

**Transcript for Arts-Based Research as Paradigm, Manifesto, and Mission for Volatile Times  
BCcampus Research Speaker Series session hosted on September 10, 2024**

**Facilitator: Dr. Geo Takach**

**Host: Gwen Nguyen**

GWEN NGUYEN:

My name is Gwen Nguyen, and I'm a learning and teaching advisor for BCcampus. It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the first session of the Fall 2024 Research Speaker Series. Before we start, I'd like to go over a few housekeeping items. The session will be recorded. And you're welcome to keep your camera off and feel free to rename yourself to "Participant" if you prefer. And we also enable live captioning for accessibility as well. So a special thank you goes out to my two incredible teammates, Leva Lee and Kelsey Kilbey. So Leva has been a wonderful partner for this Research Speaker Series project, and Kelsey has always been our wonderful support behind the scenes of our Research Speaker Series and all the teaching and learning.

Now I'd like to acknowledge the land where I come from. We move to the next slide. I'd like to begin to acknowledge that I'm joining you all from my home office in Gordon Head, Victoria, situated on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen-speaking People, including the Songhees Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ Nations. Originally, I'm from Saigon, a very vibrant, busy city in the south of Vietnam, and it's known for two distinct seasons only: the rainy and the dry season. So in Saigon right now, we face challenges such as severe pollution and in the north of Vietnam, right now, the big flood and typhoon. So I'm very grateful that my family and I have an opportunity to live, work, and enjoy, you know, the very peaceful and beautiful space with four clear seasons. So on this slide, you will see a photo that I took last week when I walked along the Fisherman's Walk in downtown Victoria with some friends, so I recognize that we are forever uninvited guests on this land, so we will try our best to be considerate and respectful leading gently alongside with you all and with whoever share the space together. You're welcome to share your introduction and territorial acknowledgement in the chat if you wish.

Back to our topic today. Arts-based research. It is a form of qualitative inquiry that uses the artistic processes to observe and understand human experiences. Here at BCcampus, we are big fans of using arts-based inquiry because we believe that it helps us look at our experiences in holistic ways. I think the approach is quite trans-disciplinary too. Arts-based research makes the findings as well as the inquiry more accessible and encouraging. Also, besides that, it is believed to address some critical issues of ethics, for example, like social justice, and also empower marginalized voices. You can check our previous Research Speaker Series sessions for arts-based research. For example, the one in the springtime, with the digital arts-based research in education by Rachel Horst, for example. So I think that arts-based research is not for not just for artists or educators. It has been used in health care, in business, in social sciences as well. So today, we are very excited to pick up our series with the first session on arts-based research.

We are very fortunate to have Dr. Geo Takach, a professor from the School of Communication and Culture at Royal Roads University with us on the topic Arts-Based Research as Paradigm

Manifesto, and Mission for Volatile Times I know that Dr. Takach has a full session planned for all of us, so please join me in warmly welcome Dr. Takach and let's learn together how arts-based research can inspire us and can help us change the way that we think and teach. Yeah. Thank you. So here you go.

GEO TAKACH:

Thank you very much, Gwen. Good morning, everybody. It is my great delight and privilege to be joining you from the traditional lands of the Lekwungen-speaking Peoples, like Gwen. In fact, with her lovely land acknowledgment and her discussion of arts-based research, my work here is done, but I won't leave just yet. Actually, it may not quite be done. I'm very grateful to these First Peoples, the Lekwungen-speaking Peoples, the Songhees, and the Esquimalt Nations for their stewardship of this land since time and immemorial, which to me, as somebody engaged in environmental communication among other aspects of communication studies, is something that is an ongoing reminder, an ongoing example, of how relating to and caring for the land to which we all owe our lives and our ongoing existence is something important. And certainly with its focus on social justice and environmental justice and economic justice, arts-based research is engaged in some of those values and priorities for which I am grateful to the Lekwungen-speaking Peoples for their stewardship. Now, long and tortured sentences like that last one aside, I'd also like to point out that my university, Royal Roads may be, we are hoping it will be the first university in Canada to be located on treaty settlement lands. Hopefully the Te'mexw treaty negotiations, which have been going on for some decades with a view to recognizing the formal within the colonial system, formally recognizing the title of these First People to these lands. We're going to talk about art-based research today. By way of the chat box or just shout out, when you hear the words "arts-based research," what leaps to your mind? What do you think? What does that conjure up? Thank you. Thank you. Yes. "Photo voice, visual media, new entry points to IDs." I like there's abstract and there's very concrete responses too. "Outputs other than just writing tests." Yeah. I think I'm seeing a very high level of ABR, pardon the acronym, literacy from which we're going to build and work from today. "Research that uses some form of art to investigate." That's a beautiful summary. "Using arts to explore the process," The activities like. Yes, yes to all of your replies and thank you for them.

