USER EXPERIENCE WITH ARCHIVES AND
FEMINIST TEACHING CONVERSATIONS
WITH THE JUDY CHICAGO ART EDUCATION COLLECTION

A Dissertation in
Art Education
by
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This is a case study of three university professors’ archival experience with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through their participation in feminist *Teaching Conversations*. The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection is a living archive of materials on feminist art pedagogy. *Teaching Conversations* is a feminist orientation to archives that is ongoing and involves participatory engagement and transdisciplinary dialogue to support teaching and using the collection for creating living curricula. The professors are situated in different disciplines and, differ in their teaching and research foci.

Using theories of archival experience (Ellsworth, 2005; Latham, 2007; 2011), I analyze conversational interviews for the purpose of understanding archival user experiences of feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. From conversations with the participants in this study, I present insights on dialogic, feminist, archival orientations that enhance access to archives for teaching and learning. My study reveals the use and engagement with archives as a social practice, where outreach, both on a personal and public level is vital to creating and sustaining a living archive. Through the exploration of three individual journeys with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, the study reveals the impact of the invitation to an archive as a sustaining and transformative force for teaching, learning, and community around collections.

The participants’ accounts reflect the complexities in the way information, ideas, and ways of approaching a subject in archives can be put into practice. As the three
participants engage and meaningfully learn about the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection in different ways, they prove that there are many ways of being in archives and many ways of using and engaging with archives. In the case of one participant (Ginny), her attraction to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and the feminist Teaching Conversations project is for the purposes of finding a community for feminist dialogue about teaching and intersecting disciplines to see new possibilities in teaching and in promoting social change. Her archival process is a social process as she learns about and engages with the collection through dialogue with her faculty peers and through her students. She contributes to the living archive by setting up the opportunity for students to be teachers with the materials. Another participant (Margo) comes to the collection looking for opportunities for scholarly activity with others, and to explore what feminist pedagogy is in practice. In Teaching Conversations, she seeks answers to the question of how best to apply the collection to her own practice and has difficulty finding direction. However, when she turns this process around and meaningfully applies herself to the collection from the standpoint of her own personal interests, she comes to a deep appreciation of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and Chicago’s feminist work. Through combined social and personal archival processes, she finds her own contribution to the living archive and the added bonus of a potential opportunity to create work with another colleague outside her discipline. The third participant (Rebecca), is a story of transformation through feminist Teaching Conversations, where she slowly finds a sense of empowerment as a teacher and renewed vision for her work. Through her experience of working on her own, to then sharing curriculum, and dialoguing with other teachers
also interested in the collection, she discovers her own potential—that her work is a valuable contribution to teaching the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, and a valuable contribution to the teaching profession that even transcends her own discipline.

Overall, this study broadens understanding about using art education archival records for transdisciplinary purposes and demonstrates the value of art education archives. It also contributes to current archival scholarship that seeks to expand on notions of art education archival materials as forms of information and things to experience (Latham, 2007; 2011), and archives as spaces for experiential pedagogy (Ellsworth, 2005), feminist scholarship, and activism (Eichorn, 2010; 2013). Based on the participants’ individual perspectives of the living archive, I suggest emerging qualities of a feminist archival orientation and a feminist archival sensibility. A feminist archival orientation involves flexible, iterative, dialogic, comprehensive, user-centered, and inviting methods, and frames the archive as living, participatory, and transdisciplinary. Feminist archival sensibilities conceptualize the archive as social, inclusive, democratic, and living.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archives are sites to find or create community, where one can dip into the wealth of history, see the present in new ways, and imagine the future. In the archive, you can discover quiet voices or start a conversation; you can seek inspiration, find insight to share or warnings to heed. Therefore, with this work, I acknowledge my appreciation for archives and I acknowledge my appreciation for those (past, present and future) stewards who dedicate themselves to making critical inquiry and engagement with materials from the past even possible.

This work was fostered through vital guidance and mentorship from faculty in the School of Visual Arts, Program of Art Education and in the Penn State University Libraries. I hold so much gratitude towards my advisors, Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd and Dr. Patricia Amburgy, for their amazing abilities in supporting my writing process and balancing each other so perfectly. I couldn’t have had a better team. I am also thankful for the collaboration between Karen and Jackie Esposito, and their offering me a role with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection coming to Penn State. I am thankful to Karen for the opportunity to be able to ride in on the wave that she created with Teaching Conversations. I also have tremendous gratitude for Jackie, for all those conversations in the library, whether in her office or at the reference desk. She definitely extended the invitation to the archive in so many ways that would never fit on this one page.

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EPIGRAPH

We live our lives; we tell our stories. The dead continue to live by way of the resurrection we give them in telling their stories. The past becomes part of our present and thereby part of our future. We act individually and collectively in a process over time, which builds the human enterprise and tries to give it meaning. Being human means thinking and feeling; it means reflecting on the past and visioning into the future. We experience; we give voice to that experience; others reflect on it and give it new form. That new form, in its turn, influences and shapes the way next generations experience their lives.

Gerda Lerner, 1997, p. 211
Chapter One: Archival Experience Case Study Introduction

In this qualitative case study of three professors, I explored their experiences with a library archive, through a particular archival orientation, which is a transdisciplinary, feminist project to inspire conversations around teaching and learning that support the creation of living curriculum. This feminist archival orientation is called Teaching Conversations. The collection, housed at the Pennsylvania State University Archives, holds materials that document feminist artist, Judy Chicago’s teaching practice, characterized by Keifer-Boyd (2007) as a feminist, participatory art pedagogy. My study explores participants’ experiences in Teaching Conversations with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection.

Although Teaching Conversations continues to evolve, during the time of my involvement, from Summer 2011, when the collection arrived, to Spring 2014, when the Judy Chicago Symposium occurred, the project was in its first iteration and comprised of a group of approximately 12 professors at Penn State, who gathered together from varying disciplines and departments to build understanding about the collection for teaching. From the data of sustained and iterative conversations from May 2013 to April 2014, I used inductive methods to understand how users, specifically three professors, experience the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through feminist Teaching Conversations. I developed my research question to not only draw conclusions about user experience with a specific archival orientation to a specific archive, but also to be able to explore the impact of a feminist archival orientation. Participants’ expressed their
experiences as they chose to reveal them to me in my conversations with them. My research question is: How do users experience the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through feminist *Teaching Conversations*?

Through the perceptions of three individuals learning about and using a particular archival collection that is a living archive, the study exposes the complex ways that users engage and meaningfully learn about collections, that archival processes can be both social and individual, and that they can be complicated, sometimes frustrating, and rarely are they linear modes of interpreting and building knowledge. Although the study reflects the complexities in the way information, ideas, and ways of approaching a subject in archives can be put into practice, it also reveals transformative ways of being in archives, the impact of the invitation to an archive through a feminist orientation to archives, as well as the emergence of feminist archival sensibilities.

**Statement of the Problem**

Experience with and awareness about archives and archival research (i.e., using primary source materials) can be helpful for determining the authenticity of information, and gaining factual knowledge and insight about the world. Using archives to explore a given topic can enhance understanding and provoke critical reflection and deep analysis, as well as diversify one’s perspective of the self and the world. Knowledge from secondary sources provides necessary voices to put together the story. However, knowledge based only on secondary sources, even when primary sources are easily accessible, depends solely on the stories and interpretations produced by others, and thus
the arguments and claims belonging to others. It also removes the learner from the kinds
of tacit knowledge and intangible encounters that can happen with artifacts, that are, or
were, at one time, part of the story.

Typical archival policies and practices of providing access to collections can be
barriers for a diverse range of users (particularly new users) to enter archives, let alone to
access them, effectively use them, and to appreciate their scholarly value (Craig, 2003;
Suarez & Suarez, 2007). Moreover, the primary perspective of most archival user studies
positions archives solely as sources for searching information, and emphasizes specific
user information searching behavior (Kuhlthau, 2004) and access points, rather than
seeing archives as sites for attracting a broad range of users and exploring what sustains
meaningful scholarly use. Most archival user perspectives embedded in archival policies
are based on, and created for, a typical user. Usually a collection comes in to an archive,
and goes through the processes of being described, organized, re-boxed, and made public,
before going onto the storage shelves ready for a user to come and request it.

Archives are not exclusive to the traditional historian who ventures in to mine or
excavate historical information. However, typically when a patron comes into an archive,
they are aided by an archivist who supports the individual’s inquiry by retrieving and
bringing their requested materials for quiet study in a reading room for patron to use on
site. Many archivists also make themselves available to work with groups and classes in
the archive. Therefore, the archive can also be a social space. As in the case of this study,
archives can be sites for creating and exploring pedagogy, activism, as well as attracting
and hosting difficult dialogue.
Significance of the Study

There are significant aspects to feminist Teaching Conversations and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, which makes studying experiences with the project particularly interesting for understanding access to art education archives and orientations to archives within archives practices. Both the collection itself and the feminist Teaching Conversations project are unique for using art education archives and for typical archives practices.

First, the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection is a living archive. The materials went through the usual archival mediation that happens when a collection is donated to an archive. However, within the acquisition of the collection (the legal transfer of ownership of the collection to an archive), the deed of gift outlined purposefully set archival policies that include the opportunity to capture, over time, what users do with the collection or how they repurpose it for other uses (if they choose to share their work). The deed of gift for the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection explicitly established parameters for archiving the documentation of user content, thus acknowledging the user as creator or author, participating in the archive through the work they do with the collection, in whatever format that might be.

Second, feminist Teaching Conversations is a uniquely user-created, transdisciplinary approach to archives, conceived and initiated by, art education and women’s, gender, and sexuality studies professor, Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd. Rather than being developed by an archivist, as is typical, Teaching Conversations is user-developed
and facilitated as a way of providing access to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection.

Feminist *Teaching Conversations* is intended to be an ongoing transdisciplinary project with feminist goals that address issues of gender, race, and social inequalities. With a unique social framework that attracts new and non-traditional users to the collection, it encourages a wide range of disciplinary foci and transformative, pedagogic possibilities. Therefore, as an access point and feminist orientation to the collection for a broad range of users, the project expands the notion of archives simply as information (Latham, 2007), and extends the parameters to become a site for experiential learning or pedagogy (Ellsworth, 2005) and feminist work (Eichorn, 2013) towards transdisciplinary goals.

In feminist *Teaching Conversations*, engaging and interacting with archives through dialogue is an invitation to discovery, to building understanding by offering sustained ways of encountering archival materials through multi-sensory modes. The project is not fixed with a specific start and finish or set outcome; rather, it should be understood as a multi-faceted, creative, and continuous dynamic made up of individuals, whose ideas generate other ideas. Although mining an archive is still something that *Teaching Conversations* supports, crucial to its feminist transdisciplinary intention, is that the project also expands this archive on feminist art pedagogy as a living archive, a site where new possibilities form that can transform teaching, as well as feminist activism and scholarship.

Through the simple act of extending an invitation to the collection and embracing a collaborative relationship with archivists to support a living archive, this study sheds
valuable insight on the impact of offering sustained opportunities for dialogue and pedagogical support around a collection, and on creating spaces in archives for meaningful pedagogy. I explore three users’ experiences of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through Teaching Conversations, revealing that feminist, user-driven, dialogic initiatives with archives can have significant consequences for teaching, learning, research, and creative practices, both individually and collectively. I must note here that as in any qualitative study, the focus is on particulars—on individuals’ described experiences—and while these experiences can inform us about overall experiences, they are not meant to be defined as universals. Moreover, the outcome of the conversations, the individual teaching projects, the use of the collection, and the archival experiences, ultimately depended on the participants’ choices and actions. Each one is uniquely specific to each individual; one perspective does not define the whole.

Structure of the Dissertation

Moving forward from this chapter, this dissertation is structured in the following way. Chapter Two covers aspects of the conceptual and historical concepts of the study and the broader context within the areas of knowledge that this study straddles—art education, archival studies, and feminist theories, which are provided in order to help the reader understand my perspective and approach in this study. I also discuss my research question, connecting the conceptual elements used in framing the research perspective. The broader conceptual frameworks encompass the notion of archives as places and objects to experience (Latham, 2007; 2011), and feminist pedagogy that includes
embodied ways of knowing (Ellsworth, 2005). My literature review covers definitions of the specific terms I use related to archives. The definition of archives within archival studies (library and information sciences) is ever expanding, especially with increased technological impact. With this in mind, a clarification of archives is explained as it relates to this study (in connection to the archives/user relationship and learning in archives), keeping in mind that, with regards to the acquisition of knowledge and learning, disciplines within education and archives also have varying perspectives as to how this works. Next, I discuss the relevance of using archives to the field of art education as well as the potential of archives for scholars across disciplines. I also discuss feminist perspectives on archives and archival practice. Chapter Three introduces feminist artist Judy Chicago and her collection on her teaching as part of the art education collections at the Penn State University Archive, including the contents of her collection to provide a background for the reader's conception of her teaching archive. Chapter Four outlines my strategy of inquiry and the methods used in collecting and analyzing my data. I also address the methodological issues that I encountered during the study. Chapter Five provides summaries about the Teaching Conversations participants that I interviewed for this study, and explains how I discovered, through coding and mapping my data, the specific dialogic themes that emerged in my findings. Then, based on the themes that emerged from the coding process, Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight discuss my findings through conversations with my participants’ on their experiences with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and Teaching Conversations. Chapter Nine follows with a discussion on what I learned from the research and how this new knowledge enhanced my perspective about using and experiencing archives. I conclude the dissertation with a
discussion on archives as social sites and how feminist *Teaching Conversations*

influenced my notions about what constitutes a feminist archival orientation as
cultivating a feminist archival sensibility. I conclude with implications for art education
and archives and possibilities for further research.
Chapter Two: The Conceptual and Historical Framework for this Study

This chapter explains the conceptual and historical framework for my study starting with an explanation of the research question and how this question evolved through my personal experience. I then discuss my theoretical lens in coming to this study and then follow with a discussion of related terms to build a foundation for thinking about using and engaging with art education archives.

Research Question: Experiencing the Judy Chicago Art Education and Teaching Conversations

My research question is: How do users experience the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through Teaching Conversations? This question slowly emerged out of my own experience with archives and discovering the value of social interaction around archival materials (Holt, 2010). My inquiry was also informed by my archival research experience, processing art education materials, and facilitating reference requests while working in the Special Collections Library at Penn State. Combined, these experiences led me to believe that effective archival orientations are closely linked to social and transformative learning experiences. Both explicitly and implicitly connected to the relationship between user and archivist, they are iterative, dialogic, process-oriented rather than product-oriented, and they are generative. My experience working in archives also made me realize the power of archival practices in mediating access to and
use of archival materials for teaching, learning, research, and creative practice—how easily archival policies and practices can impact one’s experience in archives, what one does with archives, and how one learns about the past, including how the archive can affect who and/or what gets considered within the historical narrative; thus how it can shape future understanding. This experience also made me contemplate how I might be positioning myself in the present in situating myself within an archive, and how it shapes my vision of the future.

**Theoretical Frame**

Experiences within feminist *Teaching Conversations* and in the context of learning with and through archives, is a central focus of this study. Serving as the underpinning perspective driving my inquiry, my theoretical frame reflects my own experience with archives and how I see inherent potentialities as well as possibilities of learning experiences in archives.

I see archives as potential sites for a diverse range of experiences leading to new knowledge, curricula, facts, ideas, events, and valuable insight. An archive encompasses what the user brings to the materials in terms of personal experience, memory, and their own relationship to the subject.

An archive is a space where one can find insight, learn about the self and others, and make discoveries. However, an archive is always changing and always mediated somehow (either by archivists or users) which means that “discoveries” are relative to the experiences of those who encounter the materials.
Archives and Pedagogy: The Experience of the Learning Self

My study stems from the position that engagement with archives can stimulate embodied and emplaced (Ellsworth, 2005), informational and sensorial (Latham, 2007; 2010; 2011), learning experiences. I draw from both Elizabeth Ellsworth’s (2005) feminist learning theory, which situates pedagogy in the experience of the learning self, and from Kiersten Latham’s (2007, 2011) theory of archival experience, which includes ways of understanding that emphasize experience, and are both informational and embodied. I combine these concepts as a lens to explore an archive as both a thing (collection) and a place of learning. Both Ellsworth and Latham have in common an interest in theorizing within the realm of museums, art, and artifacts. Evoking movement in experiential learning, Ellsworth navigates the world of media studies and pedagogy, writing about transitional spaces, objects, and phenomena as capable of inspiring pedagogical pivot points. Latham is situated in library and information sciences and museum studies, writing about transactional sensorial embodied experiences between object and user. They both emphasize individual, transformative experiences in ways of knowing, but also take into account these learning experiences as relational not only to self, but to others, the environment, and the world. In addition, they both hold to the idea that the experience of knowing and learning include the body; that the senses and bodily perception of the physical world form our human experience, as we live in and are conscious of the world through our bodies (Grosz, 1994).
For instance, in her book *Places of Learning*, Ellsworth (2005) describes sites, which she feels exemplify a particular force of pedagogy that is the lived experience of the learning self, including sites of learning that can “encourage a sense of community, of belonging to a shared space, inhabiting a communal experience” (de Bolla as cited in Ellsworth, 2005, p. 133). The places she describes are situated within individual and collective ideas and experiences (past, present, and future) and asserted through intensive realizations of self in relation to other; blurring all constructed roles and rules to provoke discovery and animate internal and external forces of learning that evoke, and sometimes disrupt, memories, ideas, and histories. These environments, as she describes, “attempt to turn those seemingly absolute boundaries into places of learning by rendering them porous, fluid, and palpable” (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 159).

Kiersten Latham's (2007; 2011) theory on archival experience situates archives as both a place where materials are located, and the physical and digital objects that one can see, listen to, and touch. She sees archives as both potential information and things situated in multiple contexts of time and space that can stimulate multisensory experiences. For instance, she describes, the tangible physicality of the material and the potential impact of engaging with collections in an archive, specifically, how this engagement can stimulate “personal meaning during the research process” (p. 2).

I combine the ideas of Ellsworth (2005) and Latham (2007; 2010; 2011) to help me interpret three *Teaching Conversations* participants’ archival experience with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. For Ellsworth (2005), “the qualities of an experience of learning is crucial to what is learned” (p. 18) and she describes learning as
involuntary, a sensation; an experience of the learning self. For Latham (2011), she describes experience as encompassing sensation. It is dynamic rather than static. It involves both the past and the future, and is always historically situated. To experience something includes thought, feeling, doing, perceiving, suffering, and other aspects of living in the world; in other words, it is holistic. (p. 11)

Additionally, both Latham’s and Ellsworth’s theories are applicable to the notion of a living archive where users generate living curricula. Using artifacts and textual materials and thinking about object-centered experiences in museums as a model for libraries and archives, Latham’s (2007) angle for my thinking about living curricula is in terms of holistic process. She believes that archival materials, with their inherent multi-layered possibilities of meaning and relationship between the viewer, the object, and the environment where they are housed, is what makes them unique for learning experiences.

Much like Teaching Conversations looks at the possibilities for starting dialogue about the ideas inherent in the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, Latham (2011) views the object as a unique jumping off point for meaning-making, and a catalyst for valuable and productive learning experiences. Invoking Dewey, she describes engagement and experience with archives as involving an “undivided continuous transaction between human beings and their environment” (p. 11).

Ellsworth (2005) also provides a lens for thinking about living curricula in a living archive. I applied Ellsworth’s curricular theory as a lens to study three university educators’ use of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection as a living archive that “opens the door onto the possibility for something else. It opens the door to the
possibility, the paradoxical possibility, of a narrative without closure” (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 104).

Ellsworth compellingly describes the teacher as “an opener of the future—one who reinvigorates dead knowledges (as things made) with life through use” (p. 165). With this in mind, teachers, who contribute to the living archive, accept the notion that curricula is not a static, fixed entity but can be translated and changed. Ellsworth (2005) also states, “It is the silence of the pedagogue who accepts that he or she does not, cannot, have the last word, and who embraces the pedagogical power of not providing the last word” (p. 108). Teachers create living curricula for the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection with the idea that their work will be recycled over continuous time, that their initial utterance or response to the archive is no longer theirs alone but rather folded into a larger conversation that keeps on going.

**What are Archives?**

Archives are places that house primary source materials (original documents and artifacts) to be preserved in perpetuity, over generations of time, for continued use. The term *archive* is also used to describe the materials themselves. The mere notion of an archive housed in perpetuity means that the materials within are intended to be preserved over continuous time, outlasting the life of the creator of the materials, the lives of the users who interpret them, and the lives of the archivists who steward them.

The largest American organization for archival work is the Society of American Archivists (SAA). They define an archive as,
materials created or received by a person, family, or organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs and preserved because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator, especially those materials maintained using the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control; permanent records. (Society of American Archivists, 2015, para. 1)

Archives can be an accumulation of physical or virtual archival objects, an archival profession, an archival process, and/or an archival service. The term *archive* can represent both a verb, *to archive*, and a noun. As a verb, archiving encompasses collecting, describing, preserving and making accessible archival records, which are usually unpublished, primary sources, or one-of-a-kind documents. The histories embedded in these archival artifacts are like physical signs and symbols, collected and preserved because of the potential scholarly value they contain. It is only through user engagement and interpretation that the stories related to these artifacts can be activated. The noun, *archive*, encompasses the architecture that houses the records and the records themselves that hold potential information about events, people, places, and things. Ideally, archives are climate-controlled in order to preserve the records inside but they can exist in a variety of locations from organizations such as museums to private homes.

**Contemporary Perspectives on Archives**

Archives are increasingly being defined in more expansive terms within the archival profession in terms of how they grow (Boles, 2005; Greene, 2002), and in how
they are shared (Flinn, 2007) through those who help to create them, engage with them and share them, and through those who possess a particular experience connected to them. Flinn (2007), for instance, explores the archive from the perspective of community and marginalized experience in his work with community archives, outside of the university setting.

Postmodern archival theories (Cook, 2001; Greene, 2002; Light & Hyry, 2002; Nesmith, 2002) emphasize the relationship between archives and users (Huvila, 2008; Samouelian, 2009) putting value on interaction (Krause & Yakel, 2007), including between archivist and user (Johnson & Duff, 2005). These perspectives position the archive as encompassing both inventory as well as what exists on the peripheral (usage); including contextual artifacts elsewhere, the content that the user generates, and the individual experiences users bring to shaping their understanding of an archive. By how archives users choose to share what they produce from an archive—through writing, teaching, or other creative means, these factors affect understanding of the present, and can guide actions that shape the future. Indeed, the archive is deeply embedded in social relations as it functions in terms of how it is shared.

Archives users analyze archival records, interpret them, and create the memories or understanding of the context in which they originated, while archivists make this work possible, by making collections accessible, with proper infrastructure and tools. Collaborations between those who steward archival materials (archivists) and those who consult them (archives users) have been and continue to be increasing, especially as newer forms of technology factor in the production of and analysis of archives (Clement, Hagenmaier, & Levine Knies, 2013). Increasingly, the archival practices of collecting,
describing, and organizing are becoming more user and participatory-focused with areas being mapped out to allow for more collaborations between archivists and scholars, including more emphasis on interaction through social media around the archive, creating spaces for diverse pedagogical experiences. By and large, archives are increasingly shifting to more participatory-focused approaches that involve more transparency in mediating archival materials and the development of new technologies that enable searches and descriptions within the context of the documents, including handwritten materials and scanned artifacts. Technology influenced and enabled, this is part of a larger paradigm shift in thinking about communication, as well as the cultural and societal dimensions of context that take into account the inter-relationship between archives, archivists, and archives users; interpretations and possibilities are boundless. Archivist Terry Cook (1984/5) was at the forefront of these changes decades ago arguing for more explicit emphasis by archivists of the “order and meaning in the records in their care to expose the deeper dimensions behind the creation and description of archives,” knowing that an understanding of these archival processes impacts meaning and interpretations (p. 45). Collaborations between users and archivists therefore are central to ensuring the ability to continuously theorize, explore, engage with, and encounter archives, to continuously challenge, debate, reinvent, and transform history (Sachs, 2008). Access to the archive is crucial to this relationship but it does not end when the archivist delivers the materials. Access is both a form and an attitude according to archivist Angelika Menne-Haritz (2001).

Archives provide information potentials, not the information itself. And they enable the investigation. This is the main target of the access paradigm. Those
who need information should know where they can find which potential sources and how to investigate them (p. 61).

There is a demonstrated recognition that an understanding of archival processes can promote richer and more informed interpretations (Sachs, 2008), and that even a broad perspective on archival tenets of provenance (i.e., the origins and processing) can also enhance user experience archives (Latham, 2010; 2011).

