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## From the Editors

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In a decade of nationalistic fervor, defense of white supremacy, renewed anti-Asian and anti-Black racism, unequal distribution of wealth and resources highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic; a journal like *Dialogues in Social Justice* is so needful. This journal, working at the intersection of adult education and social justice, aims to call out current injustice through an academic approach.

With a sense of urgency, an issue on *Liberation Theology* reminds us that the field of adult education has historical leanings enmeshed in faith, the church and liberation theology – the fusion of Christian theology and socio-economic scrutiny that privileges the poor and advocates for their liberation. The movement was born in the Latin American Roman Catholic Church in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Concurrent with this movement; Conscientization, an emancipatory pedagogical process, was developed by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire.

Arguably, there is in the early 2020's an urgent need for conscientization as it relates to the complicity of certain segments of the American Christian church that consciously or unconsciously prop up institutionalized racism through revitalized voter suppression policies, unsubstantiated accusations of Presidential election voter fraud, an attack on science during the Covid-19, not to mention the recent US Capitol Building insurrection on January 6, 2021. Much of the evangelical church's outright participation, veiled rhetoric, or deafening silence are issues of not just conscience, but also of education. Liberation theology is systematically opposed to the conservative politics of white evangelical America who support charity and paternalization of the poor instead of distributive economic social justice and equity for all in the world's richest country. We, the editors, maintain that we can learn from liberation theology as it intersects with Adult Education, and that this discussion is long overdue.



This issue of DSJ is honored to open with an introduction by Canadian educator, Peter McLaren, who is long recognized for his revolutionary pedagogy, cutting-edge educational scholarship, political activism, and liberation theology. Peter McLaren is a founding member of the contemporary critical pedagogy movement and worked closely with Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, and Donald Macedo. In addition, he is one of North America's leading experts on Freire.

McLaren's introduction is followed by eight research articles, one reflection, and two book reviews. The first article is Sydney Curtis's *Acting Out the Shared Heritage: Towards A Pedagogical Model for Liberatory Education* which makes a connection between the traditions of liberation theology and critical pedagogy toward teaching spirituality in postsecondary education. The second article, *Liberating Faith and the Journey of Inconclusion: A Close Reading of Paulo Freire's Essay "My Faith and Hope*, unpacks Freire's faith and relation to liberation theology. Zacharakis, in this issue's third article, grounds the thinking of Guitterez, Dewey and Marx as they relate to both liberation theology and individual responsibility and equality. The following four articles situate liberation theology and critical pedagogy in specific international and US adult education settings: Jenga in rural Uganda, Conti in a Pittsburgh PA correctional facility, Wedderman & Ramdeholl within a US State University, and Lui in a community-based setting in China. The final research article by Williams is an in-depth analysis of liberation theology and the Poor Peoples' Movement.

This eclectic group of adult educators, contexts, and writings suggest that liberation theology in its divergent evolution is firmly entrenched in the conceptualization and praxis of adult education around the world. This is DSJ's first venture into this topic; therefore, letters to the editors are welcomed as we, the editors, wish to expand the dialogue.