



UNITED STATES SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION THROUGH ART

ZIEGFELD AWARD 2013

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Thank you United States Society for Education through Art (USSEA) for the honor of this award! I am deeply humbled by the recognition with this prestigious award by USSEA. I also thank Elizabeth Delacruz for her nomination, which was an honor

in itself; and for her coordination and time that nominations require. I appreciate the support of many colleagues and students, with whom I share this award, as my life is enriched with the collaborations and dialogue with you all.

BUILDING A CYBERHOUSE

The metaphor of house provides opportunities to explore gendered spaces, the body, society, power, and privilege. Many artists have played with the metaphor of house, and I have too in creating CyberHouse. House is a metaphor for the interconnection of seemingly disparate functions. The Greek word *oikos*, literally house, means all aspects of what works together to make a house function as a whole. House connotes an ecological system of people, institutions, and ideas connected to each other in complex ways. The virtual house is a collaborative, fluid entity that grows from the participation of its use.

Building architectural elements inform the CyberHouse game vocabulary in that these building attributes (e.g., wall, threshold, ceiling, step, window, foundation, structure, frame) reflect human experiences by their metaphorical use in everyday language (e.g., come up against a *wall*, on the *threshold*, she has hit the *glass ceiling*, one *step* at a time, *window* of opportunity, *foundations* of life, *structure* of an organization, *frame* your ideas). Figure 1 is a visualization of these concepts that a player encounters after creating a self-icon as one's avatar is conveyed in stepping into mirror in the foyer of the house. When the player enters the house, the idea is that

BUILDING BRIDGES

In this presentation today I employ the metaphor of house, to interweave three areas that I have been forming with colleagues and students: Building Transcultural Dialogue, Building Participation, Building Capacities for Translate-abilities, Response-abilities, Sense-abilities.



one is entering self. The house is animated to look like it is breathing and maintains a soft audible respiratory rhythm (see CyberHouse at <http://dpcp.emitto.net/cyberhouse/>).

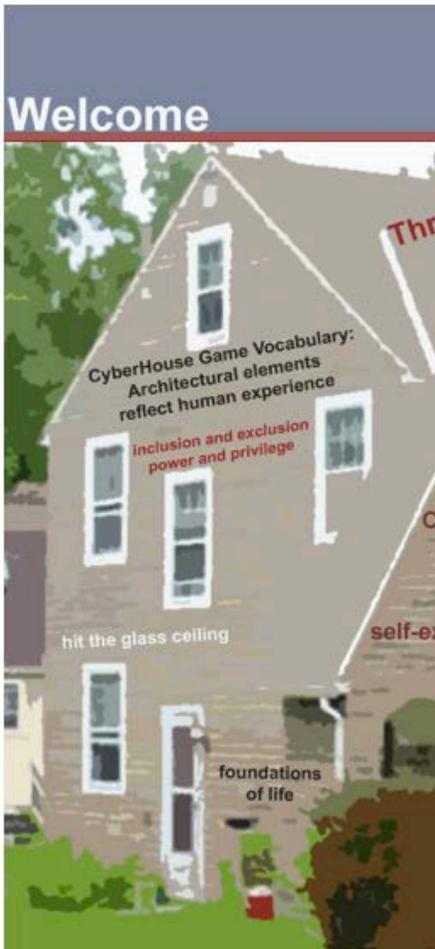


Figure 1. CyberHouse at <http://dpcp.emitto.net/cyberhouse/>

CyberHouse, a virtual world, is a game of self-referential organization of body through landmarks in one's life to develop agency in reflections on self in relation to others, and possibilities to reconstitute self and the world.

Actor-network theory (ANT), an approach for the study of innovative translations among technological, natural, and social systems in which the separation of human and non-human elements is difficult, guides my development and analysis of CyberHouse regarding how it functions pedagogically in terms of transformation, empowerment, and reciprocal exchange. Actor-network theory focuses on tracing the transformations of both human and non-human actors, in which each element is viewed as a network in itself. In this analysis, Actor-network theory problematizes body and landmark disconnections in a Web-based environment designed for the critique and transformation of patriarchal structures.

