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## **Attitudes:** Mapping Lines of Demarcation in Art Education

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This essay explores the conscious and un-conscious divides art educators create as they map their careers as art educators. It begins with a discussion of possible causes for lines of demarcation to develop through examination of how art educators self-identify, the structure of teacher preparation programs at institutions of higher education, degrees in art education, and a visual and written narrative of my own journey navigating lines of demarcation within the profession. It closes with suggestions for strategies to diminish or erase the dividing lines that contribute to negative perceptions, attitudes (attitudes), low professional self-esteem, and teacher burnout.

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I have always considered myself an artist first and educator second, not unusual given that teaching is my second career. I hold undergraduate and graduate studio art degrees and continue to maintain a studio practice. After years of teaching, these roles have equalized and I consider myself an artist-educator. I first became aware of the divisive attitudes between “makers” and “teachers” as an undergraduate student, falling victim to the same ignorant attitudes of those proclaiming, “those who can, *do*; those who can’t, *teach*.” It did not occur to me at the time that my studio professors were in fact earning their living as teachers.

Unfortunately the field of art education nurtures these attitudes. They develop from within the art profession and spread outward, negatively impacting perceptions of the fields of visual art and art education. This essay maps those lines of demarcation that we as art educators consciously and unconsciously draw around ourselves and within the profession, examining how these metaphorical lines influence the *artitudes*<sup>1</sup> of others and ourselves about what it means to be an art teacher, artist-educator, teaching artist, etc. The profusion of descriptors alone is confusing, yet the need to label ourselves based on how we identify is a self-empowering act in a profession that is often marginalized within both the domains of art and education.

### Mapping Lines of Demarcation Labeling

There is ongoing debate and scholarship on how art educators classify themselves (Daichendt, 2009; Zwirn, 2005; Hickman, 2005). Are we artists who teach? Teachers who make art? Both? One or the other? And why do so many of us feel the need to make these distinctions? Typically the term artist-teacher or artist-educator, is used to “describe [their] dual practice or to emphasize the importance of art production in relation to [their] teaching” (Daichendt, 2009, p.33). The label implies a balance between the roles of making art and teaching with, through, and about art. But

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<sup>1</sup>*Artitudes* is a term I coined to describe the negative ways in which art and art education professionals perceive one another, the intersection of the domains of art and education, formal and informal training in art and art education, and artistic and pedagogical skill and practice.

it also calls into question why the term art educator is insufficient in describing these dual, mutually dependent roles, and suggests that “art education is best when practicing artists are in charge and disregards the importance of the education field” (Daichendt, 2009, p.33). Daichendt (2009) and others (Chapman, 1963; Hansel, 2005; Hickman, 2005; Horne, 1916) posit that the term “artist-teacher is not considered a dual role but a philosophy of teaching that involves the integration of artistic experiences in the classroom” in which teaching and making art, while difficult to balance, support each other (p. 33). One label should be sufficient to express this duality, however, because teaching is so undervalued as a profession compared to that of being an artist, and many in our field feel the need to clearly communicate that being an art educator means being a maker of art as well as a teacher of art and that a teacher’s personal art practice connects to how and what they teach. Several ethnographic studies have been conducted on this topic (Beudert, 2006; Graham & Zwirn, 2010; Reitman, 1990; Zwirn, 2005).

### Art Teacher Training

Many P-12 art educators decide to become art teachers because they enjoy art making and want to teach it to others (Graham & Zwirn, 2010). Not all look to teaching as an economic “fail safe” in case they don’t “make it” as artists. Others are trained artists who enter teaching through alternate routes with little or no formal pedagogical training. In researching art teacher preparation programs in the United States, Beudert (2006) found that of the 259 doctoral granting institutions of higher education (IHE), 123 offer art education programs at the baccalaureate, masters, and/or doctoral levels, few offer all three. At the time of Beudert’s (2006) study, 350 IHEs, both public and private, offered undergraduate and/or graduate degrees in art education. “75% of these art teacher preparation programs are located in colleges, schools, and departments of art” (p. 28).

Even though the majority of art teacher preparation programs are housed in departments, schools, or colleges of art and design, most have an affiliation with schools and/or colleges of education. The ex-

ception is art education programs housed in specialty IHEs like AICAD schools (Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design), such as MICA, RISD, and SAIC. This means that art education faculty straddle lines of demarcation and academic cultures that may differ greatly. These lines were not created by art education faculty, but must be navigated by faculty to build and maintain successful and effective art teacher preparation programs. Art education faculty often find themselves caught up in the attitudes created by these two different cultures, art/design education and teacher education, neither of which seem to fully understand what the field of art education is. This has been my experience, and art educator narratives (e.g., Beudert, 2006; Zwirn, 2005) echo this. The majority of these institutions have a small number of full-time art education faculty who find themselves crossing lines to attend meetings in both art/design schools/colleges/departments and schools/colleges of education, bridging curricular divides and advising all art education students.

