

De(Fence)

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Editorial

The idea of a moving and critical voice is a metaphor for the Caucus on Social Theory and Art Education (CSTAE) and the role that it has played for the members of the National Art Education Association (NAEA). The inception and founding of the Caucus by a small group of art educators sprang from the felt need to bring a critical social theory perspective to art and art education (cyberhouse.arted.psu.edu/cstae/25th-anniversary/CSTAE25history.htm). Over the course of my participation in NAEA for the past eight years, the annual conference meetings of the CSTAE have functioned as a site for contribution, dialogue, criticality, discussion, dissent, debate, deliberation, concurrence, and liberation. I believe the Caucus has been a safe haven for many of us, a resting ground where we feel we can be ourselves, both seen and heard, where our individual and collective voices have a chance to be justly represented. We often introduce *The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* (JSTAE) as the official journal of the CSTAE, which serves as an alternative voice for the field of art education through the promotion of scholarly research that addresses social theory, social issues, action, and transformation as well as creative methods of research and writing. Likewise, for the past three decades, the Caucus itself has served as an alternative voice for art education, promoting social theory, issues, action, and transformation. A heartfelt thank you to all CSTAE founding members and coordinators, journal editors, reviewers, and authors, working before and with us all of these years. Thank you for the traditions you have fostered and the legacy of the CSTAE that we inherit with you.

De(Fence)

As Caucus members, we traditionally develop an annual call for the *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education*. In the evolution of each call, the participants at the annual general business meeting generate ideas that reflect the time, the year, and the coming theme for the National Art Education Conference. Members gather for discourse on topics that emerge in a completely collaborative manner. Ideas are written down as they are raised, prompted by what those before have offered in conversation. In the generally cold and sterile rooms of conference centers and hotels, Caucus members have convened year after year, making the rooms warm with their commitment to social theory and critique, a collaborative spirit, and a priority to represent all voices. The evolution of a theme becomes somewhat of a call and response, a means to sift through multiple viewpoints and perspectives until the collective 'we' decides what most matters in art education at that particular moment in time. The theme for this issue, JSTAE Volume 32 **De(Fence)**, is no different. The year 2011-2012: economic stress; Wisconsin and the impending loss of unions and the negotiation process for teachers. People, especially art teachers, feel the crunch as jobs diminish across the nation. How to respond? And how to respond without augmenting a state of fear?

Ideas for themes that arose during our conversations at NAEA 2011 were varied: Appeasement Doesn't Work; Class; Negotiation; Marginalization; Research in the Service of Commerce; The Elements and Principles of Democratic Life; The Standards of Social Theory; Playing with the Gap Between Theory and Practice; Teacher: Endangered Species; Proof; How Will We Save Art Education?; Bargaining for the Collective; and De(Fence). One person commented that art education students were now being trained to defend themselves as part of their teacher education programs and actually felt compelled to do so. Another noted that student teachers back away from such engagement. Someone said that they felt that teachers were experiencing a full-on assault. Another suggested that we create a call to allow for these kinds of conversations, open-ended and provocative. Someone added that whatever the theme is, we should aim for cross-divisional work to try to serve K-12 teachers, promoting co-authorship and multi-authored pieces. The idea of building coalitions arose. It was proposed that the title of the theme should invite ambiguity and play. After much deliberation, we voted on the theme De (Fence) for Volume 32 of the JSTAE.

It is with this same collaborative spirit that we developed the call for this issue of the journal. Many discussions ensued between Editor and Associate Editor as we pursued agreement. We wanted to ask questions rather than make statements. We agreed that we wished people from all walks of art and education to feel welcome to respond. We also wanted those reading the call to feel free enough to respond unconstrained by our parameters. We included both questions and an accompanying poetic narrative, which we hoped would invite articles that reflected liberating possibilities for writing styles and thinking. Because many of the authors in JSTAE Volume 32 excerpted the call directly in their articles, I include the call here:

De(Fence)
 Defending
 Proclaiming
 Persisting
 Desisting
 Entering, Finding entryways

De(Fence)
 To take away fences, walls, imposed boundaries.
 To resist fences, borders, barriers, bulwarks.

De(Fence)
 Of schools, the arts.
 Convince. Equip by placating.
 Interject, interact, intersperse.
 Keeping visible; keeping important.
 Teach defense, teach offense, teach adaptation, rigidity, safety, teach policy.
 Collect, bargain, negotiate, persevere, explain, rationalize, give way, give away.
 Strengthen, collect, maintain, create, de (fence).

