

Access*: Interdisciplinary Journal of Student Research and Scholarship

Volume 5 | Issue 1

Article 1

2021

Editor's Introduction, Fall 2021

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Recommended Citation

Lundberg, Margaret L. (2021) "Editor's Introduction, Fall 2021," *Access*: Interdisciplinary Journal of Student Research and Scholarship*: Vol. 5 : Iss. 1 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/access/vol5/iss1/1>

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October 19, 2021

Greetings Readers,

Welcome to the fifth volume of *Access: Interdisciplinary Journal of Student Research and Scholarship*—and although I can hardly believe it as I write, it is also the second volume published during this global Covid-19 pandemic (here's to hoping it is the last).

In introducing volume four in early November 2020, I wrote with such hope that things were—at long last—changing for the better. That the completion of the still pending 2020 election cycle would start us down the road toward the end of this pandemic—something we are all still waiting for. Although I sometimes hope I will never again hear or use the word “unprecedented” to describe the times we live in, it remains an apt descriptor of our times.

Still, life (and the *Access* journal) will always find a way.

In producing this volume, we encountered many of the same issues we have in the past: processes that took longer than we anticipated due to our 18 month work-from-home status, followed by a return to campus that heralded not only renewed relationships with colleagues and students, but a writing center move to new spaces. These changes have been good, but occasionally challenging as well. Still, dedicated reviewers and assistant editors have stood alongside me all along the way as we worked with some wonderful student authors to ready their articles for this publication.

Before I introduce the articles in this year's journal, I'd like to extend my gratitude to our *Access* editorial board and reviewers. Although 2021, like 2020, was extraordinarily challenging in many ways, you supported this journal by encouraging

your students to submit papers, by working with them throughout our summer-long review process—and sometimes working our authors directly. I cannot thank you enough for all you do!

I'd also like to recognize my amazing assistant editors, Beck Adelante and James Hannes. Although the publication process is one they have both worked through with me several times before, this year felt exceptionally challenging as we worked through final edits even as we were moving offices—sharing our perspectives on the writing without once being in the same room. Thank you both for your thoughtful and painstaking work. I am not ashamed to say this volume would likely *never* have been finished without you!

A final thank you goes to the student authors whose work you will find in this volume. In the midst of a global pandemic, they not only advanced their educational success and wrote these wonderful papers, but endured two rounds of reviews and revisions before finally reaching the finish line with one final approval. I know you will enjoy their work.

Our first article, “The impossible Choices and Sacrifices: An Examination of the Trauma Filipina Migrant Workers Face,” Isabel M Garcia writes of the exploitation of Filipina migrant workers, many of whom who have endured unsafe and abusive working conditions, as a way to spread awareness of their situations.

The second article, “Higher Education Response to Challenges during the Covid-19 Pandemic,” was written by Luke Byram. Originally written near the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated stay-at-home orders—but updated for current times—Byram explores the responses of institutions of higher education around the world to

student need and performance. He also considers the effect of the global supply chain and technology challenges on student success.

Third, we have an examination of the history and politics of faith-based organizations in “Prayers in Prisons? The Politics and Performance of Christian Faith-Based Initiatives in the US.” Ashley Edliq considers the growth and mission of such organizations, as well their “success stories” and sustainability in the face of issues surrounding the constitutional question surrounding the Establishment clause and collaboration of Church and State.

Our final article was written by Access’ own assistant editor, Beck Adelante. Titled, “In this Harsh World, We Continue to Draw Breath: Queer Persistence in Shakespeare and Hamlet,” Adelante uses close reading and a consideration of recent productions of Hamlet as a foundation for examining Shakespeare’s self and work through a queer lens, analyzing them through what they have termed the *queertinum*.

Welcome to Access volume 5—the second Covid edition!

Margaret Lundberg
Editor-in-Chief

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