



Report from the Co-Directors

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Several new publications and a second sortie into the archives of the Rudolf Steiner Library have highlighted the activities of the Research Institute for Waldorf Education (RIWE) during the first part of this academic year.

We can report the printing of *Education, Teaching, and the Practical Life*, one of Rudolf Steiner's last remaining collections of lectures on education not previously translated into English. Selections from this volume have appeared in the last three issues of the *Research Bulletin*, including this one. Most of these lectures were given in the early 1920s as new Waldorf schools were springing up in Germany, Holland, and other parts of the world. Although there is some overlap in content from one lecture to another, it is a delight to sense the joy and warmth with which Steiner spoke about the potential of Waldorf education in its early years. The book, which provides many examples and clear observations concerning childhood, is available from AWSNA Publications.

Another book on education and the unfolding of childhood, entitled *Developmental Signatures*, is also now available. Co-sponsored by RIWE, the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN), and AWSNA Publications, this book arises from research in Germany focusing on children ages 3–9. It contains clearly formulated and developmentally appropriate answers prompted by questions from European governmental agencies seeking clarity on how Waldorf education meets their state requirements. Several passages are excerpted in this *Bulletin*.

Paul Gierlach has completed his reflections on “The Prisoner’s Kiss: Literacy’s Journey in a Waldorf High School,” a paper on the teaching of English language and literature in the high school. The paper is posted on the Research Institute’s

web site (www.waldorfresearchinstitute.org) for free download.

In October a strike force from the Research Institute descended upon Ghent, New York, with the purpose of unearthing significant articles from older journals stored deep within the archives of the Rudolf Steiner Library. The staff of the library provided invaluable assistance, pulling out stacks of boxes filled with articles whose titles we had uncovered in their indices. Altogether, some 115 articles concerning education are being added to the Research Institute’s Online Waldorf Library (www.waldorflibrary.org) for free download.

On the research front, work has begun on a third phase of the Survey of Waldorf Graduates, which will compare the results of our survey of North American Waldorf graduates (reported in previous issues of the *Research Bulletin*) with three

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new studies of European Waldorf students, one each in Germany, Switzerland, and Sweden. This third phase will also compare the statistics of our North American survey with those gathered in the National Database for Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, DC, for both independent and public schools. Meantime, in the coming months we plan to update and republish a popular monograph, entitled “The Results of Waldorf

Education,” with new testimonials from university professors and other data taken from the second phase of the survey.

Working with the Pädagogische Forschungsstelle (Educational Research Institute) of the Bund (Association) of Waldorf Schools in Germany, the Research Institute is preparing a position paper in support of all children on the subject of educational assessment. We will chal-

lenge the value of high stakes testing, describe alternative methods of assessment, and offer new thinking on the setting of standards. It is time for Waldorf educators to be heard in the national and international discussions on education. Our goal is to establish the Waldorf school position firmly in support of the rights of children to a healthy childhood. It is our task to protect all children from anything that attacks the very being of childhood.

In addition to this joint project, the Co-Directors of the Research Institute were invited to make presentations this autumn at three German centers—Mannheim, Kassel, and Stuttgart—and to attend a world leadership conference in Dornach sponsored by the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum, where the findings of our Survey of Waldorf Graduates, Phase II, were presented.

For this spring we are preparing a symposium at High Mowing School with Anne Greer, who will be presenting for peer review her innovative curriculum for teaching grammar. This symposium of invited teachers of English will result in a source book to be made available to all Waldorf schools by the Research Institute and AWSNA Publications.

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The popular “Teaching Sensible Science” seminars for class teachers in grades 5–8 have begun a third round, this time on the West Coast at Rudolf Steiner College. It is our hope that every school will encourage colleagues to participate in this valuable training in phenomenology so as to strengthen the teaching of science in elementary schools across North America.

For high school physics teachers we announce a symposium on teaching physics, planned for October 25–27, 2008, at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California, with the title “Physics, Phenomena, and Personal Growth in Waldorf Education: What, Why, and What Else?” Please watch your mailboxes for further particulars.

Again, we hope that every high school plans to send a physics teacher.

In conclusion we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the leaders of AWSNA for their thoughtful assistance and tireless advocacy in grant writing; their financial support of our publishing and research ventures, including the most recent phases of the Waldorf graduate survey; their keen eye for identifying key research questions; and their genial collegueship.