

Editorial: Inclusion Invasion

Manisha Sharma
University of North Texas

Correspondence regarding this volume may be sent to the editor:
jstaeditor@gmail.com

The call for this issue of JSTAE was written in 2021, in the thick of the pandemic. In it I noted that at the time, we— artists and art educators— were participants and witness to debates around access and choice— and limitations thereof— in issues of immigration, vaccination, gender, and the relationship between economics and environment, and that the rising volume of voices around these issues are largely about systemic structures of immunity and empowerment.

The questions framed in the call for manuscripts, for this issue, were in the spirit of unpacking how social institutions and their framing is experienced and challenged by art educators. They sought to elicit inquiry on how art and museum educators wield social theory to examine the current moment, which, at the time of the call, was one of immobility and pause for the entire world. This moment of pause is also, hopefully, a moment of introspection and reflection.

The articles in this issue demonstrate intervention into habitual institutional practice as a strategy of insistent disruption into mirrored perceptions of inclusion and invasion. Interventions into curricular norms problematize them and seek alternative futures. They activate art and craft otherwise than how they are normally intended, in the interests of addressing varied iterations of inequity across social systems.

Read in connection to each other across the issue, these authors demonstrate how effective art education makes space for students, teachers, and general publics to critically examine the past, current, and future roles of art in our social lives through understanding how systemic patterns define these social lives.

The pandemic brought about unity in its experience of bewilderment, vulnerability, and immobility. With it came the potential of examining how we define inclusion, and how we approach tackling what we consider as invasive.

Acknowledging the janus-face of activism as invasive or inclusive enables a making of space for polarized

views within the same dialogue. This approach of intervention, as opposed to attack, on ideologies and belief systems is conducive for debate which is essential for a healthy democracy and empathetic humanity.

Caitlin Black writes a tribute to the **Monumental Impact** of the legacy of Dr. Melanie Buffington's work on confederate monuments in public spaces of the United States. She suggests how the Monument Lab and its field trip guide might engage audiences in empathetic dialogue about the presence and impact of monuments as public art. As such, Black proposes an act of activism around social and political statements of temporal immobility amidst spatial mobility. Her manuscript, written in an accessible rhetoric illustrates the enactment of theorizations of whiteness, institutional memory, and counter-memory in the maintenance of hegemonic systems referencing the American Civil War.

Jason Cox and Lynne Hamer, like Black, refer to colonial social structures still present in today's educational systems and evident in the absence of disconnect from urban-dwelling students' lived experience. Framing their work within postcolonial theories of deculturation, third space, and hybridity, they offer the strategy of reality pedagogy enacted through PhotoVoice methods in the Teach Toledo program for teacher education, in **Creating Commons: Photovoice Philosophy in a Third Space**. In this pedagogy, pre-service teachers re-examine their beliefs and purposes as art educators in context of the lived realities of urban-dwelling students.

In Pórtate bien con la maestra: How the Border Questions Quality in Art Education, **Heather Kaplan and Diane Golding** question philosophical assumptions of truth underpinning aesthetic and political value judgements while setting curricular goals and assessments in makerspaces. They challenge blanket definitions of progressive

education and 'quality' work in the case of a culturally hybrid location at the US-Mexico border where ideologies of quality and progressiveness are not always in harmony with each other. In examining specific cultural experiences and practices at this site, they draw our attention to dissonances in systemic decision-making in STEAM education. Set in theories of post and de-colonialism, the article challenges ideas of a master-narrative built upon ideas of contamination rather than multiplicity, and calls for an intervention to unsettle and trouble settler narratives amidst the traces and erasures of other presences.

Emily Hogrefe-Ribeiro points out how the apparently settled directions of current systemic thinking is leading to unsettling realizations about the precarity of our future. Engaging ten white participants in a zoom-based speculative futurism activity, Hogrefe-Ribeiro directs an interrogation of white privilege and hegemonic power through confrontation with Afrofuturist artistic visions and representations. The article presents a case to imagine the future of art education through alternative narratives and counter-discourses while examining our own complicity in maintaining supremacist systems through established norms of reading race through visual culture.

Jason Cox and Lillian Lewis offer a pedagogical strategy for art museum education in the form of immersive game-playing. In their article, they introduce *Mantles in the Museum*, a game that confronts student/ audience discomfort of being in the museum, by role-playing as art critic choosing from one of five frameworks through which to view and discuss artworks. In the form of the game-design and invocation of Rancière's ignorant schoolmaster concept, the authors address the separate nature of institutional portrayals of art from the socio-cultural beliefs of museum professionals. This immersive experience, they claim, disrupts not only visitors' notions of art criticism and museum education, but also perceptions of insider/outsider binaries in feeling

at home within museum spaces and arts discourses, by creating a temporary community of inquiry.

Carissa DiCindio and her graduate students also invoke Rancière's concept of the ignorant schoolmaster in an intervention into museum education practices in their co-authored essay. DiCindio et al, disrupt expectations of a dominant curatorial voice in the experience of an exhibition by staging an intervention that highlights sensory experiences for visitors, in keeping with the theme of the artworks. This intervention exemplifies a socially engaged experience that brings to light the expectations and cues of the museum as institution vis a vis experiences and expectations of museum visitors from diverse backgrounds and interests. Embedded in this experience is scrutiny around (1) the disruptive moment of covid-19 which created a level of inaccessibility for museum educators and audiences alike, and (2) the institutional rules of an art museum in allowing certain types of engagement and activities, given considerations of insurance and liability both of the space and the artworks.

Finally, **Dana Kletchka** references feminist writings on love, ethics, and moral responsibility to consider both the impacts of the covid-19 pandemic on museum educators, and the possible responses to adjust to these in compassionate and wholesomely humane ways. Kletchka proposes that in keeping with feminist framings of care as relational, the institution and its professionals consider work and service through an interconnected lens of well-being, where the health of one is treated as inseparable from the well-being of the other, including the quality of service it allows to be offered to the public.

This issue was considerably delayed due to pandemic conditions, as well as my personal challenges and life changes in the past year. I acknowledge and give gratitude for the patience and resilience of authors, reviewers, and Associate Editor Dr. Carissa DiCindio, in the publication of volume 42.