

Editor's Note

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Welcome to the *Spring 2011* issue of *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*. This issue (57:1) signals the shift of *AJER* from a print publication to a journal that is published only on-line. It is hard to imagine that the first Editor of *AJER*, Herbert E. Smith, might have envisaged this move some 56 years ago, but it has now eventuated. Indeed, as recently as four years ago it was suggested that there would be no move to dispense with the paper-based journal. Yet, here we are and the paper publication of the journal has ceased. There are sure to be mixed feelings about this change. I remember the satisfaction of holding the paper copy of the journal in which my first article was published in 1994. A journal 'in my world' at that time was received in the mail, searched for (sometimes for hours, and often in many possible locations) on library shelves, dog-eared, annotated, and eventually put in a safe place for protection and future reference. If you lost your copy of a journal you might have to wait some time to get a replacement, and it would not be nearly as easy as going to a website and re-accessing it as is the case today. Many of us have shelves full of paper issues of journals. However, it seems like such collections may be fast becoming a reflection of times past. The world of publishing is certainly changing, as evidenced by more and more journals moving to on-line delivery and the sales of eBooks beginning to challenge those of traditional books. It is hard to predict what the future holds for academic publishing. However, there is no doubt that more and more scholars anticipate that their journal and book libraries will be increasingly housed on hard-drives and/or remote servers. Subscribers often expect immediate access to scholarly works. This is no longer the way of the future. It is the way of today. This first on-line issue of *AJER* has been planned for some time, and is now a reality.

While we note the move from paper-based to on-line delivery of *AJER*, the function of the journal remains the same: to publish original, high quality research and scholarship in the field of education that has been subject to stringent peer-review. This issue of the journal bears testimony to the continued pursuit and fulfillment of this mission. Recent times have witnessed a marked increase in the number of journals in educational research. Some have been established to attend to diverse interests of scholars who considered that the existing outlets were not empathetic to or welcoming of their work. Others have been established to enable scholars to publish in particular language/s. Still others have been established to provide publishing opportunities for special interest and/or regional groups. In this world of substantial changes in publishing *AJER* will remain, "devoted to the dissemination, criticism, interpretation, and encouragement of all forms of systematic enquiry into education and fields related to or associated with education." This is our commitment to our authors and readership.

The future holds several tasks for me as incoming Editor. A review of submission, editorial, production and review processes will be undertaken over the next 12 months. *AJER* faces challenges similar to those of many education journals. I welcome feedback on any of these matters from the community. It is important to build on *AJER*'s strengths while at the same time being willing to consider if there is room or need for improvement.

I would like to thank the previous editor Professor Larry Prochner and *AJER*'s long-serving assistant Edie Peters who both have left to take up other opportunities. Thanks also to Dr. Hans Smits for his high quality service to the journal over many years. I welcome Deb Mallett who has taken over Edie's role. A review of the production process/es of *AJER* is currently underway and changes, if there are any, will be announced in future issues. In the meantime, thanks to all for your continued support of *AJER*.
