

Editorial: Fault Zones

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As an undergraduate student, I had a list of general education requirements I needed to fulfill and the one I dreaded was a lab science. I knew from high school experiences with large worms and frogs and that lingering smell of formaldehyde that I had no interest in taking a class that required me to dissect an animal. A few days before the start of class registration, the student newspaper published a list of the 10 easiest classes and one of those, known as Rocks for Jocks, was a lab science. A few friends mentioned they were going to take the class and thus, I signed up for a Geological Science class.

On the first day of class the professor's introduction surprised me. He knew the class was called Rocks for Jocks and he knew it was on the infamous list of easy classes. He also informed us that the Geology department did not appreciate making that list and took him off of teaching graduate classes intentionally to elevate the level of this general education undergraduate course. It was a sad realization for me that this class was not going to be a cakewalk.

However, over the next several weeks and months, I grew increasingly interested in geology and rock formations. The professor frequently utilized hyper-local examples including sites on campus and in the immediate surrounding area. He also organized a field trip that took us about 10 miles from campus where we stood by the side of

the road and analyzed the layers of the rock, observing the thickness of the various layers and the different pitch of the layers that was punctuated by striations and different angles in the layers of the rock.

This professor exemplified the power of a strong teacher, one who was passionate about the subject, built upon existing student knowledge, and pushed us to see some familiar things around us in new ways (Greene, 1971). He got me to care about a topic that did not interest me one iota before the semester began. That is part of what a good education can do, encourage students and help them build the tools so that they can empower themselves to see and understand their world, people, places, and ideas through different frameworks.

While not as dramatic as earthquakes or other geological shifts, this shift in perspective of teachers and students is central to making progress in education. However, when considering public education, holistically, in the United States, there have been some events that created significant shifts including the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision and the 1972 Title IX Education Amendment. These two events created greater, though certainly not equal access, to education throughout the United States. In 1983, the federal government published "A Nation at Risk" that questioned the quality of public schools (Kamernetz, 2018). This report and the consequent view of public schools as failing, promoting mediocrity, and posing a danger to the future of the country, has spread and is repeated in the current day. In recognizing the 35th anniversary of this report, Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, recently stated, "we are a nation still at risk" (Toth, 2018, para. 11).

To continue with the metaphor of this volume of JSTAE, Moving Fault Zones, and public education, we might consider subsequent legislation as forms of aftershocks following this pivotal report. Perhaps the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 and the Race to the Top legislation from 2009 are some of these aftershocks? The current moment

of promoting charter schools and using public funding for vouchers and other means of dismantling the public education system may be the next aftershock. What these types of events cause in the underlying structure of communities and public schools is not yet clear. The type of safety net that public schools and strong communities provide may be disappearing as proponents of school choice funnel money toward for-profit entities.

Throughout the articles in this volume of the *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education*, the authors explore various types of faults, interpreting the idea through different lenses including borders, weaving, breaking new ground, understanding geographic and political borders, among others. The articles are intentionally presented to alternate between those that are more focused on research and theory and those that are more focused on art and the interrelations between art, history, place, and ways of knowing.

Adetty Perez Miles considers faults as borders and relates ideas of moving between the Mexico/US border. Through a discussion of different contemporary artists and their interventions along the border, she highlights artistic practices that subvert and expand binary notions of place.

Through her two found poems, Mindi Rhoades explores original texts related to geology and earthquakes. By deliberately removing portions of the existing text, she creates altered meanings that emerge from the faults of the deleted text.

Mark Villalpando, a high school art teacher, explains how he worked within the upheaval of the Trump era to raise issues of bullying and LGBTQ+ acceptance with his students. Through discussions and their artmaking, students addressed complex issues of acceptance and bullying while exploring ideas of activism.

Corinne Peterken examines her own artistic practice as well as policy changes that affect early childhood education. Through her weaving and fiber arts, she utilizes poetic inquiry to understand the fault zones between what we know about how young children learn and what is currently being valued by standardized testing.

As she explores her work as a public arts commissioner, Yichien Cooper simultaneously shares her inner thoughts and reflections as well as addressing larger issues about public art. She builds this relationship between the science-focused past and present of her community as well as the hope for an arts-filled future.

Taylor Miller undertakes a photographic journey through the land in Israel and Palestine, noting elements that relate to the political fault zones there. Through her ruminations on the past and present, she explores how governments and people bring about rapid change.

Christen Garcia also uses a border as a metaphor for a fault, focusing on food traditions that flourish on the Mexico/US border. As she discusses various hybrid foods, she also unpacks the history and heritage of those foods and how they have been political tools that, at times, func-

tioned to “other” people and create a hierarchy.

The cover images and the images interspersed between some of the articles are by Clark Goldsberry. Through his artistic interpretations of different fault zones, he captures potential changes in a variety of ways. Through variations in color, scale, and types of faults, he depicts a range of ways changes occur.

Reflecting on articles that take such different forms and address varied content is challenging. However, the unifying thread that I see is the opportunity for change and potential growth. Though Moving Fault Zones can be destructive, they can also create new land that may have the potential for a different future. Thus, I encourage the readers of the *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* to consider areas in their practice where change may be coming and work to create a more positive and equitable future for art education.

References

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