Are we separated? Do we separate?
 Must we defend, certify, specialize?
 As we create a defense, are we impacting pedagogy?

De(Fence)
 Pushing tradition.
 Complicity in little silos. The recourse?
 Fence, the noun.
 Fence, the verb.
 Defense. Being compelled to take a stance.
 Restriction. Restrictive. De-fence.

De(Fence)
 Can I resist fences, borders, barriers?
 Need I defend against the in/visibility of my discipline?
 How can I resist imposed boundaries that fence in the arts?
 Or impose a set of expectations, which dilute their singularity?
 Is de(fencing) the act of collecting, collaborating, strengthening, supporting, envisioning, protecting, liberating?

Call for Papers JSTAE Volume 32 Journal Theme: De(Fence)

In light of recent and dramatic changes in our local and global economies, policies and job markets, are we as artists/scholars/educators/arts advocates compelled to take a stance in defense of our fields, jobs, and personal politics?

Are we standing alone or do we feel alone in our positions or vulnerabilities?

Are we divided or fenced in/out from the possibility of sharing any collective efforts to realize a collective vision, and if so, what are the divides?

On the other hand, what are the challenges or benefits of creating, studying visual culture, or teaching art in this uncertain time?

Can we create, innovate, reshape spaces, opportunities or works that engage people or bring us/them from the margins to the center?

We hope that this collaboratively developed call for Volume 32 of *The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* will not inhibit potential contributors but will encourage submissions from any possible author, poet, artist, writer, researcher, teacher, whether in higher education, K-12, administration, policy, or general education. We include prompts and prose associations with the hope that contributors will address this call from a broad range of perspectives. For this reason the editors of JSTAE and membership of the CSTAE hope to inspire individual or collaborative responses related to the theme: **De(Fence)**.

The spirit of collaboration that is embodied by the Caucus seems to me to be the essence of what it means to De(Fence), to remove fences, to acknowledge difference, and difference's corresponding ideas. Thereby we create crossings, paths in, and dialogues. But not without thought, attention to justice, equality, rightness. In its truest sense, to defend means to include, rather than exclude; it means to protect, to represent the under-represented; to make visible that which has been kept invisible by a structure that seeks to homogenize and control. And so in the hope of de-fencing and defending with a rigorous collaborative spirit, we -- the editorial team, the reviewers, and authors -- have carried through with this volume.

JSTAE Volume 32: De(Fence)

In pondering the potential for multiple meanings of the JSTAE theme De(Fence), consensus does not seem necessary. The articles in Volume 32 represent a variety of ways to make sense of and understand the theme. Consistent throughout these interpretations is the critical and uplifting authors' voices informing each article in this issue. I have grouped the articles in what Eldridge terms a "collaged reflection" (p. 71), interpreting and loosely connecting their content.

Defend and De(Fence)

"Are we divided or fenced in/out from the possibility of sharing any collective efforts to realize a collective vision, and if so, what are the divides?"

"On the other hand, what are the challenges or benefits of creating, studying visual culture, or teaching art in this uncertain time?"

In "Defending and De-fencing: Approaches for Understanding the Social Functions of Public Monuments and Memorials," Melanie Buffington and Erin Waldner brilliantly interpret the theme De(Fence) in dual ways, examining both a traditional monument, the Lee Monument, that defends and idealizes the past by perpetuating the metanarrative that dominant culture ideology promotes, and *Shoes on the Danube Bank*, a monument that presents an underrepresented event and so becomes a counter narrative that functions as a "counter monument" (p. 10) that de-fences by questioning those same metanarratives. Interventions to monuments, like graffiti and yarn bombing, create multiple interpretations of historical 'truths': "In contrast to the Lee Monument that functions to control and limit interpretations, we think of de-fence as removing fences, taking away boundaries, and opening up monuments (and history) to multiple interpretations" (p. 8).

