Embracing Transdisciplinarity:
A Cross-Section of Educational Issues and Perspectives in Canada

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Education is profoundly transdisciplinary. Educators and researchers are called to cultivate education systems that foster complex transferable competencies, such as creativity, self-regulated learning, critical thinking, and social responsibility and action, in addition to disciplinary knowledge (OECD, 2023). Educational discourses marry pedagogical theories and a range of disciplinary sciences (e.g., climate science, social studies) to support disciplinary learning. Psychological, socio-cultural, and critical theories contribute to education scholarship and practice, offering different philosophical orientations that are all needed to understand the complex systems of teaching and learning.

This transdisciplinarity is evident in the perspectives of new scholars in Canada, which we showcase in this Spring Issue of the Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education (CJNSE). We are privileged to work with scholars who, as a collective, embrace the complexity inherent in education's transdisciplinarity, contributing a cross-section of key issues and philosophical orientations for new scholars in Canada across a range of teaching contexts and subject disciplines. Cross-cutting themes of the articles in this Spring Issue include: (1) relationship building and positionality in education; (2) amplifying critical perspectives on and through teaching and learning; (3) illuminating and navigating implications of new technologies to support education; and (4) understanding and supporting mental health in schools.

In This Issue

This Spring 2024 issue includes 13 articles:

Nimrah Ahmed, Mijung Kim, and Qingna Jinn contributed a literature review entitled *Challenges in K-12 Climate Change Education: A Literature Review*. In their review, Ahmed et al. identify challenges related to student knowledge (e.g., lack of prior knowledge, misconceptions), teacher knowledge (e.g., teachers' misconceptions about climate change, which influence students' understandings), and a lack of external support related to climate change education. The authors draw on social constructivist and ecological systems theory to highlight levers for improving climate change education. Importantly, they highlight a pressing need for research on climate change education in elementary education contexts.

Christopher Godfrey contributed a literature review entitled *Supporting Technology Integration in K-12 Classrooms: Putting the Puzzle of Professional Learning Guidelines Together*. In this review, Godfrey synthesizes key features of high-quality professional learning experiences, including the adoption of grassroots and contextually-responsive approaches, ongoing learning experiences, and the integration of pedagogical and content knowledge. Godfrey advocates for adopting these principles in developing professional learning experiences to support technology integration in K-12 education.

Aide Chen and Qianhui Ma contributed a book review entitled *Book Review of Abegglen, S., Neuhaus, F., & Wilson, K. (Eds.) (2022). Voices from the digital classroom: 25 interviews about teaching and learning in the face of a global pandemic. University of Calgary Press.* In this review, Chen and Ma summarize the findings presented in the book, including challenges and affordances related to remote learning. The authors highlight as key contributions the depth and richness of insights related to remote learning across a range of geographical and disciplinary contexts, as well as the diverse interpretations of the findings. The book offers an in-depth understanding of pandemic-related shifts in education while leaving room for additional research with different populations.

April King contributed a position paper entitled *Cultivating Purposeful Positive Relationships: The Need for Meaningful Connections in Education*. In this paper, King draws on research related to collective teacher efficacy; interpersonal learning and relationships; and factors contributing to incarceration for in-risk males to show that purposeful and positive relationships are central to inclusive education. The author calls for research that amplifies the lived experiences of incarcerated males to elucidate the types of relationships that could help them.

Kate Cole and Tanya Surette contributed a research article entitled *"I Truly Think That Some Schools Don't Want To Appear As If They Have These Issues.": Microaggressions Experienced By Queer Educators In Canadian Schools*. In this article, Cole and Surette report on a qualitative, narrative inquiry-based analysis of four 2SLGBTQIA+ educators' rich, storied descriptions of their experiences in educational spaces. Their analysis revealed experiences of microaggressions from various sources (e.g., institutions, decision-making, self) and shared impacts of these experiences, including exhaustion and feeling responsible for educating others.

Vivian Leung contributed a book review entitled *A Book Review of Killick, D, & Foster, M. (2021). Learner Relationships in Global Higher Education: A Critical Pedagogy for a Multicultural World.* In this review, Leung summarizes the book's focus on re-centering human relationships in learning and critiquing neoliberalism in higher education. The authors, Killick and Foster emphasize the use of critical pedagogy to facilitate dialogue around diversity, analyzing intercultural learning, the importance of inclusivity in curriculum design, and the role of human relationships in education. Leung highlights the book's examination of challenges and strategies for fostering equity and diverse interactions, suggesting areas for further research on intersecting identities of learners.

Joshua Lim contributed a position paper entitled *Treaty and Citizenship Education: Learning Activities through History and Social Studies*. In this paper, Lim explores how integrating citizenship and treaty education enhances students' understanding of Canadian identity and civic responsibility. Lim highlights the potential for this education to support reconciliation processes with Indigenous Peoples. Lim proposes activities aligned with Ontario's Social Studies curriculum including the use of symbol-based lessons to connect citizenship and Indigenous treaty education. This position paper explores current barriers and recommendations for implementation.

