Encounters in Theory and History of Education / Encuentros en Teoría e Historia de la Educación / Rencontres en théorie et histoire de l'éducation

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Abstract

Rosa Bruno-Jofré (Queen's University, Canada) and Gonzalo Jover Olmeda (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain) co-founded *Encounters in Theory and History of Education* in 2000. *Encounters* was created to support scholarly work on the theory and history of education and disseminate it to the widest audience possible. With this goal in mind, *Encounters* has always been completely open access, and publishes articles in English, French, and Spanish. This article explains the history, publication process, and future of *Encounters*.

Keywords Open access; Data visualization; Digital scholarship; Editorial process; Knowledge dissemination

Résumé

Rosa Bruno-Jofré (Queen's University, Canada) et Gonzalo Jover Olmeda (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain) ont co-fondé *Rencontres en théorie et histoire de l'éducation* en l'an 2000. Ils ont créé *Rencontres* afin d'appuyer la recherche sur la théorie et l'histoire de l'éducation et la disséminer au plus vaste public possible. Afin d'atteindre ce but, *Rencontres* a toujours été disponible en libre accès et publie des articles en anglais, français et espagnol. Cet article explique l'histoire, le processus éditorial et l'avenir de *Rencontres*.

Mots clés Libre accès; Visualisation de données; Érudition numérique; Processus éditorial; Diffusion du savoir

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Introduction

Encounters in Theory and History of Education is an open access (OA), peer-reviewed, trilingual (English, French, and Spanish), interdisciplinary journal that acts as forum for rigorous scholarly work on the theory and history of education. *Encounters* prides itself on being global in terms of its content, authors, reviewers, and editorial team. It welcomes articles that are methodologically and historiologically reflective or have a critical perspective, and that could open new lines of thought or ways of approaching knowledge in the interdisciplinary study of the history and theory of education, broadly conceived. Rosa Bruno-Jofré (Queen's University, Canada) and Gonzalo Jover Olmeda (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain) co-founded *Encounters* in 2000. Although the first issue was primarily conceived in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, *Encounters* moved to Queen's University in its first year when Rosa Bruno-Jofré became the dean of the Faculty of Education. It has been produced there since then. In 2007 Rosa Bruno-Jofré founded the interdisciplinary Theory and History of Education Research Group, and *Encounters* has been linked to the group from that founding.

The editors' intention has always been to generate a space for democratic access to knowledge. In its early years, *Encounters* was available in both print and electronic format, and it transitioned to being a digital-only journal in 2011. It has always been free to access; in fact, the early printed issues were distributed to libraries in Spain and Latin America for free. *Encounters* was the first journal at Queen's University to use the Open Journal System (OJS), and has continued to be at the forefront of using products from the Public Knowledge Project (PKP) for the last 18 years. In 2018, led by Bruno-Jofré's initiative, the editorial team behind *Encounters* launched The Theory and History of Education Monograph Series using PKP's Open Monograph Press (OMP). The early support of the Faculty of Education at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (until 2011) and the ongoing support of the Faculty of Education and Library System at Queen's University (2000–present) have been critical to the success of *Encounters*. The current editorial team includes: Rosa Bruno-Jofré (senior and founding editor), Gonzalo Jover (founding honorary co-Editor), Jon Igelmo Zaldívar (associate editor), Ana Jofré (digital section editor), and Kathleen P.J. Brennan (managing editor). The journal's advisory board includes scholars from Canada, the United States, Spain, France, and Chile.

The journal has published articles by both established and junior scholars from Canada and other parts of the world. To continue to strategically grow readership and participation, the editorial team has created a new digital section of the journal, which launched with our 2018 issue in the late fall. Submissions published in the digital section of the 2018 issue included a digital interactive work created by the Visual Analytics Lab at OCAD University, led by Sara Diamond.

