

Defining | US

PODCAST LEARNING COMPANION

Our podcast companions expand learning beyond the walls of schools and organizations by bringing crucial conversations to the leaders, educators and organizations that matter. Use this guide to promote critical reflection, deeper discussion and meaningful connections among adults and youth around the topics that are Defining US.

VOICES OF CHANGE

A Podcast with Stacey DeWitt

INSIDE EPISODE 11:

"Art, Media, and Transformative Education"

Join the conversation as Tammy Thomas Garnes and Stacey DeWitt share insightful dialogue about the power of art and media in the service of transforming society. They discuss the potential for art to shift the hearts and minds of individuals and communities, as well as the systemic changes necessary for lasting social change. As a key leader of ARRAY 101, the education arm of Ava DuVernay's company Array, Garnes shares details about ARRAY's television and film projects that inspire change for the greater good.



MEET TAMMY THOMAS GARNES

Tammy Garnes is the Vice President of Education & Understanding at ARRAY 101, overseeing education and social impact projects including ARRAY Crew. Garnes' previous experience includes being a communications executive in the public education sector and a film producer in the entertainment industry. A graduate of the Peter Stark Producing Program at the University of Southern California, Garnes is a former producer whose credits include *Roots – Celebrating 25 Years*, *Dancing in September*, and *Biker Boyz*. Join Tammy and Stacey Dewitt as they discuss media, education, and outreach. She and Stacey go deep into several projects from ARRAY as well as discuss CWK's flagship, documentary *Children at the Crossroads of Change* and how these resources can be used to develop change in your community.



LISTENING AND REFLECTING

Use this learning companion to dive deeper into the episode topic, with suggestions for asynchronous listening, engagement and experiences that offer opportunities for reflection, connection and commitment.

WAYS TO LISTEN

Use the podcast transcript to increase engagement by following along and highlighting words, phrases, or concepts that stand out in the conversation. Take notes in the margin of reflections, connections and questions and consider these three methods for listening:

1. Open Listening - Listen to the podcast to simply notice and note the words, phrases and moments in the conversation that spark emotion and connections
2. Focused Listening - Listen to the podcast with a focus on the Moments that Matter using the time stamp and topics from the "Podcast Notes"
3. Reflective Listening - Listen to the podcast with a focus on critical self-reflection, using any or all the reflection questions below

CRITICAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

BEFORE YOU LISTEN:

1. What experiences have you had that connect to this topic?
2. What do you hope to learn from this episode?

AS YOU LISTEN:

1. How do you consume art and media in your daily life? In what ways has it influenced your thoughts about people, your actions, and your decisions?
2. What are your experiences with storytelling? What stories are important for you to tell about yourself and your experiences?
3. What are 3 positive media sources or artistic projects that support an inclusive and equitable society?
4. How have you privately or publicly challenged false and incomplete narratives advanced through K-12 curriculum, mainstream media, and social media?
5. What is media literacy? How can you demonstrate critical media literacy in your personal life and daily interactions?

AFTERWARDS:

1. What about this discussion resonated with you?
2. What questions or ideas would you like to explore further?
3. What conversations will you have, or immediate actions will you take, to create change in your own sphere of influence?

EXPERIENCES THAT ELEVATE THE LEARNING

The following experiences are intended for use with leaders, educators, parents and those working in educational organizations. The purpose is to promote critical reflection, connection and commitment toward action. They should be used and adapted based on the individuals, group dynamics and organizational context of the learning.

EXPERIENCES TO PROMOTE CRITICAL SELF-REFLECTION

Reflect on Important Moments in the Conversation

Use the timestamps within our [podcast notes](#) to find and re-listen to the most powerful moments in this episode, then write about your own perspective, experience and insights.

- How do your identity, experiences and knowledge influence your understanding of this topic?
- How does this topic connect with your current context?
- What are the implications to your practice?
- How will you continue the conversation in your school/community/organizations?

- 1:32 Tammy's Story-The Vision and Impact
- 10:25 Art and Media Meeting Education
- 19:30 The Danger of Un-Education
- 31:39 Transcending Fear and Transforming Communities with Counter-Narratives
- 44:46 Exposure, Disruption, Liberation

COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

Tammy Thomas Garnes describes how education within Black communities occurs largely within individual homes and communities rather than in public schools. Do you have personal experiences with ethnocentric, racial or religious educational practices that take place outside of public schools? Are you aware of communal education practices that happen outside of your cultural practices? Read this [report](#) from the [Coalition for Community Schools](#) that describes the rationale and core characteristics of community-based learning. Community-based learning as an educational approach is an example of bridge-building between the work done in homes and communities and the curriculum taught in schools. The linked report provides several examples of strategies and outcomes of community-based learning. After reading the report, work with a partner or in a small group to address the following:

1. Describe your experiences with family and community-based learning and education
2. If you work in an educational setting or have children that attend school, what kind of community-based learning would you like to see incorporated into the school curriculum?

