

Doing Research on
History of Art Education:
Notes for Panel on
Research Methods

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Historical Research

- Detective work
 - Searching for information from primary and secondary sources
- Narrative work
 - Writing a meaningful story that interprets those facts.

How to Begin?

- Start from questions or broad topics
- Look for secondary sources: what other authors have written on this topic
- Read, take notes, identify key facts
- Ask questions about authenticity of sources (external criticism) and credibility (internal criticism)
- Organize preliminary notes into a chronology or timeline

Organizing the Story

- Identify rationale for your research
 - Explain what you are writing about (the topic)
 - What you don't know about it (the big question)
 - Why you need to know about it (the rationale)
- Consider significance for the field
- Shape the information into some type of story
 - Refer to secondary sources to see how other researchers interpreted similar stories
 - Use concept mapping
 - To identify key ideas to explore in the historical narrative
 - To organize structure or sequence of the story

Multiple Sources

- Documentary sources, archival and other written records
- Human sources—people to interview about their knowledge of the topic
 - Comparing oral history interviews with written records can give a richer, more complex and more personalized sense of the past
- Visual sources
 - Photographs taken at conferences or images included in organizational publications

Interdisciplinary History

- Draws on range of primary sources
- Is consciously interpreted against a theoretical framework based in more than one discipline
- Connects art education with varied types of history—art history, history of education, social history, intellectual history, cultural history, local history and more