The building of CyberHouse as virtual learning space was joined by an intertextual exploration of house with colleagues in Finland where I taught in 2006, supported by a Fulbright, at what is now renamed Aalto University. Also, the building of intertextual house was constructed in working with Ugandan colleagues and students. I taught onsite at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda in spring 2010, where I facilitated the *Transcultural Dialogues* project, that I will return to shortly.

Feminist cultural critic bell hooks sees "freedom as always

and intimately linked to the issue of transforming space" (1995, p. 147). She suggests that we think critically about the spaces that we inhabit and in discussion with others to gain "a concrete acknowledgement of [our] reality" (p. 146). She adds, "many narratives of resistance struggle from slavery to the present share an obsession with the politics of space, particularly the need to construct and build houses" (p. 147).

House is a metaphor for body, community, and a place that can confine or build confidence. House is symbolic of social class, values, privilege, and at one time home ownership was necessary to vote in the United States. House is both the ultimate personal possession and can denote a collective. House is a social space, physical space, and a metaphysical space. Metaphysically, house constitutes a symbolic structure of human experience. House is a lived body, a social body, and a body image.

An individual house is associated with females (i.e., birthplace, nest, nurturing space, womb). Houses of government are associated with males. These gendered constructions can change. A house can be a refuge, a preservation of traditional values, a core education center, a middle-

class notion, and can refer to concepts of family. "The dream house is a uniquely American form, because for the first time in history, a civilization has created a utopian ideal based on the house rather than the city or nation" (Hayden, 1984, p. 38). House as an *American Dream* is a symbol of upward mobility, yet housing is a common human need. A house can be a site of isolation. However, in CyberHouse, it is a site of collective activity where the community of players is encouraged to work together to decode and recode the messages of their house, their symbolic collective body. CyberHouse is a community in cooperative living, under the same virtual roof, with windows of opportunity offered by contributing to the well-being of others. There is not a head of household in CyberHouse. It is an alternative form of housing, not a single nuclear family dwelling. It is a means to dismantle the master's house (Lorde, 1984). My research on the theoretical framework and pedagogy of CyberHouse has been developed in several published articles (e.g., Keifer-Boyd, 2009; 2012).

Building Transcultural Dialogue: Global Perspectives in Research & Teaching

Transcultural Dialogue is an action research project, begun in 2007, with colleagues at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, and University of Helsinki. The transcultural dialogue concerns contemporary visual culture in U.S., Ugandan, and Finnish contexts in a project designed to erode assumptions, ignorance, and misunderstandings. We are in the fourth iteration, and the next transcultural dialogue is planned for spring 2014.

Transcultural Dialogue involves positionality, community, voice, reciprocal-reflexivity—all important to feminist research and social justice activism. Reciprocal-reflexivity involves seeing from multiple positionalities, revealing differential power relations, and disclosing who benefits from the research. I briefly introduce my *Transcultural Dialogue* project, as example of a process for a postcolonial feminist critique that maps "the nuances of hegemony and resistance in visual texts that are embedded in larger systems of representation" (Parameswaran, 2008, p. 418). It is conversational performative text, which is a form of cultural critique in that more than one perspective is included, often as counterpoints, and viewers or readers are invited to participate in the dialogue with auditory commentary that surrounds the

artwork. The transcultural dialogue is the content for a community of practice to negotiate a collaborative artwork based on their dialogue. (I welcome your comments on the Spring 2013 Transcultural Dialogue at http://cyberhouse.arted.psu.edu/322/projects/3c_tdv2013.html)

In the first iteration of the Transcultural Dialogue project, Ugandan graduate art students selected websites that each saw as representing the visual culture of the United States, while the United States undergraduate and graduate art education students selected websites that they believed represented the visual culture of Uganda. We looked at what was bookmarked to represent each group's country, read the rationales for the selected representations and responded whether, how, and to what extent these representations related to individuals' lives. Participants created visual artworks using the dialogue as the content for the artworks and responded to questions about their subjective relationship to the images, and articulated what knowledge is needed to understand the artworks.

