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Table of Contents

Editorial – the new normal? <i>Chris Duke</i>	2
Climate Change and Injustice	3
Those who Give the Most, Benefit the Least: The Injustices of Extractive Industries <i>Shauna Butterwick</i>	3
Third ‘Climate Justice and ALE’ webinar <i>Thomas Kuan</i>	10
Academia and Publishing	12
Knowledge Democracy: The Call for Open Access Publishing <i>Budd L.Hall</i>	12
Blackmailed by Academia <i>Gabriele Strohschen</i>	13
Higher Education and Changing Demography: Book Review <i>Chris Duke</i>	15
Other Issues	17
Later Life Learning SDG. Ageing Well in Post-Pandemic Cities: CLC Webinar Series <i>Thomas Kuan</i>	17
Community Learning Centres Progress towards Education for All in Vietnam <i>Khau Huu Phuoc</i>	18
News and Action from PIMA	21
From the PIMA President – PIMA supports the Trips Waiver proposal <i>Shirley Walters</i>	21
Invitation to a Webinar Climate justice and related struggles 30 March 2021	22
PIMA supports the five-year ALE Campaign – WE ARE ALE <i>Shirley Walters</i>	24
What do members bring to, and seek from, PIMA? Summary of PIMA membership survey <i>Maria Slowey, Julia Denholm, Carol Kuan</i>	25
Welcome to New Members	31

Editorial – the new normal? *Chris Duke*

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This is *the* year of paradoxes. Everything has changed and maybe nothing has altered. The impossible is easy, the familiar impossible. Taboos become normal conduct, as the taken-for-granted slips away. New information technologies and the use of media open up incredible learning opportunities, and more sinister ways to influence, control, enslave and destroy. There is nothing like a global pandemic or war to make the impossible obvious and easy.

C-19 pandemic sweeps across everywhere and everything. The rate and range of responses are remarkable; yet millions have lost faith in governments and leadership, science and rationality. Citizens are fed fake news by the false prophet and, fall prey to fantasy and terror; yet rediscover family, neighbourhood and ways of living together, even as wealth-poverty gulfs widen further, New technologies hasten to gain ground on an ever-accelerating climate-change extinction crisis brought upon ourselves. The glass is half full and half empty, as Chris Brooks pointed out in Bulletin 34, in *Two Victories for Science and Rationality: Why so much doom and gloom?*

The Bulletin looks beyond normal frameworks of assumption and practice for understanding and action to address, moderate or transform the way we manage now, and to have adult learning and education (ALE) in a context of lifelong learning (LLL) better serve peoples, as diverse and unique individuals in their communities.

This year we are part of a new effort to work together with others across nations, regions, and local communities to put learning in the reach of all for the benefit of all. We are looking afresh at how learning occurs and can be supported to meet individual, community, and ecological needs, while recognising the key role of nation-states, intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) - the UN agencies, the EU and OECD – aim to identify needs and orchestrate sustainable development, currently through the SDGs.

In the next Bulletin, No. 36 in May, PIMA Vice-President Heribert Hinzen will take up the theme of partnership with examples and experiences for building on our interwoven linkages, with opportunities to cooperate globally, as individuals and in associations.

This current issue goes to the heart of an ecological crisis with the extractive industries that consume non-renewable resources in sometimes devastating ways and at an unaffordable long-term cost. PIMA shares this initiative with many other local and global agencies, especially international and national civil society organisations (CSOs, NGOs, INGOs) that speak with one voice and common purpose about the essential contribution of big LLL guiding ALE: for effective advocacy and impact on political and institutional policies, strategies, processes and outcomes.

The pandemic this year influences all that we do. How do peoples and power-brokers learn from it and change our priorities and policies? This is up to us all, working together. The UNESCO World ALE conference CONFINTEA VII in 2022 is an occasion to promote the

essential role of ALE in implementing all the SDGs, and in altering assumptions and behaviour throughout the human endeavour.

In this Bulletin, we also question the creation, ownership, accessibility and use of published knowledge created in academic, political and professional circles: what does postcolonialism (or is it neocolonialisms?) mean? Where and how is it sought, created and used, to what effect? Who creates, owns, and uses? - the wealthy North for the Global South, big powerful players for 'little people'? - the wealthy hi-tech knowledge-rich 'old West' or older civilisations, ways of knowing and being of the 'middle kingdom' East? - and in every place, older wisdom and ways?

Is the only shared future competing for hi-tech megacity and uniform, or still and again shared 'natural' and balanced? We plan to sustain inquiry into learning life deep as well as lifewide, absorbing the 'new normality' that people forced to stay local and look inward are learning. We will probe the commodification of knowledge, like so many life assets; and the boxes into which we partition, hamper, or prevent more equitable sustainable development.

In 2021 the Bulletin will sustain efforts for effective collaborative local-regional action and culture change, with special issues on the conduct of universities and higher education, and on what has fast become an extinction crisis. As part of our open collective process, we here present feedback on the Bulletin; and invite all members and friends to help enhance its impact and usefulness.

Climate Change and Injustice

Those who Give the Most, Benefit the Least: The Injustices of Extractive Industries *Shauna Butterwick*

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Report on the PIMA 10 February 2021 webinar

On February 10th, PIMA held the third webinar in their series exploring the links between climate justice and adult learning and education. PIMA's goals are to educate, collectively face the climate emergency, and consider what it means for adult education in the context of social solidarity, human development and socio-ecological justice. *Linkages amongst climate change, resource extraction and adult learning and education* was co-hosted by PIMA, CASAE *Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education* and SCUTREA (Standing Committee on University Teaching and Research into the Education of Adults). There were 120 registrants with 75 attending from numerous countries including South Africa, Serbia, Cypress, Singapore, Australia, Canada, United States, Scotland, England, Ireland, Nigeria, Uganda, and Timor-Leste. The recording of the webinar is posted on the CASAE website: <https://www.casae-aceea.ca/webinars/>

The working group for this event included: Shirley Walters, Jane Burt, and Shauna Butterwick. Particular appreciation goes to Tim Howard of the CASAE secretariat who managed the zoom hosting technology and to Mary Kostandy, UBC PhD student, who was on standby to offer technical assistance to registrants. And huge gratitude to the keynote speakers Trusha Reddy and Judith Marshall. This was a very successful collaboration amongst the three networks of PIMA, CASAE and SCUTREA.

Shirley Walters, PIMA President, opened the webinar and posed a key question for consideration: “Is mining vital to modern life on Earth – under what conditions?” Jane Burt, an adult educator and environmental activist from South Africa, currently living in England, facilitated the remainder of the programme. She noted that our presence on this webinar meant that we all owned and consumed products and materials that are extracted from the earth, illustrating our complicated and paradoxical relationship with mining. On the one hand, it creates massive environmental degradation and is a major force behind migration and displacement of peoples. On the other hand, it is also a source of income and employment for many communities. As the speakers subsequently outlined, however, those who give and who are negatively impacted the most, benefit the least. This imbalance and injustice threaded its way throughout programme presentations as well as participants’ active engagement in the lively chat and their verbal comments and questions.

Trusha Reddy, the first speaker on the programme, has been involved for over 15 years as the Programme Head of Women Building Power: Energy & Climate Justice at WoMin African Alliance (<https://womin.africa/>). Her work and that of other women in this alliance, a Pan-African ecofeminist organisation, is focused on exposing the impacts of extractivism on African women, and on organizing and defending the land from resource extraction. Their activism is underpinned by women-centred and just development alternatives grounded in a radical and African ecofeminist agenda.

This approach challenges the dominant patriarchal view that nature and natural resources are at the service of humans, an orientation which “reduc[es] nature and natural resources to inputs to extractive production processes, such as power stations, dams, and agricultural projects, which ultimately destroy these resources upon which humans and all species survive” (Randriamara, 2019, p. 19). From an ecofeminist orientation, patriarchy dehumanises and excludes women from decision-making and “brings women’s labour into exploitative service of the dominant economy and men’s interests in households and communities” (p. 19).

