

## Mentor's Introduction to Emily Keenlyside

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I am very pleased to introduce the dissertation research of Dr. Emily Keenlyside, whose work in museum education – and very specifically, in the understudied subject of the training of museum educators and guides – works between theory and practice. An experienced museum educator and trainer of museum educators herself, Emily is fascinated by how learning happens. She is particularly attuned to the kind of transformative learning that can provoke individual and social change. Emily works with others to discover both how such learning happens, whether that be in museums or in research projects themselves, as well as how individuals and institutions can support and actualize the realizations of such learning.

Using interviews and focus groups, Emily's dissertation research engages the experiences and wishes of museum educators in Canada and Scotland during the five-year span of her doctoral studies. Her work began about the time of two disputed 'anniversaries,' the 150<sup>th</sup> of Canadian confederation and the 375<sup>th</sup> of settlers' founding of the city of Montreal, and continued through the worst/first devastations of the COVID-19 pandemic, the police murder of George Floyd and others, and the upsurge of the vocal, international social movements related to Black Lives Matter, in particular. Amid continuing

*Marilyn Zurmühlen Working Papers in Art Education 2022*

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global/local pushes for decolonization, reconciliation, restitution, equity, social justice, and racial justice, museum educators considered with Emily how and whether they were able to support the work of change in the art museum, and what the role of the museum educator, even the museum itself, might be as we strive to create a better, more just, and more inclusive world.

Alongside her participants' voices, Emily's dissertation research includes her own: drawing on feminist standpoint theory she situates herself as a woman who enjoys white, middle-class privilege, and has a long history of work in cultural institutions, museums, and galleries. She also traces the arc of her own doctoral learning via a series of meta-narratives that connects each of the three articles that comprise her thesis: Emily has created a 'dissertation by manuscript'. This format allows her to incorporate three published or near-published articles as the heart of her dissertation, each an articulation of a particular aspect of her research with museum educators. She chose this format over the long single text of the chapter-based thesis, hoping that each article's shorter length and relatively rapid turnaround might allow her to make a suite of immediate, readable contributions to other practitioners in her field. The spinal cord of connection between the three manuscripts is the meta-narrative that addresses Emily's own learning and positions her research conversations themselves as sites of learning. As such, this series of bridging texts might be particularly relevant to the academic reader. A careful, delicate, and dense work of multiple parts, Dr. Emily Keenlyside's dissertation text is anticipated by her article for the *Marilyn Zurmuehlen Working Papers in Art Education*. Here, Emily makes very clear how much she wishes her work to be of service to the professionals she respects so much, according to the justice values that guide her.