

CPI Welcomes the Summer 2023 Special Issue

“All That Glitters is Not Gold: Culturally Responsive Online Assessment and Pedagogy in Uncertain Times” with Kim Koh, Jennifer Lock, and Cecille DePass, invited Guest Editors

Aesop’s fable about the farmer’s hen that lays the golden eggs, concludes with the stern moral warning: “all that glitters is not gold”.^(1 & 2) The cautionary fable reminds us to think critically and be mindful of readily accepting either ideas or material things which appear to be too attractive. For the purposes of this issue, high tech, digital technology in teaching and learning, as well as high stakes, standardized testing fall within man-made categories that glitter enticingly. Generally, however, when one digs more deeply and investigates what lies below the surface, it becomes apparent that marginalized, disadvantaged, and oppressed groups and individuals tend to be negatively impacted by such signs of so-called, material progress. bell hooks (1994), for instance, documents explicitly the differences between “education as the practice of freedom and education that merely strives to reinforce domination” (p. 4). As importantly, hooks gives full credit to Paulo Freire’s influence concerning the development of her own process of conscientization. In bell hooks’ own words: “Paulo’s work has been living water for me” (p. 50).

In this issue, the contributors explain how culturally responsive teaching and assessment can be mobilized to foster relevant and meaningful educational experiences, especially for marginalized students. To do so, the Special Issue concentrates deliberately on culturally responsive, online assessment and pedagogy. Specifically, it addresses the ways in which educators and students grappled with online educational experiences during the 2020-2023 global pandemic, when the world, as we knew it, changed radically.⁽³⁾ At that time, by being forced to teach, learn, and assess educational experiences using digital technology, teachers and students became immersed within online, digital educational environments. Kim Koh argues in her concluding article, that students from more affluent homes had easy access to computers and the required technology, while unfortunately the same was not true, generally, for disadvantaged students, particularly for marginalized students in the global south. (See also, articles by Stephen MacGregor and Joshua Pigeon, and Kathleen Kellock in this issue).

By adopting social justice perspectives, the authors examine the impacts of online, digital teaching and assessment on students and teachers in a few countries in the global north as well as in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. Although the issue consists of only five articles and two poems, it is “little but talawah” (meaning small but very strong, in the Jamaican Creole language).

The issue begins with poems by Sonia Aujla-Bhullar and Carol Lee. **Sonia Aujla-Bhullar’s** poem: “My Place/Your Place” juxtaposes the characteristics and effects of a dominant Eurocentric teaching-learning milieu in which the cultural backgrounds of students of colour (like herself) are often diminished, disregarded, or devalued. The poet concludes with a call for action by educational institutions to adopt a transformative and emancipatory educational curriculum. (Although not acknowledged, it is likely that some of Paulo Freire’s (1970) ideas underpin Aujla-Bhullar’s call for action).

In “The Wonder Test”, **Carol Lee** turns intentionally to nature and invites the reader to look at the world in new ways through fresh eyes. Lee describes in glowing and yet playful words, a dancing winter’s day, at sunrise. Furthermore, Lee’s poem demonstrates in graphic language

that our beautiful world cannot be generalized, reduced, or measured in a mechanical manner. The ability to immerse oneself in the awe and wonder of our natural world is a meaningful life skill to have and to teach, yet one that is rarely, if ever, assessed for its presence in students.

The articles in this issue range widely, from incorporating personal narratives and lived experiences, to summarizing and analyzing the relevant literature, through to presenting philosophical and conceptual works, as well as to highlighting associated policies and practices in the educational field which have either positive or negative impacts on marginalized students.

The first article by **Carol Lee** challenges the assumptions and practices which govern the standardized high stakes testing industry. Lee suggests alternative strategies for assessment in which the student's agency and sense of self-worth are fostered and enhanced. The author highlights a series of stories, drawn from lived experiences of students' learning in formal, non-formal, and informal environments. Of special interest, is the inclusion of some information from Lee's (2022) dissertation in which she summarizes how an older Indigenous woman encourages a few students in a primary school to think critically and tackle problems by themselves. Accordingly, in the narrative, Annie, the older Indigenous woman shifts power from reliance on an authority figure to encourage deliberately, the students' abilities to solve problems in a safe and collaborative learning environment.