Trusha began her talk outlining the devastation brought on by climate change, specifically the latest cyclones in southern Africa which are occurring far more frequently, flooding vast areas of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and South Africa, resulting in many deaths and the displacement of thousands. The African communities which have suffered the most and which have the least capacity to adapt have contributed *the least* to creating climate change. This injustice is at the heart of climate chaos. Trusha and WoMin have called for support for African communities who must now ‘be in a constant state of disaster preparedness’. They also are having to resist another source of devastation to the land -- the rapidly expanding mining industry. This heavy burden leads to their precarious existence all in the name of

infinite economic growth. Those most devastated by these climate events are the *sacrifice zones*: “Low-income and racialized communities shouldering more than their fair share of environmental harms related to pollution, contamination, toxic waste, and heavy industry. On this account, disparities in wealth and power, often inscribed and re-inscribed through social processes of racialization, are understood to produce disparities in environmental burdens.” (Scott & Smith, 2017, p. 861)

Sacrifice zones, both human and environmental, were also an issue of concern for Judith Marshall who was the next presenter. Judith worked for many years with the Steelworkers Union in Canada, conducting member education on global issues, coordinating union cooperation projects in southern Africa and international worker exchanges, many of them in the mining sector. Judith researched the collapse of the tailing ponds in British Columbia at the Mt. Polley copper mine owned by Imperial Metals (Marshall, 2017). As Judith noted in her talk: “The dam collapsed in August 2014, spewing twenty-five million cubic meters of toxic muck into Quesnel Lake, a pristine glacial fjord. The spill then surged onward into the Fraser River system. There were no deaths, but ecosystems were severely damaged including important salmon spawning areas. Habitat and livelihoods of more than 50 Indigenous communities in the Fraser River Basin were affected, some of them as far away as 200 km from the actual mine site”.

Judith’s research led her to make connections with other researchers and activists investigating tailings dam collapses, particularly the Samarco mine in Mariana, Brazil, owned by Vale an Australian mining company BHP. That human-made disaster instantly killed 19 people in the community closest to the mine. Six hundred kilometres of the river basin of the Rio Doce were impacted, destroying a hydro-electric dam as well as farms, livestock, property, and livelihoods, reaching the Atlantic ten days later. Judith noted how these tailing pond failures, while happening far away from each other, were shockingly similar, illuminating the global policy of profit ahead of safety. Like Trusha, Judith also brought attention to the complicity of governments with the larger mining industry. Judith called on adult educators to support the development of basic literacy to teach communities about the realities and impact of extractive industries and the immense footprints these industries leave behind, all the while not benefiting local or national communities in the ways promised. The extracted resources are sent to far-away markets.

Shauna Butterwick, adult educator and Professor Emeritus at the University of British Columbia, then provided an overview of the film *Women Hold Up the Sky* created by WoMin; participants had been encouraged to review the film before the webinar. This documentary tells a powerful story, similar to the accounts provided by Trusha and Judith, about the exploitation enacted by extractive industries who have utter disregard for the lives of humans and the land. The film is also a hopeful story as it highlights the courage of women at the grass roots fighting these industries to protect the land that feeds and sustains their families and communities. In the film, activists like Fakazile, Margaret, Belly, July, Lucy, Alice, Monica, Nora, Violet, and Flora among others, describe how extractive oil, coal, and hydro industries have colluded with patriarchal power systems and governments which deny

women's ownership of land. The women describe themselves as 'squirrels against an elephant'.

In Uganda, the Congo, and South Africa, companies such as McAllister Energy are given access to land without the necessary consultation with affected communities. The film provides shocking images of how these companies drive over, burn, and bulldoze smaller communities where women are the major providers, turning rich, green, fertile lands into dead, grey, flattened landscapes. Fighting against this devastation, women have organized and resisted using popular theatre, song, study circles and grassroots exchanges, revealing the lies told by mining companies about the benefits that will come to communities if they agree to industry terms. The women have also asserted their rights through legal resources and the courts, with some victories. These grassroots activists remind us, however, to remain vigilant as corporate powers are always searching for new ways to expand.

Discussion

Following the presentations, participants were invited to consider three questions: i) based on what we have heard, what are we learning as Adult Educators? ii) what does this mean for ALE? and iii) what struck you about this webinar and where would you like this conversation to go from here? In the subsequent discussion, several themes emerged including:

- the complicated relationship many communities have with mining companies
- the importance of solidarity networks
- the development of adult education strategies including mining literacy
- the importance of crafting an alternative narrative.

Employment vs the Environment

Presenters drew attention to the paradoxical relationship we have with mining and how mining companies exploit a false binary between the environment and employment. Webinar participants noted other examples such as in Puerto Rico, where popular educators were teaching the community about the poisonous waste emitted by a Coca Cola plant. The locals responded by saying that while they recognised the pollution, they still wanted the plant to continue, as it was the sole source of income for landless families. The seduction of mining companies who engage with local economies, which have few if no other alternatives for employment, is a central issue for adult educators.

Building Solidarity Networks

Participants brought attention to other examples of activists engaging in various interventions to resist the expansion of extractive industries into their communities. Like the activists in *Women Hold Up the Sky*, in Ireland, campaigners used the courts in their fight against Shannon LNG US and Fortress Energy in North Kerry (South-West of Ireland), which were seeking permissions to build a fracked gas import terminal on the Shannon Estuary. After 13 years, they were victorious (<http://www.shelltosea.com>). In Alberta, Canada, a network of ranchers, environmentalists and Indigenous communities have come together to protest the licenses given by the provincial government to Australian mining companies for open pit mining on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains (Beers, 2021).

While their efforts led to the temporary restoration of previous policies to not permit licenses for extractive mining operations, activists are watching carefully for the government's behind the scenes collusion with mining companies. The economic imperative fuelling natural resource extraction in Alberta has a long history. Transforming how Alberta relies on extractive industries to fuel the economy is a long-term project but there are signs of shifts taking place. Many other examples of resistance to extractive industries are taking place throughout the world. For example, for years protestors have pushed against the building of the Keystone pipeline running from Canada to the United States, through Indigenous territory. The efforts of these activists paid off, as within days of becoming the new US President, Joe Biden, cancelled the pipeline.

Building Economic and Mining Literacy

In her presentation, Judith noted the role of adult education in creating basic literacy programmes to demystify the false promises made by mining companies. But it is not just those concerned with climate justice who is engaged in adult education, Judith warned. Mining companies are developing programmes and using their power to create a narrative to keep mining in the public eye. Using skilled and persistent PR initiatives, mining companies are making multiple incursions into the public school system, universities, museums and high-profile philanthropy in order to, as Judith notes, “buy community good will through corporate social responsibility projects.” As she said when looking at what mining companies promise, “there is a lot of un-coding to do”. (For another exploration into corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its role in influencing communities about mining, see George Sakodie's UBC thesis).

Participants listed other events and resources focused on the relationship between climate change and adult education. Decades ago, participants observed how the Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth* predicted, despite some errors in modelling and timing, the current climate and environmental crisis (Meadows et al, 1972, 2004). More recently adult educators have organized conferences on this theme such as the *6th Biannual Nordic 2015 Conference of Adult Education and Learning*. Events like these point to how adult education must bring a global view, teaching how trans-nationalism, the erosion of the cultural and political influence of nation-states, is enabling the expansion of exploitative industries. (Harju & Heikkinen, 2016).

Analysing climate change by attending to both power and place is yet another aspect of developing a form of mining literacy (Klutz & Walter, 2018). While building a form of mining literacy in which the devastation wreaked by mining and other extractive industries is illuminated is important, another role of adult education, participants noted, must include assisting communities in learning about energy alternatives and working with communities to help them think creatively about what these alternatives might be. Adult educators must help learners navigate ‘mountains of information’, in order to unearth hidden truths, including the link to COVID 19 and disaster capitalism (Foster & Suwandi, 2020). The question of whether there was such a thing as ‘good mining’, and if there exist principles that can guide mining development, is an area needing further research.

