Aims and scope revisions and other changes

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In a world that is rapidly changing, any forum committed to promoting cultural discourse must pause occasionally to ascertain how well its aims and scope continue to guide the kinds of conversation it hopes to provoke. To this end, members of the editorial staff and board spent time this summer reviewing the journal’s Aims and Scope Statement, researching the statements of journals with related foci (e.g. Journal for the Study of Spirituality and Religious Education), and drafting a revised statement for the IJCS, which was subsequently endorsed by the editorial board.

This new Aims and Scope Statement, a portion of which typically appears on the back cover of each issue of the journal, continues to reinforce the IJCS’s identity as a forum for interdisciplinary, inter-professional and intercultural conversations about children’s and young people’s spirituality and practices of spiritual nurture. It describes even more clearly our recognition that spirituality and spiritual values can be understood from religious and non-religious perspectives, and our desire to promote research focused on secular contexts as well as faith or wisdom traditions. It emphasises the importance of attention to context and practical implications as well as abstract theoretical claims.

This new statement also incorporates a non-discrimination clause, something we think essential in times when divisive social and political rhetoric can render discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, physical or mental ability or age more likely. The IJCS aims not only for civil discourse, but for respectful engagement about diverse and holistic approaches to children’s and young people’s spirituality and personal development. This concern for respect is not a new stance, but it is now an explicitly stated rather than implicitly assumed expectation. The articles we publish will continue to reflect particular viewpoints within diverse belief systems and academic disciplines, and we will even more actively encourage our authors to socially locate their perspectives rather than to assume universal understandings and practices or employ ambiguous ‘we’ language.

The full text of the journal’s new Aims and Scope Statement can be accessed at http://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=cijc20. We hope it will serve to draw even more researchers, scholars and reflective practitioners into the lively discussions that have already characterised the IJCS and will develop in our future.

And other changes …

The journal is also undergoing a change of editorial team and the new team will be introduced in the next issue, 23.1. Below are messages from outgoing editors, Jackie and Brendan.
I (Jackie) have been the managing editor of the journal since 2015 and edited two editions of the journal. I am retiring from academic life at the end of 2017 and Karen-Marie has agreed to become the managing editor at least for an interim period. I was delighted to be asked to edit this journal, which I’ve known and valued for so many years and decades, and feel privileged to have been involved in making some significant changes to the journal, such as the new Aims and Scope, which will better reflect the breadth of our academic field. I’m off now to take up my new roles as a Humanist Celebrant and Hospital Chaplain where my years of experience with the spiritual will stand me in good stead.

I (Brendan) shall also be stepping down from my role as co-editor of the journal at the end of this year, due to both work and personal commitments. I have served as co-editor now for a little over eight years, working closely with Cathy Ota, Karen-Marie Yust and Jackie Watson. What a tremendous privilege it has been to have collaborated with you and to have engaged in such a high calibre of scholarship. I shall, however, remain a member of the editorial board and international consulting editors, and I intend to submit some of my own research for peer review to this journal – something that I was hesitant in doing as a co-editor.

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