Another Acid Test

Michael J. Emme

That Merry Prankster of postmodernism, Jacques Derrida, introduced the mind altering drug of significant play into theoretical culture's discourse around meaning and text. Like his prankster' predecessors, Derrida's mindful but seemingly anarchistic intervention resulted in insight (into the complexity of text in culture) for some, and chaos (in the guise of abject deconstructive relativism) for others. What follows is a compilation of texts that is both mundane and complex.

The first text is the original call for submissions published and distributed by e-mail to the membership of the Caucus on Social Theory, an 'issue group' of the National Art Education Association, and, of course, the sponsor of the journal in which this article is published. Next is a modified call for submissions published in the NAEA newsletter, and finally there are 10 visual readings of those two written texts sent to me by teachers from across the United States. The original call for submissions was developed as a small project within the Caucus to try to both discover and support classroom teachers who are specifically engaging their students in social issues as an aspect of their
art education. It is significant to note that the version of the call published in the NAEA newsletter was, as far as I can tell, an editorial modification that was never approved by any member of the Caucus on Social Theory. So, some teachers saw the first call, some saw the second and some may have even seen both.

The various texts that follow combine together to create the raw data of a case study, or, perhaps a thematic anthology. Is the theme social issues as curriculum? communication? art education? the classroom? art teachers? organizational politics? corporate image? The last twitches of a left wing organization that has lost its vision?

Each contribution directly or indirectly constitutes a different take on the significance of the original text as well as an implied reading (or non-reading) of the meaning of "The Caucus of Social Theory in Art Education." The differences between the various readings make it unnecessary (and dangerous/impossible) for me to impose any further 'meta-reading' on what follows.

Whichever ad motivated them to get involved, thanks to the teachers who sent postcards!

Whichever 'Merry Prankster' is your muse, enjoy playing with the convergences and contradictions.

Postcards With an Edge

"You're such an Activist! That's too political! That's not art; it isn't beautiful! You aren't going to win art competitions with that work! Images do shape perspectives and express beliefs, but we need to prepare students to earn Advanced Placement!"

If this sounds familiar consider sending a postcard describing/showing your classroom/community practice as an art educator to:

Postcards With an Edge
Mike Emme
10807 54th Ave. NW
Edmonton, AB T6H 0T8
Canada

These postcards will be:
Reproduced (as many as will fit) as an activist art teacher's resource in the next volume of The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education,

Exhibited at several Universities in the US and Canada,
Displayed at the NAEA National Conference in New York,

Published on the Caucus for Social Theory in Art Education Website.

All contributors will receive digital copies of all of the contributions to this project.

Specs: Illustrate on one side with images/text and handset on the other, like "real" postcards (use postcard size 4" x 6"). DEADLINE: Oct. 1, 2000.

1 Generational note: The Merry Pranksters were a band of clown/activists who converged in the early 60's and were led by Ken Kesey, author of -among other things- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1962). The pranksters introduced music, art, poetry and LSD (in what were sometimes called 'electric koolaid acid tests') to people across the United States in an effort to expose alternative meanings to the text, "American Society."

Send Postcards of Your Work

The Caucus for Social Theory in Art Education, an issues groups of NAEA, is seeking postcards from art teachers showing examples of their classroom/community practice as art educators. The postcards will be displayed at the NAEA conference in NYC, published on the CSTAE website, and published in The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education.

Specs: Illustrate on one side with images/text and handprint on the other. Use "real" postcard size (4"x6").

DEADLINE: October 1, 2000. Send to: Mike Emme, 10807 54th Ave. NW, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 0T8, CANADA

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An A List for An Art Educator

As an art educator at a university, I strive to remain active in many communities—town, school, art, and all that comes intersects my way. I view myself as an avid facilitator—one that constantly promotes active collaboration and critical analysis. In the photo, art students age 4-6 are displaying their ecological expressions as the graduate students simply admire. We spent a week as researchers, studying the effect of deforestation to all kind. Activists! Artists! Art Educators! All humans! All of us learned with and from each other and that is how my art room, art community, art education society functions. I advocate community needs assessment and action for reformation for a better place for all.