In asking the ontological question, *What is real?* the theory in this participatory arts-based action research, is that reality

transforms in the sharing and in the exchanges with others different from oneself. In the third iteration of Transcultural Dialogues, I, along with my colleagues in Uganda (Richard Kabiito) and Finland (Martina Paatela-Nieminen), invited our students to bring metaphors, beliefs, experiences, and familiar sayings (e.g., idioms) or folklore to the group as content from which to question assumptions of the neutrality of knowledge. The prompts for the dialogue generate transformative learning such as evident in this student response:

I am obviously not very good at taking someone else's perspective. It seems that my interpretation of someone else's ideas and beliefs reveals more about my own beliefs than theirs. Even in my effort not to stereotype I have never-the-less done exactly that. My history and experiences have influenced my opinions of others and my ignorance has become clear. Thank you for sharing those details about your family; it makes [me] reconsider completely my previous response. (October 2011)

When discourse is the content of collaborative artworks by those

generating the discourse, I ask students how they see their subjectivity in the artwork they produced in negotiation with each other in the artmaking process and its signification.

There is evidence of dialogue that began to change perspectives by learning of other "readings" of the artwork. For example, below are excerpts from the Spring 2013 Transcultural Dialogue:

USA man: "Great! I didn't see the association with the color of her dress and the flowers on her head! What a fantastic way to break through stereotypes, by using them, to promote a collective identity."

Finnish woman: "Thank you! I am glad if you liked it and that I was able to evoke thoughts. I would like to specify that the flowers on her head is part of Finnish countryside romantic, which is very much used in advertisements."

Finnish woman: "[USA man], you had such an interesting point. You see heterosexuality, femininity, traditional values and abundance in the picture. However to the Finnish person this

picture is a bit confusing, we might see just ethnicity. Those things you mentioned are there, but the person is 'wrong' because she represents the discriminated minority."

USA man: "Yes. My reading of the image was different because I didn't know the codes within the image for Finnish people. The image hailed certain aspects of my culture and identity and naturally I went to that reading first before trying to negotiate the meaning of the dress and the woman's ethnicity."

This sharing of readings (i.e., the dialogue on DIIGO sticky notes near the image on the website) laid the foundation for sharing idioms as culturally-specific public pedagogy that is familiarly conveyed through personal spheres of influence and culturally maintained in visual media on the Internet and elsewhere. This art lesson is an example of how to look deeply into how one's own beliefs shape what we see, and how to see from multiple perspectives.

Idioms convey cultural ways of seeing—MAKING VISIBLE values through culturally specific humor and conveyed through images directly (e.g., omelette, curl, chin)

or indirectly as with the selected images (e.g., lottery ticket, waiting so long one becomes a skeleton, nail in hand, Moomin characters, plastic surgery), which communicate transculturally.

education from which have flowered diverse forms of feminist art. The bold and uncharted development of a feminist art program, at Cal-State, Fresno, was further developed when it was moved to Cal-Arts and then to the Woman's Building in Los Angeles. These feminist art programs educated not only

goal in 2007 of a permanent exhibition of *The Dinner Party* at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. In addition to the onsite archive at Penn State of Chicago's teaching projects, a 'living' online curriculum facilitates encounters with *The Dinner Party* artwork to

"better understand women's experiences ... It is the history of 1,038 religious and state leaders, scholars, orators, scientists, philosophers, artists, authors, musicians—a story of gifted intellect, courageous acts, indomitable spirit" (Constance Bumgarner Gee in the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection Penn State: <http://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/>).

artists
but
also



**Building Participation: Feminist Archival Sensibilities
The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection**

Judy Chicago is a founder of the feminist art movement; a pioneer who diffracted art world barriers and challenged societal perceptions of art, artists, education, and women. In 2011, Judy Chicago donated materials from her teaching projects (1970-2005) to Penn State Special Collections Library.

Judy Chicago has planted strong roots of feminist art

audiences—a necessity for the perseverance to create the groundbreaking artwork, *The Dinner Party*. Artworld influential critics (e.g., Hilton Kramer and Robert Hughes) belittled *The Dinner Party* for being pedagogical, and they did not appreciate the feminist content of the education. But MANY did.