**Relevance to Art Education: Understanding Archival Experiences**

Art education archives encompass a wide range of formats that (although not completely covered here) include analog audio/visual materials, textual documents, photographic images, sculptures, and three dimensional art objects, as well as an increasing amount of various digital materials. Art education archives are oriented to both past and future practice. Art educators look to the past through the mark making, the documentation of practice and issues that impacted history, the works of art that result from ideas, and the expression of momentary thoughts and intentional communication. Through research and pedagogy, archives can help shape the future of art education practice. Mediated through educators, they can be used to cultivate understanding about knowledge and forms of expression as art education deals with literacy of images. Like art, archives are expressed both through language and form. They serve as material/visual culture, as symbols and objects, which are also a medium of learning in art education.

There has long been concern by art educators about the status of archiving the field (Morris & Raunft, 1995) as the preservation of artworks and art education records
can only slow down the process of inevitable absence. Preserving these materials in perpetuity entails a life cycle approach in thinking about how to preserve art education materials while still allowing continued access for scholars to generate knowledge from them. In most cases, these processes transform the materials into new form—as symbols, that live on to be used, repurposed, shared, and eventually altered in other ways. This is particularly important as many art educators are concerned with teaching how to do art education history (Korzenik, 1985; Marche, 2000; Smith & La Pierre, 1995; Stankiewicz, 1995), have included the use of archives (Korzenik, 1983; Pinto & Smith, 1999) for critical inquiry into the past (Amburgy, 2002; Funk, 2011), and have used or created oral histories to understand the past (Dambekans, 1997; Raunft, 2001). Art educators have also helped inform teaching across the curriculum by mapping out methods through contemporary art and archives for teaching other subjects such as social studies and history (Desai, Hamlin, & Mattson, 2010). There are also art educators who collect art education records to promote historical understanding of the field and the unique aspects inherent in the processes of archival research. For instance, feminist art educator and historian, Diana Korzenik (1986) considers archival research as a dynamic interrogation of artifacts, or “living research” practice. Her work is based on studying art education ephemera. Her first publication, *Drawn to Art* (1985), documented art education in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and the shift to mass education. For a few decades, Korzenik has amassed her own collection of art education ephemera, which she donated to The Huntington Library in 1997 (Korzenik, 1997), and about which she later wrote about and published in *The Objects of Art Education* (2004). In 2009, Korzenik also gave her collection of materials regarding Rudolph Arnheim to the Archives of American Art (Korzenik, 2009).
Indeed, the sheer existence of art education collections housed in archives demonstrates the seriousness to which art educators regard the documentation and archivization of their own materials pertaining to art education practice and the field itself. The many art education collections being collected and preserved at the Penn State Special Collections Library is also representative of this concern (“Penn State Special Collections Library”, 2014).

Collaborations between art educators and archivists involve sharing similar interests and working towards similar goals. How these materials are made available and used by generations that follow is another dimension of potential for art educators as this usually involves cross-disciplinary relationships that draw on multiple expertise. Many of the activities around the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, for instance, demonstrate the kinds of possible collaborations between archivists and art education faculty that are vital to promoting understanding about past art education practices and building on them.

The relationship between the art education program at Penn State and the Special Collections library has history. For instance, decades ago, Penn State archivist and Head of Special Collections, Leon Stout (1985) presented at the Penn State conference on the History of Art Education held in 1985 to promote the value of the children’s drawings archived at Penn State University Archives. It is often the case that the interests of both archivists and users guide collecting strategies in archives. Although not an art educator, Stout’s interest in the history of children’s art practice (situated in both formal schooling and informal settings) was crucial to making Penn State University a hub for scholarship on art education history. As much from a consequence of his devotion to children’s art as the foresight of notable faculty in the art education program dating back to its inception,
two of the three units within Special Collections (Penn State University Archives and Rare Books) now hold significant collections of art education materials.

**Informing the Field of Art Education: The Use of Art-Related Archives**

There are many sources around the field of art education that can inform the use of archives in art education research and practice as there are varying methods used in archives that speak to the possibilities in relating to an archive. For example, archivist Lisa Darms (2009), explores artist and AIDS activist David Wojnarowicz’s *Magic Box*, a compilation of various objects the artist had collected together in a box. She defines objects in archives as “both sensed, tangible material and perceived external thought” (p. 155). How best to preserve Wojnarowicz’s work is complicated as objects are usually separated from the collection and housed alone in order to protect them from exposure to preventable damage and decay. Exploring the treatment of objects in the archive, Darms wonders how archival processes impact meaning and interpretation as arrangement gives evidence and context to the creator of the collection. She questions the notions of provenance and original order in this case, asking, “Can the archival object be described as moving forward into the future, rather than exclusively in terms of its origins?” (p. 153).

The way materials are accessed in an archive depends on description levels that facilitate users to understand them in as close to their context and original order (or provenance) as possible. Provenance is concerned with the relationship of the materials
within a collection in terms of how the creator of the collection conducted their activities but this notion is expanding. Naming provides access, but it can also limit possibility. According to Darms (2009), “provenance is being considered as “both the imprint left on a document by its creator and as a network of relationships between collections and creators that is ongoing” (p. 148). In relation to artists’ archives, provenance might have more bearing on interpretation and meaning, although, in other cases the question has been raised of whether knowledge of provenance matters or not to the user (Theimer, 2012).

The possibilities are where archives and art education can inform many other areas of knowledge. For instance, Maria Tamboukou (2011) uses genealogy directed towards the future rather than the past. Her research exploring women artists’ letters in an archive, allows her to see possibilities of excavating other ways of being, or rather, of becoming a woman—that the processes of inquiry create a new archive of one’s own, as she curates the pieces that represent what she seeks to communicate. Her process in the archive has surfaced what she calls heterotemporalities, where her own perception of the present, collapses with the past, or even with the life of the subject she is researching. This moment within the research becomes vital to Tamboukou’s research process as she embodies both past and present. Elizabeth Grosz (2005) also discusses possibilities of embodied inquiry that are inherent in exploring the past as potential creation of the present and future, but not determined by the past. She states, “The task is to make elements of this past live again, to be reenergized through their untimely or their anachronistic recall in the present” (p. 117).
Feminist Perspectives on Archives

“All the works that women created and saved through time constitute an enormous archive of collective consciousness-raising, of all the efforts by women” (Kohrs-Campbell, 2002, p. 46). Indeed, feminist scholars, writers, artists, archivists, and activists have been “revealing, illuminating, contextualizing, and positioning” the way history is portrayed, written, created, and collected, as far back as the documentation of these activities exists (Dandy & McKay, 1975; Hinding & Bower, 1979). As early as the late 1800s women started documenting, collecting, and preserving the raw materials of specific groups and organizations (though heavily biased) that could represent women's history (Haan, 2004; Lerner, 1993).

Like a mirror to society, many of the changes in policy and practice within archives have reflected broader social transformation. What feminists know about women’s history has largely been made possible because of archivists sharing in a rich legacy of social transformation. For instance, like other marginalized populations under-represented in the historical canon, the field of women’s history emerged in the early 1970s and it developed through the joint efforts of scholars, librarians, and archivists through documenting, collecting, preserving, and making materials about women available for continued interpretations; “these processes form the foundations of historical scholarship” (Sachs, 2008, p. 659). Feminist scholar of history, Honor Sachs (2008) calls for scholars to understand how archival processes impact interpretation as she argues that knowledge of archival collections and provenances provides vital perspectives on history. She also calls for scholars to acknowledge the collaborative
relationships between feminist archivists and scholars that have built the foundation for feminist archives. Their combined labor has helped to welcome new perspectives of research and dynamic inquiry although acknowledgement of these relationships is rarely fully given in feminist publications (Grigg, 1991; Sachs, 2008).

Feminist archivists and scholars have done much to expand the scholarly scope for women's archives, although the process is continuous. Scholar Kimberly Springer (2004) critiques the history of choices being made in the selection of who gets archived. There are still “gatekeepers” that need to acknowledge and “recognize the ways in which attention to gender, women’s reconfiguring of the political landscape, and the contributions of women of color have changed historical practice for the better” (p. 29). Springer also emphasizes the value of “locating women’s history in interdisciplinarity” (p. 28), suggesting an investigation “outside the field and its organizations for additional places for acceptance of women’s history” (p. 28).

User-driven feminist *Teaching Conversations* reflects these collaborative, interdisciplinary practices between scholars and archivists but builds on them further through a feminist, transdisciplinary focus. Its welcome to participants is based not in any one academic affiliation but on respective interests in the ideas embedded in the materials, and the opportunity to repurpose the materials into something else. For instance, for one participant in this study, her engagement was in order to find a community of feminist teachers outside her discipline to help her make changes in her own classroom (Ginny). In *Teaching Conversations* participants are encouraged to reach outside their own discipline, to experiment, and to bring in every possibility of growing the collection through infinite interpretation.
Feminist Archives as Social Sites for Activism and Pedagogy

Although feminist archives started in response to the erasure/omittance of women’s history, they have expanded the role that they play in contemporary terms. Archives, particularly those situated in academia, have not traditionally been seen as social spaces. However, some archivists and librarians are re-thinking the role of the library archives space as a dialogic, teaching space. There is a slow shift in archival practice that is putting people rather than materials at the center (Theimer, 2014), and feminism has helped this new model. Feminist thought has been very influential in creating a paradigm shift in the perceived role and relationship of archives (Eichorn, 2013) and libraries (Gilley, 2007) to society, and feminist scholars are increasingly re-inventing the archive. Eichorn (2010) reflects on the creation of women's archives in relation to where they are housed. She states:

Even if our archives are inherently linked to loss, they have not been constructed exclusively as repositories to preserve what was, but rather been deployed as the primary apparatus through which we have continued to authorize new forms of feminist knowledge and cultural production at a time when prevailing political forces have often suggested that feminism is no longer relevant or necessary. (p. 627)

Feminist practices within the library and archives are influencing archival user policies from traditional materials-centered approaches to people-centered approaches that include participatory practices in terms of collection and providing access to
materials, to even description practices (Theimer, 2014). Libraries and archives are becoming learning centers. For instance, Women's Studies librarian, Jennifer Gilley (2007) aligns with liberatory, feminist, pedagogue bell hooks (1994), educating for critical consciousness. Gilley sees the classroom as community and the role of librarians in common with feminist teaching practices through the teaching of information literacy. She teaches these skills to empower students to take ownership of their own learning in order to “see themselves as critical agents rather than passive consumers of information” (p. 227). For some feminist scholars, archives and libraries are seen not only as concepts and places, but also as practice; they are “redeploying existing archival spaces not only to ensure their histories are preserved but also more importantly, to authorize their legacies in the present” (Eichorn, 2010, p. 641). Feminists are learning their own value as creators, collectors and even archivists of their own documents (Hooper, 2010). As Eichorn (2010) states:

In a myriad of ways, the archive has become a central link between feminist activism and scholarship—the place where feminists of my generation are finding ways to resolve the tensions between theory and praxis, the university and the community. (p. 635)

Though the archive is by no means full, perceptions of archives as gate-keeper institutions holding knowledge are shifting to include the idea that knowledge can be questioned, multi-purposed, and generated within an archive (Burton, 2005); that archives can also be sites for cultural community building (Flinn, 2007), for remembering the forgotten (Ketelaar, 2008), for stimulating difficult dialogues (Cvetkovich, 2003), and
for inviting and hosting, cross-disciplinary activities for productive dialogue and discourse (Steadman et al, 2002).

Feminists are expanding the archive space as a site for pedagogy, activism, and transformation. For instance, Eichhorn (2010) argues that where the generations of feminists before focused on the documentation, collection, and preservation of feminist materials, contemporary feminists are expanding the archives space as a site for pedagogy. She says:

What is unique to this generation of feminists, however, is the necessity to adopt the archive as a central rather than peripheral part of our scholarship, cultural production, and activism—in short, the recognition of the archive as the practice and site upon which these forms of resistance hinge (p. 636).

**Feminist Archives as Living Archival Practice**

The long tradition of feminist archival processes of collection, preservation, description, and feminist interpretation are living processes that occur on multiple fronts. Honoré Sachs (2008) sees the process with archives as *reconstructing lives*, as the lines between lived-experience and material past often seem to converge. Feminist scholars of English, Kirsch and Rohan (2008) see the processes of searching, gathering, and engaging with materials for research as a lived process, encompassing the intersection of virtual, historical, and lived experiences. They focus on the implicit value of the embodied connections researchers make with sources in “locations most associated with
isolation and loneliness—the archives” (p. 1) but rarely do they articulate these notions publicly. Scholar Kimberly Springer (2004) describes her own experience searching for materials on Black feminist organizations from 1968 to 1980, leading her to unexpected places such as attics, underneath beds, and in garages and crawlspaces. Her search also made her aware of the continued problem of women modestly appraising their own accomplishments. In one case, a feminist activist, in an effort to help Springer with her research, sent her what constituted the entire archive of the Black Women’s Organized for Action group; a collection that should have already been archived and preserved for public access long before. In acquiring these extremely valuable materials, Springer (2004) also realized the unexpected responsibility she had in safeguarding them for future generations. She reflected on the importance of preservation stating:

Seeing that the original black feminist organizations’ material that have come into my possession make it into either an historical, educational, or activist institution’s holdings or become a part of a digital archive, are just as much a part of encouraging the growth of women’s history as writing about the materials.

(p. 31)

Springer (2004) argues that feminist scholars need to be open to history being located in unexpected places, to look more critically at where materials are found, catalogued, and described, and at who is making their existence happen.

A feminist archival sensibility attends to constructing the stories by and about women (Sachs, 2008) as well as the documentation, collection and preservation of materials that relate to women. A feminist archival sensibility counters the processes (both inside and outside archives) that destroy or erase materials related to women's
history, and recognizes the long-term value of contemporary feminist traces consequently significant to future understanding, with regard for the future of feminism.

This activity indicates an enduring resistance to discriminatory, patriarchal, archival collection practices, and the so-called truths of such prolific archives. Through a long documented history of feminist work, the efforts that many have put to building knowledge about women in history indicates why archives matter (Gould, 2014). Those who have endured the challenges of this work are representative of why a knowledge of history matters to how we make meaning from the world and how this understanding informs our collective attitudes and relationships over time (Lerner, 1997)—a point that Judy Chicago (2014) has been making over the course of her entire career.
Chapter Three: Judy Chicago and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection

From early on in her profession as an artist, and particularly from her experience in her art history courses, Judy Chicago had learned the power of the canon; that the only reason that women are not equally represented in the art world is because they have been systematically erased from the historical narrative. She resisted this fate by actively publishing, documenting her practice, collecting and amassing resources to use and share, and purposefully caring for her own documentation to insure their longevity, so that her materials could be preserved for future audiences. For instance, Judy Chicago started archiving her artist records at the Schlesinger Library at Harvard University starting in 1996 (Chicago, 1996). Her artist records serve to contextualize her specific art pieces. The documentation of her teaching practice makes up a body of feminist art education materials that comprise a teaching career of more than five decades. In archiving her collection in perpetuity at Penn State, Chicago has created a new space for marking and remembering feminist perspectives in art education history.

This chapter brings context to both Judy Chicago’s life and work, and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, including the context around its definition as a living archive. I explain what a living archive is and how feminist Teaching Conversations is connected to the collection within the notion of living curriculum in this chapter; but first, I provide a background to the acquisition of the collection followed by a brief biographical summary of Judy Chicago. I follow by describing the contents of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection.
In the summer of 2011, artist Judy Chicago donated her teaching materials to the Penn State University Archives, becoming Penn State’s first feminist art education collection and the first feminist art education collection (of its kind) for the field. I will mention here that another feminist art education collection, The National Art Education Association Women’s Caucus archives, can be found at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio (Lindsey, 2001). What is unique to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection at Penn State, however, are the parameters of their use, where unlike traditional archival practices, the usage of the collection can be archived as living curriculum.

The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection gives prominence to feminist art pedagogy. Chicago developed her own method of teaching a content-based approach to art making which is informed by feminist principles of equality that confront and bring awareness to patriarchal systems of power and privilege (Keifer-Boyd, 2007). As Keifer-Boyd (2007) notes, Chicago’s approach is “rooted in democratic ideals in which different views are encouraged and argued” (p. 138).

Feminist art pedagogy stems from feminist pedagogies that acknowledge the idea that there are different ways of knowing. It is based on situating the self while valuing personal experiences, including recognizing those whose experiences are on the margins of patriarchal discourse. The idea of situating the self is theorized within feminist epistemologies that take into account one’s standpoint and their situated-ness in lived experience, specifically how it impacts approaches to knowledge.
The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection demonstrates the value of art pedagogy centered on women’s and marginalized others’ experiences, and resists tendencies of erasure of feminist histories. The collection offers the opportunity to engage with original source teaching materials that represent feminist learner-centered art pedagogies, and provides documented examples of how to embrace issues in the classroom that are often ignored or overlooked because of their feminist content.

As archival collections are basically the residue from a person or organization’s activity and are created by the donor over a specific period of time, the collection’s scope and content also represents Judy Chicago’s personal and professional life. The materiality of her archive is representative of the fact that ways of being in feminist teaching are not polished products but textured processes that encompass both struggle and achievement. A receipt might reveal the seemingly mundane financial obligations of the work involved. A letter might expose opponents or allies. A journal entry might reveal questions. A manuscript might recover the beginning of an original thought scribbled in the margins of a page. The following section attempts to convey a sense of the collection and its creator and donor, Judy Chicago, with the preface that this summary cannot fully represent the depth and diversity of Chicago’s creative output, as it is not within the scope of this study.

**Judy Chicago: A Biographical Summary**

Born in Chicago, Illinois in 1939, with the given name of Judy Cohen, Judy Chicago studied art at the University of California in Los Angeles, finishing her Masters
of Art in 1964. Throughout her career, Chicago was involved in feminist movements, working to raise feminist consciousness through her art and teaching practices. She eventually took the name Judy Chicago as a gesture against patriarchal practices that encourage women, once married, to drop their given name. Chicago saw this practice as another form of oppression against women; that society obligates women to cede from their identities (names) to adopt the identities of their husbands.

In the early 1970s, Chicago started teaching art after about a decade of professional art practice. Starting at Fresno State University, she introduced feminist art pedagogy with a pedagogical approach centering on content connected to women’s perspectives, ideas, and experience. With a feminist attention to process, collaboration, and social relations and in her feminist approach to making and teaching art, she strived to create a space for women (only) and women’s identity in pedagogy within the learning environment (Gerhard, 2013). Chicago also helped to pioneer key strategies of the early feminist art movement in her teaching, including collaboration, the use of “female technologies” like costume, performance, and video, and early forms of media critique” (“A Studio of Their Own”, n.d.).

Judy Chicago (2013) believes, “feminist art education begins with each person’s individual voice and builds both individual and collaborative art-making out of those issues expressed by many different voices” (p. 9) and she developed a student-centered strategy focused in terms of students’ experiences, to “bring their personal issues into the art-making process” and to inform the technique that would be adopted for the specific artwork. This connection she feels is vital so that “both the form and content of their projects reflect their lives as women” (p. 2).
Feminist art pedagogy is intended to help students gradually develop consciousness about gender along with a deep understanding of women's history, women's art, and women's achievements (Keifer-Boyd, 2003). Chicago (2013) says:

Feminist values are rooted in an alternative to the prevailing view of relations of power, which involves power over others. In contrast, feminism promotes personal empowerment, something that, when connected with education, becomes a potent tool for individual and social change. (p. 3)

Chicago views feminist art education as “empowerment education” because her method begins with the process of “helping students to become empowered to do what is important to them in their art” (Chicago, 2013, p. 2). Recalling in an interview in July 2012 with Huffington Post journalist Kathryn Brooks, Chicago described her own educational experience as motivating her teaching philosophy and her own personal challenges identifying as a woman artist:

I thought that if I retraced my steps back to my own university education and helped young women become artists without having to deny they were women, I might learn how to do that myself. I don’t think I ever consciously planned a curriculum—rather, I used my own university studio art education as a negative example, trying to help my students find their own voices within the history of women’s art, literature and history. (Chicago as cited in Brooks, 2012)

Judy Chicago has long held the belief that women risk continuous erasure from mainstream historical narratives, and that even with the advancements made by women to
change this, their status continues to be precarious in general—especially within the art world (Cooke, 2012).

*The Dinner Party*, completed in 1979, perhaps best represents Chicago's struggle to insert women into the historical canon. The table is a metaphor for a women’s centered historical narrative as each place setting represents a significant woman of history. Chicago’s intention with the piece was that the women selected to sit at the table represented many others “some famous, some anonymous, but all struggling, as the women on the table struggled, to have some sense of their own worth through five thousand years of civilization dominated by men” (Chicago, 1979, p. 52).

For over twenty years after the completion of *The Dinner Party*, Chicago was still looking for a permanent exhibition space for it, in order to safeguard that the piece, and all the contributions made to it by the hundreds of volunteers, would not fall to the fate that she so strenuously tried to resist—that of the erasure of women's achievement.

Public historian and arts activist, Elizabeth Sackler finally made a permanent home for *The Dinner Party* possible in 2007 at the Brooklyn Museum to be installed in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art (http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/). Additionally, Chicago has developed, with other art educators, *The Dinner Party* Summer Institute (http://www.thedinnerpartyinstitute.com/) called *The Dinner Party* Curriculum Project (DPCP). This project attracts K through 12 art teachers and provides online curricular materials to further the message of the artwork and support the teaching of feminist art everywhere. The materials from the DPCP are included as part of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection archived at Penn State (http://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/dpcp/).
Contents of Judy Chicago Art Education Collection

The Penn State University Archives mission statement dictates a collection policy focused mainly on the history of the university in its various roles and contexts, as well as the history of the surrounding area. Also included in the collection mission are materials documenting the activities of prominent faculty and alumni, and the varying aspects of scholarly and student activity, including sports history pertaining to the University.

Since the art education program's inception in 1946, under the directorship of Dr. Viktor Lowenfeld and, later others, who shaped the program over the years bringing it to national and international acclaim, Penn State has developed to be a major center for art education research, teaching, and learning. Former and notable Penn State art education faculty have, over the years, left their papers to the Penn State University Archives. With the growth of its records, other notable art educators and collectors outside of the university have started archiving their materials at Penn State as well, knowing that the materials attract scholars from all over the world. Combined, the collections have become a body of primary source materials on art education that is next to none.

Additionally, Chicago's Collection fits with the whole of the art education collections at Penn State Special Collections. Moreover, her work has been extensively documented and researched by Penn State faculty member Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd (2007). Because of the popularity of Judy Chicago's artwork, her collection inspires new users curious about her archive, attracting a diverse range of potential users, and provides an opportunity for broad outreach about art education and archives.
When Judy Chicago donated her collection on feminist art pedagogy to the Penn State University Archives to make her teaching materials publicly accessible, she counteracted ongoing tendencies of erasure of feminist histories and made a critical contribution to the field of art education and feminist scholarship. In general, public responses to the press releases about the arrival of the collection were positive, with some exceptions. Through *Teaching Conversations*, planned outreach activities and events brought the collection to the attention of graduate students, faculty, and the public, to create scholarly dialogue around possible uses with the materials for teaching and research. Evident by the numerous emails and calls to the Penn State Special Collections library about the acquisition, these activities, along with press releases about the collection, provoked curiosity to imagine what her collection might contain in people familiar with her work, and particularly in those not familiar with using archives.

The contents of the record cartons reflect ways of being a feminist teacher, with readings, resources, letters and reflective essays. Commencement speeches read as timeless advice for the future. Correspondence exposes the nuances of negotiation, frustrating aspects of collaboration, differing views, and personal accounts around the “facts”. The contents also reveal lives that were shaped and transformed by the teacher, writing informed by feminist practice, and the cultivation of life-long relationships, representative of the fact that teaching and learning does not end on the last day of class.

Practice (2000), At Home (2001-2002), Envisioning the Future (2003-2004), and Evoke/Invoke/Provoke (2005). The physical collection comprises slides, audio-visual materials, and documentations of artworks, correspondence, student writing, and teaching notes as well as a range of other materials. The onsite archive is an integral part of conducting class activities for handling original documents as well as seeing how they are arranged and exist within the whole collection.

