

We welcome you to the inaugural issue of *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies*. As emerging scholars from diverse disciplines in education and information studies, we came together with an interest in promoting critical and innovative scholarship. Through our discussions with one another, we recognized several themes that we consider important in responding to the current historical moment in our fields: 1) a critical examination of the growing inequities that exist within schools, libraries, and other education and information institutions, 2) a commitment to research that makes use of interdisciplinary frameworks, and 3) the promotion of the scholarly work of graduate students, post-doctoral scholars, and practitioners. We believe these themes can help link the multiple specializations and topics included within the broad scope of education and information studies. In integrating these commitments into the mission of *InterActions*, we hope to create a counterspace in which alternative solutions and progressive visions can be shared.

The relationship of academic journals to their historical and social contexts is often a more or less unconscious one. By contrast, we hope that *InterActions* will represent a deliberate intervention into its historical moment—in regard to the disciplines of education and information studies as well as the culture of scholarship more generally. A renewed conservative offensive currently seeks to gain greater control over public education and information institutions and calls for a reactionary re-alignment of values. An emboldened right wing attacks the goals of affirmative action. Law enforcement demands almost unlimited access to library records and internet communication. Business-oriented “choice” and voucher initiatives transfer essential economic resources out of a public education system that desperately needs more funds. With regard to scholarly discourse itself, well-funded think tanks work to curtail academic freedom and label any expression critical of the status quo as “unpatriotic.” These developments are deeply linked to the expansion of a form of global rule that aggressively strives to reconstruct the world according to the views of an increasingly narrow and privileged minority. As intellectuals, activists, librarians, and educators, we need to recognize the necessity to respond to these processes. Part of our response will be to continue to explore ways of imagining and implementing pedagogy, recordkeeping, student retention, information management, and more, that are useful and creative. Additionally, we must critically confront the current political and social changes head on in our work as part of the struggle for a radically different and better world. *InterActions* will continue to encourage and promote such efforts.

One important way in which we aim for *InterActions* to provide a critical counterspace is through the promotion of interdisciplinary scholarship. To fully understand how education and information institutions affect our lives, an array of theoretical lenses is needed. In accordance with the trend toward

interdisciplinarity in many academic areas, we recognize that incorporating the epistemologies, paradigms, and methodological approaches of diverse fields and traditions can help us respond to this task. Through increasing academic interchange, traditional disciplinary frameworks are being dramatically challenged and reconfigured in provocative new ways. We hope to continue this process of cross-fertilization and transformation. Furthermore, we are deeply aware of the profound insights that non-traditional disciplines such as ethnic studies, queer studies, women's studies, disability studies, labor studies, and others continue to provide to research within our fields. Therefore, we are especially committed to acknowledging and encouraging work that combines insights from these disciplines with research in education and information studies.

In addition, we believe it is vital for emerging scholars and practitioners to have publishing outlets for their work. We intend for *InterActions* to create opportunities for emerging scholars to engage with peers through the processes of submission and review, while simultaneously crafting and refining diverse lines of research. By connecting those with similar intellectual and political concerns, we aim to provide a space for emerging scholars to take innovative risks and advance their fields. We also strongly encourage practitioners and activists, who are involved in the front lines of our fields, to submit their reflections and observations for publication.

Finally, this endeavor has been accomplished with the encouragement and support of the administration and faculty, as well as the hard work of many graduate students at UCLA's Graduate School of Education & Information Studies (GSEIS). Although the mission of *InterActions* reflects the ideas of the editorial board, the journal shares GSEIS' overarching commitment to the pursuit of rigorous, innovative research and improvement of policy and practice. We believe that GSEIS provides us with a crucial base from which to continue progressive trends and movements in education and information studies.