Sepideh Mahani's three-part article includes: personal lived experiences, a purposeful review of the published literature, as well as a summary of the culturally responsive pedagogy and assessment approaches that she incorporates in her teaching in higher education. The author begins by discussing how she grew up, as an Iranian student who attended public schools and universities in Canada. At that time, neither the school teachers, nor the university professors, nor the formal curriculum presented anything other than a western Euro-Canadian stance and worldview. (The learning environments that Sepideh Mahani experienced were similar to the ones that Sonia Aujla-Bhullar describes in her poem).

Mahani's review of the relevant literature highlights the benefits of adopting a culturally responsive pedagogy, and explains the shifts to include critical thinking and anti-oppressive pedagogies. As importantly, the author draws on her online teaching in higher education to emphasize the importance of: enabling dialogues, insisting that students' and instructors' use respectful tones and language when responding to students' oral and written work, and her active engagement with multiple forms of online assessment.

Stephen MacGregor's and Joshua Pigeon's article explicates the strengths and benefits of a meaningful collaborative partnership between the academic researcher (MacGregor) and the practitioner (Pigeon). The article discusses the responses of educational systems and teachers to the unanticipated impacts of the pandemic, and summarizes the published literature in the field. The authors' article focuses on four major areas: equity and inclusion, instructional design, assessment, and leadership. The article convincingly demonstrates how the following factors affected online learning and assessment: (i) the systemic, historical, and contemporary educational inequities, (ii) the decisions by school systems in OECD countries to cancel standardized assessment during the pandemic, and (iii) the problems of teachers and students who lacked the knowledge and skills to make the transition to online teaching. Of particular interest, is the list of ways which could be adopted to enhance collaborative research between teachers and researchers. Such approaches include: provision for teachers of continuing online,

professional development opportunities, as well as the teachers' active participation in online pedagogy and assessment networks.

Kathleen Kellock's article, a case study, explores the impacts of the pandemic on secondary schools in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. Driven by the unanticipated school lockdowns, and demands of the imminent, national standardized examinations for secondary school-leavers, all teachers had to rapidly adopt online teaching approaches. Kellock identifies major limitations encountered during the transition. She indicates that there were neither informal guidelines nor formal policies issued by the national government or by her own school. Furthermore, there were no provisions to offer any in-service training for the teachers involved. With some 60,000 students affected by the school lockdowns, Kellock explains the ways in which teachers (herself included) and students adjusted to the new teaching and learning milieu. She summarizes the impacts on the students' performance as a result of the delayed 2020 national examinations, and identifies the loss of learning opportunities for a sizeable number of Bahamian students.

In their article, **Noah Romero, Nate Koerber, Kenneth J. Fasching-Varner, and P. G. Schrader** draw on the works of critical theorists including feminists to examine the ways in which disproportionate numbers of black, brown, and Indigenous students are effectively 'cooled out' of the academic streams in schools. Unfortunately, a significant number of such students tend to drop out of formal education, and/or are eventually "tracked into juvenile incarceration systems". Issuing a clarion call for revolutionary educational changes, the authors suggest that Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and living must be the foundations for meaningful changes. Such an education emphasizes the intergenerational, collective, and reciprocal well-being of all (including people, land, ancestors, and animals).⁽⁴⁾ The authors suggest the adoption of a relational autonomy in which all individuals are educated to take and make ethical actions which benefit their respective communities. In such educational systems, teachers would demonstrate a love of learning, an ethic of care, and co-create with their students, safe and trusting teaching-learning environments.

With well over 20 years of research and post-secondary teaching experiences in the field of assessment, **Kim Koh's** concluding article, presents a large and comprehensive picture of major changes in assessment practices over time, in which it is possible to situate the individual contributions found in this Special Issue. Koh's article traces the evolution of assessment and meticulously maps the strengths and benefits of culturally responsive assessment. As importantly, Kim Koh demonstrates the ways in which educational policies and practices for designated groups, such as, students who are: English language learners, immigrants from the south, of colour, working class, Indigenous, and/or have educational disabilities, as well as women and girls, are likely to benefit from culturally responsive teaching and assessment.

To conclude: In addition to presenting insiders' perspectives and lived experiences, this Special Issue demonstrates the flexibility and resiliency of teachers, showcases the necessity of adopting teaching, learning, and assessment strategies that are tailored to meet students' needs, and finally, highlights the difficulties and challenges of coping, striving and surviving during the uncertain times associated with the global pandemic.

Endnotes:

¹ Aesop (620-564 BCE), described as being an Ethiopian, was an enslaved person who eventually was manumitted and bought his freedom in ancient Greece. For a Special Issue which focuses on improving the educational assessment and evaluation of students who are marginalized, disadvantaged and/or oppressed, the connections with Aesop's life are not lost. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that Aesop is credited with creating the genre of the fable (Encyclopedia Britannica, Google).