I'm going to share a screen with you now and let's have a look at what we're going to be spending the rest of our time on here together. I call it A paradigm manifesto admission for volatile times because given there is a strong critical tradition in the roots of art-based research, which began as arts-based educational research. Also some roots in therapy as well into the mental health and physical health fields as well, starting in about the 1980s. But always a strong social justice imperative working in the background. Where there are issues that are very complex and they're wicked problems and they may not even be solvable. Arts-based research is a great way to tap into multiple intelligences to explore them. So it's certainly something that lends itself to manifesto-style communication and empowering the research community engaged in it. A lot of arts-based research is done with rather than on as in the traditional extractive research sense communities. Let's see. Paradigm. Yes. It has been called, ABR has been called a subset or a part of qualitative research, as Gwen mentioned. But Dr. Patricia

Levey, we'll come to her soon. Big hero of mine, and others make a case for ABR being its own paradigm because it has its own way of looking at the world. But really, anyway you slice it or categorize it, it is something I believe that is a useful methodological supplement to, we'll call them more traditional forms of inquiry.

Over the next half hour plus, we'll be looking at the roots of ABR. I've already alluded to some of them. A couple of definitions, talk about some advantages and challenges. I'll share a few examples from my own work and a teaching example in case you want to give that or a variant of that that works for you try in your own classrooms. And then at the end, time permitting, just invite some thoughts on how you might see ABR fitting into your own research and I add teaching adventures. That's where we're headed.

And this is where we will start. There are some deeply entrenched binaries in so-called Western society, for example, regarding left brains and right, pictures and numbers or words, objective versus subjective. Spending like Santa and saving like Scrooge. Although popular culture and certainly the universities for administrative purposes keep them separate, arts and science. The two were actually considered, as I've come to understand, a common form of inquiry until the Enlightenment, the so-called Enlightenment, at which point they were separated. But if you think about it, both art and science represent the pursuit of truth and both have the potential to change how we see ourselves and to bring fresh understanding of ourselves and the world around us. Both express intellectual and emotional experience. At their most pivotal, I think, arts and science both require courage to confront the status quo and re-examine how we relate to each other and to the world. Science. Guided by quantification. It's analytical, it's deductive. From x, we discern y. It thrives on certainty and what is considered true in science is something that is replicable or repeatable. You did that experiment. If I do it, I'm going to get something like that too.

Whereas art is an aesthetic method, and it's a process of thought guided by the senses. There are differences. It's intuitive. It often thrives on revels in uncertainty, which science isn't crazy about generally. And what is true is what seems to reflect or interpret our own experience. That is a measure of truth for art. Both embody not only processes, but also the results. Just to give a shout out to science and scientists. Many people don't seem to appreciate that scientists also need compelling language and visuals to move other people and that expressions of their findings as Hayden and Hayden write are just not there to be picked off the lab shelf, but they must actually be created and noble scientific process is laden with creative thought although both artistic and scientific inquiry have been established for millennia and are certainly staples of the academy, only recently has art been considered a form of scholarly research. There was a conference, arts-based educational research in the 1980s. I think in the 1990s, we started to see work being published around it. But what actually arts-based research is has been going on for a lot longer, I believe. The premise of arts-based research is that many of the greatest contributions to human understanding, not all, many, have come from the arts. What ABR tries to do, as I indicated at the top, is increase the range of methods by which we might depict, construe, and assess the world around us. It's a method of inquiry that allows researchers to

understand and examine through artistic production processes. There's some great definitions in the chat box that I'll refer you to. Barone writes, "The ABR deploys aesthetic principles or design elements both within the inquiry process and the research text itself."