Educators are also finding ways to assist learners to find their voices and place their concerns on the public agenda. This is a central concern of Canadian researcher and activist, Joan Kuyek, who has recently published *Unearthing Justice: How to Protect Your community from the Mining Industry* (2020), based on years of activism with numerous communities. Her book seeks to educate communities about the false equation between mining and prosperity. Illuminating the various tactics used by extractive industries, particularly as they engage with Indigenous communities, such as “extraction contracting” (Scott, 2020, p. 269), is another area of adult education curriculum development needed in climate justice movement.

Participants pointed to other resources such as Charles Eisenstein (2018), for understanding and intervening in the climate crisis. Eisenstein challenges activists to see the dangers of limiting climate change interventions in reducing carbon emissions. “The rivers, forests, and creatures of the natural and material world are sacred and valuable in their own right, not simply for carbon credits or preventing the extinction of one species versus another”.

Crafting an Alternative Discourse

For people working for climate justice, challenging frames and narratives are essential. What language we use in addressing climate injustice is significant. Participants argued against using terms like ‘natural disasters’ as there is nothing natural about these events. Rather they are human-induced. Indigenous scholars and activists have much to teach us concerning the significance of how dominant corporate and colonial interests engage in using terms that sever our relationship to the earth as a source of life. Botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer, a member of the Citizen, Potawatomi Nation, in her book *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (2013), calls for replacing the concept of ‘natural resources’ with the idea of “earthly gifts”. Terms such as those articulated by Kimmerer, help us to “acknowledge and celebrate our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world ... to understand the generosity of the earth and give our own gifts in return”.

Changing the narrative involves adult education initiatives navigating the difficult space between hope and despair. Elin Kelsey in *Hope Matters – Why Changing the Way We Think is Critical to Solving the Environmental Crisis* (2020) calls on activists and advocates for climate justice to engage with radical hope, a concept similar to Freire’s *Pedagogy of Hope – Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2006). For Kelsey, “hope is not about turning our back on the facts. It’s precise because we *do know* how much trouble we are facing ... hope plays a crucial role in mobilizing individuals to take part in collective action” (p. 43).

Conclusion

The webinar offered much food for thought and identified possibilities in response to ‘what’s next?’ The next webinar in this series continues the conversation focusing on “Climate justice and related struggles: Aesthetic, creative and disruptive strategies”. (More information to follow) The February 10th webinar served as a kind of reunion of adult educators from different parts of the world who, from their lively engagement and comments on the chat,

were hungry to connect and to continue the conversation about the role of adult education in promoting climate justice.

Presenters and participants brought attention to the everyday and global details of climate injustice. Thomas Berger (2008) reminds us of the “countless personal choices, encounters, illuminations, sacrifices, new desires, griefs and, finally, memories which the movement brought about ... [while] the promise of a movement is its future victory ... the promises of the incidental moments are instantaneous ... experiences of freedom in action” (p. 8). In many respects, Trusha, Judith and the film *Women Hold Up the Sky* point to the possibilities for freedom in action. Education for democratization is one way to think about the role of adult education in relation to climate justice, that is, advocating for political decision-making processes based on authentic and respectful consultation with an educated citizenry.

This report concludes with a poem Judith had cut because of time constraints. Activists in the international network of those affected by Vale, the Brazilian mining giant, were contacted by a Brazilian lay priest working in Mozambique. His parishioners reported strangers arriving in their rural villages, asking about crop yields, and offering payments higher than last year's earnings in return for signatures. Vale's name was on the receipts. Vale wanted land access to build a railway linking its coal mines to a deep-water port. Didi, one of the trade union founders of Affected by Vale network offered a poem, one that captures well the nature of the struggle.

*They move about as if they own the earth,
with receipts and whatever else they might need
to demonstrate that they are lords at
every level, above ground and sub-soil,
from beginning to end of life.
They conjugate verbs like divide, profit,
possess, command.
And us?
We respond with unite, share,
resist and dream.*

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[For the next Climate Webinar, on 30 March 2030, please see below. Ed.]

Third ‘Climate Justice and ALE’ webinar *Thomas Kuan*

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The third ‘Climate Justice and ALE’ webinar held jointly with CASAE* and SCUTREA* on ‘Climate change, resource extraction, and adult learning and education - what are the links?’ on 10 February 2021, echoed voices of concerned women from Africa to Australia sharing stories and woes of mismanaged earth’s resources, and the resulting injustices for indigenous and ordinary citizens. The panel speakers shared thoughts, feelings and data on climate changes caused by randomly destroying Earth’s (sur)face.

Trusha Reddy rightly mentioned that climate changes had affected many countries and that generally, those who have not caused climate change are the ones who suffer most, with the least capacities to adapt, the least resilience, and so on. The panel speakers agreed that the origin of climate change started from the use of fossil fuels for industrialisation, and rapid

extractions from the earth are for the economy, for growth, and profits. Climate justice – is it for the scarifying of people for sustaining resources and survival of the human species? Shauna Butterwick spoke of the book *Braiding Sweetgrass – Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plant*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, and the concept of nature’s resources of Earthly Gift as the need to ‘acknowledge and celebrate our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world’.

In the webinar’s zoom chat, Tom Sork shared an opened source book which is provocative as it is specific to ALE: Harju, A., & Heikkinen, A. (Eds.). (2016). *Adult education and the planetary condition*. Finnish Adult Education Association. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305770068_Adult_Education_and_the_Planetary_Condition. Sir Alan Tuckett mentioned that he was struck by a Puerto Rican popular educator’s experience in highlighting the poisonous waste emitted by a Coca Cola plant on the island. Engaging with people living close to the plant, people argued with him that they recognised that the plant was poisoning them over time, but still wanted to hold on to it, as the sole source of income for landless families. ‘We need creative alternatives too.’

The documentary film *Women hold up the sky* showcased how many ordinary African women suffer and struggle under big mining companies. This reminds me of similar injustices are found in Australia where some township residents were being ‘bullied’ by mining corporations. Those township residents used social media to showcase their cause and call for recalibrations of policies which were not given ‘due diligence’ (allowing questionable deals and policy directions not really in the interests of Northern Australia or even Australia more generally) [ref: [\(1\) Townsville Residents & Ratepayers Association - Posts | Facebook](#)]. Climate changes issues fall on women’s shoulders and their voices are being heard as ‘Women hold up half the sky’ (Mao Zedong’s quotation).

What can later life learners take from these episodes? We may, as we age, ponder on returning resources to the Earth, just as we had taken resources from it when we built our careers, family, and livelihood. Adult learning happens in daily life, and later life learning leads to education or wisdom, which is the knowledge to understand nature’s balances and the need for the return of earthly resources. This is also intergenerational learning, where youth’s advocacy for green and clean climate changes can be supported by older generations.

Jane Burt was an excellent moderator; see her skills in the replay: https://dl.dropbox.com/s/pzzvjjunzclq8na/GMT20210210-160031_PIMA--CASA_1760x900.mp4

The next climate change webinar ‘Climate justice and related struggles: aesthetic, creative and disruptive strategies’ will be on 30 March 2021.

[*CASAE - Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education.
*SCUTREA – Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults.]

Academia and Publishing

Knowledge Democracy: The Call for Open Access Publishing *Budd L.Hall*

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How can I start these notes? Can I tell you about the wonderful book published by an author I greatly admire whose ideas on knowledge democracy have so influenced me? Did I mention that it sells for about Euros 150? Can I tell you about a book that my friend Rajesh Tandon and I worked on for three years about community-led knowledge, only at the end to find out that our book cost more than lecturers in African universities make in a month? Can I tell you about a review of a book that I did for the Oxford University *Community Development Journal*? When I had submitted the review, I was told that I would have to pay £1,200 - to be able to share it freely with friends and colleagues. Do I tell you that despite having coined the term participatory research, I turned down the invitation to write for a new Handbook on Participatory Research because the publisher refused to allow for me to circulate my pieces freely to those persons from whom I learned this work in Africa, Asia and Latin America?