² Long ago in the 1950s, when Cecille DePass (nee Harriott) was a youngster in a prep school in Kingston, Jamaica, she remembers reading this fable in one of her English reading books. The story's moral has remained with her for more than 60 years, and perhaps unintentionally, helped to foster her critical thinking skills.

³ Many of the Editors explain that the impacts of COVID-19 have been far reaching. What has been very difficult to accept is the high level of opposition to the vaccines that control the spread of COVID-19 despite the media's continuous reports about the disastrous, world-wide growth in infection rates when populations are not inoculated. Many individuals, even in Calgary, refused to be vaccinated. Disinformation was rife and the dissemination of biased information by powerful individuals probably helped to shore up the strong levels of opposition. At CPI, however, we continue to offer our sympathies to individuals and their families who have been affected seriously by the pandemic.

⁴ For a series of articles, poems, and artwork in which the contributors, with close links to their respective Indigenous communities, showcase efforts to transform their Eurocentric universities and schools, please see CPI's Special Issue entitled: "Spirit and Heart" (Vol. 10, No. 2, 2018), edited by Alesha Moffatt, Tiffany Prete, Celia Haig-Brown, and Cecille DePass.

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- Lee, C. (2022). *Story-making reconciliation with four Grade 5-6 youth* [Doctoral Dissertation, University of Ottawa]. University of Ottawa Thesis Database.

Future CPI Publications include the following:

Publication of the Winter 2022 Special Issue (Vol. 13, No. 2), edited by **Veronika Bohac Clarke**, University of Calgary is **pending**. The issue entitled: “Beauty and the Beast: Using Creative Expressions to Envision a Just Society Amid Post-Truth Politics, Pandemic, and Climate Change” has been delayed, due to several major factors over which the Guest Editor and CPI have had no control.

In Winter 2024 (Vol. 15, No. 2), **Tiffany Prete**, University of Lethbridge, **Celia Haig-Brown**, York University, **Jessica Keeshig-Martin**, York University, and **Cecille DePass**, University of Calgary will produce an international issue entitled: “Spirit, Heart and Reconciliation”. The issue will follow up on some of the overarching themes and issues presented in CPI 2018, Vol. 10, No. 2. As importantly, responses to recommendations of Sinclair’s, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) will be included. The Call for Submissions is published in this issue.

In Summer 2024 (Vol. 16, No. 1), **Noah Romero**, Hampshire College, with **Carol Mutch**, University of Auckland, and **Wairehu Grant**, University of Waikato, will produce an international issue entitled: “The Remembered Children of Maui—Pan-Pacific Conversations and Solidarities”. In the Call for Submissions, Noah Romero (2021) states that the CPI Special Issue is inspired by “Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (2012) call for continued engagements between First Nations peoples living in the overdeveloped West and the Indigenous peoples of the Global South” (p. x). The Call for Submissions is published in this issue.

In Winter 2025 (Vol. 16, No. 2), **Noni Mendoza Reis**, San Jose State University, **Rosalinda Quintanar-Sarellana**, San Jose State University, **Enid Lee**, Enid Lee Associates, Santa Cruz, and **Cecille DePass**, University of Calgary, will produce an international issue entitled: “The Unheard Voices, the Unheard Struggle: Una fuerza ponderosa que lucha por expresarse”. The Special Issue will concentrate on central issues encountered by Latin Americans in the USA and to some extent in Canada. The co-editors also plan to invite some Mexican scholars to contribute to the issue. The Call for Submissions is published in this issue.

In Summer 2025 (Vol. 17, No. 1), **Marcela S. Duran**, York University, **Jan Stewart**, University of Manitoba, **Donald A. Dippo**, York University, **Mohamed Duale**, York University, and **Cecille DePass**, University of Calgary will produce an international issue entitled “Voices of the Forcibly Displaced: Transition, Resettlement, Education”. The Call for Submissions is published in this issue.

In Winter 2026 (Vol. 17, No. 2), **Bathseba Opini**, University of British Columbia **and her team** will produce an international issue, working title: “Education for/with Students with Disabilities as Social Justice Education”. The Call for Submissions will be published in the Winter 2024 (Vol. 15, No. 2) issue.

