

Editorial: The Life Course of a Journal

As I started to put together this issue, I realized that this issue marks the start of the 25th year of the journal's publication. The journal has gone from being a child to being a teenager and is now a young adult. At first, I thought I might go back and look at what the previous editors-in-chief had said during their tenures. After some thinking about this idea, I decided, instead, not to look back, but to look ahead.

This issue year and this issue of the journal mark the beginning of a number of important "events" in the life course of the journal. The first of these events are changes to the structure of the editorial board. As a result of a number of changes proposed and agreed to by the CAG board, we are creating a new position on the editorial board, Associate Editor-in-Chief, and an Editorial Advisory Board. The associate editor-in-chief will work with the editor-in-chief and the section editors to make the editorial process more efficient. In this issue, you will find an advertisement outlining the profile of the associate editor-in-chief and calling for applications. I hope those of our members who have significant editorial experience and meet the profile described will contact me about this position. I have asked the section editors to suggest distinguished researchers working at Canadian and international institutions, whom I will invite to join the Editorial Advisory Board. When this process is complete the Editorial Advisory Board will be made up of eight distinguished researchers (four from Canada and four from abroad), representing the four sections of the journal, whose role will be to provide advice to all of the editors and to work with the section editors to identify qualified reviewers.

The second change that will take place as the year progresses is the introduction of an electronic submission process. I am now in the process of testing the software and, before the year is out, we will be offering this service to authors. Our ultimate goal is to phase out the hardcopy submission of manuscripts, but this will be done gradually as everyone becomes used to the electronic submission process.

My first year as editor-in-chief has mainly been marked by positive feedback. I am particularly appreciative of the work of the section editors and of the reviewers of manuscripts from the past year who are acknowledged at the end of this issue. The one aspect of the journal that does concern me, however, is the number of authors from whom I have heard who are concerned about the length of time it

has taken to receive a decision on their submissions. While I am convinced that the changes I have described in the above paragraphs will make the review process more efficient on average, I would also like to remind all of the readers of the *CJA* that, if they are asked to review a manuscript, they should do so and do so within the timeframe that the section editors request. We cannot maintain the standards set by previous editors-in-chief without high-quality manuscript reviews, but we also cannot afford to frustrate potential authors through a review process that is unacceptably long.

A third event that has taken place of which you may not be aware is that electronic versions of papers published by the *CJA* since 2004 are now available through libraries that are members of Project MUSE. Project MUSE is a collaboration between libraries and publishers providing 100-per-cent full-text, affordable, and user-friendly online access to over 300 high-quality humanities, arts, and social sciences journals from 60 scholarly publishers (<http://muse.jhu.edu/about/muse/overview.html>). If your institution has a subscription to Project MUSE, then the electronic versions of articles are free to you. Project MUSE is making the *CJA* available in hundreds of university and other institutional libraries across Canada, and internationally in the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, China, Costa Rica, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palestine, Poland, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. With Project MUSE, *CJA* articles are now being read around the world by researchers and those interested in gerontology outside of the CAG and its institutional subscribers.

There are also changes coming to the content of the *CJA*. Particularly through the 1990s and the first few years of this new century, gerontological research has developed and matured in Canada. The Canadian Aging Research Network, the Seniors Independence Research Program, the Canadian Study on Aging, more recently the Social and Economic Dimensions of an Aging Population, Hidden Costs / Invisible Contributions Major Collaborative Research Initiatives, and coming soon, the Canadian Longitudinal Survey on Aging, each in its own way reflects this maturing process and is representative of

a significant program of research, and many parts of these projects have found their way into the pages of the *CJA*. What I believe has been missing, however, is an opportunity for the key investigators of landmark programs of research to sum up what they have accomplished. In this issue, I am introducing a new special feature section to address this void. Occasionally, I plan to publish an entire paper in both English and French, a paper that sums up a major multi-year program of research that section editors and I believe deserves to be highlighted. I hope everyone will read the paper by François Béland et al. in this current issue and let me know whether it would be worthwhile to see other articles that play this role.

I am also excited that we appear to be attracting more manuscripts from international sources and more manuscripts that focus attention on the fundamental processes that underpin health issues of importance

among an aging population. My hunch is that these manuscripts reflect the growing audience for the *CJA*, a growth linked to the journal's being indexed in Medline, to Project MUSE, and to the additional resources available to us as the result of the support we receive from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—Institute of Aging. While we have many challenges to face in the coming years in a world of electronic publishing, I am optimistic that the changes that are taking place will result in a *CJA* that will continue in good health for many years.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any thoughts that you would like to share about the changes I have described or any other aspect of the journal. I can be reached at rosenber@post.queensu.ca.

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Editor-in-Chief