The Finding Aid, which is a document that summarizes the collection as well as describes the inventory at the folder and box level, assists users in finding what they are looking for and shows how the collection is organized in what are called series, which are description levels that reflect broader aspects of the contents of archival collections. In the case of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, the series represent particular projects and professional engagement. It is important to note here that the descriptions of the series that follow is based on the online Finding Aid and does not correspond in any chronological format. It is also important to note that researchers should always contact the Penn State University Special Collections to utilize current descriptive guides to the collection, which may differ slightly from this description as periodically, archivists put additions and reorganize the collection, which may change the overall order of the collection. The folders do not describe each and every item enclosed in the folders. Therefore, users are best consulting the physical archive with an open mind, and with the patience to make time for contemplation, curiosity, surprises, discovery, and questions.

Series one is documentation on the At Home Project (which revisits, in its own way, an earlier project called Womanhouse, series 12) in which Chicago and her husband, photographer Donald Woodman, in 2001, co-facilitated male and female students at
Western Kentucky University in transforming the various rooms of a house into
metaphoric installations within the domestic spaces, to evoke issues surrounding eating
disorder, self-worth, parent-care, racism, prejudice, discrimination, homophobia, as well
as issues of domestic violence including rape, child and spouse abuse. Series two is
Chicago’s commencement speeches. Series three is The Dinner Party Curriculum Project
(DPCP), which documents the evolution of the creation of the curriculum using Chicago's
seminal artwork The Dinner Party. The DPCP was developed at Kutztown University
under the guidance of Drs. Marilyn Stewart, Peg Speirs, and Carrie Nordlund, with
consultation by Constance Bumgarner Gee and Judy Chicago. The DPCP supports
teachers interested in creating curriculum using the artwork. Series four is Duke
University, where Chicago, in 2000, facilitated a class to create an exhibition titled From
Theory to Practice. Series five is Envisioning the Future, an arts partnership with Pomona
Arts Colony in California in which Chicago and Woodman teamed together to teach a
team of eight professional artists about their own teaching method of participatory art
pedagogy. These artists, in turn, taught approximately sixty students in the creation of a
twelve-site exhibition exploring the subject of the future. Series six is the Fresno Feminist
Art Program documenting Chicago's work in 1970 with a group of fifteen women at The
California State University at Fresno (then called California State College). There,
Chicago set out to counteract her own struggle during her art education experience that
she felt invalidated herself as a woman artist and created a studio environment for her
students that was responsive to female experience. Series seven has general files that
include writings by Chicago and others, notes, and other related documentation. Series
eight documents her return to teaching in 1999, after 25 years of having concentrated on
her studio practice. The result was *SInsation*, an exhibition that Judy Chicago facilitated with students at Indiana University. Series nine represents documentaries on specific artworks, including Chicago's *Atmospheres*, the *Birth Project*, *Resolutions*, and *From Darkness into Light*. Series ten comprises records on *Through the Flower Summer workshop* held in 1994 in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Series eleven is documentation from teaching at Vanderbilt University in 2005, when Chicago and Woodman again teamed to work with students and local artists. There, they facilitated an exhibition titled *Evoke/Invoke/Provoke*, which stimulated conversation and controversy. Series twelve is *Womanhouse*, an artwork created in 1971, out of Judy Chicago’s and Miriam Shapiro’s work with 25 students in The *Feminist Art Program* at The California Institute of the Arts. Many of the artists were Chicago’s students from Fresno and they collaborated on a collective piece called *Womanhouse*, which involved the transformation of the rooms of an old mansion into an installation and performance space. The rooms were metaphors for private/public representations and oppressions typically experienced by women. This series also includes performance scripts; for example, included in this series is *Cock and Cunt*, a play written by Chicago in 1970, and *Waiting*, written and performed by Faith Wilding in 1970.

The physical archive is the basis for the online archive (aside from the DPCP), which is growing as physical materials from the Collection are digitized and requested for digital access, and as links to relevant sources are added. Access to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection is offered through multiple means. Reference archivists provide access to the physical materials onsite at the Special Collections library using the Finding Aid. The website is a participatory web architecture with social networking capabilities.
such as twitter, facebook feeds, as well as interactivity through a dialogue portal to enhance interaction and engagement while also serving as an access portal (http://judychicago.orted.psu.edu/dialogue/).

The website is an integral part of the dynamic, living archive, continuously growing as new content is generated from the materials in the collection, and shared online. The idea is to have a space for users to interact with each other with a focus on the collection. The website provides a space where knowledge about the collection is never static. Users contribute leaving tracks and traces around the collection, a continuous dialogue and building of a repertoire of archival memories that can be kept, shared, and repurposed, especially through the dialogue portal.

**The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection: A Feminist Living Archive**

The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection is a *living archive* from which users produce *living curricula*. This notion of a living archive is not only a central tenet of the collection but also explicitly defined within the deed of gift (or legal transfer of ownership) of the collection to Penn State. Part of the definition of the living curriculum reads:

> Curricula are based on values and beliefs that describe how teaching and learning helps students come to understand the world in which they live. A curricula (sic) framed around encounters with enduring ideas about lived experience provides teachers and students an opportunity for open-ended inquiry, self-reflection, and personal connections (Deed of Gift, 2010).
It is worth outlining here that reference to the DPCP is within the definition of living curriculum. The definition as specified in the deed of gift for the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection reads:

*The Dinner Party* Curriculum is a living curriculum because learning is a fluid process that creates new ways to think about art content, diversity, and gender sensitivity through the use of inquiry, reflection, and expression. As teachers and students adapt encounters with art and ideas within their own life experience based on principles of *The Dinner Party* Curriculum they will continue to create a living curriculum (Deed of Gift, 2010).

The original intent for the DPCP was to be organic and generative. Judy Chicago stated:

All of us involved in developing this curriculum want it to be a living tool, one that can be expanded upon by teachers for decades to come. What we have tried to create is a basis for explorations, discoveries, and an expanding array of projects and activities (Chicago, n.d.).

As shown in the definition of living curriculum, the goals that Judy Chicago set forth with DPCP reflect the goals she laid out by gifting her art education collection to Penn State. The definition acknowledges the lived experience of the user, their situated-ness, and understanding they bring to it. It acknowledges that the user has a dynamic role in shaping the collection through the creation of living curricula.

Uniquely articulated within the legal transfer of ownership of the collection to the archives, this definition implies a more fluid and complex relationship than traditional archival practices that differentiate more clearly the material transfer between past and present. The role of the user is a central tenet of a feminist living archive. By default of
the definition, the boundaries of the collection are open and fluid in how it is repurposed and in how users engage with it. The user and archivist relationship is central to supporting the collection as a dynamic, living entity.

**What does it Mean for an Archive to Live?**

Unique by archival standards, the living archive extends the parameters of how collections are typically used. As new content is generated by users, it is folded back into the collection in perpetuity, to be shared with other future users. The idea of living curricula is predicated on a notion of continuous growth in a participatory archival environment where users generate new content from the collection, which then becomes part of the growing archive—with new possibilities.

A living archive is dynamic. The collection lives and grows through generative use, and will continue to grow as users engage, teach, and share the collection and their teaching processes inspired by the materials. A living archive includes the future, capturing user engagement and interactions over time to be folded into it as a legitimate part of the enduring value of the collection.

**Enhanced Curation: Capturing Living Processes**

This type of approach to archives is indeed part of an increasing trend inside and outside of traditional archival practice to re-imagine archives. These approaches see archives as interdisciplinary social resources being both produced and interpreted.
simultaneously (Kozel, 2013) or archiving processes that are being transformed by
digital networked technologies (Kozel, n.d.). These approaches also position archives to
encourage a diversity of users and creative interpretations, particularly in the performing

The idea of a living archive is user-centered and echoes the shifting role of the
scholar or user as being increasingly enmeshed with archival activities through the
collection, curation, and digital scholarly editions (Clement, Hagenmaier & Levine
Knies, 2013). The living archive follows a tide of changing perceptions about, not only
the relationship between the user and an archive, but also the donor and an archive,
similar to how Clement, Hagenmaier & Levine Knies (2013) describe enhanced curation
practices. Enhanced curation further extends into the contextual value of a collection,
delivering meta-rich content that can only be captured and/or curated by the creator as
documentation originates.

Enhanced curation means that the archivist collects materials from the creator
while the creator is still living,

enriching accessions of digital material with accessions of information acquired
through interviews—information about the creator’s digital habits, computer
usage, software preferences, and so forth. In other words, these details about the
creator as a curator of his or her own digital material becomes classified as
archival. (p. 121)

In the case of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, user engagement with
the materials is central. The definition of the living curriculum within the Deed of Gift
(2010), articulates the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection as a living entity, which
changes and grows as users, researchers, faculty, and even Judy Chicago, interact with
the collection to create new knowledge and understanding. This interaction with archives
requires thinking about archives as living entities and the conception that archives are not
solely fixed by the creator of the collection but also authored through the narratives of
those who engage with the materials (Kozel, n.d.). This bringing to life of archival
materials is therefore fundamentally dependent on the user, how the materials are used,
interpreted, shared, and performed for generating new knowledge; a relationship centered
on archives, user, and materials. The following cases illustrate various examples of living
archives concepts.

Diana Taylor (2003) in her book *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, describes how “the archive exceeds the live” (p. 19) as its meaning changes. One example Taylor uses is a series of photographic work done by Argentine activist photographer, Julio Pantoja, photographing adult children holding portraits of their missing parents, who were victims of political violence. The series represents a paradoxical living archive, where the dead parents of their adult children live on as a photographic portrait. For the children (who are the approximate age of their parents when they went missing) these photos have become an archive exceeding the living, the “embodied home of the remains” (p. 185).

I use this example to illustrate how an archive exceeds the living over time, through perpetual and continuous opportunity for user interaction with the same object. An archive goes beyond the creator and user(s), surpassing each and everyone who encounters the materials, and their respective interpretation(s). In the case of the children in Pantoja’s photographs, they use their archive (their memories) to repossess, re-
contextualize, and reintroduce themselves to it, and to themselves; sometimes just by the simple act of holding the image of their lost parents close to their bodies. What is generated from this act traces a struggle with history, an act of resistance, as well as a deep interaction with archives.

The meaning, value, and interpretation of an archive can change over many generations. Exceeding the living, future generations will engage with these photographs on their own terms, with their own lived experience; and with their own understanding of history, they will make their own story.

Achille Mbembe (in Hamilton, 2002), although reflecting particularly on state and national archives (in this case South Africa), offers a way of understanding the relationship inherent in keeping and using archives, particularly the dimensions of power that exist in dealing with memory of the living and the dead, that blur binary opposites; there is no life without death and no memory without forgetting. Traditionally the archive, as Mbembe suggests, “imposes a qualitative difference between co-ownership of dead time (the past) and living time, that is, the immediate present” (p. 21). The contents of an archive are traces of living processes, representative of events, struggles, thoughts and actions. The whole idea of an archive then is to access the possibility “to reassemble the traces rather than destroy them” (Mbembe, 2002, p. 22). For what purposes, Mbembe (2002) states, “The function of the archive is to thwart the dispersion of these traces and the possibility, always there, that left to themselves, they might eventually acquire a life of their own” (p. 22). The idea of keeping and using archives as, Mbembe argues, rests fundamentally on the acceptance of death. However if public archives are “supposed to belong to everyone” (p. 21), if one alternatively regards the public archive as social
property or a knowledge commons (Hess & Ostrom, 2007), this also implies a relationship—a co-ownership, as Mbembe (2002) suggests, of collective memory. Boxed and foldered, preserved, and stored in temperature/light controlled conditions, and waiting to be reactivated, or taken out for consultation, the text in various formats is woken up. Its hidden possibilities are activated, as if being returned to life. “The final destination of the archive is therefore always situated outside its own materiality, in the story that it makes possible” (p. 21). Mbembe describes the relationship between the user and the materials that represent an event in time as both a manipulation of an archive and a way of giving voice to the dead:

Following tracks, putting back together scraps and debris, and reassembling remains, is to be implicated in a ritual which results in the resuscitation of life, in bringing the dead back to life by reintegrating them in the cycle of time, in such a way that they find in a text, in an artifact or in a monument, a place to inhabit, from where they may continue to express themselves. (p. 25)

A living archive as the Judy Chicago Collection is defined, encourages an archive to have a life of its own; it levels the control, thus archive and user are entangled in past, present, and future simultaneously.

The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection: A Living Curriculum

The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection website (http://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/) and the feminist Teaching Conversations project launched shortly after the archive record cartons arrived at Penn State and were prepared
for public access. The archive became a social site with the launching of feminist

*Teaching Conversations.* Participants learned about the evolving transdisciplinary project and explored the meaning of using and contributing to a living archive. They learned about the plans in process with living curriculum, that through sharing their own teaching documentation using the materials in the collection, the archive could grow, representing the living processes with and through the archive that can generate a multitude of stories. The assemblage of texts, images, and sounds came alive as *Teaching Conversations* participants applied their questions, concerns, interpretations, and experiences to the collection and pondered how to reshape the collection into curricula.

**Feminist Teaching Conversations**

As stated on the collection website, *Teaching Conversations* “embraces feminist principles of equity and eco-social justice, and sets into motion participatory, self-knowledge, and critical inquiry” (“Teaching Conversations”, 2013). *Teaching Conversations*’ welcoming, participatory nature serves as an access portal and sustained platform for supporting teaching with the materials in the collection through both physical and virtual means, allowing and encouraging new perspectives, remixes, and juxtapositions of archival materials. *Teaching Conversations* is open to anyone interested in exploring curricular possibilities with the collection, a unique project that gives users a dynamic and active role in creating and generating meaning.

*Teaching Conversations* is an attempt to use the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection to think or imagine pedagogy in new ways or possibilities. The project situates
the archive as a dialogic site for activism and pedagogy. Reflective of the previously discussed changing roles in archives practice, *Teaching Conversations* transforms the archives into a social space and encourages a diverse range of uses for the collection.

Through feminist *Teaching Conversations*, participants explore various ways to integrate the materials in the collection into their respective courses and, through its focus on *living curricula*, users have the option, if they choose, to share their work by adding to the archive. Users are considered potential contributors to this particular archive. The living archive therefore, established within the policy of archival process specific to this collection, sets parameters that grow the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection as a living archive and thus explicitly encourages an understanding of the role of contributors in the continuum of scholarship, teaching, and learning within the archive practice (Bly & Wooten, 2012).

**Feminist Teaching Conversations: Towards a Transdisciplinary Practice**

In creating *Teaching Conversations*, Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd is striving for feminist transdisciplinary creativity. She created the project as a way to engage across disciplines, to access the collection in a way that is not necessarily fixed in any single methodology. Feminist *Teaching Conversations* is open to different ways of knowing, and encourages transdisciplinary creativity.

Transdisciplinary Creativity: Our approach to creativity is theorized as a speculative standpoint, a notion developed from feminist approaches to epistemology. A speculative standpoint requires acknowledgement of our
situatedness, and openness to different ways of knowing. It requires artists and scientists to translate disciplinary discourses, rather than lose the creative intelligence each offers. (Keifer-Boyd, Trauth, & Wagner-Lawlor, 2015; http://cyberhouse.arted.psu.edu/DOCC/topics/2_CREATIVITY.html)

Teaching Conversations starts with an invitation to be part of a diverse range of teaching faculty who engage in a teaching conversation around the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, a collection representing feminist art pedagogy. These conversations are intended to cross intellectual boundaries to establish and create new ideas and new artifacts that are not fixed in any one discipline. The emphasis towards transdisciplinarity integrates knowledges from multiple disciplines and transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries to create living curriculum in context to the collection. Keifer-Boyd’s goal with the project was to create a platform for supporting ongoing dialogue about the collection to imagine pedagogy and possibilities for teaching and learning. She uses the term transdisciplinary “to emphasize translate-ability of specialized ways of knowing among scholars even in (supposedly) widely separated fields of expertise” (Keifer-Boyd, Trauth, & Wagner-Lawlor, 2015, p. 87). The ongoing nature of Teaching Conversations means engaging multiple disciplines over time, and is determined by the particular perspectives on the archive that intersect at any given moment.

Teaching Conversations is a move towards transdisciplinary approaches in the university setting that involve the integration of knowledges from multiple disciplines to collaboratively address issues and problems in the world. With the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, Teaching Conversations participants gather to explore materials on
feminist art pedagogy, uniquely situating the university archive as a transdisciplinary pedagogical space generated by possibility while representing open-ended ways of integrating art into teaching and learning across disciplines.

Transdisciplinary approaches are not universally defined, but for the purposes of this study, I provide some interpretations. Though definitions between multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary can be ambiguous depending on the scholars using the terms, there are subtle differences that differentiate transdisciplinary practices (Teinake, 2011). Stemming from multidisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity involves the exploration of a topic from many disciplines simultaneously, including “what is between the disciplines, across, the disciplines and beyond the disciplines” (Marinova and McGrath, 2004).

Nicolescu (1997), in his thesis on sustainable development of universities, states: “Transdisciplinarity entails both a new vision and a lived experience. It is a way of self-transformation oriented towards the knowledge of the self, the unity of knowledge, and the creation of a new art of living” (Nicolescu, 1997). He calls for universities to establish among its faculty, transdisciplinary workshops for dialogue and research.

What is unique to a transdisciplinary approach is the idea of engaging across disciplinary borders to create new ideas and artifacts that do not hold to any one discipline. These artifacts have the potential to continue fostering new works that defy disciplinary boundaries as they can appeal to a range of scholars across disciplinary lines. For instance, the university setting demands specific disciplinary authorities, within the realm of critical visual arts research, which do not necessarily rely on any single prescribed body of knowledge learned and then applied. Therefore, there is room to
create unique parameters of working based on an array of practices, and the necessary tools of inquiry for open-ended discovery. There is room to enact change, which is one quality of transdisciplinary methods. Sullivan (2010) refers to the inventive inquiry that comes out of this process, or the postdisciplinary nature of arts based research, as it “takes the researcher beyond existing content boundaries” (p. 112). As transdisciplinarity approaches acknowledge the commonalities and richness that various disciplines bring to the whole, art educator, Julia Marshall (2014) for instance, sees transdisciplinary rising above disciplines and dissolving boundaries, “to create a new social and cognitive space” (p. 106).

Transdisciplinary emphasizes the ability to dialogue across specialized knowledges to solve problems creatively and collaboratively. Feminist researcher, Patricia Leavy (2011) describes transdisciplinary methods as emphasizing collaborative problem solving to address real-world issues and problems and seeks to make apparent instances where transdisciplinary approaches are being adopted within the research community in the social sciences. Leavy emphasizes that collaborative transdisciplinary research methods draw from the combination of different knowledges and embrace the development of hybrid designs and the creation of new research tools (i.e., approaches, content, and modes of analysis) in order to anticipate the unplanned and unexpected aspects of inquiry.
Chapter Four: Methodology

The *Teaching Conversations* project is a unique perspective to facilitating access to archives, with a feminist approach on orienting users to archives and emphasizing, through dialogue, the possibility and potential with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. My study explores how a feminist orientation to using archives impacts archival user experience asking how users experience the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through *Teaching Conversations*.

My goal was to explore using and experiencing the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection situated within *Teaching Conversations*, a feminist framework for accessing and experiencing archives. I employed an interpretivist approach that was flexible but also came out of my conceptions about access and engagement with archives as both sites for experiential learning and things to experience; a position I acknowledge in my theoretical frame. This flexibility was crucial to my ability to see the data, as I will discuss further in this chapter.

**Qualitative Research**

I used qualitative methods to see what will emerge from what the interviewees chose to express to me about their experiences with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and *Teaching Conversations*. Qualitative inquiry offers the capacity to form arguments about particular situations to deeply understand and imagine how things might
work in particular contexts. Mason (2002) provides a loosely defined explanation of what is *qualitative* about qualitative research. She describes it as (a) “broadly interpretivist in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted,” (b) encompassing varying methods of data generation which are “both flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data are produced” within real life contexts, and, (c) useful for building understanding from rich, detailed contextual data while emphasizing “holistic forms of analysis and explanation” (p. 3). Qualitative research methods involve an active engagement in the research, taking into account the complex and multi-dimensional qualities of social activity—living, breathing, thinking, feeling, interacting human beings, whose individual backgrounds and experiences shape how they see and engage the world.

Research in art education has become increasingly qualitative, to include a range of approaches and alternative forms of inquiry based in areas such as narrative, arts practice, experience, and others (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997; Leavy, 2009; Sullivan, 2010). Elliott Eisner (2008) saw the movement of art education research inquiry from dominantly quantitative to increasingly qualitative as art educators explored and understood the field through a diversity of approaches and meaning that these studies produced. Eisner (1991), describes aspects of qualitative research that include the researcher as an instrument in the inquiry, centering the interpretation of phenomena occurring in the natural setting, with emphasis on context and details, and allowing voices to emerge from the data.
Role of the Researcher: Mixed Methods

I used mixed methods for data collection, including qualitative interviews, which were the primary source of my data, and to a much lesser extent, participant observation, as I was involved in some *Teaching Conversations* gatherings. This role was secondary, and mainly served to support the dialogue in my conversational interviews with my participants. Therefore, my main research role was as interviewer. I also conducted textual analysis of key texts pertaining to Judy Chicago and her art education collection to enhance reader understanding of the context of her pedagogy and her collection.

I employed participatory frameworks of engagement involving dialogue, shared experiences, and reciprocal-reflexivity (Lather, 1991). Reflexivity involves a “self-conscious stance” on the part of the researcher by making position, motives, and desires explicit in how the research process shapes and influences the researcher and the knowledge produced from it (Klein, 2012, p. 6). Reciprocity is dialogically-based, involving the input of the research participants in checking how the researcher has produced meaning from the participants’ accounts, helping to avoid exploitation of participants by inviting their input in the meaning that is produced within the research process (Keifer-Boyd, 2012).

Strategy of Inquiry

What motivated this research as a qualitative exploration was my position that engaging with archives and doing archival inquiry involve complex personal and social
processes and my conviction that the archives space can be a site for tapping into infinite possibilities for engaging teachers, learners, artists, and community. In order to understand the complexity of engaging with archives and the varying aspects of the personal and social processes that were involved through *Teaching Conversations*, this method was both exciting and challenging for the same reasons—the complexity and diversity of experiences.

A qualitative interview-based inquiry allows the experience to be determined by the research participant through dialogue, and, therefore, it allowed me to explore how each participant perceived their own experience of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through *Teaching Conversations*. In order to (as much as possible) avoid influencing my participants’ positions, values, and beliefs, I used the participants’ experiences as a departure point to drive the questioning so that they could shape the direction of their answers as well as where the conversation would lead. Semi-structured interviews that use a list of open-ended questions served as an unrestrictive reference. This was important, as I had to consistently reassess and customize my questions to each individual rather than use the same questioning script for each participant. I go into greater detail on the vital need for flexibility further in this chapter, when I discuss the methodological issues encountered in my study.

Feminist *Teaching Conversations* began in Fall 2011 and is intended to be ongoing. The first iteration of the project provided me the sustained framework and schedule for my study. During the first semester after the collection arrived at Penn State Special Collections, faculty from several different disciplines attended a *Teaching Conversations* meeting, where they were introduced to the collection, and other aspects
of Judy Chicago's artistic practice and feminist participatory art pedagogy. They gathered periodically over the following semesters amongst the record cartons that the archivists made available, to dialogue about the collection as well as ways to fold the ideas embedded within the materials and aspects of Judy Chicago’s work into their coursework. Their dialogue served as a strategy for me to continue the conversations.

Research Site

Since the purpose of my study was to examine archival user experience with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through feminist Teaching Conversations, I used the Teaching Conversations project as my research site. The gatherings took place in the University library with access to the physical materials in the collection. The participants came from different disciplines and departments on the Penn State campus, such as 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. The group engaged in conversations about the collection, about teaching, and they also gave feedback about the website for enhancing access for their individual needs. They also had the opportunity to request materials to be digitized for website access. Other than these group meetings, participants were encouraged to access the collection on their own in the Special Collections library. Plans for the Judy Chicago symposium that was scheduled to take place in April 2014, inspired Teaching Conversations participants, early on, to start thinking about teaching
projects using the collection and the possibility of including themselves on a teaching panel to present and share their work with the broader teaching community.

**Identifying Study Participants: Rebecca, Ginny and Margo**

The criteria for choosing my participants were based on a combination of their interest in doing sustained work with the collection, their involvement in *Teaching Conversations*, and their use of the collection in the classroom. As I intended to conduct interviews about how participants experienced using the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection for teaching through their participation in *Teaching Conversations*, it was crucial that my participants be committed to a relatively long-term engagement. Their participation in my study would require them to commit to both talking to me about their experiences teaching with the collection over a significant length of time and be involved in *Teaching Conversations*. This was not an easy accomplishment, because for some, agreeing to be involved in my study meant that they were absolutely sure that they would be teaching with the collection, if they hadn’t already done so, and not everyone was ready to commit at the point that I was ready to start my data collection.

