, broader transformations to include students,
community, and society. Through this model it is hoped that the nature of the student/teacher relationship may redefine itself to include meaningful, caring collaborations between each and a more cooperative sense of community within a studio/classroom. It is important to model for students that which we believe to be important mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I find it unfortunate that the emotional and spiritual well-being of students and teachers is not a focus for much educational research. We must remember that we are human beings who teach people, not just curriculum. However, the transpersonal orientation discussed by Miller and Seller (1990) does stress the integration of physical, cognitive, affective, intuitive and spiritual needs of the whole child. The Primary Program within the British Columbia public school system also provides an example of a curriculum with goals for a transformational orientation. Indeed, I feel a sense of hope in learning about a transpersonal orientation within the transformational position of curriculum which I believe supports delivering instruction by the teacher-as-artist in a number of ways. The teachers and learners are viewed holistically, with self inquiry, reflection, action, social involvement and self assessment being critical to the learning process.

As art educators, we face a challenge to meet the diversity of learners in today’s classrooms, and to make art experiences meaningful to all. There is a need for developing alternate methods of delivering instruction. This research project explores a model that intends to help teachers and students question what they know, how they know it, and to reflect and act upon increased understanding. The project intends to help teachers and students construct knowledge in order to create their futures.

This project describes the experiences of three teachers and the researcher as they explore a model of instruction that facilitates empowerment of both
students and teachers through experiences with personal creative development and shared experiences within the community of the art studio. While we construct new ways to coexist within the student/teacher relationship, perhaps we may experience pickets of personal change, creating spaces for communities of critically responsible learners to emerge. Hopefully, with a pedagogy oriented to caring, and models of teaching that facilitate personal empowerment for all, we will move towards a societal transformation that honors equality and empowerment for all. With passion and eloquence, jagodinski (1992) describes this possibility:

Out of ourselves a new visionary myth will be generated. As its articulation unfolds more and more people (s) will recognize its direction. This is not the lifework of a generation, but of many generations. It...begins with a journey, a quest towards an unknown vision - yet it is pregnant with insight. Perhaps the child has already been born and waits in the birth canal. (p.181)
Desire itself is unbounded, limitless. Desire sears us, opens up a cavernous space deep inside us....desire alerts us....It is the action or willing to do something...the movement or attitude of the mind which is directed with conscious intention to some action. Desire certainly rules and circumscribes choice. When will is harnessed to desire, a sense of moving in a forward direction is generated.

Joanne H. Stroud (1994, p.7)
Reflections of a Gate
Re-flecting Through a Gate

Reflection had become a part of my teaching practice in a systematic way during a graduate course a couple of years ago. However, it was with this project that I felt I was beginning to have a deeper understanding of the process. Why is reflection so critical in teaching towards a transformational orientation? As I thought about my metaphors, I wondered about our ability as teachers to really understand otherness or the other side of the fence. I felt that reflection was the necessary process that would facilitate possible understanding of ourselves, of the multiple perspectives shared with our students and of the stories heard within a regular teaching day. Transformation relies on reflection to construct connected ways of knowing about ourselves and our students. It is through this connected knowing that we may develop and support our social responsibilities for creating change. We must continually examine and question our beliefs and values in order to understand how society has shaped us as individuals. Such understanding impacts upon those that we teach. The more I would revisit my visual thinking as my hands worked to create the gate, the more convinced I felt about the power of reflection and subsequent action as necessary for reshaping teaching and learning. Through a gate that remains unlocked, I felt my direction moving forward with a desire for change that honours equality for all.
A Gate

A gate may serve to exclude or invite our exchanges with the other side. It may be a place where we meet difference. We may choose to keep the gate closed and locked or open, with the opportunity for movement, as it swings back and forth. This movement offers us the opportunity to repeatedly go forward and then back again. A closed gate may suggest that we are certain and grounded at times but the gate does not need to be locked. At the same time, a closed gate need not suggest closure or the final truth, but rather uncertain, ambiguous, and fragmented truths. We may have exchanges and conversations hearing multiple stories and voices on both sides. For me the gate is a metaphor for the concept of reflection. Reflection is an important process that is critical for the ongoing development and understanding of ourselves, of each other, and of the world in which we live. Like a gate, the ability to be reflective may be dynamic and in constant movement, with the mind purposefully moving back and forth with thoughts that continue to develop and further our understandings of our teaching practices. Reflection as a process may lead us to a greater understanding of our personally and actively constructed realities and the multiple realities of the students with whom we teach. With will, passion and desire, a cycle is set up as our reflections inform our actions which in turn are reflected upon again.

The methodology for this research is teacher research, which has evolved from action research. Action research has been discussed and debated vigorously in educational research over the last decade. This debate often tries to define what action research is. Gauthier (1992) suggests that we develop understandings about what action research can do rather than with what action research is. He states that “Action research is above all a matter of language” (p.
Noffke (1997) posits that between the professional and political dimensions which action researchers may focus upon lies a third purpose that is central to action research: the personal. She further explains:

This emphasis denies neither the importance of political activity nor the generation of professional knowledge, but it views the main benefits of engaging in action research as lying in areas such as greater self-knowledge and fulfillment in one's work, a deeper understanding of one's practice, and the development of personal relationships through researching together. (p. 306)

In this project, the methodology itself transformed throughout the course of the research. A strong autobiographical voice emerged. As an educator committed to understanding my teaching and art making it seems important to remember that understanding is a process of discovery and construction. Therefore, in this study, action research is a process as well as a methodology for a product.

Bresler (1994) defines action research as "the study of one's own practice in order to change and improve it." (p.12) She further states that:

Action research is based on the close interaction between practice, theory, and change. The goals of action research in education are the deeper understandings of teachers' own educational practices and the institutions in which they operate....the researcher in action research is an insider. His/her primary area of expertise is in their practice ("Knowing how") rather than a largely theoretical one ("Knowing about"). (p.12)

Bresler (1994) briefly describes the history of action research as a term coined in 1945 by Collier who used it as research to inform action aimed at improving the quality of farming practices for Indian Affairs. The next year, social psychologist Kurt Lewin further developed action research as a means to demonstrate the gains in industrial productivity through democratic participation. The value of the ideas of group decisions, commitment to improvement linked with action and understanding was applied to a number of teacher-managed research projects by Stephen Corey in the early 1950s at Columbia University, New York. Stenhouse (1975) used action research in the United Kingdom to give teachers an
active role in the gradual systematic study of their practice. Kemmis and McTaggart (1981) published *The Action Research Planner*, a teaching guide for those interested in improvement and change in teaching practices through action research. “It provides a way of thinking systematically about what happens in the school or classroom, implementing action where improvements are thought to be possible, and monitoring and evaluating the effect of the action with a view to continuing the improvement” (p.5). Carr and Kemmis (1983) identify the goals of action research as improving practice, improving the understanding of practice and improving the situations where practice takes place as they elaborate upon situational knowledge and critical reflection.

Educational action research is a term used to describe a family of activities in curriculum development, professional development, school improvement programs, and systems planning and policy development. These activities have in common the identification of strategies of planned action which are implemented and then systematically submitted to observation, reflection and change. Participants in the action being considered are integrally involved in all of these activities. (p.84)

*The Reflective Practitioner*, by Donald A. Schon (1983) supports the position of teacher as researcher, looking at reflective practice and supporting teacher knowledge. Noffke (1992) discusses the diversity of concerns within action research, identifying for example that action research may have teacher empowerment as its main concern. On the other hand, action research may focus on personal understandings of practice with or without implications to larger social, economic, or political issues. Bresler (1994) expands upon the concern for teacher empowerment. She discusses the goals of action research in education as teachers having ownership over their practice and over the environments in which they practice. In short, teacher empowerment. Particular to this project, she suggests that some advocates believe the focal point of action research is empowerment, that is, “part of a movement toward a more decentralized system
of educational decision-making and responsibility” (p.13). She also supports action research as an approach to understanding teaching with the assumption that there is more to education than product; that is, education also involves the process of teaching and the process of learning by examining the contexts in which learning and teaching take place. Reflection may provide detailed descriptions and an opportunity to construct greater understandings of these contexts in a spiraling manner.

Patricia Holborn (1988) discusses the process of reflection. She defines reflection as:

meditation, thoughtfulness, or careful consideration of some subject matter, idea, or purpose. The reflective process involves a critical examination of one’s experiences in order to derive new levels of understanding by which to guide future actions. The reflective process is cyclical. That is, understandings gleaned from our experiences are situations. In turn, the interaction of our behaviours with a new situation leads to further reflection and understanding. (p.197)

In describing a reflective practitioner, Holborn identifies the ability to respond flexibly as an important characteristic of effective teaching. She discusses two levels of reflective activity that reflective professionals have. The first is reflection-in-action which is the immediate thoughts and actions that happen during the course of actual situated teaching. The second referred to as reflection-on-action, involves deliberate thoughtful reflection on broader educational issues, for example, thinking about the role of education and the role of the teacher in society.

Action research is interested in bringing theory and practice together while honouring teacher knowledge and experiential knowledge. How one works in practice is reflected upon as one recalls the lived experiences within the daily world of their own classroom. This knowledge is personally and actively constructed, acknowledging ambiguity, uncertainties and multiple realities. As
teachers reflect upon their teaching and continually engage upon their theories in action they may begin to recognize barriers to action, and through cyclical reflection may examine how to change their situations to improve upon practice and adjust inequities (Irwin, et. al. in press). Irwin describes collaboration as a pivotal characteristic of action research as colleagues seek mutual understanding of issues at hand.

May (1993) also identifies action research as collaborative critical inquiry that addresses social inequities within the classroom while identifying the possible sociopolitical interests of action research. Although she suggests action research is guided by a strong commitment to understanding our teaching and our learning in art, she further comments upon the assumption that teachers involved in action research may not aim to solve problems or "improve" practice, even though such may happen. She states, "What one wishes to better understand may not be improvable or in need of improving" (p.116). She also raises concerns about problems with action research such as it having too narrow of a vision with respect to structures imposed upon teachers, the difficulty in accessing professional literature available to teachers, and the inadequacy of teachers' skills in observation, analysis, interpretation, and critique of theoretical and pedagogical discourse. I concur with May's concerns, particularly with the notion of the narrow vision embedded in the structures imposed upon teachers. Teachers often work in isolation and ought to be supported and encouraged to practice observing, analyzing, interpreting, critiquing, and reflecting in collaboration with other teachers and with administrators in a caring and safe environment.

Action research supports the use of written reflective journals by the teachers involved. This notion of a written journal may be problematic for teachers to uphold in a disciplined regular manner. For a researcher the
reflective journal is a necessary tool for reflexive practice. On the other hand, teachers bring more practical concerns and everyday structured agendas to the research project. Time is always so scarce in a teaching day and interruptions are many. It may be that we need to support other methods of collecting reflective thoughts during action research cycles. Possibly support for teachers to dialogue together in a systematic and purposeful manner in addition to audio taped conversations may be ways that could facilitate gathering reflective data.

Opening up caring spaces for reflections to become collaborative may provide opportunities for teachers to be willing to explore their teaching practices more. Stacey (1988) discusses the contradiction between the feminist principle of collaboration and the ownership of the final product. However, just turning action research over to practicing teachers is not necessarily the solution. Although, this project appears to support a collaborative and reciprocal quest for understanding the nature of a teacher/artist, the product is that of the researcher. If action research is motivated by a single person’s written account, then are the participating teachers authentically involved? In this case, the answer is yes because of all the participating teachers interest in exploring their teaching through a teacher-as-artist model. The written account or the product of the study did not negate the importance of the process for the participants in their desire to understand their teaching practices. In the case of this research, the teachers involved have been authentically interested in the project because of their passions for art making and for teaching. Although the thesis is a written description and interpretation of the researcher, the implications of a teacher-as-artist model have impact on the practices of all teachers involved.

Van Manen (1990) addresses five assumptions commonly found in action research projects. He identifies and critiques what he calls the democracy assumption, the external knowledge assumption, the reflection/action
assumption, the change assumption, and the teacher-as-researcher assumption. Although I have been the university based initiator of this project, I consider myself a participant in the project in terms of theoretical knowledge and teaching expertise, thus there has been a continued sense of a democratic relationship between myself and the teachers involved. They are my colleagues. However, the research project and the thesis itself were more important to me. Although I provided some opportunities for focused exposure to theoretical knowledge for the teachers involved through suggested readings, they did not always seem to be able to find the time for reading. Their focus and teaching commitments restricted their total involvement in linking theory to practice. Thus the notion of collaboration between myself as the researcher seeking to understand my practice and the participating teachers seeking to understand their practice provided the theoretical structure for this action research. Reflection on their parts helped them to understand their practice, after the fact. However, it is difficult to say if their practice actually changed immediately or if change occurs gradually over time. Transformations may occur through changes in attitudes, beliefs, and values and are experienced over time. Van Manen (1990) describes the difficulty in articulating the actual reflection/action assumption and the narrow theory-into-practice concept of application. That is, after reflecting upon our teaching it may seem unlikely that we immediately change, improve, and/or alter our practice. He suggests that what is necessary is “a concept of pedagogical reflection and action that effectively blurs and blocks the idea of the theory-practice relation” (p.154). He proposes the notion of what he calls “pedagogical thoughtfulness and pedagogical tact” (p.154).

