

# Editorial

## Peer review of papers

Scholarly publishing is an imperative for a successful academic career. Publishing one's research results and theoretical position papers has gone beyond the point of being simply a matter of passing on ideas to peers and future scholars for the inherent worth and value therein. A long list of publications in one's field has become a necessary prerequisite for almost any kind of advancement, promotion, or change of location in academia.

Any university committee that examines the credentials of a colleague, either for appointment or promotion, is faced not only with the task of determining how many papers altogether, or within a certain period, a colleague has published, but numerous questions about the quality and importance or rigor of the colleague's writings are also introduced. Are the journals, in which the individual has published, refereed? Are these journals prestigious publications in the person's field of expertise? Has the person been the single author, or are there multiple co-authors? Has the person published in any of the "leading" journals in her/his field? Do these papers advance knowledge in the person's field? Has the study been respected enough to have been supported by a research grant? And the list goes on and on. With each new hurdle that is mastered by each scholar, a higher one is mounted for the next cohort.

All of these expectations place a heavy responsibility on an independent journal, such as the *McGill Journal of Education*. How can a journal that covers as broad a field as education hope to maintain high standards for the diverse subjects and subfields submitted by authors? How can an independent journal compete for quality writing and research reports with journals that are subsidized with membership fees and government grants? The cost of expert reviewing and editing is

enormous, especially when a journal aspires to recognized scholarliness in any particular field.

Much of the quality of a journal depends, therefore, on the scholars in the field who voluntarily serve as independent referees or reviewers of the papers received by the editor and editorial board. Quality journals depend on their skill and expertise. This journal owes its reviewers a great debt of gratitude for whatever recognition it may receive from the academic community. Without the diligent work, scholarly knowledge of many fields, and careful reviews that are done by the scholars listed on the next page, the *Journal* could not hope to maintain the level of quality that the editor and the editorial board have set.

Every serious paper submitted to this journal is reviewed by at least two reviewers, and most times three. The commentary and editing suggestions given us by the reviewers (and other scholars in the field) is of great importance for us to be able to produce a high-quality journal. Although reviewers do not receive co-authorship of the papers they review, it should be noted that their contributions play a major role in ensuring that scholarliness is maintained and that the papers published here make a contribution to the knowledge base of the field and its subfields.

We value the important contributions made by the board of reviewers of this journal.

**W.M.T.**