## Editorial

## From Macro to Micro, from Leaders to Volunteers: Insiders and Outsiders Comment on Varied Aspects of Our Field

Walter Archer, Editor-in-Chief

This issue continues an interesting high-level discussion that began with the publication of a Forum article in this journal two years ago titled "The Life and Death of the Canadian Adult Education Movement," by Gordon Selman and Mark Selman (2009). In another Forum article in our Spring 2011 issue, Tom Nesbit challenged the main conclusion of the Selmans' article, namely, that Canadian adult education can no longer be considered a social movement (Nesbit, 2011). In this issue we feature a rejoinder by Mark Selman that attempts to clarify some of the statements made in the 2009 article regarding the possible causes of the demise of the social movement focus of Canadian adult education. Selman also, in his turn, challenges Nesbit's contention that the social movement aspect of Canadian adult education is still alive and well.

This is a very important discussion for our field, since our practice of university continuing education is situated within the broader field of Canadian adult education. It is crucial that we understand both the historical and the current contexts within which we work. We are indebted to these three distinguished scholars and practitioners of adult education in general, and university continuing education in particular, for this thoughtful and thought-provoking analysis of the overall context of our work.

In marked contrast to this discussion by three veteran "insiders" in the field of university continuing education, the other Forum article in this issue is by a contributor who has had a relatively brief involvement with university continuing education. Alan Middleton is a practitioner and scholar in the field of business and is now the executive director of the Schulich Executive Education Centre at York University as well as assistant professor of marketing, Schulich School of Business. Looking at our field at the macro level and with "new eyes," he has some interesting and no doubt provocative things to say about what we and our institutions are doing and what we might be doing instead to move with the times that are "a-changing." Not all practitioners and scholars of university continuing education will agree with what Middleton has to say, but all should find his comments stimulating.

The author of the first item in the Articles section of this issue, Janice Landry, is an experienced practitioner and well known in the field of Canadian university continuing education. In

Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education / Vol. 37, No. 2, fall 2011 Revue Canadienne de L'Éducation Permanente Universitaire / Vol. 37, N° 2, automne 2011 http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/cjuce-rcepu "Lived Experience of University Continuing Education Leaders" she reports some highlights of her doctoral research. She used a phenomenological approach to examine the "lived experience" of those in our field who have achieved positions of leadership. Readers who are in similar leadership positions will no doubt be interested in what Landry reports regarding the experience of their peers. Those who aspire to such positions can also benefit from this preview of what they may be getting themselves into.

Angelika Sellick and her co-investigators take a micro-level focus on one particular aspect of our practice in their article "Key Strengths of an Innovative Volunteer Training Workshop." They describe their experience with an important aspect of community-engaged programs, namely the training of community volunteers. Employment of community volunteers as learning facilitators is a key component of many community-based literacy programs, so their training is a main determinant of the success of such programs. It is quite appropriate that the CAUCE Research Fund contributed support for the research reported here, since the results will be of interest to many CAUCE institutions.

The contributions to this issue of CJUCE are a good cross-section of the ways in which we can examine our practice from the very macro to the quite micro level, and thereby maintain our thoughtful engagement with all aspects of our practice.

## References

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- Selman, G., & Selman, M. (2009). The life and death of the Canadian adult education movement. *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education*, 35(2), 13–28. Retrieved from http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/cjuce-rcepu