The artwork and its provocative form and content challenged societal perceptions about art and women. There is an extraordinary story of Judy Chicago's ongoing educational mission in her founding *Through the Flower*, which achieved its

After 30 years of creating art, Judy Chicago returned to teaching in the late 1990s to further develop feminist art pedagogy. The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection at Penn State includes videos, photographs, and written documents (by Judy Chicago) about her development of content-based participatory feminist art pedagogy.

My research in this particularly house building project concerns building an architecture for participation with the digital

interface with the Collection, and exploring a feminist archival sensibility in *Teaching Conversations*, as well as looking deeply into approaches to collaboration that is part of Judy Chicago's pedagogy and artmaking.

Feminist activist art pedagogy, such as that developed by artist Judy Chicago in her teaching projects—*Womanhouse* (1971-1972), *At Home* (2001-2002), and *Envisioning the Future* (2003-2004)—involve guiding participants to identify concerns arising from their life experiences and to deeply explore such issues through research. She advocates that research is an important part of the process in creating content-based art (Keifer-Boyd, 2007).

Chicago's teaching methodology, similar to the way she approaches art making, begins with self-exploration that guides content searches as arts-based research to situate individual experience within larger socio-political, institutional, and/or environmental issues and contexts. Her methodology guides how to translate personal experience into content-based visual form that informs and engages a larger audience than oneself in that particular content. Laura Meyer and Faith Wilding, Fresno Feminist Art Program alumni, describe: "Pedagogy

and artmaking were inextricably intertwined. Research, self-examination, and discussion fed the artmaking process, and making art was a means of producing and sharing knowledge" (Fields, 2012, p. 60).

Teaching Conversations is a project I initiated in fall 2011 with the formation of a group of feminist colleagues at Penn State in architecture, film, communications, art history, theatre, visual arts, art education, English/utopian studies, information science and technology, curriculum and instruction, archives, Jewish studies, and women's studies. We began to engage in conversations together in fall semester 2011 about the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection; and especially about ways to use it in our curriculum. Our conversations have been recorded and transcribed for inclusion in the Judy Chicago archive. Student work created as part of diverse curricular engagement with the Judy Chicago Collection at Penn State will be exhibited throughout the campus in spring 2014 as part of the campus wide celebration of Judy Chicago's archive. Judy Chicago describes:

After nearly a decade of what I describe as "male drag" (i.e., making art which disguises the

gender of the female artist), I rebelled and sought to unite my gender and my artmaking by constructing a feminist art practice that encouraged—rather than discouraged—young women from exploring their own experiences as potential content for artmaking. (in Keifer-Boyd, 2007)

G-STEAM: Building Capacities for Translate-abilities, Response-abilities, Sense-abilities

The Gender and STEAM Research Group (G-STEAM) was established in 2007 to foster and facilitate collaborative, transdisciplinary research and teaching about gender within the intersections of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM). This group, which meets monthly, shares work-in-progress on topics of gender and feminism within and across the arts, humanities, and sciences. I have coordinated, co-convened, and participated in G-STEAM for the past five years.

Our work has developed creative collaborations resulting in a National Science Foundation grant, publications, and in international and national presentations. Federal agencies and the United States Congress

are considering a STEM to STEAM Council of artists, designers, education, and business leaders to facilitate a comprehensive approach towards the incorporation of art and design into federal STEM education initiative (HRES 319H). Education policy is being reviewed for the inclusion of art and design in the STEM fields during reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The G-STEAM Research Group is building our capacity to translate STEM into STEAM, i.e., to translate scientific theory and research into visual and other art forms, and to use visual communication in scientific inquiry.

G-STEAM has partnered with FEMBOT and FemTechNet, which is a global network of hundreds of scholars, students and artists who work on, with, and at the borders of technology, science and feminism in a variety of fields including Science, Technology, and Society (STS); Media and Visual Studies; Art, Women's, Queer, and Ethnic Studies. The network has linked institutions of higher education around the globe through September-December 2013, in the first Distributed Online Collaborative Course (DOCC) in higher education. The design of this DOCC builds on two key notions: (a) that expertise is distributed within networks; and (b) that learning in a digital age is

fundamentally collaborative and participatory. This course is a feminist rethinking of education, that models technologically-enhanced learning through feminist principles and methods. I am one of the developers and facilitators of the course, AED/WMNST 597: Gender, Art & STEM, which will be offered in fall 2013, and partnered with FEMBOT and FemTechNet. In this course, we will use technology to enable interdisciplinary and international conversation while privileging situated diversity and networked agency.