Epistemologically and practically it is quite impossible to separate thoughtfulness from tact in the manner that we can separate theory from practice. This is because pedagogical thoughtfulness and tact are only the reflective/active correlates of the same thing. Reflective
thoughtfulness can only express itself as tact, and tactfulness must express itself in a manner that is full of reflected thought. In contrast, when we speak of one person as theoretic and another as more practical, we clearly hint at two very different qualities. But when we refer to a person as tactful, we simultaneously refer to a certain thoughtfulness or sensitivity as well as to a certain way of acting. (p.154)

Addressing the assumption that the significance of action research hinges on the notion of change, van Manen (1990) continues to argue for tactful acting and pedagogical thoughtfulness. He suggests that we can plan for and prepare our hearts and minds to orient ourselves to make “thoughtful sense of the meaning the child’s experience has for the child as well as for our adult view” (p.154). He supports the promise of action research as a method of deepening our understanding and meaning of the questions that we pose for ourselves, rather than finding solutions and solving problems.

Through the processes of collaborations in planning, implementing, reflecting, and replanning, action research may provide a structure for developing greater pedagogical tact and pedagogical thoughtfulness eventually resulting in change, as we orient ourselves towards a “pedagogical fitness of the whole body person....Indeed tactful acting is very much an affair of the whole embodied person: heart, mind, and embodied being” (van Manen, 1990, p.156). Ideally, change involves a transformation on a personal level first and then on a societal level. I have chosen action research as the methodology for this project because of its collaborative and reflective structures which may be addressed with interpretive methods. In addition, I am drawn to the active engagement of theory and practice giving shape to the educational environment in which I work. In this study collaborations will involve myself as the researcher, three teachers and their students. As the researcher, I initiated the project and provided motivation to continue. In addition, as a result of being at the university, I have access to the academic theory and professional research
literature; thus I was able to support the teachers by suggesting supplemental readings. I had the flexibility of schedule to support the teachers in planning meetings, in collecting observations and data during their teaching performances, in taping our conversations, and in transcribing the tapes. As a teacher and an artist engaged in my own practice, I have been a contributing and collaborating member of the group, during our conversations. However, what is noteworthy with this group of art teachers is that each teacher shares an interest in approaching instruction through modeling art making, each participant is a committed professional teacher, interested in understanding and improving their practice whenever possible, and each participant is committed to and concerned about their own art production. Miller's (1990) *Creating Spaces and Finding Voices* provides a well documented and constructed model of collaborations within action research in which all participants had a shared interest in the project. May (1993) suggests that rich action research supports individual assumptions, interpretations, relations, and negotiations as being as important and of interest to the participants as the conceptual basis of the research itself.

**Opening The Gate**

The participants in this research project came together primarily because of their interests in looking at the possibility of teaching art through combining their own art production and their responsibilities of teaching. Although all three teachers involved are committed art educators and practicing artists, they unanimously identified the challenge of finding enough time in their weekly schedules to feel a desired satisfaction for their own art production. Thus the idea of actually using their own art production in the classroom as a viable means of teaching art making seemed an intriguing option to implement and observe in order to understand and possibly change their own teaching practices.
When this project began in the spring of 1996, Nellie was a visual art department head and a high school art teacher at a fine arts focus school in British Columbia. Patrick was in his first year of teaching, and was also teaching at a high school level in the same school. Allison was a Grade Seven teacher at an elementary school in the Delta school district.

Nellie had been an art teacher for ten years in the same school district. With a father who had a burning interest in ceramics, she was raised in a family that valued art making. She had been supported and encouraged by her family throughout her life as an artist and a teacher. We met in a graduate course at the university. After that course finished both Nellie and I continued to explore our understandings of and commitment to feminism as it impacted upon our lives as artists and teachers. We became part of a group of six women art educators involved in an ongoing action research project that systematically facilitated our growing understanding of feminism as it informed our art making and our teaching practices (Irwin, et. al. in press). Nellie as the administrative coordinator of the visual arts holds a leadership position at her school in addition to her teaching responsibilities. She has developed a visual arts curriculum for the school addressing the learning outcomes for the students from grade one to grade twelve. She is also committed to her own art making practice, engaging in a number of different media and techniques. Her images often deal with issues that are of concern to women in our society, for example the incidence of wife abuse in families. She is a committed art teacher who shows genuine care and concern for her students which is evidenced in a number of ways. For example, Nellie facilitates a year end show for her students in collaboration with a well respected local gallery. She also has students do in class formal critiques and informal critiques by inviting her senior students to her home for class potlucks.
Patrick had been a devoted and practicing artist in Montreal before coming to the lower mainland. He had worked on a number of large commissions in Montreal, mostly involving sculpture. He also maintains a small studio in Vancouver which allows him to continue with his art making as a painter and this helps him to keep in touch with the local art scene. He also has been supported and encouraged by his family throughout his bachelor’s degree in fine arts (BFA). We met in his teacher education year at UBC, where he was enrolled in the ceramic class in which I was the instructor. Patrick demonstrated great promise as an educator at that time, showing genuine care and concern for the work of all his fellow students in the course. He did voice concerns about the responsibilities of a full time teaching career interfering with his ability to make his own art. However, he was committed to becoming a teacher and finished the teacher education program with high recommendations for a teaching position. He became a teacher at the same school as Nellie the following September. He is also a committed art teacher who shows genuine care and concern for his students.

Allison is an elementary generalist grade seven teacher in a middle class elementary school of about 500 children in Delta, B.C. She has a background in psychology and fine arts. She is also a practicing artist, mostly as a painter who works out of a studio in her home. She has also been teaching a district-wide art program for gifted students and was awarded the art teacher of the year from the British Columbia Art Teachers Association. She too was supported and encouraged, mostly by her mother, to make art while she was growing up. Allison and I have been colleagues within the same school district, recognizing each others need for, and frustrations with, finding time and space to make art within the busy schedule of full-time classroom teaching. We also experienced many conversations around the importance of honouring the visual thinking of
our students and the marginalization that art seemed to receive within the public structures of schools. We have been colleagues in art advocacy by bringing student artwork to the forefront of our schools.

After a number of informal discussions with each participant about the personally felt frustrations toward our own art production, each participant began to question the possibilities of using their art production as a way of delivering art instruction. Thus with enthusiasm, it was agreed to begin this research project in the spring. I distributed a copy of the research proposal to each member and asked them to begin thinking about a specific research question that they would be interested in setting up as their first action research cycle. In addition, I gave each of them a copy of the British Columbia Ministry of Education’s suggested guidelines for teacher researchers (See Appendix 1).

On May 12, 1996 Nellie, Patrick, and I met to decide upon each person's research questions and their own action research cycles. Nellie and Patrick were wanting to explore their own art making in class as a way to facilitate the personal theme development of their students. They both had been disappointed with the results of their teaching efforts in this area, stating that students for the most part seemed to address themes in superficial ways. Therefore they framed their starting question as such:

How do we create in our students, an understanding of the significance of theme development and image development for their own personal work? How do we get that to happen?

It was decided that I would come to the school three times before the year end. At each session I would first observe their teaching and then tape-record our discussions about their own observations, their data, and their reflection. It was decided that data would include student journals and response feedback in the
form of self assessments. On May 14, 1996, I had the same type of meeting with Allison with the same intentions established for the duration of that school year. Allison was committed to using a visual journal daily as an art making behaviour she valued in her own art production. She wanted to explore her teaching through the use of her journal. To begin she framed her question as such:

What does my teaching look like when I use my visual journal as a tool for teaching art?

Then, the following September, we met again to review our progress and to make further plans. It was decided that again we would meet three times throughout the fall term in order for me to observe their teaching and to discuss each participants research questions, their observations, their data, their reflections and consequent actions. It seemed promising to have both the end of the school year and the beginning of the school year in order to compare intentions of practices and actual practices with teachers wanting to change their teaching practices.

My personal exploration for this research centered around understanding my teaching through my artist voice and my researcher voice. Not all my teaching assignments at a post-secondary level lend themselves to using a teacher-as-artist model. However, through reflecting upon my teaching experiences at this level I understand the importance of sharing an authentic voice with my students. Whenever I have been confident in voicing my identity as an artist in whatever teaching context I found myself, I was a more effective teacher. I didn’t feel a sense of alienation with myself when I was clear and confident with my identity as an artist, therefore I was able to build more authentic relationships with my students. I have made this assumption based on
student evaluation of my teaching performance over the course of my three year teaching assignment at a post-secondary level.

In addition, I wanted to include my artwork in the final product of this research because of my commitment to honouring visual ways of representing knowledge. As an artist who works primarily with clay I knew I would need to process my reflections and learning about research through my hands making clay forms. I wanted that part of who I was to be seen and valued in addition to my writing. While researching my feminist understandings, I identified with the principles of collaboration, embodied knowing, learning through process, and making my personal lived experiences visible. Thus, I began my research cycle with the question:

What visual metaphors would best represent my understanding of these feminist principles as I engage in the construction of personal meaning about my teaching and research through an action research design?

As I worked in my journal, I began to focus on the idea of collaborations and inclusion. I felt I could represent strength in the collective voice of a group while honouring individuality and diversity within the membership by creating a number of forms that were started from the same in shape yet developed into different forms through surface embellishment. Thus, I created a mold through which I could reproduce the same form of a stylized female figure. The next challenge arose once I had the form and was able to explore ways of interpreting diversity. Furthermore, I wanted a visual place to represent my understanding of this research, of the structures embedded in writing a thesis, and of the content within chapters as they unfolded. Each chapter visually and textually gives meaning to my metaphors of the stairs, the fence, the gate, the form, and the community, as each metaphorically interprets my position in the research process.
The essence of each teacher's research question did not change, but their cycles and reflections caused a continuous re-examination of what exactly a teacher-as-artist model meant. At the beginning of the project it appeared that each teacher had a static understanding of what such a model looked like. Each teacher wanted to be in the classroom legitimately engaged in his/her art production in some manner as a way of teaching. However, as the research unfolded individual understanding of a teacher-as-artist broadened to include a more dynamic view of such a model. These new understandings supported each teacher viewing himself/herself as mentors with multiple meanings about their teaching practices. Rather than just producing art as a way to deliver instruction, teachers in the project began to see themselves as pedagogical artists in mentoring roles, modeling a variety of art behaviours for their students. For this research I am referring to pedagogical artists as teachers who are artists and who are oriented towards caring for their students. Subsequently, the teachers began to explore if and how these art behaviours were evident in their students' work. Such behaviours included keeping journals, working on personally meaningful image development, exploring personal themes, creating bodies of work, critiquing personal work, discussing personal work, and mounting exhibitions. In addition, each teacher continued to reflect upon the significance of building trusting and respectful relationships filled with care for their students.

Throughout this project I have been acting as the researcher, setting up meetings, providing some guiding direction toward a focus, observing their teaching, collecting their data and recording our discussions. Through reflection, I have been moving back and forth through the gate as I organized the data collected from the three teachers into reoccurring themes or issues as I see them. The following chapter discusses the cycles in detail, through the interpretations of my personal perspective.
CHAPTER FOUR

AN IMAGE OF FEMINISM:

TEACHING COLLABORATIONS

More important than the product of desire, image embodies desire, gives form to desire which can subsequently be translated into action. (p. 81)

Images of will and desire open up awareness of the interconnectedness of soul in all things. (p.4)

Joanne H. Stroud (1994)
Reaffirming an Image
Re-affirming an Image

A knowing body, an embodied way of knowing is knowing that our head, hand and heart are all part of who we are. Together through our daily lived experiences and our relationships, it is our embodied ways of knowing that give form and affirmation to the images we have of ourselves and of each other. How can embodied knowledge serve transformational purposes? In understanding ourselves, we may present the opportunity for the reciprocity of relationship between teachers and students to occur. Indeed, a more authentic and collaborative view of relationships between all the players in the field of education could support a community of teaching and learning in which people respect and care for each others uniqueness and differences. It has been interesting for me to reflect upon my understanding of feminism as I have become more familiar with its many forms. I am committed as a female to continue to reaffirm the importance of the principles of collaboration and caring found within feminist pedagogy, thus in my artwork, I have highlighted a female form. As my understandings of feminism continue to develop, they impact upon my teaching and my art making which in turn impacts upon my students. Through continuous reflection and action, my journey seems to be spiraling towards becoming more conscious and aware of who I am. I understand the social and political responsibilities necessary for my commitment to teach towards personal and societal transformations.
Images

