

consumption, valuing, and dissemination of their works of art; and, how through this process, issues of gender equity and social justice emerge in our learning, teaching, and practice of art.

We begin this process by introducing the eight participants and invite readers to click on each name for a brief account of the nature-nurture influences in their art practice: arts-researcher [Dorothy](#),³ also a teacher in university and community education; baker [Maureen](#), also a peace activist and anti-logging environmentalist; painter-collagist [Marla](#), also an advocate for women artists; and flamenco dancer [Thérèse](#), also a practitioner of the healing arts. We include the responses of the other artist-participants—poet-videographer [John](#), also a pediatrician and art-medicine pioneer; photographer [Anita](#), also a teacher and arts-based researcher; baker-mosaic artist [Stephanie](#), also a fierce advocate for parents and children; and poet-writer [Chris](#), also a community activist—to underscore how the relational, including power relations, infuses art practice and artists' gatherings. In this essay, we represent in more depth three research participants—Maureen, Marla, and Thérèse—who serve to illustrate the strong connections between visual culture, gender, and popular education. The responding participants also shed light on the aspects of visual culture and gender situated in this unique grouping at one time and one place on the west coast of Canada.

In Tofino as in all 15 whistlestops, our first criterion for selection of participants was to create a gathering representative of diverse art forms. The process often began with just one person we knew—Anita and Chris have been friends since grade 8—with the remaining participants often emerging as serendipity rather than a planned choice. Anita, as our Vancouver Island point person, put out an invitation for volunteers through the arts groups in Tofino. John, as Dorothy's partner and traveling companion from east to west coast, *volunteered* as videographer for all the whistlestops, including Tofino (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Videographer John Graham-Pole preparing to record the Tofino Whistlestop

Introduction to the Dialogical Intermedia Study



Figure 2a: The outdoor signage for *The Common Loaf Bake Shop*, Tofino, Vancouver Island

The overall research project focuses on the art of women popular educators—needlecraft, visual arts, music, popular theatre, and writing, especially autobiography—in the context of the women's movement. We conducted 15 whistlestops across Canada to assess the convergence of art, feminism, and popular education in historical and contemporary contexts. In the Tofino Whistlestop, we share moments that demonstrate arts

research in action through the participatory and creative expression of women. As you watch the videos embedded in this essay and its setting

3. The text in purple bold font are hyperlinks to video clips, images, or other external sites.