



Seven Years with the JUE

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Among my proudest moments as an academic are the times when I have met fellow presenters at conferences who tell me, “You published my article in the JUE.” It is a pleasure to meet these young scholars in person, and it is a thrill to realize that their JUE article is part of the foundation they are building on as graduate students or even postdoctoral fellows. It’s exciting to know they are still reading, doing, and writing ethnography. That said, I hope all JUE authors have a positive, constructive, and encouraging experience of publication with us, whether they pursue further academic study or not. The aim of this journal has always been to show that undergraduate research can make compelling, valid contributions in and of itself.

The first issue of the JUE that I helped produce, after accepting founding editor Jason Patch’s invitation to take over as editor, was volume 5, number 1, in 2015. This is volume 12, number 2. **Seven years, 17 issues, 99 articles, and 107 authors** later, I am very happy with where the JUE now stands. It is a well known, well respected, open access undergraduate journal that consistently receives excellent submissions from students writing in English from around the world. Twelve years is a long run for

an undergraduate journal, and I think it is in great shape to run for at least twelve more! Two big innovations helped it achieve this position.

In 2016, I created our international, multidisciplinary Senior Editorial Board, made up of professors and independent scholars who conduct ethnographic research themselves and who commit to reviewing up to one submitted manuscript a year (plus its revisions, usually). Without the generous, serious work of the folks on the Senior Editorial Board, the JUE team would simply not be able to keep up with submissions to the journal, nor deal with them as thoroughly and efficiently as we aim to. It has been wonderful to collaborate with these scholars. The second change came in 2018, when I switched to using Open Journal Systems (OJS) to publish the JUE, thanks to the hosting and expertise provided by Dalhousie University Libraries and the funding for research assistance to make the switch provided by Dalhousie's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Publishing on OJS helps make the JUE perennial, facilitates indexing and attribution of DOIs, and makes it easier to get the recognition this journal deserves.

Many other good things have happened in my seven years with the JUE – a fabulous redesign, invaluable research assistance from several Dalhousie undergraduate and graduate students, and a gradual systematization of our processes. I am now handing the reins of the JUE over entirely to the current editor-in-chief, Dr Karen McGarry, an anthropology professor at McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario). Karen and I have worked together for the last two years to ensure a sustainable transition, and I am confident that the journal is in excellent hands! I will stay on as a member of the Senior Editorial Board and I'm looking forward to seeing what exciting new ethnographic research is sent my way for review.

In the meantime, we present the eight rich articles of volume 12 number 2. Clayton Jarrard (Kansas State University) explores how queer Christians navigate their relationship to their religion in caring online communities. Roos Metselaar (University of Amsterdam) analyzes how pregnant women in The Netherlands appropriate fetal ultrasounds for use as a kind

of entertainment, having fun with technology in what can be an anxious time. Elizabeth Payne's (Macquarie University) autoethnographic photo essay unpacks the meanings of material possessions and their stewardship as the items are boxed up for a house move. Alicia Maners Taylor (Harding University) takes hesitation as a point of entry into understanding the shifting identities of Syrian refugee women and mothers who settle in St. Louis. Damilola Fakunle (Wake Forest University) documents how institutions in Jamaica that look after children in government care uphold children's rights and vernacularize those rights in accordance with local norms. Princess Udeh (UCLA) investigates how and why Black university students create their own safe spaces and resources for maintaining mental health on campus. Danning Lu (Wheaton College) compares four community gardens in Beijing and Shanghai to identify the factors that make them a success or not in this sociopolitical context. Chuhan Zhang (Dalhousie University) takes an ethnographic approach to demographics, exploring what is important to parents as they make fertility decisions in light of China's recent shift from a one-child to a universal two-child natal policy.

It has been a privilege to bring such original ethnographic research by undergraduates to a wider audience, to mentor such impressive budding scholars, and to communicate with such generous, insightful colleagues. I hope you enjoy this issue, and many more. Thank you for reading and for staying curious about human beings in all their complexities. Here's to the *Journal for Undergraduate Ethnography*—long may it thrive!



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