The images presented of my ceramic forms are metaphors for my growing understanding of and political commitment to bring a feminist pedagogy to my teaching. For this chapter, I have created the outline of a female form as a metaphor for the feminist position of this research. I am discovering that a feminist pedagogy is necessary in my teaching for my personal transformation. Indeed, it is the key. I have exaggerated the open space in the center of my form to suggest a passing through; an opening and an unlocking of the gate. Throughout this project I have purposefully created female figures that repeat in their form, yet differ from each other on the surface and in their metaphor. As I grew in understanding this research project, often my greatest insights about feminist pedagogy occurred when I would work with clay. Through my hands and through the process of reflection, I had the opportunity to make visible my thoughts about the metaphors that I was struggling to develop, create, and understand. Each piece has been carefully worked, shaped, altered, embraced, caressed, reflected upon and returned to consistently over a ten month period of time becoming what they are at present. As I reflected upon my time spent in the classrooms observing and talking with Nellie, Patrick, and Allison, I began to understand this research project itself as a creative endeavour, with each of us bringing different agendas and concerns to the forefront. And yet, my forms still remain in a dynamic process of becoming. As I read more and searched within myself I began to have a deeper understanding of feminist pedagogy within my teaching. Through the processes of teaching, reflecting, writing and art making, I became more clear and confident with my learning and my knowing of who I am as an artist, an educator, and as a researcher. Over the past four years of my learning I have become consciously aware of my personal and social
responsibilities to teach towards a transformational orientation through a feminist pedagogy. This change or personal transformation has taken time. My artwork represents my understanding of the feminist premise that perceives knowledge and power as being created through process. It is through the interrelationships of ideas, contexts, and the body as well as the mind, that we construct our ways of knowing who we are and how we are situated in the world. That is, through embodied life, we as individuals create evershifting realities with respect to our knowledge and power within our everyday lived experiences, interacting with others and the social worlds we inhabit (Martel and Peterat, 1994). My forms are three-dimensional and yet they appear flat. There is a tension set up in viewing them as the viewer discovers that they are not full bodied and rounded. That dimension is missing; it is not there and yet because of the three-dimensionality of the form, it may be imagined or assumed to be there. This visual quality echoes the voice of that which is not heard; the voice that silently dwells, crying out saying this is who I am as the integrated mind, body, and spirit of a whole human being, and one who cares passionately. As teachers and learners we must honour the parts of our knowing that are not seen and acknowledged. We may experience personal transformations and witness societal transformations by taking the time to build the relationships necessary to support our students in who they are and in who they are becoming. This dimension is what is missing from much of the educational reform and change that is focused on rational and technological ways of knowing. Brown (1992) discusses how new teachers are ushered into classrooms with a wealth of learning and management strategies, soon to acknowledge that teaching is so much more than the execution of technical skills. He refers to van Manen’s questioning of why research has not attempted to investigate the non-technical dimensions of teaching. By non-technical he is referring to van Manen’s
"pedagogic tactfulness" as a "knowing body" rather than a "body of knowledge". As van Manen (1988) reminds us:

To be oriented as researchers or theorists means that we do not separate theory from life, the public from the private. We are not simply being pedagogues here and researchers there - we are researchers oriented to the world in a pedagogic way. (p. 450)

This research project supports this view as well as a feminist orientation towards curriculum in art education that is searching for alternate ways of instruction for the purpose of producing meaningful visual images and objects. The project honours the lived experiences of the students and the teachers within the context of the everyday classroom life. Brisken (1992) describes feminist pedagogy to be:

about teaching from a feminist world view and from a perspective on the world that is in favour of the sharing of power, privilege, property, and opportunities; which recognizes the systematic and systemic oppression of women; which believes in the possibility of change, and which understands the need to organize collectively to make change. (p.461)

Of concern to this research project, she further describes several aspects central to a feminist pedagogy to include:

1. making visible lived experiences in societies social structures and in the naming of the personal as political; that is, the individual experience is a social and political reality.

2. legitimating the multiplicity of experiences, voices, and truths, especially those in the margins.

3. respecting the gendered character of experience through challenging the overly rationalist approach to knowledge and understanding by incorporating the affective, emotional, and experiential into the learning process through collaborative and cooperative ways of learning.
4. reconsidering the teacher/student relationship through altering classroom dynamics by teaching towards empowerment and leadership for all.

This chapter attempts to bring the creative voices and the lived experiences of the teachers involved into a context of teacher research which endeavours to reform educators through personal transformations based on the recognition of identity and relationships. The stories that unfold throughout this research address the aspects central to Brisken's description of feminist pedagogy. As Grumet (1988, p.xv) informs us, through the telling of our stories we may “remember, imagine, and realize ways of knowing and being that can span the chasm presently separating our public and private worlds.” My request to the teachers to participate in the project came from our casual interactions with each other as colleagues involved in art education in different schools and at different levels within one specific area of the world. This chapter reveals our individual journeys as we all examined the questions we were asking of ourselves with respect to our art production and our teaching.

We started in the early spring of 1996 with casual discussions around our frustrations as artist/teachers trying to make our own art while having full time teaching positions. Nellie and I had been part of a group exhibition in the fall of 1995 dealing with our growing commitment to, and understanding of, feminism. At that exhibition Nellie was surprised by the comments from her students who informed her that in one evening of viewing her artwork, they felt they had a better understanding of who she was as a teacher. During Patrick’s teacher education program in 1994/1995, he was a student in the ceramic studio in which I was the instructor. Coming from a Fine Arts background, he was one of the students who voiced concern about finding time for his own artwork when he had the responsibilities of a teaching position. Allison and I had discussed many times, usually while walking our dogs, the importance of making our own
art work and the frustration of finding time to do so as full-time teachers. With these discussions and the hope of more fruitful inquiry they all agreed to participate in the project.

We all felt that we worked within educational environments and structures that seemed to restrict authentic open spaces for our creative voices. We all felt a sense of frustration separating our art production from our teaching. We all wanted to share explorations of delivering instruction in art that would lead to a greater sense of empowerment for ourselves and our students. We wanted to be leaders and to share our leadership with our students. In short, we wanted to become challengers.

It is when people become challengers, when they take initiatives, that they begin to create the kinds of spaces where dialogue can take place and freedom can appear. And it is then, and probable only then that people begin thinking about working together to bring into being a better, fairer, more humane state of things. (Greene, 1986 p. 73)

I wanted to continue to grow in my understanding of collaboration and feminism, especially found within the spaces inhabited everyday within the classroom walls and within our relationships with ourselves, each other, and our students. Greene (1986a, p. 441) as quoted in Miller (1990) states:

We have to find out how to open such spheres, such spaces, where a better state of things can be imagined; because it is only through the projection of a better social order that we can perceive the gaps in what exists and try to transform and repair....As teachers learning along with those we try to provoke to learn, we may be able to inspire hitherto unheard voices....to break through the opaqueness, to refuse the silences. (p.5)

With this in mind, in early March I gave all three teachers a copy of my proposal and a brief handout on Action Research that I had photocopied from the British Columbia Ministry of Education (Appendix 1). I asked them at this point to begin thinking of a specific research question related to their teaching which they could investigate. I also had prepared four questions for each teacher to think
about for our first taped interview. The questions were 1) How are things going with your own art production? 2) In what ways does your art production influence your teaching? 3) In what ways does your teaching influence your art production? 4) What is your research question to start off this cycle? During this meeting the dates for me to begin visiting their classrooms were set up.

I have tried to tell their stories here with much of the detail of our interactions presented through transcribed dialogues, through my personal observations of their classrooms and their teaching, and through excerpts from their journals. However, the project is still filtered through my interpretations, experiences and voice. And yet, contained within these interpretations are our multiple stories of our shifting perspectives and understandings of what it means to teach art through our own art production. It appears that our understandings about being teacher/artists are continuous and ongoing with a final truth, answer, definition, or outcome being elusive, perhaps unnecessary.

Throughout the cycles, I was pleased with the genuine willingness of the teachers to be involved. Their concerns were authentic in that producing art and being excellent teachers were endeavours they valued. However, written reflective journals, as a tool, became problematic for each involved in this action research project. This echoes van Manen's (1990) description of what he calls the democracy assumption. Although there has been a continued sense of equality between these teachers and myself as colleagues, we have different concerns and agendas to adhere to. As the researcher, I kept a reflective journal because of the interest and personal involvement in writing a thesis. On the other hand, the teachers bring more practical concerns and everyday structured agendas to the research project. They were more consistent with visual journals. Time is always so scarce in a teaching day and interruptions are many. Therefore, most of the data collected for this action research has been through my observations and
through our ongoing taped conversations in which the teachers do show evidence of their reflections upon their practice.

Another tension that I experienced with respect to this action research centered around my assumption that cycles would be contained in neat and tidy units of time and that questions, data, reflections, and subsequent actions would be clear. Each time I visited the teachers I hoped that they would be finding answers to their questions and that they would be generating new questions. This was not the case. In fact throughout the entire project, the questions of the teachers did not really change much. However, a deeper understanding of their teaching practices did emerge, as did their understanding of themselves as teacher-as-artists. This is what van Manen (1990) is referring to when he suggests that what is necessary is blending the theory and practice relation. Their reflections led them to question their understanding of a teacher-as-artist model. May (1993) discusses action research as descriptions of understandings and is not always concluded with movement toward action. Through my reflections and further conversations, I began to reconceptualize our teacher-as-artist model to be that of pedagogical artists in mentoring roles, modeling a variety of art behaviours for their students.

On May 12, 1996 I visited with Nellie and Patrick in their classrooms. They had been discussing what they wanted to explore as a problem or question in their teaching. At that point they had been working with their students on the idea of theme development in art production and felt that the students didn’t really understand the depth to which practicing artists could explore a theme (for example poverty, war, nature, pop culture etc.). Their students would generally respond to themes in either a superficial way or by stating they had already done the project. Although they did have a sketchbook/journal strategy, including organized picture files and a final four piece quality assignment with clear
criteria in place for the students to develop their themes, both Nellie and Patrick felt that the project had failed miserably. They wanted to look at how they could improve upon the students' independence in view of developing in-depth meaningful images and finished works of art revolving around a theme, concept, or issue. They suspected that if they could model for their students how they as artists explored themes in-depth in their own art production, then their students would in turn go a little deeper, research a little harder, persevere a little longer, and create a little more when it came to their finished quality pieces. They wanted their students to become more independent and responsible for their own learning. Quality was described as the best that the student could do at this time in order to meet the criteria that was negotiated between the students and the teachers.

Nellie: So we started going through those handouts of yours and we thought that they were very useful because they got us focusing on things, like one of the question frames was I find it funny that the students__________, so we find it funny that the students feel that once they have worked with a subject or topic once that they have sort of dealt with it and you know we spent a lot of time looking at bodies of artists work so they do see that historically artists are working with big themes or topics. We've gone to shows downtown where you go in and see unified bodies of work and yet that notion is still very much a foreign concept for most of the students. They used to do this thing or that thing and everything is different and they're not building a synthesis in their ideas and to us they're not delving as deeply into the subject matter as they should. We don't think that they seem to feel a lot of research is necessary in to their works, that it should just come easier, that they should just immediately draw it or paint it.......so that's where we want to start to look. What we did was try to build in some parameters to get them focusing but it didn't work so well either so to us the question is How do we create in our students, the understanding of the significance of theme development and image development for their own personal work? In addition, How do we get that to happen?

Nellie's teaching style during this visit was casual and informal. She was working intermittently on her own art project, creating a table out of her
laminated books. She was doing this in a corner of the classroom, out of the way of general traffic. Her grade eleven students were working on a printmaking project all at different stages of development. Some were drawing, some were etching their images onto a metal plate or adding to the image already present, while others were placing their templates into a chemical bath. Nellie circulated among all the students offering help and advice when necessary. However, it appeared that the students were independent and responsible with their art making, especially in regards to the chemical bath. The students seemed to feel comfortable with the environment and respectful of the teacher. It did not seem unusual for her to be working on her own project and she was most willing to give feedback or help when students desired. All the students in the room were engaged in their art making. Nellie also took the time to give me a tour of the school. She was able to leave her students working alone in the classroom for the duration, and all were still working upon our return. The artwork from the students was prolifically displayed throughout the hallways of the school. I did notice students in the hallways were also courteous and friendly with Nellie as we passed by.

Patrick’s classroom also doubled as the stagecraft room, consequently, there was a lot of wood stored in the room. He did not have the same amount of space as Nellie; however, he did have an enclosed office. There was a number of power tools spaced around the classroom. The grade ten students in this class were also working independently on images for a ceramic table top project. Patrick had his example with images of chimpanzees repeated in a grid pattern. He mentioned that these students had commented to him about his chimpanzee images, wondering why he would still be working on that theme. The students were working on their respective images in repeated squares on paper trying to decide upon a design for their final ceramic table top. Peter was helpful and
supportive, circulating among all the students. This class had more structure than Nellie's, with students staying in their seats and raising their hands. However, they did seem respectful of Patrick and when the bell went, they were responsible and friendly in leaving. At that time a number of other students came to see Patrick about various concerns, and he interacted with each of them in a caring and genuine manner.

During class time, I did not observe either of them teach directly. However, during the lunch hour, both Nellie and Patrick were informally engaged in their art making. As I observed, Nellie continued to create her table or stand, an extension on her earlier theme of actually manipulating and varathaning visual journals into finished pieces of art. Patrick was working on a small table using cement tiles with chimpanzee images transferred onto the tiles. Small groups of students were always around informally in the studio working on their projects, observing their teachers, and socializing together. The atmosphere was quiet, pleasant, and productive with everyone informally productive and focused on their art making independently. I went around the classroom and photographed student work which had been done in the style of Nellie's visual journals - different themes, but similar techniques. Students seemed unconcerned about what I was doing there, and why I was doing it.

On May 14, I met with Allison at her classroom. Upon thinking about the four questions I originally asked her, she was quick to respond with her strategy and discipline of keeping a daily visual journal as something that she wanted to explore further in her teaching and in her art making. She had been inspired by another art colleague in her district to keep a disciplined daily visual journal; that is, a daily collection of her visual thinking about a variety of subjects or issues, that incorporated a variety of image development strategies, materials and processes, and the visual elements of art and principles of design. She believed
this to be valuable art making behaviour for an artist and wondered how she could model the use of a visual journal for her students to improve upon their visual thinking. She wondered about how much of what she was doing would influence students work. She framed her question as such:

What does my teaching look like when I use my visual journal as a tool for teaching art?

