

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

A Special Theme Issue of *Studies in Art Education*

STUDIES
in ART Education

exploring the discourse and actions of decolonizing
research practices in art education



*Melanie Yazzie (Diné), *Counting*

Monotype, 2014, 12" x 15"

Walter Mignolo introduces his book, *The Politics of Decolonial Investigations* (2021), by stating that the book “aims at healing colonial wounds and shrinking the wide spectrum of Western overconfidence to its own size. Colonial wounds are inflicted in all areas of lived experience, human and nonhuman, physical and mental, by the recursive enactment of the ‘arrogance of power (p. 3).’”

In speaking of the purposes of his work, Mignolo continues, “these investigations shall contribute to rebuilding and reenacting our parameters of knowing and sensing and to the restitution of our love and mutual respect; it aims to restore the communal, encompassing the relationality of the human species with/in all the living universe, which has been destituted by the social, severing the human species from the cosmic planetary energy and the will to live for far too long” (p. 3). It is with Mignolo’s spirit to decolonize all aspects of being in the academy, in art education and beyond, our colonial practices in research, pedagogy, artistry, the ways we approach learning, and the ways we communicate our learning—the forms that shape both our thinking and writing—that I write this special theme issue call for *Studies in Art Education*: **exploring the discourse and actions of decolonizing research practices in art education.**¹ I encourage authors to submit manuscripts as a means to pursue change and reflect upon transformations made possible by decolonizing discourse and actions in art education. This call requests that our field asks: How might we approach decolonizing the embedded coloniality of contemporary practices in artistry, pedagogy, research, forms of writing, the language we use, and in our ways of thinking, feeling, and knowing?

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Maori) observes that “decolonizing methodologies are about forcing us to confront the Western academic canon in its entirety . . . and the stories it tells to reinforce its hegemony” (p. xii). She adds that decolonizing methodologies necessitate that we decolonize “our minds, our discourses, our practices, and our institutions” (2021, p. xiii). Such approaches might question and disrupt the taken-for-granted assumptions that accompany coloniality, and which engender Eurocentric hierarchies or metanarratives rooted in White supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity, that generate mistrust, racism, ableism, and the exclusion of multiple truths. How can we attempt to do decolonizing work that Mignolo (2021) describes as both restorative and relational, while calling out the inequity that coloniality inherently embodies?

Submission deadline:
April 1, 2024

Publication date:
May 2025

How to submit:

All submissions for this special issue should follow the established submission guidelines for *Studies in Art Education* on Taylor & Francis’s website located at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/usae20> (Click on the link “Instructions for Authors.”)

Word count:

Approximately 6,000 words.
Include an abstract of 75–150 words.

Please send specific questions to kstaikidis@niu.edu

All manuscripts undergo a masked review by selected members of the *Studies* editorial board.

In the “Reflections” section of her third edition of *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2021), when reflecting about the 2 decades between her first and third editions, Tuhiwai Smith notes,

The message of decolonization issuing from many writers in the field is that the process of decolonizing can be extremely “messy”... The intellectual project of decolonizing has to set out ways to proceed through a colonizing world. It needs radical compassion that reaches out, that seeks collaboration, and that is open to possibilities that can only be imagined as other things fall into place. *Decolonizing Methodologies* is not a method for revolution in a political sense but provokes some revolutionary thinking about the roles that knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge hierarchies, and knowledge institutions play in decolonization and social transformation.

While I did not write explicitly for non-Indigenous academic audiences, the book has been reviewed extensively by diverse disciplines, is used widely as a text in academic programmes and has helped galvanize some research groups into new projects, new collaborations, and new relationships. The book has somehow reached and touched a hugely diverse range of scholars, from different disciplines and linguistic contexts. It has been a catalyst for re-examining curricula, for revising some professional and ethical standards, and for capacity building, and community empowerment projects. (pp. 288–289)

How might we as artists, art educators, and researchers practice relational and decolonizing forms of research and collaborative writing? How can we catalyze an expansion in our awareness as human beings? How might we apply *Decolonizing Methodologies* (Tuhiwai Smith, 2021) to integrate honoring protocols (Eldridge, 2008; Ballengee Morris & Staikidis, 2017) for our research and teaching?