With my Institutional Review Board approval secured to do recorded interviews and participatory observation, I was able to find three participants through my own proximity to the *Teaching Conversations* project and the collection. I asked four professors participating in *Teaching Conversations* if they would be willing to be interviewed about their experiences with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and *Teaching Conversations*. Of the four, one declined because she was not sure at that time
if she would fully commit. This left three participants who accepted my invitation. Two participants had already used the collection (Ginny and Rebecca) in their courses and my other participant was involved with many other aspects of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and she expressed that she was planning to use the collection for teaching. I felt confident that she would continue her involvement with both *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection because of her additional participation in the many activities surrounding the acquisition. Only two of these participants defined themselves as feminists (Ginny and Margo). The other participant did not explicitly talk about her feminism (Rebecca) although she alluded to teaching some feminist content in one of her classes in regards to Judy Chicago’s art.

Rebecca is a lecturer in Jewish Studies, History and Religious Studies; Ginny is an associate professor in Theatre Studies; and Margo is a professor of English and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. With the diversity of their individual interests and backgrounds, combined with the length and depth of the study, I felt that focusing primarily on the experiences of three participants, over the course of two semesters, would provide a sense of their experience with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and feminist *Teaching Conversations*.

The accounts of three people cannot be generalized to a set type of user. This study does not seek to make fixed, universal claims that summarize every participants’ experience because it acknowledges each user as an individual who brings their own experience, assumptions, and expectations to the archive. Their individual experiences paint a picture of the kinds of different approaches possible. Moreover, *Teaching*
Conversations is shaped by the participants that attend it at any given moment; another set of individuals would certainly show other possibilities of experiences.

Ethical Standards

For the purposes of confidentiality, I use pseudonyms to refer to my individual participants. Most of the interviews took place on campus either at the university library or the art museum, except for one interview that took place at a restaurant. I keep the recordings secure in accordance with safeguarding confidentiality. I recognize that this is not fool proof in disguising the individuals, as anyone involved very closely with the project might be able to correctly guess the identity of these individuals. Therefore, in order to maintain transparency with my participants, and respect methods of reciprocal-reflexivity, I shared each of the interview transcriptions with my participants usually within ten days of our conversations (while relatively fresh) to review, allowing for editing, comments, and feedback.

Sharing my interview transcripts was an essential aspect of the credibility of my research and data. Because I shared the interview transcripts with the participants soon after the conversations occurred, they had the opportunity to re-visit our discussions to clarify points that they thought I might not have caught and/or to add to the discussion. This was also an opportunity for them for reflection and to listen to what they had shared with me. Van Manen (1997) refers to this process as a hermeneutic interview because the researcher refers back, as needed, to the interviewee to dialogue about the ongoing
development of the interview transcripts “turning the interviewees into participants or collaborators of the research project” (p. 63).

**Data Collection**

I conducted three phases of in-depth interviews with each participant. Conducting the conversations over the duration of the planning, implementation, and presentation stages of the individual teaching processes allowed time for participants to reflect on their changing ideas and experiences, as well as cultivate a sense of their students’ experiences. This activity also helped to keep a fairly consistent and easy flow in our communication, allowing for better recall, and more connection to the conversations as they happened over a long period of time.

In depth interviews can help give insight on how a person interprets and orders the world (i.e., how a person makes certain relationships and connections between particular events, what their concerns and perspectives are, and what their values are in relation). Seidman (1991) provides a solid framework for interviewing suggesting that the interviewer should designate at least three separate opportunities for conversations that do not exceed ninety minutes. The time limit insures that the interviewee does not become fatigued through the process and therefore can be fully present in the conversation, and coherently respond to questions from the interviewer. I interviewed each research participant for about forty-five minutes to an hour and a quarter each time, depending on their availability. I digitally recorded the interviews with the exception of two, with two different individuals. In those cases, I took notes shortly after the
conversation and folded those notes into my analysis. I then transcribed the recordings and did a qualitative analysis of them, which involving coding.

Recording the conversations helped reduce the opportunity for misinterpretation or misunderstanding. I recorded the conversations with an application, downloaded on my iphone, called "highlights" which, allowed me to, with a seamless tap on the screen, bookmark moments that seemed particularly important to me, or that I wanted to make sure that I could later revisit.

I conducted my interviews over three stages of the Teaching Conversations project, which the participants followed in varying degrees, and in their own way. The first interview took place during the workshop phase, presumably after participants had done preliminary reading and research about the collection. The second interview occurred after participants had explored the collection in discussion with each other. The final interview took place soon after the symposium or after they had finished teaching their respective courses using the collection, depending on their respective situations. In the case of one participant, she used the collection for a class and presented course content through a separate venue than the symposium.

The interviews were informal and conversational, with the interviewee being the critical agent in shaping the conversation. From the conversations, I teased out details of individual experiences, asking questions while trying not to presume the answers, in order to allow my participants to direct their own answers, where they chose. For instance, if the prompt was to reconstruct a particular moment that was important to the participant (perhaps a moment where an idea or vision crystallized), a question such as, “What was that experience like?” gave the participant the chance to tell the story or as
Seidman (1991) explains, “reconstruct their experience according to their own sense of what was important” (p. 63).

While still fresh in my memory, I transcribed each interview soon after the conversation. First, I listened to the full recording while making notes. Then, I listened to the conversation again. When necessary for clarity, I slowed down the replay with a function that was included on the application and at this point, I would start transcribing the interview. I did several iterations of listening to the recorded interview conversation while writing out my interview transcripts and reflecting on my memory and notes of the implicit communication from my conversations. I repeated that exercise until I was able to listen to the interview in regular speed and read my transcript at the same time. Once I was sure that the transcription was correct and complete, I would then send the transcript to my interviewee for their review and input. Usually, this would occur within two weeks after each conversation. Once I would get confirmation from the interviewee and/or an edited transcription back via email, their comments would then become part of the data and folded into the analysis. I would re-edit the document based on their comments, if there were any. From the new written transcript, I would add notes, comments, thoughts, insights, and new insights. While transcribing, I also made notes on parts that I wanted to revisit in the next interview.

**Managing the Data**

Part of my data management process was to keep the content as accessible as possible. In order to be able to work on my dissertation at any given moment to add
references, thoughts, or ideas, and to organize my study in one place, I created a private project website to hold, in a sense, an archive of my dissertation, and serve as a constant workspace and dissertation journal. The site was initially organized around my research proposal to help guide my study. I uploaded relevant literature onto specific web pages that structured my study. The design of the site was flexible, allowing me to create pages whenever necessary, to organize the content as needed, or as I needed to change my perspective.

Another part of my method in my data collection was to set aside time for myself directly after each conversation to write out notes about the conversations and include any implicit aspects of the conversations. In order to thoroughly capture the whole of the interviews, I attended to the nonverbal communication as best as I could. Taking notes on the nonverbal qualities of communication such as pauses, body language, and facial expressions, helped to enrich the descriptions and interpretations as well as stimulated my memory when listening to the interview again. I basically captured the whole process, from personal journal comments to notes from books, interview audio and transcript data, including relevant email correspondence.

Overall, the project site served as a dynamic interface for thinking and writing, tracking progress, organizing, as well as seeing and analyzing my data. Easy and flexible to use, the project site brought the research closer so I could at random moments make note of bumps in the research process, ideas that suddenly presented themselves, or simply jot down a note to myself to revisit later. This space for reflection on the process was important for me, especially when I ran into issues in my method, or when things did not seem to fit.
Methodological Issues Encountered in the Study

Although not necessarily intended, the dialogic, personal, and social process of my interview method actually mirrored the Teaching Conversations dynamic. From the beginning to the end of the study, the interview conversations fit seamlessly into the larger scope of the Teaching Conversations project, almost like extensions to those conversations. Teaching Conversations became a frame for interaction that extended into the interview conversations, implying a script designed for a desired conversation, but at the same time, offering the potential for open-ended and unanticipated conversations to occur.

The conversations usually stemmed from what was already being discussed in Teaching Conversations, driving the overarching method as participants consistently situated the conversation where they chose. They repeatedly chose to continue working out with me, in conversation, what they were doing within Teaching Conversations. Although I had prepared to ask questions about participants’ experiences with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and Teaching Conversations, I had expected that my participants would be discussing their use of the physical materials in the archive more prominently than they actually did. In reality, they mostly discussed their teaching projects and the social aspects within Teaching Conversations.

Rather than focusing on their actual physical engagement with the materials in the collection, my participants chose to talk through the conversations happening in Teaching Conversations, consistently turning the conversation on teaching or what was being
talked about in the context of the project. Their engagement and use of the Judy Chicago collection (whether it was physical or virtual) seemed to be much less than what I had expected. For instance, I thought that every one of my participants would be engaging with the physical collection in the library and that they would engage with it, and spend much more time with it, than they actually did. I thought that they would have much more to say about their experiences in the archive, with the collection; but in reality, this was not the case.

In two of the three cases (Ginny and Margo), the participants did not go into the archive (on their own) at all to engage with the physical materials in the record boxes. Instead, they had student assistants investigate the collection for them. In comparison, another participant (Rebecca) did not at first socially engage within *Teaching Conversations* as I expected. I humbly admit that these scenarios did not occur to me, when I was developing my interview questions and at first, this was disconcerting to me.

**The Research Process: Personal Perspectives**

It took time for me to not only acknowledge what was happening, but to also come to terms with it in a meaningful way. Bogdan and Knopp Biklen (2007) posit, “Becoming a researcher means internalizing the research goal while collecting data in the field” (p. 93). Research inquiry requires self-questioning; not to feel that they necessarily have sole control over the direction and focus of the research, but rather to understand what is possible. The researcher must interrogate their own values and reflect
Van Manen (1990) urges the researcher to be reflective, sensitive to language, insightful, and constantly open to experience.

Feminist research perspectives argue that position is impossible to completely ignore and therefore should be made explicit, insisting that because beliefs, values, and methods guide the inquiry, they should be scrutinized and understood (Hesse-Biber, 2010; Lather, 1991; Mason, 2002). The method used in this study is inspired by feminist inquiry into the world of human experience or lived experience. Lived experience involves “the embodied sensation of making sense” of oneself (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 1). Making sense of oneself means to orient oneself within the larger context and, “to orient oneself to a phenomenon always implies a particular interest, station or vantage point in life” (Van Manen, 1997, p. 40).

For me, this vantage point is my multiple and hybrid identities as a graduate student immersed in art education and archives coupled with my own embodied experiences using archives. Working in and with archives has been a transformative experience for me as well as an intriguing way for me to explore aspects of the history of art education and archives as social spaces. This research has been transforming as well as I learn about feminist archival perspectives and a feminist orientation to archives. These values and emerging ideas are also evident in my choice of the study’s theoretical frame in thinking of archives as things to be experienced (Latham, 2007; 2011) as well as potential sites for experiencing the learning self (Ellsworth, 2005).

Van Manen (1997) posits, “We gather other people’s experiences because they allow us to become more experienced ourselves” (p. 62). It is because of the encounters I have had with archival materials, and the empathetic nature of doing research with
artifacts that provokes me to wonder how particular points of entry into archives might or might not shape one's experience with archives. However, in the practical application of “research” in the position of a graduate student less seasoned in research practice and seeking out responses from established teaching faculty on campus (who also “do research”), there was a certain measure of vulnerability to which I alluded already. These sentiments were nonetheless, undeniably present, and I feel that they merit mention. Acknowledging the presence of vulnerability takes courage to let oneself be honest and to be seen. Perhaps vulnerability is essential to innovation, creativity, and change, as it helps one make something new that has never existed before.

As a novice researcher, I was unsure, at first, as to how to proceed with my participants who seemed to not be “participating”. This discrepancy caused me some frustration during the research process, given that I had expected my participants to engage with the physical archive and each other. However, as I investigated the unfolding data, I acknowledged my process and decided to explore my project site where I was putting the pieces of my dissertation together.

In examining how I was configuring and refiguring pages, I was able to see how entrenched I was in my own pre-conceived ideas about what constitutes using archives; because the way some of the participants were using the collection did not correlate with my own ideas about using and engaging with archives. One of my pages, I had created (spontaneously) to hold the pieces that were seemingly not “fitting” right, I had titled the page “squares into circles” (See Figure: 4-1).
Expanding my own Perspectives on Using Archives

I started to realize however, that it was my own perspectives on using archives that was not fitting. I was focused on a set user and held certain definitions as to what constitutes archival use. I was focused too pointedly on an assumption of a certain type of engagement with the archive that was, in actuality, much more ambiguous and complex than expected. My pre-conceived notions made up a certain scenario of what the interviewees would be doing with the materials, and in turn influenced the questions that I had initially wanted to ask.

I began to see that the disconnect between what my assumptions were, going into the study, and what was happening in reality, in terms of engagement with the collection, could be an issue, because of how each of the interviewees responded (or not) to my questions, how they understood my questions based on their individual engagement with the project, and how they responded meaningfully from their own experiences.
Once I came to terms with what I felt, at first, was a dilemma; I realized that what the participants were telling me about how they were using and experiencing the archive should be the shaping force of my study. I needed to base my thinking on what the participants were actually doing with the collection rather than what they were presumably not doing as a form of using the archive; their experiences should guide me and open my understanding about what constitutes using archives.

It wasn’t that my participants were not using the archive, because in actuality they were. Rather, the way that my participants’ were using the archive was only, much different than what I expected, and for what I had prepared. They relied on the dialogue about the collection happening in Teaching Conversations to learn about Judy Chicago and what the collection contained to think about teaching with the ideas inherent in the collection. In effect, they were using and experiencing the collection through dialogue with me, and/or the other participants and/or their students. They were using and experiencing the archive through teaching conversations.

I realized that my participants were using the archive through Teaching Conversations as a form of speculation on teaching through dialogue, which was just as valid as any other way. This realization that I must legitimize speculation and dialogue as a way of using archives was actually one of the key findings of my study showing that one way of using an archive can be mediated through conversation. Archives are social. They are embedded in social relations. Participation in the archive is both a giving and receiving since the archive functions in how it is accessible to others, or shared. In the case of Teaching Conversations around the collection, the social component is even more emphasized.
Flexibility in Methodology

As is crucial to a qualitative perspective, I developed my research question to draw conclusions about user experience with a specific archival orientation to a specific archive, and also to be able to think about the effectiveness of archival orientations that are flexible, iterative, dialogic, and comprehensive. In order to come to terms with the discrepancy between what I had set out to do with my proposal and where my interviewees had, in a sense, taken me, I chose to work in parallel to the emerging data, which was revealing a major emphasis on dialogue and beginning to show how a feminist orientation can shape the archive, the use of the archive, and the user. My having certain expectations about using archives could have implicitly dictated to my participants how they should conduct themselves in the archive and I wanted to hear my participants’ own perspectives about their experiences. I wanted to understand individual experiences of Teaching Conversations with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, *without specifying what users should do*. Dictating my own expectations and outcome of their experience using the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and participating in Teaching Conversations would not serve well to understand the complexities of what their experiences might be.

I revisited my proposed strategy of inquiry, which was a phenomenological study on archival experience and revised my method to allow myself to be more open to letting the study guide me. The methodology I had chosen was to allow for this flexibility; to be able to move back and forth between different elements of the research process (my own
and the processes of my participants) as well as connect my philosophical and methodological position to the research process and to its appropriate data generation methods. Reflecting on the process, I realized that I was meeting *Teaching Conversations* participants face to face and having a conversation with them about their experiences with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and the feminist *Teaching Conversations* project. The content of our conversations depended on what the participant wanted to talk about. Each had their own perspective on both *Teaching Conversations* and the collection, and in order to understand their individual experiences, I sought to hear participants’ perspectives about their archival experiences as they chose to express them during our conversations. I determined that a more narrative, interpretive approach was more suitable as I sensed that I needed to open my perspectives on the possibilities of what might constitute *using* archives.

**Conversation as Method**

It became apparent to me that *conversation* was my research method. Conversations encompass elements that provide richness and depth, context and nuance, as part of the analysis and explanations. Throughout the stages of interviewing, the conversations moved between thinking out loud about ideas for using the collection, what happened or might happen in the classroom, or other issues related to using archives. Both before and after their respective courses, there remained self-questioning about what continued involvement they would have with the project or what new projects could be pursued. The interviews were not linear or moving to a specific end, but rather followed
the same process of *Teaching Conversations*—that of using an archive especially through speculation and dialogue and generating new ideas and ideas for projects with the collection.

As a transformative process, *Teaching Conversations* involves self-reflection as questions in discussion repeat and spiral on previous assumptions and experiences, capturing new ones (Cranton, 2000). Lave and Wenger (1991) define access in learning as “talking about, and talking within practice” (p. 109). Talking through experiences, ideas, and talking about the research journey and/or articulating the learning process, participants bring discoveries to the surface, and illuminate new ideas.

**Data Analysis**

Dialogical, flexible, and contextual processes to collect data were also methods that I used to understand the data. Interpretational framework methods (Dahlberg et al., 2001; Hycner, 1985; Smith & Osborne, 2008; Van Manen, 1990) helped me to conceptualize how to layer the stages of my own data analysis. Interviews, transcriptions, reflections, and lines of inquiry took place simultaneously and iteratively as the study progressed, with meanings and interpretations emerging as the study evolved (Crist & Tanner, 2003).
Specific Methodological Applications in this Study: Coding and Mapping

I used coding and mapping methods to explore my data, coding the transcripts from the conversations first, and then mapping the categories that emerged from the data. Coding is a process of labeling relevant words, phrases, sentences, or sections of the transcript that hold particular weight or meaning. Content mapping as a research tool provides a visual representation of the structure of knowledge or conceptual understanding of a particular focus (Miller et al., 2009).

Coding

After all the transcriptions were completed in the same format, I listened to the audio and read the interview a number of times in succession “to get a sense of the whole” (Hycner, 1985, p. 281). This allowed for insights to emerge and set the context for emerging patterns and themes, which was helpful to start thinking about coding. Working directly on the transcripts, I then read each of them repeatedly and marked them with each pass, circling text that caught my attention. Customizing my reading and coding in a personal intuitive process, I was encouraged by Smith and Osborn (2008) who state that, “There are no rules about what is commented upon, and there is no requirement, for example, to divide the text into meaning units and assign a comment for
each unit” (p. 67). They see this stage as a “personal process and the analysis itself is the interpretive work which the investigator does at each of the stages” (p. 67). I worked with the recordings and transcripts layering my listening and reading of the text. With each listen and read, themes eventually emerged towards general categories and claims (Smith & Osborn, 2008). I followed a non-linear, iterative and simultaneous process, constantly comparing the whole interview transcript with the parts, while extracting meanings from the text and coding points that I thought should be marked.

For me, coding and themes were very open in the beginning based on the following reasons—the participant might repeat ideas often, what they say might surprise me, they might explicitly point out something that they feel is important, or what they said connected to something I had heard before. Sometimes, the coding process was just intuitive; what they said just seemed important for me to code at the moment. I tried to be open, aiming for a conceptualization of underlying patterns in what each individual expressed.

Some of the initial codes made up some of the consistencies that emerged from the conversations, and eventually, in some cases, became themes that carried through. I color-coded the themes directly on the transcripts to re-visualize the data in an alternative way. The codes overlapped (and there were many instances), and like colors on a palette, they mixed, expanding my interpretations and adding meaning (See Figure: 4-2).
Figure 4-2: This photo shows the color-coding of the interview transcripts.

My project site (See Figure: 4-3) was crucial to supporting a dynamic data collection process.

Figure 4-3: This photo is an example of my dissertation project site.
Using the pages on my project site, much in the way that one might use a journal, I could, in a sense, dialogue with myself. I used the comments feature and created pages whenever necessary to capture both the process and the work simultaneously.

Another page held emerging theme headings. These were threads of the conversations that I highlighted to bring into my preparation for the second and third iterations of interviews with each individual in order to continue each conversation. These threads also consisted of the constants that emerged from the conversations and eventually became themes that carried through (See Figure: 4-5).
Figure: 4-5: This photo is an example of my dissertation project site to illustrate journaling and emergence of themes.

I compiled these excerpts and threads from each interview on a separate page on the project site titled “conversational themes.” I highlighted the text from the transcripts and in some cases wrote out parts of the transcripts by hand. Then I worked out those themes in color directly onto the transcripts (See Figure: 4-2).

Participants’ experiences proved to be complex, transformative, generative, sometimes frustrating, and sometimes mainly social. Their experiences were not necessarily shared globally but there were some commonalities. The transformation of initial notes into themes set up a self-reflexive dialogue and was useful in visualizing the whole. The next stage of my method involved intuitively mapping the descriptions that my participants provided about their experiences and the relationship between those categories to visualize how the data looked over time. This exercise was beneficial for me to organize how I could translate what I was seeing into writing by helping me focus on what participants expressed as a whole. It revealed another perspective the data and served to contextualize my own exploration during the whole process.
Mapping

Mapping Teaching Conversations participants’ experiences with the focus on capturing and describing variations of their experiences allowed for an understanding of some related aspects of their individual experiences. Using a visual map to orient descriptions and themes can also be referred to as a content map. I mapped both the parts and the whole of the data during my inquiry using drawing, color from the coding, and text. Since mapping is a personal tool, usually the researcher determines what the elements represented signify, to connect what the representations mean to the whole.

This mapping exercise was familiar to me, as I had also used this method for giving form to my research ideas in their nascent stages in order to find and structure my dissertation study. Drawing helped me make sense of my research interests; to slowly organize my ideas while providing insight into what it was that I was thinking, and to put my own experience into visual context. This drawing of my early research ideas was purely conceptual (no text). By working in this way, my drawing slowly started making my ideas visible.
Figure: 4-6: This research map was a process to conceptualize my initial thinking about learning in archives.

The above content map reflected my perceptions on teaching and learning with archives as a social practice and served as a way to visually structure my thinking and future study. This image had no text or color (except for a small cluster in the center which represented my own location within the ideas). It consisted of spirals and lines representing social activity around archives, networks between learners and knowledge transfer as well as clusters of small circular marks representing collections and knowledge nodes. It was a visual of my thinking about archives as a social learning space where users are connected over time and space. I used this drawing as an anchor throughout the entire study; it graced the homepage of my project site and appeared in presentations over the course of my studies about archives as social spaces.
I returned to the content mapping method again for my dissertation; this time to see the data in a different way, to structure my thinking about what the data were telling me, and to understand and explore my participants’ expressions as a whole. My content map image was intuitive as I had tried as best as I could to refresh my perspective from reading and coding the data by mixing up the excerpts and setting them aside for some time. I did this by cutting apart my color-coded transcripts into salient excerpts, then leaving them aside for approximately one week in order to refresh my perspective. I then went back to the individual excerpts that had been mixed up to obscure the identity of the speaker. I refigured the pieces into an intuitive and layered organizational schema that
was based on the chronological flow of the *Teaching Conversations* project and how the
themes repeated through that flow.

I began to see my process of mapping as a form of restorying the data
(Ollrenshaw & Creswell, 2002) as I was inspired by this method, which is sometimes
used in narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry emphasizes stories told by individual
participants and learning in a particular setting. Restorying involves gathering the texts
and remixing them into a type of chronological order. The stories encompass experiences
both personal and those that involve social interaction (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I
restoried my data by cutting apart the color-coded transcripts into salient excerpts, mixing
them up to obscure the identity of the speaker, and then refiguring the pieces into an
intuitive and layered organizational schema that was based on the chronological flow of
the *Teaching Conversations* project (See Figure: 4-7).

My map not only structured a way of seeing the data, but also helped me to see a
larger perspective. In developing a framework to understand the data and eventually
translate what I was seeing in my writing, I referred back and forth between the two
conceptualizations. The coding was a micro perspective based on each individual
conversation, while the mapping gathered all the categorized texts and was refigured into
a more chronological macro view of the data.

Incorporating both strategies of mapping and coding into my methodology
provided micro and macro perspectives of the participants’ accounts, which in turn,
helped me discover what my individual participants were experiencing—each with their
own backgrounds, experiences, assumptions, and expectations. Through changing the
form of the data and the process of looking at it differently, it helped me make sense out
of the complexity of it and articulate what it looked like. The process helped me to put words to my findings.
Chapter Five: Findings

This chapter serves to introduce my participants in context to their experiences with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and their participation in feminist Teaching Conversations. I also outline my initial findings by providing first a broad perspective from the conceptual map of my conversations with my participants. I then follow by introducing the findings from coding the data and briefly summarize three themes that I have identified from my data analysis. The three subsequent chapters are then organized around these central themes where I describe and analyze my participants’ experiences in terms of the themes that I introduce in this chapter.