Encounters publishes one issue per year. The 2018 issue included a special thematic group of articles on "Gendered Education in History, Theory and Practice: Case-Studies on Women's Education, Gendered Spaces and Performativity of Knowledge" (guest coordinated by Carl Antonius Lemke Duque and Álvarro Chaparro Sárnz), special feature articles drawn from other work on the theory and history of education, and

two pieces in the new digital section that aim to showcase work that takes advantage of the journal's digital platform. The 2019 issue will honour philosopher Nel Noddings with articles by philosophers from around the world discussing her major research areas. In the future, *Encounters* plans to continue pushing the boundaries of scholarly digital publishing both in terms of content and technology. The editorial team also looks forward to fostering and deepening the connections between scholars of education from around the world through their participation in both the journal and monograph series as authors, reviewers, readers, and members of the advisory board.

Current operations

From its outset, the journal has been run with the central tenet that its outputs be free of charge for both readers and authors. *Encounters* has always been an OA journal without article processing charges (APCs). Because the editorial team has had this open access model in place from the beginning, the journal's development and structure have always been inherently lean. Initially both the Faculty of Education of Queen's University, Canada, and the Department of Theory and History of Education of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain, funded the journal. However, the funding from Madrid was discontinued in 2011 as a consequence of the financial situation of that university. Queen's University has been the primary funding source for the journal since 2011, but we are applying for outside funding to strategically grow the journal while maintaining our commitment to OA publishing with no embargoes or APCs. The editorial team has watched with excitement and hope for the future as OA publishing has become increasingly valued and respected. This movement toward OA publishing as the norm rather than the exception can be seen in the *Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications* (Government of Canada, 2016), and the *Encounters* editorial team agrees wholeheartedly with the report's assertion that "Societal advancement is made possible through widespread and barrier-free access to cutting-edge research and knowledge, enabling researchers, scholars, clinicians, policy makers, private sector and not-for-profit organizations and the public to use and build on this knowledge" (par. 1).

With the support of Queen's University (both the Faculty of Education and its library system), *Encounters* has been able to use the OJS platform without any direct costs to the journal. The editorial team handles most aspects of the publishing process in-house and works with trusted colleagues to handle any outside work at a reasonable cost (e.g., French translations of titles, abstracts, and keywords).

Encounters is indexed in: Web of Science Core Collection (ESCI), IBSS: International Bibliography of the Social Sciences, EBSCO Education Source, DOAJ-Directory of Open Access Journals, DIALNET, Difusion y Calidad Editorial (DICE), and LATIN-DEX. The journal is a member of the Canadian Association of Learned Journals (CALJ), MIAR (Informacion Materix for the Analysis of Journals, Spain), and DICE. In Spain, the journal is evaluated in CARHUS PLUS+ (Group C), CIRC-Clasificación Integrada de Revistas Científicas, and MIAR (2016)-Matriz de Información para el Análisis de Revistas: 9.7/10. *Encounters* was recently accepted by Scopus, and will be indexed by Scopus in 2019. Our future plans include working with the Queen's University Library system to target other major indexes as well.

The editorial team uses the OJS system to handle all aspects of operating and publishing *Encounters*. Authors can submit pieces in response to thematic calls for articles or other areas that fall within the intellectual remit of the journal (theories and histories of education) through the website (*Encounters*). Once a piece has been submitted to the journal, the senior editor, in consultation with other members of the editorial team as needed, decides whether or not to send the piece out for review. The managing editor, at the direction of the senior editor, uses the OJS system to correspond with the author/s and to contact potential reviewers. Reviewers then access the anonymized manuscript through their accounts on the *Encounters* website and have the option to either submit their comments in a word document or use our review forms. After the reviews are completed, the senior editor, again in consultation with the editorial team as needed, decides how to proceed with the piece. The managing editor then corresponds with the author/s, and follows up on any revisions required based on the reviews and comments from the editorial team. If the piece is accepted, the managing editor coordinates any needed copyediting, formatting, and the translation of titles, abstracts, and keywords into the journal's three operating languages. The new digital section follows the same process, but the digital section editor handles the coordination of the process in place of the managing editor. When compiling the yearly issue every fall, the entire editorial team works together to handle final edits and formatting issues.