Knowledge is unequally produced and shared. Western, English-language knowledge dominates the global charts of knowledge production. African, Latin American, Asian scholars seldom see their names in the bestseller charts. Scholars writing in French in West Africa live in an almost invisible world to the hegemonic euro-centric knowledge production world. And who can afford a book in any language at \$150? Who can pay thousands of dollars to have an article published in a prestigious legacy publishing company journal?

The commodification of academic knowledge production has reached a point where we are all being forced to think about how we want to see our knowledge products used. For most of my academic life, I was very happy to have my work published by any of the publishers that I came upon. I have published with academic presses, with legacy publishers (Routledge, Palgrave-MacMillan, Sage) and civil society outlets such as the International Council for Adult Education and PRIA in India. I never thought about the price of books. I assumed that somehow if the content was useful, and the word got around, people would find access. In this, I was naïve and selfish. I was happy to add new articles and new book titles year by year to my academic bosses who helped me keep up my academic career respectability. But over the 50 years of my publishing life, the publication industry has changed.

The publishing industries are one of the most profitable of all the global business sectors. Knowledge, as we know, has become a key to economic development. Control of access to new knowledge is profitable in the extreme. We are in the midst of a transformation in the sharing of academic knowledge. Legacy publishers have vast sums of money to influence things like university rankings games, the impact measurements for academic achievement and career advancement for academics, and the status of their employer institutions. Think about the academic publishing process for a minute. Scholars do the research, finding their funding for their projects. They craft their words into chapters, articles or books, and very often then send them off to publishers who create paywalls through market pricing. Publishers

take our intellectual property and limit access through price structures so that those persons whom we would wish could read our work will never see them.

Why do we write academic knowledge products? We need to be honest and say that to some degree we do it because it is required for career advancement in our universities. But I suggest that many of the PIMA readers are people for whom knowledge for change is a more important calling than knowledge for a career. And if that is the case, it is the time right now to stop and think not only about what we write about but how our thoughts and ideas can circulate freely to community workers, majority world scholars, activists and others. PIMA readers come from adult education and community development fields of practice. They are feminists, arts-based activists and dissident scholars, by and large, or wish to be considered as such.

We now have many excellent open access journals in adult education and related fields. There are about 15,000 journals listed in the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#). Publishers are harder to find, but if scholars continue to raise questions about free Open Access (not OA that you have to pay for) then things will change. [Coalition Publica](#) is a Canadian OA structure for journals in both French and English. MIT Press in the USA is all open access. U of Athabasca Press in Canada is similarly Open Access. Some publishers will consider publishing both a hard copy at market price and an OA version simultaneously. There are options. You need to ask each time you submit something to a journal or a publisher. We need new business models for the publishing of truly open access materials, but they are emerging.

I close with the mention of the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science, which will be released in November of 2021. Our UNESCO Chair, with support from Dr. Leslie Chan, Prof Florence Piron and Dr. Lorna Williams, has produced a policy brief [Open Science Beyond Open Access with and For Community: Towards the Decolonization of Knowledge](#). For those who wish to learn more about these approaches to knowledge democracy and knowledge equity, this will be helpful.

Blackmaled by Academia *Gabriele Strohshen*

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“In these, the Chief Justice does not directly assert, but plainly assumes, as a fact, that the public estimate of the black man is more favorable now than it was in the days of the Revolution. This assumption is a mistake. In some trifling particulars, the condition of that race has been ameliorated; but as a whole in this country, the change between then and now is decidedly the other way; and their ultimate destiny has never appeared so hopeless as in the last three or four years...All the powers of earth seem rapidly combining against him. Mammon is after him; ambition follows, and philosophy follows, and the Theology of the day is fast joining the cry. They have him in his prison house; they have searched his person and left no prying instrument with him. One after another they have closed the heavy iron doors

upon him, and now they have him, as it were, bolted in with a lock of a hundred keys, which can never be unlocked without the concurrent of every key; the keys in the hands of a hundred different men, and they scattered to a hundred different and distant places; and they stand musing as to what invention, in all the dominions of mind and matter, can be produced to make the impossibility of his escape more complete than it is. It is grossly incorrect to say or assume, that the public estimate of the negro is more favorable now than it was at the origin of the government.”

Excerpt from the *Speech on the Dred Scott Decision* by **Abraham Lincoln**, June 26, 1857

From our perspective, there is a direct relationship between an intersection of adult education (AE), social justice, and white supremacy. Historically, the idea of social justice and adult education as connected and opposed to oppressive systems, including white supremacist systems, have been the mantra of many so-termed radical adult educators in the US. We assert that the practitioners of AE, irrespective of colour, are not as sincere in their actions to prevent discrimination as their writings might suggest; that they are hypocrites and work actively to suppress the aspirations of the black people they profess to serve. For example, one current exploitative action, which offers lucrative funding, and publishing opportunities to boost their careers is studying incarcerated black men, whom they would be reluctant to hire as colleagues if they were similarly qualified. In this, they withhold one of the hundred keys.

We set out on February 9 2020 to invite voices for ***Blackmaled by Academia***, which we envisage as an assemblage of voices of black males in academia that would provide an authentic look behind the veil of their lived experiences. We conceived its communication, not necessarily in the traditional academic fashion so much as collaboration among authors’ authentic insights on the subject. A rock-hard meta-analysis of all chapters then sought to identify emerging themes on the status, condition, and positionality of black males in academia from which to move forward with action. The essential purpose of this collaboration was to eventually uncover positive and practical ways to advance the inclusion of black men in the academy.

We invited black males to relate their experiences in academia in the roles of student, instructor, colleague, and/or administrator. For their vantage points, other-coloured and gendered stakeholders were equally nudged to reflect on their assumptions, expectations, and interactions, exploring how they perceive reality, the career goals, and the aspirations of black males in higher education.

On February 1, 2021, we announced the publication of ***Blackmaled by Academia***, wherein 18 Brave Males exposed both overt and covert racial prejudice in academia by way of their stories. The book is composed of tales of resilience, strength, persistence, and strategies they use to address the mischaracterizations, fears and injustices perpetuated within institutionalized, racist structures. The themes that emerged focused on positive benefits for the academy and communities, when black male’s talents are fully realized.

We now invite not only further dialogue but also positive action, to move the field past archaic models of Higher and Adult Education; to eliminate medieval, Ivory Tower mentalities that are no longer relevant, nor effective, to meet the educational challenges of the 21st century. Toward these ends, we invite PIMA's international community to contact us so we can identify how best to mutually support such efforts.

Higher Education and Changing Demography: Book Review *Chris Duke*

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Maria Slowey, Schuetze, Hans.G., Zubrzycki Tanya, editors (2020) *Inequality, Innovation and Reform in Higher Education. Challenges of Migration and Ageing Populations. Switzerland: Springer.*

Thirty-one scholars contribute 330 close-printed pages to a 21-chapter study of change in higher education, the 25th in Springer's Lifelong Learning Book Series launched in 2004, with No. 26 on young adults and active citizenship, due for delivery this year. A brief review can do scant justice to such a rich tapestry drawing on the authority of 30 contributors and a dozen mostly wealthy OECD countries. The global South is represented only by the large and wealthy cases of Mexico and Brazil, the book thus naturally profiling the receiving rich more than the poorer sending countries.

The first sentence of the first section fittingly proposes that 'climate change, and its potentially catastrophic effects, may form the dominating world challenge of the twenty-first century', locating interest squarely in the 'real world out there', rather than within the intestines of the institutions that comprise higher education. This sector is itself contested and loosely bounded: a sub-system of education in a diverse, sectorised and much-fragmented world. Only two chapters name universities as their subject, the pinnacles of a larger post-school, post-secondary or tertiary system of colleges and universities abbreviated for example as TAFE and FHE. This wider span features in Archer and Kops' chapter 17.

