

Farewell Editorial

On Open Access, the Politics of Citation, and Generous Scholarship

Connie Russell, Lakehead University, Canada

I have been involved with the *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* for 16 years now, first as an author and reviewer, then guest editing a special issue with Paul Hart, immediately followed by a seven-year stint co-editing with founding editor Bob Jickling, and finally settling into my role as sole editor. In the latter couple of years as editor, it became clear to me that the time to pass the journal on was approaching; my enthusiasm had begun to wane and I found myself increasingly eager to spend less time editing others' words and more on my own. My tardiness in getting Volumes 20 and 21 out into the world—indeed, here I sit, well into 2017, writing the editorial for the 2016 volume—demonstrates that I made the right decision. Often not understood by those who have no experience with journal editing is the workload involved, which can be especially heavy with an independent journal. The *CJEE* editorial team sees each volume through from start to finish—between the initial submission of manuscripts to getting the hard copies of the journal into the hands of subscribers, there are many steps, including ensuring the online manuscript management system is working, shepherding manuscripts through the review process, working with authors as they revise their manuscripts, copy-editing, proofing, cover design, liaising with the printing company, managing subscriptions, coordinating the mail-out as well as ongoing tasks like managing the budget, fundraising, and promoting the journal.

Is all that work worth it? Absolutely! For over 20 years, *CJEE* has been on the cutting edge of the field in terms of content, methodology, and representation. Indeed, pushing at the margins is one of the things the journal likely is best known for, alongside its fondness for philosophical inquiry and intersectional analyses that highlight the interconnections of social and environmental justice. Even now, *CJEE* remains atypical in publishing poetry, narrative, memoir, and photography and other visual arts as ways to represent environmental education scholarship. From the outset, *CJEE* has been committed to epistemological, ontological, and methodological diversity, which has led to our desire to spark or reinvigorate a number of discussions. During my time in editorial roles with *CJEE*, we have devoted space to the following themes: new genres of research inquiry (Russell & Hart, 2003); schoolground greening (Dyment & Reid, 2005); religion (Jickling & Russell, 2006); art, literature, and ecopoetics (Dunlop, 2008); socioecological inquiries into practice (Greenwood & McKenzie, 2009); animality (Oakley, 2011); decolonization and Indigenization (Korteweg & Russell, 2012);

marginalization (Russell & Fawcett, 2013); dark matters (Blenkinsop, Fettes, & Kentel, 2014); food (Oakley & Russell, 2015); and this year's theme, emotions (Russell & Oakley, 2016). The next volume, guest edited by Greg Lowan-Trudeau and Blair Niblett, will be focused on activism, another timely and important topic for the field to explore.

As long-time readers of *CJEE* know, the journal has been open access since it came to Lakehead University when, under Bob's leadership, we started using the Open Journal System courtesy of the Public Knowledge Project.¹ *CJEE* also remains fiercely independent. We have fielded many requests over the years from publishing companies to have *CJEE* join their roster, but thus far have declined. We did so because we are committed to open access to scholarly work (see Korteweg, 2007) and argue that research should be available to everyone who wants to see it, not just those who can independently afford to pay for subscriptions or who work for universities (that, disturbingly, find themselves subsidizing large publishing corporations through library budgets that presumably could be spent in far better ways). We purposely kept our subscription rates well below the norm for individual and institutional subscribers who wanted a hard copy of each volume as soon as it was published; otherwise all back issues were freely available on our website after a one-year embargo (to enable us to have a small revenue stream to help recover some of our costs). While remaining independent made the journal more labour intensive to produce and has undoubtedly hurt our "ranking" by some measures (Jickling, 2011), we nonetheless have chosen to resist the growing corporatization of knowledge production.

I am delighted that *CJEE*'s new editors, Emily Root and Pat Maher, are also interested in trying to keep the journal open access. Indeed, they have decided to go one step further by removing the one-year embargo altogether so that articles will become freely available the moment they are published. In order to make that possible, this will be the last volume of *CJEE* produced in hard copy and while that will be disappointing for some readers, it is clear that many now prefer to access content digitally. One exciting bonus of publishing solely in a digital format is that it may allow the journal to expand its representational possibilities (Barrett, 2014; Korteweg, 2014; Russell, 2005). I applaud Emily and Pat's decision, but I also recognize that it will create financial challenges for them. So, if any of you have money burning a hole in your pocket, I am sure that Emily and Pat would be more than happy to hear from you! Seriously, please do contact them if you can assist the journal financially or have fundraising ideas to share with them as it would do wonders in keeping *CJEE* independent and fully open access.

