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Editorial: New horizons-four years later

**Bharath Sriraman, Editor
The University of Montana**

Vol.4, no .2 signals the conclusion of this volume and four years of the journal's existence. Although we are still in our infancy in comparison to other journals in the field of mathematics education, there is no doubt that we have carved a niche in a highly competitive business where scholars and readers have numerous choices when it comes to supporting journals. The journals niche is the fact that it attracts scholars/contributors from a variety of domains such as mathematics, critical theory, philosophy, educational psychology, educational philosophy, social justice, teacher education and the history and philosophy of mathematics and science, in addition to practitioners at all levels. The articles that have appeared in the four volumes and the monograph are indicative of this niche. Journals survive or perish depending on the flow of manuscripts. In this respect we have been very lucky with a steady stream of high quality submissions as well as conscientious reviewers. We also continue to receive invitations for indexing, which speaks for the standing of the journal.

Over the last 16 months, we received 86 manuscripts from 26 different countries. The acceptance rate is currently 22-25%. In cases of rejection, we have supported the authors with extensive suggestions for improvement and other avenues for publication. In some cases, we reject manuscripts because the mathematics is too sophisticated and may not be accessible to the average reader. We are not a journal that publishes pure mathematics articles that require research level knowledge within a specific sub-domain of mathematics. Articles that involve mathematics are determined on the basis of whether or not they would appeal to advanced undergraduate/beginning graduate students of mathematics, practicing teachers and those that enjoy mathematics recreationally. In cases, when it is difficult to find reviewers for a particular manuscript, we ask the authors to provide a list of three possible reviewers. I am moving towards a review process which is open and constructive and beneficial to all parties concerned. One of the consequences of the increased flow of manuscripts is the "bottleneck" effect, i.e., reviewed and accepted manuscripts having to wait inline for publication. This problem can be circumvented by increasing the frequency of issues to 3/year. Having said that, starting from vol.5 we will be publishing 3 issues/year [February, June and October]. Among the issues in the pipeline (vol.5,no.3) is focused on statistics education for which manuscripts are still being submitted. Readers are encouraged to submit papers on this topic. We still are consistent with our goal of keeping the transit time from submission to publication to approximately 8 months.

The readership base of the journal is now approximately 4200 from 94 countries based on statistically sieving uniqueness of IP addresses and average repeated visits. The geographic distribution of readers is as follows: 35%- North America; 18%- Western and Central Europe; 12%-Scandinavia; 12% -Asia; 8% -Middle East; 8%- Australia and NZ; 4%- Africa; 3% -South America. Needless to say we are thriving! The journal recently received another offer from a reputed publishing house for conversion into a print journal in addition to the electronic version. However accepting the conditions would have meant restricting access to paying subscribers, and putting an embargo on when the articles become available online through indexes. This goes against our philosophy of free and open access. So the offer was turned down.

The first monograph of the journal on social justice issues released in January this year was very well received. A telegraphic review appeared in the *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education* in May 2007, and full length reviews are forthcoming in *Mathematical Thinking and Learning*, as well as *ZDM- The International Journal on Mathematics Education*. I thank the reviewers for their gesture of writing these reviews. A limited number of print copies are still available for sale for the cost price (\$20). We are hoping to use the proceeds to sustain print monographs on special topics or themes on an on-going basis and are open to suggestions on possible future looking topics.

This journal issue contains articles from well-known scholars as well as new doctoral recipients and those currently working on their doctorates. Again the sheer range of topics covered in this issue represents the true face of the journal. The articles in this issue will appeal to a wide audience: teachers of mathematics, university mathematics educators, philosophers, cognitive psychologists and naturally math enthusiasts.

The journal is happy to extend its support to Sense Publishers in the Netherlands, which publishes affordable and high quality books of interest to the mathematics and science education community as well as to the larger field of education. A new feature of the journal is to inform readers of new and noteworthy books published by Sense and sources for reviews of these books.

Finally, I hope you enjoy this issue and I thank you for your continued support.