Here are some definitions that I've always liked. Here's the one from Wilson and Flicker. Here's another one from Barone that we mentioned. There's an omnibus definition from Sean McNitt that's been quoted many times. I think this is an important addition that I offer to you. This gets at that critical impetus that underlies some arts-based research, not all, but it's also an act of encouraging understanding and resistance to oppression and things that could be remedied and also offering hope. ABR arose because traditional academic vocabulary was found to be wanting, and it was found to fall short in its ability to capture and communicate the diversity and complexity of human experience, the whole holistic, I think is the term when used, human experience. The resulting research often made less than the desired amount of impact on intended audiences. Maybe a few people would read about it in a scholarly journal and that's it. But how did it affect participants in the research?

How did it affect communities? These are things that arts-based research is very mindful of. It echoes the researchers desire to evoke emotional as opposed to solely cognitive understandings and responses to human experience. ABR is not art for its own sake, making art for its own sake. That's an eminently valid enterprise unto itself. But the core of arts-based research, as was pointed out in the chat box, remains a scholarly inquiry centred on a defined research question. You are conducting a scholarly inquiry. You're just using artistic methods and methods from the arts to help answer your question. Uh, it could be a stand-alone method ABR or used in conjunction with more traditional qualitative and quantitative methods. It's meant as a supplement, not something that takes over everything else. Now, art and research, having said that, even though they come together in arts-based research. They remain different enterprises. We shouldn't ask to do art. We shouldn't ask art to do more or less than it is capable of doing, for example, settle on one single interpretation. That's a lot to ask of art. Maybe not a lot to ask of science. Nor should we stretch scholarship to the point of shredding theoretical methodological or disciplinary rigor. It's a meeting place for the academy and for the arts. It can offer substantial advantages as well as challenges. We've mentioned some of the advantages in the chat box. ABR lets us access highly nuanced and deeply detailed, complex and expressive renderings of human affairs beyond the literal or the quantitative. It draws on a richer palette of what researchers call created intelligence and communications to generate information that often feels more accurate, original, and intelligent than more conventional descriptions. It recognizes that ABR does that the choice of the forum through which we represent the research affects not only what we see and hear, but also the experience. Bringing in Marshall McLuhan here about the medium and being the message, certainly part of the message. ABR can present fresh points of view and provoke action for social change beyond merely reporting findings. It offers potential to gain special insights and reach audiences not typically available to scholars. For example, my work, my ABR has been shared not only in traditional scholarly presentations, conferences, and classrooms, but also town halls, festivals,

art galleries, theatres, bookstore readings, and sundry public events. It's a great opportunity to get out and share your research with the wider public and justify it and defend it as well.

Now, what are some of the challenges of ABR? Is it all a walk in the park? Oh, probably not. The underlying theory scholars say lags behind the practice. There's a lack of referential precision. That subjective element that might make consensus difficult if not impossible, but hopefully it might make greater understanding more possible. This is a real one. There's a potential backlash by the research establishment, maybe not so much openly, but more so in hiring committees and granting agency jury deliberations, perhaps, a backlash by the research establishment against what some might view as bizarre representations of data. But it's been with us for over, in a formal form, for three decades now. It's not something brand spanking new and untried. I'm offering counterbalance to the challenges as we go here. This one is losing currency with the increasing advances in technology. Big announcement about AI by a large technology firm yesterday. Constraints imposed by existing systems of publication on material transcending print. That is said to be a factor, but really, there are more outlets than scholarly journals, traditional print for sharing arts-based research, more so every single day. Maybe the biggest challenge that I find is meeting the standards of both scholarly and artistic rigor. And on that, Susan Findlay, wonderful arts-based researcher wrote that "the trouble with rigor, if you try to follow artistic rigor too much it can become rigor mortis and an instrument of perpetuating the very status quo you're trying to change with your arts-based research."

If you're new to arts-based research, I'm going to recommend one of my heroes, Dr. Patricia Leavy. Here are some of her works on the subject and website that you can have a look at.

Now, in terms of sharing arts-based research, here are some thoughts on places that such work could be shared. I and many others have used, I'll let you get that. It's basically limited by your imagination, and as you can see, far more than a scholarly journal or a scholarly conference, or even a webinar are as wonderful as they are.