Obviously, *CJEE* is not the only journal committed to open access. Rather, we are members of a wider movement (Korteweg, 2007, 2014; Price & Puddephatt, 2017; Willinsky, 2014) that is, in part, a response to what Price and Puddephatt (2017) call the "crisis of profiteering" in academic publishing whereby:

...for-profit corporations in charge of most academic publishing continued to develop monopolies and stretch library budgets by steadily increasing subscription fees. This state of affairs in academic publishing has been defined as the “serials crisis,” referencing the hyper-inflationary practices of for-profit peer-reviewed journals which, from the mid-1980s to the mid-2000s, rose more than 2.5 times faster than inflation. (p. 102)

Thus it is not surprising that Price and Puddephatt found in their study of Canadian open access journal editors that a prime motivation for many was a desire to resist capitalist profit motives in academic publishing, a position I share.

Price and Puddephatt (2017) found other common motivations as well, such as seeking to challenge academic publishing norms and removing access barriers for authors and for readers. Willinsky (2014) is also concerned with the latter and argues that widening the audience for academic journals is vital:

...the vast majority of research studies in education are accessible only to members of a subscribing research library or by direct purchase of the article from the publisher. There may be, according to the Technorati online search engine, close to 600 blogs that identify themselves as dealing with educational research, yet the quality of those blogs is severely limited in my estimation by the inability of the bloggers to link back to the vast majority of the original research studies, if the bloggers themselves happen to have access. (p. 579)

If we really are seeking to make a material difference as scholars, surely widening the potential audience of our work is one important strategy?

Open access is not without its challenges, of course, and these go well beyond the workload associated with editing an independent journal that I mentioned above. For example, predatory publishers have negatively impacted the reputation of open access journals. As Price and Puddephatt (2017) observed:

These [open access] journal editors must try to compete in a field where traditional publishing companies continue to monopolize the top journals in the field, and where the very existence of predatory journals challenge their credibility by giving open access a bad reputation. (p. 103)

This is particularly so in a neoliberal audit culture where “impact factors” materially impact the professional lives of many academics. And here is one place where established scholars can make a difference by spending their privilege. In his own farewell editorial, Jickling (2011) urged scholars who support the principle of open access and who have more latitude (i.e., tenure) to continue submitting their manuscripts to *CJEE* and other open access journals like us. Similarly, Willinsky (2014) encourages researchers to:

...take greater responsibility for the public status of their own work....They need to work with the journals they *patronize*—truly, as they freely donate their work to these publications—to ensure that the journals possess as liberal an archiving policy as possible in enabling authors to post copies of their work online....They could lend

their support, as well, by sending the occasional paper to those journals that have immediate open access policies for all of their content. (p. 580)

Heeding Willinsky's call can also help with the legitimization of open access journals, which is why Jickling (2011) also requested authors to cite articles from *CJEE* and other independent journals in the field as much as possible.

The impacts of citation practices have been gaining attention recently, particularly from anti-racist and feminist scholars (e.g., Ahmed, 2013; Marston, 2017; Mott & Cockayne, 2017; Tuck, Yang, & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2015). For example, writing about the discipline of geography, Mott and Cockayne (2017) have analyzed "the continued underrepresentation and marginalization of women, people of color, and those othered through white heteromale hegemony" and observe "how particular voices and bodies are persistently left out of the conversation altogether" (p. 2). In education, Tuck, Yang, and Gaztambide-Fernández (2015) ask, "Who do you choose to link and re-circulate in your work? Who gets erased?" (para. 3), asserting that "practices of citation make and remake our fields, making some forms of knowledge peripheral" (para. 5). In environmental education, too, attention has been directed to how certain voices, methodologies, and intellectual traditions continue to be marginalized (Russell & Fawcett, 2013; Russell, Fawcett, & Oakley, 2013) even those with rich histories in the field such as those grounded in feminist and biocentric scholarship, environmental justice and anti-racism, and Indigenous knowledges and decolonization (e.g., Fawcett, 2013; Gough, 2013; Gough, Russell, & Whitehouse, 2017; Haluza-Delay, 2013; Lowan-Trudeau, 2013; Shava, 2013). Such marginalization matters to our field for, as Mott and Cockayne (2017) suggest, "the choices we make about whom to cite—and who is then left out of the conversation—directly impact the cultivation of a rich and diverse discipline" (p. 2). Of course, one cannot cite what one has not read. Reid (2016) recommends we ponder "how open we are to being ordered by other's ideas, particularly in our reading habits and responses to those, and in whether we accept the complexity of a field, or aspire to reduce or expand it" (p. 423).