Conversations with Participants

My active participation in the conversations, in following the dialogue and seeing where the interviewees would lead me, factored greatly in what the data looked like. The accounts from my three participants revealed that experiences with feminist Teaching Conversations and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection were complex, personal, and multi-dimensional. The data showed that participants’ processes with the collection were not linear, with a beginning and end. Rather, they overlapped and repeated throughout the entire study. One example of this was their continuous dialogue about potential projects using the collection. Even after the symposium, when the projects were “complete,” participants continued thinking about the collection and expressing ideas about new projects that could come out of the collection. I noticed that they did this more
freely than they had in the beginning of their involvement, as one idea seemed to generate another.

The following summaries of each of my participants are the result of my conversations with each individual over the course of the Teaching Conversations project, as well as related information that I used to enhance my understanding of these conversations. I discuss, in random order, how each individual was introduced to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and feminist Teaching Conversations, how each participant described the course for which they used the collection, and what they did with their students. I describe their perceptions and experience of the Teaching Conversations project and the collection, addressing particular aspects that each of the individuals repeatedly brought up over the course of the conversations in their recollections. In some instances, I go into how the participants described their own philosophies around teaching, learning, or archives. In some cases, where text is in quotations, it is pulled directly from the transcripts for emphasis.

Rebecca

Rebecca is a lecturer in Jewish Studies, History, and Religious Studies. She pointed out several times in our conversations that she has not always been in academia. At one point, she had been an artist and an art teacher in a middle school and she said that this background informed her teaching of non-art related courses with adult students as she said that she regularly incorporates music and art into her curriculum.
At the time of this study, Rebecca was teaching “The History of the Holocaust”. She had been teaching this course repeatedly for about eight years, occasionally making adaptations as scholarship increased on the topic. With much mystique around the Holocaust, the class is popular, and is sizeable in attendance. Given the nature of the course as a general education requirement, Rebecca described the students who enroll as usually just looking for something “interesting” to take. She taught the class as an introductory course, assuming that students came with little to no knowledge about the content. Rarely were there Jewish Studies or History majors taking the class.

At first, Rebecca was reluctant to have me interview her, expressing some trepidation that perhaps she would not be a good fit for my study. In my email response, I encouraged her in writing that my request was based on her use of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection in her teaching, and her participation in Teaching Conversations. She responded, agreeing to meet me, but suggested that I could gauge after the first interview as to whether or not I wanted to continue with her. Later, upon meeting her for the first time face to face, when I thanked her for meeting me, she replied frankly, but politely, that it was my insistence that made her agree to meet me. At first, her response put me somewhat ill at ease, as I did not want her to feel coerced into talking to me. However, although I felt slightly awkward starting our first meeting with this tone, I quickly realized that it was perhaps my own vulnerability and apprehension as a novice researcher; because after we started talking for a bit, the conversation started to flow with ease and, in the end, we both agreed to meet again and pick up our conversation in the future.
I feel that it is worth mentioning how the various methods of communication (email, phone, face to face) play a large role in establishing rapport and creating the dynamic between interviewer and interviewee. I discuss this first meeting with Rebecca and the beginning to our conversations because I feel that these nuances play a significant part in qualitative research methods, which involve people, feelings, as well as real and imagined perceptions about what each person is thinking and meaning in the course of a conversation. Recognizing this helps not only make sense of the conversations later but also reminds us of the breadth of factors involved in what might seem to be a simple introduction in a conversation.

During our first conversation, Rebecca described how she had gotten involved with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and *Teaching Conversations*. She had read an announcement in the local newspaper about a presentation by Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd on Judy Chicago and the collection that was going to be held at the local synagogue. Rebecca went and at one point during the talk, Karen mentioned the *Holocaust Project*. The *Holocaust Project*, by Judy Chicago and Donald Woodman, is a large installation that resulted from the artists’ research into their own Jewish ancestry to understand more about the Holocaust. Rebecca became immediately curious and approached Karen after the presentation to learn more about the art. Karen spoke to her more about the *Holocaust Project* and also invited her to the next *Teaching Conversations* event. Rebecca accepted Karen's invitation and attended *Teaching Conversations* gatherings several times after, at the library on a couple occasions, and also a potluck at Karen’s home where Judy Chicago and Donald Woodman were also present.
Although Rebecca had used archives before, the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection was her first experience in the archives at Penn State, and she was quick to add that it (the collection) gave her a reason to go. When she saw the materials in the collection, she decided to incorporate the Holocaust Project, specifically the *Cartoon of the Fall*, and related materials about the making of the work, in her curriculum. She requested the archivist on duty to copy slides from the collection so that she could use the images in her class.

One of the classes she taught previous to our first conversation together was a week long, mini-course at the Chautauqua Institute called, “Art and the Holocaust”. The course was designed to demonstrate artists’ responses to the Holocaust. Each day to begin the class, she introduced different selected works from the Holocaust Project to serve as a touch stone to expand to other artists' work around the subject. She condensed the installation into five parts and worked off of particular aspects of the art to connect it to other representations of the Holocaust. An example she recalled was Chicago’s *Wall of Indifference* (1989), an image of a deportation train filled with prisoners going through the woods. There is a scene of a woman who has thrown her child out of the window of the train. The narrative indicated that the image was based on a story that Judy had heard while traveling and researching the topic about women who would drop their children out of the train windows in hopes that someone might find them and save their lives. Rebecca connected this image in context to a rescue movement called Kindertransport that saved thousands of Jewish children from Nazi extermination by transporting them to Great Britain from Nazi-Germany and their occupied territories (http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005260).
Rebecca also taught another course at Penn State previous to our first conversation. She used the collection for this class, discussing Chicago and Woodman’s *Holocaust Project* along with other artists’ responses to the Holocaust. She showed her students a thirty minute DVD from the collection about the making of the *Holocaust Project* (Chicago & Woodman, 1993).

Our last conversation occurred the day after Rebecca presented her semester’s teaching project at the Judy Chicago symposium. Rebecca went into greater detail with me about what she did with her students at the Judy Chicago exhibition on view at the Palmer Museum. We walked through the exhibit together while she recalled her conversations with her students. She stated that their commonality for the class was Chicago’s *Cartoon of the Fall*. They sat in front of the art together, and discussed the different markers of identity the art depicted. Her students also wandered through the whole exhibit to think about the broader themes that could be applied to the time period of the Holocaust also connecting the exhibit to material that they had covered in class. After, they regrouped and discussed what they found in the other pieces of art in connection to other materials and ideas they had covered during the course of the semester.

**Ginny**

Ginny is an associate professor in Theatre Studies. She was a Broadway performer before she became an academic. She explained to me that like many of her other colleagues in New York City, the World Trade Center attacks on September 11,
2001 were an impetus for her to rethink her life goals. She decided to leave New York and go back to graduate school to eventually earn her doctorate in Theatre Studies. She teaches theoretical courses and critical thinking, teaching the critical theory of theatre.

Our first conversation occurred right after a Teaching Conversations session in the library. She had already done a teaching project with the collection the previous semester. At the time of our first conversation, Ginny had just recently achieved tenure.

Ginny came to Teaching Conversations because she was invited by Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd. She expressed much professional admiration for Karen, describing her as a very “compelling colleague” and a “seasoned thinker” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). Ginny is very interested in linking her work to ideas outside of her discipline. When she first met and conversed with Karen, she felt there was something that they had in common about “thinking about what was happening in the world” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

Ginny is deeply community-oriented. She initiates projects that blend communities within the university and the town. In addition to her teaching on campus, she is also a playwright and conducts workshops in local schools and community centers through a theatre project that connects performance works to global and local issues that help to prompt conversations and create change.

Through Ginny’s initial conversation with Karen, she was able to see the possibilities of linking the project to her own work. She went to the Teaching Conversations gatherings and explored the video components in the Chicago collection as well as what was readily accessible online.
Chicago’s videos ultimately inspired Ginny to use them as a basis for her students to create performance video projects. She also used the visual images in the collection as a basis for discussing broader themes. Inviting her students to pick out an image from the collection, she asked them to tell the story behind the image. Next she asked that the students develop their own images from their story. Working with her teaching assistant, who was an undergraduate senior pursuing a double major in Theatre and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality studies, she invited him to facilitate a project for her senior level course, “Women in Theatre”. To prepare for the class, he went to the archive and met with Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd, who helped him select supplemental materials to put together his class presentation.

For the resulting project, students utilized the collection to create video projects as a feminist response to a high profile, sexual assault scandal that had recently been exposed to the public (through national media), and was a topic of major controversy and concern among students and faculty on campus. The students’ performance works focused on the issues raised by the scandal were made public to the community at large.

Margo is an associate professor of English and Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Her research interests include notions of feminist utopianism and hospitality. She participated in various activities connected to the collection for both teaching and research. Using the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection was the first time Margo had ever used a collection for teaching. However, she has had experience using archives for
research, having used them for her dissertation work as well as for other research. Her most recent archive experience was with the Susan Sontag papers. She talked about this work several times during our first conversation as a point of reference for her to talk about using and experiencing archives in general.

Margo's participation in Teaching Conversations was prompted through her professional friendship with Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd. She was curious about the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection—interested in the contents of the collection both because of Chicago, as an artist, situated in the feminist historical spectrum, and as a teacher, having developed her particular method of feminist art pedagogy.

Over the course of our conversations, Margo talked about the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection in a variety of ways, and she talked about different possibilities of using the materials for teaching. One project Margo discussed was revising an online introduction to Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies called, “Women in the Arts and Humanities,” a course which introduces students to basic feminist principles, and to a range of important figures in the women's movement. Revising this course was a responsibility towards which she expressed a certain measure of burden. She thought that the course was in “horrible shape,” technology being one of the main issues. Margo specifically thought about reorganizing the structure of the course using Chicago's art installation, The Dinner Party, as the central metaphor. She discussed incorporating the art as a tool for students to think about who they would invite to the table. She thought that by moving their thinking from the historical to the contemporary moment would facilitate for students a rich and living sense of the feminist movement. This project remained, however, in the planning stages during the entire time of this study.
Unlike the other respondents, Margo participated in extra activities and events connected to the collection besides *Teaching Conversations*, and therefore had many more opportunities to engage in dialogue about the various aspects of the materials. These activities included visiting Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* installation at the Brooklyn Museum and meeting the artist, as well as a collaborative curricular project focused on the collection, and various presentations. All of these activities took place over several semesters.

**Participant Conversations: What the Content Map Revealed**

Participants’ experiences were not necessarily shared globally but there were some thematic connections that made it possible to map the dialogue as a whole. What emerged from reorganizing, or restorying, the excerpts was spiral formed. Starting from the center of the map, I placed excerpts from each participants’ recounting of how they came to the *Teaching Conversations* project, which then flowed to reveal discussions and perceptions of social engagement with other participants, to dialogue about using archives, teaching with the collection, to then reflections on what came out of the courses and how they described their eventual projects. For the most part, the excerpts from the dialogue continued to flow to reflections on new ideas and projects the participants. This generation of new ideas spiraled back into the flow of the beginning, as much of the ideas were spawned through their interaction with other participants or were developed collaboratively—thus continuing a circular direction that implied repeated activity. The flow of excerpts feeding back into the beginning was based on the participants’
continuation of expressing new project ideas drawing on the collection, which showed that the experience of using the materials continued to generate ideas for new projects (See Figure: 4-7).

This resulting mapping image revealed a familiar organizing principle. It reminded of the familiar spiral form from the map that I did earlier on to help visualize my ideas and research interests. I had interpreted this initial image to reveal the impact of social interaction within archives, but I was also intrigued that my second map also reflected this spiral, iterative movement. Combined, both images suggested to me that, rather than following a straight linear progression, archival experience is continuous and overlapping, with concepts repeating, to make patterns of ideas. Learning in an archive can be a very social experience.

Figure 5-1: This image illustrates the juxtaposition of the two concept maps.

Following from the center, the first and most significant correlation was the impact of the invitation to the collection, being invited to the collection through feminist *Teaching Conversations*. The second was curiosity about the artist and her archive. The
third was dialogue, both in and out of *Teaching Conversations* and the way participants explored and talked through the practical application of the archive for teaching, which carried through the entire process. Participants continuously dialogued about new possibilities for teaching or other projects using the collection. The collection remained the central focus for starting ideas.

**Participant Conversations: What the Coding Revealed**

In the case of the participants I interviewed, the motivation for participation in *Teaching Conversations* started with an invitation and then curiosity about the artist Judy Chicago, an archive itself, or the notion of a teaching conversation, in general. They came expecting to build knowledge of the collection in and with support from others, through engagement with and dialogue about the collection. Some of them were attracted to the idea of engaging in feminist *Teaching Conversations* across disciplines, especially those for whom feminist inclinations are more marginalized in their field. They came to see what could be in a collection of art teaching materials that document a feminist pedagogy and how these methods could relate to their own teaching, to imagine how they could generate content from the materials for meaningful learning, engagement, and interaction in their own classrooms.

Each participant had specific aspects of the collection that they were thinking about depending on their specific teaching areas; each had different ways that they were bringing the ideas in the materials into their curriculum; and each had varying
experiences that they brought to the collection. These factors informed the way they saw the collection and the project in general.

My participants’ dialogue sheds insight on what their preliminary notions, expectations, or assumptions were and how they changed. Their stories —how they came to the collection, the archives, and the project itself, and what sustained their involvement, serve as a foundation for thinking about individual archival experiences through feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection.

**Themes within Dialogue: Archives, Teaching, and Social**

Three broad themes emerged from coding the conversations. They followed dialogue concerning archives-related discussion, teaching reflections and related issues, and social interaction. There were many instances where categories overlapped as meanings were emphasized towards a particular aspect. For instance, social activity was a piece that carried through in other themes, such as teaching; but sometimes social aspects were emphasized as a central factor when participants would express a specific thought about the importance of talking with others about ideas, meeting others, and/or sharing curricular ideas. The following three chapters are organized by each of the themes: dialogue about archives, dialogue about teaching, and dialogue about social activity and include the way all of the individual participant’s experiences are reflected within these contexts.
Chapter Six: Dialogue about Archives

One of the main themes from the conversations was specific to how participants talked about archives. Their dialogue encompassed perceptions about archives in general—including past experiences, such as doing research with archives. Participants also expressed their individual perceptions of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection in terms of what they thought the collection represented and how they used the materials.

Situating the Self within an Archive

Margo first saw the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection as a model of feminist pedagogy. She explicitly stated that the collection made her “think more about her own teaching” (Margo, personal communication, July 15, 2013). Margo was interested in Chicago’s participatory art pedagogy as possibly offering some insight about feminist teaching beyond her own discipline. She wanted to understand more about feminist approaches, how they might connect to her own teaching, and how she might incorporate various aspects of feminist pedagogy. She admitted in the beginning that she was unfamiliar with using a collection for teaching and was not sure as to what constituted using an archive in terms of teaching.

Ginny saw the collection as ideas; and she saw herself, in relation, as exploring the ideas embedded within. She said that she saw using the collection as a way to be “a feminist, theoretician, theatre historian, playwright, and actor all at once” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). Also an Ancient Greek and Roman historian,
Ginny looks at her experience both in theatre performance and teaching as her own theatrical archive. She draws from this experience as well as her various academic interests.

Rebecca saw the collection as a body of primary source materials that she could incorporate into her existing curricula. She inserts archival materials into her classes fairly regularly, mostly using digital works that she can access online, or going into the archive and requesting materials to be digitized. For Rebecca, the materials represent more content for a class that she feels is already content heavy, so, for her, it is a matter of balancing materials that pertain to a specific point or letting them go.

Engaging with Archives

Some participants talked about their previous engagement with archives including their experience using archives for research purposes. For instance, Margo spoke in depth about her research using the Susan Sontag archive, the work that she generated from the materials in her collection, and how her engagement with Sontag’s papers affected her understanding and connection to the writer.

Margo sees archives as primary source materials that can enhance knowing about a topic. Using Sontag as a case in point, what she enjoys about using archives is the vantage point into one’s life, the vicarious way of witnessing a person—seeing in the manuscripts the little handwritten side remarks or the beginnings of ideas and patterns of ideas, over the course of a personal and professional life. She feels that for one to really build understanding through an archive, one needs to have developed a certain way of
looking. She thinks that using archives is about learning how to read differently. However, in the case of Sontag, she felt that her extensive knowledge of the scholar, also made her a different reader of the materials in her archive. She stated,

I don't think anybody should go into archives with knowing a lot about the person ... Part of it is looking for confirmation but also you have to be open to finding stuff that doesn't fit, and thinking about why that is, or what ... not forcing somebody into some position that you want them to have ... It's really about learning to read in a way … in a much more complicated way (Margo, personal communication, July 15, 2013).

Ginny mentioned that she had used archives for her doctoral research but that she had never taught with a collection or engaged with archives as she had within *Teaching Conversations*. When Ginny first learned about the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection from her colleague Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd, she immediately imagined possibilities of using the collection in her practice. She saw the collection as an opportunity for opening minds to feminist thinking, expressing that the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection was profoundly valuable and important because her archive can show one “the possibilities of a culture as opposed to the probabilities based on stagnant information and the test” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). She saw the collection as representative of “teaching, and allowing young people to explore the possibilities of visual representation, or the possibilities of articulating your thoughts in a specific way” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

Rebecca has had experience using archives and primary sources both for research and teaching but she had never experienced an archive through a group orientation with
archives. She said that she enjoys being in an archive, describing herself as a very tactile person. Rebecca applied her experience with archives to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, staying to normative archival methods that are more focused on isolated, quiet study time in the archives reading room. At first, she was reticent in regards to the dialogic and social aspect of engaging with the feminist Teaching Conversations project. She went to the sessions mainly to access the materials in the collection rather than engage with the other participants.

Rebecca offered her reflections on being encountering certain archival materials—particularly in her focus on teaching the Holocaust. She described that engaging with archives for her is “unlike picking up a text that has been produced by a publisher that is wholly disconnected from its source” (Rebecca, personal communication, October 11, 2013). She finds the connection to the human element compelling and she feels that archives can provoke a transformative experience that makes one want to go deeper, to know more. Rebecca sees engaging with archives as a kind of conversation between the user and the material, particularly, with materials for which the creator of the collection is no longer alive. She stated eloquently,

To go in and read words that were written so long ago by someone who isn't here any longer, and to literally touch the paper they used, and how they wrote their words; I begin to wonder around that. You know? Where were they when they wrote this? What happened that day? Who was in their lives at the time? How was this received? Was it ever written again? Was it ever spoken again? Was this a one-time offering? Who else has walked through these pages? Who else has been here? Those kinds of etheric connections outside of time and space; you now have
a story to tell around the words (Rebecca, personal communication, October 11, 2013).

This statement reflects Rebecca’s experience exploring the Holocaust—the massive genocide—and her experience of piecing together a history from what remains, in order to tell her students the story. This process has taught her to look at both what is there and what is not there—to wonder around the etheric connections outside of time and space.

Rebecca admitted that although she did not feel quite the same affect using the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, she was still compelled to go in to the archive to see the physical materials. My impression is that given the nature of Rebecca’s topic on the history of the Holocaust, she has a profound understanding about loss, not only in terms of genocide, but also in terms of the materials the victims left behind, and the processes through which many of the materials were recovered and later preserved by archivists. She is aware of the human element and understands the processes of mediation that occur with regard to archival materials, as well as the kinds of stories that the materials themselves hold even just in terms of the journey to the archive and the subsequent treatment of the material by archivists to prepare it for public access. Rather than resigning herself to the website (if there is one) and depending on what, she warned, could be biased descriptions provided by the archivist on the finding aid, she prefers touching and seeing the materials. She asks, what is really behind the archivist’s descriptions by physically going in to see them (if possible); perhaps something else of interest is hidden in the folders. Rebecca is aware. She is both appreciative and critical of the process through which archival materials are mediated. She regards the finding aid as a tool to access materials but also as an instrument that should be critically questioned.
Engaging with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection

Rebecca did significant exploration of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection on her own, adding that the presence of the materials in the library gave her a reason to go in there. Even though she had explored the collection during a Teaching Conversations session, she decided to go further, and so she spent three full days in the archive alone looking for more. She went through every record carton to make sure that she had covered every possible aspect that might pertain to the Holocaust. Rebecca described her experience of “routing through and seeing what else was there.” She saw other materials that she connected to from the perspective of her “past life and careers” but eventually reached the conclusion that she had seen as much as she could in relation to her class. She stated, “I couldn’t see that it could as easily connect to what I’m teaching now” (Rebecca, personal communication, October 11, 2013). Therefore, the extra time spent in the archive did not surface more materials to use for her class, but she felt she had seen all of the materials and was satisfied knowing that she was not missing anything.

Both Margo and Ginny expressed that they did not put time aside to go to the archive on their own to look through the materials because they felt overwhelmed confronting the size of the collection. They both perceived the collection to be too vast; and therefore, searching in the physical collection would impose too many time constraints. Ginny stated at one point that she felt overwhelmed at the thought of going through the collection on her own, stating “…the breadth, the depth of this learning, the
Ginny expressed that one of the other things she found overwhelming was the sense of urgency or responsibility she felt just by the sheer existence of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection at Penn State. Ginny sees the teacher's role with the collection as an opportunity that must absolutely be embraced. She spoke of feeling a sense of obligation to the collection; the idea that the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and feminist Teaching Conversations were opportunities that she was obliged to take. She said, “It’s a way in, and anytime we can have a way in, we have to take it. We’re obliged to take it” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). She further stated,

I feel, I guess, the onus on just me personally going through the whole thing because I feel obliged. When you are given—I have what I call the obligation of opportunity—that’s how I live now. When I’m presented with an opportunity, I feel obliged to take it as far as I possibly can (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

Processes of Understanding an Archive through Feminist Teaching Conversations

Margo’s process of connecting to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection grew over time, as she got more familiar with the collection through her involvement with Teaching Conversations. She had a turning point when she was faced with a particular presentation that she had offered to do. To prepare, she forced herself to have
“some alone time” to research online and explore the connections that Judy Chicago’s work had to her own research and was intrigued to find that Judy Chicago's work connects strongly to her interests in notions of utopia and hospitality.

Margo admitted that when she had taken the time on her own terms to think and write about utopia in relation to Judy Chicago's work, she found her niche within the collection, and her appreciation and understanding of Judy Chicago and her art grew immensely. From there, Margo essentially went in two directions: using the materials in a class, and exploring the collection in connection to her research interests.

In terms of her research interests, she recognized Chicago's aspirations for her art as having utopian sensibilities that provoke viewers to think towards a better society. Margo found Chicago’s pedagogy, from process to product as a process of imagining something different, relating Chicago’s visionary energy as having utopian qualities, particularly in her treatment of exclusion (more specifically the long history of exclusion of women). Margo explained that Chicago creates, through her art and her pedagogy, a place for difference and she thought that this kind of place-making that Chicago does is situated in a speculative place-process, or journey that one continues on for one's life. Chicago’s place-making function of utopia struck her as a way of explaining why the artist had spent so much time making, documenting, and archiving her work; then being an advocate for art education; Chicago did this to create a better place.

Margo also made connections between Chicago’s work and notions of feminist utopianism, (in terms of finding a way to coexist and welcome difference), and feminist hospitality, (in terms of inclusiveness). Aspiring to this idea she thinks is the way
Chicago uses the house as a symbol to this process. Relating the notion of hospitality to the trajectory of Chicago's work, particularly *Womanhouse* and later *At Home*, offered Margo a particularly compelling lens—in *Womanhouse*, the men are omitted whereas in *At Home*, men and women collaborate within the spaces, showing a move to new understanding, of hospitality, but still exposing and confronting the consequences that exist when both inhabit the same space.

For an undergraduate Introduction to Women's Studies class, Margo brought her students to see the Judy Chicago exhibit at the Palmer Museum that opened January 21, 2014 and was on view through the entire semester. She also facilitated another class session inviting visiting artist and former student of Chicago, Nancy Youdelman. Youdelman was exhibiting work as part of the related Judy Chicago events happening and was also present on campus to meet with students. Youdelman, was part of the very first feminist art class, taught by Judy Chicago in 1970 at California State University, Fresno (then called California State College). She also participated in the Feminist Art Program (1971-73) at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, where she was part of the *Womanhouse* project.

