

Editorial

EVOLVING BEYOND BORDERS: THE ONTARIO ACTION RESEARCHER'S LAST ISSUE

Kurt W. Clausen, Editor

When the first issue of this journal emerged on this website in 1998, its founders wanted to hear from, and reach, a certain group of people: Ontario teachers and researchers. This notion had been the brainchild of members of the Ontario Educational Research Council. Flush from a particularly successful conference around the theme of action research, they had felt that local researchers in this area were toiling away in the dark, unrecognized and unappreciated. The creation of this journal was, therefore, the creation of a forum for these unsung workers to display their small victories, failures and gained knowledge. It was designed to be imparted largely to their peers: Other Ontario practitioners who could benefit from this localized insight. How little did the architects of this journal realize that the geographic boundaries held within its title could not be held for long.

When I first became an editor of this journal in 2001, I inherited what I considered a local concern. We accepted mostly local submissions, had an almost all-Ontario editorial board, and an all-Ontario readership (or so I thought). This continued for a few years until I had the good fortune of finding a solid staff to help me find some answers and adapt to new conditions. My first coordinator, Paula Millard fielded e-mails and continued to comment on the trans-Canadian, and in fact global, correspondence that began to trickle in to our site. I first noticed this with a submission from Sharon Murray from St. Thomas University in Fredericton (who is now one of our veteran review panelists). This was followed by a host of submissions from across the country, the United States, Ireland and Indonesia. I wondered how these geographically far-flung researchers found us, and why they chose us to display their writing.

Over the years, various coordinators have brought more and more subscribers to the OAR. Allison Tryon, Linda Payne, and presently Deanna Hodgins have all added to the now 500-subscriber list. What amazed me, however, was the geographical composition of this roll. Many are from Ontario, but sizeable numbers come from across Canada and abroad. Again, I found myself wondering about the thirst for action research that spans boundaries.

Finally, in 2003, Christine Ferguson, a web-designer retained by Nipissing University, joined the OAR staff and began changing the journal's design to the form you presently see. Her insight and technical expertise transformed a rather clunky production into a much more elegant and adult vision of a journal. Alongside these extensive renovations, Christine added a way to track our readers - and it was here that I was able to see its composition. Of the thousands of readers that view our journal each year, the majority were not from Ontario. Rather, people from across the country were reading our articles. A sizeable number of readers also came from south of the border and overseas.

Clearly, our mandate has now burst from its geographical seams and must be seen as more than a "provincial" concern (in both senses of the word). The time has come for it to expand to encompass and acknowledge the many submitters, readers and reviewers who play a vital part in this journal. For that reason, starting with our next issue, we will be changing the title of this journal to *The Canadian Journal of Action Research*. It will continue in almost all ways as its present incarnation, save the change in title to reflect the new reality of its national mandate. We look forward to this new "beginning" as a time to reflect on our core desires for this journal, and look forward to your continual patronage as we expand our gaze.

For our last issue, we will end with three articles that are quite disparate but all revolve around the theme that has been the core of this journal for over a decade. The first, written by **Christine Armstrong** of Kingston, Ontario, concerns the use of writing portfolios in a French immersion classroom. The second, written by **Maher Al-arfaj** of King Faisal University, speaks to the undergraduate learning outcomes at his institute and how well they have been implemented since its recent inception. Our final offering comes from **Kathleen Sharman** from Windsor University, who examines the narrative process as vocational teachers discuss their experiences in the classroom.