Much of the literature of teaching after initial compulsory education focuses on universities; but their clienteles have altered and are perhaps now altering faster in many countries, with the changing needs and demands of the 'real world'. Hence the title *Inequality, Innovation and Reform* in the face of multiple challenges, from which are here chosen the demographics of *Migration and Ageing Populations*.

The Springer Lifelong Learning (LLL) Series secures itself a long life, the changing balance of most individual lives further redistributing lifespan from schooling to adult life, and from 'employment' or other 'work' to later life 'retirement'. This term, resonant only in modern wage-based economies, may come to prove ephemeral even there, as social, technological, ecological and cultural coalesce, and recurrent education makes a reappearance. The book went to press only as coronavirus was beginning. But the pandemic quickly made the politically and economically unthinkable natural, not to say inevitable.

In an edited collection like this, the editors must lead to creating an integrative story. This they do well. Part I offers an overall review of the implications of these demographic phenomena: one a zone of acute political and ethical tension for countries of destination; the other, a fast-rising social, economic, and often now also ethical concern in modern individualised and fragmented societies: here age care is no longer normal family business for extended families in stable communities. Until the C-19 pandemic struck, high mobility for work globally distanced the young often oceans away from elderly relatives.

Parts II and III take on the two separated themes. 10 chapters on migration and 7 on ageing respectively describe well and analyse thoughtfully. Part IV integrates overviews first of migration and then of ageing. Finally, Schuetze and Slowey review the demographic change and HE, both now and on through the century.

My question as a historian and lingering optimist is whether looking back and across countries and regions enables us to move forward more fruitfully. In a Langston Hughes footer favoured by Budd Hall "Hold fast to your dreams, for without them life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly". How far and in what ways are today's universities of effective use to their different societies and environments, local and global; that is to say, their engagement. I confess to the view that the education system and its institutions, HE included, are dependent variables rather than prime movers. As demography changes, HEIs like other successful enterprises will look for new lines of business and new ways to market themselves; be it the multiplying elderly, or immigrants, or others in need of what they can offer. The main driver of change is macro-political: dominant ideology and big powerbrokers are in the saddle. Innovation and reform rely more on the political teeth of deep cultural transformation than smart educational leadership.

A cool appraisal of what this richly endowed volume provides might be: Inequality – doing fine; Innovation – universally claimed; Reform - distinctly elusive. Institutional change is glacially slow, though like melting glaciers it can accelerate if conditions change. A central theme for the editors is sheer complexity: the messy untidiness of just about every dimension one selects, producing 'a degree of oversimplification' as in figure 1 on page 14. The same applies to 'migration' - here in practice largely immigration - and even to ageing. The volume adheres to a scholarly belief in systematisation to understand, and to belief in a mission for HE. It gives the last word to the magisterial Simon Marginson who warned a decade ago against retreat 'into a closed-system of self-protectionism and self-interest' (p.322). Most contributions share my leaning to (naïve) optimism. But not entirely: what, asks Zgaga, for example, happened to EHEA and Bologna?

If a reviewer is allowed a dash of scepticism, I save it for the celebration of 'big data' in chapter 18, seen as a servant of 'scientific governance' and a thoroughly good thing, keeping an eye of course to individual privacy. If only it stayed in the hands of good people running universities and not those running the big bad world outside. I also share a philosophical commitment to learning cities as sponsored by the UNESCO-supported Learning Cities Network GLCN: big data may help exactitude of measurement; but how far does it identify, and enhance, individual and community learning for shared gain? Is it stamp-collecting, or a means of doing better? All in all, this book is a good thought-provoking read.

Two footnotes: I visited the Springer LLL series Website to see what themes precede this 25th-anniversary number. It lists only titles still in print, including Volume 1, about the ethics of LLL policy and management. Its apparent longevity on ethics is food for thought if not for tears. Volumes 9 and 15 are about women. The last seven numbers include citizenship and democracy, assessment, certification and access, older adults, curriculum design, and research in ALE. The full Springer list is relevant: like it or not, publishers and series like this are part of our story – actors and not merely purveyors.

Secondly, this is a study of HE systems and institutions, not the inner life and secret gardens of academe. New managerialism has reduced this space, but an inner cultural life often survives new managements. This may matter especially in terms of public civic education, and the contribution of universities to communities local and national. In probably most countries enjoying a free press and use of the Internet, academic staff are in high demand in the broadcast and print media, perhaps also the social media, as sources of information, understanding and wisdom – not as managed employees but as active and informed citizens. Reaching out by many individuals may be changing the perception of HE, and in rehabilitating expertise also rehabilitate HEIs as institutions with the courage to look and speak out.

Other Issues

Later Life Learning SDG. Ageing Well in Post-Pandemic Cities: CLC Webinar Series *Thomas Kuan*

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The CLC - Centre for Liveable Cities *Ageing Well in Post-Pandemic Cities* on 25 Feb 2021 ([Ageing Well in Post-Pandemic Cities \(clc.gov.sg\)](https://clc.gov.sg)) was the 14th in the Series. It featured two speakers: Dr Emi Kiyota, Founder and Director, Ibasho and Charlene Chang, Group Director (Ageing Planning Office), Ministry of Health, Singapore, moderated by Michael Koh, Executive Fellow, Centre for Liveable Cities.

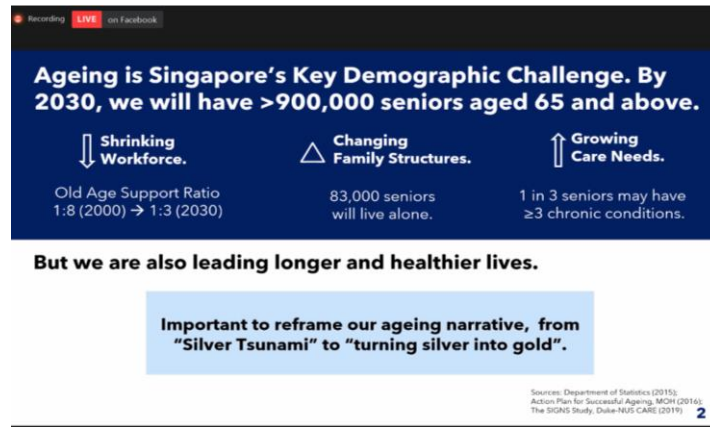
Webinar Synopsis:

With one in six people in the world projected to be aged over 65 by 2050, ageing is set to be a key global transformation of the 21st century. How have COVID-19 altered trajectories in planning for older communities, and what opportunities have the pandemic presented? How can cities continue to remain liveable for their citizens to not just age, but age well?

Emi Kiyota's *Ageing well in post-pandemic cities* shared cross-cultural perspectives and outlined three interesting factors:

1. Advocating the Elders and Caregivers
2. Foster economic development
3. Promote social inclusion for dementia.

With countries still mired in the vaccination of its citizens, Charlene Chang showcased how Singapore approaches its ageing issues amidst the pandemic. To me, the pandemic social experience will produce valuable lessons for future health crisis strategy, as Singapore's ageing population is gaining status as 'amongst the oldest nation'.



Moderator Michael Koh had his hand full of questions, and due to insufficient time, several questions were left unanswered. Host Dinesh Naidu mentioned an interesting challenge that 'maintaining social connections' matters much to 66% of people for ageing well in post-pandemic cities.

Speakers' slides and a replay of the webinar (56 minutes) can be found on the CLC website: <https://www.clc.gov.sg/events/webinars/view/ageing-well-in-post-pandemic-cities>.

Community Learning Centres Progress towards Education for All in Vietnam *Khau Huu Phuoc*

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Community learning centres in Vietnam

Vietnam started its project of building learning societies in 2005. However, the phrase "learning societies" first appeared in official government document earlier, in a report by the country leading Party at a national conference in 2001.

Community learning centres (CLCs), institutions advocated by UNESCO for the provision of learning opportunities in flexible modalities for all people with various needs, are key players in the process of building learning societies, and adult learning and education (ALE) providers in Vietnam.

The Law on Education (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2005, and 2019) provides that CLCs are continuing education institutions that implement literacy programmes and other programmes responding to the needs of learners, updating their knowledge and skills, and transferring technology on the simple principle that "I learn what I need to."

