Editorial: IIER endings and new beginnings

Ten years ago in 2004, the NSWIER organised a well attended convention under the leadership of Associate Professor Alan Watson and the NSWIER Executive Board. The conference attracted a sizeable crowd of about 800 delegates eager to engage in the central issues surrounding literacy education in Australia and abroad. I was pleased to be among the many colleagues who offered help with various practicalities surrounding the conference program. This engagement marked the beginning of my involvement in the activities of the Institutes of Educational Research.

The 2004 conference was made memorable for me by a related matter. One of the Keynotes was delivered by Professor Peter Freebody who spoke to the appropriate theme of 'What Works and Why' in considering literacy teaching and learning across the curriculum and beyond. I was particularly pleased to learn about the keynote address, as five years earlier Professor Freebody had supervised my PhD thesis to completion. My research investigated language, culture and identity in educational policy and practices among the indigenous Sami people in the Scandinavian countries. The issues of equity in and access to education through the medium of mother tongue instruction among minority student populations have remained alarmingly relevant to this day. Despite some efforts and leaps in progress at many educational levels in the past 20 years, indigenous education remains inadequately provided for around the world.

I am proud that the IIER has continued to pay particular attention to the social justice issues affecting global education landscapes then and now (see e.g. Special Issue 22(1) in 2012, http://www.iier.org.au/iier22/2012conts.html). Forums such as the one made available through the IIER is one in a series of important measures through which to begin mediating a dialogue that speaks meaningfully to the educators, policy makers and advocates of future change. In light of the recent world events on democracy we are yet again reminded of the urgent need for such progress and cross-border transformation in and of our social collectives.

This issue (volume 24, number 1) however, marks the end of my role as Editor in Chief and the handing over of the Editorship to Associate Professor Anne Power, Vice President of the NSWIER and music curriculum expert at the University of Western Sydney. I do this with great confidence in her capacity to continue the support of the scholarship that marks the quality of papers published in the journal.

Anne Power is a music curriculum expert at the University of Western Sydney and has been conducting research on 'Enhancing Indigenous Content in Performing Arts Curricula in Tertiary Institutions through Service Learning in Indigenous Communities'. She is known for leadership in the field of professional practice and is a member of the Centre for Educational Research. She is published in the International Journal of Music Education, British Journal of Music Education and the Australian Journal of Music Education. She is a former chair of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Research in Music Education and Vice-President of the NSW branch of the Institute for Education.
Research. She is editor of Musicworks, the national journal of the Australian National Council of Orff Schulwerk. Her work with service learning and disadvantaged students converges with themes of creativity. In a recent book *Teaching for a fair go: Exemplary teachers of students in poverty*, she explores creativity as a way of closing the equity gap. Her ARC research *Enabling schooling success* also aligns with themes around equity of access and social justice. I wish Anne all the best in continuing the editorial role which I have enjoyed so much in the last three years.

The work of the IIER extends across local and international borders. I have had the fortune of receiving hands-on support from Anne Power as Associate Editor, and our Assisting Editors John Buchanan, Rita Tognini and Zsuzsanna Millei, all of whom have unassumingly and accurately provided assistance with reviewing and copy editing manuscripts over the years. We work in close collaboration with the international team of members of the Editorial Board who offer their expertise in the form of reviewing and advising on the quality of manuscripts. Thank you for your commitment and generous support.

I wish to also, most sincerely, thank our former Editor and current publisher Clare McBeath and Business and Website Manager, Roger Atkinson, and the WAIER without whom many of the daily decisions and administrative maneuvers would have been made all the more cumbersome. I trust that with continued collaboration of the affiliated IER networks the journal will continue to grow both in scholarship and scope.

My last thanks and a gesture of sincere appreciation goes to my Department of Education and the Teacher Education at Södertörn University in Sweden, who have supported my involvement in the IIER since my arrival here in 2009 and without which I would not have been able to carry out the various tasks as Editor in Chief. I hope that this collaboration between educators across international borders has helped to bridge our collective agenda of educational research and practice.

I have very much enjoyed providing service to the IER both as member of the NSWIER Executive Board (2004-2009) and member of the Editorial Board of IIER from 2007 onwards. Being part of the Institute for Educational Research, which is also the oldest Australian network of educational research (Fleming, 2008) has shaped me professionally and transformed me academically whilst introducing me to an extensive and vibrant community of scholars over the years. I am also somewhat humbled to have been awarded Life Membership in the NSWIER in 2012, and I look forward to a continuation of my involvement in the IER research community in years to come.

Lastly, let me introduce the articles in this issue. The seven articles derive from four countries and range in subject matter from the issue of prospecting about metacognitive patterns of human interaction in a science museum to an archival analysis of entries in curriculum literature lists for upper secondary levels in Australia from the post Second World War era.
The first article by Anderson and Thomas explains the dialectic hermeneutic questioning and decision making processes involved in informal learning through an observation of parent-child interaction at a science museum. The second article by Berg and Smith reports on a comparative analysis of teacher efficacy beliefs in preservice teacher education in New Zealand, Malaysia and England and argues against a typification according to country of origin. The authors report on significant differences in efficacy beliefs between the two cohorts from western countries and the one non-western country, but caution against typical Malaysian, English or New Zealand teacher efficacy markers. The third article by McKenzie, Hemmings and Kay takes up on the topical matter of phonemic awareness among first year students at the onset of writing instruction. They confirm that oral language skills remains a key predictor also in early writing development. The fourth article by Moriarty investigates the ways in which research designs may impact on the analytical power of measures of self-efficacy by using an example of "an intervention that aimed to increase levels of mathematics competence among initial teacher education students". Raturi and Boulton-Lewis report in the fifth article on the teaching and learning beliefs of early career lecturers in the Pacific Island Countries and come to the conclusion that their pedagogy rests on a number beliefs about "the importance of independence in learning, support systems, appropriate curriculum, qualities of a teacher, the teaching and learning process, teaching and learning strategies, and the teaching and learning environment". In the sixth article we turn our scholarly gaze to faith based schools in Australia. Striepe, Clarke and O'Donoghue's report on the understandings of "how leadership can be connected to moral purpose" and influenced by "how the meanings of the values were transformed as a result of the participants' faith and the school's faith affiliation". Lastly, Yiannikis tracks the contents of English literature course curriculum in Year 12 during a sixty year period from 1945 to 2005. The documentation found that although significant changes were made to both curriculum and pedagogical practices, much of the literature offered in the courses of English literature remain the same "with many by Shakespeare still the central and dominant texts throughout the period studied".

The seven articles in this issue reveal a variety of timely educational topics which jointly advocate for research precision and accuracy of educational investigation. I hope that this, and the future issues of IIER will provide you with moments of meaningful dialogue on the social and educational issues that matter the most.

Meeri Hellstén
Retiring Editor

References