## 2012-1013 Featured Grantee Summary

| Grantee Name: | Juan Carlos Castro  
| Clayton Funk |
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| Title of Project: | Parallel Discourses: Visualizing Themes of the NAEA Annual Convention (1951-2012) |
| City, State: | Montreal, Quebec  
| Columbus, Ohio |
| Grant Period: | July 2012 - August 2013 |
| NAEF Grant Amount: | $7,940 (Research) |
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### Project Description:
Parallel Discourses investigates the macro trends of the National Art Education Convention conference catalogues. Our meta-analysis is from aggregated and visualized proposal titles and catalogue descriptions in the form of word clouds to identify patterns, divergences, and absences through the history of the organization and inferentially the field of art education. The entire collection of National Art Education Convention catalogues was digitized and a complete database for each conference year is presently in production.

### Project Goals and Objectives:
The goals of our project are oriented around the following research questions: What are the persistent and divergent themes presented at NAEA conventions? Which themes connect the diversity of the membership and which remain within specific divisional boundaries?

### Description of Activities Supported by this Grant.
We deployed a hermeneutic method -- a process of interpretation characterized by close, iterative, and open reading of human made communication -- catalysed by data visualization in word clouds to trace the contours of discourses in the NAEA convention catalogue.

- Aggregated proposal titles and
- Built a custom book scanner to create high resolution scans of each NAEA convention catalogue.
- Made each scan text searchable with optical character recognition (OCR) software
- Automatic and manual extraction of and each session title, description and relevant text (date, time, division information)

In our analysis we used word clouds for initial visualizations of word frequency (the number of times a word appears in a text). The more a word appears, the larger and darker the word is represented in proportion all amount of words. In this way, we could “see” a text visually through these spatial and color-tone relationships.

- Generated word cloud samples from each decade and from catalogue, 2000-2013 sorted visualizations by division in relation to theory and practice (as applicable).
- Through iterative coding and reading of the word clouds, we identified most frequent keywords.
- Have also created other visualizations to look at frequency trends over time and in comparison between theory/practice divisions.
- These visualizations support our reading of the catalogues as a text that reflects the current trends, interests, and topics in the field of art education.
Word cloud samples of the total NAEA convention themes found in presentation titles and descriptions.

**Results: Lessons Learned or Findings of Research:** We found from our initial comparative analysis that the division between those exploring theory (e.g. Higher Education, Caucus for Social Theory in Art Education, Research, etc...) and practice (Curriculum and Instruction, Elementary, Middle, Secondary, etc...) in presentations is not as wide a gap as commonly perceived. The analysis shows that Art Educators across organizational divisions tend to be most concerned with:

1) The teaching of art  
2) Student learning in art  
3) Art education in schools  

These concerns persisted regardless of the trends perceived from decade to decade. For the future, we see these emerging trends of concern:

1) Advanced Placement (the 2D, 3D, Art History, and Drawing high school college Placement exams)  
2) Studio practice.  
3) Growing interest among practitioners and theoreticians in all divisions in roles, functions, and activities of community based art education  

**Impact of Receiving this Grant:** The NAEF grant funded travel to the NAEA offices in Reston, Virginia to digitize conference catalogues in their collection and funded two university graduate students to assist in the digital management and construction of the catalogue database. Overall this grant enabled the digitization of the entire collection of NAEA convention catalogues and will provide a broader picture of the history of ideas in the organization.

**Grantee Biography:** Juan Carlos Castro is Assistant Professor of Art Education at Concordia University in Montreal. His current research examines how mobile media coupled with creative production networks knowledge in urban environments to create educational and civic engagement with teens and young adults. Clayton Funk is Assistant Professor at The Ohio State University. He is the author of several articles, book chapters, and the textbook, Contemporary Art Culture. His research is about the history of American art education and visual culture in the early 20th century. It includes the development and regulation of motion pictures, advertising, propaganda, and radio as they emerged in schools, incorporating public education, and thus art education, within the popular mass media.

**About the National Art Education Foundation**  
NAEF supports visual art educators and promotes the teaching of art through professional development, research, and program sponsorship. As an independent, philanthropic organization, NAEF assists with efforts to represent the teachers of art in America, improve the conditions of teaching art; promote the teaching of art; encourage research and experimentation in art education; sponsor institutes, conferences, and programs on art education; and to publish articles, reports, and surveys about art. The Foundation has supported 266 projects since its inception in 1985. NAEF funding supports a wide variety of professional activities, including research in art education, scholarships for professional development, promotion of art education as an integral part of the curriculum; establishment and/or improvement of art instruction in public and private K-16 schools; promotion of the teaching of art through activities related to the instructional process, curriculum, student learning, student assessment, classroom behavior, management, or discipline; purchase of art equipment and/or instructional resources. Donations in support of NAEF, a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization, are tax deductible and greatly appreciated.