Starting with two pilot centres in Hoa Binh and Lai Chau Provinces in the north of Vietnam in the project “Promoting Community Learning Centres in Vietnam” (MOET, 1999), this community learning movement quickly picked up momentum and became the most extensive network of ALE centres in Vietnam. CLCs have, over recent years, sustained their number of around 11,000, being present in nearly all communes and wards of the country, and providing learning activities which range from literacy to post-literacy, from income-generation to leisure skills and to provide knowledge for improving the daily life for people of all ages in the locality. They also improve local people’s knowledge of civil laws, and legitimate actions and legal processes.

Adopted by Vietnam, the UNESCO-advocated CLC model has been implemented with degrees of innovation to suit the socio-economic situation of the country. Being “learning facilities of the people, by the people and for the people” (MOLISA, 2018, & MOET, 2018), they are autonomous but still receive the supportive involvement of the government at all levels. In fact, they are under the direct management of the commune/ward People’s Committee, and the head of the local People’s Committee is also the director of the CLC (MOET, 2008, and 2014). This gives the centre an advantage: easy alignment of CLC programmes and activities with the central Government’s direction. Take for example, the first outbreak of coronavirus in 2020. Local governments, by directives of the Central Government, were to take control measures by raising people’s awareness of the disease and giving advice on disease prevention. In their double role as head of the local authority and leader of the CLC, they organised appropriate CLC activities in cooperation with mass organisations like the Vietnam Women’s Union and the Youth Communist Union.

Besides the directors, CLCs also have as their two deputy directors the deputy director of the local unit of the Vietnam Association for Learning Promotion and a local school headmaster. (The Vietnam Association for Learning Promotion is an association that promotes learning mainly through raising funds and coordinating programmes and activities of different unions and association in Vietnam like Women’s Union, Youth Communists’ Union, Farmers’ Association.) CLCs are under the professional direction & guidance of a district Board of Education and Training, a sub-unit of the Ministry of Education and Training. This mechanism enables support in matters of programme implementation.

Challenges faced by CLCs

The dual role of management members helps keep CLCs functioning at low cost as the directors receive salaries through their main duty in the government or school, with only a modest responsibility allowance for this second duty. The flip side of this double function is that many directors and deputy directors are already overloaded with work in their main duty, thus not fully dedicated to this ‘secondary’ role.

Operating on the principle by the people and of the people’, CLCs have another downside: they do not have permanent staff. They do not have a teaching staff of their own, but call for and rely on volunteers living in the area. These are often not teachers by profession, thus having little or no skill of teaching, not to mention andragogy that facilitates transferring of knowledge to adult learners, who make up the majority of CLC programme participants.

About 50% of the CLCs in Vietnam also have seconded teachers from local schools. While this has the advantage of utilising people with knowledge and teaching skills, the practice faces some obstacles due to conflicts with regulations on teacher arrangement by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

CLCs do not have an infrastructure of their own but utilise shared offices of local People's Committees. Very often they are located in rooms set aside by the Committees, which are themselves quite limited in space and facilities. Teaching conducted at CLCs is usually having local people gather in a room where instructors present a thematic talk. Often this mode of teaching and learning does not attract learners.

Another challenge is with financing CLC activities. CLCs receive modest regular operation budgets from the government. The CLCs do not have a strong linkage with other line agencies (Đỗ, 2018) and many have not been able to mobilise resources from society. Therefore, a contrasting picture is seen across the country. In places where CLC management committees are proactive, they may face a shortage of funding for the programmes they want to organise, while in other places where CLCs are quiet, the provided budgets may not be fully utilised. According to Vũ (2020), only about 30% of the CLCs in Vietnam are operating effectively. The figure reported by the Department of Continuing Education is higher, at 75.6%, (MOET, 2018) due to different standards that are applied.

Future direction

For the past few years, a pilot model has been initiated by many local governments, which have combined their CLC with the local Cultural House and Sports Centre to utilise their facilities for learning activities of the CLCs. However, the merger results in the dismissal of education officials like those from the local unit of Vietnam Association for Learning Promotion and a local school, resulting in a lack of any professional contribution in management. Despite this problem, merging has proved efficient in many cases and promises to be a successful model.

At the Conference concluding a project “Enhancing lifelong learning movement in families, family clans, and communities till 2020” organised in November 2020, the Minister of Education and Training, Phùng Xuân Nhạ, told top education leaders: “Talking about education while disregarding continuing education is looking at just half the issue”. Considering CLCs as key players in continuing education in Vietnam, the statement highlights their future role in the Vietnam education system.

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News and Action from PIMA

From the PIMA President – PIMA supports the Trips Waiver proposal *Shirley Walters*

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The PIMA Executive Committee has adopted a new operational policy that enables PIMA to support certain campaigns or causes which are in line with PIMA’s broad aims and purposes. The agreed policy states that a member can propose to the Executive, explaining the reasons, a cause or campaign to be supported. A decision will be made by the Executive and the result will be conveyed to members through the Bulletin or a special note. The issues arose when the Trips Waiver Campaign was brought to the Executive’s attention. Given that social justice and access to knowledge are deeply held values of PIMA, support was given to this campaign. In line with the agreement, I am reporting on PIMA’s support by describing its essence.

“We’re at a point where we are seeing the stark realities between the haves and have-nots in this pandemic, and governments shouldn’t waste another minute to find solutions to stop this inequity” Dr Sidney Wong, Executive Co-director of Medicines Sans Frontieres (MSF)

Covid-19 pandemic has revealed the deep inequalities and lack of solidarity across the wealthier and poorer countries and regions. The race to obtain vaccines reveals the dark underbelly of narrow and deepening nationalist interests, even when the pandemic has shown that ‘we will only be safe when we are all safe’. The virus knows no boundaries. The pattern of vaccine production restrictions and unequal access will lead to an increase in international inequalities, leaving a large part of the world with no access to vaccines not until 2024.

In response to this, India and South Africa have put forward to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) a waiver proposal for TRIPS (Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights). This waiver proposal seems to be the political and institutional response with the greatest potential to guarantee the scaling of the production of pharmaceutical inputs, allowing the adoption of a comprehensive strategy to ensure timely, sufficient, and affordable access to all technologies developed to fight COVID-19.

The intellectual property (IP) waiver proposal aims to allow countries to choose not to enforce, apply or implement patents and other exclusivities that could impede the production and supply of COVID-19 medical tools until global herd immunity is reached. If adopted, the waiver would send a crucial signal to potential manufacturers that they can start producing needed COVID-19 medical tools without fear of being blocked by patents or other monopolies.

The proposal is now officially co-sponsored by Eswatini (formerly Swaziland until April 2018), Kenya, Mozambique, Pakistan, Mongolia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Zimbabwe and Egypt. However, a number of WTO members, including the EU, UK, US, Japan, Switzerland, Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, El Salvador and Australia, continue to oppose it.

We added PIMA’s support to the campaign.

Invitation to a Webinar Climate justice and related struggles 30 March 2021



Invitation to a Webinar

Co-hosted by PIMA, CASAE and SCUTREA

***Climate justice and related struggles:
aesthetic, creative and disruptive strategies***

There is a range of responses to the enormity of global climate crises. They range from denial; to the belief that technology is the answer; some feeling ‘green fatigue’; others, particularly youth and young adults, living in a state of ‘climate anxiety’. There is, however, another group of people; a cadre of feminist artists, activists and educators who refuse to accept, to ignore, to remain silent or to disappear into fear. This webinar focuses on their aesthetic, creative and disruptive strategies. At a time when the world is beset by a looming climate crisis, these public educational practices offer inspiration as the imagination of the possible.

Host: Shirley Walters, PIMA President

Moderator: Darlene Clover, feminist, scholar-activist, professor at the University of Victoria.
Canada

Speakers:

Victoria Foster, United Kingdom

Victoria Foster is involved in social and environmental justice education. She is based at Edge Hill University, UK. She is particularly interested in arts-based methodologies underpinned by feminist epistemology. Her book, Collaborative Arts-based Research for Social Justice (2016, Routledge), provides a rationale for employing this approach in community settings.

