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EDITORIAL

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# A REFLECTION ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ACADEMIC JOURNAL ADMINISTRATION

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There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has been an unsettling and uncertain time for everyone. The work that underpins an academic journal, at least within our context, has been impacted by the pandemic. The difficulty, already present for an editorial team, to recruit reviewers are becoming exacerbated with the pandemic. There are fewer people who agree to review articles. The invitations to evaluate are often declined and there are more reviews not completed, which stalls the review process. We experienced potential authors dropping out of a forthcoming themed issue and we provided plenty of extensions to committed authors as a result of the pandemic. We are not surprised by this greater challenge to write and review work. Home confinement complicates the reconciliation of professional and family life, which leads to an accumulation of insecurities and uncertainties triggered by the pandemic and the physical and mental health problems it causes. Responding to reviewer requests for changes to an article can be overwhelmed by the need to respond to health care emergencies. All of this and many other challenges significantly hinder the possibilities of contributing to an academic journal, whether by writing or refereeing an article, or even by managing the journal itself. While many people are forced to reduce their professional activity to ensure their safety and to maintain their health and that of those close to them, the time for writing articles or reviewing for an academic journal may be reduced, if not cut off. The vitality of a journal is thus likely to be further reduced.

When we dug a little deeper into our journal's statistical database about views and downloads, we learned a bit more about the impact of the pandemic on the CJSAE. August 2020, perhaps at a time in Canada when the rules were made less restrictive, was among the least amount of abstract views since we started keeping record in 2014. Conversely, in November 2020, when lockdowns were becoming more frequent again in Canada, abstract views were among the highest since keeping record. We interpret this information as being that people might have been enjoying the 'freedom' while they could, such as going outside and reconnecting with one another. When lockdowns began to happen again and people were stuck in their homes, consulting the journal became a more frequent experience. Furthermore, while one might assume that since the number of reviewers was down that readership would also falter, we experienced more article downloads in 2020 than in 2019.

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While there can be any number of factors causing this increase, we can interpret this data point as being that people steadily consulted the journal while navigating the pandemic, potentially as a useful resource.

This current journal issue has plenty of information and insights to offer readers. First, as neoliberalism still imprints and promotes a model of adult education based on competition and consumerism, Marlon Sanches proposes critical citizenship education principles to counter this model. The analysis of the Brazilian participatory budget initiative shows how participatory budgeting can be seen as a useful tool to promote democracy and citizenship. Second, as Roula Kteily-Hawa reports from the *Story Sharing for Sexual Health Research* (SSSH) project, training female peer leaders situated within South Asian community-based organizations can promote dialogue and knowledge about sexual health and reduce HIV stigma among South Asian women. The peer leader manual developed by the SSSH and used in the partnership among the community-based organisation and the researchers provide rich insights for community-engaged health research, notably for women's sexual health in marginalized communities. Third, John Lyle's article on coach development programmes evaluations shows the relevance and impact of particular delivery modes, the incorporation of coaches' practice, the enhancement of future capacity versus current performance, and the emphasis on personal development and interpersonal skills, among other topics. Fourth, in their article, Spring Gillard and Rob VanWynsberghe view adult education and a sustainable community development certificate through the lens of sustainability tours, which can be a useful learner-led pedagogy. Finally, in her article, Ash Grover's critically reflects, as a biracial and queer woman working in the field of education, on film characters that had a strong influence on her as a teenager, and on her own experiences with formal and informal learning contexts, addressing the social and political gaps in both contexts. In this autoethnography, she argues for the value of popular culture as a way to learn about aspects of identity which are often not discussed thoroughly, if ever.

This collection contains a field note by Cameron Smith, which is a testimony of a *Club de français académique* as an informal learning context of people interested in improving their linguistic skills. This field note reminds us how communities of informal practices can thrive within academic or formal education contexts. This collection then concludes with book reviews written by Sara Carpenter and Mahdi Ganjavi. Carpenter discusses a new publication on Antonio Gramsci and his social and educational theory and its dissemination not only in the critiques of schooling as a social institution, but also in the domain of the cultural relations and epistemologies. Ganjavi reviews a new book that analyzes the UNESCO Libraries and their impact on cultural diplomacy and educational reform.

The variety of the subjects presented here respond to a diverse body of knowledge needed by practitioners and researchers in the field of adult education. As the pandemic of COVID-19 forces us to be in lockdown, there is an opportunity to read and reflect on this eclectic issue of the journal. We continue to be greatly appreciative of the reviewers, authors, and production team members for their contributions to this issue. Stay safe, everyone.