With her students, Margo discussed the work of Judy Chicago and her former student Nancy Youdelman’s work, in terms of monumentality versus intimacy. Margo saw notions of intimacy and monumentality within the two women's works. For instance, she found the crux of Chicago's work to be situated between the monumental and intimate, as her work creates a space that collapses the private and public, male and female spaces, with *At Home* serving as an example. Chicago’s attention to space, finding other ways to organize domestic space metaphorically, simultaneously addresses the
intimacy of women's lives and makes those intimacies monumental, through the
transformation of an entire house.

Margo’s archival experience was situated between the monumentality of Judy
Chicago's exhibit at the museum, and the intimacy of the content in Nancy Youdelman's
exhibit in the gallery. She also linked this notion in regards to her experience with
Sontag’s manuscripts in seeing the unguarded and unpublished marks. She was struck by
the intimacies embedded in the writings of Sontag’s journal in contrast to the
monumentality of her as an internationally-known and larger-than-life figure.

After her experiences presenting at the symposium and the gallery talk as well as
bringing her students to both the Chicago exhibition and meeting Nancy Youdelman,
Margo’s perspective of feminist *Teaching Conversations* and the collection had changed.
She had time to reflect on her use of the materials that were available to her on campus.
She said that using the museum and other resources was a great experience that made her
more aware of incorporating outside resources for future classes, including using
websites and other media to supplement her class materials.

**An Archive as a Living Curriculum**

Margo was intrigued by the website and the idea of living curriculum, generating
new knowledge from an archive and adding new voices. She thought that introducing the
concept of a living archive to students, within the framework of a course, would be an
effective way to engage them. She saw the living archive as a way to give voice to
students, to make their contributions to scholarship visible through an archive.
During my first conversation with Rebecca, we discussed the website for the collection and the idea of a living archive, where users could generate “living curriculum” for inspiring new work and building an archive. Rebecca was less interested in using the website for the collection because the physical archive was easily accessible. However, she saw benefits for teachers far away to be able to access the website and to see ways that the materials were used for teaching. Rebecca thought there were definite benefits in posting ways that teachers have used the collection, because she thought their contributions could serve as a platform for an exchange of ideas. However, she was at first critical of the term “living curriculum,” saying that the description sounded too academic. She jokingly made a comment that the image of living curriculum made her think of a “book with legs on it” and suggested that since the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection website is intended for the public, it should have descriptive language to attract the non-academic community, but should also be accessible for students, teachers, and academics. She used the US Holocaust Museum website (http://www.ushmm.org/) as an example for being particularly user-friendly because of the featured drop-down menus specific for use by students, teachers and visitors.

Ginny was satisfied with the website and she thought that the living curriculum would be beneficial to teachers as she saw the strength of the website in sharing the practical applications to “existing forces.” She stated, “anytime something can bring together the ideas that are available to you, and anytime you can go to one place and access the possibilities, then you can begin to form your own set of possibilities” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). Reflecting on a recent discussion at one of the Teaching Conversations gatherings, Ginny recalled another participant bringing up the
idea of entanglement, and she carried this term again into our conversation, within the context of the digitization process of archival materials. She felt that while digitizing the materials in the collection is key to access, she warned against trying to digitize everything. She stated, “We have to entangle the possibilities of the collection at this juncture both by digitizing it, and by presenting it in physical form” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). She suggested digitizing just the “representative ideas” in each record carton, rather than everything as less rather than more would be most effective for a digital collection. She also felt that this would make the materials accessible in such a way that students could still personalize the archive by shaping it the way they want.

Ginny connected strongly with the idea of the collection as a generative living archive, explaining that the materials in the collection exist in and of themselves as the story of Judy Chicago—but what happens with them—how they get translated and interpreted, becomes something else. She recognized that Chicago’s gifting of her collection was an attempt to keep the ideas embedded in the collection alive through the possibility of continuous study; to keep the ideas “living into the future, as opposed to studying the archive from the past.” Ginny added that her impression from meeting Judy Chicago at the Teaching Conversations potluck was that Chicago had a profound desire to see her ideas take on new form and “keep moving forward.” Ginny felt that this was the fundamental reason that she gifted her collection, and the idea behind a living archive. Ginny planned to archive documentation of her students’ performances to add to the living curriculum, positioning her work with the collection as artifacts for future uses.
Chapter Seven: Dialogue about Teaching

Dialogue about the collection and feminist *Teaching Conversations* brought out several aspects about teaching practice and theory. Teaching dialogue included “thinking out loud” about how to use the collection, individuals’ philosophical underpinnings about teaching, or reflections on one’s own teaching practice, and reflections on the participants’ respective courses using the collection. For instance, each participant shared their own teaching experiences with the collection—what materials they used, what they did with the materials, how the students responded (i.e., what they connected to and discussed) and finally, if applicable, what the students did with the collection for their respective projects or responses. They also shared their frustrations about teaching or academia, including indications of where hierarchical boundaries were made evident within academic constructs.

In terms of dialogue about teaching, it was the practical application of an archive in teaching or possible curricular uses with the collection that was the most prevalent in the conversations, and it was also the most generative throughout the entire study. From the beginning of the project and even after the symposium, participants continued discussing new ideas and possible ways that the collection could be used for other projects.
Self as Teacher

Dialogue about teaching often brought up perspectives teaching and learning in relation to self within teaching practice. Ginny sees teaching as activism, and the role of teachers as idea-creators, creating change. She sees learning through communicating stories, particularly talking about difficult subjects to broach or subjects that are rarely talked about. Steeped in social justice issues in her practice and theory, Ginny referred to a Teaching Conversations discussion that resonated with her and she used it to describe her own feelings about the role of the teacher. She reflected on a moment when one of the participants metaphorically expressed her desire to be one of the most “dangerous teachers in the world.” This statement grabbed Ginny’s attention. She agreed with her colleague, alluding to the irony of how the term “danger” is related to change, even change for the social good. She stated thoughtfully, “We're supposed to be dangerous. We're supposed to be provocateurs. We're supposed to generate ideas and not reestablish the foundation on top of the foundation, on top of the foundation” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). Ginny added that the challenge in teaching this way alternatively entails thinking about education in different ways and described what she thought was a shift in student learning expectations from seeking to receiving information. She thinks that students increasingly tend to expect to be given the information rather than being obligated to seek it. Partly technology driven, and partly due to the standardization of education where learning is motivated by specific
assessments, Ginny felt that a radical notion to students in this contemporary moment is to encourage them to seek the information. She stated, “We can offer them (students) alternatives. I don't know if they will ever come back to seeking. I just offer seeking as a possibility” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

At the time of our first conversation, Margo said that she was interested in Judy Chicago’s feminist art pedagogy, explaining that she was interested in feminist pedagogy but she was not quite sure what a feminist teaching practice was. When I asked her about her own experience as a student in graduate school, she described her experience sitting in traditional, lecture style courses. She added that she had never taken a women’s studies or feminist pedagogy class. Margo’s emerging definition of a feminist teaching practice was in relation to how formal the teacher structures the class, or how much control the teacher takes of the delivery of the course content (through lectures and/or discussion). She explained that she tries to run loose, conversational classes, but she said that she also likes to feel that she has some control.

Rebecca has been teaching various age levels for many years. At Penn State, she had been a lecturer for eight years. As a teacher, Rebecca explained that she tries to be attentive to what her expectations should be of her students by addressing the learning range that might be in her classroom, especially given that her classes usually cover a wide range from different majors and at varying levels within their respective programs (i.e., freshman to senior).

Rebecca quickly gave me the impression that she was conscious of the levels of hierarchy in academia. She downplayed her experience using archives, and expressed herself modestly. “I am not a traditional academic. So I have not been steeped in archival
work in my professional growth” (Rebecca, personal communication, April 6, 2014). My impression however, was that she had a significant amount of experience teaching and using archives. I sensed that she seemed to be comparing herself to a set type or idea of a university “professor”. This was a consistent feeling that I had during several conversations with Rebecca, and although she talked about her teaching and referred to the underlying academic hierarchy, she did not choose to discuss it in depth.

Archives in the Classroom

Rebecca talked about how already content-heavy her course is; that there is a surplus of material with which to teach about the Holocaust. She finds that the challenge is in curating all the information, to narrow the materials down to something that is manageable over a semester-long course. Using the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and Chicago’s art as a counterpoint for understanding the Holocaust was a welcomed change to Rebecca’s classes in the past. She explained that the art helped to balance the heaviness of the subject matter.

Rebecca used the archive, specifically the Holocaust Project, as a discussion point with her students to talk about markers of identity and explore the stereotypes in Jewish portrayals. She found that using Chicago’s art as the central focus to explore the Holocaust, allowed students to tie the artist’s response to their own ideas about the content of the class, providing a unique and personal experience.

The first time she taught with the archive, Rebecca had a relatively smaller class size (45 students), so she decided to propose a different final project option than usual, in
response to the course content. She offered her students the choice to do a creative work (art, music, poetry, etc.) in lieu of a final paper. The result was that most students still chose to write a paper, but several students wrote poems, one created a musical composition, and one student created a mixed-media art piece. Reflecting on the project she said,

I suppose that beyond art specifically, and beyond Judy Chicago specifically, in offering the more creative project option, it did reach, a handful of students in class. I was wonderfully surprised at what came back from them, mostly in poetry … It was an impetus for creation and I think that was worthwhile. (Rebecca, personal communication, October, 11, 2013)

To Rebecca’s knowledge, none of the students had any background in art, and so she saw this offering as a step outside of their normal opportunities. At the end of the semester, each student presented their final work to the class and Rebecca was pleased at the results.

Ginny was excited about the possibilities of the collection as tactile information that can open up possibilities for young people to help them relate to overarching topics of discussion like race, gender, sexuality, and ethics. She felt that the collection was a unique opportunity to bring an understanding of feminist theory to her students. At first seeing the materials in the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, Ginny was immediately drawn to the images. Chicago’s Womanhouse became an anchor for Ginny to think about her “Women in Theatre” class, a course that features women in the arts from the 1970s to present. Ginny saw possibilities in studying Chicago's work as a transitional moment that helped to define the representation of women, and women in the
arts, as well as the role of women artists. She also saw the collection as offering a platform for her to discuss media representation of women as well as symbolic visual languages that could be used to explore local and global issues of violence against women and children.

Ginny mentored her teaching assistant to do a student generated teaching project in which he presented and lead a full class session using the collection. He created a series of Power Point slide shows and incorporated videos on Judy Chicago from the collection, bringing them together to use visual cues to use with the class. Ginny also had a class session with Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd using the collection. The images in the collection were used as a starting point for the students to create their own stories and representations. Their assignment was to explore the “stories” embedded in the visual representations in the collection that were available to them and choose one to tell her the story of that image, within their own context and imagination. With the image in front of them, students wrote approximately 200 words on what the image evoked in them. Later, they followed up developing their initial texts farther and creating a final video project incorporating the use of a green screen on which students were to project their own background images to enhance the story of their chosen image.

During my first conversation with Margo, she told me that she was in the process of planning her first women’s studies graduate class the following semester. In thinking about what she could draw from the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, she expressed that she was going to “maybe” try something different for the class; perhaps a more feminist approach. Margo wanted to learn about feminist pedagogy and was looking for clues based on Judy Chicago’s feminist art pedagogy. She did not explicitly
say that feminist teaching was better, rather that she wanted to learn about feminist pedagogy by exploring the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. Her initial ideas were based specifically on changing her usual format in front of the classroom and play less of a leadership role and to let students lead discussions of readings.

By the second conversation, after Margo had been teaching her graduate class, the semester was drawing to an end and she was very enthusiastic about the dynamic of the class. She indicated that she was comparatively more relaxed about this class than usual, but she was also self-critical. She wondered aloud if maybe she hadn't been very giving to the class, since she didn't take as much of a leadership role this time than she typically does.

She had modified her method by allowing students to take on discussions of the readings. She shared her experience with two of her students, in particular; both of whom, in the beginning of the course, seemed disinterested, perhaps frustrated; but in the end, became very engaged and talkative. Margo was pleased because she felt that they had come to a point where they were able to distinguish where the readings were connecting to their own work within their own respective disciplines. Margo talked about encouraging one of these students, who was conflicted about which topic to pursue for a final research paper, one of which was of more interest on a personal level, but less aligned to the student’s academic and professional pursuits. Stuck in a dilemma of whether or not to choose the personal topic, seemingly off course from academic goals and perhaps frivolous, Margo encouraged the student to seize the opportunity to connect the course content on a personal level, within the safety and confidence of the women’s studies class, and outside the student’s respective department. In doing so, Margo
suggested that the student might potentially work out issues that could open other avenues for understanding, which could also enhance insight on her research goals. From my perspective, Margo’s class and her self-reflective teaching practice during the semester had given her a sense of confidence and perspective on her own emerging feminist teaching practice as well as given her both energy and opportunities for growth.

An Archive as Feminist Pedagogy

The following semester, with students in her undergraduate Introduction to Women's Studies class, Margo spent one class session at the Judy Chicago exhibit at the Palmer museum and another class session at the Nancy Youdelman exhibit. They analyzed and compared the work of Judy Chicago and her former student Nancy Youdelman. Because Youdelman was on campus, Margo was able to bring her students to meet the artist in person. Margo said that the combined availability of both of these resources was ideal for inclusion into her segment on feminist art and was very significant for her students. She described a transformation within the dynamic of the class; that by moving out of the classroom, the students became more talkative and relaxed with each other, where before they had been more quiet and passive.

Rebecca did not talk about the feminist content of Judy Chicago’s archive or art until our final conversation after she presented at the symposium. At the symposium, she was exposed to more perspectives on feminism in connection with Chicago. She learned more about Judy Chicago’s feminist work and background, as well as the collection as a feminist archive. She attended Judy Chicago’s presentation and heard presentations by
others involved with the curricular activity around Judy Chicago. She learned about other feminist teaching projects using the collection. She also became aware of a larger context of the archive, including the context around the acquisition of the collection. During our last conversation, she reflected on this, and how she began to think about other possibilities of connecting the archive to other classes she had taught in the past (Women and Religion, and Women and Judaism). She admitted that over the semester, she had not explicitly used the term feminism, but she did bring a historical context of gender into her discussion by relating the Cartoon of the Fall to early modern times in Europe and North America when the torture and killing of women accused of being witches was legally sanctioned and included witch trials.

Rebecca also talked about the act of teaching Judy Chicago’s work. She likened her process to being in conversation with the artist herself—almost as an extension of the artist’s message. She said that she was pleased to find that she had stayed “somewhat true to her (Chicago’s) understanding by bringing in the patriarchy and the goddess religion and attitudes against women” (Rebecca, personal communication, April 6, 2014). Rebecca felt that using the collection in regards to religion and gender could offer a different approach to Chicago’s work. She was intrigued by this idea and even expressed the desire to have a conversation with the artist herself about using her art and highlighting different aspects of it from a different grounding, such as religion. Rebecca also added that the experience of using the collection also enabled her to reconnect herself to her artistic life. Through this experience, she said that she was reminded of how art can be effectively integrated into the curriculum to teach a diverse range of concepts; that “art can speak to anything” (Rebecca, personal communication, April 6, 2014).
Ginny’s response to the collection was by emphasizing the feminist message inherent in the materials. She felt a sense of responsibility to hold to the artist’s feminist intentions through teaching with the collection, saying that Chicago’s archive was gifted to create community around feminist ideas so that the ideas would live on and affect change. I translated this “sense of responsibility” to mean her way of meeting what she thought was the moral imperative of this archive. She says that one of her main goals is to instill in her students the understanding that people came before to help create the culture. That now, it is up to them. Ginny called it the “obligation of opportunity.” She described how she obliges her students (especially her female students) saying, “You can no longer seek to be empowered. You have to sit down at the table and order the meal and pay for it because you own the table now” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

For Ginny the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection offers a way to bring feminist content into her classroom, saying that “any tool that I can use to help impart an understanding of what feminist theory is, I am going to use it” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). Ginny discussed the impact of using the visual materials in the collection to “jostle” the students’ thinking, explaining that she had recently started introducing subject matter in the classroom, especially to bring up difficult topics and start a conversation. This method was proving very successful for her, as she had students look at the images in the collection before reading textual analysis of the larger concepts behind some of the confrontational images. She found that after this process, the students could then relate to the articles more intellectually. She stated,

Any way that I can get into the mind of a student and help them relate to overarching topics of discussion like race, gender, sexuality, ethics,
whatever the conversation is—especially feminist theory, I will use. And the Judy Chicago exhibition here, has offered me a gigantic way to level a whole lot of playing fields (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

In using the collection for teaching, Ginny asked herself, “how can I do what I do- but not impose- but use the collection as a tool that helps me? … But it can’t overshadow what my job is, which is to teach plays … and feminist theory” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). However, she added that teaching feminist theory was actually not her “job” but her desire and philosophy as a teacher and she credited her department director for allowing her to follow these goals.

**Breaking Boundaries in Creating Spaces for Pedagogy**

Teaching dialogue also included references to other aspects of the profession including perceived academic borders. This included discussion around promotion and tenure, academic hierarchy, faculty or departmental conflicts, and student/teacher hierarchy. Feminist *Teaching Conversations* served as a space where these conflicts could be confronted; where teachers could explore, experiment, and discover.

In our first conversation, Ginny announced that she had just recently received tenure, jokingly saying that the tenure process was the longest audition she had ever experienced. She did not explicitly say any more about how tenure impacted her teaching practice, although she expressed that she felt a good measure of support by her
department head in allowing her to modify and create her curriculum to include feminist content in her courses such as feminist theory and women playwrights.

Although she was intent on teaching feminist theory, she also acknowledged the academic boundaries that exist with regard to being able to teach what one wants, or according to one’s own values. She criticized the fact that a student can quite possibly complete the entire program in the School of Theatre without ever having read any women playwrights, let alone any sort of feminist literature. She therefore feels compelled to balance this scale in what she contributes to the theatre curriculum. Ginny thought that *Teaching Conversations* represented a safe and supportive space for teachers whose feminist inclinations might be less welcome within the fabric of their departments. She sees feminist *Teaching Conversations* as an opportunity for creating community and creating change, especially in lieu of the current negative attitudes towards educators impacting the way teachers relate to one another.

We are so intent on survival as teachers that we forget that we have each other as cohorts, and colleagues and peers because the war on education in this country is so profoundly disturbing and puzzling (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

For Margo, feminist *Teaching Conversations* was an opportunity to discover feminist ways of teaching within a safe space to learn and experiment. She was interested in Chicago’s participatory art pedagogy and wanted to learn about various methods of feminist pedagogy, as she questioned her own methods as a feminist teacher. Margo admitted that she didn’t always feel like she was “a natural teacher.” Referring to Judy Chicago’s method of feminist participatory art pedagogy she said,
I think you actually have to be very confident to do teaching in the way that you know, in that less formal format, and feel like students have gotten out of the class what you want them to get out of it. I'm not confident that I know exactly how to do that (Margo, personal communication, July 15, 2013).

Margo wasn't sure if she embodied a particularly feminist way of teaching. Self-conscious about other’s perceptions of her, she brought up how her teaching practice might be perceived by others (students and faculty in Women's Studies) as “not feminist enough.”

Over the course of our conversations, I got the impression that Rebecca did not feel particularly supported as a lecturer in her department. I began to sense that she was very conscious of the implicit academic borders in place as she hinted at having experienced varying degrees of welcome within her department over the eight years that she served as a lecturer there. Rebecca expressed being occasionally “reminded of her professional place” and I gathered the impression that she felt undervalued and unsupported. She mentioned that her involvement with Teaching Conversations and her use of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection for her course curriculum was not well received in her department, moreover that they declined to publicize anything about her involvement, on their website.

After hearing about Rebecca’s experiences as a lecturer in her department, I recalled her constant reminders to me that she did not come from the same type of academic background as her colleagues. I started to think that maybe she had embodied these negative experiences—that these sentiments had influenced how she initially felt about meeting with me and allowing me to interview her for my study. In reflecting on
our first conversation, I also later thought that her lived experience might have also been one of the reasons that she first hesitated to get involved in the symposium. When I first asked Rebecca if she was planning to participate on the teaching faculty panel in the upcoming Judy Chicago symposium, she seemed reluctant. At the time, I was surprised, and puzzled as well, because during that same conversation, when we talked about the coming semester, she became animated and enthusiastic, taking the opportunity to brainstorm initial ideas with me. She even jokingly and spontaneously talked to the recorder at times, seemingly comfortable sharing her ideas in process. At that point, I did not push the subject further, besides complimenting on how she had already amassed a repertoire of teaching experiences with the collection that other teachers could draw inspiration from, and that she also had done significant exploration of the collection. In retrospect however, I began to think that her reluctance was perhaps because she thought that she would be entering into more of the same treatment that she was enduring in her own department. Perhaps she thought that she didn’t have much to contribute to the project or the teaching profession.

In comparison to the other participants in my study, Rebecca’s immersion into the archive was comparatively significant to Ginny’s and Margo’s. However, she was also much less involved in the social activity of *Teaching Conversations*, staying relatively to herself throughout almost the whole process of using the collection. Although she attended the *Teaching Conversations* potluck gathering at Karen's house, when Judy Chicago and Donald Woodman came to Penn State for a visit, and although she was intrigued that there were so many different faculty there who gathered to discuss utilizing the collection in their classes, she said in that first conversation with me that she had not
established any meaningful social connections with any of the other faculty. In fact, her most vivid memory of the evening was her picture taken with Judy and Donald. In Rebecca’s case, *Teaching Conversations* initially served as just a way to access the collection. Although Rebecca did not at first commit to presenting her work with the collection at the symposium, she did eventually decide to participate. She described her process in coming to the feeling that what she was doing with her students using the collection was interesting and worth sharing. She explained how, as the semester was in process and she was working with students with the collection, she came to realize the value of her own work and that she did indeed have something to share with the teaching community. With this emerging confidence, she took the necessary steps to reach out to include herself on the panel of teaching faculty. She also described the realization that came through her involvement in the symposium; that *Teaching Conversations* was not only an access point for learning about the collection, but also a feminist project for supporting feminist teaching, supporting teachers, and inspiring new forms of curriculum and content within a sustained social space. She recognized that feminist *Teaching Conversations* was an opportunity for both personal and professional growth.

I began to suspect that what Rebecca lacked within her own department (encouragement and support), she found in *Teaching Conversations* because she even acknowledged my role in her participation, when I encouraged her to participate in the symposium. She stated, “I would like to acknowledge you and thank you for putting the seed in my brain, when we had our last chat, when you said—well, why don't you share this? Why don't you be part of the symposium?” She said, “It reached a point where I
said—yes, look at what I am doing! This is really cool stuff! Why shouldn't I share that?”
(Rebecca, personal communication, April 6, 2014). Frustrated with her unsupportive
department, Rebecca found that Teaching Conversations was a place to find recognition,
validation as a teacher, and encouragement.

**Feminist Teaching Conversations Transforming Teaching**

The Judy Chicago symposium therefore, was a significant turning point for
Rebecca. After presenting at the symposium and meeting other participants and
attendees, she reflected on her realization,

> It’s that sort of nudge. Like, Oh yeah; Maybe these sorts of notions that
you have about doing this next or doing this, or investigating that, maybe
those really are good notions. Maybe those are what might even be some
valuable contribution to the disciplines (Rebecca, personal
communication, April 6, 2014).

Sharing her work with the collection was a very meaningful experience for Rebecca,
where she found encouragement and a sense of value in what she was doing as a teacher.
Her sense of self-worth as a teacher changed as a result of presenting her work at the
symposium. She described the experience as the “capstone” to her teaching the History of
the Holocaust, and even to teaching the course for the past eight years at Penn State.

Rebecca’s experience with Teaching Conversations and sharing her project to the
larger teaching community therefore was a hugely positive transformative experience for
her, impacting her perspective on her own identity as a scholar and a teacher. She spoke
of her work with the students and her participation on the teaching panel in terms of having renewed energy. She was so elated from her experience at the symposium, meeting other faculty, and sharing her experience, that she even mentioned that the experience had made her think about taking her ideas further, perhaps even to pursue a Ph.D. in a related field. To share her work with other faculty at the symposium and receive critical feedback and encouragement inspired new ideas and not only provoked Rebecca to see her own potential, but also boosted her self-image as a scholar and teacher.