In his own way, Jan Jagodzinski both de(fences) and defends. Jagodzinski speaks to two problematics in "The Terror of Creativity: Art Education After Postmodernism," using as his vehicle, *Waiting for Superman*, the documentary film that lambasts public schools, teachers, and unions. The film serves as Jagodzinski's means to underscore the emergence of a 'creativity' he situates within the broader context of neoliberalism and designer capitalism, as well as the second problematic he defines, 'after postmodernism,' a state caught between the rejection of modern universalism and postmodern relativism. Jagodzinski de-fences our myopic vision, or deconstructs these two problematics for us, "terrorism [of creativity] and 'after postmodernism' [which] feed into one another in a continuous loop, what the social activist and journalist Naomi Klein (2008) has identified as one aspect of its repeating cycle: 'the shock doctrine,' where capitalism profits from disasters, both natural and (let's say it) man-made. The other aspect of this endless loop...is creativity as the appropriation of 'life'

itself by the industries of designer capitalism in their thirst for constant innovation to keep globalized capital in motion” (p. 17). In contrast, the author defends another side of art education that escapes the reins of utility by representing the fundamental antagonism between art and design. The ‘force’ of this other side can be affective, disruptive, rhizomatic, alternative – offering us ‘escape attempts’ and a commitment to resistance.

Defense

“Are we as artists/scholars, educators, arts advocates compelled to take a stance in defense of our fields, jobs, and personal politics?”

“Are we standing alone or do we feel alone in our positions or vulnerabilities?”

Ed Check courageously reflects upon his life and experiences as a gay artist, professor, and activist in West Texas, living in a part of the United States where gay is “wrong/strange.” Check uses autoethnography as a narrative method to describe and reflect on his experiences that become a testimony as he documents stories often untold. “In Fenced In/Out in West Texas: Notes on Defending My Queer Body,” Check writes, “It is important for me to tell some of my lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and queer (LGBTQ) fenced in/out stories. It is precisely these kinds of stories I search for from students, educators, and artists as I record my own and make art and writing about them. My internalized homophobia, fear of job loss, and demonization of my character are three of the many reasons I have chosen to remain silent at times and I assume why others follow a similar course of action” (p. 20). Check’s essay describes the historic complexities of living and practicing as an openly gay art education academic as he reflects upon ways he has experienced being fenced in and out professionally and personally. He also describes how he has defended himself by strategizing to create emotional and intellectual safety. He uses his own art making as a tool to break the silence and publicly honor his LGBTQ community. Through “defending his queer body,” he gives art teachers and students the opportunity to hear his story as he helps to counter cultural homophobia and violence and allows other gay students and teachers to know they do not stand alone: “Stories can assuage and possibly heal some of the brutality that occurs in schools. I offer this as one of many testimonies” (p. 19).

Like Jagodzinski, Nadin Kalin contends that knowledge production in education has been subsumed by market ideals associated with neoliberalism, thereby systematizing academic work into comparable predictable outcomes. She cites Aronowitz (2000) who posits that education is undergoing the institutionalization that redefines practices of teaching. In “(de)Fending Art Education Through the Pedagogical Turn,” Kalin advocates for the defense of education as art, a re-practiced form of critique, insisting that education be experienced as alternative cultural practices. Kalin proposes that the educational or pedagogical turn embraces a shift in artistic and curatorial practices: “As such, pedagogical practices as art practice or artist-driven education projects embrace self-education as they concurrently confront interrelations among education, institution, power, and market capitalism” (p. 43). Dematerialized mediums, lectures, talks, knowledge exchanges, classes, reading groups, educational projects “act as artwork” (p. 43). The author shares these ideas within the context of an art education graduate seminar through “(dis)organizing a course at the juncture of art and pedagogy” and permitting “the generation of alternative ways of knowing as well as the critical interrogation of norms and sites within the university” (p. 45).

Like Kalin, Melissa Crum also relies on critically looking, this time as a method to consider alternative ways of conceptualizing marginalized cultures and ethnicities in “Reasserting Humanity Through the Liberatory Gaze.” Such “liberatory practices work in defense of marginalized people by defending and proclaiming their humanity” (p. 57). Using Barthes’ 1977 theory of the photographic message, Crum uses alternative texts in unique ways to restructure art spaces, making interactions with images political acts. These acts then become “border crossing opportunities” (p. 57) for spectators to centralize those who have traditionally been made to stand on the periphery socially, politically, economically. In this article, the objectification of a Black female subject within a 19th century Brazilian photograph is deciphered through examination of the double meanings of photographs and text. Like Buffington and Waldner, Crum explores the notion of public “universal” signs, but in this case, from the perspectives of race and gender. Here, Barthes’ connotation procedures frame and question supposed universal understandings of Afro-Brazilians and other women of African descent. A bold reimagining of representation that asserts humanity unfolds. Crum defends the insertion of educators into the curriculum through their willingness to be self-reflective as they confront their own limited perspectives, so that they can “assist students’ in their border-crossing learning experience...with artists who vicariously take their observers on a journey of inquiry and social discomfort through visual and performative experiences...” (p. 65).