In the spirit of sharing, I will share some of my adventures. These photos are all taken by me or at my request, so they are reproduced here with consent. The one you're looking at here is actually as a couple of music students, and my collaborator who's a composer. Three music students actually performing a musical comedy that I wrote, and I wrote the script, stage play libretto and the music was done by my learned collaborator. And this is that particular project actually done with professional actors. I had the fortune, I'll leave you to decide whether it's good or bad, to spend most of my life in a province next door to this one. Which time I spent a lot of time focusing on the loyal role of oil in our lives and our culture. This project took up the research question, what is the role of oil in our lives and our culture? And in this particular project, War of the Wild Roses, the premise is that Princess Louise for whom the province is named, Louise Caroline Alberta, bored of the anonymity in the afterlife, finagles a trip to modern-day Alberta to burnish her fame and therefore, her status in the afterlife. But what she gets involved in is a fight to stop a certain large bituminous brouhaha / bonanza in the northeast of the province.

A second piece was a radio play when the Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities, I believe, Canada's largest gathering of eggheads took place in the great city of Calgary, where I did my last degree. We did a reading of this play in which figures from the past come to the present in a talk show format and try to make sense of what living in a petro culture is from their various perspectives. We had Adam Smith, father, said to be the father of capitalism, Henry Ford, Basho, the Haiku poet, Catherine the Great. People who you wouldn't normally associate with petro culture analysis, but who definitely had a perspective. So did the research gave them the dialogue and hired actually for this one, actually student actors to play some, to play all of the parts of that.

So this is another one. I won't play it, but it's a film, and it asks the question. Here's an example of an arts-based research question. This bitumen, these tar sands or oil sands or bit sands, as I've called them in an effort to try to depolarize the heated rhetoric around the terminology. It's often discussed as a conflict between the environment and economy, but what if we discussed it as an issue of public health? That's what this particular film does. But in terms of some of my work is described in a book which is freely available from the publisher, and freely downloadable online from Palgrave Macmillan called "Scripting the Environment."

What am I working on nowadays? There's Esquimalt Lagoon, which is actually just this way out the window here in the Lands of the *Lekwungen*-speaking peoples. I have been looking at this as a research question. Pretty big question. But it just occurs to me there might be some commonalities and synergies among environmentalist artistic and Indigenous thought that we could bring together in communication to try to build stronger relationships, that prove relationships with the Earth and the First Peoples of the Earth. That's what I'm about to show you, and it's taken a twisted and tortuous and delightful and glorious turn, but it started with a vignette that was a pandemic film that I'm about to show you. And then it became a pilot, which then became a trailer for a documentary film that is slated to premiere here this fall and in other places. And there's also a parallel book by Lexington Books it's bought by a Blooming something, a Bloomsbury large publisher has since bought it, but they kept the people and I'm delighted to keep working with them and that book can't tell you when it will come out. It's out for peer review, hopefully as we speak. How did I do this research? What were my inquiries? Well, there they were. Research by visiting and listening, I would describe it as and those are some of the activities that I completed and some of the folks that I spoke to. And so what I would like to show you now. It's a project that keeps on giving. I don't know, at some point, a wise person told me, a wise educator told me you've got to have a stopping rule for every project you do. I am challenged to stop the documentary film and just sign off on it. As I did with the manuscript when I have to hand it in. We find that with our research sometimes. Here is a short pandemic film done without live participants, done in relative isolation that represents my response to what I was starting to learn. It's an initial response to emergent research as I sought to bring together these three things into dialogue. Here's what I came up with.

[VIDEO STARTS]

♪ ♪ Who needs natural disasters? Hubris creates our own people, places, planet. We colonize 'cause we think we're better. We unhinge ourselves from nature, an eye for an eye. Always before us, we gift the next seven generations, rising sea levels, parts per million of carbon, extinctions of species. The false god of Enlightenment has begat progress, instrumental, discordant, all-consuming. At the altar of growth, we are offered 10,000 sacred adverts each day, the old failing benedictions. The most chilling colonization is the colonization of our minds. Business as usual. Some are more entitled than others. Earth's natural resources are infinite. First, we need to decolonize our minds. Dreaming, awakening, dancing, singing, painting. Impelled to create and share stories. We are animals with our tails unfurled. To restore relations with the land, our first step is to re-story it. An interweaving, mutuality, reciprocity, softer volume, slowed velocity, respect, relationality, not pulling on separate threads, but embracing the tapestry totality. [Birds chirping] Create a new shared space, a message, a conversation, a story. One at a time. Listen. Decolonizing takes courage. If we lose our fears, we can ally our visions, messages, actions, tell new stories together, bring them to life for good. [VIDEO ENDS]

GEO: This was a collaboration with visual designer Bonnie Safer Takach. And one of the many highlights of this project for me was waking up at stupid o'clock. Those aren't sound effects. These are actual birds and going out into the forest to record them. This was in Treaty 6 Territory that we did that.

