

The Journal of Social Theory
in Art Education

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The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education

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The *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* (JSTAE) is a publication of the *Caucus on Social Theory & Art Education* (CSTAE), an affiliate of the *National Art Education Association*. Its editorial policy is in compliance with the CSTAE's constitutional mandate:

to promote the use of theoretical concepts from the social sciences—which include, but are not limited to, anthropology, sociology, and political science—to study visual culture and the teaching of art; to inform art educators about theory and practice in the social sciences, thus acting as a liaison between social scientists and art educators; to encourage research into the social context of visual culture and teaching art; and to develop socially relevant programs for use in the teaching of art.

The editors invite formal and informal contributions on all matters relating to social theory in art education. Correspondences, book and exhibition reviews, and performance pieces are welcome. Original manuscripts, together with three copies should be prepared according to an internally consistent publication style. Membership is not a precondition for submittance. Deadline for submission for JSTAE No. 14 is April 15, 1994. Send relevant articles to:

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Contents

JSTAE Number 13 1993

Michael J. Emme Elizabeth Garber Charles Wieder	5	Editorial
Kristin G. Congdon	13	Art Teaching for Peace and Justice
Karen A. Hamblen	37	Developmental Models of Artistic Expression and Aesthetic Response: The Reproduction of Formal Schooling and Modernity
Charles Garoian	57	Linear Perspective and Montage: Two Dominating Paradigms in Art Education
jan jagodzinski	87	The War of Labels: An Art Educator in Search of a Sign

	113	Feminism and Censorship in Art Education: Four Perspectives
<i>Kirstie Lang</i>	116	Freedom of Speech and Censorship
<i>Gudrun Helgadóttir</i>	124	Feminism and Feminisms: The Prospect of Censorship
<i>Fiona Blaikie</i>	131	Visibility and Invisibility in Art and Craft
<i>Pamela Tarlow-Calder</i>	142	Censored by Omission: Imagery that is Excluded from the Art Education Classroom
Reviews and Responses		
<i>Tom Anderson</i>	157	Bowers' <i>Elements of a Post-Liberal Theory of Education</i>
<i>Susan Washam Witten</i>	162	Bersson's <i>Worlds of Art</i>
<i>Robert Bersson</i>	164	Bersson Responds
<i>Kristin G. Congdon</i>	167	Brown and Spitzer's <i>Public Folklore</i>

On The Cover: Darwin Perez (front cover, photographer unknown) and Sabrina Brown (back cover, photo by Marjorie Greathouse) Students at Howard Middle School in Orlando Florida with masks they produced in an after school arts program that blended the visual arts and drama. The program was lead by Steve Lotts and organized through the Community Arts Program of the University of Central Florida.

Editorial(s)

Michael J. Emme
Elizabeth Garber
Charles Wieder

When trying to express to students some of the challenges I experience when working with collage as an art form, I suggest that each element or bit torn out of a magazine has a voice. When you place two elements beside each other you have a potentially complex visual/cultural conversation. The collage projects I experienced (usually in an English class) in high school typically involved collecting dozens of marginally related images and pasting them on a single page. The processes involved were certainly a pleasant alternative to more routine activities, but the final product was always a frustration. I have since come to realize that what I had created in those first experiences with collage were the visual and narrative equivalent of a room full of people each talking at the top of their lungs with no one listening. Occasionally, mostly by chance, moments of coherent dialogue would rise above the din, but soon enough those little islands disappeared.

On many levels *JSTAE 13* is an attempt to build a meaningful collage. In replacing Harold Pearse as editor, the decision has been made to try a collaborative editorial model using an editorial team that includes Elizabeth Garber, Charles Wieder and me. Hence the editorial itself will be in three parts and three voices. The process of reviewing manuscripts has been shared among the three of us, with the result that all of the

work in *JSTAE 13* has been read by at least 5 or 6 people. Naturally we didn't always agree on the merits of particular submissions. Diversity involves constant negotiation and occasionally even real compromise. As the person who laid out the final publication and wrote the 75 or so letters involved in maintaining lines of communication, I have been given the top perch on the masthead this time, but our hope is to rotate that lead position through the team over the next several issues of *JSTAE*. Our further hope is that each member of the editorial team will have the time and opportunity to identify a theme for the issue where they lead the team. The theme for *JSTAE 14*, ECO • TECHNO, is spelled out briefly at the end of this editorial and represents an attempt to bring seemingly diverging voices and visions together.