Christine Ballengee Morris

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Dear Mr. Emme,

One of my students designed this iguana. A student in the metal shop helped construct it. Now it graces a lamp pole in the courtyard entrance of our school. I use the postcards for "art" communications and thank you note. The student also receives cards to show off his work.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Mike Emme

10807 54th Ave. NW

Edmonton, Alberta

T6H0T8

CANADA

[Postmark: Canada Post]
A district-wide project from the Clayton School District

Clayton, Missouri 63105

Submitted from:
Margaret Reino
NAEA WR. V.P
Art Teacher
Meramec School
Maggie Reino

STUDENT'S CHAIRMANIA 9/27/2000

Students devised methods of creating their own miniatures chairs using toothpicks, tooth brushes, sculptyl III, jewelry pieces, match sticks, etc. Some 80 pieces were constructed varying in size for 2 x 3 x 2" to 7 1/4" x 8" x 6." Two were selected for the student section of the Philadelphia Furniture & Furnishing Show in May 2000.

Regards, Barbara Cherlic
60 Highstown High 60 Leshin Lane
Highstown, NJ 08520

Mike Emme 10807 54th Ave.
NW, Edmonton
Alberta T6H 0T8

CANADA

08520 08520
**Beautify Brentwood**  
**Community Paint-Fest**  
**Saturday, March 4, 2000**

15 teams of student artists decorated new trash cans with lively, imaginative, colorful, appealing creations at the first ever Beautify Brentwood community paint-fest. Art supplies & lunch were provided by the city of Brentwood. Artistically decorated trash cans now brighten the streets of our community.

Lois Rufer, Art Instructor  
Brentwood School District  
#90 Yorkshire Lane  
Brentwood, Mo. 63144

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**Hope House**

*a collaborative arts installation between*
Sanford Sculpture Students  
The Residents of Hope House  
The Garden at Hope House  
111 North Jackson Street  
Wilmington, Delaware

**THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

Lisa Ashley  
Andy Eaton  
Danby Lumber and millwork Co.  
John DiGiovanni  
Gateway Nurseries  
Michael Humphreys  
Handle Bar Landscaping

MBNA America  
Mr. Mulch  
Sanford Art Department  
Sanford Second Grade  
Walkers Greenhouse
Reversed Painting *Grade 5 - adult
Displayed at the Rainforest Cafe/MGM Grand Hotel
Las Vegas, NV

Materials: recycled laminated plastic (or glass), permanent ink pen, acrylic paints, colored construction paper, drawings by student (pencil or white paper)Follows inside Rainforest animals.
1. Students draw an animal.
2. Place the drawing under the plastic, tape in permanent pen.
3. Paint animal in acrylics.
4. Select color construction paper for background.
5. Frame & display.

Art Teacher:
Sandra Zinkevich
Debbie E.S.
1900 S. Lisa Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89117
(smzink@aoa.com)

Bob Lloyd

**Railroad Avenue,** 28" x 34" Photo Credit: D. James Dee

August 5, 2000

Dear Mike,

In response to your "Send Postcards" of work in community practice, please find enclosed several cards.

I am now a retired art educator.

Good luck,

Bob Lloyd
Thanks to the following:

Christine Ballengee Morris of Newark Ohio and her students;
Dan Brown of Okanagan Washington, and his students;
Dennis Fehr of Lubbock Texas and his students;
Barbara Churilla of Hightstown, New Jersey and her students;
Bob Lloyd of Brooklyn, New York, a retired but active art teacher;
Betty O'Regan of Hockessin, Delaware and her students;
Maggie Peeno of Clayton, Missouri and her students;
Kathe Rice Stanley of Rock Hill, South Carolina and her students;
Lois Rufer of Brentwood Missouri, and her students;

and

Sandra Zinkevich of Las, Vegas Nevada and her students.