So moving on from there, I'd like to show you a pilot film that is basically going to function as the trailer for my documentary film slated to open on November 1st. We'll see how that goes. And it's called "SHIH or Interconnectedness." Let's see if I can play.

[VIDEO STARTS]

♪ ♪ We depend on our home, Earth, for our physical survival and our well-being. But in our timeless sacred quest to make a better life, we're not always giving her the love that she deserves.

And you can say, "Well, look at this great place we have down here, and we like to keep it that way. But what are we going to sustain? We don't even know that yet."

And we're not exactly honouring those that have looked after the Earth since time immemorial. My ancestral territory is Kwakwaka'wakw on my father's side and Gitksan, on my mother's side. And I have not had much opportunity to spend a lot of time and be connected with either territory and either family and experience a lot of the culture from either side of my family, which I think is a by-product of colonization, of assimilation, of oppression. Decolonizing, particularly when it comes to education has to do with peeling away the sort of colonial educations that we received that are about these hierarchies of humanity that place whiteness and Europeaness on the top and have constructed Indigenous identities as being less than and

inferior, and, in fact, in need of wiping out. Taking whatever we want from and doing whatever we please with the air, the land, and the water. That's like stealing people's land, criminalizing their culture, and kidnapping their children. Both involve taking from others. It's those fundamental ideas of who has authority, who can make decisions, how we balance power or don't balance power in certain relationships, needs to be recognized as a problem.

So I think those connections are being made by Indigenous people that, you know, being subject to one aspect of colonial violence, that is the residential school system is analogous to or maybe directly connected to another aspect of colonial violence that is being perpetrated in a more corporate way and in relation to energy extraction. So as an uninvited occupier, the traditional lands of the Lekwungen-speaking Peoples, the Songhees, and Esquimalt Nations on what's sometimes called Vancouver Island. I got curious. I set out to find new ways to think about how to relate to the Earth and her First Peoples. So we can talk more about that and then maybe even do some things to take this sad song and make it better. Art is an inextricable form of communication and creation that is just fundamental to how we are and see the world.  
Hillary: But what if art isn't a thing, it's a way?

I wouldn't have done this work if you hadn't asked me to. It wouldn't have looked the same way if we hadn't, didn't even ask me these questions. And the cool thing is you haven't seen it yet.

This confluence of the climate crisis, recognition of multiple ways of knowing and being that's really, in many ways rooted in indigeneity, and the arts can make a space where we can be safe to engage in some of these ideas. This film invites you to join me and some amazing folks on this quest. There's a word my dad and I've been talking about called shih. It's a Dakelh word. Shih is something that means how connected and interconnected we are with the world around us. Right. You wanna see it?  
[VIDEO ENDS]

GEO:

Okay, that's the trailer. Fun fact, there's ABR within the ABR. In addition to speaking with the folks you saw in the, the blended shot. I commissioned visual artist Dian John, whose work I admire very much. I've heard him speak and was just bowled over. I commissioned him to answer that research question in a painting, and that's what he is, he is about to reveal that talks about the painting, and then in the course, over the course of the film, he reveals it to the viewer. That's where that's going.

So let's look at a classroom example. How might ABR be brought to bear in a classroom? Here's one activity that I've developed and led a number of times that I offer to you for use and adaptation or ignoring as you may see fit. In terms of learning outcomes, ideally students would show an ability to do more things, assess the potential of ABR in their own journeys as researchers, scholar practitioners, and citizens. Consider how a specific research question of their choice might be answered in a specific arts-based format. Experiment with and workshop their own ideas for arts-based ways to answer their research questions. Finally, analyze and



comment constructively on ideas for ABR projects proposed by their classmates in class. The overarching goal I guess of this exercise for me is to give students a solid foundation to begin their own inquiries into ABR methods as additional resources in their toolkit for active learning. What's the lesson plan? Well, the lesson plan works in three parts. At the beginning, there is discussion on theory, the epistemological roots and foundations, advantages, and challenges of ABR, sounding maybe a little bit like what I've been talking about for the first part of this talk. In the second part, and certainly allowing for Q&A because the students, learners do have questions especially when exposed to this for the first time. And then ask a question, how might this work for you? How do you see using this? I lead a brainstorm session with students, generating an example of an inquiry of interest to them. For example, how would you improve morale in a particular industry or place, explored within a short story, dance choreography or a sculpture? To name just three forms in which you could address a question like that.

