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Letter from the Editor

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Welcome back, *JCTP* readers!

Speaking on behalf of the entire *JCTP* editorial board, we are eager to share with you the first of two issues focused on politics in education. This issue, *Politics, Purpose, and Education: What/Whom Do Each Serve?*, comes to you the day after the United States presidential election. That is not by coincidence.

This issue was birthed in 2019, our response to the ongoing political discourse taking place in the United States, which is impacting all of our systems; micro, meso, and macro. This idea came to life before the strain of COVID-19 in the world and in our schools, where education has since been reimagined and educators expected to take on added roles to an already overflowing plate.

This issue is the first of its kind, where authors submitted their work under four themes: Egalitarianism, Economical, Humanistic, or Civic. These themes were based on Zion and Blanchett's (2017) interest areas embedded in United States education. Throughout this letter, I have included the themes in [brackets], so as to inform you, the reader, which interest area they felt best represented their work.

We begin this issue of *Politics, Purpose, and Education: What/Whom Do Each Serve?* with Angeline Dean's [economic] poetry piece, *Black Bodies/Whiteness Infringed – Yet Still We Rise*. This piece of poetry is accompanied with a visualization of the words it contains and is a powerful image of this work and the application of the economic theme.

Following Dean's poetry piece, Atasi Das, LaToya Strong, Susan McCullough, and Jennifer D. Adams open with their [humanistic] manuscript, *Developing Political Activity as if the World is on Fire*. Das et al. studied political activity among science teachers, ending with a call to action for all educators concerning political consciousness and political activity. After Das et al., Lilly B. Padía and Rachel Elizabeth Traxler's *(Special) Education is Political: (Special) Education is Social Justice* [humanistic] begins. These authors discuss the history of special education and how special education currently exists with students who are differently abled and ableism in schools. They make recommendations for a social justice-oriented learning environment, transforming (special) education as we currently know it. Kerry Cormier discusses the impact of language used in the courts in education in her manuscript [egalitarian], *The Influence of the Language of Courts on Educational Opportunities for Students with Disabilities*. She sheds light on the role that language plays in education, discussing the impact of those words and their role in the academy and education in general.

From this piece, the critical lens on institutional racism begins with Riley Drake and Alicia Oglesby's [humanistic] narrative, *Humanity is Not a Thing: Disrupting White Supremacy in K-12 Social Emotional Learning*. Drake and Oglesby argue, through literature and their own experiences as school counselors, that social emotional learning as it currently exists aids in perpetuating white supremacy in K-12. Evelyn Ezikwelu also explores racial discrimination in K-12 public schools. Ezikwelu does this through the relationship that Black students have with their white teachers in her [humanistic] piece, *Institutional Racism and Campus Racial Climate: Struggles for Sense of Belonging and Academic Success Among Black Students in the K-12 Public Schools*.

Ezikwelu’s manuscript leads into Nicholas Francis Havey’s [civic] manuscript, *Radicalized on Campus? (Un)Coded Whiteness as Campus Social Movement*. Havey introduces the rhetoric of whiteness on college campuses and how that informs and employed among campus organizations. Havey specifically looks at conservative groups on college campuses before, during, and immediately following the 2016 presidential election. From there, we go to Nicole Hacker and Eric Bellmore’s [civic] manuscript, *The Trump Effect: How Does It Impact International Student Enrollment in U.S. Colleges?* Hacker and Bellmore discuss the rhetoric surrounding international students at universities in the United States and how that rhetoric has changed under the Trump administration. Through a review of the literature, they explore what has been declared “the Trump effect,” with short- and long-term impacts this administration may have in higher education as it pertains to international students and their time as students vital to the landscape of the academy.

Jesslyn Roebuck Hollar and her [economic] manuscript, *Brokering Inequity: Knowledge Distribution as Policy Limitation*, follow Hacker and Bellmore’s work. Through document analysis, Hollar examines the knowledge base produced by federally-funded intermediary organizations and how those impact powerholders at a state-level.

Matthew J. Shackley’s [humanistic] manuscript *Economy and STEM Education Policy: Towards a Bidirectional STEM Pipeline* follows Hollar’s. Shackley reconceptualizes the STEM pipeline, drawing Dewey and Vygotsky’s work to support democratizing instruments of science for social justice. Our last [egalitarian] manuscript is Ming Yin’s, *Opportunity for Whom? Understanding Curriculum-Oriented Out-of-School Time Math Learning*. This mathematics-oriented OST study had outcomes focused both in and out of the classroom as critical components for student success.

We wrap up with Hind Alharbi’s [egalitarian] review of *Developing Teacher Leaders in Special Education: An Administrator’s Guide to Building Inclusive Schools*. This book, edited by Maggin and Hughes (2020), discusses teacher leadership in special education and how best to utilize roles for successful education outcomes. Alharbi’s commends the authors and editors for their work and inclusion of essential issues and the blend of theory and practice, while providing an overview of the book through a critical lens.

On behalf of the board, I am thrilled to announce that Atasi Das, LaToya Strong, Susan McCullough, and Jennifer D. Adams with their [humanistic] manuscript, *Developing Political Activity as if the World is on Fire*, have received the **Dr. Isaac Gottesman Featured Contribution to Critical Thought and Praxis** designation. This designation is given to one piece of submitted work from every issue that represents Isaac’s appreciation for critical thought and the board’s mission. The research presented by Das et al. examining science teachers and political activity ends with a call to action relevant to all educators, whether science or elsewhere specialized. This research is done through extensive qualitative interviews and presents unique outcomes regarding the state of education and political activity.

Lastly, due to the response for this call for papers, we would like to note that there will be a second volume representative of this call for papers focused on politics and education. This

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volume will be available in the Spring of 2021. We hope that you enjoy *Politics, Purpose, and Education: What/Whom Do Each Serve?* and that you will come back in the Spring to join us for Volume 2. Thank you all for your continued support of JCTP.

Katie Anthony
Senior Editor