

## **EDITORIAL**

### *Publishing Academic Journals in the Internet Era*

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For more than 40 years the *Journal of Educational Thought* has been published by the Faculty of Education in the University of Calgary. The point of the journal has always been to provide a venue for those broadly and deeply interested in educational thought. Because of this the journal, while always encouraging the publication of educational research of an empirical kind, has always tended to have a rather philosophical cast. Controversy in educational aims, foundations, funding, and presuppositions have been our central interest and that of our authors. We believe that publishing in the journal is of benefit not only to the educational profession but to the authors who publish with us. We sought and still seek no other benefit.

JET as a non-profit journal published out of a Faculty of Education, often generously supported by the Alberta Teacher's Association, has never sought transfer of copyright from our authors nor even consent to publish as correspondence between the journal and the authors appeared to constitute such consent and we simply assumed that we would and could act on the best interests of our authors when third parties asked for permission to republish. Our practice was to contact the author(s) in question and simply say yes. However, in recent years a new situation has developed with the advent of the internet. Some large publishing operations are now interested not only in publications in hard copy to be mailed to academic institutions and individual scholars three or four times a year. Rather, they are in the business of publishing all materials as quickly as possible on the internet and only latterly in traditional journal formats. This permits the international scholarly community to access scholarly articles quickly, easily, and from anywhere in the world. Often students or teaching faculty at universities and colleges have the benefit of arrangements negotiated between their institution and a publishing house that, for a regular

annual sum, gives the institution and all its scholars 24 hour access to the entire publishing history of each journal published by the publishing house. This is a great convenience.

One of the consequences of this, however, is that journals like JET which do not have arrangements with a large publishing house cannot provide such 24 hour access to all scholars who want to access an article from the journal. An alternative to this is for such journals to work with a third party that, for a non-exclusive agreement, makes the journal in question available on-line. This means that a small sum will be transferred every year from the non-exclusive re-publisher in the event that some articles are downloaded through their own website relating to the journal in question. This is not a profit-making arrangement for a not-for-profit journal like JET, though in principle every penny received helps to keep a journal publishing. Five years ago JET entered in principle into such an arrangement, though as yet no money has been transferred to us.

Recently some scholars have taken umbrage at such usage of their writings by re-publishing houses working on the internet and in the hopes of gaining some money from such re-publishing houses these scholars have joined in collective legal suit against some of them. The implication for a journal like JET is that if such legal suit were to succeed the re-publishing houses would seek compensation for their own losses directly from the journals in question. Because of this for the first time JET and similar journals will have to seek, as is standard practice in any event, copyright transfer and consent to publish from all authors who would like to be published in the journal in order to protect the journal from legal liability.

One regrets the loss of the innocence and simplicity of earlier times but one must move with the times. From this issue of JET onward all authors who wish to publish with us must sign an agreement of consent to publish and transfer of copyright to be held in our offices.

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