As discussed above, *Encounters* uses the OJS platform for all phases of journal production, and thus we are able to use that same system to gather vital readership and user data. We used the OJS system to examine the following data categories over the last two years: main page views by month, table of contents views by month, abstract views by month, and article downloads by month. Over this two-year period, *Encounters* averaged 28 visitors per day and 842 visits per month to the main page. It had article downloads from more than 110 countries, including Canada, the United States, Afghanistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, Denmark, El Salvador, Fiji, Ghana, Honduras, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Lesotho, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, South Africa, Spain, and Zimbabwe. While the rates vary based on the time of the year (the journal is published in the late fall, so there are expected peaks there), the numbers are generally trending upward. The number of article downloads by month is generally 10 times larger than any of our other metrics. This is likely due to people accessing articles directly through search engines and other third-party services such as Google Scholar. The number of article downloads by month is thus a good indicator that the content of the journal and the authors it publishes are of broad interest and reach a large number of people. Over the past two years, the main page of the *Encounters* website was viewed 20,210 times, abstracts were viewed 66,326 times, and articles were downloaded 126,607 times.

Challenges

The journal's main challenges stem from being a niche, independent, OA journal. As members of the editorial team have explained in the past, it can be "challenging to maintain a journal that is not attached to a big publisher or a professional association. However, this permits a great deal of independence" (Bruno-Jofré, Zaldívar, Marie Mari, & Martínez Valle, 2015, p. 50). Over the last few years the team has worked hard to increase the scope of the journal, both in terms of what it publishes and who reads

and cites its publications. This process has been complicated by the lean nature of the funding model, which limits the ability to work with third-party services, invest in an advertising strategy, and pay outside consultants for complex technical needs. Throughout the history of *Encounters*, these potential limitations have been overcome through the tireless work of the core editorial team. Historically, most members of the editorial team have worked on a purely voluntary basis, but the managing editor is normally paid an hourly wage for various tasks. Outside consultants have also been paid to handle specialized translations as needed.

Plans for future development

In thinking through plans for future development, the editorial team has targeted four areas in particular: applying for outside funding through organizations such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC); launching and developing the new digital section; establishing an advertising strategy; and creating a companion monograph series.

Launching and developing a new digital section

The new digital section is a major part of our strategic effort to grow our readership and respond to the needs of our scholarly community. In recent decades, there has been a proliferation of digital projects in the humanities. While many such projects meet high standards of intellectual rigour, they cannot always be entirely transmitted in print or in flat PDF files, as they require affordances that can only exist on a digital platform, such as interactivity. There is a need, therefore, for channels through which such works can be peer reviewed and published as scholarly works. Yet, to date, there are very few formal peer reviewed channels of publication for such works. One such platform is the Stanford University Press digital projects (Publishing).

In response to this need and challenge, the editorial team has initiated a new section seeking scholarly submissions of works expressed on visual and/or interactive platforms. Our call for submissions includes (but is not limited to) web pages, interactive displays, and data visualizations. We encourage the submissions of articles that feature links to digital works or project websites, but we are especially interested in the submission of digital works that can be published as web pages on the journal website. In the long term, we envision archives that include both text-based works in PDF as well as a collection of scholarly digital works.

For this endeavour to be successful in the long term, we will require additional support to meet our growing technical needs. While the latest version of OJS (OJS3) does not limit the type of file that authors can upload, which has allowed us the possibility to experiment with submission types, the system does not have the ability to serve works that are technically more complex than an HTML page, such as interactive data visualizations. Digital section editor Ana Jofré has provided a short-term solution so that we can publish and present these works as soon as possible, but a large part of our strategic development will be devoted to finding long-term solutions for hosting a collection of scholarly digital works alongside our archive of published articles. Such development also includes a deep engagement with research on the preservation of digital

works, as the speed with which technologies become obsolete presents a major challenge in archiving these works.

