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## Editors' Note: New Research in SoTL-AH

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## Editors' Note

Virginia B. Spivey and Renee McGarry

The present issue of *Art History Pedagogy and Practice* marks the first anniversary of this journal. We are excited by the growing interest in scholarship of teaching and learning in art history (SoTL-AH) we have seen in the last year, and encouraged by the number of art historians who are beginning to develop their own SoTL-AH projects. The studies published here serve as strong models for art historians new to this emerging field of research. Each is deeply grounded in existing SoTL literature, and together they highlight the variety of methods used to investigate questions of student learning. The authors mine class comments, reflections, surveys, and focus groups, as well as their students' work for qualitative evidence to support their findings. We hope their publication— along with their extensive bibliographies – will provide guidance to faculty beginning to pursue this emerging area of research.

Gretchen Bender offers new insight to important questions around how introductory survey courses may be more effectively taught. She presents findings from her experiment to restructure a large lecture class into a seminar, adapting a model of planetary thinking to introduce both majors and non-majors to global content in art history. She offers clear explanation of the theoretical impetus for her project and details practical ways in which class activities and assignments were designed to meet course learning objectives.

Ellery Fouch discusses the ways she has implemented the principles of Universal Design for Learning in her classroom by documenting an experiment involving *tableaux vivants* in her college-level art history classrooms. In order to transform the assigned works students engaged their close-looking and critical thinking skills and were required to think creatively not only about the form of each work but also the content. The students' finished assignments and written self-reflections demonstrate how the assignment engaged both metacognition and embodiment, both of which are often excluded from traditional assignments.

Kimberly Datchuk shows how university art museums can successfully adapt research in online teaching to create student-centered experiences that enhance learning in undergraduate courses. Through a discussion of the pedagogical approach now used at the University of Iowa Museum of Art, Datchuk presents an important model for integrating cross-sector instructional practices in academic art history.

This issue also includes an invited feature, written collaboratively by Parme Giuntini, Kathleen Wentrack, and Anne Swartz. Inspired by Katy Deepwell's new MOOC at [n.paradoxa.com](http://n.paradoxa.com), the authors review the course for its pedagogical and scholarly contribution to the study of feminist art history. The course, however, also provided an opportunity to dig deeper by addressing the

evolution of the MOOC format in recent years and how open access to expert content in such courses can serve faculty and students in a variety of ways.

As we enter 2018, we hope that continuing to explore questions of teaching and learning in the art history classroom can reestablish, reinvigorate, and shape conversations of visual literacy and the importance of art to our world. As New York Times art critic [Roberta Smith stated](#) in reference to newly implemented entrance fees at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Reading skills are seen as essential to the common good. Visual literacy is every bit as important, and if our culture and school systems placed more emphasis on learning about art, people would grow up with more of a museum habit.”<sup>1</sup> SoTL-AH provides the opportunity to demonstrate the value of visual literacy to students in the classroom and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> Holland Cotter and Roberta Smith, “The Met Should Be Open to All. The New Pay Policy Is a Mistake,” *The New York Times*, January 4, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/04/arts/design/the-met-should-be-open-to-all-the-new-pay-policy-is-a-mistake.html? r=0>