

A Word with Our Editors, Part I: Heather von Stackelberg

By Cynthia Gordon

The Journal of Integrated Studies (JIS) would not exist without the dedication of a strong team of volunteers led by our amazing editors, Heather von Stackelberg, Nicole Hill, and Adrienne Munro. To celebrate their contributions, we will be profiling each editor so readers can get to know them better.

Heather von Stackelberg has been involved from the beginning, and has been key to the development and success of JIS. After five years with the journal, Heather plans to "retire" from JIS to make time for other interests. Her leadership and expertise will be sorely missed.

When and why did you first become involved with JIS?

When Reinekke was first getting the journal going, I saw the announcement that she was looking for editors and reviewers, especially people who had editing experience. A few years before, I had assisted a psychology professor in editing and proofreading two books on the psychology of the Internet (along with other more minor editing experience), so I applied. I was offered the role of Section Editor for Narratives and Creative Non-Fiction, and I've been an editor with the journal ever since.

What is the most surprising piece you have read or story you have come across?

I'm not sure I can describe any one piece as most surprising . . . I suppose the thing that I have been most surprised about as editor is seeing the huge range of topics and ideas that submissions have covered. I find it amazing all the things that people think about in depth.

Please give me some background on your experiences with the MAIS program. What is your focus area? Why did you choose AU?

I'm an AU alumnus now; I graduated in 2010, with a focus in Adult Education, though I wasn't there so much for the Education focus as for the writing and research parts. I picked an Adult Education focus because it seemed like a good place to focus on writing and research, and there wasn't any available concentration that fit better with what I wanted. I'm teaching in an upgrading program for adults now, and I'm able to do this because of this degree, so that part worked out for me. I chose AU in part because the MAIS program looked like a good one, it had the courses I wanted, and also in part because of its flexibility. I live in a rural area and it isn't easy for me to get to a traditional campus. I had fairly small children when I started the program (my youngest was 6). I get good wireless Internet where I am, so the flexibility of the program to work from home on my own schedule was important.

Outside of your studies and activities with AU what do you do for fun or profit?

I write science fiction. That's my main way of staying sane when life gets crazy. I also do needlework; cross stitch, or Temari, which is a Japanese needle art of stitching precise, mathematical patterns onto a ball of string. I also play the ukelele, though not very well yet, as I've been playing for less than a year now.

Please share one surprising or unusual fact about yourself.

When I was attending the University of Alberta, I was part of a Medieval re-creation group, and was

one of the people who put on full armour and did full-contact sword fighting. (So don't ever try to attack me with a big stick. It wouldn't end well. FYI :-) That's where I met my husband, with whom I've just celebrated our 19th wedding anniversary.

What are your writing/publishing/editing ambitions now that you are leaving JIS?

As I mentioned, I write fiction, and I'm just in the process of doing re-writes and editing on my first novel-length piece (and I've started my next one). I'm hoping to put it out there as the first publication of our (my and my husband's) publishing company, World's End. I'm planning to publish my own work first, so that if I screw up on something, it'll be with my own novel and not with someone else's <grin>. In the long run, I want to be employed full-time, editing and publishing other people's awesome work, along with continuing to write and publish my own.