Rebecca and Margo were both empowered by the acceptance of their ideas to a wider audience, an audience that was encouraging and grateful for the contribution. For instance, Margo’s discovery in linking Chicago’s artwork to her research interests on hospitality and utopia and finding encouragement within the broader scope of *Teaching Conversations* was an invitation to deeper exploration. Her gallery talk was a significant moment for her both in her appreciation of Chicago’s work and her understanding of the collection. The impact for Margo came through connecting Chicago’s work to her research. In tying the collection to her own area of interest and deep understanding of themes that she holds close, she came to a much deeper awareness and appreciation of Judy Chicago's work. Moreover, through her gallery talk presentation, she also felt inspired that she was contributing something new to the existing scholarship on Judy Chicago. Her productive interactions with others finally gave her a sense that she was a part of the teaching conversation around the collection.
The social emphasis was the most prominent quality and permeated almost every aspect of the conversations, overlapping into both teaching and archives dialogue. Social engagement included all forms of communication evident: talk about sharing ideas, meeting people, dialogue about sharing work through writing and publication, reflections on interactions with others, and classroom interactions. The social factor was the most significant of each of the participants’ experiences of *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection.

**Feminist *Teaching Conversations* as an Invitation to the Archive**

The invitation to the archive was pivotal. It was an invitation to come to the table, so to speak, to learn about the collection through feminist *Teaching Conversations*. Of the three participants I interviewed, all of them participated in *Teaching Conversations* because of a personal invitation to the project from Dr. Karen Keifer-Boyd. They each had varying reasons for their attraction to the project. Their level of engagement and participation also varied. Margo and Ginny were already familiar with Karen and her work, having had some previous interaction with her on both professional and personal levels. Each of the three participants saw *Teaching Conversations* as a way to learn about the collection. However, Ginny and Margo were particularly interested in participating in *Teaching Conversations* because of their interest in feminism and the Judy Chicago Art
Education Collection as a feminist archive. They also shared a desire to gather with feminist faculty from other disciplines and discuss feminism and teaching.

Rebecca first met Karen at the local synagogue, where Karen was doing a presentation on the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. After the presentation, she approached Karen to learn more about Chicago’s Holocaust Project in terms of curricular content for her course on the history of the Holocaust. Karen invited her to participate in Teaching Conversations to learn more about the collection and to engage with other teachers exploring possibilities with the collection. Rebecca went to the following Teaching Conversations sessions with the main focus on seeing the materials in the collection. In comparison to Ginny and Margo, she focused a lot of her attention in the archive on her own, putting less emphasis on the social interaction of Teaching Conversations. However, for Rebecca, the symposium became the most significant aspect for her over the course of the project. She thought that the dialogue with other teachers about the work, sharing her ideas and getting feedback about her work was very beneficial.

Feminist Teaching Conversations: Community and Dialogue in the Archive

Margo saw Teaching Conversations as a social opportunity for scholarly activity, offering her a way to learn about Judy Chicago and her art education collection. Her persistence in staying involved with the activities and people connected to the collection proved beneficial over time in supporting her understanding of feminist pedagogy and developing her learning about the collection in connection to her own ideas. Moreover,
her sense that something positive and productive would result from engaging in a
community of practice around the ideas embedded in the collection also proved well
founded. For example, a very key moment for her was meeting the curator at the Palmer.
Their meeting and interactions spawned new discussions on possible scholarly projects
and Margo was excited to move forward.

Feminist *Teaching Conversations* was pivotal for Ginny in how she accessed the
collection and engaged with the materials as a collaborative way to access the ideas
embedded in the collection. Ginny fervently believes that dialogue is integral to learning
new things and seeing new possibilities. She explained that dialogue helps her to make
connections visible; connections that might exist outside of theatre but could be brought
into the discipline. She stated, “I think it’s integral to have a bunch of educators sit in a
room with something as important as this collection and bounce ideas across the table
because we're all from different disciplines.”

The transdisciplinary goal of feminist *Teaching Conversations* provides an
opportunity for dialogue around the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection that involves
the input from multiple disciplines to creatively solve real-world problems through the
creation of new solutions and it reflects how Ginny sees the archive, as a creative site for
collaboration. Ginny thought that the impact of *Teaching Conversations* was the social
factor; the offering of a creative social space for supporting teaching towards the values
inherent in the collection. She stated:

We're all in this together. We're all in this together in how to, both understand,
articulate, and create a new culture. Being in the room with creative thinkers is
catching us in the act of ultimate creativity (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

Ginny expressed how she values opportunities that offer instances where she can reach out to talk to people about teaching because she feels that teaching is typically a “solo operation.” She feels that teachers tend to be alienated in their respective disciplines; therefore any opportunity to change that, “to create something together,” is a radical change. She saw *Teaching Conversations* offering “the collaboration of creativity” on many levels, stating:

I think the sense of collaboration that the Chicago teaching material offers a teacher and a student is the same kind of collaboration that the material can offer teachers and teachers. So it’s the collaboration of creativity that the collection offers us (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

Therefore, Ginny saw value in simply using the collection between teachers as a departure point for dialogue and collaboration that could emphasize the dialogue as a main result.

**Feminist Teaching Conversations as a Site for Feminist Pedagogy**

Ginny also saw feminist *Teaching Conversations* as a potentially supportive environment to help her enact change in her own classroom, expressing that the project follows what the collection represents to a certain extent; that of building community and generating new forms of activism that address the feminist social justice work from where Judy Chicago’s teaching archive originated. She felt that Judy Chicago’s gifting of
her archive was to build community around feminist pedagogy, to access the possibilities inherent in a collection of materials on feminist art pedagogy. She stated,

What it also does is what Judy Chicago wanted to do all along is build community. As I say, we are so intent on survival as teachers that we forget that we have each other as cohorts, and colleagues and peers because the war on education in this country is so profoundly disturbing and puzzling. I think for teachers to be in the same room together to talk about the possibilities ... anytime people are in a room talking about possibilities, things can change (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

Things can change, which is also a central focus of transdisciplinarity. Ginny sees potential in networking to make a difference, creating social change, or starting other Teaching Conversations. Her reference to the dynamic within the group of teachers from different disciplines to come together to envision change echoes the transdisciplinary goal of Teaching Conversations. In learning about the project from Karen, and hearing about the feminist Teaching Conversations project, Ginny’s attraction to the project was to be among a diverse group of feminist faculty that she could learn and grow from. She acknowledged that a strong part of her connection to the social aspect of the project was her dedication and interest in the ideas of the specific individual women that made up the group as she finds the discussions provocative with this particular group of women.

Both Ginny and Margo also prepared for, and gave talks, for the Surveying Judy Chicago: Five Decades exhibit on view during Spring 2014, which gave them an opportunity to connect their respective expertise and ideas to aspects of Judy Chicago’s work. In Margo’s case, she had agreed early on in the preparations of the spring 2014
semester to do her gallery talk about Judy Chicago’s work in connection to her own research on the notions of utopia and hospitality. She admitted that in those early days of the collection coming to Penn State, she had offered to participate without hesitation, guessing that she would find a connection between Judy Chicago and her research “somewhere.” She also admitted that during this time, she usually said yes to every engagement connected to Karen, as her strong interest in Karen’s work was a compelling reason for her presence in Teaching Conversations. Margo saw this project as an opportunity to explore feminist pedagogy in dialogue with other feminist teachers. She explicitly said early on in our first meeting, that she wanted to listen to how teachers are describing, what it means to teach with this method, and how to use Chicago’s pedagogy. Her sense of community and her interest in collaborating with feminist colleagues and meeting scholars from other disciplines is essentially what kept Margo involved in the project as she felt that feminist Teaching Conversations offered a unique opportunity to meet other scholars, and that she would learn something, or do something new, because of her involvement. Therefore, Margo’s attraction to the social dynamic of the project sustained her engagement and eventual use of the collection.

**Feminist Teaching Conversations and Archival Experience**

Margo was very involved with various activities and group projects around the collection. Over the course of my conversations with her, I realized that of the three participants I was interviewing, she was perhaps the closest to the activity on campus surrounding Judy Chicago and the collection. However, given all of the projects that she
was involved in, she was probably also the least sure about what to do with the collection for her own classroom. She referred to herself as “a newbie” in terms of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, continuously expressing hints of ambiguity throughout her involvement. Margo was interested in using the collection for teaching, but had a hard time finding her own niche. Several times over the course of my conversations with Margo, she said that she felt difficulty situating herself with the collection to think about her courses.

I have no idea what Judy Chicago's method is. I have no idea what is in the collection … Part of it is that I want to listen to what it means to use her pedagogy, because I don't really know what it is at the moment (Margo, personal communication, July 15, 2013).

Margo forged on by instinctively following what attracted her attention within the various activities, letting her self be open to what would come out of these engagements.

I’m just feeling my way a bit. I’m as much interested in the content in terms of her art and where it fits in the feminist historical spectrum as I am in the pedagogy part … I think going to those things (Teaching Conversations meetings), I’m learning something each time, but not having, at the moment, a very clear picture on how I would use them … I guess I’m trying to figure out what relationship I have to it or how I would use it exactly (Margo, personal communication, July 15, 2013).

We discussed Margo’s method of coming to know Judy Chicago's work; how she allowed her curiosity and intuition as well as her interest in the social aspects of the project guide her involvement in Teaching Conversations. Her persistence and open
attitude ultimately supported her understanding of the whole. Margo said that she often operates on the margins of activities when she is not clear about a topic but possesses an interest in learning more. She explained that she often chooses to stay relatively close to the activity but at the same time, observe from the outside. She explained, “I guess my methodology lately has been that if I have an instinct that something relates to what I'm really interested in—utopia—I sort of let that happen” (Margo, personal communication, April 18, 2014).

At a point during Margo’s participation in the project and the various other activities, she was looking for direction and not really knowing where she wanted to focus with the collection. One of her ideas she was presenting on was to incorporate *The Dinner Party* into an online Introduction to Women’s Studies class; but she felt overwhelmed by the prospect—the issue of coordinating the technology and dealing with what pieces of the physical collection she was going to use. She came to a point where she was having a hard time bringing herself to a place where she felt really connected to that particular project. She also expressed frustration with the collection in terms of how much time she would need to go through the collection herself. Recalling her frustration she said,

> I felt like it was almost too much coming at me at once with the technology and archives, and Judy Chicago, and this talk, and that talk. And then there was the physical archive, and what do I do with that? And, I don't have time. There were all these different things (Margo, personal communication, April 18, 2014).

Recalling her feelings, she said that she remembered feeling that she was “at sea” in relation to the whole project (Margo, personal communication, April 18, 2014). She said
that up to a certain point, she felt that she was existing (in her words) "on the fringes" of *Teaching Conversations*, “bobbing along,” “floating along” (Margo, personal communication, April 18, 2014). She said that the short talks she gave at conferences were not very productive for her in terms of feeling the need to really focus on the project because, she reasoned, “you can't really say anything in ten minutes” (Margo, personal communication, April 18, 2014).

**Meaningful Inquiry as a Way of Being in the Archive through Feminist *Teaching Conversations***

Margo described her experience with feminist *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection as a sort of “accretion” of understanding. Through learning with others, and staying close to the project, she slowly built an understanding of the collection to the point where she finally had a breakthrough and could then do something meaningful with the content.

The pivotal moment with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection was Margo’s preparation and delivery of one of her presentations. She needed time to situate herself in relation to the collection so she made time for herself to study and research Judy Chicago's work. Margo used the website to put the collection and Judy Chicago’s work into a meaningful context to her own ideas. Relating the collection to her own ideas made her feel creatively engaged with the collection. Eventually, she came to a point where she definitely felt that she had gained a deep appreciation for Judy Chicago's work and that she had learned a lot in the process.
Until she really started connecting her personal interests to Chicago’s work, she said that she did not really know what her relationship was to the project. Once she shifted her perspective on the collection, by applying the collection to her work rather than applying herself (her ideas and experiences) to the collection. Margo's sustained and close proximity to the people and the activities around the collection helped her slowly form an understanding about Judy Chicago and her collection. Before taking a more personal engagement with Chicago’s work, she admitted that she felt that the project was obscure and that she was absorbing an understanding of the collection more in an intuitive way.

Dialogue as a way of using the Archive through Feminist Teaching Conversations

Teaching Conversations, therefore, became the space for Margo to explore her areas of interest in dialogue with others while working out her curricular ideas. A one point, she even wondered aloud about whether the fact that the physical collection is available at Penn State or not, even matters, as she did most of her individual exploration of Judy Chicago's work with what is readily available online. Margo began to move out of the frustration of how to use the collection within the social framework of feminist Teaching Conversations as it supported her understanding of Judy Chicago’s work and teaching through dialogue. Her ambiguity got worked out in conversations happening in and around Teaching Conversations; conversations that focused on possibilities.

In terms of learning about the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, Ginny and Margo engaged with the archive almost entirely through the social mechanism of
Teaching Conversations. They both depended heavily on the dialogue about the collection with the other faculty in Teaching Conversations, as a way to know more about how they could use the materials for teaching. Their understanding of Judy Chicago, and the contents of her collection, was mostly constructed through social means. Aside from when they saw the materials at the Teaching Conversations library sessions, neither Ginny nor Margo engaged with the physical materials on their own in the archive. In both cases, they requested students to assist them in searching the collection. At one point, Margo said that she sent a student intern to the Special Collections library to look through the collection for her. She recalled, in retrospect, that this was futile because her intern did not really know what to look for. In Ginny’s case however, her student assistant was using the collection for a student directed teaching project with her class.

The social factor within feminist Teaching Conversations strongly enhanced the understanding and use of the collection. The social factor was also pivotal in sustaining use of the collection over time. Margo and Ginny relied on the dialogue as a tool to access the collection. Through dialogue, they learned about the contents of the collection, as well as discussed what to use, and how to use the materials. The Teaching Conversations sessions were useful for trying to figure out how to use the collection as well as how to engage with the materials within their respective classrooms. For instance, Ginny stated,

In the Teaching Conversations, I listen a lot. Because I want to know what you are using ... I listen a lot to what you all talk about the most. And to me, in my mind, that becomes the, I won't say seminal (she smiles), the ovular works.
(Gesturing as if pointing to materials.) There’s that I can concentrate on, that I can concentrate on, that. (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013)

Feminist *Teaching Conversations* therefore was integral to supporting Ginny’s and Margo’s archives experience from the start of their involvement with the project. It extended beyond the typical archival orientation model by promoting archival experiences that can happen alone and with others. For both Ginny and Margo, it was imperative that their engagement with the collection happen with the group, as they were both attracted to the project because of a shared interest in learning about the collection with and from others. For Rebecca, her process was different. At first, Rebecca participated in *Teaching Conversations* because she saw it as an invitation to access the physical collection and get an idea of what it might contain. She did not interact with the other participants like Ginny and Margo, who came to the project for the dialogue with other teachers and learn about the collection. Instead, Rebecca explored the archive, on her own, conducted her teaching projects, and then later discovered the opportunity for dialogue within *Teaching Conversations*.

**Speculation as a way of using an Archive through Feminist *Teaching Conversations***

As much as dialogue factored in how participants used the collection, so was the factor of speculation. During the course of this study, and as a result of my conversations with my participants about their experiences with feminist *Teaching Conversations* and the collection, my concept of what constitutes the use of archives evolved to include and legitimize speculation and dialogue as a way of learning about and using archives.
The participants I interviewed over the course of the study taught me that the use of an archives as speculation is a legitimate form of using an archive. Speculation involves possibility. Speculation involves imagining what if. Ellsworth (2005) states, “Creating room for speculation enables an educator to explore her understanding of the places in which people encounter enjoyable learning experiences and the means through which she, as an educator, could imagine making and using such places.” (p. 9)

Ginny came to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and feminist Teaching Conversations for the purposes of finding a community for feminist dialogue about teaching and intersecting disciplines to see new possibilities in teaching and in promoting change. Her initial output was her speculation on the prospect of setting up the opportunity for student to student learning, setting up the possibility of the encounter with the archive to “existing forces,” as she described. Her archival process was a social process of engaging with the collection through her faculty peers and through her students. She contributes to the living archive by setting up the opportunity to see what happens when students encounter visual cues from the archive to generate their own stories. Margo came to the collection looking for opportunities for scholarly activity with others and to explore what feminist pedagogy is in practice. In Teaching Conversations, she also speculated on how best to apply the collection to an online Introduction to Women’s Studies Class. When she experienced difficulty finding direction, she turned her process around and meaningfully applied herself to the collection from the standpoint of her own personal interest and in the process, came to a deep appreciation of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and Chicago’s work. Through a combined social and
personal archival process, Margo found a personal connection to the collection and a clearer perspective to speculate on how students could encounter it and form their own interpretations. Finally, Rebecca’s method of speculation was through several iterations of setting up archival encounters for her students until finally within the arena of *Teaching Conversations*, she found a collaborative space to speculate on her own encounter with the archive through dialogue with other teachers. For Rebecca, she found a sense of community at the symposium and as a result, she also found a sense of empowerment as a teacher and renewed vision for her work.

Since a significant factor in using the archive was based on the overwhelming quantity of materials and how to translate the materials into a fluid template that can be used in the classroom, working those difficulties out within a social context was pivotal for building curricula. *Teaching Conversations*, is a social opportunity for collaboration between teachers to speculate together on how students might engage and encounter the ideas embedded in the collection as an experience of the learning self.

The participants used the archive as a place of learning by setting up the encounter with the collections for their students, offering opportunities for diverse types of research, teaching, and learning that generates rich, deep, meaningful, and multisensory experiences. For instance, Ginny brought her students in to encounter and explore the ideas embedded in the visual images of the *Womanhouse* series to create their own performance stories. Rebecca used the *Holocaust Project* to offer the opportunity for her students to encounter and explore ways in which the history of the Holocaust has been interpreted and depicted through a contemporary artist’s perspective. She set up the opportunity for her students to confront the explicit and implicit markers of identity that
Chicago uses to depict Jews and women. Finally, Margo used both the Chicago exhibit and the Youdelman exhibit, also setting up the opportunity for her students to interact with Nancy Youdelman to compare and contrast the notions of monumentality and intimacy within feminist expressions of identity.

Dialogue sets up the opportunity to speculate on possibility. Participants of feminist *Teaching Conversations* engaged in the activity of creating room for possibilities for their students with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection in the classroom or even through other modes of repurposing such as publications, or in the case of Ginny, performance work with her students. Margo’s participation in panel presentations on the curricular possibilities of incorporating *The Dinner Party* into an online Introduction to Women’s Studies course was not a project that she actually moved forward with during the time of our conversations together. However, she speculated on the possibility, and used the opportunity in dialogue with others to imagine the possibilities. Finally, Rebecca used the opportunity during our conversations to talk about possible teaching projects and later during the symposium she continued speculating on new possibilities as she became more and more aware of the context around the collection and what others were doing with the materials.

**Feminist Teaching Conversations Transforming the Archive**

During my conversations with my participants, I began to realize that the dialogue within and from *Teaching Conversations* coupled with the practices of teaching with the materials was how they were actually experiencing and using the archive. They
consistently turned our conversations back to what was being talked about within the context of *Teaching Conversations* more than focusing on actual physical engagement with the materials in the collection. I realized that feminist *Teaching Conversations* was an extension to the archive for them; a feminist approach to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection.

In this regard, feminist *Teaching Conversations* transforms the archive through meaningful dialogue focusing on teaching and possibilities with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, by extending the invitation to take the collection as far as possible, and encouraging opportunities to collaborate on teaching and learning that create room for possibilities. For instance, Ginny and Margo did not go on their own into the archive to engage with the physical materials at all. Their experience and engagement with the collection was almost entirely social as they relied on the dialogue happening in *Teaching Conversations* to learn about the contents of the collection and also had student assistants investigate for them. In the case of Margo, the main component sustaining her use of the materials was dialogue. For Ginny and Rebecca, dialogue was key to enhancing both the use of the materials and their teaching practice. Rebecca discovered the feminist aspect of *Teaching Conversations* within her symposium experience and hearing other presentations. When I asked her then about her experience with the collection and feminist *Teaching Conversations* she stated, “I guess it’s just a reminder of how much is sort of hidden away. And that's what I think of archives … they are available, and yet, they are hidden.” Rebecca hadn’t used the opportunity earlier on to dialogue with other teachers and learn about the collection within the project. Instead, she familiarized herself with the archive, on her own, and later found the hidden support of feminist *Teaching Conversations*.
Conversations, which was there all along, but still hidden from her like an unfamiliar archive.

**Living Curriculum through Feminist Teaching Conversations**

Ginny, Margo, and Rebecca were interested in the concept of a living archive and they all talked about the website highlighting curricular ideas developed from the archive. They agreed that having a way to share or to adapt from someone else's work, or modify, and reuse ideas would be beneficial for future users of the archive. After the symposium, Margo was thinking about the possibility of sharing through group writing around the collection and perhaps a research study.

Although Rebecca took time to situate herself within *Teaching Conversations*, she was opened up to new perspectives on her role in regards to the archive as well as curriculum development through archives. For instance, Rebecca mentioned one *Teaching Conversations* session in which she was invited to tag specific aspects of the materials to enhance the website. She found this process interesting that she was being asked for her input to help future users. *Teaching Conversations* offers opportunities for participants to designate what pieces of the collection should be made available online. Users can also give input on the website in terms of tagging so that searches can be more efficient. Teacher feedback on the collection itself is also taken into account.

Rebecca also discussed the possibility of writing high school/middle school curriculum for teaching the history of the holocaust using the collection, turning her teaching into new possibilities. When we revisited the term “living curriculum,” her
sentiments about the words had also changed. She had gotten more familiar with the term hearing others discuss what the notion means in varying ways at the symposium. She actually forgot that she had criticized the term in the first place.

After Rebecca’s experience participating in the symposium and dialoguing with other participants, she also placed more value on her own work to be part of the living curriculum, to inspire others. Rebecca often used our conversations as a platform to sound her teaching ideas. But later, at the symposium, she discovered the value of social interaction around the collection. She found that using the collection for teaching was generative, and the more she explored her teaching of it in dialogue with me, and with others at the symposium, the more ideas she had in incorporating aspects of Judy Chicago’s collection in other work. Even after her semester was over and she had presented her project, Rebecca said that she continued to be compelled to think about other ways to use the collection. She also expressed interest in seeking out other collections that might be useful for creating curriculum. In fact, Rebecca continued dialoguing about curricular and writing possibilities connected to the collection even as she declared that after that particular semester she would no longer be continuing teaching in residence at Penn State.
Chapter Nine: Conclusions and Implications for Art Education and Archives for Feminist Teaching Conversations with the Judy Chicago Art Education

My study revealed how user-centered initiatives for dialogue and pedagogy around collections can transform the archive as a social site where pedagogy is in the making (Ellsworth, 2005), and, as users create and share their own work from the collection as living curricula, how the possibilities of experiencing and building the archive can be generative.

My study demonstrates that although using archives can involve both solitary and social methods, archives are inherently social as they are embedded in social relations through their creation, mediation processes, the users who interact with them, as well as those who steward them. Dialogue is a central aspect of these processes.

Dialogue about Archives, Teaching, and Social Interaction

As the findings suggest, dialogue related to archives, teaching, and social interaction was central to how my participants expressed their experiences with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through feminist Teaching Conversations. Their archival experiences were open-ended. Rather, than the conversations ending, the dialogue continued revolving around archives, teaching, and social interactions—surfacing new ideas, curricula, and opportunities for social activities. The image below combines my two research maps, superimposed, providing a visual representation of the
social and dynamic qualities of a participatory archive where people are at the center (Theimer, 2014), engaging with archival materials and with each other and showing that there are many ways of using and engaging with archives and there are many ways of being in archives (See Figure: 9-1).

Figure 9-1: This is an image of my two research maps superimposed to reflect archives as social spaces.

**Theorizing Archival Experience: Personal Perspectives**

In this chapter, I reflect on my perspectives of archives and how the study has influenced my thinking about using and engaging with archives, ways of being in archives that include archives as social spaces, the impact of the invitation in transforming the archive space, what constitutes a feminist orientation to archives and finally, what constitutes a feminist archival sensibility. I see potential for art education archives and for archives in general in creating feminist spaces for transdisciplinary,
dialogue around collections. This first iteration of feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection offers one way to think about archival experiences through a feminist archival orientation.

**Using and Engaging with Archives**

The participants in my study, each came with their own disciplinary knowledge, assumptions, expectations, and personal experiences, and encountered the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through feminist *Teaching Conversations* to learn about the collection and speculate on the ways in which learners might engage with the archive. Each participant had a different experience and certainly a different set of individual respondents would have yielded different experiences. There are many ways to use and meaningfully engage with archives, because users learn about collections and experience them in different ways. There are many ways of approaching archives. As a result of my conversations with my participants, I gained new perspectives on experiencing and using archives.

