Twenty Years of *Current Issues in Comparative Education*: An Editorial Introduction

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Within the twenty years since it’s founding, *Current Issues in Comparative Education* (CICE) has become a recognized and respected source for debate in the field of comparative and international education. CICE has welcomed contributions from many on the leading edge of knowledge production, and has continued to serve as unique platform, critiquing the foundations of comparative and international education, with an eye towards shifts in the field and globally.

In its inaugural issue (1998), the CICE editorial board opened with attention to the breathtaking pace of change across the globe at the close of the twentieth century. Now nearly two decades into the twenty first century, we are at the helm of a new set of shifts whose impacts are felt with increasingly seismic effect. On the technological front, within the twenty years since the creation of CICE, accelerated computing power and innovative disruption have become the norm, the effects of which have shifted established industries, created new academic fields, and dislocated established ways of living and working (Henderson, 2017; Henderson et al., 2017). The manner in which people around the world interact with state, economic, and social institutions has also vastly changed. Services, routine commercial activities, and even dissent, are increasingly mediated by technology platforms, raising new questions as to privacy expectations and surveillance overreach. [1]

Geopolitically, shifts in play since the end of the Soviet era positioned the United States as the world’s sole superpower, or, in the eyes of some, a hyperpower (Cohen, 2004; Gulddal, 2007; Gott, & Cho, 2012) [2]. However, in the period since then, the world has witnessed the economic ascendency of China, the movement of investment, economic power, and capital growth to Asia, and a gradual shift in international student global mobility as traditionally outbound nations reorient as inbound nations (Jon, Lee, & Byun, 2014) [3].

While we’ve also witnessed a shift in international awareness of climate change, and recognition of its devastating consequences, there has likewise been sustained resistance toward mitigation at a global scale. Worldwide, deaths related to climate change are believed to average over 400,000 per year, and while advances have been made (see: The Paris Agreement) the recent rise of populism, protectionism, and complacency may threaten the many gains made over the last twenty years (Orr, 2017; Roth, 2017) [4].

Amidst such dramatic change, contributors to the current issue of *Current issues in Comparative Education*, focus on several topics related to the changing conversation on comparative education worldwide, in many instances examining the role of the individual among shifting state, cultural, or educational institutions. *Mark Ginsburg*
offers critical analysis of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and its policies with regard to education strategy. Ginsburg argues that it is USAID’s longstanding practice to identify teachers as human capital components rather than implementers with valuable contributors to educational policy.

Similarly, Leva Rouhani explores community education systems in sub-Saharan Africa, which are designed to create space for egalitarian decision-making, but in effect, often reproduce hierarchical power dynamics, at the “community-level”. Amy Auletto, Tayeon Kim, and Rachel Marias, take a wide view, examining the relationship between educational attainment and gender equity across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), arguing that education can have a quantifiable effect on the development of egalitarian attitudes within the MENA region. In closing, Katie Wright and Emma Buchanan take a longitudinal approach to what they term as “international mindedness”, exploring the effects of the International Baccalaureate (IB) on the life trajectory and outlook of participants from the 1970s to the 2010s.

This year, CICE proudly celebrates its twentieth year in publication, highlighting this milestone with a series of commemorative events and activities. We’re grateful to have reached this stage and for the extraordinary contributions of many wonderful authors throughout the years. This issue, and those preceding, would not be possible without the dedicated contributions of the editorial board, external reviewers, and volunteer staff of CICE which, year on year, allow this publication to remain as it began, a practitioner and student-led resource. Your efforts have allowed CICE to be a vital voice within the field of comparative and international education.

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Notes
[1] The effect of technological disruption within higher education will be explored in greater detail in the Spring 2018 Special Issue.
References