Although *JSTAE 13* was not built around a theme, there are, nevertheless, some common threads running through the journal. The theme of diversity, and diverse understanding, represents the continuity between issues of *JSTAE*. Several of the articles in *JSTAE 13* represent that moment of shock we each experience when we hear a voice for the first time though it has been around us all along. In diverse ways each of the articles calls for an openness to reassessing our understanding of 'the obvious' that is the critical quality necessary to bring to our participation in institutions such as the artworld and education. While I will leave it to the rest of the editorial team to discuss the threads that they perceive in *JSTAE 13*, I hope that these collected efforts can represent several moments of communication rising above the din.

—M. E.

I joined the Caucus on Social Theory as a graduate student. Ken Marantz, one of my Ohio State mentors, had perceptively pointed out to me at some point that in any group, a person needed to focus on those individuals within the group whose activities and ideas were most exciting to her

or him (even if it's just fifty people, I remember his saying, fifty is enough). The Caucus sounded like a group of people I wanted to be involved with. It was and is. (The name of the organization—so often discussed a few years ago—worked on at least one of us.) The *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* was the *Bulletin*, in a spiral bound form but nevertheless noteworthy articles that I had to borrow from my professors since the library did not subscribe. To my thinking, this issue of the *Journal* continues those solid beginnings.

The articles that make up this issue are varied in both content and style. Content includes educating for peace and justice (Congdon), consumer culture (Jagodzinski), issues of censorship and feminism (Lang, Helgadottir, Blaikie, Tarlow-Calder), montage and linear perspective (Garoian), and developmental assumptions behind research in art education (Hamblen). As those readers who persevere will see, the styles range from personal to more academic. The variety is important to me (and, I think, to my editor-colleagues, Mike and Charles). It indicates the breadth of social theory and its relevance to the many voices and actions we take as art educators. It represents that there is, in our midst, a polyphony (a word I used in the title to my dissertation study on feminist art criticism; a word that I continue to want to use).

There is, in the breadth of current cultural studies (including feminism, poststructuralism, etc.), an ongoing distinction between social deconstruction and reconstruction, between analysis and the construction of change. Often, analysis and deconstruction are criticized for what they don't do—reconstruct. But these voices, of course, help us to "understand" (a dirty word in some circles) the "what" and the "why" (that sometimes includes "when" and "where") of reconstruction may turn in circles or race completely chaotically. The articles that comprise this issue of *JSTAE* can be understood along these "lines;" I find each article makes a contribution relevant

to social theory and change in art education at this moment in history.

Finally, on a personal note, I would heartily recommend our experiment in editing to any energetic souls who have inclinations to editorships. Of course, I have a thick folder of correspondence between the three of us (as main switching center, Mike's must take up a file drawer—thanks Mike, for your boundless energy, ever thoughtful responses, and good humor), but then we all have the benefits of prolonged exchanges (that eventually included reviewers' comments as well) on each article and the collaborative experience/product. In many cases I remember having an "ah-ha!" over some insight Mike or Charles made. The structure of collaboration encourages each of us, more than ever, to put aside our initial reactions and listen, reconsider, rethink, and stay open. In this world today, this is an important skill. So the journal you cradle in the palm of your hand is polyphonic and also, underlaid with poly-thinking and poly-listening. And to pick up on a note I dropped in the first paragraph, might we encourage you to suggest a subscription to your local library? Happy reading.

—E.G.

Editors are unavoidably critics, and literary critics at that (even when what they're editing is an academic journal). The work involves judging the significance and the pertinence of ideas, and how well formed and informed they are. This journal of the Social Theory (etc.) Caucus is itself largely about criticism, social criticism. So what sort of criticism is done by critics of social theory critiques?

In the case of *JSTAE*, one common approach to editing that's ruled out is the traditional presumption of authoritative connoisseurship. Our social theory roots preclude such pomposity. What editorial non-cansons, then, was our editorial process? Making our selections and going about the

business of editing? This, in fact, was the very concern raised at the outset of our work on *JSTAE* 13. Our long deliberated approach basically came down to this: a) to continue our dialogue, working closely with one another about our choices, our differences, and our editorial approaches, and b) to make every effort to work sympathetically with those writers on art education social theory who send their work our way, toward helping them develop their work on its own terms.

