

## Un(precedent)ED

The 30<sup>th</sup> Volume of The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education is unprecedented, in many ways. First the theme is unprecedented, or, rather, *Un(precedent)ED*. This typographical wordplay, quite common throughout the history of JSTAE, troubles habitual readings of the term, allowing for interpretations that open up possibilities, however brief, for new forms of research, theorizing and artmaking.

*Unprecedented.* Having no previous example.<sup>1</sup>

*Un-presidented.* The potential for shifts in power as Americans vote for a presidential candidate every four years.

*Unprecedented.* The election of Barack Hussein Obama as 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States (having no previous example).

*Un-precedent-ED.* That which has no previous educational example.

*Un-ED.* Uneducational.

These are just a few of the interpretations of the volume theme, which each of the authors addresses in a unique manner. Some approach the theme head on, while others choose a more oblique angle of analysis and exploration. Some deal with unprecedented events and actions, while others discuss historical examples, analyzing the development of precedence in art educational practice, and offering suggestions for novel forms of research, pedagogy, and artmaking.

Ed Check offers the reader a historically rich reading of class distinctions, in *A National Labor Project: Recovering Unprecedented Numbers of Working Class Lives and Histories through Art*. He discusses the lack of previous examples regarding class distinctions in art educational practice, while identifying possibilities for making these histories visible. His essay includes a number of strong images that speak to many aspects of working class life, and documentation of artwork that does the same.

In *The Promiscuity of Aesthetics*, Paul Duncum offers a provocative reading of the pleasures to be found in aesthetic philosophy. Duncum offers the reader an overview of many precedents of aesthetic philosophy in art education, and in doing so invigorates a subject that is historically depersonalized. He also adds a nuanced layer to the argument over aesthetics that has been engaging art educators for a number of years.

jan jagodzinski writes on the unprecedented (and potentially *uneducational*) nature of the philosophy of Alain Badiou, in *The Unprecedented Event: Acknowledging Badiou's Challenge to Art and Its Education*. It is the nature of the event, as theorized by Badiou, that may, in fact resist the very notion of precedent, as the event is unique at each instantiation.

The effects of disruptive technologies upon political art precedents are discussed by Karen Keifer-Boyd, in *reStAGE: Activist Art/Disruptive Technologies*. This essay provides the reader with numerous contemporary examples of art activism, utilizing the hypertextual nature of the online journal format in an appropriate manner. This text, embedded with hyperlinks that provide

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/unprecedented>

additional information to the reader, represents a form of the disruption discussed by Keifer-Boyd, marking possibilities for scholarship in a networked age.

Ryan Patton presents *Obstructing the View: An Argument for the Use of Obstructions in Art Education Pedagogy*. This essay presents pedagogical notions that may be thought of as un-educational, as they introduce limitations into spaces that have often been constructed around notions of 'freedom,' 'expressivity,' and 'creativity.'

Strategies for indigenous artist led inquiry that break academic precedence are described in *Decolonizing Development through Indigenous Artist-Led Inquiry*. Written by Christine Ballengee-Morris, James Sanders, Debbie Smith-Shank, and Kryssi Staikidis, this collaborative piece fuses a wide-ranging analysis of ethnographic research strategies with autoethnographic writings, resulting in a rich (un)scholarly read.

Mary Stokrocki, with Bianne Castillo, Michael Delahunt, Laurie Eldridge, and Martin Koreck presents the reader with an analysis of the predominant visual culture of the Southwestern casino. *Casino Capers: Exploring the Aesthetics of Superfluidity* expands the notion of aesthetics as analyzed by Duncum, acknowledging the influence that spaces designed for rapid consumption have on our perception of how we view the world, each other, and ourselves.

Matthew Sutherlin and Amy Counts present an unprecedented scholarly mashup of Deleuzian philosophy and K-12 art education, in *'image'/'I'/'nation': A Cultural Mashup*. This essay explores the interstices between words, images and their cultural associations, describing the process of constructing national identity in the K-12 art classroom.

And, finally, the book review (*PR*)*Obama Art & Propaganda*, by Kathleen Keys, also builds upon typographical alterations that relate to the journal theme. Keys reviews four books that document the recent street art forms that promoted the 2004 presidential campaign of Barack Obama, which, in many ways also pushed for the un-presidenting of George W. Bush.

The second way in which this volume of JSTAE is unprecedented is that it is being presented in an online format, for the first time. The shift to an online format is one that many academic journals are currently undergoing, for a variety of reasons, some economic, some conceptual, and some political. The move to an online format for JSTAE represents a bit of each of these. This new format allows readers to access information free of charge; the philosophical underpinnings of the journal are in line with the open source movement in many ways; authors publishing in JSTAE agree to a Creative Commons contract which allows them the power to determine how the work can be reproduced.

Additionally, the online format allows for a variety of content to be embedded in the texts. Pieces like *reStAGE: Activist Art/Disruptive Technologies* make use of hypertext links, providing immediate access to references and artist projects. Other authors are able to link to video clips, as seen in *Decolonizing Development through Indigenous Artist-Led Inquiry*, and *'image'/'I'/'nation': A Cultural Mashup*. The possibilities for incorporating additional media will only increase as the journal develops its online presence.

Last, JSTAE Volume 30 is unprecedented because of the ability for you, the reader, to not only access information and media, but also to participate in the process of adding to the journal. You can, of course, submit manuscripts for the annual call for papers, posted at [www.bluedoublewide.cstae.com](http://www.bluedoublewide.cstae.com). You can volunteer to be a reviewer for JSTAE, posted on the

CSTAE site, under caucus bylaws. You will also post responses to the articles at the upcoming JSTAE blog site; follow links from the [jstae.bluedoublewide.com](http://jstae.bluedoublewide.com) site. It is in this way that the content of the journal is constantly updated, contested, and remixed, creating the unprecedented at every turn.