This special issue call comes at an important time. There is a felt need for decolonial action in research language, research form, and research philosophy in the art education field expressed by those who serve in leadership positions for the National Art Education Association (NAEA). In November of 2022, Bob Sweeny (acting senior editor of *Studies in Art Education*) coauthored an editorial, “. . . A Journal of Issues and Research,” in *Studies* Volume 63, Issue 4 with NAEA President Wanda B. Knight, NAEA ED&I Commission Past Chair Browning Neddeau, and NAEA Research Commission Chair Amy Pfeiler-Wunder. In the editorial, Knight wrote about the need for criticality related to language used in research published in *Studies*; Neddeau suggested storytelling as research and questioned how *Studies* could better support decolonized forms of research requesting us to think about the ways we can truly celebrate diversity of thought by including underrepresented community voices; and Pfeiler-Wunder asked that we conduct and communicate research distinctly by using a network model to describe interconnected possibilities of such research collaborations and publications (Sweeny et al., 2022). Speaking of care, Pfeiler-Wunder asked,

How does the journal become a steward of new lines of inquiry? Stewardship involves care, care over time, care for others. As journals are situated in power dynamics by nature of living within institutions, pausing to consider the questions that are emerging. . . which [might] disrupt what has become comfortable and known are the very questions individuals, as stewards of research, need to pose. (Sweeny et al., 2022, p. 292)

Taking into consideration the notion of the decolonial as care over time, which might help to reenact a restitution and restoration of mutual respect (Mignolo, 2021), authors may want to consider some of the following questions as they draft potential submissions:

Decolonial Investigations (Mignolo, 2021)

- How can decolonial investigations shift the inherent power dynamic of researcher and participants?
- How might researchers attempt to cede the traditional ethnographic authority of the colonizing stance into a transformative relationship that includes participants as partners or mentors?
- How can art education researchers further consider decolonizing approaches connected to the ethics of representation, issues of true reciprocity for participants, and a methodology based on equity?
- Eurocentric paradigms pervade research in art education. How do we challenge epistemological bias in research by interrogating our research design, data collection, analyses, and interpretation of research results based on our positionality? (Knight, in Sweeny et al., 2022).
- In what ways can we urge ourselves to “reexamine oppressive structures and styles so we can truly celebrate the diversity of thought, allowing people to tell their research stories without placing people as objects?” How can we include underrepresented community voices and encourage writing research from within communities? (Neddeau, in Sweeny et al., 2022, p. 291).
- How can art education research both enact and represent the relational in research?
- What kind of relational and oral-based knowledges might scholars share who are writing research in their own communities?

Examining Positionalities

- How can we unpack our viewpoints based on unique life experiences that shape our perspectives and influence our research? How do we encourage “pluralistic perspectives to decenter implicit Eurocentric, universalistic, pseudoneutral perspectives and notions by including the cultural standpoints of those who experience the consequences of unequal power relations within dominant cultures?” (Knight, in Sweeny et al., 2022, p. 290).
- How might researchers collaborate with participants, both in the field, and in the writing up of the research? How can more nuanced dialogic research protocols inform theories of collaboration more generally? (Lassiter, 2020).
- How do art educators work with communities in research to ensure that reciprocity and benefit based on participant and community needs (as told to them by participants) become a major focus of the research? (Tuhiwai Smith, 2021).
- “Working with” is distinct from “studying about.” How might critiques of distancing and its embeddedness in colonial philosophies and practices support alternative collaborative research approaches? (Lassiter, 2020).

- Examples of researchers abound who pull away from close field-based relationships to then research and write their articles or books, distancing themselves from those close friendships as they develop their expertise to “speak for” the artists or other experts from whom they’ve learned. The tradition of engaging in this distancing process remains strong (for building one’s own expertise or career, for instance). How might art educators examine such distancing that resides in colonial philosophies and practices? (Lassiter, 2020, p. xvi).
- There are multiple complications in representing others. How can recognition of the complexities of the research process at all levels, in the field, and after, generate an ethical evolution in the art education field?
- How might we change writing forms to include oral histories, storytelling, narrative, verse, or inquiries that predominantly use image and video as essay?
- What are the ways ethical self-questioning enables decolonial thinking in research practice?
- How can decolonial research practices help to examine our art education curricula and pedagogies in preK–12 classrooms and museums? How does decolonial research enable the creation of classrooms that bespeak belonging, including the races, cultures, genders, abilities of all students to write back (Ngúgi waThiong’o, 1981) against the colonialism that permeates our institutions?