And that's what we did, rather diligently. As noted above by Emme, added to our editorial reading and writing chores was an awful lot of correspondence. Tiring though the work often was, no part of it was unfulfilling. In our three-way long-distance give-and-takes, whether over differences or re-evaluations of earlier discussions, if not always reaching consensus, connections were always made—as a sense of personal closeness developed. Even amidst scurrying about to send off materials or communiques that were almost always past due, space would be made for personal notes and expressions of concern. Shared beliefs as well as respected differences became the basis for personal attachments.

That feature of our editorial method—a commitment to communication and feeling of personal attachment—I would define as caring—caring about work, the people doing it, and the people the work is about. It is that quality of caring that I think distinguishes this journal, and the Caucus that gave birth to it. The questions we raise matter to us, as do our methods of inquiry. A sense of social import underlies our efforts. Research "findings" mean something—to be adopted or questioned or tested. In other words, the hypotheses in these pages aren't null. And because our questions aren't the easy ones and the methods rarely tried-and-tested, the writing and the dialogue were never dull.

Editing, consequently, was rarely a straightforward process. Even the simplest criticism requires interpretation. Inherent in what the Caucus is about calls for regular cross checking of one's methods, assumptions, and tolerance level. We called upon each other as translators of differing methods of inquiry that were unfamiliar to one of us. In one instance we might grapple to explicate a taken-for-granted assertion that sounded out of tune; in another case try to put an author's impatient tone into scholarly prose; or to find a way to underscore without overstatement a passionate plea for a radically different sort of educational approach. These weren't the simplest sort of translations.

What did we end up with for your study and critique? There is Hamblen's discussion of schooling as an agency for reproducing in unwitting students their caretakers allegiance to modernist formalism. The paper is not a prescription for appeasing your local school board or principal. There is Congdon's call for "teaching for peace and justice"—which is not the least bit like a lesson plan for decopaguing the door to your classroom. Nor is Jagodzinski's discussion of the untoward consequences of a hidden curriculum of pop culture imagery to be taken as a campaign guide for gaining two minutes more 2nd grade art every other week. Nor is Garoian's paper a high school project on linear perspective or montage. Nor is the series of feminist perspectives on censorship by Lang, Helgadottir, Blaikie, and Tarlow-Calder a recipe for quieting a squeaky artcart. Nor is there advice on how art teachers can join forces with the marching band to wow the PTA while at the same time raising test scores.

What these articles do take on is a very different order of business—namely, questioning the very subject matter of the arts, raising the most fundamental questions of meaning and methods of study—questions concerning who education is for and for what purposes. Like the artist stepping back from a

work in progress to see what needs refinement and what's better left alone, the authors of the pages that follow have taken pause to study what's not working in art education, or is working badly. It's not business-as-usual around here. If you'd rather not know what's wrong with how you were taught or are teaching, this is probably not the journal for you. But if you sometimes dare to ask why your teaching isn't working as you once hoped, or why the work has become less gratifying, you may well find some leads in the pages that follow. I have.

—C.G.W.

ECO • TECHNO

A CALL FOR IDEAS • A CALL FOR IDEAS • A CALL FOR IDEAS

The prefixes 'eco' and 'techno' are clearly linked to a whole series of oppositions such as romantic/classical; male/female; artistic/scientific; but these oppositions simplify complex relationships that have profound implications for social structure and through that for art and education.

JSTAE 14

(proposed publication date--Summer 1994)

will aim to function as a forum for both words and images exploring the problem of reconciling **ECO • TECHNO** in art and education.

MANUSCRIPTS • should be submitted following the guidelines listed at the front of JSTAE 13.

IMAGES • Working under the assumption that art can function as basic or applied research whose findings are visual, any visual works submitted will be adjudicated by a jury for their relevance to the theme **ECO • TECHNO**. Works by you, your students, or colleagues which are selected will be reproduced photographically and included as part of a gallery of images in JSTAE 14. Please submit reproductions in slide form. Make sure all works are clearly labelled and limit your submissions to 3-5 works.

All submissions should be sent to:
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Art and Teaching for Peace and Justice

Kristin G. Congdon

Abstract

The social goals of peace and justice are not removed from art processes and products, and especially not from curricula in art classrooms. In this article, six topic areas are suggested for the art educator which further the causes of peace and justice: 1) Appreciating diversity; 2) Understanding that art creates individual and group identity; 3) Encouraging collaboration in art processes; 4) Working respectfully with the earth's ecosystems; 5) Analyzing art which deals specifically with war and violence; and 6) Promoting peace and justice through art.