

The Vermont Connection

Volume 43 *The Embodiment of Liberation:
Embracing Opposition and Resistance within
Higher Education*

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Executive Board Editor's Note

Todd C. Cooley

Dana K. Prisloe

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EXECUTIVE BOARD EDITORS' NOTE

The Vermont Connection is excited to publish the 43rd volume of our higher education and student affairs journal. The journal is a space for authors to co-create knowledge and engage with the journal's theme through traditional scholarly works, personal stories, and creative pieces. This year's theme is *The Embodiment of Liberation: Embracing Opposition and Resistance within Higher Education*. What follows are messages from TVC 43's Co-Content Editors about the journal, making meaning of the theme, and our experiences.

Todd

I am so humbled and honored to help bring together this brilliant collection of voices for the 43rd edition of *The Vermont Connection*. *The Embodiment of Liberation: Embracing Opposition and Resistance within Higher Education* as a theme comes to us after two years of enduring a global pandemic, where systemic issues of racism and oppression have been brought to a point of national reckoning, and where the maintenance of the status quo within higher education feels both hostile and unsustainable. For me, the journal this year celebrates an opportunity to move forward - it points to new possible futures where institutions of higher education are more equitable, accessible, and supportive for all students, but especially those who are the most marginalized within the academy. It also reminds me of the gratitude I feel to be a part of the Vermont Connection, and to have moved through this time with such a special and compassionate group of scholars and practitioners.

With this being the first-ever fully digital journal, Dana and I took the opportunity to embrace new modalities of scholarship within this issue. Within, you will find not only traditionally written academic articles of wide-ranging subject matter, but also podcasts, Digital Storytelling Projects, and more. They represent critical examination of issues within higher education, and also authentic narratives of experiences within the realm of higher education. We encourage you to sit with these pieces, and allow them to expand your ideas of what is possible within higher education.

Dana

To honor The Vermont Connection's first ever fully-digital journal, Todd and I wanted to embrace accessibility and create a journal that uplifted the voices of those with marginalized identities. Thanks to the amazing contributions and energy from Chantel J. Vereen (HESA '21), along with support from our HESA and TVC community, we co-created the journal theme of *The Embodiment of Liberation: Embracing Opposition and Resistance within Higher Education*. For me, this theme focuses on dismantling the systems of oppression within the academy and highlights voices and opinions that actively resist those systems. Especially reflecting on the past few years with the Black Lives Matter movement and the COVID-19 pandemic, this theme embraces the current yearning for change and reform.

As one of the Co-Content Editors of this year's journal, I hope you enjoy and embrace our authors and their brilliance. We encouraged our authors to submit pieces that extend beyond standard articles, and we're proud to present written, audio, and visual pieces to TVC 43. Breaking down the norms of what is acceptable and "professional" has been both a personal and group goal while creating this journal, and I hope to carry on with this work within my career after HESA. We invite you to continue to embrace various voices and formats as you engage in liberatory practices and dismantle systems of oppression within higher education.

In Community,
The Vermont Connection Co-Content Editors
Todd C. Cooley & Dana K. Prisloe