Identity

From my first meetings with all three teachers, I found it interesting that we all seemed to assume that we knew what a teacher-as-artist looked like. However, we all had different understandings about what we were attempting to do in modeling art making for our students. Nevertheless, as the research unfolded through taped conversations and observations, a common theme emerged: identity. The importance of identity woven throughout this research is fundamental to a transformational orientation to curriculum. How the teacher views him/her self impacts upon the teacher/student relationship. A caring teacher, with passion for lifelong understanding of self and students, desires collaborative relationships based on trust and respect. Identity in this research includes knowing oneself as an artist, and as a teacher with a pedagogy oriented toward caring. This theme is further developed in the subthemes of personal commitment and of relationships based on trust, respect, and reciprocity. I will discuss each of these themes through this chapter.

Relationship with Self as an Artist

In response to my initial questions, the following transcriptions illustrate the teachers passion and desire to see themselves as practicing artists, who value teaching their students about art through their own art making.
Patrick: Well I'm getting more work done this semester. Before Christmas I didn't really paint. I just kind of reworked these old ideas and I started reading a whole bunch of stuff on medical experiments and our use of animals for our benefits so I am working with chimpanzees which apparently have 99.8% of the same gene structure as we do....so I'm with chimpanzee imagery and that's the one in the Vancouver juried show....I've been working at school. That's one of the reasons why I've been able to do more work. Last term, being my first year of teaching I was just trying to manage figuring things out and I didn't feel I could bring my work to school.

Nellie: Some of the things I've been working on as of late are more craft oriented in that they have a more functional quality to them. You see sometimes I feel the notion of you do get jealous at time looking at the students and the amount of time they get to work on their pieces and yet there is a line where you still have to look at the responsibilities that are in the classroom. Like take our open studio nights....How they're currently operating is they happen once a week, Thursday evening. The intention is to have it a time where we simply work on our own artwork and its informal instructional time. If the students have to ask us for help or questions, of course we'll help but we try to protect our own working time. Unfortunately, we've found that we have to get more disciplined and build in behaviours or something to get that happening because what tends to happen is we start doing other responsibilities like marking or group planning and we've really got to try to protect the studio night for its intention and integrity.

Allison: I feel more committed in using my journal as a teaching tool and strategy and I think that what happens too is that I have a piece at the back of the classroom that I was working on since just before Christmas and what I do every once in a while is that I bring in some larger pieces that are more on the finished end and show the kids where it has come out of my journal so they see what I'm doing as an artist out of my journal so this becomes something that is not just what a teacher is doing and using, but something that an artist is doing. They see what it looks like as I transfer it from the journal to the big oils.

The commitment from these teachers to make art is evident. Each teacher felt better about themselves when they were engaged in their own art production. They felt that they were better teachers as a result because they were more passionate about their lives in general when their passion for their own art production was being fulfilled.
In addition to creating artwork for themselves that is of importance, the teachers involved also supported the notion of modeling other art related behaviours. MacGregor (1995) discusses the importance of individual power and he suggests ways in which art may be useful in this regard. He supports the preservation of self through art making while also identifying with art related behaviours. Art behaviours are defined in a number of broad ways as described in the transcriptions to follow. Dissanayake (1988) discusses art as a selective behaviour across millennia necessary for human survival. Ultimately she views art and culture as a need to give form, meaning and significance to one’s life. As educators modeling art behaviours, we may help our students understand art as the satisfaction of a fundamental human need across cultures, transcending the ordinary to the extraordinary. London (1992) also supports art making and an art education that elevates and enhances the quality of the practitioner’s life “from inherited states of being to preferred states” (p.9). As evidenced through the transcribed conversations, all three of these teachers are committed to enhancing their lives and the lives of their students from ordinary states to extraordinary states of being through personal engagement in art making.

Allison finds that it is helpful to use image development strategies for art in her journal, an art making behaviour she values. In turn, she encourages students to do the same.

Allison: What I’m seeing is a lot of the stuff that I’m working with in my own personal artwork with the rocks and the shapes is coming through with what I’m doing in the classroom in that we’re working with abstraction and magnification and I’m wondering if it is personally meaningful to them and I think it is because they are actually using the technique of using their view finder, how to be aware of what a two minute sketch and a four minute sketch was and how to do the technical end of an abstraction and magnification was part of it and then at the end they were able to use this skill to go back in their journals to find something that was personally meaningful to them, like the chip bags, or clock, or gum wrappers. Now in the morning journal time that they have
they are all starting to use magnifications on their own. They have a seven minute journal time in the morning when the music listening program is on......sometimes I direct it, there is usually a suggestion for the kids who are stuck and one of the suggestions is often to go back to use the viewfinder now in other images in their journals. I think it is good. I use that strategy in my own journal a lot.

Patrick uses his paintings as a way of modeling perseverance and problem solving for his students. In addition, the students have the freedom to critique and comment upon his work, thus seeing his artistic self and interacting in a mutually respectful way in the teacher/student relationship.

Patrick: I’ve been bringing my paintings into class and working on them when the students are working on their own paintings. I’d have mine up against the blackboard and walk over and work a bit on it and they’d come over and ask me questions or ask for me to help them or sometimes they’d give a comment on what I was doing so that was interesting.....that sort of feedback going both ways between me and the students. They saw I was struggling with certain things and that I wasn’t just walking around saying do this or do that. They see me struggle to bring connections to my body of works. You know they see the technical things that happen, the surprises, the problem solving as you’re making some things but in the end that image is very different from anyone else’s and through the whole process, the time spent has been thoroughly engaging. Most of the students seem to appreciate me doing this, and those that don’t, I don’t know. They don’t really comment at this point.

Nellie’s approach to her own art work also displays some interesting art making behaviours. However, this was not as apparent in her direct instruction teaching, but more so it was noticed by her students who came to see her art exhibition.

Nellie: In my own artwork I find that I always work in themes - in big themes and then in mini themes within, to the point where a lot of my work tends to be series rather that isolated pieces, like my bridal series, or my puppet series. The other thing is for me I have to have a lot of reading and thinking time to come up with my ideas. I’ll do practice pieces, working on technique and then I’ll start with the serious stuff and I have an idea of where I want to go. I think it was these series that impressed the students when they came to see the opening at UBC.
My second visit to Nellie and Patrick's school revealed their efforts to expose their students to art behaviours within their local community through a student exhibition in cooperation with a local well established gallery. The senior students in Nellie and Patrick's classes applied for one of two positions to mount the exhibition. They could either be part of the curatorial committee or part of the public programming committee. Otherwise, they could submit artwork and hope that it became part of the juried show. This partnership with a local gallery gave students work experience. Through this type of experience gave the students the opportunity to learn about the roles of people involved in the visual arts in the community who are responsible for mounting an exhibition in a public space. At this point, Nellie and Patrick were still concerned with their students lack of depth in being able to explore a theme of their choice. This concern manifested itself in the students inability to talk and discuss their work with interested public and media.

Nellie: Being able to talk about their work is a really big issue with art and it goes back to our initial question for this action research. The idea of really getting the students thinking like artists - in getting them to choose a subject matter and explore it in meaningful depth and to become an expert in the topic or area is what we want. We started by talking about issues that were important to them like starvation in third world countries or the suicide rate among young people but it is difficult for them to really have it going together with their art. They are still very young and their ability to articulate their ideas verbally is very rough at this point even when they are visually strong. However it helps them to understand why it is important to be able to write or speak about their artwork when you bring your artwork into a public gallery. They experienced their images interpreted or understood in ways that they did not intend.....so it was a good learning experience for them and they now really know why we ask for artist statements.
Through each students personal involvement with the exhibition, Nellie and Patrick facilitated students in constructing a deeper understanding and appreciation for theme development. They both believed that articulating personal ideas about their visual work was important because of the synthesis of understanding how an artist engages in discussing personal meanings embedded in artwork. Indeed, through their modeling, Nellie and Patrick were honouring the value and importance of an artistic voice for each student.

In addition, Patrick placed a lot of emphasis on articulating an artist's statement because, as he explains to his students, sometimes critics misinterpret artist's intentions. Artists need to be clear. He was able to use the experience of the exhibition to model possible misinterpretations of art history during his classroom unit on art history. The student show provided a real life experience where one of the students work was misinterpreted and written about in the local newspaper.

Patrick: So this newspaper article interviewing them at the show reveals exactly what I have been trying to explain to them during our art history classes. This paragraph right here talks about one of our Grade 11 student's artwork and when I read it I knew that it had nothing to do with the work. I know because I talked to the student when she was creating it and when I showed the article to the student she said....that's not what I said. I'm glad I had modeled by talking about the meaning of my own works how to talk about your own artwork during our class critiques. I think it gave her some confidence.

Allison also found it important to provide her students with experiences to show their work in an exhibition. At the end of the year, she mounted a show of her students papier mache chairs called "Take a Seat With A Master". Each child researched the life of an artist of their choice and created a papier mache
chair in the style of that artist, representing their understanding of the artist’s life and work. Allison also displayed her own chair in the exhibition along side the chairs of her students. Furthermore, she mounted this same exhibition the following year at her district board office fulfilling her personal commitment to bring her students’ artwork out into the community. She regularly shares her professional ideas with her colleagues through giving workshops in her district and presentations at art education conferences. In response to her image development for her chair in the exhibition she stated in her journal:

Allison: I think it is neat when the kids see my style evolving all year long in this journal and then they get to see how I can embed some of those personally meaningful and developed images into a project that they are working on. Somehow I think they are getting the idea of how artists can use a visual journal to come up with the images that they do, and that they develop over a period of time.

During the course of this research project, Allison, Nellie, and Patrick experienced a positive influence upon their students as a result of exposing themselves as artists. Their relationships with many of their students developed in a respectful manner. Between the teacher and the student, a sense of confidence in each other based on trust began to develop. However this impact did not provide clear, obvious and immediate answers to their research questions. In addition they believed that exposing their students to artistic behaviours within the larger contexts of their schools and their communities was beneficial. Again, the results of these experiences are not directly observable and immediate, especially with respect to change. Nevertheless, they felt encouraged as students’ responses in the year end self assessment, revealed many positive comments. Even though there were some concerns from the
students, which I will discuss in the next chapter, most liked the fact that they had a view into the life of an artist. They appreciated the commitment to lifelong learning, and to the sharing of ideas, processes, and techniques. They felt that they "knew" their teachers in a different way. Van Manen (1990) cautions us about looking for immediate change or solutions and answers to specific problems in action research as opposed to deepening our understanding of the questions we reflect upon, to prepare our hearts and minds to become pedagogically thoughtful. Transformations take time.

Relationship with Self as a Teacher

Ideally, teaching practices are dynamic, continually evolving and developing over time. Over the six month period in which this action research took place, there was gradual changes and improvements in the teaching practices of Allison, Nellie, and Patrick. Through their reflections, Nellie and Allison identified the ways in which the reciprocal nature of their own art making in the classroom impacted upon their direct teaching. Reciprocal nature in this case is describing how their art making affected their teaching and how their teaching affected their art making.

Allison: And it's interesting because I've got an entry from May 18 in my journal, now it is May 27th. What I was working on was the skeleton that was sitting by my desk - we're doing the skeleton in Science - and anyway, when I finished it I put a note to myself into my journal that said, "Journal assignment for kids tomorrow will be magnification using a view finder." We didn't get to it the exact next day but it was a notation for me to use that in my teaching because I saw it was successful for me and interesting too.

Nellie: One affects the other. With my own work I get a lot of ideas that I like to implement in the classroom, especially with processes, and I get students asking me about techniques that I'm doing and asking when they
get to learn them. And as I see they are interested I can make decisions in my planning what to teach. At the same time I get a lot of ideas for my art from people in the class, from what I see them doing.

Both Patrick and Nellie’s art making in the classroom facilitated student/teacher interactions in a positive way. These interactions appear to legitimize who the teachers are, what they do, and how they do it in the eyes of their students.

Patrick: When we do projects alongside of them, I think they appreciate that...like the self portrait project. It was a large drawing about 3 feet by 4 feet and that is a challenge for high school. When we first started off this project there was a sense of frustration but I worked on mine at the same time. I had mine taped up on the blackboard and as I was drawing, the students would stop and talk about things with me. In fact, when I suggested that a student try something her comment was okay, she would try it because she was sure that I’d done it in my artwork. I think they have a sense that it is not just out of a book, but it is a matter of my fingernails getting dirty too. It seems authentic I guess.

Nellie: I find it is interesting that when they see us teaching by making our artwork in the studio it generates a lot of questions, discussions, and comments. They want to know reasons why we are working with the images that we are. They ask a lot of technical questions like how did you do this and how did you get the idea to do that. The other thing that I think is really good is that they see us struggling and having to modify and problem solve because that is on going. They see Patrick and I bounce a lot of ideas back and forth as we are working. It’s neat because we kind of have all these mini conversations almost one on one with the students in an informal way and yet the audience is larger than just that one student. Whoever is listening also hears.

It appears that as Nellie, Patrick, and Allison committed themselves to this model of instruction during the course of some of their direct teaching, authentic relationships with their students were developing based on the values of trust, respect, and caring. All three teachers value these relationships.

One of the immediate concerns that surfaced during my third visit to the schools was the issue of copying. This issue concerned all of the teachers to
varying degrees and in a variety of ways. Each teacher agreed with the idea that for skill development and specific techniques, copying the teacher’s model was an acceptable way for students to learn. However, this was not encouraged when it came to the development of personally meaningful imagery. By encouraging the importance and value of personally meaningful images, the teachers were facilitating the possibility of building mutual respect within an authentic teacher/student relationship. In addition, it was the teachers’ concern to foster the respect for each other’s artistic ideas.

Teaching through her visual journal Allison encourages the copying of behaviours and techniques in her students as they each develop their own meaningful imagery.

