

JOURNAL OF SOCIAL THEORY IN ART EDUCATION – JSTAE

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CALL FOR PAPERS FOR VOL 40

Journal Theme: *Precarity*

DEADLINE: November 30, 2019

Precarity is a systemic and a subjective condition. It can refer to insecure employment or income often associated with market volatility and labor contingency. Precarity may generate fear through uncertainty, insecurity, unpredictability, instability, and risk. Precarity operates between, among, and inside of living forms, to reveal power relations and systems of dependence.

Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2015) asks, what if “precarity *is* the condition of our time?” and “what if our time is ripe for sensing precarity?” (p. 20). Tsing defines precarity as the condition of being vulnerable to others and she argues that thinking through precarity changes social analysis. Tsing further explains that, “precarity is a state of acknowledgement of our vulnerability to others. In order to survive, we need help, and help is always the service of another, with or without intent” (p. 29). How might the vital potential of precarity that operates on the human and ecological registers invite a lens onto the ways that fear and precarity might be expressed in art education?

Precarity can refer to the subjective condition of those who experience insecure desires and social precarity can be internalized as anxiety, fear, and depression. Lauren Berlant’s (2011) notion of *cruel optimism* explores the agency of precarity, where misguided fantasies of the good life and a belief in reciprocal contingency generate habitual affective responses amid conditions of cruelty. Drawing from “Giorgio Agamben’s analysis of the class related production of characteristic gestures that the cinema collects as they become archaic,” (p. 7) Berlant tracks a history of genres, narratives, and tropes to invite us to think about “the present as a process of emergence” (p. 7) and notes that precarity is no longer delegated to the marginalized. She seeks

“to construct a mode of analysis of the historical present that moves us away from the dialectic of structure (what is systemic in the reproduction of the world), agency (what people do in everyday life), and the traumatic event of their disruption, and toward explaining crisis-shaped subjectivity amid the ongoingness of adjudication, adaptation, and improvisation” (p. 54).

How might such a mode of analysis play out in the field of art education?

Erin Manning (2016) also examines the activation of precarity, in particular how precarity materializes and expresses itself in conditions like depression. Rather than identify depression in terms of a psychological disorder petrified by anxiety, Manning views depression as an affective force and vital energy that might be redirected and collectivized otherwise through an emergent ecology of enthusiasm. She focuses not on the failings of precarity but what such neurodiversities can do and the collective contexts in which such precarities arise. How might art education negotiate or create new energies in facing a future-yet-to-come, a world-yet-to-come?

Berlant, Manning, and Tsing invite a view of the generative and affective force of precarity. How can we situate these questions in relation to feelings anxiety, insecurity, and fear that are so pervasive in art education? As art educators, we exist in a precarious position within educational institutions with pervasive concerns about job security and lack of appreciation rooted in market-based values. If precarity is rooted in vulnerability, what does it mean to be vulnerable? What might be thought, done, felt, sensed, within our field in terms of precarity as a form or concept? How does precarity relate to social theories within art education?

References:

- Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel optimism*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
Manning, E. (2016). *The minor gesture*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
Tsing, A. L. (2015). *The mushroom at the end of the world on the possibility of life in capitalistic ruins*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

With this call, we are soliciting papers that respond to the provocations incited by the theme *Precarity* in relation to the field of art education. The editors of Volume 40 encourage authors to play with the theme further when looking at the multiple uses and meanings of precarity or its theoretical potentials.

In addition to the aforementioned concepts, authors may consider, but are not limited to the following lines of investigation:

- Precarity within feminist discourses
- Precarity within transgender studies
- Precarious practices and procedures of pedagogy
- Precarity within queer theory
- Ecological precarities related to discourses within art education
- Economic precarities related to art education
- Institutional precarities of art education
- Precarious methodologies relative to the field of art education
- Precarities of human and non-human interactions relative to education of art

We welcome multiple interpretations of the theme *Precarity*, Volume 40:

The editors of JSTAE and members of the Caucus of Social Theory in Art Education (CSTAE)* invite individual and collaborative responses related to the theme *Precarity*. We encourage submissions from authors, poets, artists, writers, researchers, art teachers, general educators, administrators, museum educators, and others with an interest in the theme. We seek contributors who will address this call from a broad range of perspectives, including NAEA members of all divisions and regions and non-NAEA members.

All authors should explicitly address the theme as well as some form of critical social theory in their paper or artwork including, but not limited to: feminism/gender studies, curriculum theory, critical race theory, post-colonial theory, postmodernism, queer theory/sexuality studies, posthuman discourses, disability studies, contemporary animal studies, Red pedagogy, decolonizing methodologies, critical studies of social class, material studies, and media theories.

For this issue, we seek two different types and lengths of articles, plus submissions of artworks that rethink or remake notions of precarity in conceptual or theoretical ways.

We solicit traditional journal articles (3,500-5,000 words) that utilize a variety of research methodologies or other scholarship to address the theme. We are especially interested in articles written by teachers and we are interested in submissions that incorporate visual images, audio, or video by all types of art education scholars.

We solicit short articles (about 1,500 words) that emphasize artistic responses to notions of precarity as described above. These could take the form of photo essays that utilize non-traditional formats of images and text.

We solicit high quality images of an artwork or the documentation of an artwork. These should have a short abstract that will act as an artistic statement. Details about the work should also be shared, such as date completed, dimensions if applicable, location of work if site specific, and media of the original work as appropriate.

All submissions must carefully follow the style conventions of the American Psychological Association's Publication Manual (6th edition). Authors planning a non-traditional format are encouraged to consult the editors before submitting their piece.

The submission and review processes are fully online and can be accessed starting August 15, 2019 at <http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/jstae/>

Submissions are due online by November 30, 2019.

The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education (JSTAE) is the official journal of the CSTAE. JSTAE 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.

Please direct any questions to Daniel T. Barney, JSTAE Editor 2019-2021, at jstaeeditor@gmail.com.

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*The Caucus of Social Theory in Art Education (CSTAE) <http://cstae.org> is an Issues Group of the National Art Education Association (NAEA) <http://arteducators.org>