A few of the art teacher preparation programs at these institutions, mostly those housed in independent colleges of art and design or IHEs that offer baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral programs ascribe to a philosophy of art education that emphasizes the importance of *art* in art education. For example at Teachers College, Columbia University, where I received my doctoral training, there are two art education doctoral programs: the Doctor of Art Education (EdD) and the Doctor of Education in the College Teaching of Art (EdDCTA), which I hold. According to Burton the EdDCTA "is intended primarily for graduate students who wish to teach studio art or take on an administrative job" (as cited in Beudert, 2006, p. 9).

At these institutions a balance between art skills and practice and pedagogical skills and practice is emphasized. What does this look like? At Teachers College EdDCTA students take most of the same courses as EdD students, but there are required education courses on how to teach art at the college level and required studio courses designed to assist the student in creating and mounting a studio capstone exhibition in addition to the written dissertation. At The Corcoran College of Art + Design, where I taught

previously, students had a rigorous program that included practicum experiences in a variety of art education settings with learners across the lifespan, a written research thesis, and participation in a studio capstone exhibition side-by-side with BFA and MA students in a variety of studio disciplines.

## Degrees

After examining how lines of demarcation are established and maintained in IHEs with art education programs, the next step is to look at what degrees are offered at these institutions and how these degrees further divide us as art educators, perpetuating attitudes that are then disseminated by us in our school communities.

To be considered a successful professional artist, one does not require a college degree in a studio art discipline or any degree at all. There have been many successful, self-taught artists, such as Jean-Michel Basquiat, and artists with degrees in non-art subjects, such as Pepon Osorio, whose degree is in social work. Artistic competence and recognition in the art world is more subjective, dependent upon the aesthetic opinions of critics and art writers, the artist's creative concept, reputation, and execution of artistic ideas. Duchamp's *Urinal* effectively illustrates the subjectivity of artistic success. If the person is already considered an artist, then anything they say is art could be considered art. The work of contemporary artist Bruce Nauman addresses this phenomenon. However, in the education domain, degrees hold sway. The degrees one holds and the reputation of the IHE in which one obtained them are key markers of success as a professional educator. An MFA from Yale is more likely to land one a college position teaching studio art than a MAT degree in art education.

In researching the types of degrees offered at IHEs with art education programs, Beudert (2006) found degree and certification options including Bachelor of Arts in art education, Bachelor of Fine Arts in art education, Bachelor of Science in education, and Bachelor of Science in art education. Some institutions have combined degree programs where students focus on studio art courses at the undergraduate level and then spend a fifth year completing education courses to ob-



Figure 1. Lines of Demarcation.

tain a master's degree in art education. The most typical combination is that of BFA/MAT. In undergraduate art education programs, credit hour requirements in art range from 30-36 studio and nine art history credits to as many as 75 art/art history credits in combined degree and BFA in art education programs. According to Beudert's research, at the graduate and post-baccalaureate (certification) levels, IHEs offer Master of Arts in Education, Master of Arts in Art Education, Master of Arts in Teaching Art, and Master of Science in Education. This variety in teacher preparation/certification programs is influenced by state certification requirements and licensure reciprocity in at least 42 states. "Studio courses tend to include foundational courses, together with a few courses in specialist areas such as painting, ceramics, printmaking and digital

media" (Beudert, 2006, p.34). In reviewing pre-service art education programs for her research, Beudert (2006) found that most of these programs were studio focused and this was "particularly evident in programs where art education coursework is limited to methods courses and the student teaching practicum" (p. 34).

Today with the rapid growth of charter schools and independent schools, most of which do not require teachers to hold a license to teach, many of the art teachers in school districts, like Washington, DC where 49% of the schools are charter schools, are

not licensed. In my experience as the former director of the only art education program in Washington, DC, the training of most unlicensed teachers in these schools ranged from little to no formal training in art, to degrees in an art discipline with little to no training in pedagogy, to a balance of both. These inconsistencies in training requirements contribute to the attitudes expressed and perpetuated by art educators toward their peers.

### Navigating Lines of Demarcation: My Own Journey

After eight years in the corporate world, I decided to return to school and a career in art. This led me to pursue an MFA in printmaking with the thought of teaching studio courses at the college level. This was much easier said than done. Five years, a studio, and many exhibitions later, I was still looking for a college teaching job when I decided that I should pursue an

alternate route to teaching, obtaining a license to teach art at the P-12 level, preferably high school, and segue to college level teaching from there. As a high school art teacher, I delighted in attending NAEA conferences to meet other P-12 art teachers, attend hands-on demonstrations of studio processes, and try out new art materials. At the time I did not notice the lines of demarcation at these conferences between the three populations represented: P-12 educators, college educators, and museum educators.

After deciding that I wanted an art teaching career at the college level, I once again returned to graduate school to obtain an EdDCTA from Teachers College, Columbia University. My spirit soared. I'd found the place where studio and art education research came together in a happy marriage. For that brief time I had collegial relationships with other artist-educators and museum educators who believed art education was equally about making, studying, and researching visual problems. As I attended conferences, my interests shifted. I was no longer attending sessions geared toward P-12 educators, but those related to topics and research in higher education. I had unconsciously crossed over one line of demarcation.