Allison: They’re used to seeing me with my sketchbook and working in it. There used to seeing me do what I did today, that is working in my sketch they’re used to seeing me using that as my primary tool that I’m teaching from for this part of the lesson. What I’ve seen is there is a lot of growth in their journals as there is more growth in mine. The more collage and the more watercolour painting and the more other stuff I do in mine, the more other stuff they do in theirs. You can see a big difference in the richness like if I look at my earlier journals, they are very much like their earlier journals. They are just pencil on paper. As mine are getting more fluid, I think that theirs are too. That is, they are getting more fluid in their visual thinking, it is getting as easy for them to turn to visual thinking and representing as it is to turn to words...and the journal becomes a place to work out problems and to make notations and it becomes a place to record what is going on in their lives, which will be personally meaningful and different from mine and each others.

Through whole class discussions, resulting from sharing lived experiences, Patrick worked towards establishing individual respect between and among himself and students as they develop personally meaningful imagery.

Patrick: So we’re dealing with the idea of copying and plagiarism and appropriation by lots of discussion and I don’t feel there is a problem in
them copying my work. No, I think that we are building a respect for other people's artwork through our discussions. You can be inspired, you can think, wow!, I'd like to try something like that but you just can't go ahead and blatantly copy. Like one thing that I try to stress when we have our critiques is this. When we put our works up I always start off by saying, "Look at this - if we were doing a math exam and you all got 100% then it would mean they could all be the same - all the right and all the same answers...and here we are with all our works up starting from the same criteria, same project and you have so many interpretations of that. So we're talking about personal experiences and interpretations and that whole process that happens internally. When it comes out, why does each persons look so different? That is what we discuss, where we are coming from and it is so exciting when you see the persons voice coming through in a body of work and we are able to discuss it together as a class. Its so unique to that person so when they see my work, and I'm working along side them they see me struggle to bring connections to my body of work. They see the technical things that happen, the surprises, the mistakes, the problem solving as I work but in the end they see that my images as everyone else's images are very different from each other.

Nellie also supports class discussions and models through her art making how artists may be inspired by each others ideas and work; yet the artwork produced is personal, unique, and meaningful to the student who created it.

Nellie: I think the students are really clear with where we sit with copying. We're not comfortable in that we discuss the differences between plagiarism, where you blatantly copy something, and inspiration where you are taking aspects of what another artist has done and somehow incorporated it into your own work. We talk about and model how you can change and modify images. For example, the varathaned journals that I did and then what we did as a class project really highlighted for them how you can expand upon someone else's idea and make it your own, without copying. I had produced a whole series of artworks using my journals and books as the surface to be manipulated onto a finished piece. Part of the objective was to look at nontraditional art materials and to push them into a different realm and use them as art media. I showed the students how I had used journals/books in a 2 dimensional way as wall hangings and what was really exciting was where they took the idea. After seeing what I had done, they were able to come up with ideas that were completely different and that I had never thought of. There was a host of solutions to how they used their journals/books and combinations there of. We all were inspired.
Self assessment strategies also became more of an integral part of the teaching practices of these three teachers. Authentic self assessment practices are based upon trust and respect within the teacher/student relationship. During the course of this research, all three teachers developed new assessment strategies. Allison has her students tag pages in their journals for her to look at that were significant to them and explain why. She also developed a self assessment questionnaire (Appendix 2) as the result of using her art making as a vehicle for her teaching. Nellie and Patrick have a self assessment questionnaire (Appendix 3) that helped them view their students learning in addition to formal class critiques with the teachers artwork included. Through the process of their action research cycles, Nellie and Patrick decided to provide more ongoing support for peer assessment so they altered their approach to class critiques. Although effective for summative self assessments, the formal class critiques at the end of major projects did not provide enough support for works in progress.

Nellie: As I think about it, I'd like to support the class critiques more in progress as well as at the end. I've tended to use class critiques at the end and I think there is a lot of valuable insight that could come from the class as a whole and that would cut down on the time that I personally have to give to individuals going around talking one on one with insights about works in progress. Not that I'd stop that altogether but I think everyone could benefit from each others critiques of works in progress and include having my work right up there alongside of everybody else's. As we model our own critiquing of works in progress they seem to learn from our experiences or at least they seem to feel some camaraderie. Like they begin to see how many rough works we expect to see before moving to a quality piece. This strategy can help troubleshoot problems for those students who tend to commit so much time and effort into a piece that they are unwilling to alter it even if it could be more successful another way.
As we returned to our research in September and as a result of her research question and reflections upon her actions, Allison experienced her teaching evolve in other ways to support the use of the visual journals. She began to realize that supporting structures and strategies were necessary to help her students stay on task and to be organized in an independent way.

Allison: I’m further along in my development and use of the journal. Last year I got kids working in their journals yet it wasn’t too regular because I wasn’t as regular or as confident but this year I started right off the bat by showing the students my summer journal and they were excited to get started right away. We have the regular daily morning drawing time and I have a place for their journals in the classroom, all in little bags with their tools ready to go for them. It’s kind of an honouring of the process I guess. I see various levels of commitment coming. For example, the group of girls know how to get themselves organized, they’re working collaboratively, they’re sharing the materials, they know what they want to do, they are working independently in their journals. These boys are working well, but not as independent. They need more of my attention and prompts and that’s okay. I’m noticing more and more of them getting hard cover journals like mine. This hard cover one becomes the real one. They are even buying them with their own money. It seems to have a legitimacy to it and it’s not just a classroom thing.

Allison began to integrate the use of the visual journal more with the rest of the curriculum in her Grade 7 classroom. She included more notes to herself about how to use the journal in her direct teaching. She believes that having a special place in the classroom to keep the journals made a difference to the students as they could see that she was committed to their use.

In September Nellie and Patrick were still concerned with improving their students’ understanding of theme development. They wanted to continue with their roles as artist/teachers. However they made five major changes in their immediate teaching to start off the year. First of all they included the students in establishing very clear criteria with respect to their objectives for theme
development. Second, they developed a more structured strategy for developing individual picture files or image banks (Appendix 4) based on Nellie's personal experiences with developing her own picture file or image bank. The purpose of these picture files or image banks was to help collect thematic images from a variety of sources and over a period of time which in turn could help students develop their own imagery around a personal issue or theme. Third, they had more discussions about what a theme meant and they used their own work to stimulate these discussions. Fourth, they developed what they called the "How, What, Why" strategy. Through this support structure they addressed the how of a theme through teaching processes and techniques; they addressed the what of a theme through using the idea of picture files; and they addressed the why of the theme through ongoing self assessment and peer assessment during regular class critiques. Finally, both Nellie and Patrick, with a stronger commitment and more confidence, modeled their own theme development in class by working on their own artwork right from the beginning of the year.

Throughout these reflections in which I have identified some parts of Nellie, Allison, and Patrick's teaching practices, it is evident that there is a genuine passion and a strong commitment for excellence in their teaching. By developing new strategies such as in progress group critiques and tools for self assessment, each teacher demonstrated a desire to find new ways to address all aspects of teaching. In doing so, each teacher looked for new ways to coexist with their students in the classroom. Indeed, each teacher owns the power of the possible. Their teaching practices are dynamic and continually evolving. They
reflect upon their teaching and that in turn affects their actions. However, as I continued to reflect upon their teaching, it appeared to me that many decisions that each teacher made, with respect to their practice were supported by their pedagogical orientation to caring. As agents in this continual spiral, they each remain committed to realize their personal and professional potential as artists and as teachers who impact upon the lives of their students. With commitment, transformation takes innovation.

Relationships With Others as Pedagogical Artists

In this research I am referring to pedagogical artists as art teachers with a particular attitude or mind set from which they operate when they interact with their students. Van Manen (1989) suggests that good pedagogues model possible ways of being for their students as they themselves realize that their adulthood is never a finished project. He supports a reciprocal kind of relationship in which teachers and students learn from each other. "The reward for both parents and teachers is the presence of hope" (1986, p.29). He writes:

The...pedagogue is oriented toward the child in a special way. While being concerned with maturation, growth and learning, I do this: I immediately enter a very personal relationship with the child.....There is a maximal closeness with the maintenance of distance. (1979b, p.14)

As I listened to our conversations and reflected upon my observations I was able to identify many situations that reveal Nellie, Patrick, and Allison as "pedagogically thoughtful and tactful" (van Manen, 1991) during the course of this research. There was a sense of sharing authority, with respect to art making, with their students and personal responsibility within the teacher/student relationships. The shared lived experiences of making artwork within the daily
life of the art classroom provided situations in which the teacher/student relationships were transformed.

As teachers, we endeavour to ask questions of our students, but with a pedagogy oriented to caring, it is important how we ask the questions.

Patrick: The teacher's role is to support and ask thoughtful questions....I think a lot of it has to do with the tone - how you ask the question. Like if you say in an accusing fashion, "Why are you doing it black? Everything you paint is black. Why?", then the tone of your voice is something that may repress a student who is trying to express something through their artwork or make them feel uncomfortable showing their work or talking about it. Hopefully through working together on our art work they are seeing and feeling what I am about and I am helping them to show everyone else what they are about.

Indeed, how we let our students know who we are depends upon the values of trust, respect, and caring. It is an opening up, a letting go, or a removal of the need for control that we often feel we must have as teachers. Again I refer to van Manen (1984b) for support as he asserts that the greatest enemy of pedagogical tactfulness is the desire for control. Nellie reflected upon the doubts that she experienced as she let her students know her as an artist.

Nellie: The other thing too is that I've been hesitant to show my own artwork in my journal because they seem so rough and it is such a personal and intimate space but I think that it is useful for them to see how many ideas never come to the light of day - my visual brainstorming-I guess. But they see how my ideas are adapted and modified and changed and also the amount of research that goes into a piece. This is good because then they see what I go through to come up with my themes. Nothing happens by chance, you are thinking about all the things you are doing in a total painting and they get the chance to see how I work at this in my journal and then how I transfer that to my paintings. I've noticed as a sweeping generalization that before I did this, the students would focus on a positive space in their painting and would not tend to research the surrounding space.
As Patrick reflected upon his first year of teaching he was able to identify some of his own personal transformations. He felt that he was definitely growing, learning, and changing. One thing that really amazed him was the self realization about how much knowledge he had as an artist. This was particularly apparent to him with respect to skills, techniques, and processes and during his unit on art history. But, it was through his teaching that he began to understand how to use this knowledge to build connections with his students in order to support their transformations.

Patrick: You build that trust over time. Like there are the students who leave in the middle of a sentence because the bell has gone and then they’re those who will stay after school to talk to me about say our art history unit. I’ll start to talk about Quebec art history because that is where I am from and I’ll stay until five thirty or six o’clock talking with some students who I am building those connections with and then I’ll lend the books that I have. With the students it is varied. Some have gone through transformations. For example, I had a student who was really struggling with a difficult period with her drawing and it was about something that happened in her life when she was really young. It was very personal and intense and at the end of the project she said she would not have done that with any other teacher because she had seen me struggle with my own issues and that has been the case with a number of students. But some students have the window closed and it is hard to make those connections. With other students it is active participation. They are getting stuff out of my teaching through modeling art making on some level but maybe not transformational. It has to do with how they connect with a certain teacher and that works in certain levels with certain students and with other students maybe they’re not at the point or they’re just not interested in allowing themselves to have a transformation happen. Sometimes it feels like you’re sort of struggling with that wall of resistance and so you keep trying to create that window of opportunity to happen. Like when you are offering suggestions to a student and really trying hard to get them to push an idea and they say that they like it the way it is and that they don’t want to touch it. I would get upset and depressed when I first started and I talked to Nellie about the fact that I didn’t think that all students were with me 100%, but you’ve got to work with the fact that all people are at different levels at different times. I feel that I have more success with my students when I accept this and work with it. Still I try to get everyone excited but I try not to let it dampen my
spirits if it only is working with half of them or three quarters of them. You just have to keep moving ahead and keep hoping for the best for all.

As Nellie reflected upon this project she mentioned that she felt she was just beginning to scratch the surface of teaching through modeling her own art making. Although she did find that her students were becoming more independent with their learning in art, she wondered how she could get more of the "push" coming from inside the students.

Nellie: What I want is for there to be relationships between us based on respect, interest in art, and the excitement of creating, developing and learning. I want more of the criteria and push to come from inside the student than this whole externalized notion of the teacher wants me to.....And as they see me as a participating member of the classroom community, they see the modeling coming into play and the connections that what I do is not just another school thing. It is what people really do as artists and it is not just an add on...like now we have got to do this self reflection thing. It is what artists do. I think it helps them to understand how to be more in charge of their learning and then their life. That's what I hope will become of my teaching this way.

She was able to identify some characteristics of students that she believed had experienced personal transformations. These students were able to think critically about their learning and to identify changes, but that it was difficult to precisely assess given time pressures. However, students who assumed more responsibility for their own learning did tend to be reflective.

