



EDITORS' SPECIAL

Reflections on *JMI*

In March, 1994, I officially took over as the coeditor of the Essay section of the *Journal of Management Inquiry*. Tom Cummings put Paul Hirsch and I together. We officially met in Banff at the WAM meeting when we roomed together. It was a match meant to be. He carried the masthead, and I did the grunt work. This basic division of labor has served us well since. Then, in 1998 we were asked to serve as coeditors-in-chief.

As coeditors-in-chief it was our responsibility to get out the journal 4 times a year. I must say there have been times when I felt the sting of white page fever. However, somehow, we came through. It was our pleasure to work with very good copy editors at Sage. Without their help it could not have been accomplished. Also, without the assistance of some very good graduate students at Texas Tech, it could not have been accomplished. Special recognition belongs to Kevin Kennedy, who served as my editorial assistant, friend, and graduate student from 1998 to 2002. Kevin made sure all of the manuscripts were sent out, and when they had been accepted, he worked with me on getting out each issue to Sage. Since 2002, that work has been divided up and ably accomplished by my graduate students Karen Patterson and Jun Xia. (I should mention that congratulations go to Jun, who completed his dissertation in a record 3½ years). Prior to Kevin, Mark Hoelscher and Janice Black did yeoman work. A special word of thanks goes to our section editors. They have worked with the authors to turn interesting manuscripts into great ones. Much of the success of *JMI* is because of their hard work and creativity.

It is now time for me to pursue other professional interests and step down after 12 years. In my time, I have tried to fulfill our mandate to

publish a high-quality journal that challenges the way we, as academics, see things. We have not tried to mimic *AMJ*, *AMR*, *ASQ*, or any of the other top journals. We have tried to find our own voice and style. Toward that end, originally as the coeditors of the Essay section we started to publish commentaries. Rather than just letting differences between authors and reviewers disappear or prevent the publication of an article, we chose to highlight controversies. As Art Bedeian said, we chose not to stifle the author's voice but to highlight it by making sure that alternative voices were expressed. I hope that we have been faithful and let a thousand voices bloom.

We introduced Editors' Special and Editors' Choice sections. These sections allowed us to solicit essays or nontraditional research from the leading people in the field. As the late Larry Cummings used to say about research in organization behavior, some people don't look on it as the same as a refereed article because they are only two referees, Barry Staw and him, and they invite 90% of the articles. Although some Editors' Special or Choice articles were invited, others started out as regular submissions. In some cases, we chose to sidetrack the regular blind review process, accept them, and solicit commentaries. Thus, to get published they only had to please us. We hope, nonetheless, that you are pleased with our choices. Although we all have our favorites, perhaps publishing Jim March's farewell address to the Stanford Business faculty stands out.

Another pleasure we have had is putting together special events at the annual meetings of the Academy of Management. It is here that we have been able to bring together our editors and special friends of *JMI*. Four events stand out: hosting a gathering in Washington, D.C., at the Marriott, hosting the Second City in Chicago, sponsoring the baseball game in Denver, and touring Oahu in Hawaii. Although we did the heavy lifting of making the arrangements and following through, a special thanks goes to the WAM executive board and Sage for providing the funds for the events.

Although I am stepping down, a new coeditor-in-chief will assume my duties. Although I hope to see many of the innovations we made continue, I am sure they will put their special stamp on *JMI*. In my retirement, I am taking a sabbatical from Texas Tech. I will be teaching at the University of Queensland from January to June, 2006. After which I will return to my duties at Texas Tech. While on sabbatical, besides teaching at UQ, I plan on writing a book on strategic leadership. All of you who have written a book can have pity on me. There has got to be a better way to spend a sabbatical. On the other hand, snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef, lying on those great sand beaches under the hot summer sun, and throwing a shrimp on the barbecue while downing down some suds does not sound too bad. As they say down under—no worries.

It has been a great 12 years. WAM is a fun and unique experience. It has always featured great meetings, great colleagues, in great places. As we say, the Westerns are not a location, but a state of mind. Fifteen years ago it proposed a new journal, one in which our colleagues could share their views outside the confines of a strict and narrow view of science or our profession. In the past 12 years, I hope I have done my part in building the reputation of *JMI*. I hope it reflects the best of WAM. I hope it is still a good read after all these years.

Farewell,
Kim Boal
Coeditor-in-Chief