

mentor's introduction

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Joanne McNeal's study is important for a number of reasons. It will focus on more than art forms; it will give voices to artists. It will give voices to women, particularly women in the North. It will give status and visibility to the "crafts" not just the "fine arts" as defined by the eurocentric Great Tradition. It will have implications for the art curriculum in Northern schools and colleges and may cause Southerners to re-think their notions of "art" and its roles in people's lives. This study relates well to DBAE, particularly to what Karen Hamblen has called the second generation of discipline-based art education. Joanne McNeal will study histories of Northern women's art; she will look at the way the work of indigenous and other Northern women's work has been, and is, discussed (aesthetics/criticism); and she will study women's art production in the Canadian Arctic. All of this will lead to proposals for curriculum development that can either be consistent with, or challenge, DBAE theory.

Although she acknowledges a number of limitations in applying her ethnographic perspective, Ms. McNeal is extremely well prepared to undertake this study. She has worked as both a teacher-educator and an arts festival organizer in the Canadian Arctic.