CULTURE QUILT

Identity and genealogy are themes of this podcast episode. Tammy Thomas Garnes describes the significance of critical self-reflection and authentic representations of the histories of marginalized groups in mainstream media. Part of the process of creating and consuming media that reflects true experience is excavating the details of one's life history to better understand the impact of traditions and heritage on how we view the world. You will work with a group to collaborate on a culture quilt that can represent both individual and collective experiences. Each participant should use one square to create a visual representation of their culture (values, traditions, clothing, celebrations, politics, religion, education, etc.). Allow each participant to discuss their individual squares then connect all squares into one large quilt. Identify similarities and differences within the larger quilt.

EXPERIENCES TO PROMOTE BUILDING DEEPER CONNECTIONS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AND THE LEARNING

GO DEEPER WITH THE PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

At timestamp 19:30, Garnes and DeWitt discuss the dangers of miseducation and the power of art and media to disrupt false narratives with true and counter-narratives about the histories and experiences of minoritized people. Go to timestamp 19:30 to replay this portion of the podcast then read the article linked [here](#) about how K-12 history textbooks reflect incomplete and false narratives about the Transatlantic slave trade. Discuss in small groups the facts highlighted in the article and what other false narratives may proliferate in school curriculum.

ARRAY 101: ENGAGE WITH ART

Stacey DeWitt and Tammy Thomas Garnes highlight the value of ARRAY's TV and film content, with projects such as *Colin in Black and White* (Netflix), *Home Sweet Home* (NBC), and *Naomi* (CW Network), for interrupting stories that perpetuate social inequality. With the help of her team at ARRAY 101, Garnes has designed learning guides, to extend the viewer's engagement with the themes of the shows. Select one of ARRAY's television or film projects to watch and access the associated learning companion to explore the work that ARRAY 101 is doing to involve the viewer in social change. You may access the television and film across a number of different networks and streaming service providers as indicated in the description above and the learning companions are [linked](#). Discuss with a partner how the learning companion enhanced your engagement with the project's themes.

EXPERIENCES TO PROMOTE TAKING ACTION

FROM ART TO ACTION

Part of ARRAY 101's mission is to use the art of storytelling as a catalyst for change within individuals and systems. Both DeWitt and Garnes agree on the power of art to transform individual hearts and minds, as well as the need for systemic changes that are reflected in policy and law. Complete the following steps to reflect on your experiences with art compelling you to change and the limits of your personal transformation:
Identify a piece of art that has inspired a shift in your mindset, thoughts or emotions. Write a brief reflection on how your thoughts shifted and any of your subsequent actions resulting from the change.

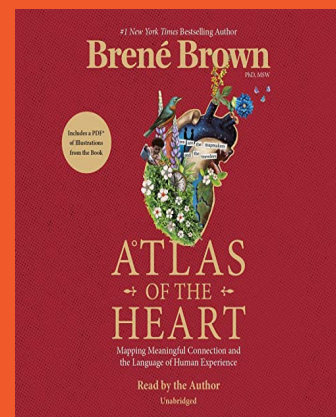
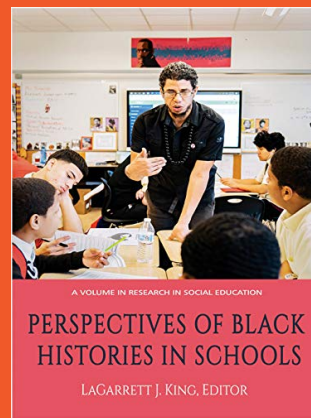
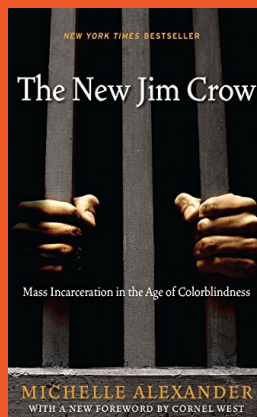
1. What were the limits of your personal change? What barriers hindered your efforts of change?
2. What policies would support lasting changes beyond the interpersonal level-building bridges, social emotional development and/or mental health for your youth and adults?

SANKOFA

The concept of Sankofa was frequently mentioned in this podcast episode. Sankofa refers to reaching back to the past to carry forward what is useful and can be used to describe the significance of using historical wisdom to inform the present. Sankofa requires a willingness to learn from the past, and often begins with the process of remembering past wisdom. Oral histories are a great way to engage in the process of remembering. Read [here](#) to learn more about the Sankofa bird and its origin.

Work with a partner or in a small group to identify and share lessons learned from your past. Have one person from your group or partnership act as recorder to compile a list of shared wisdom from the past that is of value in the present. Finally, you may watch an [interview](#) with the filmmaker, Haile Gerima, who created the film Sankofa that Garnes mentioned in the podcast.

INDEPENDENT READING AND BOOK CLUB RECOMMENDATIONS



RELEVANT RESOURCES:

- [Why Telling Our Own Story is So Powerful for Black Americans](#)
- [Narratives of Black History in Textbooks: Canada and the United States](#)
- [Black History is Not American History: Toward a Framework of Black Historical Consciousness](#)
- [Pursuing Social and Emotional Development Through a Racial Equity Lens: A Call to Action](#)

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