Lasha Luciw contributed a literature review entitled *Mitigating the Impacts of Secondary Trauma in K-12 Educators*. In this review, Luciw provides an overview of the prevalence of secondary trauma and its effects on educators, highlighting emotional and psychological impacts, burnout, compassion fatigue, and attrition. Luciw emphasizes the need for individual and organizational strategies to mitigate these effects and best practices for supporting educator mental health. This paper calls for further research and organizational investments to better support educators working with traumatized youth.

Salmah Quadri contributed a position paper entitled *The Conceptualization of Critical Literacy and its Historical Development*. In this paper, Quadri explores the definitions, core principles, and historical evolution of critical literacy. The paper utilizes a framework by Yoon and Sharif, examining themes of language, power, identity, and multimodality, within the realm of critical literacy. Quadra presents a comprehensive analysis of critical literacy's impact on teaching, the integration of social justice in literacy practices, and the relationship between critical and liberation literacy, denoting their significance in contemporary education.

Cameron Telch contributed a review essay entitled *Review of* Antietam in the Lower Forty*: An American Play on Shell Shock*. In this review, Telch explores how the play portrays shell shock in an American Great War veteran, Jim Erickson. Telch highlights the play's depiction of the psychological and emotional struggles of shell-shocked soldiers and their impact on family dynamics. The review emphasizes the play's anti-war stance and its unique contribution to understanding the American experience of shell shock. Telch calls for greater recognition of the play as a valuable resource for history educators addressing mental health and war trauma.

Haiyi Yan contributed a literature review entitled *From Macro to Micro: A Summary of Dr. Angel Lin's Research over Time*. In this review, Yan provides a chronological summary of Dr. Lin's research and contributions to language education scholarship. The author explains how Dr. Lin's work has advocated for the inclusion of learners' preferred language to cultivate rich linguistic learning environments.

Sasha V. Nandlal contributed a research article entitled *Factors Affecting Preservice Teachers' Efficacy to Assess Students in Inclusive Classrooms*. In this article, Nandlal reports on a quantitative study based on questionnaire data from student teachers. Bivariate correlation analysis implicates external factors as significantly related to student teachers' self-efficacy to assess students in inclusive classrooms. The findings highlight the importance school climate and cultivating experiences in inclusive classrooms as critical conditions for supporting inclusive assessment.

Antik K. Dey contributed a literature review entitled *The CARE Model: Reimagining Education through an Emancipatory Framework that Disrupts Coloniality in Schools Systems*. In this review, Dey advances a model for educational leadership to support school system decolonization. Dey highlights the need to decolonize across four areas: the mind, knowledge systems, partnership with community, and socio-politico-economic systems. Based on these insights, Dey proposes the CARE model, calling on policymakers and educators to *challenge* their assumptions, *align* pedagogy with diverse epistemologies, *revive* relationships with minoritized groups, and *embrace* post-neoliberal economic policies.

Acknowledgments

Authors

Nimrah Ahmed (University of Alberta); **Mijung Kim** (University of Alberta); **Qingna Jinn** (Cape Breton University); **Christopher Godfrey** (Nipissing University); **Aide Chen** (Western University); **Qianhui M**a (Western University); **Kate Cole** (Acadia University); **Tanya Surette** (Acadia University); **April King** (University of Windsor); **Vivian Leung** (Western University); **Joshua A. G. D. Lim** (University of Toronto); **Lasha Luciw** (University of Calgary); **Salmah Quadri** (University of Manitoba); **Cameron Telch** (Mount Saint Vincent University); **Haiyi Yan** (McGill University), **Sasha V. Nandlal** (University of Prince Edward Island), **Antik K. Dey** (University of Toronto).

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About the Authors

Nathan Rickey, MEd: Nathan Rickey, the Managing Editor of CJNSE, is a PhD candidate studying classroom assessment at the Faculty of Education, Queen's University. Emerging from his experiences as a high school English teacher, his research focuses on the psychosocial mechanisms of student self-assessment.

Aurra Startup, MA: Aurra Startup is a PhD student in the Education department at York University. With a solid commitment to social justice, Aurra's research centers on the challenges and possibilities of implementing restorative justice in schools. She currently serves as the Associate Editor for CJNSE and is passionate about demystifying the publishing process with fellow graduate students. Beyond her scholarly pursuits, Aurra actively engages in the non-profit sector through her commitment to creating brave space programs to de-stigmatize topics such as mental health and foster strong relationships with BIPOC Muslims. Her dedication to social justice and educational equity seeks to create a bridge between her scholarly pursuits and community activist work.