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EDITORIAL

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# FORTY YEARS LATER: THOUGHTS ON BEING TOGETHER

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On behalf of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education/Association Canadienne Pour L'Étude de L'Éducation des Adultes (CASAE/ACÉÉA), we offer our heartfelt congratulations to the CASAE/ACÉÉA membership for celebrating its 40th anniversary, a milestone reached amid the chaos and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. To mark CASAE/ACÉÉA's anniversary, this themed issue allows for exploration of the *Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education* (CJSAE) as an important aspect of the association.

CASAE/ACÉÉA is a national, bilingual, and member-driven organization that is devoted to advancing the study and practice of adult and lifelong learning and education in Canada. It is also an associated member or partner of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, the Canadian Association for University Continuing Education, the Canadian Society for the Study of Education, and the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education. CASAE/ACÉÉA members include graduate students, faculty members, researchers, practitioners, and policy makers who are interested or engaged in adult learning and education. CASAE/ACÉÉA plays a pivotal role in celebrating researchers' scholarly achievements, enhancing the research capacity of adult educators, and disseminating research and scholarly work in the field. It holds regular regional and national events, including an annual conference for CASAE members and friends. CASAE/ACÉÉA also teams up with other national and international organizations to promote lifelong learning and education. Among others, it is currently part of the ICAE Adult Learning and Education (ALE) branding campaign (see <http://icae.global/en/2020/11/unescos-futures-of-education-icaes-future-of-ale/>).

CJSAE is committed to the disciplined inquiry in the field of adult learning and education. The journal has not only published regularly, but also been instrumental in advancing critical work in the field. The scholarship it promotes has become increasingly diverse. Last fall, for example, it published a themed issue called *Learning and Teaching: Artful Narratives of Transformation* (guest edited by Kathy Mantas and Carole Roy), which housed the first-ever curated art gallery of works in the journal. CJSAE also continues to see an increase in continuing education-themed papers due to our partnership with the

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Canadian Association for University Continuing Education. A few months ago, CJSAE recruited its new francophone editor, Jean-Pierre Mercier. We expect to see an increase in French submissions and French-language theme-based issues in the near future. The publication of the 40th-anniversary issue calls for special celebration not only because it is a culmination of varied bodies of work, but also because it was accomplished during an extraordinary time.

The diversity of the journal’s publications is witnessed in the articles and themes of issues over the last four decades—issues, for example, that explored adult learning through exhibition strategies and museums (2019), community- and arts-based adult education and research (2018), policies, practices, and praxis on the margins (2017), institutional practices of adult education (2017), distributed pedagogies of difference (2015), learning and social structures (2012), work and lifelong learning (2007), and a multitude of articles spanning topics like literacy, libraries, community development, Indigenous knowledge, immigration, gender, sexuality, social movements, prior learning assessment and recognition, and so much more. At times, CJSAE issues have grasped the pressures of neo-liberalism on adult education programs, and at other times have celebrated and embraced our uniqueness within the fields of education and workplace learning.

Perhaps the 40th year has been more difficult for all of us with multiple pandemics, including COVID-19, racism, and gendered violence. COVID-19 has caused historical disruptions to our social and economic lives at the same time that it has exacerbated social, economic, health, and digital disparities. To add to the uncertainty, growing pandemics of bigotry and racism are being experienced locally and globally. These are often linked to the alarming rise of authoritarian and fundamentalist regimes, state violence, and police brutality, as well as the spread of a culture of reactionary populism and political polarization. This seems like a time for us to rethink what is essential in life, what it means to be sustainable, and what it means to be together.

Although individualism might help us stay at home alone and learn a new hobby or practise informal learning through our computers or sewing machines, by acting together we can build something sustainable and push for actions that benefit communities and build the commons in the long run. This is our challenge and our need. As the foundations of community-based adult education have demonstrated, the performance of a community comes from its people and actions, where the collective trumps the individual (Hanson, 2020). The Antigonish Movement, Mechanics’ Institutes, women’s institutes, and newcomer movements exemplify what is possible when we collectively strive for actions to emphasize public ownership, solidarity, and bottom-up changes. A post-pandemic world should emphasize anti-racist, equity-based, sustainable development, not further social and economic division. Adult non-formal education and community development have flourished in hard times, so hope lies in thinking about how we build on these traditions together.

CJSAE has persevered and will continue playing an important role in fostering critical scholarship in adult and lifelong learning and education. We want to thank Robert Mizzi, a past president of CASAE and the exiting editor-in-chief of CJSAE, for his outstanding leadership in managing and sustaining the journal through this difficult time. The journal thrives as an ever-vibrant intellectual hub of adult learning and education in Canada. This would not have been possible without the editors of the past, including Nancy Taber, Scott MacPhail, Donovan Plumb, Tom Nesbit, Thomas Sork, Jane Dawson, Dorothy Lander,

Leona English, Allan Quigley, Paul Bouchard, Benoît Charbonneau, Claudia Denis, Reg Wickett, Robert Carlson, Adrian Blunt, Nicole Tremblay, Catherine Warren, and Madeleine Blais—and the many writers and reviewers who have contributed. We welcome Adam Smith and Robin Neustaeter to the editor(s)-in-chief position. Together, we will forge ahead!

### References

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