

RESEARCH~ART~RESEARCH (R~A~R) PROJECTS

Research~Art~Research (R~A~R)¹ is the main methodological approach guiding BEST's Research projects. R~A~R is a spiral process and practice of going back and forth between the review of archival material, the literature of historical, educational, social studies, and application of lived experience-driven research, to artistic representation of the insights of academic research, then to the analysis and representation of the social and emotional impact of each "product" of the project on its audiences. R~A~R has many reiterations of knowledge "products," such as academic journal articles, public murals, graphic novels, animation films, podcasts, and performative/theatrical productions.

R~A~R is wide-reaching, socially relevant, and accessible to a broader audience outside the university/academy. R~A~R is driven by collaborations and relationships of trust between academics, artists, teachers, the general public, and all public intellectuals and activists in NM. Hence, R~A~R is responsive to the vision and mission of the center as a hub of creativity and sustainable knowledge creation practices in Ethnic Studies and place-based learning for all New Mexicans. R~A~R is also a potentially decolonial praxis (theory~practice~theorizing~practice) that intentionally delinks from the reductive, deficit, trauma-based, and often violent Western Colonial paradigms of inquiry. It is an attempt to co-create knowledges that inspire the wellbeing of communities, harmony, abundance, and imaginations of an otherwise – ways of living and being outside coloniality.

BEST's R~A~R projects are committed to creating/co-creating knowledges and promoting understanding and awareness of the New Mexican experience through a concerted effort in five areas: K20 education, community engagement and outreach, scholarly research, social justice advocacy and activism, and policy analysis.



¹ Arts-based research (Leavy, 2017) is an interdisciplinary research methodology that synergizes between artistic and research practices