

# Editorial

## Progress Report on JMDE

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We have now put out 5 issues, which is conventionally an occasion for summary and reflection. I'll keep it brief. We now have 1,750 readers who have asked to be notified of the appearance of each issue: we'll call them 'committed readers,' perhaps our closest approximation to subscribers to hardcopy journals. We have had over 19,000 hits on the website, according to our counter, but do not know how many of these read, or download, or make copies for others, of the material. An independent estimate of the number of hits from Lars Balzar's website (q.v. via Google) places the numbers a little higher, at 12,000 to 30,000 per day (!). Our issues are now widely announced in a considerable number of journals and websites-and many thanks for their help in dissemination.

On the success of our mission-bringing the news and thinking of the profession and discipline of evaluation in the world, to the world-it's clear that we are reaching and are read, at least sometimes, by a large number of people in at least 30 countries, quite possibly by more than read all the hardcopy journals in evaluation

put together. And we do cover what's happening in evaluation in many parts of the world outside the Anglo-Euro sphere, to a degree not matched by any other publication. Many thanks to our correspondents around the globe that help to make us the 'journal of record' for much of the many developments that are going on today, and we would welcome still more contributors-we're negotiating now with some Palestinian and Lebanese evaluators and we're expecting the Russians will be in the next issue.

Another kind of coverage we provide is summaries of the leading journals, both as a guide to purchase for those with limited funds, and as a key to current themes and debates for those who lack the time or resources to read any of them. We also run a series of articles exemplifying the use of common or particularly interesting evaluation tools, often at a level well behind the cutting edge, but right in the middle of what needs to be covered in advanced or inservice courses.

Last, but by no means least, we provide some cutting edge contributions to the disciplines by authors generally recognized as the best in the business, to inform and challenge those at that level and aspiring to it.

Now of course it's hard for those with simple stereotypes and inflexible minds to grasp the concept of a multi-level journal, so we run into or hear indirectly of criticism couched in such terms as "of course JMDE isn't really a professional journal." Indeed it isn't *only* a professional journal, it's something more. After all, we've now put out about 1,000 pages in our five issues and within that the amount of material that is *purely* professional level, peer-reviewed standard, is more than has been published in the same time by more than one of the leading hardcopy

journals. In terms of disciplinary utility and significance, looking at what we've carried and a couple of articles that are coming up, I'm betting that there will be just as many reprinted from here into the anthologie or citation-lists from important books as from any other journal.

One goal we have not reached is that of hosting good debates and discussions. We'd like to see more submissions that are reactions to, or developments from, some of the pieces we have published. And of course, being an evaluation journal, we'd appreciate suggestions for input, or critical judgments-with reasons-that will motivate us to improve. There's plenty of room for that, but keep in mind, as you consider suggestions that our resources are somewhat limited—all our editorial work is done by four people on two continents working entirely in their (hypothetical) free time, with zero secretarial support or expense budget. (Once an issue is completed in electronic format, the Evaluation Center pays for the cost of putting it online and keeping it there, for which they deserve and have many, many, many, thanks.).