The inaugural digital section appeared in the 2018 issue. Submissions to this section have been quite varied, from visual storytelling to interactive data visualizations, and present a departure from the text-based theoretical works typically published in *Encounters*. The 2018 issue, for example, includes a work that walks readers through how to turn a spreadsheet of data into an engaging and effective visualization, with both practical and theoretical considerations. The final outcome, the interactive visualization, is featured in the journal as part of the article, and users are able to experiment and interact with it.

We expect that this digital endeavour, with interdisciplinary works spanning into fields beyond history, such as design theory, will broaden our readership.

Establishing an advertising strategy

In addition to our digital innovations, the editorial team also plans to increase the number and range of our readers and contributors through publicizing *Encounters* in a variety of ways. First, we will continue our efforts to submit pieces about *Encounters* to edited volumes and scholarly journals such as this one. In the future, we plan to submit further publications on *Encounters* that emphasize its role in the publication of rigorous, peer-reviewed, and OA scholarship in the theory and history of education.

We also plan to work strategically with members of the Theory and History of Education International Research Group to spread awareness of *Encounters*. This work will include the continued involvement of group members in the journal as contributors, reviewers, and advisory council members. We also look forward to working with group members to advertise *Encounters* at the conferences they attend, with their students, through their social media accounts, and with their wider research networks. We anticipate that this outreach process will involve creating and placing advertisements in conference programs, other journals, and, potentially, on websites connected to the research areas of *Encounters*. As part of the journal's efforts toward leveraging third-party services, we plan to look into using services such as Google Ads to reach a wider audience. Depending on future funding, we may also work with an outside social media consultant to develop an advertising strategy that will be coordinated across social media platforms and work with our other advertising efforts.

Creating a companion monograph series

We are expanding the reputation of *Encounters* through the creation of The Theory and History of Education Monograph Series. Our monograph series is the pilot project for PKP's Open Monograph Press (OMP) at Queen's University. Professor Rosa Bruno-Jofré is the founding and senior editor of the series, and it was through her initiative that the Queen's University Library first considered the use of OMP. Bruno-Jofré and Rosarie Coughlan (scholarly publishing librarian at Queen's University) have served as co-chairs of the pilot program. The first book, edited by Thomas O'Donoghue (University of Western Australia) and Simon Clarke (University of Western Australia) and titled *New Directions in Research on Education Reconstruction in Challenging*

Circumstances: An Introduction to the Field, has already completed the review process, and we anticipate its publication in early 2019. This book features a broad range of contributions examining cases of education reconstruction in various categories of challenging circumstances. The chapters include review essays and qualitative empirical studies within the interpretivist paradigm. All of the contributions take particular care in addressing the unique contexts of their subjects, and these contexts include Rwanda, Serbia, Chile, and many more. O'Donoghue and Clarke commissioned this dynamic collection of scholarly work to generate new and exciting research pathways in the field of education studies. Our second planned book will be a monograph by Nel Noddings (Professor Emerita, Stanford University) and Laurie Brooks, and we anticipate publishing it in late 2019. O'Donoghue and Noddings are both active members of *Encounters*, having variably served as contributors, reviewers, and advisory council members.

Concluding thoughts

At its heart, *Encounters* is one instantiation of its creators' belief in the critical importance of open, meaningful access to scholarly work on the theories and histories of education. As a journal, it has always supported the work of scholars regardless of their affiliation, or lack thereof, which has led to a rich publication history that has featured junior scholars, independent scholars, and senior scholars from around the world. As we continue to work toward growing the reach and scope of the journal, we have high hopes for the future of OA publishing and for supporting new forms of scholarly publication that take advantage of the artistic and interactive capacities of digital platforms.

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