Nellie: They tend to mark themselves lower, I think because in addition to criteria that has been established they have internalized their own personal criteria for success and they may feel they haven't met that so they've been much harder on themselves at evaluation time. And that has come up again and again. They don't just expect that we as teachers will give them all the wisdom and information. During their individual portfolio presentations in front of the class they talk about their learning, growth and change. For example they talk about what was challenging and where they want to go from here. They seem to like to hear about our experiences as we model the presentation of our portfolios too.
I was able to observe Allison in a number of teaching situations, one with her own homeroom class and then with a different grade seven class where she only taught art. I found it interesting that with her own classroom students she had a different set of assumptions and expectations. In her own class she had established relationships with her students that show evidence of caring. For example she helped a group of boys get organized with their materials, reminding them that it is important. She further supported them by saying that she would remind them again tomorrow how to stay on task with their organization. When one student did not immediately recall an answer, she said, "and while you are thinking I will ask someone else what they think and I'll come back." To me this suggests that she is caring for the student in his/her effort to provide an answer. She did the two minute and four minute sketches with her students. At the end of a sketching activity in the journals, Allison reminded the students that no matter how busy life gets, they will always be able to find a couple of minutes to work in their journal. At this point she displayed her own work in her journal, commenting upon the amount of time that a number of sketches took. Although she embeds ways to protect her privacy, like writing in French, she allowed the students to look freely through her journal that she keeps at her desk when they want. They do so with respect and care. When the students requested to use images from their journals instead of the skeleton to magnify, she replied with, "Of course you may use your own ideas to magnify. You have a plethora of things in your journals to elaborate and magnify." In addition, her classroom was set up with students in groups of four
or five sitting at large tables and students are free to get appropriate materials to work with from an organized area in the classroom. My observations of these lived teaching experiences led me to think that in an elementary school setting, it may be an unrealistic expectation to think that caring relationships may be established to the same extent with subjects and classes which are platooned. Indeed, even the physical setup of a homeroom classroom helps to determine the teachers' identity and supports caring relationships among teacher and students.

Throughout this chapter I have documented the stories of Nellie, Patrick, and Allison's lived experiences in their respective teaching situations. Each story may be understood and interpreted in a number of different ways. However our identities as artists, teachers, and pedagogues is critical to establish authentic, caring relationships with our students that hear their stories, encourage their learning, and support their empowerment. With more time, as a group, it could be informative to continue to explore our teaching and art making journeys with a clear focus on feminist pedagogy. Although the teachers themselves did not identify or define their pedagogy as feminist, as each of us are at different understandings of what that means, I have reflected upon these stories with an orientation that supports a feminist pedagogy; that is a pedagogy oriented to caring. There is power in caring. However, as we open our hearts to the lives of our students, and when we share who we are, we run the risk of hurting ourselves. Transformation takes courage.
I return to some places day after day, season after season. I am not just interested in the material in my hand. A leaf, stone or stick is an opening to the process of growth, light, seasons, weather and it is understanding these processes that interests me. When I work with a leaf, I work with the summer it has grown in, and the tree it has grown from, and the place in which it is found. That is why I must work with the materials at their source. Each work explores the place and the changes that happen there.

Andy Goldsworthy (1992, p.35)
Recreating a Community
Re-creating a Community

As I go back and visit each of my forms I am committed to support their strength as a community of forms rather than finding one more intriguing or important than the other. I have created a metaphor of a community through my female forms for the purpose of this research, to emphasize the feminist principles of collaboration and caring. As we find the courage to be our authentic selves within the context of our educational experiences and as we build more interactive, connected and caring relationships with our students; how can we re-create a community of hope? With my will engaged, I began this action research with my own memories. With passion, I shared the lived experiences embedded within this research. With a desire for change, I arrived at the possibility for transformation. Perhaps this is my greatest hope. Through creating artwork, I continually experience the imagining of ideas and bringing such ideas into a concrete and tangible reality. The process of making art gives me a confidence to envision and create that which is not yet known. Therefore, I am able to imagine and hope for the recreation of communities that are built through caring, respectful, and trusting relationships within the structures of our society. As my art making and my teaching continue to impact upon others: hopefully, more will join me in the journey of our becoming.
A Community

A community is established by a group of individuals who are connected in their ways of knowing about each other and who share a sense of belonging. A safe community may support an individual's learning through risk taking and problem solving. It may be a place where knowledge is constructed by making connections between what is known and what is experienced; a place where learning occurs through modeling and caring versus learning through imposed authority. The relationships between members within a caring community support and validate each individual's experiences and ideas while they promote the exploration of new ones. Such is the atmosphere for transformation. In fact, as teachers, it may not be possible to do anything other than to provide the fertile atmosphere and opportunity for transformations to take place.

I have created a metaphor for community with my female forms placed all together, yet each is unique and different in their own way. The strength of this visual metaphor lies in the connectedness of each form and their relationship with each other. At the same time, the strength of the community as a whole is supported. If we as teachers are life long learners, we each bring constantly changing selves to the communities within our classrooms. Our students also bring their ever shifting realities and changing selves. It is through our identities, each aware of our own voices and willing to share our passions, desires, and hopes that we may build authentic relationships based on caring. Such relationships support the possibilities of understanding ourselves and each
other within the contexts of our teaching and learning. Therein lies the hope for transformation.

Findings

Prior to our last meeting I had asked each teacher to reflect upon the following questions and I audio taped their responses: 1) How has your understanding of a teacher-as-artist model changed? 2) How have your teaching and art production changed? Thinking back over the project allowed each teacher to revisit their understanding of a teacher-as-artist model and to reflect upon any changes. There was agreement among all three teachers with respect to changes in their understanding about what they meant by a teacher-as-artist model. Through the following transcriptions I am able to address the ways in which these three teachers changed in their understanding of their teaching practices when instruction was delivered by a teacher-as-artist model and when action research was implemented.

All three teachers identified a greater degree of personal comfort in understanding the ambiguities embedded in a teacher-as-artist model. At the same time, they did become more confident and committed towards implementing a feminist pedagogy, even if they did not name their pedagogy as such. In describing critical/feminist pedagogy as providing a framework for teacher education in a democratic society, Scering (1997) discusses teacher authority shaping teacher's work to activate multiple perspectives:

The activation would involve a participatory mode of learning with increased interactions through dialogue and similar strategies across and within lived differences could be the basis for the production of critical and connected knowledge....Hierarchical social relations supporting
individualistic, competitive approaches to learning deter students from collaborative work promoting social responsibilities and awareness of self-formation in learning, sharing and caring communities. (p.65)

Through their commitment to a pedagogy oriented to caring, Allison, Nellie, and Patrick began to share their authority to empower students.

Patrick: I still don’t have a definitive answer to the question about understanding what a teacher-as-artist model is. Certainly Nellie and I have had many conversations about it but what I think is the major difference between now and before is that now I feel more comfortable with not having a definition of a teacher-as-artist. I feel that as I change and grow as a teacher and change and grow as an artist, my idea of what I do as an art teacher also will continue to evolve. Last year I felt that I had to be a “good” teacher-as-artist, so I did the same projects as the students, and I liked them to see me doing that. This worked well in clarifying something that I may have been trying to get across. I think this is a great way to show flexibility in thinking as it is a good way to show students that things don’t always work our right away, but that an important part of any learning is the mistakes, to work with the “happy” accidents. Through problem solving, I try to model creative ways of fixing mistakes and to help the students be flexible in their thinking and tolerant and patient.

Allison: Well yes my ideas about a teacher-as-artist model have changed because I was involved in this research. I thought about it more consciously and as a result I had another lens to look at my teaching and myself through. It is neat because in a formal yet informal way this project gave me a name for what I was doing. It helped me to identify what I was doing in the craft of my teaching and to give it a name, even though this naming has many faces, like when they see me with my journal or we all have our art work together at the board offices. As well, I model a lot of different art making behaviours. I guess I feel okay in having my understanding of teaching through the use of the journal to be in continuous evolution.

Nellie: It’s funny, the more we try to define it the more it evades us but now we are comfortable in that. Our teaching and art making is always in flux, changing and evolving. It is like life itself in that I don’t know if we’ll ever have a feeling like we have arrived. I don’t think I can define or say well now we are teacher-as-artists, or that a teacher-as-artist model is (fill in the blank). It is more of a philosophy and part of our pedagogy. I think that my definition of a teacher-as-artist has become broader. When I was originally looking at this, I was modeling a number of behaviours in the classroom specifically related to art production and in particular I
thought it was important to work on the same projects as the students most of the time so they could see my understandings and interpretations of the same projects that they were doing. I also thought it was beneficial for them to see that their teachers didn’t just talk about making art - they did make art. Where this expanded or developed to is that although I will continue to do some projects that the students do because I like to trouble shoot problems that may arise and I like to get visuals ready to get the students excited. This is what they see that an art teacher does. But I think that where the real benefit of the teacher-as-artist model comes in is that you model on a much broader sense what it means to be an artist. And that means to be self motivated, self disciplining, self critiquing, looking for inspiration as it hits you in everyday life, how to find and develop a theme etc. It is all these things that the students see when I am engaged in my own art production that is meaningful to me as an artist.

As I reflected upon these understandings and as I made connections to the professional literature that I was reading, I conceptualized the idea of changing our original of the teacher-as-artist model to the role of a pedagogical artist to describe more clearly what we were doing. The teachers involved modeled visual problem solving and art related behaviours for their students. Their classrooms are interactive spaces and they relate with their students in caring ways, building relationships based on trust and respect. Although they may have been aiming for a transformational orientation, for the most part, they were teaching from a transactional position. However, action research that leads to deeper understanding of the questions we ask as pedagogical artists ought to be ongoing. This research is a view of one small section in each of our journeys. Van Manen (1991) helped me to understand in a deeper way what pedagogy meant, with his advocacy for a thoughtful and tactful pedagogical caring for children and students. Aoki (1992) reinforced my new understandings with his description of the meaning of teaching as watchfulness and thoughtfulness.

Finally, through the course of this research I discovered the extensive work and
writing of Nel Noddings. Eloquently, Noddings (1991) refers to occasions of caring as:

the moments when...teacher and student meet and must decide what to do with the moment - what attitude to take - what needs are present, what to share, whether to remain silent. This way of meeting the living other in caring situations needs legitimation. It needs to be the guiding spirit of what we do in education. It cannot be accomplished through an extra course or specified form of training. Rather it requires that we look at education from a different perspective. (p.168)

Looking back to the guiding research questions, the teachers involved developed a greater understanding of their teaching practices, which did result in some changes to practice. In the following paragraphs I will address those changes.

3. In what ways is the teaching practice of the teachers involved understood when instruction is delivered by the teacher-as-artist model and action research is implemented?

Each teacher did identify changes in their teaching practices, even though this was not necessarily their intention when they began this research. In fact, their practices changed in ways that they could not have foreseen when they began because their reflections led to a better understanding of their practices. May (1993) and van Manen (1990) discuss action research as a systematic and deliberate method of deepening the understanding and meaning of teacher practice, rather than looking specifically for action and change, although this may occur. The impact upon the teaching practices varied, although all three teachers remain committed to continue at times to teach directly through their roles as pedagogical artists. First, the physical space of a teaching environment affects whether a teacher may indeed model their own art making for students.
During the course of this research the school that Nellie and Patrick taught at was undergoing the construction of a new facility. Nellie and Patrick's commitment to their role as pedagogical artists did impact upon that construction. Indeed, finding a separate space within the classroom for pedagogical artists to work on their own art making may improve decisions about when and where collaborations ought to take place, without infringing upon student support. Empowerment involves understanding the environments and contexts in which teaching occurs in addition to understanding teaching practice (Bresler, 1994).

Nellie: I also think that by having a designated space in the classroom, that is a teacher's space to work is important. It is outside of the office where the art teacher things happen like the planning and marking. The students can see, through such a space, that art making goes much beyond the walls of the classroom. I mean that we are really fortunate here to have made the decision to have created studio work spaces for the teachers in our new school construction and I don't think this would have been as critical had Patrick and I not been committed to our own art making. As well, we made the senior room to be very suited to studio production. There's not a lot of millwork, not a lot of furniture, concrete floors and there is just a lot of big open space so the students can work on big canvases etc. The other thing of significance is that the classroom is the production space - where we all make art. The exhibition space is in the gallery outside. So there is that whole other dimension about what an artist does. Exhibiting has become more apart of our program because that is important to Patrick and I in our art production. We want the students to get their work out there into the community. We want people to see and hear and talk with us about what we are doing.

Allison recognizes and values the uniqueness of the physical environment in which she teaches. She has a double classroom which helps her to set up a small space for her own art production. In addition, the space is conducive to exhibiting.
Second, all three teachers felt their actual teaching practices had improved in specific ways such as creating and implementing more supports and teaching strategies for helping students to be independent and organized in the creating of personally meaningful images. Such supports included more ongoing class critiques of works in progress, more structured self assessment tools, the integration of art with the rest of the curriculum through using a visual journal and individually organized visual journal bags with a specific place for keeping them in the classroom. However, the decisions that the teachers made to improve upon their practice were informed by their relationships with themselves and with students.

Nellie: I like to think that everyday, in every way, I’m getting to be a better teacher. I think I’m a better teacher because I’m more aware of feminist perspectives on teaching like I’m more inclusive and trying to be more collaborative with the students. I’m more empathetic to where the students are coming from. I’m aware that my self esteem is connected to my own art making in addition to my students. I enjoy their successes but we are on different journeys. I want to be the very best in terms of support structures and in helping them gain techniques and skills. I want to remove obstacles for them and to provide motivation, but I too have my own artwork to be involved with and that gives me a sense of who I am.

Patrick: But what I think about with my teaching is that the most important thing this year is that the students continue to see me planning, creating, struggling, working, thinking, and problem solving with my own ideas. When I work on my own work, the students seem interested and continue to ask questions, make suggestions, and even critique my artwork. I remember when about five or six students saw me stressing out and rushing in a big way to complete a frame for a painting to meet the deadline for submissions for a group exhibition. They actually just got in and helped me. When I assign a new project like the sculpture project, they ask me if I will be working on my own sculpture too and it doesn’t seem to get in their way, especially with the senior students.