In an insightful piece called “A Collaged Reflection on My Art Teaching: A Visual Autoethnography,” Laurie Eldridge confronts the complexities of teaching art in a public elementary school as she deals with a high-stakes testing environment. “I write in *defense* of teaching that is based on social justice and visual culture theory. I take the theme of this issue, *de(fence)*, literally as a need to defend” (p. 70). Her collaged work of art prompts reflection on curriculum and teaching practice. Eldridge calls her writing a visual autoethnography. Like Check, she hopes that her work inspires other art educators to “find their own voices and provide their own addition to the creation of a rich, thick description of the professional lives of art educators as they increasingly have to *defend* even the basic need for art education in public schools” (p. 70). And like Buffington and Waldner, as well as Crum, Eldridge questions her public school’s dominant Western viewpoint as the unwritten but overt philosophy most often presented as neutral.

De(Fence)

“Can we create, innovate, reshape spaces, opportunities or works that engage people or bring us/them from the margins to the center?”

“Is de(fencing) the act of collecting, collaborating, strengthening, supporting, envisioning, protecting, liberating?”

Steve Ciampaglia bravely asks that art educators “assist students to de-fence the currently cordoned cultural commons. In order to do this, it is crucial to understand how American copyright laws have evolved and how they affect cultural production” (p. 83). In “De(fencing) the Cultural Commons Through a Deconstructive Media Art Curriculum,” Ciampaglia makes the case for providing students with the ability to “re-open” and deconstruct currently closed media texts by using the PC and other digital devices to reconstruct malleable parts of visual language into new texts. Such new texts, according to the author, have the “potential to transgress the cultural demarcation erected by big media’s successful lobbying of the US Senate for restrictive copyright legislation” (p. 83). Ciampaglia convinces us that PC and digital media technologies are potential tools of cultural, educational, and political

liberation. Art educators “can encourage their students to use these technologies to tear down the DMCA-erected fence that encloses the cultural commons and unlock the media texts entombed within” (p. 92).

In “Graffiti Walls: Migrant Students and the Art of Communicative Languages,” Fernando Rodríguez-Valls, Sandra Kofford, and Elena Morales use an interdisciplinary methodology with migrant high school students as they poignantly explore what they call an “intellectual commute” (p. 99) from text, oral, and written language to visual expressions – sketching, drawing, painting, spraying and tagging – and back to text. It is the authors’ conviction that the visual arts create communicative actions between teachers and students, so in this project the object was to create a common ground between migrant students and the teaching team who together analyzed poetry, short stories, movies, and graphic novels. Later, students created visual expressions reflective of their cultural identities. “Departmentalized education *fences* the voices of migrant students within the areas comprised of Language Arts curricula” (p. 97). Instead, authors suggest that de-fencing communicative action takes place when teachers and students listen and adopt each other’s languages, developing a common language without excluding each other’s perspectives, a process that involves constant dialogue, participatory pedagogy, communicating across difference, and a curriculum that de-fences.

In her analytical piece “‘Silencing’ the Powerful and ‘Giving’ Voice to the Disempowered: Ethical Considerations of a Dialogic Pedagogy,” Adetty Pérez Miles interrogates her own teaching practices by questioning the counter-hegemonic voices her curriculum embodies and its challenges to her students’ world-views. She asks, “Am I using dialogue as a rhetorical device to persuade?” Again, and like Kalin, Rodríguez-Valls, Kofford, & Morales, Pérez Miles explores the content of her curriculum by utilizing critique and dialogue as possibilities for de-fencing the limitations and function of dialogue and dialogism in pedagogy. She observes, “For me, authorizing student perspectives and decentering authority do not mean shying away from asking hard questions, analyzing controversial topics, or challenging social practices complicit with oppressive norms. In fact, doing so is necessary to stimulate learning environments that forge connections and relationships across difference in which multiple worldviews and differing perspectives are understood and valued” (p. 120). Pérez Mile’s headings intrigue: De(Fence): The Interjection of Poetic Language; De(fencing) the Hegemonic Common Sense: Agonistic Re-Workings; and De(fencing): Finding Entryways That (Re)Authorize Student Perspectives.