Hannah Geldeman, Canada

Hannah Gelderman (she/her) is an artist, educator and organizer who recently completed a Master of Education in Leadership Studies. Her focus is on the role of participatory visual arts in this era of the climate crisis.

Njabulo Chipangura, Zimbabwe

Njabulo Chipangura works at the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe as an archaeologist and is based in Eastern Zimbabwe at Mutare Museum where he has led innovative educational work using an exhibition of diamond mining to create a forum for public dialogue and critical debate.

Date: 30 March 2021

Time: 08:00 PST; 15:00 BST; 17:00 CAT; 20:30 IST

Venue: ZOOM

Please register in advance for this meeting

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJApdu2ppjMsHdFMMCLj4v1F7_1Wfq6eqNpY

For information address CASAE | ACÉÉA casae.aceea@csse.ca

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Along with the ZOOM link, you will be sent a link to short films, which you are requested to watch beforehand.

PIMA supports the five-year ALE Campaign – WE ARE ALE *Shirley Walters*

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we are



PIMA is part of an open global alliance of networks, associations and organisations for adult learning and education (ALE), under the convenorship of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), who are launching a five year WE ARE ALE campaign. One of the aims of the campaign is to ensure that ALE is seen, understood and valued by governments, international agencies, the private sector, civil society, and education institutions.

While Agenda 2030 identifies lifelong learning (LLL) as critical to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ALE, which is a significant part of LLL, is largely invisible. One of the reasons for this is that we are divided into a range of communities of practice:-workplace learning, community education, university-based adult education, lifelong learning, continuing education, health education, vocational training, adult basic education, literacy, popular education, social movement learning, public education, women’s education, and so the list goes on. Those outside our field do not understand ALE. Behind the campaign is the idea that we do ourselves a disservice by not self-identifying under a common umbrella term while continuing in our specialised areas of practice. This campaign is to promote ALE as the umbrella term so that we can campaign and work cooperatively for the good of all.

For the first time, an open alliance of ALE partners has created and accepted three attributes for ALE: justice, well-being and change; and a common global definition and vision of adult learning and education. The definition echoes that of UNESCO’s 2015 Recommendation on ALE (RALE), which includes three key domains of learning and skills: literacy and basic skills, continuing education and vocational skills, including liberal, popular and community education and citizenship skills, for youth and adults including the elderly. The ALE campaign strives to unite ALE advocates, organisations, and practitioners including health, workplaces, communities, universities, and media, to support the campaign and together strive for a healthier planet and a better world.

The campaign will encourage all of us in our networks, associations, organisations to join and support the campaign, with an open kick-off event on the 22nd March 2021.

Immediate Campaign Actions include: participating in the ‘kick-off event on 22nd’; adoption of the ALE campaign logo and integrating it into our organisations’ communications. By including the ALE campaign logo alongside our organisation’s logo in all communications,

our organisations will raise awareness for the campaign across all forms of media and social media, and it links us to the broader alliance.

Another action is to use the wider, more inclusive definition of ALE in our lobbying, educating and advocacy work, and locate our special area of practice within this.

The definition was developed in collaboration with 13 international associations, including PIMA, from all regions of the world. The definition helps us maintain a consistent and collaborative effort for education and advocacy initiatives. All the detailed information will be available on a soon-to-be-launched website.

A medium-term action will include engagement in the UNESCO processes in our own countries and regions, and internationally, leading up to UNESCO's Seventh International Conference on Adult Education – CONFINTEA VII, to be held in 2022. We aim to ensure strong civil society engagement in the Conference processes, programmes and outcomes.

In the interests of justice, well-being and change, locally and globally, this five-year campaign will encourage us to act together for ALE: to be seen, understood and valued as critical partners towards a healthier planet and a better world.

We are all invited to become involved!

For updated information please consult Shirley Walters ferris@iafrica.com or Heribert Hinzen hinzen@hotmail.com.

[Please note that Heribert Hinzen will take up this theme at length in the next Bulletin. Editor]

What do members bring to, and seek from, PIMA? Summary of PIMA membership survey *Maria Slowey, Julia Denholm, Carol Kuan*

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Background

As a network, PIMA is only as vibrant and strong as the time and energy that members can commit to pursuing its aims of promoting, interrogating and mobilizing for adult learning and education.

The network is evolving, and it is excellent to see new members joining every month. So, it seemed timely for the Executive Committee to find out a bit more about who we are, why we joined, what we hope PIMA can achieve, and what ideas we have for further development.

This survey, conducted over December 2020/January 2021, was not intended as a scientific study, however, it does provide a snapshot of the views, interests and suggestions from the 30 colleagues who generously took the time to respond in some detail.

To them, we say a big **THANK YOU!**

Colleagues offered rich comments and valuable insights that are summarized here. The full details were considered at the February 23, 2021 meeting of the Executive Committee. Particular attention was paid to practical suggestions made by respondents as to further ways in which PIMA might develop.

You will hear more about these in future Bulletins.

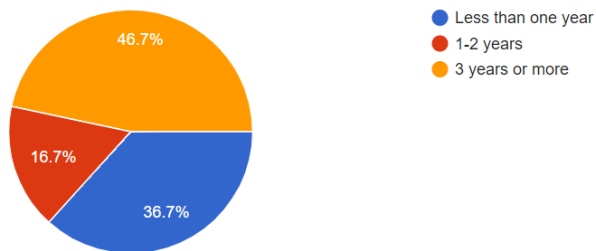
This brief report covers five areas: the profile of respondents; reasons for joining PIMA; perceptions of the main strengths of PIMA; ideas for further suggestions for development; strengthening connections with other organisations/networks/institutions with which we are involved.

1. Profile of respondents

The graph below shows respondents were fairly evenly divided between new members – those who had joined less than one year ago – and longer-standing colleagues who had been members for three years or more. This seems positive as it shows that PIMA membership is renewing itself over time. Additionally, it suggests an opportunity for new members to become more engaged with activities.

1. How long have you been a member of PIMA?

30 responses

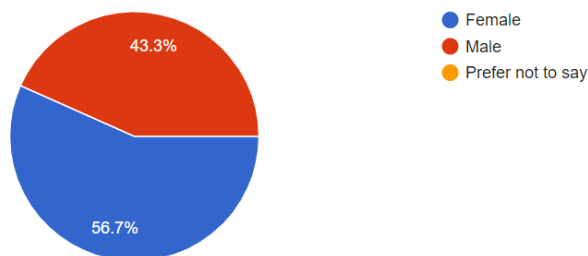


In terms of **geographical spread**, the largest group of respondents is based in Europe: Estonia, Ireland, Germany, Sweden and the UK. The next largest group is from North America – Canada and the USA – followed by Africa, Asia and Australia.

Respondents roughly reflected the gender balance of our membership.

8. What gender do you identify with?

30 responses



2. Reasons for joining PIMA

We all have different reasons for joining PIMA but have rarely articulated these. So we were interested to find out more about members' motivation. This was an open-ended question that yielded interesting results.

At the risk of losing some of the richness of the comments made, responses can broadly be summarised into three main themes: networking and fellowship; knowledge exchange, information and inspiration; and furthering specific areas of ALE development.

Theme 1: Networking and fellowship

One of the strongest underlying themes directly connects with the objectives of PIMA concerning **making connections and promoting networking** between like-minded scholars and activists.

Particularly to the fore is the value placed which respondents place on the value of PIMA to supporting **international connections**.