G-STEAM Research Group: An immediate goal is to complete my research in 2013 supported by a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant "Communicating Research to Public Audiences on Gender Barriers" (#1002790). As the project evaluator, I am responsible for the summative evaluation activities. I designed the assessment surrounding the staged readings of *iDream* the play, gathered data, provided formative assessments to the NSF, and will write-up an overall assessment of this informal educational experience, including the achievement of the learning objectives and the overall project goals.

Building on the 2010-2013 NSF grant, publications, and presentations, with Eileen Trauth and Jennifer Wagner-Lawlor, we

are working to form teams including health, science, and art professionals. Each team will develop projects within their local site to address critical socio-environmental challenges, with an eye toward creating a sustainable educational/artistic product that also considers viable modes of communication and transmission in that location. Convening remotely after a year's work via social media and other communication technologies, we will reflect collaboratively on how convergences led each team toward re-visioning their own future, as an individual and as part of a community—how they were able to think through a local challenge by reflecting, speculating, assessing risk, responding. The goal in the sharing will be to discover and create connections in what may seem disparate projects so that local site-specific work is responsible to global impact.

We emphasize translate-ability of specialized ways of knowing among scholars even in (supposedly) widely separated fields of expertise. We present an embodied curricula as learning processes that welcome critique, and embrace a notion of creativity as a *social* process (Sullivan, 2007) engaging translate-abilities, sense-abilities, and response-abilities. The in-between spaces where

translations (Fenwick & Edwards, 2012) occur when artists and scientists collaborate in creative spaces, if creativity is understood as metaphor-making (Keifer-Boyd, Wagner-Lawlor, & Trauth, in press).

The capacity for metaphor-making is crucial for *translate-ability* of diverse knowledges.

Sense-ability is relational-awareness of the sensations of emergent knowledge in its multifaceted forms of knowing.

Imagine a creative community building each other's *response-abilities* to take on the world's urgent problems.

STEAM Embodied Curricula is a mode of imaginative problem-solving requiring not just one expert perspective, but the play of multiple perspectives, each of which brings a different kind of knowledge or experience to creative enterprise. This view stresses the complex *social* nature of creativity. Creativity cannot merely be observed from an individual's cognitive perspective, but must be understood in relation to other salient aspects of the environment. One of those salient aspects must be *other individuals*—human, certainly, but also nonhuman; that is to say, we can frame our experiences in terms of human *ecology*, which foregrounds the interaction of

human beings in both cultural and natural environments.

STEAM Embodied Curricula require translations between artists and scientists, and many different *ways of knowing* to envision sustainable solutions to global challenges as variable as HIV/AIDS, energy sustainability, and climate change.

$1 + 1 = 2$ (in a base ten system)

$1 + 1 = 10$ (in base 2, digital systems of "on or off")

$1 + 1 = 3$ (from a social science heterosexual procreation system)

$1 + 1 = 1$ (in an incorporating system, if understood to join together)

$1 + 1 = 0$ (in a conflict system in which they mutually destroy each other)

Digital Feminists Mapping.

I conclude with some exciting examples of a STEAM embodied curricula in digital feminist mapping a global house in which connections are made between health, environmental, and social practices.

Envisioned and developed by Maya Lin, the *What is Missing?* Foundation mission is to create, through science-based artworks,

an awareness of the disappearance of species due primarily to habitat degradation and loss. "On average, every 20 minutes a distinct living species of plant or animal disappears" (Lin, 2013). Maya Lin Studio has created a digital memorial "not as a singular static object, but as a work that can exist in multiple forms and in multiple sites simultaneously" (Lin, 2013).

I, and others, are finding tools like Google maps very useful in building architectures of participation with a feminist sensibility of eco-social justice.

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