

Global Studies of Childhood

Special Issue: Children's Art in Times of Crisis

Editors: Monica Eileen Patterson (Carleton University) and Hannah Dyer (Brock University)

This special issue of *Global Studies of Childhood* focuses on children's art and its relation to social crises. Child Studies scholars, psychologists, educators, clinicians, and curators have long held that making art helps children process and socialize difficult experience. This special issue explores the affective, aesthetic, emotional, social, and political processes involved in the making and sharing of art, placing emphasis on the potential for art to offer insight into the circumstances, consequences, and urgencies of crisis. We aim to bring together articles that address children's use of art to process, symbolize, and communicate their experiences and histories of migration, war, surveillance, social crises, political turmoil, and survival. David Marshall has written extensively about the relationship between trauma, aesthetic expression, and politics in Palestine. For Ruth Nicole Brown, "the desire to play with movement, sound, images, and words against the assumable or knowable figure of the Black girl is very much a part of her creative process".¹ Glynis Clacherty and Diane Welvering's "The Suitcase Project" has used art therapy and storytelling to offer psychosocial support to refugee children in South Africa. In *Lives Turned Upside Down: Homeless Children in Their Own Words and Photographs*, Jim Hubbard archives images made by children ages nine to twelve, that reflect their experiences with homelessness and life in shelters. Taken together, this body of work demonstrates the power of arts-based approaches to working with children. Children's art has been mobilized by a range of actors as testimony to racism, war, apartheid, abuse, resilience, and optimism, and when taken seriously, raises inquiry into its meaning, narrative, and interpretation.

We aim to solicit an interdisciplinary collection of articles produced from a range of fields that share an investment in bridging child studies, art/aesthetics, politics, and pedagogy. Children's art harnesses considerable affective power and as a result is and has been historically mobilized and reproduced by non-profit and political organizations for fundraising purposes, PR maneuvers, and neo-liberal campaigns. Its affective capacities, though, can also galvanize its audiences towards new ethical feelings about and responses to injustice. In asking how making, curating, and witnessing children's art helps to register children's agency, we seek articles that open up new lines of inquiry for child studies. Because, as Robin Bernstein, Julian Gill-Peterson, Erica Meiners, Rebekah Sheldon, and Kathryn Bond Stockton have rightly shown, discourses of innocence can impact children's subject formation, making art can remind others of their complexity. The editors encourage the submission of work that engages childhood in relation to race, citizenship, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class.

Keywords and key topics:

Trauma and memory

Aesthetic expression

Drawing, sculpture, painting, comics, crafts, photography
Bio-politics and war; carceral states and surveillance
Colonialism, genocide, imperialism
Climate change and environmental disaster
Race, racism, and racialization
Homophobia or trans-exclusions
Internment and detention
Migration and border-crossing
Galleries, museums, bedrooms, kitchens, classrooms, and community centres

We welcome submissions adjacent to (but not limited to) the following questions:

- * What new affective, epistemological, and political frameworks emerge out of children's art during/after political crises? What new knowledge and insight might be gained by attending carefully to children's art that responds to crises?
- * How is children's art interpreted and received by those around them? How and for whom is it produced? How has it been mobilized for particular interests and agendas? How can it best be engaged and understood?
- * How is violence (material and symbolic) expressed in and understood through children's art?
- * How does making art allow children to disrupt ahistorical and universalizing definitions of childhood?
- * What is the power of children's art as a form of witness to the impact of injustice that demands or evokes affective response in its viewers?
- * How do children not interpolated by normative developmental theory express their needs and desires through art?

Expressions of interest:

Please email an abstract of 500-800 words (including key references) and a short bio of each author to guest editors by **January 28, 2020** at artintimesofcrisis@gmail.com .

Timeline:

Invitations to submit full papers will be sent by **February 28, 2020**
Deadline for full papers of no more than 6000 words: **June 30, 2020**
Review process and revision: **July 15 – October 30, 2020**
Deadline for final manuscripts: **November 15, 2020**
Anticipated publication date for the Special Issue: mid **January 2021**

ⁱ <https://gws.illinois.edu/directory/profile/rnbrown>