Allison: I’m more aware of what I’m trying to do and why. I have more classroom organization and teaching strategies in place. I know where students need support and I am able to remind them to stay with it. I also
integrate the journals with the rest of the curriculum more and provide strategies to help those that are stuck. This year we got them organized and ready to go right from the start to be used everyday.

The professional decisions that these teachers made with respect to the changes in their teaching practices are indicative of their pedagogical tact and thoughtfulness, in addition to their commitment to teach through their own art making. They are oriented to the world of their students.

Reflecting upon the collected data from their year end self assessment questionnaire (Appendix 3), Nellie and Patrick began to rethink their approach of when they ought to assume their roles as pedagogical artists in their teaching. Most of the students agreed that it was beneficial to have art teachers who are practicing their own art making during some of the class instructional time. Students voiced their appreciation for the understanding, trust, care, and compassion that they felt from their teachers as they observed the teacher’s problem solving, struggling, and perseverance. They voiced a sense of pride and respect for their teacher’s work and identified their personal attitudes being affected by the attitude of the teacher. However, a significant number of Grade 10 students felt some reservations about having their teachers make art in their classrooms, especially during teaching time. These concerns were centered around feeling inadequate and disappointed in their own work, and feeling that the teachers were sometimes too busy and/or too preoccupied to help them personally. Nellie and Patrick also felt this tension. Their reflections support Weiler’s (1988) description of the need for teachers to reflect upon and
understand their own presumptions and assumptions while they assert their
own experiences to help students produce meaning.

Nellie: Our teaching has changed in another way from the beginning of
this project because we have been examining more what we are trying to
do with the students and in some respects we have decided to try to set
more realistic goals for what the students are able to achieve at certain
points. Patrick and I have discussed our disappointment with the theme
development projects that we had the grade 10, grade 11, and grade 12’s
involved with. And we really felt that if we explained it more, modeled it
more with our own art making, showed more examples and things that
they would be able to be more independent with their theme
development. But we now think that for the grade 10’s it might just be a
little beyond where they are at in terms of their maturing processes and
development. So with the grade 10’s we are going to structure it more
where they are learning skills and techniques with more support and
direction in projects and image development. Through discussions we
will try to get them thinking about themes and issues in their lives but not
developing large bodies of art work around such issues independently.
Maybe we’ll have them do one piece in the grade 10 year that is relating to
their theme and then build upon this in the grade 11 year and then finally
delving into it more independently in the grade 12 year.

Patrick: Yes I agree with Nellie because it didn’t seem to matter what we
did, the grade 10’s just didn’t seem to have that personal connection to
their themes. They just didn’t seem to be able to make that leap. I think it
was our pedagogical voice trying to understand where the students are at.
Even though the grade 10’s are interested in our art work and the work of
the grade 12’s, I think it is about helping them to set realistic goals for
them to become what they want to be and to be more present for them.

These pedagogical decisions are based upon what the teachers think and
how they feel about themselves, when they hear the voices of their students.

They are informed by the shared lived experiences within the daily life in the
classroom and through the relationships they share with students. Kenway and
Modra (1992) support an understanding of pedagogy as all the components
involved in the act of classroom teaching. They discuss understanding pedagogy
which recognizes “that knowledge is produced, negotiated, transformed and
realized in the interaction between the teacher, the learner, and the knowledge itself” (p. 140). As educators, we need to find spaces to discuss our pedagogy in more collaborative and supportive contexts.

Nellie, Patrick, and Allison did experience a more conscious awareness of identities as a result of this research. In this research, identity became the main reoccurring theme in teaching and learning in visual art when instructing as pedagogical artists. Identity, however, with its multiple understandings and contradictions is a complicated matter. Identities shift and change as we experience our lives and grow. Therefore, it is critical that we build reciprocal trusting relationships with students, as we listen for “the multiple, contradictory voices of teachers, writers, researchers and administrators... who have been asking others to speak” (Orner, 1992, p. 88).

Allison: I feel more confidence with being an artist and a teacher and able to be who I am in the classroom. It is neat to be able to teach in, about and through something like art when I feel so passionate about it. I guess I just like giving it a name.

Nellie: Well you have to have a pretty good sense of self. Like to get honest feedback from the students you have to be comfortable with who you are and be aware that you have more to learn from students about your teaching and art making. I think this is one of the best results of teaching from a teacher-as-artist model. You have to let yourself be open to discussion, comments, and critiques from the group. Teachers don’t usually get this kind of feedback on themselves as teachers or artists. Everybody seems to benefit from this type of relationship. It’s neat to be around people creating and that motivates me. I find the classroom neat because you see people following their passion, so it drives me to do the same or maybe I drive them to find their passion. It is definitely reciprocal between teacher and student but also between student and student. They have said to me that they are motivated by a shared studio environment and would not be able to get as much work done by themselves.
Patrick: I think the effect of this research has been very positive on my art production because I am happier with the quality and the quantity of what I am doing. It also makes me feel more authentic and less like a hypocrite when I speak to the students about having to “make” time to work on art. I think they believe me and see that I find it to be something very worthwhile to do with my life. I also am a better teacher because I know the students in a deeper way and they know something more about me.

This theme of identity did impact upon the teacher/student relationship in a number of ways, primarily altering this relationship within the community of the art classroom to become more reciprocal and caring. All three agreed that teacher/student relationships as a whole improved as a result of situating some teaching practices within the passion of their roles as pedagogical artists.

However, although they believed that the opportunity for student transformations did exist, it was difficult to assess if indeed transformations did occur.

Allison: Well this problem with the idea of transformation is that it is illusive, it takes so much time and is so gradual. Like is there a meter that you can say it is happened at a one or a five or a ten? I don’t think that is how we can assess transformation. I know that I am continually growing, changing, and evolving. I take that on as my personal responsibility and I try to create my world to be the best that I can. I can only model this for the students, I can’t make them transform. Maybe we need to open up spaces for that to be talked about.

Nellie: Is it transformational? I don’t know. Sometimes you can see transformations in the students, sometimes not. I think that the best we can do is get them to connect with what they are thinking, feeling, and experiencing and to help them to articulate their vision. So it needs personal questioning and critiquing all along the way. It is a fine line between pushing them to do their best or in settling for less. It is about encouraging them to push themselves, to be responsible for their thoughts and actions but to celebrate their successes along the way. You have got to be honest with yourself. So you model listening to your own voice and ideas and to really work with them. You have to keep asking yourself questions. I guess if we let students see us doing this, we can hope to eventually see their transformations. It takes a long time.
Patrick: Everyone is somewhere along their own path and I think it is hard to see transformations because it is a slow process. But we can keep going in that direction by making things happen for ourselves that we have some control over. If the students see this, maybe they will want to take on that responsibility themselves. I don’t know, transformation is hard to talk about. I mean what does it look like. Maybe it’s about an attitude.

Art making reaches out to the world, to mark the way, to help us to re-invent, to discover, and to transform ourselves in the continuous process of becoming and knowing who we are. London (1992) suggests that art is also power - “power not only to transform the face of the page, but the quality of our lives. Art Education, would do well to take stock of its actual legacy, and expand its mission and practice accordingly” (p.15). Shulman (1992) supports the concept of pedagogocial content knowledge in his work with staff development. Perhaps the best that we can do as pedagogical artists is to continue to make connections with our hearts, minds, and spirits allowing our will, passion, desire and hope to become a stronger part of our teaching practices. Therein lies the possibility to encourage trusting, caring and respecting relationships with our students, through which we may witness transformations.

As I reflect upon the question asked by MacGregor (1995, p. 153), “How may I, as an educator, provide conditions that will allow others to develop sufficient faith in themselves to say: Here I am. I matter?”, I hear my voice as an art educator. My voice continues to develop as I identify and trust my abilities and passions for my own art making and teaching. I feel a continued sense of commitment to teach with a feminist pedagogy oriented to collaboration and caring, with the hope of building relationships based on trust and respect. As I
create my own world to become a better place to live, perhaps I will be able to help others to do the same.

Implications

It is apparent from this study that the identity of the three teachers involved strongly influences their teaching and art making practices. When the three teachers were consciously aware of and fulfilling their artistic passions, they were happier in their classrooms. When the teachers were more aware of their authentic selves, they were more able to build caring reciprocal relationships with their students. Although, these three teachers began with caring attitudes and confident skills with respect to their pedagogy, they were willing to continuously reflect upon their teaching in order to understand it more deeply and make changes when necessary. These implications suggest that it is important to encourage teachers to discover their identities and to bring these identities confidently into their classrooms. As Greene (1986) states, we need to open spaces in education for teachers to discover their passion, to break through, and to become open to the power of the possible. This suggests there is a need for creating spaces filled with caring teachers who are willing to share the professional passions and desires that are situated in everyday lived experiences within a classroom.

This research has implications for the rediscovery of discussing pedagogy, situated in the classrooms of teachers. Pedagogy is about relationships between teachers and students; it is also about the relationship that both have with a particular subject. According to Pearse (1992), knowing a subject is:
to love and respect it for what it is and the ways it lets itself be known. This responsiveness to the subject is the essence of the relationship between student and subject matter. A real art teacher embodies art. Must be attuned to art. (1992, p.62)

Thus art teachers may find inspiration and fulfillment in discussing their passions for art making within the context of their pedagogy. The reciprocity of thought and action; that is action full of thought and thought full of action is an essential quality of pedagogy (van Manen, 1986, p.54). This implies that teacher research as a form of inquiry should be encouraged among art educators to inform and improve pedagogy. This may be particularly informative to those art educators who see themselves as pedagogical artists, seeking to improve understanding of themselves and their art making.

Teacher identity, including passion, and the building of caring teacher/student relationships may become more of a focus for professional development and for teacher education programs. Teacher research may be supported through finding spaces and alternative ways in which teachers may reflect in collaboration as well as in isolation. Educational research and reform may become more attuned to the whole human being by opening spaces that honour embodied ways of knowing; that is, knowing through the body, mind, and heart, in addition to the cognitive rational ways of knowing that over ride much of the professional literature.

Recommendations

In the world of art education we need to continue to strengthen our connections and our collaborations. As pedagogical artists, whether we are making art or teaching, we need to know ourselves. It is important as educators
to believe in self; therefore, the first connection for art educators to make is with self. Changes in self, whether the changes are in attitudes, skills or knowledge are the first steps to making change possible for others. Second, art educators must continue to discover new ways to interact and connect with their students, fostering leadership and empowerment for all. Art teachers must find ways to create opportunities for their students to feel safe in their risk taking and problem solving in their art making. Art teachers must be willing to take risks themselves as they express their passion and desire to their students. The strength of the community within the art classroom may be reinforced through teacher/student collaborative art exhibitions. Third, art educators must make connections with each other to continue building a professional community where there is a sense of belonging. We must not ignore teachers, and teaching in context. May (1994) asserts that we must stop denying our work and workplace conditions as extraordinarily complex and often oppressive and abusive. She states that:

reforming art education is impossible without creating and participating in professional communities where we work. We cannot create substantive change without a community. We cannot even imagine how things might be otherwise without legitimate time and space to utter the unspeakable, to listen to each other’s personal stories and proposals so that we might consider alternative policies and practices. (p. 3)

Finally, art educators must continue to create connections and collaborations with the broader community outside the walls of the classroom and school. They must connect with the larger social contexts and respond to social issues of concern. For example, through building authentic collaborations with the art world, art educators may encourage art students to follow a passion for teaching,
while also encouraging art teachers to engage in their own art production, and to establish mutually beneficial relationships with fine art faculties and post secondary art schools. It is through connected, caring, committed communities that we can work together to re-create a socially just society and a more humane world for all.

Conclusions

Although each individual’s research question did not change much over the course of the research, their understanding of their question deepened. The original guiding research questions evolved because of our deepened understanding, which changed the concept of a teacher-as-artist model to the role of a pedagogical artist. However, each question was addressed in the following ways:

1. What are the reoccurring themes and characteristics of teaching and learning in visual art when instruction is delivered by a teacher-as-artist model?

This research generated a new understanding of a teacher-as-artist and discovered the reoccurring theme of identity as it emerged from the transcribed conversations and reflections of three pedagogical artists modeling art making in the classroom. Commitment to identities as pedagogical artists and identities within relationships also emerged as reoccurring themes.

2. How is the teacher/student relationship altered when instruction is delivered by this model?

Although change was not necessarily the intention, teacher identity and commitment to one’s identity as a pedagogical artist did impact upon
teacher/student relationships as they became more caring, trusting and respectful within classroom communities.

3. In what ways is the teaching practice of the teachers involved understood when instruction is delivered by the teacher-as-artist model and action research is implemented?

The three teachers involved developed a deeper understanding of their art making and teaching which did result in a number of changes in their practices as identified at the beginning of this chapter. The summaries of our experiences may encourage other art educators in their struggles to define themselves as artists and teachers.

The most profound learning for me has been a deeper understanding of feminist pedagogy and its implications for a transformational curriculum. Courage, time, and innovation are necessary for educators to create possibilities and opportunities for their own personal transformations and the transformations of their students. Hope gives us the reason to believe in the power of the possible. Van Manen (1986) suggests that it is hope which distinguishes “a pedagogic life from a non-pedagogic one” (p. 27). I find a sense of hope in a quote by Winterson (1995):

If truth is that which lasts, then art has proved truer than any other human endeavour. What is certain is that pictures and poetry and music are not only marks through time, of their own time and ours, not antique or historical, but living as they ever did, exuberantly, untired. (p. vii)

Transformation happens within individuals in relationships. As we continue our individual journeys, willingly unlocking and opening gates as they appear in our pathways, perhaps we may understand our personal responsibilities. As pedagogical artists, we are responsible for developing our passions and desires,
for facilitating change, and for creating a better life for ourselves and our students. With hope, we may experience our own transformations and celebrate the transformations in others.
Revisioning the Future
References


Congden, Kristen. (1996). Art history, traditional art, and artistic practices. In Georgia Collins & Rene Sandell (Eds.), Gender issues in art education: Content, contexts, and strategies. (pp 11-17). Reston, VA: NAEA.


