

Bank Street College of Education

Educate

Graduate School of Education

Faculty and Staff Papers and Presentations

Spring 5-2021

**The Occasional Paper Series: An Open Access Journal
Transforming Educational Research Across the Globe**

Gail Boldt

Follow this and additional works at: <https://educate.bankstreet.edu/gse>

The Occasional Paper Series: An Open Access Journal Transforming Educational Research Across the Globe

In February 2021, the Bank Street *Occasional Paper Series* (OPS) exceeded the mark of 100,000 downloads. The first issue of OPS was published in 1999, with 300 paper copies printed and distributed to Bank Street faculty and students. In 2012, OPS was relaunched as an online, open access publication, paid for and hosted by Bank Street College of Education.

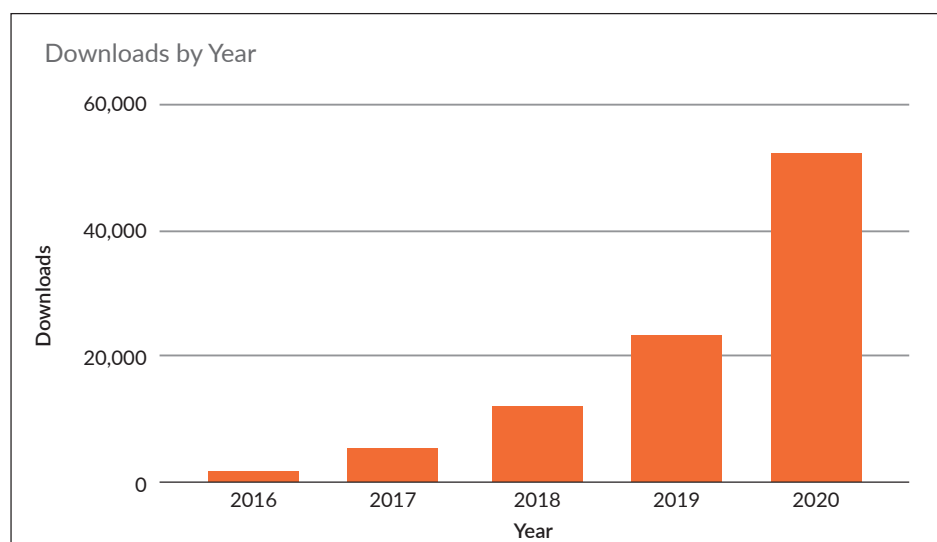
As an open access journal, OPS works to fulfill the original intent of the open access movement: to remove barriers to accessing high-quality, peer-reviewed research; to reduce inequalities between well-financed institutions that can afford to purchase access and those that cannot; and to improve access for the general public, businesses and organizations, and for those in under-resourced regions of the world. Our assumption is that access to scholarly research is a social good that should be available to everyone.

In December 2015, OPS began to be hosted by the bepress Digital Commons system, an open journal publishing platform. Digital Commons provides tracking and statistics, which enable us to determine how many downloads of individual papers or whole issues occur daily. We can see what is being downloaded and where the downloads are occurring by city, country, and institution. This information allows us to track how and where OPS is being utilized.

Data from the Digital Commons platform tells us that OPS has been tremendously successful in meeting the goals of the open access movement across several measures. OPS has been downloaded in 186 out of 195 countries in the world. While the United States continues to be the primary consumer of OPS, it is downloaded in both economically advantaged and disadvantaged countries across the globe.

With articles written by teachers, teacher education students, parents, and researchers and attending carefully to the diversity of our contributors' voices, papers published in OPS critically take on social issues, represent the complexities of classroom interactions, and tell inspiring stories of curriculum and pedagogy. OPS is a voice for socially conscious education, extending Bank Street's scholarly voice and providing a powerful expression of the progressive values that frame the work of the College.

The growth of OPS since we first began tracking downloads in December 2015 has been astonishing. From December 2015 to the end of 2016, the total number of downloads was 1,451 from 72 countries and 197 institutions. Institutions include educational institutions; federal, state, provincial, and local governments; commercial and corporate interests; non-profit organizations; libraries; and the military. In 2017, there were 5,451 downloads from 114 countries and 625 institutions. In 2018, there were 12,149 downloads from 119 countries and 1,046 institutions. In 2019, the figures were 23,260 downloads from 148 countries and 1,539 institutions. In 2020, it was 52,507 downloads from 1,749 institutions and 166 countries.



In just the first four months of 2021, we have had 19,487 downloads from 146 countries and 914 institutions, putting us easily on pace for another record-breaking year. In total, from December 2015 through mid-April 2021, there have been 114,300 downloads from 186 countries and 4,116 institutions. Across all years, educational organizations have comprised 69 percent of all downloads, while commercial interests are 21 percent, governments are 5 percent, non-profits are 2 percent, and libraries are 1 percent. Importantly for the mission of OPS to continue to serve the Bank Street community, 33 percent of all downloads are associated with Bank Street itself. Additionally, once someone downloads a PDF of a given piece or issue, that person is able to distribute the PDF and it is therefore reasonable to assume that the impact exceeds the number of downloads.

As the reputation of OPS has grown nationally and internationally, we have expanded the Editorial Board while still maintaining a close tie to members who are part of the immediate Bank Street community. Current Board members are Gail Boldt, Editor-in-Chief, *Occasional Paper Series*, Bank Street College, and Professor, Penn State University; Virginia Casper, Retired Faculty Member, Bank Street Graduate School of Education; Quiana Jackson, GSE '19, and Current PhD Student, Penn State University; Harper Keenan, GSE '11, Assistant Professor, University of British Columbia; Mollie Welsh Kruger, Faculty Member, Bank Street Graduate School of Education; Kyunghwa Lee, Professor, University of Georgia; Ali McKersie, Teacher, Bank Street School for Children; Mark Nagasawa, Director, Straus Center for Young Children & Families, Bank Street Graduate School of Education; Sharon Ryan, Professor, Rutgers University; Jonathan Silin, Editor Emeritus, *Occasional Paper Series*, Former Faculty, Bank Street Graduate School of Education, and Fellow at the University of Toronto; Karyn de Silsby Pia, Teacher, Bank Street School for Children; Susan Stires, Retired Faculty Member, Bank Street Graduate School of Education; Wendi Williams, Dean, School of Education, Mills College, and Former Associate Dean, Bank Street Graduate School of Education; and Mayida Zaal, GSE '02, Professor, Montclair State University.

Open access journals have, in some instances, devolved into a “pay to publish” scheme which devalues the reputation, quality, and impact of the work published. The continued financial sponsorship of OPS by Bank Street has allowed it to thrive as a worldwide education resource. As an open access journal, OPS supports the mission and credo of the College and builds its place among international educational leaders. The Board of the *Occasional Paper Series* is proud of its growth and grateful to its contributors, readers, and Bank Street College for making this possible.

To explore the *Occasional Paper Series*, please visit bankstreet.edu/ops.

Authored by Gail Boldt, Editor-in-Chief, Occasional Paper Series, and Professor, Penn State University. Published in May 2021.