My participants’ accounts illustrated an archive, the archival process, and the discovery that comes from engaging with Chicago’s work and her materials as a social practice, which is vital to creating and sustaining a living archive. The expressions from my individual respondents participating in feminist *Teaching Conversations* and using the Judy Chicago Art Education are the beginning of a fuller picture of the archive as a social site for scholars from all disciplines focused on the possibilities inherent in participating in that space. Their three individual journeys through feminist *Teaching*
Conversations with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection revealed that archival processes are individual processes that are complex, sometimes overwhelming, and sometimes frustrating. Ginny felt overwhelmed by the idea of going through the collection on her own. She saw Teaching Conversations as an opportunity for dialogue and having her student teaching assistant work with her students using materials in the collection. For her, the collection was a basis for starting difficult dialogue in her classroom. She responded to the moral imperative of the ideas embedded in the materials, feeling a responsibility in forwarding Judy Chicago’s feminist message. Margo slowly built an understanding of the collection through dialogue within feminist Teaching Conversations in parallel to exploring her own feminist teaching practice. She also attended other social activities around the collection looking for opportunities of making connections. Reaching out to others to learn and find inspiration around the collection, she opened herself up to both distraction and the unexpected. When she was ready, she set time aside for herself to explore online to find her own connection to the collection. Margo’s way of being in the archive, through her association to a feminist network, Teaching Conversations, helped her discover her own perspective within the collection. The work that she produced out of the collection crossed multiple disciplinary lines and formed new possibilities. Rebecca’s approach to the collection was more traditional. She expected the quiet isolation of the archival reading room and was, at first, less open to the social interaction within feminist Teaching Conversations as a way of accessing the collection. Her process however allowed her to develop her work and the confidence to share it with others. In doing so, she unexpectedly discovered Teaching Conversations as a feminist network. She discovered the potential of engaging with others, and engaging in
teaching conversations with other teachers. She found much needed validation in what she does as a teacher, and encouragement within a teaching community.

An archive is what the user brings to it in terms of intention, expectation, personal experience, memory, and their own relationship to it (Latham, 2007; 2011). I learned through this research process that archival engagement can vary in how users access materials and the ideas embedded within. Each of my participants engaged with both *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection in their own individual ways, and their experiences revealed the complexities in the way information and ideas are given and received in the archive. Some participants used dialogue to learn about the collection and speculate on teaching and learning with it. Some used dialogue to connect with others to find community and support. In legitimizing dialogue and speculation as a way of using archives, the archive becomes a creative social learning space that puts people and the inquiry process with materials into the center.

Using archives involves a complexity of learning processes and these experiences connected to archives are capable of infusing into aspects of self and other. If we think of feminist *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection in terms of Ellsworth (2005), meaningful engagement with the learning self happens in the space between education and archives. Ellsworth asks us to “consider a body in the midst of crossing the gap between positions on the grid of knowledge, meanings, and relations of power” (p. 123). Feminist *Teaching Conversations* is located in this gap; this inbetween space of infinite possibility where, “the questions of how to teach and what to teach are not already legislated” (p. 97), and where participants can negotiate their own respective crossings through both personal and social experiences.
Ways of Being in Archives: Archives as Social Spaces

There are many ways of being in archives. Engaging with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through feminist *Teaching Conversations* was an opportunity for my participants to participate creatively in a dynamic, dialogic and creative process of generating a diversity of curricular perspectives using the collection to create living curricula. The flexible, iterative, dialogic, and comprehensive methodology of feminist *Teaching Conversations* allowed for many ways of engaging the ideas embedded in the archive.

My investigation through dialogue with participants of feminist *Teaching Conversations* revealed varied connections with archives and teaching, and it demonstrated the value of social interaction around an archive as promoting meaningful ways of being in archives. Rebecca learned that her work with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection can be a valuable contribution to the living archive, and in stepping outside of her usual frame of reference, she discovered that she is not alone as a teacher. She reunited her past and present experiences connecting art and pedagogy, reminding herself that art can speak to anything; that “you now have a story behind the words.” For Ginny feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the collection was an opportunity to dialogue with others about how others enact change in the classroom, a return to visuals as starting points for issue-laden conversations, and the opportunity to set up the teaching/learning situation to let the story unfold with infinite possibilities. For Margo, it was both a social process of learning about the archive and feminist pedagogy; a process
of reflection on her own teaching, and applying her own experience to the materials, in order to realize her own potential to change an archive as much as it could change her.

In her book *Places of Learning*, Ellsworth (2005) describes sites, which she feels exemplify a particular force of pedagogy that is the lived experience of the learning self, including sites of learning that can “encourage a sense of community, of belonging to a shared space, inhabiting a communal experience” (de Bolla in Ellsworth, 2005, p. 133). The places she describes are situated within individual and collective ideas and experiences (past, present and future) and asserted through the realization of self in relation to other, blurring all constructed roles and rules to provoke discovery, and animate internal and external forces of learning. “They attempt to turn those seemingly absolute boundaries into places of learning by rendering them porous, fluid, and palpable” (p. 159). Ellsworth asks the question,

> I wonder what might happen to how we teach if we designed pedagogies for ourselves that put us, as educators, in relation to education's outside—if we broke up closed circuits of exchange of ideas, identities, and practices inside education. (p. 97)

Feminist *Teaching Conversations* is networked learning that exists outside of the normal academic structure (Flecha, 2000) and archives practice, reflecting a Women's Studies approach to archival methodology that “puts collections, documents and established traditional ideas in conversation” (Steadman et al, 2002, p. 232).
The Invitation to the Archive: Transforming the Archives Space

Feminist *Teaching Conversations* orients participants through an invitation to the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. There is great potential within archives in extending an open invitation. A personal invitation along with public outreach to archives can go a long way in both attracting and sustaining visitors that might not typically enter archives. The seemingly simple measure of individual outreach and interaction brought *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection to life, activating the record and activating the archive as a social space for community around teaching and learning with archival materials.

The extension of the invitation to the archive was a very prominent part of the findings in this study revealing that the invitation directed to the specific participant’s own interests was a central to experiencing *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. Even though an open invitation to the collection was put forth through the typical media outlets that archives use—press releases about the collection, highlights on the library website, email blasts, etc., the personal and open invitation from Dr. Keifer-Boyd through feminist networks of her own was universally pivotal for attracting participants to the archive and sustaining participation.
Experiencing a Feminist Orientation to Archives

Understanding individual experiences with feminist *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through the iterative conversations that were presented in this study provides an opportunity to explore an archival orientation that is transdisciplinary, socially-oriented, and user-centered. What is the nature of a feminist orientation to the archive? A feminist orientation to archives promotes human rights, education, life-long learning, and social inclusion (Forde, 2004). *Teaching Conversations* serves as a frame for thinking about feminist orientations to archives by complicating the usual linear narrative that typical orientations propose. Most archival orientations are centered on the isolated user in the reading room of the archive doing historical inquiry with archival documents. I theorize a feminist orientation to archives as one that is user-centered and frames the archive as living, participatory, transdisciplinary, and inviting—putting into practice the concept of archives as social, inclusive, democratic, and open.

A feminist orientation to the archive is living through the interactions of those who author the space with their own lived experiences, perspectives, and concerns. The use of the archive includes the materials, the archives space, and most importantly, what happens in that space, anticipating that which has yet to come—the results of user interaction that has not yet been created and folded back into an archive. It is the user that brings life to the materials through their engagement, interpretations, contributions and interactions with the physical and digital materials.
A feminist orientation to the archive provides access to materials by transforming the archive as a participatory space—of possibility, where users are openly invited to participate in dialogue with others centered on archival materials, also inviting users to participate in supplemental description of the collection through physical and virtual dialogue portals. A feminist orientation to the archive also adheres to participatory practices in terms of openly inviting users to build the collection, to generate new content, which, if so desired by the user, can become part of a living archive.

A feminist orientation to the archive encourages users to gather together from varying disciplines within the archive space to see new perspectives. The archive is a space within the university setting where disciplinary boundaries can be rendered porous through even the juxtaposition of materials from various collections. A feminist orientation to the archive emphasizes a transdisciplinary approach to archives, while recognizing and embracing personal knowledge within the varying disciplines as well as the personal experiences of users. A feminist orientation to the archive that is transdisciplinary engages ideas embedded in archival materials in context to current issues that need resolved, with the idea of incorporating creative and transformative possibilities of generating something new. Within a feminist orientation to archives, participants are offered the opportunity to envision change, create curriculum collaboratively, and create something new. The transdisciplinary goal of a feminist orientation to the archive opens up potential spaces for feminist theory and practice, and with it, supportive environments for dialogue that might otherwise be dismissed elsewhere on campus.
Feminist *Teaching Conversations* around the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection emphasizes transdisciplinarity through dialogue. It calls on teachers from all areas to discuss the ideas embedded in the archive in context to current problems in order to explore the possibilities of resolving those problems. Feminist *Teaching Conversations* opens up the archive as a supportive site for transdisciplinary feminist pedagogy by making alliances possible across disciplines to counter overarching institutional dismissal of feminist theory and practice. For example, one participant (Ginny) who resonated with her colleague expressing the notion of the “dangerous” teacher, described the need for safe spaces for feminist dialogue to find community with other teachers deemed “dangerous” simply because of their desire for teaching feminist values of gender, racial, and social equality. This discussion summarized the need for supportive environments for feminist faculty for uninhibited conversations that resist dominant ideologies that oppress marginalized others. Feminist *Teaching Conversations* around the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection serves as a supportive environment within the archive for those seeking uninhibited conversations.

A feminist orientation to the archive is inviting. A feminist orientation to the archive extends the invitation to anyone and everyone interested in learning about the collection. Is the invitation always already a feminist act? Not at all. Many invitations come with strings attached, with both explicit and implicit conditions that come with its acceptance. A feminist orientation to the archive is boundless; it is inclusive, democratic, and open. It supports, validates and encourages the user to discover their own potential within the archive.
A feminist orientation to archives acknowledges the potentiality of all users and extends the invitation; recognizing also that their guest may not necessarily self-identify as a “user” of an archive—perhaps they are not familiar with archives nor really know what an archive is or does. Perhaps they are just wandering within the materials for a moment. In archives, where materials are preserved over continuous time and time itself is continuous, every visitor can be considered momentary.

Is the potential user comfortable in the archive, both physically and emotionally? A feminist orientation to the archive recognizes that archives can be intimidating and that many potential users don’t want to step into the unknown— they are usually more comfortable when there is a plan. A feminist orientation to the archive provides sustained support for engaging with archival materials on the user’s terms, because an approach that acknowledges and invites the user to situate themselves within the archive by applying their own interests and perspectives to an archive, rather than imposing a prescribed narrative, allows for discoveries that can lead to sustained engagement with an archive.

**Feminist Teaching Conversations Cultivating Feminist Archival Sensibility**

In offering spaces for feminist practices in the archive, feminist archival orientations open opportunities to cultivate feminist archival sensibilities in users who participate in this space. With regard to the future of feminism and feminist archives, including art education archives, my notion of a feminist archival sensibility has expanded through this research process. How does a feminist orientation to archives
correspond to a feminist archival sensibility? Succinctly put, a feminist orientation to an archive re-envisions the archive space while a feminist archival sensibility rewrites and redefines the archive.

The emergence of feminist archival sensibilities put into question the so-called truths of patriarchy, changing the way collections by and about women were made visible through the archive. Reclaiming women’s history was largely a collaborative effort between users, donors, and archivists as feminist archival sensibilities are cultivated through both collection strategies and in how collections are made available, used, performed, and shared. This output opens up infinite opportunities for teaching, learning research, and creative practice with archives and has enormous potential for what occurs in the archives space.

While feminist archival sensibilities counter the processes (both inside and outside archives) that destroy or erase materials related to women, they can also cultivate opportunities of discovery, through the offering of social spaces that are opened within the archive so that users and visitors encountering a collection can discover the unexpected, or things they might not see if they are alone. Shared through a process of giving and receiving, perhaps it is enough even just discovering that an archive exists as knowing what is present often leads to discovering what is missing. Such insight can bring one to a deep understanding that archives matter and even a sense of their own role in archival processes that a living archive offers.

This study expanded my notion of the meaning of a feminist archival sensibility in terms of the role of users and archivists within archives practices. I apply the same concept used to define a feminist orientation to archives to my conception of a feminist
archival sensibility. A feminist archival sensibility is user-centered through a feminist approach to building the archive through its collections and positions the archive as living, participatory, transdisciplinary, and inviting. A feminist archival sensibility builds the archives as social, inclusive, democratic, inviting and open.

Feminist archival sensibilities that are user-centered recognize the power mechanism within archival documentation processes and strive to acknowledge existing discrepancies in documenting the grand historical narrative by taking into account decisions about whose materials get preserved and whose past is deemed worthy of being remembered and why. Feminist archival sensibilities also take into account who has the ability to physically access archival materials and strives to open access to users of all abilities. Feminist archival sensibilities also address user agency in accessing the archive, particularly in exploring their own histories, conscious of how potential users might emotionally and intellectually identify with their own material history. A feminist archival sensibility thinks about agency with regard to marginalized populations. Are marginalized others respectfully documented in the archive? Are potential users respectfully documented in the archive?

A feminist archival sensibility positions the archive as living regarding possibilities in how the archive is used, built, shared and described, allowing for all possibilities of living processes that can occur in the archive. Feminist archival sensibilities also take into account who is responsible for making a living archive by understanding the relationship between user and archivist and recognizing the stewardship of the materials by the archivist where the user activates the records, through teaching and learning while the archivist sustains a living archive. These living processes
in the archive cross, time and space in perpetuity, where the ways of using and interpreting archives are always in the making, and yet to be determined (Ellsworth, 2005). For instance, in the case of feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, a feminist archival sensibility takes into account *everyone* who generates work from the archive and desires to share, without regard to the status of the user. Both seasoned and novice archives users, including student generated work is encouraged and valued as potential possibilities for enhancing the archive and future use of the archive. Feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection also demonstrate that archival sensibilities can be talked about, modeled, learned and discovered; opening up possibilities that are not expected nor known. Kate Eichorn (2008) states, “archival memories are just as ephemeral as those that belong to the repertoire of speech, live performance, and ritual. Objects and documents can and do disappear, even in the archives” (pp. 3-4). A living archive positions the archive as a dynamic activity made possible through a combination of efforts; both the users role in repurposing the archive through their active contributions to it, and the archivists’ active role in capturing and preserving these traces. Feminist archival sensibilities emphasize these combined efforts in preserving this activity over the lifecycle of the archive as well as the necessary collaborative efforts between users and archivists to make a living archive possible.

Feminist archival sensibility involves being mindful of who really has access to the archive as a social and pedagogic space, including the ability and confidence to participate in it. It asks how the archive can be a participatory space that is social, open, democratic, and inclusive. In this way, feminist archival sensibilities also take into
account the integrity of archival descriptions in depicting rightful participation in history (in the case of records about marginalized groups) and the potential that all users have in contributing new narratives to the archive. For instance, feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection is representative of feminist archival sensibilities through the notion of the living curriculum. In addition, the website for the collection serves as a space for conversation and interaction with the collection through comments and tagging, proving that while memories and knowledge can indeed be captured, they are not, and can never be, fixed. Capturing this interactive content on the website continues the conversation around the collection over time, enhancing the archive as a living collection. Capturing traces of context around the content, marks usage over time, and thus emphasizes the notion that archives live through users who produce new knowledge and new stories.

A feminist archival sensibility re-envisions the archive as a safe site for pedagogy and activism, extending the archive as a potential site for community, and networking to create social change. A feminist archival sensibility is conscious of the social potential around archival materials, that “anytime people are in a room talking about possibilities, things can change” (Ginny, personal communication, May 7, 2013). In this way, a feminist archival sensibility embraces transdisciplinary practices acknowledging that new narratives can emerge from the combination of many perspectives and can also serve to reinforce positive change to solve problems.

A feminist archival sensibility is mindful that the archive should be an inviting space that values many histories. A feminist archival sensibility acknowledges those who might otherwise be ‘othered’ by the archive, and extends the invitation to those who are
typically marginalized as potential users and also within the historical record. “Archives have to be hospitable to ‘the other’. Invite them in” (Harris as referenced by Ketelaar, 2008, p. 17). A feminist archival sensibility is critical of the visible and invisible traces, by critically questioning not only what is there, but also what is missing from the archive. Moreover, a feminist archival sensibility is concerned about inviting new and non-traditional users in to the archive and providing as much access as possible.

**Implications for Art Education**

What are the implications for the field of art education in focusing on user-centered, feminist, approaches to art education archival collections? I explore this question now with the idea of thinking about the art education archive as living, participatory, transdisciplinary, and inviting.

As the findings suggest, each of the three participants in my study had their own individual experiences in feminist *Teaching Conversations*, which led to new knowledge, curricula, facts, ideas, events, and valuable insight around the Judy Chicago Art Education and feminist art pedagogy. User participation with the Judy Chicago Art Education adds to the foundation of the field—activating it, making it come alive and building a living art education archive over time so that future users inside and outside of the field can participate in it.

Thinking about the art education archive as a participatory space, such as the case with Feminist *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, provides an opportunity for outreach about art education archives across disciplines but it
also opens up possibilities for teachers from varying levels to contribute to the living archive as well as find community, support, and encouragement within their practice. Creating participatory spaces through interaction and dialogue around art education collections can serve as a support for teachers both inside and outside of art education.

As an open invitation for transdisciplinary dialogue around art education materials, feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection highlights the value of art education, reaching participants who might not otherwise be exposed to the discipline of art education let alone an art education archive on feminist art pedagogy. Just as the individuals who come to an archive have many different perspectives on it and experiences with archives, so are the many possibilities of connections that can emerge between art education archives and users to inspire the field, and create new spaces for intersecting art education across disciplines. Transdisciplinary methods offer an opportunity to think about the broader role and importance of promoting art education archives within a range of disciplines and types of scholarship that position art education as a force for creating a better world.

Feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education positions the art education archive as social, inclusive, democratic, and open, inspiring new ways of thinking about pedagogy. The implications for art education lie in understanding the impact of offering inviting opportunities for dialogue and pedagogical support around materials that can enhance the work of teachers at varying levels within the field of art education as well as those whose interests span across disciplines. It offers the possibility to experiment. An inviting space for dialogue around an art education archive allows each
user to situate their own practices within the archive, as is the case of feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection.

**Implications for Archives**

What are the implications for archives in focusing on user-centered, feminist, approaches to art education archival collections or any other collection for that matter? My study revealed that my three participants’ awareness and understanding of archives changed over the course of their involvement with feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. They each had used archives in the past but they had never engaged in the archive within a feminist social framework nor had they experienced an archive as a living, participatory, transdisciplinary, and inviting space (as in the case of feminist *Teaching Conversations*). My participants discovered the archive within feminist *Teaching Conversations* as social, inclusive, democratic, and open. They each brought their own concerns, ideas, expectations and past experiences to feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and their embrace (either explicitly or implicitly) of these particular aspects of the project varied. Each of my three participants experiences and perspectives regarding feminist *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection developed at their own rate and in their own way. For instance, each developed an awareness of what it means to create curricula around the collection and share that work as part of the living curricula of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection.
On their own, they began to see the potential of archives as participatory spaces as there were multiple activities and events around the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection in which to participate and attend. My participants recognized the benefits for supporting and inspiring future teachers by voluntarily and knowingly sharing with me and within *Teaching Conversations* their projects, their thoughts about the collection, and their ideas with others within the framework of a participatory archive. Their dialogue within this participatory space was also shared as part of the collection website as well.

Each of my three participants encountered the archive from the perspective of their own disciplines looking at ways that the materials linked to their own ideas but they also engaged in other perspectives of the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection through feminist *Teaching Conversations*.

The transdisciplinary component of feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection is an aspect that has potential for archives in thinking about their location as an open space for many disciplines and research foci, and the abundance of archival resources that can be easily accessible to be sourced, mixed, juxtaposed and discussed among a gathering of faculty from varying disciplines. As in the case of this study, using the archives space as a site for gathering faculty from many disciplines with a common focus became a powerful force that each participant eventually experienced in their own way.

Each of my participants acknowledged their personal and open invitation to feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection and this invitation sustained them in varying ways. Both Ginny and Margo were looking for a social space for dialogue around the collection—Ginny, for a community of feminists to
explore ways of using the collection and Margo, to explore feminist pedagogy and find a social network for scholarly activity, and to explore ways to use the collection.

The invitation involves a user-centered approach to the archive that takes into account the impact of person-to-person components within outreach, and allows users to come to the archive on their own terms. In terms of the practical application of the invitation within archival practices, it acknowledges the deep value in building professional relationships between archivists and teaching faculty and recognizes the often overlooked networking role for faculty across departments and disciplines.

Currently, there are examples in action. For instance, Jenna Freedman, is a reference librarian and founder of the Barnard College Zine Collection, a collection of zines by girls and women (“Barnard Zine Library”, 2014). Freedman, using social media (blog and email) has played an important role in bringing mostly emerging feminist scholars together around the zines. “Freedman’s location in the place where research begins (the library) enables her to connect researchers with intersecting interests who, under other circumstances, would typically not be aware of each other’s research until post-publication” (Eichorn, 2010, p. 633).

Feminist Teaching Conversations changes the position of the archive in the classroom as it focuses on teachers (from all levels) in supporting teaching and learning with an archival collection. A feminist orientation to the archive emphasizes dialogue around the collection, engaging users in ways that are user-centered, process oriented, and generative. In one case, Teaching Conversations helped Ginny set up the conditions for student-to-student teaching showing that a feminist orientation to the archive values both teacher and student generated work offering them space in the archive as a living
archive. Margo approached the archive in many ways. However, she started by interpreting the archive as a model for her own teaching practice rather than using the actual materials in it for course content. The other participant (Rebecca) started generating ideas for creating a whole curriculum inspired by Chicago’s Holocaust Project. These examples demonstrate that an archive can impact what happens in the classroom in a variety of ways. It can be used to start conversations inspiring personal stories, inspire teaching practices, and turn into curricula to be shared.

**Perspectives on Researching Archival Experiences through a Feminist Orientation to Archives**

I think about my experience of the research process exploring archival experiences with feminist *Teaching Conversations* and the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. I learned that without open-ended dialogue, there is no way to understand archival experiences by placing assumptions on how a person might engage with an archive, or by having expectations or conditions set on what it means to use an archive. Attempting to define any one type or quality of a transaction between user and archival materials, or to try to measure or assess such engagements and encounters is not useful either. There are only descriptions that are open-ended and not fixed to any one particular user, because there is no single approach to archives nor is there one set of archival methods to engage with or repurpose archival materials.

This study marked one phase of feminist *Teaching Conversations* with the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection. There is much more to explore, especially now as the
Website is increasing content and more people are generating work from the collection into living curricula. More investigation can be done on feminist orientations to archives and around the impact of using an art education archive through sustained dialogue as well as the social possibilities in archives that can further feminist archival sensibilities.

**Closing Remarks**

We do not know, nor cannot really know without the archive, be it the physical (institutional, community, private) or, as archivist Eric Ketelaar suggests, *the archive of memory* (personal, collective, social), “where people’s experiences can be transformed into meaning” (Ketelaar, 2008, p. 21) to perhaps teach, empower, heal, reconcile, and transform. It is only through the recall, the use, and the sharing of the archive that the ideas embedded within can get out into the world, where others can spread the meaning and context as they receive it.

A living archive is a unifying force for what was, what is, and what can be. The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection is a living archive that will continue to grow through the collaborations between users who will continue repurposing it for their own projects and sharing their work, and the archivists, who will continue to steward the preservation of these materials, and make the collection accessible for future use. The materials in the Judy Chicago Art Education Collection will be processed by many and the Finding Aid will never be done. Feminist *Teaching Conversations* is set to continue and evolve as well. With these processes, and the designation of the living curriculum, a
space is created for those who seek to use the materials, or find a safe community around
the collection—and, if they choose to, grow the physical and digital collection.

The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection remains available in perpetuity to be
understood and interpreted by generations to come. The use of this living archive reminds
us that there are an infinite number of possible interpretations and perspectives;
possibilities that are not fixed, nor ever can be.
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Available at: www.nycarchivists.org/resources/Documents/ArtistsRecordsSymposiumProceedings.pdf


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