

RESEARCH INTEREST

DONNA MURRAY-TIEDGE, MFA, PhD

INTERESTS

I have extensive experience as a designer, entrepreneur, and creative problem resolver, coupled with a passion for education and teaching informed by research. As a designer-artist, I continue to cultivate my sensitivities surrounding form, function, and supra-function; qualities that connect product with people. As a designer-educator-researcher, I continue to explore qualities of materiality, space, and place as they relate to teaching and learning. As a designer entrepreneur, I continue to practice question-finding and problem-resolving as opportunities to connect theory and practice. As a research methodologist, I continue to reflect on the synergistic power of different intellectual points of view in the generation of ideas and the development of knowledge.

PHILOSOPHY

My multifaceted training in art & design and education coupled with a specialization in qualitative research methodology facilitates the overlap of classic traditions of research and cutting-edge approaches. This unique combination unites rigor, depth, trustworthiness, innovation, and breadth, as I tailor my research designs to address these complexities.

CURRENT RESEARCH

Understanding Pedagogy Through the Material World: Lessons from Saturday Art School

How do Saturday art school teachers use the material world in teaching art? How is pedagogy enacted through the materiality of the classroom? Drawing on Bresler's (1994) three orientations within visual arts curricula: imitative, complementary, and expansive, how is the material world used in each orientation and how do these orientations interact and coexist? How can the answers to these questions help us understand the unique contribution of visual arts curricula in relation to schooling and educational goals broadly conceived?

Exploring and Examining Social Science Research Methodology in Three Dimensions

Pursuit of complexity through exposure to multiple ways of knowing beckons collaboration across disciplines. Mixed method research (MMR) provides a platform for recognizing multiple ways of knowing by legitimizing diverse experience and perspectives in service of deeper understanding. Because MMR contains elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (which differ on epistemological and axiological levels), genuine 'mixing' presents many challenges. This study utilizes an instantiated design thinking tool that divides the research process into tactile components. These palpable pieces enable one to enter the process where comfortable, touch ideas, move them around, explore alternatives, shift perspectives, pretend, take risks, expose one's thinking to others, and step back and evaluate something tangible. Through instantiated design thinking, this study pursues questions of quality surrounding qualitative and mixed methods research design.

FUTURE AGENDA

Future work will evolve from findings associated with current work: 1. How do varied spatial realms of pedagogical engagement combine and overlap to create meaningful places in diverse educational settings? How does the cultivation of place affect the experienced curriculum in different disciplines? 2. How does dividing the research process into levels help students think through a research design? How do 2d/3d visual aids extend thinking and increase awareness of possibility? On an abstract level, my research objectives include: cultivating the overlapping spaces between critical and creative thinking, between art & design and education; being a relevant, integral part of education and art & design education; promoting collaborative research endeavors with interdisciplinary academics, professionals, and industries; and connecting social science research to the visual-spatial worlds of art & design.