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Letter from the Senior Editor

Tyanez C. Jones

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Letter from the Editor

“This country is a nation of immigrants” is common phrase designed to convey the idea of the United States as a welcoming place for people from varying countries, cultures, races, religions, and languages. The reality, however, is that we are not all immigrants and many from outside of our borders are met with hostilities rooted in fear, discrimination, and prejudice. It is up to us to challenge toxic viewpoints, to stand up, and speak out against injustice.

Our current issue ‘Who Belongs? Immigrants, Refugees, Migrants and Actions Towards Justice’, emerged from conversations among JCTP board members who wanted to use our platform as a medium to challenge and confront the hostile political climate that bolsters restrictive and discriminatory policies and practices toward immigrants. As part of our commitment to progressive scholarship and practice, we invited authors to submit manuscripts for this special issue using their work to critically explore ‘Who Belongs?’ by addressing topics on immigration and refugee policy, practice, and law, as well as border and national security, and a host of social policies.

I am excited about this issue because it provides a space for myself and other social justice activists, advocates, and allies to gain a practical understanding about the critical and transdisciplinary nature of social justice work. Each poem, interview, reflection, and empirical study has been framed to inform, engage, and ignite activism. I am inspired by the urgency of the authors to address the concerns and outcomes of injustice. The contributions made to this issue are essential for giving voice to the experiences of the marginalized, like when Ramon Vasquez explores counter-narratives in an elementary social studies methods course in *“They can’t expect to be treated like normal Americans so soon”*: *Reconceptualizing Latinx immigrants in social studies education*. In *“Who belongs”*: *A critical race theory and Latino critical theory analysis of the United States immigration climate for undocumented Latinx college students*, Leslie Jo Shelton examines the lived experiences of undocumented college students navigating policy and hostile discourse surrounding immigration. The contributions made to this issue are also international. Media representations of peaceful protests in Australia are explored in *“#Let them stay: visual representation of protest and community mobilization for asylum seekers in Australia,”* by Shirley Hall, Caroline Lennette, Samantha Murray, Connie Chan, Ashley Flannery, and Kate Vickery. Additionally, Janelle Ward and Renata Rocha use an outsider within perspective in the Netherlands to bring awareness to social inequalities in *“No more blackface!” How can we get people to change their minds about Zwarte Piet?*

I am pleased to introduce other features of this special issue: a book review, creative writing-poetry, and interviews. The book review by Dafina-Lazarus Stewart, discusses Susana Muñoz’s *Identity, Social Activism, and Pursuits of Higher Education*, which explores college access and identity meaning making in undocumented students. Poems by Laura Bisailon and Marika Preziuso are powerful and enlighten us, while the interviews of Tim Wise, Ginetta Candelario, and Susana Muñoz equip, engage, and empower us to work for justice.

It is my hope that you (the reader) will be challenged to engage in the work of justice without delay. As Ella Baker noted, “We who live in freedom cannot rest.”

Tyanez C. Jones
Senior Editor