Irwin, Rita L., Stephenson, Wendy, Neale, Aileen, Robertson, Helen, Mastri, Rosa, and Crawford, Nancy. (in press). Quiltmaking as a metaphor:
Creating feminist political consciousness for art teachers. In Enid Zimmerman & Elizabeth Sacca (Eds.), Women art educators IV.


Appendix I: Action Research Guide

Field-Based Research

A Working Guide

Ministry of Education and
Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism
and Human Rights
“Being a teacher researcher:

• helps me observe my children more effectively

• allows me the opportunity to know and understand my children better

• helps me to see the ‘bigger picture’

• causes me to evaluate my own teaching style and the processes I use when teaching

• allows me to interact with other teachers, to share and learn from others

• causes me to question the things I do in my classroom—what and how and why

• helps me to develop new/different ways of teaching

• makes me a better teacher; a better listener to my children

• challenges me

• encourages me to read other research and information

• and makes me realize how much I don't know!”

—B. C. Teacher, 1992
Teacher Research

What is it?

Getting Started

Teachers have been asking questions about the practice of teaching and the process of learning for a long time. Their natural explorations of the classroom have provided the educational community with important ways of knowing about learners and learning; yet teachers have often been overlooked as researchers. Increasingly, however, teachers' observations, reflections and writings are recognized as primary sources of knowledge about what's going on inside our classrooms and schools.

Field-Based Research: A Working Guide is intended to support groups of educators who are interested in pursuing questions about classroom practice. The Guide outlines an approach and includes suggestions and formats that can be adapted to a variety of situations. It is a starting place for those who want to learn through their own collaborative and individual research projects; it is not a comprehensive 'how-to' package.

What is it?

Teachers and other educators in British Columbia today are involved in the continuing processes of change and reflection. An increasing emphasis on learners—both students and teachers—has led quite naturally to an increased interest in teacher research. As the Year 2000 programs develop in B.C. classrooms, researching teachers explore a wide range of critical issues: How do learners become enabled in my classroom? What does active learning look like? What are the social interaction patterns in inclusive classrooms? How can I develop better time management—both for myself and for my students? How can/do children help each other learn? When children come to school with a lot of negative behaviours, how do I help them see school as a positive experience? How do I allow for individual differences?
Getting Started

Teachers often express some hesitation about getting involved in research groups or starting their own projects. The reasons are varied: time, commitment, self-doubts. Sometimes people wonder if they will be able to complete a project or worry about what they have to offer the group.

Most teachers begin their inquiries or research in an informal way long before they join a research group or design a research project. Teacher research begins when ...

- You reflect upon your practice.
- You communicate your discoveries with others.
- You examine what happens in your classroom.
- You look for new ways to meet classroom challenges.
- You wonder why things happen the way they do.
- You collaborate with students, parents and colleagues.
- You enjoy the support of people when you explore questions.
- You are committed to learning about what's going on in your classroom.

"... this could be a very time-consuming adventure!"

"At the moment, I feel apprehensive and bewildered because I've never participated in a research project before. So I'd really just like to sit and listen to what everyone else has to say."
Checklist: Getting Started

Do you ...

☐ often wonder about things that happen in your classroom?

☐ have some ideas you want to explore or changes you want to make?

☐ enjoy talking to your colleagues about your students, your classroom, and educational issues?

☐ want to work with other educators to enhance teaching and learning?

☐ see yourself as a lifelong learner?

☐ enjoy questioning, exploring, problem-solving?

☐ want to contribute to the dialogue about change that is going on in education today?
CHAPTER 2

Research Questions

Discovering Questions
Focusing Your Question

Questioning lies at the heart of both learning and researching. Researching teachers like questions. They are not intimidated or discouraged when they don't find quick or easy answers; they enjoy wondering, exploring and discovering. Most teacher research begins with two related questions:

- What's going on here?
- How can we change what's happening—improve our practice?

Discovering Questions

*For me the most exciting result was the number of new questions it stimulated for most of the teachers involved.*

It often takes several days, weeks—or even months—to develop a specific research question. Most often, teachers and other researchers begin with some general ideas and broad topics that intrigue them. Here are a few suggestions about ways you may discover promising topics or questions:

- Think about the issues and challenges in your classroom. What do you wonder or worry about as you drive to school?

- Look—really look—at your class. What stands out? What do you wish you knew or understood about your students?

- Listen to public discussions of teaching and learning issues. As you listen, do you respond to what's being said? Is there a topic or question that intrigues you?

- Discuss your ideas, observations and questions. Dialogue is an important step in developing questions. Discussion groups can reveal mutual concerns and provide support.

*I wonder if I reflect enough at the end of my teaching day on my students' successes—What went well? What works?*
"I am concerned about those children in my room who are passive in their approach to learning."

Once we get into the habit of asking questions about our practice, then our work will be dynamic and compelling, and we'll have a chance of meeting students' changing needs.

• Observe your classroom and take notes. Try to maintain as detailed a description as possible and avoid interpreting what you observe. (You might try keeping a daily journal.)

• Listen to or observe audiotapes or videotapes of your classroom. Do you have any questions about the lesson? Or your interactions with students?

• Read about the subjects that interest you. Search for books and articles related to topics that intrigue you.

• You may have already asked your question. Browse through your notebooks, journals and plans. Is there a question that you asked before? Do any new questions spring to mind?

• Brainstorm. Simply write down as many ideas as you can on a sheet of paper. Alternatively, draw or sketch images as quickly as you can.

• Cluster. Record a topic in the middle of a blank page, then jot down and connect related ideas and concepts.

Once you have identified some potential areas or topics for your research, you might try generating some related questions or issues. A sample Worksheet: Generating Questions is provided at the end of this chapter.

Focusing Your Question

What do you want to get out of the research process? How will the research help you or your students? The Worksheet: Focusing Your Question at the end of this chapter can help you focus on your long term goals.

After you've worked through the sections on generating and focusing questions, you may want to use the Worksheet: Articulating Your Questions to jot down what you already know about your question or topic. Then focus on what you still want to find out. Try to shape your research question or topic, but keep in mind that it's likely to be quite vague or general at this point.

Often, your question cannot come clear until you've actually done some preliminary research in your classroom. Research groups often take two or three meetings just to explore and discuss emerging topics. Time to think, observe and talk is essential—and don't worry if your topic doesn't emerge in the form of a question!
Worksheet: Generating Questions

1. Lately, I've noticed ...

2. I've always wondered ...

3. I worry about ...

4. What would happen if ...

5. It's funny how my students ...

6. How can I ...
Worksheet: Focusing Your Question

1. What question(s) are you most interested in finding out about?

2. What do you want to accomplish ...
   for yourself:

   for your students:

4. What do you want to be able to tell people when your project is completed?

5. What criteria will you use to judge your own research?
## Worksheet: Articulating Your Question

1. **What is your general research question or topic?**

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

2. **What do you already know about it?**

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

3. **What do you believe about this topic?**

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

4. **What particular questions/issues must be addressed in order for you to be satisfied with your project?**

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
Research Relationships

While some teacher researchers enjoy working alone on independent projects, most prefer to work with a partner or group. The collegial conversations that result are often the most valued aspect of teacher research.

Collaborating can help you to expand your time, your resources, and your ideas. Collaborating can also give you support and encourage accountability—sometimes it's easier to complete the work you've planned when you know a partner or group is counting on you.

How do you find research partners? You can collaborate with teachers, students, parents or anyone else who shares your interests and concerns. Some people like to work with colleagues from their own school who can share many of their experiences; others enjoy the fresh insights they get from working with colleagues from other schools or districts. Many teacher researchers collaborate with their students in their research; a few are beginning to develop collaborative research plans with parents.

If you are working with a partner or group, you may find it helpful to plan a communication strategy: Will you have weekly meetings? Phone calls? Exchange log books or journals? Meet in the staffroom for coffee each afternoon? Review progress with your class at the end of each day? Who else needs to know what's going on? The Appendix offers a number of specific ideas about group work.

Whether you work alone or with a partner, time is always a problem. How can you fit your research into your schedule?

- Choose wisely—Your research should be closely tied to your highest priorities as a professional.
- Find release time—Is there support for your research team?
- Schedule your time in new ways—Does new time appear?
- Use resource people—Are you aware of your resources?
- Delegate to others—Do you delegate where appropriate?
- Consider new collaborations—Is there room for more?

"I grew quite close to my research group, thinking about them when I was away from them. I could actually have fun, take risks, and grow within an understanding group."

"So many things are on my mind at the moment ... HOW AM I GOING TO FIND THE TIME FOR THIS PROJECT?"
Worksheet: Drafting Your Plan

Research Question:

Potential information sources or methods ...

Work with ...

Start by ...

Find out ...

(Use a separate sheet for each specific question/topic.)
Appendix 2: Self Assessment Tool

February 3, 1996

Dear Students,

At the beginning of the year, I suggested to you that the Visual Arts program should contain a variety of processes. I urged you to work in your sketch book - daily if possible. Class time was provided (formal instruction once a week, and up to three periods a week in the sustained silent period) in the first term.

We are now well into the second half of the year, and as you have noticed, guided practice is now formally provided every morning during the Morning Music Program. I want to take time now to evaluate not only the sketchbooks, but the different ways that you have been using your time. Please read over all of the questions, and then go back and answer them. In the section "comments" please ask any questions, or make any comments relevant to the use of Sketchbooks in the classroom. You may wish to keep this questionnaire to discuss with your parents in the upcoming Student Led Conferences.

1. I find sketching easy no sometimes yes very much

EXPLAIN: ..............................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

2. I am drawing more now, than before Xmas. no sometimes yes very much

EXPLAIN: ..............................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

3. I am able to see progress in my work no sometimes yes very much

EXPLAIN: ..............................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

4. I discuss my work with my peers. no sometimes yes very much

EXPLAIN: ..............................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
5. I like guided assignments during the Morning Music Program.

   no    sometimes    yes    very much

EXPLAIN..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

6. Seeing the teacher's sketchbook helps me in my work. no sometimes yes very much

EXPLAIN..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

7. I often want to draw, but don't know what to do or where to start.

   no    sometimes    yes    very much

EXPLAIN..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

8. I like working in my sketchbook. no sometimes yes very much

EXPLAIN..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

9. I work in my sketchbook out of class no sometimes yes very much

EXPLAIN..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
10. When I answer questions like this, it helps me to think about my work.

no sometimes yes very much

EXPLAIN

When you look at my sketch book, this is what I want you to notice:

During SSD/DDR/SSW I usually choose:

BECAUSE:

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:
Appendix 3: Self Assessment Tool

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT
NAME: ___________________________
DATE: ___________________________

1. List the works in your portfolio.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Media/Technique</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. If you were to choose two pieces of work from this portfolio as samples of your best quality work which ones would it be and why? (discuss where your images came from and how you developed them?)

3. What media and techniques did you enjoy working with the most and why?

4. What media and techniques did you find to be most challenging and why?

5. Choose 2 works which you feel you could rework to make more successful. Which works would you redo and how would you improve them?

6. Do you feel your theme development was successful? Why or why not? What could you do to make your theme more significant, relevant, and exciting?

7. What art goals are you setting for yourself for the summer?

8. Do you find it beneficial to have art teachers that are practicing artists? Why or why not? Did it have any impact on you in the classroom?
Appendix 4: Image Bank Strategy

PICTURE FILES/IMAGE BANK PROJECT

For this project you are to collect as many images as possible that relate to the theme you have selected to develop. Images may come from magazines and assorted publications, personal photographs, photocopies or colour laser copies from books or reference materials, etc. In addition you will want to collect information about your topic or theme by reading and researching it, exploring how other artists may have worked with this theme, etc. There should be a written component to your theme development.

1. Brainstorm a minimum of 5 personally relevant and meaningful themes that you would be interested in working with over the course of the year.

2. Choose 1 of those themes and create an "ideas page" around it. (i.e. web your ideas, create a conceptual map, cluster your ideas........find a system that works for you.

3. Using your theme topic assemble a collection of images which relate to that theme. (also consider newspapers, catalogues, calendars, postcards, etc.)

4. Once the images have been assembled, consider the ways in which the collection might be categorized. If, as an example, you have selected the elderly as a theme, you may wish to now consider groupings according to such identifiers as: the elderly as consumer, the elderly in need of care, the elderly as caregivers, etc.

5. Once you have collected, categorized and grouped your images, develop a series of a minimum of ten questions which might be asked about your representations. Such questions could include: What kinds of characterizations of the elderly do these images suggest? Who produces these images? How might these images relate to images in art history? What is missing from these images? Etc.

6. These images will help you as you create your own original imagery relating to your theme. Throughout the contour line drawing project, printmaking unit, painting projects and some multi-media projects you will be drawing on the resources you have created. The images that you will create as a result of your research and image bank project require a rich, meaningful and indepth exploration of a topic/subject or theme. Make every effort to avoid trite, superficial or stereotypical treatment of your ideas. Give them every bit of your attention.

Project Due Date: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST, 1996