All of the articles in this section illustrate that when curriculum deconstructs, communicates student voice, and involves interdisciplinary and collaborative practices, it has the transformative power to de-fence, or blaze trails. Last in this section, “De(Fencing) with Youth: Moving from the Margins to the Center,” Ann Tobey and Kate Jellinghaus empathetically examine how the positive power of relationships serves to implement collaborative art projects to put teenagers at the center of the art making process. Tobey and Jellinghaus describe four projects that involve teenage youth, orphans in Bulgaria, quilters for earthquake survivors in Haiti, girls in a locked detention setting, and students in an urban high school. The authors examine the terms “ ‘margins’ and ‘center’ through the lens of interpersonal connectedness [leading] to the universal human experiences of being valued and belonging...These examples reveal that much of the leverage to create opportunities for De(fencing) lies in our relationships with one another, in the reciprocity that happens in the ‘spaces-in-between’ (Wilson-McKay, 2009)” (p. 129). Refreshingly the authors point out that if we wish to play a role in de(fencing) with youth, adults must act on

the belief that “teens have something to offer – that their ideas and voices have a place at the center” (p. 129).

Unfence

“Can I resist fences, borders, barriers?”

“How can I resist imposed boundaries that fence in the arts?”

In an engaging historical narrative, Clayton Funk traces the social and cultural traditions of American department store retail in the gilded age to new current forms of retail marketing. In his article, “The Gaze Across the Aisle: Architecture, Merchandising, and Social Roles at Marshall Field and Company, 1892 to 1914,” Funk examines Marshall Field and Company as a cultural and retail institution of artistry and popular education. What he terms “the drama of shopping” holds social and cultural implications connected to class, gender, and race. The departmentalization of merchandise according to expense and luxury literally sorted Field’s clientele according to their social status, establishing a metaphorical distance between those who longed for and those who had, contributing to what Funk terms “the gaze across the aisle.” Although Funk points out that today’s store patrons continually negotiate the fences of their identities and tastes within the material culture of merchandising, he also advocates for the removal of invisible fences as he examines the educational approach of department stores and the social consequences and contradictions in them. In this way, Funk resists imposed boundaries and places the department store in an educational context with schooling and museums. He notes, “Indeed, serious and open-minded attention to the fanciful drama of retail marketing would reveal relationships between retail marketing and shoppers’ perceptions that could expand the critical role of art education in research and practice” (p. 156).

Laura Reeder intelligently confronts either/or professional identities in art education in “Hyphenated Artists: A Body of Potential.” She states that multi-faceted personas are “unfenced” to “navigate spaces of artistic, educational, and cultural production without having to pause for identification at borders. In this form, pedagogies for inventive social change emerge. Dialogue among fields of artists and educators links either/or, artist/teacher qualities in holistic and interdisciplinary descriptions” (p. 160). Reeder observes that the hyphenated association has become shorthand for “both/and.” She suggests removing the hyphen from professional identities to erase the boundaries of what is artistic and what is educational by ushering in heterogeneous and supportable cultural identities. She addresses “third spaces” that defy definition and “form bodies of learning and potential” (p. 171).

Last, “Both/And: A Response to De(fence)/Defense” was accepted as a commentary by Jonathan Lee and Laurel Lampela that responds to the concept of division as reflected in the field of art education: “We see these divisions throughout, from the K-12 art teachers in the schools to those in higher education writing in journals, and we wonder how things might be different as we choose to focus our attention not on the fences but on the space both inside and out” (p. 177). Lee and Lampela propose a paradigmatic shift away from the dual mind to a non-dual awareness in art education and they examine how the waltz may be seen as a metaphor for non-dualism. Their definition of non-duality is associated with Eastern religions including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism. “In effect, we propose to honor the fences and what is beyond the fences and to respect both in an acknowledgment

of their inseparable and codependent relationship” (p. 177). The authors note that art can help to transition from dualistic thinking to non-dualistic thinking.

In closing, I want to thank Patty Bode for her leadership as the Coordinator of the CSTAE and her constant support in the reviewing and publishing processes of JSTAE Volume 32: De(Fence). I also want to thank the editorial review board, Bob Sweeny, Senior Editor, for all of his counsel, and Sharif Bey, Associate Editor, for his collaborative spirit, keen insight, and consistent support. I especially want to thank Kelly Gross, the editorial assistant who has worked very hard to see this issue through with me. Special thanks also to the diligent, smart review board whose names are listed on the journal website. And, of course, many thanks to the contributing authors, whose hard work and talent make this an outstanding issue. Finally, thanks to my institution Northern Illinois University for supporting my work as editor of this journal.

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