Examples of such responses include the following:

- *Connecting with colleagues across the world who are committed to raising the profile and strengthening the field of adult learning and education.*
- *To meet people and to be able to know friends with the same ambitions to make it better to connect with colleagues and friends around the world within the adult learning and education and lifelong learning community to utilise our collective experience and capabilities to contribute to the 'interrogation mobilisation and advocacy' of adult learning and education towards socio-ecological justice.*
- *Fellowship with similarly engaged adult educators.*
- *International engagement with like-minded people.*
- *Be aligned with like-minded practices and practitioner-scholars from different countries.*
- *Sharing information and experiences.*
- *A community of practice and support – both scholarly as well as emotional support to each other.*
- *A wider international network of like-minded colleagues and another outlet for my work.*
- *Engage with colleagues in civil society on adult learning and education.*
- *Creating a more uninhibited OTB (outside the box) forum and network for new approaches to old and emerging problems concerning ALE/LL to the 'real world'.*
- *I believe that we are better together and connected across the globe.*

Theme 2: knowledge exchange, information sharing and inspiration

The second cluster of responses highlighted the value which colleagues placed on sharing **information and learning from each other**.

Again, the value placed on **international links** comes through strongly. Some examples of this response include:

- *To keep myself informed on relevant developments in lifelong learning.*
- *To keep up to date with developments in adult education particularly across the African continent.*
- *To connect with international thinking and research on lifelong learning and skills development.*
- *To learn about the practices of lifelong learning in countries and continents other than the ones I reside in at any point in time – to track the changes that may occur in the domain of lifelong learning through the times.*
- *Collaboration and trends related to adult education I can bring to my corner of the world.*
- *To learn from the knowledge network.*
- *Networking with colleagues working with adult and continuing education, reading newly published materials, be able to know about conferences and research in the area.*

Theme 3: Furthering specific areas of ALE development

Several colleagues drew attention to particular areas in which they were interested and felt they felt could be developed further through their membership of PIMA.

- *To share learning experiences on older adult learning or later-life learning.*
- *To find a group of like-minded scholars and to focus on gender and ecological issues.*
- *I'm active in seeding the learning cities movement in my home country – where it is just getting started – learning from those who are further along, and in illuminating the connexion among lifelong learning, learning cities and sustainability.*
- *To develop the network of ALE and build a strong partnership and community of practice.*

3. Perceptions of the main strengths of PIMA

Respondents were invited to comment on their perceptions of the main strengths of PIMA.

These can be grouped under four broad headings.

- (i) Value of the international/global reach of PIMA underpinned a lot of the comments.**

It is clear that respondents see PIMA is offering a range of valuable supports and opportunities- but several respondents again refer to joining because of the *International-global perspective and network*.

- (ii) Benefits of connecting with a network of progressive people dedicated to similar values.**

Illustrative comments offered by respondents include the following:

- *Building synergies. Impressive membership list. Good leadership/Presidents! Ideological engagement, intellectual acuity, members' track records.*
- *Opportunity to be open to ideas that may fall outside the mainstream of publication Policies within the field of adult education lifelong learning and ALE.*
- *A most open-minded professional association.*
- *Access to the knowledge shared by colleagues. The clear rationale with value in action gesture that could advocate something radical. Willingness to explore complex issues together.*

(iii) Exposure to new ways of thinking- 'outside the box.'

(iv) Specific benefits of PIMA.

The Pima Bulletin was highlighted for special mention. (Editor Chris Duke, take a bow!)

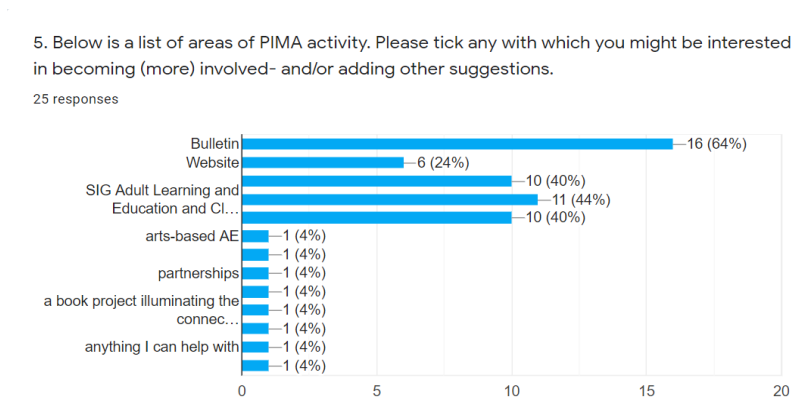
The Newsletter; webinars; organizing team; relevance, regularity and free access.

4. Ideas/ suggestions for further development of PIMA

Respondents were asked for suggestions as to how PIMA might develop further and be more effective. Here we received many helpful, and practical suggestions, about which you will hear more in the future.

- (i) **Strengthening lobbying.** Here respondents saw the value of working collaboratively with other relevant organisations/associations/institutions.
- (ii) **Connecting with members.** The point was made by several respondents that some so-called 'retired' people who are released from FT professional positions now have the time – plus energy, expertise and creativity – to devote to furthering the work of PIMA so we should find ways of better harnessing all this commitment.
- (iii) **Supporting intergenerational learning/working.** Stimulating ideas here included supporting the 'next generation', mentoring, collaborative writing, a 'history corner', involving students and supporting 'tomorrow's leaders'.
- (iv) **Engaging members.** This included offering support to each other in current challenging circumstances.

- (v) **Enhancing connections with other areas of ALE.** In addition to strengthening connections with other associations/networks with which members are involved, this group of suggestions included ideas for fostering links with other areas of ALE, for example, town planning, health, the sciences, climate change, and design.
- (vi) **Raising the profile of PIMA.** Some respondents pointed out that PIMA does not seem to be widely known; need for better clarity of connection with PASCAL; the need for better reach into the global south.
- (vii) **Developing a specific work programme** (perhaps on an annual basis?). There were many useful suggestions which, as mentioned above, are already under active consideration to take forward asap. Examples included: policy statements; virtual forums; working on joint courses; publications; indicators on good practice; outcomes; development of CPD modules; reports from colleagues who've attended conferences/workshops etc.
- (viii) **Moving from a CoP (Community of Practice) to a Movement.** Ideas here included supporting ALE in a time of crisis, lobbying for a more equal share of funding for ALE; use of on-line social space to explore social issues.
- (ix) **Engaging in existing activities.** Respondents were asked to indicate their interest in working with current PIMA activities. (See the list below.)



5. Strengthening connections with associations/organizations with which respondents are involved

The more we know about the links PIMA members have with other relevant networks the better the opportunities are for synergies, collaborative working and avoiding duplication.

Respondents provided a comprehensive list of almost other **50 national and international** organisations/agencies/institutions with which they are involved with relevance to ALE.

As PIMA is committed to collaborative working, this provides very relevant information to the Executive Committee who will seek ways of harnessing and strengthening these connections in the future.

Concluding comment

Again, **thank you** to the 30 busy people who completed the survey.

While it is not possible to do full justice to their feedback in a summary like this, we trust colleagues will find it interesting to hear something of the views and ideas members have for the further development of our network.

We also hope that some of you may be encouraged to get (even more) involved, perhaps initiating action in new directions.

Welcome to New Members

Sturla Bjerjaker, sturlabjerkaker@gmail.com, now a retired and independent senior advisor in adult learning and education (ALE), is an eminent and senior member of the Scandinavian and wider European adult learning and education scene. He is currently Chair of the Senior Council Oslo Municipality, Vic- chair of Seniornet Norway, and President of the cooperative consultancy Phronesis SA. He is a staunch champion of popular, liberal and community ALE and an advocate of the State and society's responsibility to promote and support it, as his membership of the Adult Education Hall of Fame indicates.

Jo Forster, Jo.Forster@ed-alumni.net, returned to learning as a young mother with two children and went on to do her masters and doctorate. Her doctoral thesis is entitled, '*Exit, loyalty and voice*': *the experience of adult learners in the context of de-industrialisation in County Durham*. She is interested in adult education concerning social justice, human vulnerability and structural inequality. She describes herself as a socialist feminist researcher, writer and activist who sees gender and class being constructed through the symbolic power of a capitalist system. She has played different roles in adult education in de-industrialised deprived communities of North East England.

PIMA Website <https://pimamembers.wixsite.com/network>