

Editorial

The *Canadian Journal on Aging* Enters its Tenth Year

The *Canadian Journal on Aging* has progressed at a spectacular rate since its inception in 1981. In publishing the results of gerontological research studies, the *Journal* has been successful in reflecting the dynamism generated by the gerontological community in Canada, and, most importantly, it has played a key role in the development of this community.

With the publication of this issue, the *Journal* enters its tenth year. I would like to take this opportunity to commend my two predecessors, namely Dr. Blossom Wigdor and Dr. Victor Marshall, for their pioneering work and unremitting efforts. Canadian gerontology is indeed grateful to them for having created, developed, and secured the future of the *Canadian Journal on Aging*, a vital communication tool linking researchers, as well as practitioners and researchers. I plan to follow in their footsteps and to forge ahead. The *Journal* will therefore not be substantially modified in the forthcoming years. It must remain a scholarly publication meeting the stringent criteria which are essential to the publication of a quality journal.

The *Canadian Journal on Aging* is a scholarly publication intended for researchers, practitioners, and those who want to keep abreast of the latest developments in the field of gerontology. The *Journal* has never limited its scope of activities. It has instead remained a multidisciplinary publication regularly covering a variety of topics such as biology, health sciences, psychology, social sciences and social practices. The majority of its content is of scientific nature. On occasion, the *Journal* has published in-depth articles, philosophical papers or literary analyses which have also contributed significantly to the advancement of gerontology. Prior to publication, these articles were subjected to a careful review by a panel of referees. The editorial board would like to maintain this broad multi-disciplinary perspective which is traditionally related to the publication of scholarly journals.

The process of learning is advanced by the practice of debate. However, the process of voicing differences is often made difficult by the very rules regulating the refereeing procedure. If the quality and integrity of a scientific journal are thought to be determined by this procedure, it should also be recognized as one which may slow down progress. Thus, new ideas, however brilliant, could have difficulty finding a forum. In order to avoid such a situation, at the instigation of the section editor and with the consent of the editor-in-chief, the *Journal* will publish a controversial article which deserves an audience, as long as it is accompanied by a critique describing the nature and the reasons behind the debate. The article and its critique will be published side by side in a special column entitled "Controversies". By definition, few articles will be published under this heading. It should be noted that, for the time being, this section will be incorporated in

the *Journal* strictly on an experimental basis. The editorial board would appreciate receiving your comments on this new undertaking.

In an effort to keep scholarly debate alive, the *Journal* will publish comments pertaining to articles published on our past issues. Such comments should promote an exchange of enlightened viewpoints between researchers on scientific problems.

Finally, the *Journal* is also intended to reach an audience outside the community of researchers in gerontology. It is the linchpin connecting researchers and practitioners in gerontology. However, scientific articles can sometimes seem esoteric to a lay person, and the *Canadian Journal on Aging* is not designed to popularize scientific works. Occasionally scientific papers will be accompanied by enlightened commentaries on the practical significance of research work. Certain topics evidently lend themselves more readily to this exercise than others. The objective is not to incite controversy but rather to encourage reflection, to make the general reader aware of the social, ethical and philosophical consequences generated by research studies. These texts will be short and printed at the request of the *Journal's* board. They will be published in the Editorial section. Here again, we invite your comments on the opportunity to introduce such a section in the *Journal*.

All in all, our basic aim is to publish scholarly works, and to impart knowledge to an audience of researchers and practitioners working in the field of gerontology. In essence, the *Journal* will retain its present format and the refereeing process will be closely observed. The *Journal* will attempt to reflect more adequately true scholarly activity. To ignore the debate would be tantamount to covering this scholarly activity with a thin veil of unanimity which ultimately hinders it. However, this debate must be structured and subjected to certain rules. The editorial board has compiled a few rules which we mentioned earlier, and we intend to implement them on a trial basis. We will experiment with them and we retain the privilege of terminating this experiment at our own discretion. The *Journal* also wishes to take into account the interests of the numerous readers who draw inspiration from its content for their practices. The editorial board will most definitely keep them in mind.

Finally, a scholarly journal is nothing without its authors. I would therefore like respectfully to express my gratitude to the researchers who have submitted manuscripts to the *Journal*. I would like to assure all of them that my most important goal will be to maintain the highest scientific standards. The *Journal* will act as a forum that will serve to enhance communication and to promote a free exchange of ideas among scientists and professionals within the rigorous set of guidelines to which this *Journal* adheres and is already using in order to ensure the highest possible standards.

François Béland, *Editor-in-Chief*