

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

WIM LAVEN

This issue of the *Peace Chronicle* explores the theme of Love. An idea emerged from the PJSA 2022 conference held at Mount Union University in Alliance, Ohio, of the *Peace Chronicle* as a love letter to the membership. Thinking of the magazine this way framed our intentionality in a new way, and the editorial team imagined this could draw in more raw personal reflection. The readers can let us know if we are achieving this goal and/or if this is the content you appreciate.

We endeavor to continue in the practice of love by recognizing the past through land acknowledgement, a practice that has made it into past issues. In appreciation to those who have lived, worked, and honored our geographies before us, we recognize the stewardship and resilient spirit that precedes us.

I write to you from my residence on the traditional homeland of the Lenape (Delaware), Shawnee, Wyandot Miami, Ottawa, Potawatomi, and other Great Lakes

tribes (Chippewa, Wea, Piankishaw, and Kaskaskia). I acknowledge the thousands of Native Americans who call Northeast Ohio home. I reside on land officially ceded by 1100 chiefs and warriors signing the Treaty of Greenville in 1795.

Ethical acknowledgements like this can be an act of love. Acknowledgement of the past and the recognition of its influence on our present are some of the many efforts that PJSA is committed to.

Like Amanda Singer asked at the 2022 conference, "what's love got to do with it?" We saw that love has everything to do with peace and justice, but also being in membership together.

This issue presents a diverse collection of expertise and voices to, again, survey the terrain of a theme by taking the context, locations, and needs for healing and hope as matters of serious concern. Following our last issue, on Belonging, we continue to look for ways to find connection, strengthen

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relationships, and establish equity for people in all places and of all identities. But we keep hoping to include more voices and perspectives from the bypassed, marginalized, oppressed, and silenced. A goal, unfortunately, that I have come short on.

This said, several pieces that would be featured in this issue fit into the theme of Love differently than may initially be imagined. One of these, Barbara Cooney's piece, "The Birds and the Bees" has a warning for readers. It features an adolescent desire and experience of love alongside disappointment and disruption caused by sexual assault. Two pieces will also be missing entirely, one on learning to love after domestic violence and another sharing a coming out story. The pieces may open their authors up to pushback, fallout, threats, or violence that they were initially not concerned with, but which subsequently created concerns that we should acknowledge and respect.

In the United States some identities are under attack. Being vulnerable, honest, and open is simply not safe for everyone. Love is not all flowers and butterflies. But not just in the US... imagine being gay under penalty of death. This issue serves as an opportunity to think about dynamic problem solving through crucial challenges but also new categories, types, or ways to think about love.

Jo Ann Oravec, "Technological Intimacies" has us thinking about the ways that technology is changing the way people (or at least some people) practice and experience love. Do you love your computer, or a robot? What if you wanted to marry one? Or have sex with one?

It is not the issue I imagined. I had never heard of a "paedobot" (the term for a child sex robot) or put much thought into synthetic or artificial companions before, but here we are. My friends have confided in me that writing about love is much much harder than it sounds, and it is very personal. My friends are correct, sharing intimacy and vulnerability is not easy. Imagining new ways of thinking about both the past and the present in pursuit of safety and security in the personhood of all individuals, is central to work we do as an organization... I do not think I appreciated healthy boundaries, privacy, or safe spaces enough when imagined what a Love issue would be.

We connect with one another, carrying our hopes and dreams, and we reveal as much (or little) as we are comfortable with.

The issue was also shaped by three weeks I spent in Rwanda this July (that I am still processing). The prospect of loving one's neighbor or caring about a stranger is different after staring at skulls with bullet holes and slashes from machetes. The prospect of loving yourself through self-care is

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challenged and enhanced when you interact with people who were the only survivors of the genocide in their families or who answer tourists' "how was this possible?" every day. "Never forget" has superseded my thoughts on love for much of the summer.

We are trying something new with this issue. We have compiled a Love playlist that is available on Spotify. For each of the selection we offer a short explanation. Music can indeed showcase love and bring out emotions in ways that written words are inadequate, but the real motivation here is to share our humanity and personalities.

I also wanted to make mention of the passing of our fourth anniversary since becoming a magazine. I love the contributions that have been shared in our pages. I am grateful to be a part of this work and this team. For the last four years I have worked with Gabriel Ertsgaard (and will finally meet him in person at our 2023 conference) and Emsie Lovejoy. All the credit for the success of this magazine in the last four years goes to them and our wonderful guest editors, and the shortcomings are mine. I am grateful to continue to have this opportunity.

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