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Dawn of the 20s: Volume 19.1 Introduction

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Introduction

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Taboo Readers,

A new year is upon us and 2020 is also the start of the second decade of this century. We continue to find ourselves in a quite complex social and political landscape. Like when *Game of Thrones* says *Winter Is Coming*, this editorial introduction is being written and contextualized as *Impeachment Is Coming*. All things equal, and given the conservative majority of the Senate, the Impeachment trial of Donald J. Trump may be over before this issue of *Taboo* is published. Our editorship started with talking stock of the Trump moment and it has been well over three years since the 2016 election and the world has become even more uncertain, even more based in lies and fractured communities globally. And, for our journal it is in this context that we take a moment to take inventory of where we have been and where we are going, recommitting to be multi-truth tellers in complex and *Taboo* ways.

This particular issue has been a long time coming, and the authors of the eight manuscripts are owed a debt of gratitude for their patience. Co-Editor Varner moved institutions to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education* is now housed at the Gayle A. Zeiter Literacy Center. We are excited about the journal's new home at UMLV and the exciting directions we can now grow within this context. Co-Editors Varner and Carlson remain committed to a journal that pushes boundaries, seeks to say the unsayable, and generally pushes the academic community around any number of socio-cultural intersections. As the journal begins with this first issue at UNLV we welcome Andromeda Hightower of UNLV as Co-Editorial Assistant along with Timothy Wells from Arizona State University. Over the first six months of 2020 *Taboo* will be announcing an aggressive publication agenda that combines Regular Issues, Standing Issues, Co-Editor in Chief Special Topic Issues, as well as Special Issues proposed by outside scholars and/or by invitation. This agenda will help our readership and potential authorship

see the direction in multiple year cycles and we are eager to share our editorial commitments.

This issue is comprised of eight articles that are all over the map: from a look at disability access, to issues of race, sexuality, literacy, and beyond. This issue is, as always is the case with regular issues, a complex kaleidoscope of interest and intrigue with plenty to keep readers interests. As is often the case we are providing the titles and abstracts of the pieces in this issue in our introduction to help you make choices about how you read this issue. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us as editors (kenneth.varner@unlv.edu) and (dlcarlson2@gmail.com) with any ideas, suggestions, and feedback.

In This Issue

1. ***Inaccessibility Simulator - Demo Mode*** - Michaela Stone. This piece provides a text-based simulation of the experience of making sense of inaccessible online mathematics instructional content through the use of a screen reader. As such, it is most authentically experienced without explanation of content or conventions. It should be uncomfortable to read. It should be impossible to fully understand. It should require, but not support, significant effort to access the entirety of its content. An optional, explanatory postscript is included for readers who desire clarification.

2. ***Dark Bird: The Raven Society and White Nationalists*** – Jacob Bennett. In this piece Bennett asks, is there a connection between White supremacy and university merit-based honorary societies? In this provocation, Bennett describes his experience in one such honors society at a university that has graduated numerous White supremacists. Bennett contends the history of the school creates a reality in which “merit-based” admissions to any school organization perpetuates White supremacy. In the society he joined, it was his goal to have members reflect on this argument by writing and reading a parody of Edgar Allen Poe’s *The Raven*. Mere months after my reading, White supremacists descended onto my university’s town and murdered a White activist while injuring dozens of others. Even after these events, deans at the graduate school he attended seemed unmoved to change the structures of the program to move toward equity. In this article, he asks why.

3. ***Finding Lionel: Reconciling Multiple Identities as Black, Gay, and Gifted in Dear White People*** – Christopher Sewell. Sewell asks what does it mean to be a Black male looking to reconcile their intellectual, sexual, and racial identities? bell hooks (2004) notes that Black masculinity is inherently tied to notions of power; Black males, socialized to be dominant, find this power and dominance in tension with conceptions of power in society at large. Uber masculine depictions of manhood become the basis for the baseline Black male. Concurrently, scholarly conversation depicts Black males from a deficit perspective. Justin Simien’s *Dear White People* tackles the lives of Black students at a Predominately White Institution (PWI) as

they deal with a racial incident on campus. Using Means and Mitchell's theory of Quadruple Consciousness and Whiting's Scholar Identity Model, this paper argues that Lionel's positionality as a student writer at Winchester forces him to not only embrace his Black identity but grapple with the implications of being labeled and/or identifying as Queer. This paper will explore the complex negotiations that Black, Queer males face at top Predominately White Institutions and begin to think about how we might support students as they negotiate the multiple identities that they embody.

