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Dear Readers:

This issue of the *Research Bulletin* brings a host of offerings on the philosophy, preparation, and practices of teachers in Waldorf education, as well as research into the pedagogy's spiritual and neurological dimensions. We have four original articles from North America and two pieces that originated in Europe.

Dennis Klocek offers an insightful investigation into the spiritual significance and pedagogical ramifications of current neurological research. Focusing primarily on the autistic spectrum, he shows how anthroposophy can shed light on cutting-edge brain imagery and findings on neuro-plasticity. His article, taken from a lecture delivered at a professional conference, points the way towards a holistic approach to working with autistic-spectrum students.

Frederick Amrine's series on the philosophical roots of Waldorf education continues with a challenging and important chapter on the work of J.G. Fichte. Amrine contrasts Fichte's approach to Kant's dualism with the one used by Goethe (see the previous issue of the *Research Bulletin*, Vol. XVII No. 2), and anyone familiar with Rudolf Steiner's *Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path* will notice Fichte's influence on that book. If Goethe focused on the observational pole, Fichte delved deeply into the intuitive element and was the first to "think about thinking" in Steiner's sense. Amrine again manages the rare feat of writing about complex philosophical topics with fluidity and grace.

Michaela Glöckler's lecture at the 2012 International Waldorf Early Childhood Conference in Dornach, Switzerland, is reprinted here from the WECAN publication on

that conference. Glöckler describes the three great steps of incarnation: taking hold of the body, taking hold of karma, and finding a way to express the "I AM." With her customary insightfulness and clarity, she sheds light on the challenges and opportunities that confront newly incarnated children and those who wish to work with them.

Gert Biesta is a new contributor to the *Research Bulletin*. A prolific writer and influential thinker in European educational circles, he argues for a shift in the focus of teacher education, away from a narrow focus on skills and competences and towards an emphasis on educational wisdom. Beside the worthy ideas themselves, North American Waldorf educators will do well to note the consequences of governmental interference in education, which often begins with good intentions but grows into a stranglehold that deadens education from the bottom up.

Biesta's insights are especially relevant in conjunction with Liz Beaven's article, the first of two, that describes her research into experiences of teachers who have moved between independent and charter schools. Hoping to bring actual data to an area that has tended to suffer from an abundance of passion but a dearth of factual information, Beaven interviewed ten teachers who have taught in both independent Waldorf schools and public charter schools. Regardless of one's opinion on the promise and perils of public and independent Waldorf education, hearing from those who have worked in both settings is surely an important reality check.

"An Outline of a Study Methodology" is the name of an article I wrote for a previous *Bulletin* (Vol. XVI No.1). In the article for this for this *Research Bulletin*—a follow-up that is actually

the linguistic and philosophical background to the original—I explain the thought process that lies at the foundation of the methodology. Since the study approach has been used in schools and conferences in the intervening years, we thought that including this background would help deepen the understanding of all who wish to study in that way.

Finally, a report from the Online Waldorf Library is here as always, and an index of past *Research Bulletin* issues is included for your convenience.

Happy reading!