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Editorial

Voluntas, the International Journal of Voluntary and Non-profit Organisations, is now entering its sixth year of publication. When Professor Martin Knapp, Dr Susan Saxon-Harrold and I founded the Journal in 1989, we could not have anticipated the significant growth in comparative and international research on non-profit organisations. In many ways, the first five years of *Voluntas* have been a success story, and we hope that we contributed, in small part, to this growth, both in terms of the quantity and the quality of research on non-profit organisations and sectors.

In the first five volumes, we published fourteen issues with close to 100 articles, several research notes and over twenty book reviews. Overall we have received some 400 manuscripts, which amounts to an acceptance rate of around 25 per cent. When we began, *Voluntas* was a bi-annual publication, and already in the third volume, we increased the number of issues to three per year. By Volume 4, *Voluntas* had in fact become a quarterly, as we added a special issue on national income accounts in collaboration with, and supported by, the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C. This year we became the official journal of ISTR, the International Society for Third-Sector Research; and are now planning to move to four issues per year on a regular basis beginning with Volume 7.

At the suggestion of Professor Benjamin Gidron, President of ISTR, I have agreed to serve a (final) term as editor of *Voluntas* for a three-year period beginning 1 January 1995. Unfortunately, Professor Martin Knapp has decided not to continue as co-editor, due to his new obligations at the London Institute of Psychiatry but, as ex-officio member of the editorial board, he will remain closely involved with the Journal.

In the coming three years, I would like to see *Voluntas* grow and consolidate at the same time. We need to grow in a number of directions: the number of acceptances, let alone submissions, of papers from Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Arab World and Southern Europe remains too low, as does the involvement of historians, legal scholars and anthropologists, and the attention we have paid to fields like the

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environment, housing, the arts and advocacy. In other words, there are still many unchartered areas in the geographical and disciplinary map of our field; and at *Voluntas*, we would like to make an effort in closing in on such gaps in coverage.

We also need to grow in ways that improve the quality of the research: I would like to attract more truly comparative research, both quantitative and qualitative. 'Comparative' is used both in the sense of cross-national studies, but also in terms of research that looks at how non-profit organisations differ from business firms and government agencies. Moreover, we need to look systematically at the social and economic contributions that non-profit organisations make in different societies and cultures. There are, of course, other important topics, fields and issues that come within the compass of *Voluntas*, and we will hopefully be in a position to publish a broad range of such topical papers in the next three years.

Voluntas will continue its pro-active editorial policy. Following the 1993 symposium on *Foundations and Trusts* in Paris, and the 1994 symposium on *Nonprofit Organizations in Latin America* held in Buenos Aires, the 1995 symposium will focus on *Economic Theories of Nonprofit Organizations*, to be held at Yale University. Other initiatives include a thematic issue on the non-profit sector in Scandinavia, one on *Women and Philanthropy*, and on *Comparative Output and Performance Measures for Nonprofit Organizations*.

As part of the re-organisation of *Voluntas*, I am pleased to announce that Jeremy Kendall, a young mixed economy researcher trained as an economist from the University of Kent in the United Kingdom, has agreed to serve as Associate Editor. Jeremy will primarily function as the British and European contact person of the Journal, and provide the liaison between the editorial offices in the United States and the production side in the United Kingdom. In this respect, we are most fortunate to have Jane Dennett continue as production manager for the Journal, without whose efforts we would be unable to operate. J.R. Bjerklie, a graduate student in sociology at Rutgers, will assist in the processing and handling of the various manuscripts, research notes and book reviews.

The Editorial Board has been much enlarged to reflect the growing size and diversity of our constituency. The new Board Members spread across five continents and some fifteen countries, and represent all of the major social sciences dealing with non-profit issues and topics.

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