

# The English Editorial Committee's Choices

**Without a doubt, our team enjoys reading your article submissions... and we also take great pleasure in reading in general! The members of the English editorial committee of *Pédagogie collégiale* are committed to promoting a culture of reading, and we would like to present a few titles that have touched them, each in their own way.**

The members of the English and French editorial committees of *Pédagogie collégiale* are volunteers from various colleges who assist the editor-in-chief in a variety of matters related to the journal, including determining editorial direction, planning the year's issues, evaluating article proposals, selecting privileged themes, and researching articles.

These individuals are thus responsible for reading, analyzing and debating the articles submitted to the journal with rigour, impartiality and a strong sense of ethics, based on specific evaluation criteria. They also contribute to the reach of the

publication by making it better known and by ensuring that it meets the current needs of the entire college network. On occasion, they may also contribute to writing certain articles or solicit authors to submit texts.

The AQPC warmly thanks the members of both editorial committees for all the work they do. It also thanks the administrators of their respective colleges for allowing them to adapt their work schedules so that they can take an active part in the publication of *Pédagogie collégiale*.

## "Are Microcredentials the Future of Higher Ed?" in *University Affairs*

The article "Are microcredentials the future of higher ed?" by Moira MacDonald, poses this question inviting readers to react to her overview of the microcredential movement in higher education, both in Canada and internationally. It is a relatively short read that is informative and timely.

Although there is still much discussion about what microcredentials actually are, the author notes that there seems to be a general acceptance of "the basic idea, [which] is that these are short courses that cultivate and verify a particular skill, knowledge or competency that employers want, and help learners bridge their pre-existing skills and

knowledge to meet rapidly changing labour market demands without removing them from the workforce" (par. 6), in part responding to a pressing need to 'reskill' and 'upskill'.

Offering a global perspective, the author briefly describes the approaches taken and advancements made in New Zealand and Europe, which serve as comparative contexts to microcredential initiatives taken by Canadian institutions and provinces. She includes a list of six examples of microcredentials currently offered by Canadian colleges and universities, while acknowledging that many more institutions are in the throes of microcredential discussions, considering both their advantages and potential drawbacks. Noted as well are the initiatives taken by provincial education authorities to define, describe,

and suggest a strategic approach to move their province forward in microcredential development.

Some people view microcredentials as disruptive to the traditional paradigm of higher education. Others see them as key to revitalizing higher education. The question, "Are microcredentials the future of higher ed?" remains.

**Reference:** MACDONALD, M. "Are microcredentials the future of higher ed?", *University Affairs*, January 12, 2022.



**Lee Anne Johnston**  
Educational consultant

## ***The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains***

*The Shallows* is a book I have often cited with friends and colleagues. Engagingly written and profound, it argues that the internet has not only changed our culture, relationships, and knowledge-sharing, but also our brains and their neuropathways. Nicholas Carr is no iconoclast. He recognizes the internet's value but also warns of its impacts. He draws on a wealth of neuroscience to explain how the internet has reduced our attention spans and our ability to think in deep, complex ways. A gifted science popularizer, Carr writes in a clear, accessible, and entertaining way, as he weaves together science,

philosophy, history, and cultural shifts to make his case. When I first read the book, I highlighted so many passages, I negated my efforts, so full is it of insights and research with far-reaching consequences for me, my family, my colleagues, our students, and our society.

Now, 10 years after its initial release, Carr has published a second edition in which much of the main body remains the same. (As he explains, it has aged well and is as relevant as ever). An introduction and an extensive epilogue have been added, the latter discussing emerging issues and new concerning research (some inspired by the first edition) that further supports his initial conclusions. It is a must-

read for those trying to understand why so many of us struggle with memory and concentration issues, and why the ability to think in deeper, more nuanced ways is disappearing, while at the same time offering suggestions for how we can counteract these problems.

