

Letter from the Founder and Editor

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

– Ralph Waldon Emerson

I came across this quotation many years ago, in a very different context than the one I currently find myself in. While reading, re-reading, editing, and re-editing the papers in this journal, however, Ralph Waldon Emerson’s words resonated with the endeavours of the contributors and editors of this journal.

One of the many reasons why I enrolled as an undergraduate student at Concordia University, particularly in the Department of Religion, was the possibility of making sexuality one of my concentrations. As I was browsing through different departmental websites, I realized that sexuality was a recurring theme. Students in many different Departments in the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Fine Arts have the chance of exploring the topics of sex and sexuality from many different disciplines, and this endeavour is solidified in the recently-approved major and the long-standing minor in Interdisciplinary Studies in Sexuality. As students, we benefit from a wide range of methodologies, approaches, theories, and instructors, which allow us to develop solid understandings of what sexuality is and how to approach it. This strength, however, is also one of its weaknesses. Because sexuality students are scattered across various university programmes, we do not have a centralized body that allows us to exchange ideas, research, and knowledge. This problem was what inspired me to start this journal. I wanted to create a space where sexuality students would be able to engage in academic dialogue with one another and with faculty members.

It is my honour as the founder and editor-in-chief of Concordia’s *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Sexuality* to present you with our first issue. The contributors to the journal you now hold in your hands are engaging with the study of sexuality from a variety of perspectives: History, Art history, Film Studies, Sociology, Anthropology, English Literature, Disability Studies, Women’s Studies, Cultural Studies, and Creative Writing. This interdisciplinary approach not only showcases the multidisciplinary nature of Concordia’s sexuality program, but also the need for dialogue across disciplines, fields, and programs in the study of sex and sexuality.

This journal is the product of the work of many individuals and I would like to recognize them and thank them at length. To Marnie, the journal administrator, my best friend, and my partner in crime, thank you for your help in starting this journal and for your invaluable advice. I owe a big thank you to the editors who, since last summer, have put up with my

constant, lengthy e-mails and who did an excellent job when it came to putting the journal together. To Mr. Robert Smith, who patiently guided me through the funding process: a big thank you for that and for your words of wisdom. To Trina Daniel, our outstanding graphic designer, thanks for working with us on such short notice and being so energetic and passionate. To Katrina Caruso, I certainly owe you a big thank you, not only for your work as an editor, but also for sharing your experience as former editor-in-chief of CUJAH and for guiding me through the final stages of the publishing process. To the contributors, whose work is the essence of this journal, and whose commitment to the study of sexuality is praise-worthy, thank you very much.

Before concluding, I would like to thank the faculty and staff of the Department of Religion, particularly Tina Montandon, Munit Merid, and professors Lorenzo DiTomasso and Donald Boisvert for their guidance and support.

I now invite you to go on and read the wonderful essays in this journal. They are by no means prescriptive, so I invite you to engage with them, understand them, criticize them, and use them as inspiration for your own work. Going back to the quotation above, do not follow our lead, but instead go where there is no path and leave your own trail in the field of sexuality studies.

Congratulations to the writers and to my wonderful team on starting what I hope will be a long-standing tradition at Concordia. It has been a pleasure working with all of you.

Best wishes,

Daniel Santiago Sáenz

Founder and Editor-In-Chief

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