If students are reluctant to try because of fear or uncertainty, I might suggest situating a research question in a setting that's familiar to them in an organization to which they might belong. Or an art form that they enjoy, and then imagine how that question might be addressed in that form. If some students are still uncertain after that, I invite them to consider how their favourite film character might address a question in a movie or their favourite musical icon might address it in a song or lyrics. After working through a few examples in class, I then invite them to sketch out possible research designs in breakout groups or individually for that. How would you do it? Well, I would do it in a film. What would you put in the film? Well, I go to the park and I do this, I'd invite these people. That top-level introductory planning type work to whet their appetite. And some prompting questions that I use are well, which form or medium might help address your question: Painting, short story, skit? What features of that form make it helpful and why? Why are you choosing that particular form? Of course, in scholarly research, we have to justify every choice we make and certainly ABR is no different in that respect. How might you work in that artistic form to gather the information to answer your question, organize or synthesize that information for analysis, analyze it to ground and make sense of your answer, and then craft your answer and share it out and present it. Finally, the last step of the process is to provide an empathetic forum for students to workshop. Their ideas for art-based ways to answer their questions. I asked them to pitch their concept. What's the question? What's the medium and why? And then invite comments from their peers. I'll throw in a couple too. Then collectively debrief on what they've learned and what the experience has been like for them. So three questions that I ask in this reflective exercise are first, what advantages do you see, and what challenges do you see? Sound familiar? What possible impacts, potentially positive and negative, might there be on intended audiences for the work? I think these reflections, kinds of reflections, are an absolutely vital part of the arts-based research process, and certainly in your reporting when you actually document it. They mirror for me the ongoing iterative process of informing and fueling the creation of artistic work by pausing to consider the effect of each step on the creation of the work as you go. I think there's some further benefits with an exercise like this and that's giving valuable feedback on what students are taking out of the lesson on ABR. It's getting a sense of how comfortable, or not, they are getting with ABR. Also the efficacy of the activity itself, is this worthwhile? Seeing

some tangible results. And their eyes lighting up in class or are they glazing over dreaming of lunchtime? Within a course, an activity like this can seed an actual ABR project for which more time would be devoted in and out of class. When I do that, though, when I have an arts-based research project, I always start with a proposal assignment, sometimes for marks, sometimes not, and it's submitted for peer feedback as well, just so they're not going from 0 to the full 100 kilometres an hour with a project at the end, there's a halfway house of a proposal to try out the concepts, much like the second part of second and third parts of this exercise. Finally, what have I learned from this? Well, what I've learned from conducting this classroom exercise is that it does support students doing research in applied settings, for example, in organizations that they're somehow connected to, volunteer employment, family, or otherwise. It gives them the opportunity to begin to engage creatively and hopefully also consequentially. In issues that are of concern to them in settings where they live and to bring out an artistic side that some of them didn't even realize they had or pay attention to the fact that they had or it got muzzled a long time ago. In expanding their tools of inquiry, I think ABR equips them to become more diverse and hopefully more comfortable and effective and fulfilled researchers.

Because arts-based research is new territory methodologically for many learners, I emphasize that you don't have to be a seasoned artist in a particular discipline to try it. And there's no single right answer or right way to do ABR in response to any question. And like art itself, ABR offers boundless possibilities while inviting Copious consideration, creativity, and effort. But it's really, really important when working with students to try to ensure that there's a safe space for creation, for collaboration, and for sharing. They need to be comfortable. They need to feel comfortable in that space. Even if they're taking a risk, they need to feel secure enough to take that risk. Once people jumped in and the lights start going off in their eyes, and the fireworks emerge, it can be a beautiful and inspiring thing.

