

## Introduction

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**We hope that this first issue and its successors will demonstrate the existence of a “Canadian education identity” to the satisfaction of all our readers.**

(Ragsdale, 1976, p. 1)

It is an exciting time, and also a difficult time, to live and work as educational researchers. Canada remains a vast territory constituted by provincial, territorial, and Indigenous sovereign borders. Come this July, some of us will celebrate the constitutional establishment of our settler nation-state. We will reflect on the contributions our research has (or has not) made to the lives of various educational stakeholders. Whereas, other First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities are still calling for constitutional recognition of their sovereignty both inside and outside of our settler academies. Such tensions of present absence have, and continue to exist, within this special capsule celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Canadian Journal of Education.

At the time of its first issue in 1976, the CSSE executive was comprised of the following leadership: H.T. Coutts, Past President; T. Barr Greenfield, President; Jean-Marie Joly, Vice-President; and David Friesen, Secretary-Treasurer. Ronald G. Ragsdale (Editor in Chief) and Gilles Nadeau (*rédacteur-associé*) wrote the first editorial in English and

French, which they titled *Another Educational Journal? Et, Un autre périodique en éducation?* Since then, both CSSE and CJE continue to serve a vibrant, robust, and diverse educational research community in two languages. In fact, for the past seven years, we have had over 1000 registered members collaborating with their respective 11 Associations to ensure our journal remains relevant, open sourced, and accessible not only to our members, but also the public.<sup>1</sup> With the ongoing privatization of knowledge, such a commitment requires substantial in-kind and financial contributions on the part of our current editorial team, advisory board, consulting advisory editors, and members.<sup>2</sup> Standing on the intellectual and editorial shoulders of their predecessors, the current editors Theodore Christou (Queen's University), Christopher DeLuca (Queen's University), Rollande Deslandes (Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières), and managing editor Katy Ellsworth continue to ensure that CJE remains a viable place for local, national, and international educational researchers to share their contributions with our respective fields of study. And, this special capsule is no exception.

In his essay, Donald Fisher provides a historical glimpse into the different ways past CSSE executive members and CJE editors created policies and committees, which responded to the cultural, economic, political, and societal contexts of their time. He invites us to think about the continuity and change in our Faculties of Education, editorial sensibilities toward various kinds of research, technological advances in copyediting, past intellectual turns, trends, and debates, and CJE's economic capacity to demonstrate and disseminate a Canadian education identity. CJE has and continues to play a crucial role, as he points out, in the professional legitimization of an educational research community here in Canada and abroad.

William Bruneau (1988-1992) and Stéphane Allaire (2007-2012), speak to the particularities of their editorial sensibilities and contributions as past editors. We become privy to the daily lives of editors, listening to their Walkmans as they transition from a material world supported by analog technologies toward using some of the first Commodore 64 computers, Disk Operating System (DOS), and word processing software

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about our associations visit the following site: <https://csse-scee.ca/associations/>

<sup>2</sup> To learn more about our innovative and dedicated editorial team and how to submit or review future articles, please visit the following site: <http://journals.sfu.ca/cje/index.php/cje-rce/about>. On behalf of our wider community, I would also like to thank SSHRC and CSSE for ensuring the financial viability of CJE.

applications to facilitate the copyediting of CJE. Bruneau received substantial financial and in-kind support from his university. Such kinds of institutional support are crucial to ensuring the quality of research and writing put forth in CJE. In both of Bruneau and Allaire's essays, we are reminded of the importance of an editor's proactive political capacity to create a gathering place that welcomes different kinds of qualitative and quantitative research. Like Fisher, and Bruneau, Allaire's essay shares a brief overview of the research trends—action research, collaborative research, design-based research, etc.—that shaped his tenure as a former Francophone editor. Drawing on his past experiences, while also looking to the future, Allaire asks us to reconsider our capacities to innovate rapprochements between our research practices and their potential emancipatory contributions to the lives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.

In his essay, Joel Westheimer responds to Allaire's calls for a systemic rapprochement in ways that seek to "improve the lives of students" and "society in substantive ways." To do so, Westheimer shares part of his life history as a former Grade 7 social studies teacher. He discusses the difficulties of challenging the preexisting narratives that often work to shape and marginalize the lives of teachers and students even before they encounter each other within a school. And yet, he stresses, such narratives "*can* be rewritten." He urges educational researchers here in Canada, and elsewhere, "to reassert the place of our work broadly conceived in fostering schools that make a difference, that strengthen the bonds between us, and that reclaim the importance of democratic values and the common good." In light of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report and its supporting 94 Calls to Action, Westheimer's reexamination of his life history, provides an example, of how we might draw on "teaching critical thinking" to reimagine who is included and/or excluded within our conceptions of a "Canadian public," "education that matters," "democratic institutions," and "common good." Regardless of our research agendas, as Westheimer makes clear, "educational researchers should work together to cultivate a process by which researchers become deeply engaged in public conversations."

In many ways, Thérèse Laferrière's contribution to this special capsule, illustrates the strategic ways in which educational researchers can become deeply engaged in public conversations with different educational stakeholders. She introduces us to the various conceptual and pedagogical contributions that school-based activity theory has made to her intervention research team's (IRT) research agenda. Since 2002, IRT has collaborated

with classroom teachers to establish and sustain a remote networked school (RNS), or what she calls *l'école (éloignée) en réseau (ÉÉR)* to prevent small rural schools in Quebec from closing. Laferrière invites readers to contemplate the different tensions that arise when activity systems interact within one another during the co-conceptualization, co-implementation, and co-evaluation of a remote networked school (RNS). Their IRT worked with different educational partners to co-design a digital educational network through which teachers and students could access, interact with other schools and classes, support collaborative research inquiries, and improve the ways in which the network enhances teaching and learning within remote communities. Her essay pushes new and experienced educational researchers to reconsider how they might co-conceptualize, co-implement, and co-evaluate educational research units, and the ways in which their (digital) research networks serve to improve the lives of Canadians teaching and learning within rural remote schools.

Much like Westheimer and Laferrière, William Hunter advocates for teachers to conduct action research projects within their school communities. “All teachers should have,” he stresses, “the knowledge and skills needed to critically read the education and social science literature on teaching and learning.” Several teacher education programs across Ontario, and elsewhere, as he maintains, are starting to embed the concept of “teacher-as-researcher” within their curriculum. How can we reconceptualize teaching and learning, he asks us, when it is informed by evidence-informed research?

Reconceptualizing teachers professional relationships with research involves rethinking the kinds of professional learning opportunities they are able to access and experience before, during, and after they welcome youth to their classrooms. In her essay, Carol Campbell situates the quality of content, learning design and implementation, and support and sustainability as key components of “effective” professional learning. Despite the various opportunities available to Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers across Canada there continues to be, as Campbell warns us, “considerable inequities of access, experiences, and/or outcomes for educators’ professional learning (and for the students they serve).” Like the other authors in this special issue, she encourages researchers to create, interpret, and communicate Canadian research narratives that promise to inform professional learning opportunities, and in turn, make a difference that matters to the lives of teachers and youth in the classroom.

The Canadian field of educational research is gifted with the presence of scholars, like the ones in this special capsule, who continue to demonstrate not only the existence, but also the significance of our research. My hope then, is that the journal will remain a place for us to gather, share, and question the kinds of contributions our work is making (or not), in the name of public good, to the lives of Canadian Indigenous and non-Indigenous citizens.

## References

Ragsdale, G. R. (1976). Editorial: Another Education Journal? *Canadian Journal of Education*, 1 (1), pp. 1-92.