In Summer 2026 (Vol. 18, No. 1), **Sandra Dixon**, University of Lethbridge and **Cecille DePass**, University of Calgary will produce an international issue entitled: “No Longer Silent! Racialized Academic Women Speak Out”. The Call for Submissions will be published in the Winter 2024 (Vol. 15, No. 2) issue.

CPI's Book Reviews:

Individuals willing to review books for CPI should see the Call for Book Reviewers (CPI, Vol. 9, No. 2, 2017) and contact Dr. Kathy Sitter, University of Calgary, CPI, Book Review Editor.

Invitations and Caveats:

CPI welcomes proposals to develop Special Issues, and to create additional eBooks in the **Legacy Series** (introduced in Winter 2019).

Although CPI publishes some works that tend to be critical of the existing status quo, the journal is committed to publishing pieces that portray hope for a better future for all and not for a few of us. To this end, CPI promotes the vision of a fairer, more equitable and a just world documented in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Furthermore, CPI supports a dream that is/ was espoused and practised by, for example: Martin Luther King Jr., Paulo Freire, Kofi Anan, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Lucille Mathurin-Mair, Mahatma Gandhi, Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou, bell hooks, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Vandana Shiva, Kamu Brathwaite, and Rosemary Brown (British Columbia), to name a few.

Contributions published in CPI, do not necessarily express the perspectives and considered opinions of the CPI Advisory and Editorial Boards, its founding Editors, External Reviewers and Production Team.

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Reminders:

- (i) CPI invites its Advisory Editorial Board, readers, and contributors to share information regarding recent research, publications, and accomplishments.
- (ii) CPI continues to welcome contributions from/by academics in the south and north in the fields of: literature, humanities, social sciences, arts, and of course, in education.
- (iii) CPI requests that any future publication, exhibition, or performance of specific work published in the journal, kindly acknowledges and cites its prior publication in CPI.

Arrivals and Departures

Arrivals:

CPI Editorial Board: CPI welcomes to its Editorial Advisory Board the following academics:

- Carol Lee, University of Ottawa
- Dr. Dolana Mogadime, Brock University
- Bathseba Opini, University of British Columbia
- Dr. Edward Shizha, Wilfrid Laurier University
- Dr. Thashika Pillay, Queens University

We thank you for volunteering some of your expertise to work with CPI's Production Team. We look forward to continuing the tradition of a working Board in which the members are actively engaged in fostering the journal's evolution.

On February 10, 2023, the well-known Guyanese Canadian, poet and author, Cyril Dabydeen (Ottawa Poet Laureate Emeritus and retired professor, University of Ottawa), was awarded the Guyana Prize for Literature 2022 (second prize), for the best book of fiction entitled: "My Undiscovered Country" (2017), published by Mosaic Press, Canada, by Government of Guyana. (See the Book Review by Taryn Fritz, University of Calgary, Werklund School of Education, in *Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry*, Fall 2018, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 193-196). Previously, Dabydeen was awarded the top fiction prize in 2007 by the Government of Guyana for "Drums of My Flesh" (2005), published by Mawenzie House, Toronto. More recently, in 2022, Dabydeen co-edited: "Soul Spaces: Poems on Cities, Towns and Villages" (Personal Communication, June 24, 2023).

Ambassador Dennis Francis was appointed as the 78 President of the United Nations General Assembly. Ambassador Francis is the first person from Trinidad and Tobago and the second Caribbean man to hold such an important position. The first was Dr. Samuel Rudolph Insanally from Guyana (The UWI Alumni Spotlight, June 2023).

Noah Romero has been appointed to a tenure track position in Native American and Indigenous Studies at Hampshire College in Massachusetts (Personal Communication, Spring 2023).

Finally, CPI looks forward to two forthcoming issues:

- (i) **Veronika Bohac-Clarke's** international issue (Vol. 13, No. 2, Winter 2022), entitled: "Beauty and the Beast: Using Creative Expressions to Envision a Just Society Amid Post-Truth Politics, Pandemic, and Climate Change".
- (ii) **Tiffany Prete**, University of Lethbridge, **Celia Haig-Brown**, York University, **Jessica Keeshig-Martin**, York University, and **Cecille DePass**, University of Calgary international issue (Vol. 15, No. 2, Winter 2024) entitled: "Spirit, Heart and Reconciliation".