We talked about art for scholarship's sake versus art for art's sake. Art for its own sake is free of academic dictates like posing and answering research questions, justifying claims, citing sources. It's a great thing, but this is not that. Again, that's one thing I try to emphasize that sometimes gets lost. This is a joyful union of art and research. I found it's important to allow students flexibility in their choices of topics and artistic forms. It's got to be their own choices, their own devices for ABR projects. The challenge sometimes is like with grad students, I find. They want to do this. But really, they can only do this. They can't go as broad and as big as the limits of the course and the time for the assignment permit. So work within the time and with the resources available. You can create a pilot and then work on it after the class or as part of your capstone project or thesis. But for the purpose of the assignment in class, keep it doable. Leave ample time, the usual stuff, leave ample time for questions, for discussion. Also catharsis and decompression. In the wake of learner sharing, sometimes their hopes, their fears, and their vulnerabilities through their arts-based activity in class.

In sum, to bring it all home then, I feel that ABR brings the power and beauty of the arts into dialogue with the investigative rigor, but not rigor mortis, of scholarship. With its focus on engagement, especially with an ethos to promote environmental, social, and/or economic

justice, with its reliance on self-expression and relative reflexivity, with its hands-on approach to devising, discussing, and enacting inquiry, I think ABR offers potential for active, authentic, and action-based learning. And those are just the As. Learning that can transform students, instructors, and ultimately perhaps even organizations, communities, and the world.

Finally, my last turn here is questions for you to which I welcome verbal and or chat box responses. What possibilities do you see for sharing your research and or teaching through ABR? What formats might you try? And why? What outlets and venues could you to share it in? And why? Some questions. Mull them over for a second and if you've got a response, please do share. While you're thinking of that, I will just thank some folks, SSHRC, our research funder and Royal Roads, and, of course, Campus BC, very much appreciated this opportunity to be with you today. I'll just go back to these questions for a second and then stop sharing my screen.

GWEN:

Thanks very much, Geo. Those are big questions. I guess while people are sharing thinkings and then sharing in our chat, maybe like there's this question coming from Bala a bit earlier today. He asked, "Could you share a bit more about the process of doing the piece of research? I think it's related to the interconnectedness trailer, and how have you designed and visualized the steps. Was it open and flexible or you have taught them before starting the research project or the main research question." I'm wondering if you could address this question, while people start sharing some thoughts in the chat.

GEO:

Okay. Thanks very much, Bala for your question. I'm assuming because you said the word steps, you're talking about the classroom activity. So correct me if I'm wrong, but that's what I'm going to focus on. It's a really good question, and I didn't just perfectly formulate it and march into class with it. It was the process of considerable trial and error. At first it was just to talk. It started out as just a talk. And then very loosely, it became more interactive, and I realized that my hope for it was eventually the students would run the show. It would be their show. I'd be setting the table at the beginning and then stepping back and inviting them to take ownership and be as generous as they felt comfortable being in sharing their ideas. And I find typically, they're either they're. It's tough to generalize, but two groups of students. If the whole group is very, very shy, if one person says, Oh, what the hell and goes ahead, then people start to follow. But with some classes in cohort-based learning situations, for example, where they know each other very well by the time they get to my class or their program head and they know me. Sometimes you actually have to restrain them one at a time, bucks, one at a time. So I would say open and flexible for sure. Now, to answer that question in a research context, just in case you meant that, and because I think it might make a good answer too. I find the more specific I try to get with my research question at the beginning, which is what you're supposed to do, the more I end up revising it, later. Open and flexible, the words you use, I think are a really good mantra, really good guiding advice to keep in mind going forward, that arts-based research is very emergent. It's very iterative. It's always building on itself. Hopefully not eating its own tail as you go. Cumulative, iterative, and sometimes you just have to almost start over

again. Sometimes you want to rip your hair out. I started with a lot more hair than I've got right now. But it's a beautiful process.

GWEN: I think Bala said, "Thank you for your sharing. Some students actually prefer the individual project rather than the collective one. Do you have answers regarding how you address that issue?" But she thank you, overall for the presentation, and I guess, all of us are very, I feel very grateful for your sharing. I think through the session, we learned more about the context, as well as the justifications for integrating the ABR into our practice, not only in research, but also in the classroom context as well. Yeah, thank you very much for your sharing.

GEO:

To take Bala's last question just in the millisecond that I have, individual vs. collaborative. My approach has been, I found, I've done it both ways, but start individually and then collaborative. More often than not, that's the approach I've taken. So thank you for your questions. Thank you all for being here. Thank you, Campus. Thank you BCcampus.

GWEN: Thank you, Geo.