There are different suggestions offered by those seeking to proactively disrupt the hegemonic politics of reading and citation. For example, Mott and Cockayne (2017) write:

We encourage authors to carefully read through and count the citations in their list of references prior to submitting papers as a way to self-consciously draw attention to whose work is being reproduced. Think through how many women, people of color, early career scholars, graduate students, and non-academics are cited. There are challenges to this approach, since it carries the risk in basing assumptions of gender or cisnormativity on particularly gendered names. However, though we might be able to tell little from a name, it may encourage scholars to research and learn about the people that they cite. Citation counting is a relatively straightforward way to pay attention to whom we carry with us when we cite, and to be aware of the power dynamics that are unintentionally reproduced therein. (p. 13)

While such a strategy could easily be performed in a perfunctory way, using a sort of identity checkbox technique that suggests only superficial engagement with the work being cited, if done in a more conscientious way it has potential (Mott & Cockayne, 2017). Another strategy, admittedly one that raises concerns for Mott and Cockayne, is the creation of “citation cartels (informal agreements between authors to continually cite one another’s work)” (p. 2). This approach has taken up by the rabble-rousing and inspiringly playful FEAS (Feminist Educators Against Sexism) in their recently formed “Cite Club” (Marston, 2017).

However one goes about it, attending to who one cites and why is important. So too is ensuring credit is given where credit is due rather than appropriating ideas and erasing the original inspirations (Ahmed, 2013; Mott & Cockayne, 2017; Tuck, Yang, & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2015), which I see as part of a generous approach to scholarship, an idea to which I now turn as I conclude this editorial. A few years ago, I was asked to write a short piece for the AERA Environmental Education SIG newsletter, sharing insights based on my experiences as a journal editor. I made a couple of recommendations that stated what I once thought was obvious, but now know from experience is not, such as reminding prospective authors to pay attention to a journal’s guidelines and to do their homework so that they can engage with relevant work in the field (see also Reid, 2016). My third recommendation was for folks to try to be generous scholars, both as authors and reviewers. While I admit I struggle with this sometimes myself and I do think indignation and anger need to be expressed in the face of oppression (Russell, 2006), for the most part it is possible to be critical as scholars without being dismissive or mean. We are a community of scholars and I wager we can accomplish more by being generous with one another and working together to hone our ideas, advance scholarship in our field, and make a material difference in the world.

In my earlier writing on generous scholarship (Russell, 2006), I focused on the ways researchers publicly engage one another’s work. There are many other ways of being a generous scholar, including, as noted above in my discussion of conscientious citation practices, giving credit to those who have inspired our work rather than appropriating ideas. Another way of embodying generous scholarship is to take advantage of any opportunities to publicly express gratitude that present themselves. So let me now take a moment to thank the many folks who have helped me during my time with *CJEE*.

Kudos of course must be given to Bob Jickling for all his work as the founding editor of the journal and also for his support as I moved into the big chair. My academic home, Lakehead University has provided substantial financial and in-kind support over the years for which Julia O’Sullivan and John O’Meara deserve much credit, since not all deans are so inclined. Thanks also to administrative officer extraordinaire, Karen Costa for making the money magic happen. The Lakehead University librarians have also been very helpful in hosting our online manuscript management system, notably Jason Zou. We also have been fortunate to have had Hignell Book Printing in our corner since the

early days; I am particularly appreciative of the assistance Dave Friesen has provided.

It would, of course, be impossible to publish any journal without the contributions of authors and reviewers. There are too many to list here, but please do know that I am grateful for what you have given *CJEE*. I also want to thank all the past and current Advisory Editors for their assistance over the years; six, in particular, stand out as having been consistent sounding boards since my early days with the journal: Justin Dillon, Jo Ferreira, Leesa Fawcett, Paul Hart, Alan Reid, and Bob Stevenson.

Other *CJEE* team members have come and gone over my time with the journal, but there have been three constants: Jan Oakley whose extraordinary editing skills and generosity has been particularly valuable to me over the years, Rusty Brown who has consistently done excellent design and layout work with unflinching good humour, and administrative assistant Diana Mason who has cheerfully handled our subscriptions, mail-outs, and other logistical details. I was also fortunate to have had editorial assistance in various years from Jocelyn Burkhart, Erin Cameron, Gail Kuhl, Blair Niblett, Lex Scully, and Jen Tweedle, and there has also been an impressive roster of guest editors who also deserve credit for their stellar contributions, namely, Paul Hart, Janet Dymont, Alan Reid, the late Rishma Dunlop, David Greenwood, Marcia McKenzie, Jan Oakley, Lisa Korteweg, Leesa Fawcett, Sean Blenkinsop, Mark Fettes, and Jeanne Kentel. As well, past Associate Editors M. J. Barrett and Lisa Korteweg and past Book Review Editors Traci Warkentin, Gavan Watson, Joan Chambers, and Lex Scully each made important contributions to the journal for which I am grateful.

Finally, current Associate Editors Greg Lowan-Trudeau, Pat Maher, Blair Niblett, and Emily Root have been a godsend these past two years. I am so pleased that they are continuing on with the journal (Emily and Pat as Editors and Greg and Blair as Associate Editors). I wish the four of them the very best as they lead *CJEE* into the future.

Note

¹ For more information on the Public Knowledge Project, see: <https://pkp.sfu.ca/ojs/>

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