Decolonizing Practices

- How do art education researchers frame concepts of “decolonizing” or “decolonial” in research as active and ongoing?
- How might we change the language used in published research studies to better reflect decolonizing egalitarian and collaborative practices? (Knight, in Sweeny et al., 2022).

The senior editor of *Studies in Art Education* invites manuscripts that address this special issue theme: **exploring the discourse and actions of decolonizing research practices in art education**. Submissions are due April 1, 2024. All submissions for this special issue should follow the established submission guidelines for the journal.

References

- Ballengee Morris, C., & Staikidis, K. (2017). *Transforming our practices: Indigenous art, pedagogies, and philosophies*. National Art Education Association.
- Eldridge, L. (2008). Indigenous Research Methodologies in art education. *Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education*, 26, 40–50.
- Lassiter, L. E. (2020). Foreword. In K. Staikidis, *Artistic mentoring as a decolonizing methodology: An evolving collaborative painting ethnography with Maya artists Pedro Rafael González Chavajay and Paula Nicho Cúmez* (pp. xiv–xvii). Brill | Sense.
- Mignolo, W. D. (2021). *The politics of decolonial investigations*. Duke University Press.
- Ngúgi wa Thiong’o. (1981). *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature*. James Currey.
- Rios, G. (2022, June 30). *Indigenous people protest silently with “lowercase” movement*. CityNews (Calgary, Alberta). <https://calgary.citynews.ca/2022/06/30/lowercase-movement-indigenous-protest/#:~:text=People%20taking%20part%20in%the,country%20and%20the%20United%20States>
- Sweeny, R. W., Knight, W. B., Neddeau, B., & Pfeiler-Wunder, A. (2022). ... A journal of issues and research [Editorial]. *Studies in Art Education*, 63(4), 289–295.
- Tuhiwai Smith, L. (2021). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples* (3rd ed.). Zed Books.

Endnote

¹“As the country continues to grapple with the dark history of Canadian residential schools, many are turning to the ‘lowercase’ movement to bring awareness to the treatment of Indigenous people... It’s a silent protest that is being practiced throughout the country and the United States. Michelle Robinson, Indigenous activist, explains the importance of the movement, she says it’s a form of decolonization, after Indigenous peoples were stripped of their traditions, language, and culture... She adds the movement opens the door for hard conversations that Canadians must face. Robinson says with the discovery of more than 4,000 unmarked graves on the grounds of residential schools and churches across Canada since last year... ‘We have plain racism in sight of everybody, and people don’t see it’... ‘Worse, they stand with their hand over their heart and sing for that oppressive racism’... Robinson says Canada needs sweeping reform to its justice and education systems to even begin discussions about true and meaningful reconciliation. She adds participating in the ‘lowercase’ movement is the easiest, most peaceful way to show support for Indigenous people in Canada” (Rios, 2022, paras. 1–9).

*Special Theme Issue Image

Melanie Yazzie (Diné), *Counting*, 2014, monotype, 12”x15”

Artist’s Statement: This monoprint represents my journey living with type 2 diabetes. This disease runs in my family on my father’s side, and many have died from it. When signs of it first began, I had to monitor my blood sugar levels daily (and still do). Once my numbers came into a “good” range, I began to use those numbers in my work to honor them. The recurring waterway or pathway in the image speaks about rivers, paths, and highways; it also represents the internal system of food passing through me, feeding my soul and keeping me in balance.

Having regular energy with my disease is important. I try to live being good to myself, which is not easy since this difficult disease comes with so much baggage. Other images in my work connect to my personal history.

The comb-like image is a tool my grandmother used in weaving. It had one side, but as she worked, to my young eyes, it appeared to have teeth on both sides. Many of my works are inspired by abstract, dream-like childhood memories, each with their own shapes. Often the movement of things in a dream does not quite translate to the literal meaning of an object, but in my mind, my creation holds its essence.

(Image was also featured on the cover of *Transforming Our Practices: Indigenous Art, Pedagogies, and Philosophies* (2017) by Christine Ballengee Morris and Kryssi Staikidis.)