**Reference:** CARR, N. *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, New York, WW Norton, 2020.



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## ***The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life***

*The Courage to Teach* by Parker J. Palmer is a book every teacher should have in their stockpile of rescue books. With the ongoing pandemic and the demoralization of teachers, this book provides a sanctuary for hope, peace, and guidance. The past two years have been challenging for teachers in the classroom, and their value provides an auspice of self-doubt and discouragement. This book provides and tries to regenerate reasons why educators go into teaching.

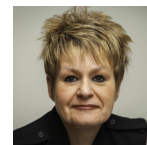
Palmer, in the introduction, states, "Teaching, like any human activity, emerges from one's inwardness, for better or worse. As I teach, I project

the condition of my soul onto my students, my subject, and our way of being together" (p. 2). Teaching develops from an inner calling where the passion for the subject matter and the students is part of inner meaning. The internal passion teachers feel is an essential and ongoing theme in the book. He continues in chapter 1, reminding teachers that the fire that drives this inner conviction can be refueled: "After three decades of trying to learn my craft, every class comes down to this: my students and I, face to face, engaged in the ancient and exacting exchange called education. The techniques I have mastered do not disappear, but neither do they suffice. Face to face with my students, and only one resource is at my immediate command: my identity, my selfhood, my sense of this "I" who teaches—without

which I have no sense of the "Thou" who learns. Good teaching coming from the integrity and identity of the teacher and not from technique" (p. 10).

This book provides self-reflection and inspiration for teachers who need to become re-inspired.

**Reference:** PALMER, P.J. *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*, Hoboken, John Wiley & Sons, 2017.



**Heather Sorella**  
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## **Everyday Antiracism: Getting Real About Race in School**

Engaging in reflective teaching practices was already difficult enough; being self-reflective in a post-lockdown world has been downright daunting. These past few months, I have found myself returning to Mica Pollock's collected essays in *Everyday Antiracism: Getting Real About Race in School* to gauge where I am in terms of my own instructional practices.

Pollock defines everyday antiracism as alternative measures educators can take to help dismantle "any act that, even unwittingly, tolerates, accepts, or reinforces" unequal opportunities

for students. She outlines reflection strategies to support these alternative measures: make note of "gold nugget" ideas about antiracist practices whenever they arise, identify general strategies for future situations, and brainstorm specific solutions for my classes.

I have been reflecting on "gold nugget" ideas for over a decade and still refer to them when I need a quick reminder or inspiration. One essay I recently re-read made me think about quieter students and whether my classroom expectations might be inadvertently causing their silence. Another essay led me to question conventional explanations about

different cultures and how these may affect the way I view students.

I recommend this book to any teacher looking for guidance adapting to our ever-changing, increasingly diverse student demographics.

**Reference:** POLLOCK, M. *Everyday antiracism: Getting real about race in school*. New York, The New Press, 2008.



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## **Media Education. Literacy, Learning and Contemporary Culture**

How should the education community respond to the challenges of an increasingly media-driven world? How can we enable young people—not just those studying in the field of communications—to become active, responsible and critical participants in the pervasive media culture that surrounds them? These are questions to which David Buckingham, a researcher, writer and consultant specializing in media education—or media literacy—, proposes enlightening answers and avenues for concrete actions in *Media Education. Literacy,*

*Learning and Contemporary Culture*. Although this book dates back several years, conceptually speaking, it has not aged a bit.

It defines what media literacy is and why media education is so important in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The book also offers a repertoire of teaching techniques adapted to a variety of disciplines, including transferable classroom strategies (textual analysis, contextual analysis, case studies, production, etc.) that are practical for anyone who wants to make media literacy a cross-curricular theoretical and practical approach to teaching and learning. This is a book that explains well how teachers can respond to

contemporary social, political and technological developments and equip students to become active and critical media consumers as well as responsible content producers in today's media ecosystem.

**Reference:** BUCKINGHAM, D. *Media Education. Literacy, Learning and Contemporary Culture*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2003.



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