

Editorial

Let me introduce this issue by highlighting some aspects that connect us to previous issues of the *International Journal of Action Research*. The first one is the new publication of the article by Peter Reason, entitled “Justice, Sustainability, and Participation”, delivered as his Inaugural Professorial Lecture at the School of Management at the University of Bath, and first published in *Concepts and Transformations* [7(1), 7-29, 2002], the journal to which IJAR is the successor. We thank John Benjamin Publishing Company and the author for granting the permission to reproduce this article, which in the understanding of the editors is a landmark in action research, and should therefore be brought again to the sight of today’s readers. *Peter Reason*, now *emeritus*, is well known to every researcher who deals with action research, and his writing are part of any bibliography in the field. This article, however, has something special in that the three concepts of the title represent, as he writes in the beginning of the text, the themes of his work. Who would deny the relevance of justice, sustainability, and participation in today’s world? Old friends and colleagues of Peter Reason will enjoy meeting him again in his deep existential and professional reflections. Young researchers will encounter someone to look up to as researcher and as a person.

The second connection is to the previous issue of the *International Journal of Action Research*. In this special issue guest editors James Karlsen and Miren Larrea organised a set of articles about the interaction between research and practice when dealing with policy learning. The starting point was a long term action research project called Giputkoa Sarean in the province of Gipuzkoa, in the Basque Country, and one of the outcomes was the issue of IJAR which dealt with territorial developments in various regions of the world. In this issue the reader will have access to a review of the book by Karlsen and Larrea, where they explore the concepts and practice at length. Paulo Freire’s idea of “demystifying” reified reality as inevitable is a major

reference for developing their work. The reviewer highlights the book's contribution to the debate on territorial development.

The article by *Tuomo Alasoini* gives an insight into the feasibility of the Finnish Workplace Development Programme dealing with an innovative approach: learning networks striving for sustainable and furthermore generative effects. The investigation of selected project examples built around themes and methods, business sectors and regions discloses their advantages and shortcomings in the efforts to avoiding especially the transfer trap of demonstration projects: short-term success stories which can neither be kept up a longer time nor transferred sufficiently into another context. The analysis shows that in terms of developmental learning, the networks succeeded best at the level of local sustainability, whereas their results concerning external generativity fell short of the aim.

Marianne Kristiansen and Jørgen Bloch-Poulsen present a detailed description of some societal conditions for organisational action research. The title of the article "Power and Contexts" signals the power relations action researchers encounter and have to deal with in their work in neoliberal working contexts. There is basically a clash between economic-management and pedagogic-social discourses, situated in different places within the same organisation. The authors, based on self-appraisal of their experience, call attention to "continuous context inquiring dialogues with immediate and additional stakeholders questioning, among others, if the action research project is practicable at all." The article allows the voice of the various stakeholders to be heard, helping the reader to penetrate the details of the research process.

The fourth article, by *Crystal Tremblay and Budd L Hall*, deals with the contribution for local and regional development through Community-University Research Partnerships (CURP) across Canada. The study draws on experiences both in urban and rural settings across various sectors and forms of intervention including building age friendly communities, affordable housing, promotion of the social economy and social entrepreneurship, revitalising rural economies, adapting information technology for disabled persons, labour research, local food production, and Aboriginal language and culture revitalisation. Knowledge democracy is a key concept for characteris-

ing and understanding a productive community based research and community university research partnerships. The authors point out that in working together communities and universities can build a new “architecture of knowledge” which includes, among other things, a more dynamic and relevant curriculum, a broader understanding of academic relevance, and recognitions of the diversities of knowledge culture.

We thank the authors who contributed to this issue of the *International Journal of Action Research*, and welcome readers.

Danilo R. Streck
Editor-in-chief