

Mentor's Introduction to Meadow Jones

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Dr. Meadow Jones' work needs to be read. I'm not just saying that her scholarship is worthy of your time and attention; I'm saying that—as much as Dr. Jones' work is rich *and* new in its content—her writing as an “object” needs to be taken in through the slow and contemplative act of reading. Dr. Jones' writing needs to be encountered and this is your opportunity. The way we (the readers/observers) take on words is—sometimes—as a means to comprehend someone else's ideas; but we also come to writing as an artform that opens up vistas through which we imagine *an* Other's world. When an artist successfully creates this window to peer into, we grow in our empathy and understanding of the world we inhabit collectively. What I'm saying here isn't anything new, but it is a rarer occurrence in writing that comes from academic activities, resources, and infrastructures. Dr. Jones has created such an artwork.

I couldn't be more proud to present to you this sliver taken from Dr. Meadow Jones' dissertation—*Archiving the Trauma Diaspora: Affective Artifacts in the Higher Education Arts Classroom!* I can confidently say that this is one of the best dissertations I've read in the porous area of arts-based research. It is excellent in both content and form. As a former chair of the AERA's (American Educational Research Association's) ABER (Arts Based Educational Research)

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Dissertation award, I have had the privilege of truly seeing some of the best work that is being done by new colleagues all over the world in this area of qualitative inquiry. Dr. Jones' work is head and shoulders above a large percentage of the work that I've seen. This is not only the case in terms of scholarly rigor, sincerity, and depth; but also, in the power and precision of the art that Dr. Jones has created, both in the inquiry and representation of her work. It's hard to believe, but many times dissertations researched and written through an arts-based method suffer from an underdeveloped literature review of the forms that the very inquiry is professing expertise on. This is not the case with Dr. Jones' stellar contribution. As an artwork, Dr. Jones' dissertation demonstrates palpably the affect of the pedagogical and pastoral process that occurred between researcher and subject. All the while this is never sensationalized, nor treated as the currency on which Dr. Jones' interests are leveraged. It truly is a most compassionate work that nevertheless opens up new pathways to think about art, pedagogy, trauma, and the self.

I could not recommend this writing more! I give Dr. Jones and this work my wholehearted recommendation without the slightest reservation. Read and assign this literature. It's a crucial stone on a path that many of us are simultaneously building and walking on.