4. *Dislodging Patriarchal and Academic Boundaries: Dialoguing on Trauma through Text, Email, and Facebook Messenger* – Monica Taylor and Emily Klein. In this piece two feminist teacher educators who are professional colleagues and friends, use personal correspondence outside of the academy to help explain how they bridge and navigate their authentic whole selves as teacher educators. These dialogic narratives break from traditional academic texts and their focus on logic and objectivity as they are written from intimate voices and include deep emotions, detailed descriptions of personal anecdotes, and imagery and references to art, music, literature and our general interactions of reading the world. Through examples from their personal daily correspondence during the Kavanaugh hearings, they explore the following questions: How can we push the boundaries of academic writing to write for our authentic selves? What are the spaces where we can do this? How do we bring in our real-world experiences of sexism, misogyny, and rage into our academic writing as teacher educators?

5. *Cupcakes, White Rage, and the Epistemology of Antiracism* – Benjamin Blaisdell. This article reveals how white rage and antiracism—often in the form of disdain for Black joy—surfaced at Pride Elementary, a racially integrated school in the urban center of a small city in the southeastern United States. Based on a 5-year ethnographic study, it analyzes the perceived threat some white teachers and parents felt by the mere presence of Black students, teachers, and administrators. It highlights the insights of the Black principal, whose experiences most clearly illustrate how school-based racism is rooted not only in white supremacy but also antiracism, thus supporting Dumas' assertion that school-based research on race must better address antiracism.

6. *Youth of Color Living and Learning in the Age of Racial Paranoia: What Social Justice Educators Need to Know* - Pierre Orleus, Curry Malott, and Andre Habana. Fearing the other has been entrenched in the minds of many Americans. With Donald J. Trump becoming president of the U.S., overt racism is being re-inserted into mainstream politics. Trump's victory has ushered in an era beset by racial paranoia—fear socially constructed about black and brown bodies, learned at home, in schools, and from the mainstream media, and expressed in unjust and, at times, violent manners. Indeed, racial paranoia has caused racially prejudiced

individuals or groups to behave and act in violent ways against people of color. This essay draws from critical race theory and present day political events involving the Donald Trump government to explore racial paranoia and its multilayered effects on people of color, particularly youth of color. This essay underscores plausible parallels between racial paranoia and the attitude, behavior, and actions of people holding white supremacist ideology and their violence against people of all colors, particularly youth of color. This essay provides suggestions that might serve educators who are working with historically disenfranchised youth of color, including immigrant youth of color.

7. *A Conceptual Framework: Racial Ideology and Teaching Practice* - Kelly E. Demers. The purpose of this article is to describe how a qualitative researcher constructed a conceptual framework. This framework arose from a two-case, critically-oriented study. It provided the researcher with an analytic tool for interpreting how the ideological assumptions of two White elementary teachers shaped their constructions of race and what these constructions meant in terms of each participant's teaching practice. Included in this piece is a summary of the study from which the framework emerged, as well as a description of theoretical and conceptual work that served as its structural foundation. Following is a detailed description each dimension of the framework, and an example of how these dimensions helped answer the research questions driving the study for one of the two cases. The article concludes with a discussion of next steps for the continued development of this framework.

8. *Who's Out? Who's In?: (Re)presentation of LGB+ Individuals in Picturebook Biographies* – S. Adam Crawley. Though the metaphor of windows, mirrors, and maps this article draws attention to depictions in picture books of individuals who identified—or might now be considered because of their romantic, physical, and/or otherwise intimate relationships—as LGB+. However, some picture book biographies limit information about the person's non-heterosexual orientation more so than others. Therefore, this article examines contemporary picture book biographies to explore the representations of individuals' sexual orientation and the implications for young readers. The piece begins with a discussion extant research about LGB(TQ)+ children's literature and asserts the need for biography-focused study. Then the piece outlines methodology and findings, specifically addressing the following questions: (1) What picture books biographies about LGB+ individuals have been published? (2) How do the books reflect the person's sexual orientation? and (3) What are the implications of such representations?

We hope you enjoy the articles in this issue as much as we enjoyed putting the issue together.

In Solidarity,
—Kenny, David, Andromeda, and Timothy