Departures:

Harry Belafonte (March 1, 1927 - April 25, 2023) was born in Harlem to Jamaican parents, Melvine and Harold George Bellanfanti. The famous American singer, humanitarian, actor, and civil rights activist was not the first black entertainer to break the barriers of racial segregation in the music industry in the USA, Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald, among others for example, had done so. However, in the 1950s, no other person in the music industry, black or white was such a huge success. His long-playing album, “Calypso (1956)” was the first recording by a single artist to sell more than one million copies. Since the late 1950s, however, Harry Belafonte’s primary focus shifted from music and performing to active participation in the civil rights movement. Belafonte was a friend of Martin Luther King Jr., and contributed his own funds to the start of the well-known Student Non-violence Coordinating Committee. It is not well known, that Belafonte also donated his own money to ensure that Martin Luther King’s family was well taken care of after King was assassinated in 1968.

Belafonte was recognized for his major contributions to entertainment and civil rights. In 2014, the Academy of Motion Picture, Arts, and Sciences, granted him the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award for his lifelong fight for civil rights and other humanitarian causes. In 1994, he was given a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, and in 1989, was granted the Kennedy Center Honor. (Google, and Peter Keepnews’ obituary, “Harry Belafonte 96 Dies: Barrier Breaking Singer, Actor, Activist”, New York Times, republished May 25, 2023).

Roslyn Pope (October 29, 1938 - January 18, 2023) was born in Atlanta to Roger and Grace Pope. Pope co-wrote the comprehensive document: “An Appeal for Human Rights” (1960). Its ideas and principles formed the basis of the Student Non-violence Coordinating Committee, headquartered in Atlanta, and became the accepted template for working for racial equality in the US, then and into the 21st century. She participated actively in the movement. Roslyn Pope was well educated with a Bachelor’s Degree in Music, an MA, English, Georgia State University (1974), and a PhD in the Humanities, from Syracuse University. Roslyn Pope was described as “the architect of Atlanta’s civil rights revolution” (Google, originally published in the New York Times).

Randall Robinson (July 6, 1941 - March 24, 2023). Attributing his experiences with segregation and Jim Crow laws in the USA, to molding and shaping his career directions, the political leader and thinker, civil and human rights activist, Harvard educated lawyer, and former professor in Human Rights at Penn State University, Randall Robinson was known for his continuing actions and for lobbying the US government to take a firm stance against apartheid in South Africa. In 1977, he founded TransAfrica, a non-government organization to promote diversity and equity in foreign policy, and to seek justice for all African countries, as well as Black people in the diaspora. He was the President until 2001. In recognition for his work, the Government of South Africa, in 2012, granted Robinson the highest honour given to a non-South African citizen. Of Robinson’s many published books, the controversial one in 2000 entitled: “The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks” (Dutton Books: New York) argued strongly for reparations for black people in the USA. For the last 20 years of his life, Robinson and his wife lived in St. Kitts, because he thought that the Caribbean country knew how to treat black people well (Google, Robinson’s Obituary in the Legal Defense Fund).

Canute Lloyd Stanford (June 5, 1933 - May 21, 2023). Stanford was born and educated in Jamaica and gained his Bachelor's Degree there. A highly educated, and erudite federal, public servant in Canada, Stanford completed a PhD in Political Science at Queens University, a MA in Public Administration, at Carleton University, and earlier, a BA Honours French, from the University College of the West Indies, London (now The UWI). As a former senior civil servant, Stanford worked with the federal government from 1964-1991 in many fields, ranging from public administration, to social and cultural policy, to employment equity. He was actively involved with the Royal Commission for Bilingualism and Biculturalism which laid the foundations for the Multicultural policy (1970).

In recognition for his exemplary contributions to the field of public administration and to the struggle for equity and equality in Canada, Lloyd Stanford received an Honorary Doctorate in Laws from Carleton University (2017). In retirement, Lloyd established himself as an Independent Management Consultant Professional, Le Groupe Stanford Inc., and also worked with John Samuel and Associates, Ottawa. Lloyd Stanford granted scholarships for students at Carleton University and at The UWI. Stanford credited his parents for his humanitarianism. He demonstrated how to live a good and full life of service to others and his family (Google). (See Tributes in this issue for memories of Lloyd Stanford from his friends Cyril Dabydeen and John Samuel, as well as brief snapshots by Cecille DePass).

Acknowledgements:

We thank the invited Guest Editors, Contributors, international and national External Peer Reviewers, the Senior Journal Manager, the Desktop Publisher, and the computer folks at the University of Alberta Libraries, for all of their voluntary work to produce this CPI Special Issue.

Very best wishes to the CPI readers in the northern hemisphere summer and the southern hemisphere winter.

Cecille DePass and Ali A. Abdi
CPI Editors and Founders