From the Editor

Stephen Keith Sagarin

In my initial interviews for editor I asked, "Is there enough research in Waldorf education to justify two issues per year of this journal?" After only a few months in the saddle, I can tell you that there is. Several European countries have vital research institutes, and we bring you news of their work through reports like Ernst Schuberth's in this issue, and also translations of recent research and scholarship. Two articles in this issue are in this category. The first is Frank Teichmann's excellent article on the idea of evolution in Goethe's time. As English speakers we are familiar with a pedigree for the idea of evolution that includes Darwin, English geologists, and others. We are less familiar with the German thinking and philosophy that made scientific discoveries about evolution possible. We hope readers find that Teichmann's article provides insight in this area. Also translated from German is Richard Landl's sensitive investigation of how contemporary brain research supports and can also inform Waldorf education for adolescents.

There are more questions to be answered about Waldorf education and Waldorf schools than there are researchers available to answer them at present. What questions would schools like answered in order to know themselves better and in order to improve teaching and learning? If we think of Waldorf education as a landscape, what does this landscape look like? At the moment, it is hard to tell because it is fairly dark. Researchers like David Mitchell, who writes in this issue on hygienic practices for Waldorf teachers, are taking on these questions, gradually illuminating the landscape of Waldorf education, and the results of their work will continue to appear here. I also have a piece in this issue, excerpted from my history of Waldorf schools in the U.S., comparing Rudolf Steiner and Jean Piaget on concepts of child development. Our hope is that a genuine engagement with the ideas of these two great developmentalists can move us beyond lip service to either.

Fellow travelers and even unintended illuminators in research on spiritual, ethical, and creative aspects of education produce research continually, and we will continue to bring you reviews and synopses of this work. In this issue, David Mitchell writes about looping, Jon McAlice about results of international student assessments, Eugene Schwartz about research on the effects of television, Christopher Clouder on legislation in the U.K., Douglas Gerwin on possible state funding for Waldorf schools in the U.K., and I write on research regarding spoken verse and respiration synchronization.

The Research Institute also funds research, and ongoing reports on this work appear here: Arthur Pittis on Waldorf high school graduates, Paul Gierlach on teaching reading and writing, Lori MacKinder on teaching remedial math in high school, and Gary Banks on teaching phenomenological or "sensible" science. This issue also contains a report from Marianne Alsop on the Online Waldorf Library.

We must no longer belong to a culture of belief; we must become a culture of inquiry. This phrase—I don't remember to whom I should attribute it—has gone through my mind for the past year as I have met with colleagues from Sunbridge College, European and American teacher education and research institutes, colleagues in Waldorf and Steiner schools, colleagues in holistic education in general, and the Board and members of the Research Institute for Waldorf Education.

Before I agreed to become editor of this journal, I had determined that research in Waldorf education—as a Waldorf teacher, as a teacher of teachers to be, and as a scholar—is an important part of my present and my future. When Douglas Gerwin and David Mitchell contacted me about assuming the editorship following the retirement of my mentor and friend Douglas Sloan—large shoes to fill—I knew that I didn't have time in my life to take this on, but I also knew that it was exactly what I needed to do. I look forward to immersing myself in current research in Waldorf education, to helping the Research Institute support necessary research, to working with schools and teacher education programs to determine what research is necessary, and to assisting with research and its publication.