Once I began teaching at Tyler School of Art, Temple University, I realized how divided our profession was. I clearly recall being introduced to studio faculty as new art education faculty with a doctorate degree in art education *and* a MFA in printmaking. Many gave me puzzled looks, as if to say, why are you in art education then? Why would you ever want to do that?

My classes at Tyler/Temple were an interesting mix of BFA students seeking licensure, BA in studio art students, and BS in art education students seeking licensure. There were so many divisive attitudes from these three groups that I had to stop class to remind them that in my space they were all on the same plane, equally capable of becoming competent and confident art teachers. But I could not really blame the students for their attitudes because their attitudes mimicked those of their professors.

As I got to know the Philadelphia area, I met many highly creative art teachers. I placed students with them for pre-practicum experiences. Many of these

art teachers took me aside and said things like, "I'd love to have a *BFA* student next time," or "could you send me a *BFA* student as a student teacher?" What's up with that? The message this communicated was that our BA and BS students were not as prepared, which I know was not the case. These attitudes about the competence of art educators based on their degree programs have been handed down to us and perpetuated by us, so much so that we have internalized them and used them against each other, creating lines of demarcation within our own profession that mirror the divisive attitudes imposed upon us from outside of art education.

I dealt with similar attitudes from colleagues at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Students who had applied to the BFA program but fell short of the qualifications were urged to apply to the BA in art with licensure option, as if to say, "your mediocre art skills will be welcomed in art education." Many students in the BA program never bothered to apply to the BFA and were some of the most gifted and talented in terms of art skills. They did not feel the need to extend their time in school to complete a BFA with licensure. The BA took less time and provided the same end result—a license to teach art. Needless to say, all of these attitudes made these teaching environments difficult. Thrown into the mix was a general misunderstanding about what constitutes research for tenure and promotion in art education from my department chair and many of my art history and studio colleagues.

I must say that my time at the Corcoran College of Art + Design was the best in terms of the attitudes of faculty and students toward art education. Perhaps this was because my colleagues respected *me* as both an artist and educator, and/or because our undergraduate art education students were working toward a combined BFA/MAT, completing an additional 39 credits in art education coursework on top of their BFA degree requirements. Whatever the case, divisive attitudes were minimized and not held by students.

I have just begun teaching at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and feel very welcomed by studio and art education faculty alike. Much like at the Corcoran, there exists a collegiality within

the School of the Arts amongst all the departments. Right before school started, I decided one great way to get to know city public school art teachers would be to attend the beginning of the year professional development (PD) session. There were two, one for secondary and one for elementary art teachers. The elementary PD was amazing. The teachers came in with art works they had created over the summer to display around the room gallery style and the PD was lively and creative. The secondary PD was more of a social event, with teachers grouped in cliques lamenting what they did not have; and when I passed around a survey and asked how VCU could support them in future professional development workshops, many wrote, "please send some BFA in studio art students to us to speak to our classes about developing a portfolio, participate in student critiques, and work with us on projects in our classes." At VCU undergraduate art education students receive a BFA, but I knew this was not what they were referring to. Why do we draw these lines of demarcation within our own profession based upon the art education degree we receive? Shouldn't we be more concerned about increasing the quality of education we provide to art education students? When will we stop categorizing one another based upon the type of degree we receive?

### **Erasing Lines of Demarcation**

How can we better educate our professional peers about the impact of these attitudes? What can we do to stop the cycle? Somewhere along the way with all the standards and assessment demands placed on teachers in any discipline by state and national authorities, the time to make art has been subsumed by "requests" to develop arts integrated curriculum, assessments that measure student learning, and administrative duties that have nothing to do with teaching art. Additionally, professional development for art teachers very seldom includes art making, but focuses more on standards, integrated curriculum practices, and assessments (Allison, 2013). These

factors not only contribute to teacher burnout, but also make it very difficult for art educators to find time to be personally creative outside of the demonstrations they make for the lessons they teach. This not only negatively impacts their growth and creativity as artists, but their creative potential as teachers of art. Add to this the criteria peers in the profession use to measure effectiveness as art educators and the result is decreased self-confidence and a need to reach out to "real" artists to assist in effectively teaching P-12 learners.

What are some possible solutions toward breaking this cycle and erasing these lines of demarcation? Perhaps a start would be some standardization in teacher preparation programs based on states with the maximum requirements for both art and education courses; creating one undergraduate degree (two at most if an IHE doesn't offer BFA degrees) preferably a BFA in art education; balancing program requirements to reflect rigor in both art skill and practice and pedagogical skill and practice; professional developments and summer institutes that encourage artistic skill development; annual art teacher exhibitions; panel discussions on the topic of divides within the profession at local, state, national, and international art education conferences; and, finally, encouraging NAEA leaders to develop a strategic plan to eliminate these divides through creation of a diverse panel of art educators to research and make recommendations. We must find ways to privilege and support art teachers' identities as teachers and artists. "Art teachers need the opportunity to create art and attend to their individual artistic development. This would enable them to help students in their classrooms achieve artistic success" (Allison, 2013, p. 180).

### **Notes**

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