

EDITORIAL

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In recent years many of us in the field of adult literacy and numeracy have become used to grieving the loss of university based teacher development programs and centres promoting research, professional development and debates in our field. Eighteen months ago, we learnt of the closure of the Centre for Literacy in Montreal, and twelve months ago, the effective closure of the National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy in the UK, both of which made major contributions to promoting and giving public access to resources, research findings and policy debates in the field of adult literacy and numeracy. Each year a few more researchers in the field ‘retire’ from their institutions, and while many are remaining active in publishing research, there is a sense of fear about who and what will be left in our field when they decide to *really* retire!

This issue of *Literacy and Numeracy Studies* marks a welcome shift from this sense of looming doom and gloom. The authors of the three research articles are all currently candidates in a research degree.

Pamela Osmond, an adult basic education teacher, teacher educator and writer of many teacher resources with many years of experience in the field is researching the history of her field in the state of New South Wales in Australia. Her article describes the vibrant community of practice among adult basic education teachers that evolved in the field in the 1970s and 1980s. She analyses the stories of the teachers from this early period using Stephen Kemmis’ theoretical ideas of professional knowledge and practice architectures. Her analysis of how the social, historical and political contexts of the time enable us to understand the agency that was afforded to practitioners – an agency that practitioners now struggle to exercise – or perhaps even to imagine.

Janet McHardy is pursuing her doctoral studies, and she and her co-author Elaine Chapman have written about their study on the different approaches adult literacy teachers take to teaching reading. Through their research, they have identified a typology of pedagogical approaches. They argue that often teachers are not aware of how their beliefs are driving the pedagogic choices they are making. Making the connection between one’s

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teaching practice and beliefs, they argue, is critical to being responsive to their learners' needs.

The third article by Janna Klostermann, another doctoral candidate, takes us to the art world in Canada. Her paper draws on literacy theories and institutional ethnography to examine how literacy practices are closely intertwined with the professional lives of visual artists. Writing plays a critical role in the way artists can represent themselves to successfully navigate the institutions and processes of art galleries and exhibitions.

The final contribution to this issue is a book review of *Beyond Economic Interests: Critical perspectives on adult literacy and numeracy in a globalized world*, an edited collection of studies largely by researchers working in Australian and New Zealand. The review is written by adult literacy researchers Tannis Atkinson and Nancy Jackson from Canada.