

Editorial

With this issue, the *Journal* completes its tenth year of publication, while its present editor realises with some astonishment the achievement of four complete volumes. The occasion must not pass without some celebration to mark the passage of time, and we are delighted to welcome to these pages some words of wisdom from a venerated previous occupant of this Chair, Jon Baggaley, now Associate Professor in the Department of Education and Director of the Diploma in Educational Technology at Concordia University, Montreal, Canada, but still a valued member of our Editorial Board.

Ten Years Before the Mast

Ten years is no time at all, but in the life of an Association and Journal it is an age. The publishing world bristles with journals of communication and the educational media, yet this particular *Journal* continues to gain in circulation and stature. To those who remember its birth pangs, it is a relief and great pleasure to mark its tenth anniversary.

For a time in the 1970s, the *Journal* barely existed from issue to issue. As its Editor from 1975 to 1977, I dreaded the knock on the door in the night, the message that our journal had been called to the Great Publisher beyond. Advertising revenue was sparse, and so was adequate copy. As each issue arrived from the printer and was distributed, the Editorial Board exchanged 'phone calls of satisfaction and disbelief.

Our intention was to sustain a publication of interest to educational television's technical and production personnel, with the academic credibility necessary to attract international attention. The firm foundation established by managing editor Shand Hutchison had shown that this could be done. I was pleased with the *Journal's* new title (in a previous existence under Shand it was the *NECCTA Bulletin*), designed to elicit new interest from libraries and abstracting services. I was faintly embarrassed by its obvious nickname, *JET*, which suggested an in-house publication for the aviation or hypodermics industry.

Seven years later, I sit in an office in North America and am proud to see the *Journal* quoted in the leading literature of the field. With the solid support of an independent publisher, young *JET* even has a glint in its eye: in the coming months it will give birth to a new Abstracts journal, further demonstrating the Association's prominent role in international educational media (see below).

It was fascinating to return, after a four-year absence, to the Association's 1984 Conference. Those four years have seen the most intense development in the history of educational technology. The sleek new offspring of the videotape machinery we laboured with in the 1960s is now commonplace in the home. It is joined by the microcomputer, whose applications are a bottomless pit. In the Conference agenda, it was satisfying to see British educational technologists leading the world with respect to computer-video hybrids, and in the art of collaboration between broadcasters and the community.

Many other things had changed since my previous visit. Although the discussions of early academic retirement were unfamiliar and dispiriting, the numbers in attendance at

the Conference had swelled dramatically. The air of buoyancy suggested a new and optimistic era in educational media development. The advent of the microcomputer certainly had a great deal to do with it.

In other ways, educational technology has not changed in *twenty* years. The old programmed learning booklets and teaching machines were also expected to revolutionize education, but they had logistic problems which prevented this from happening. Today's computer-based technologies have all the same problems, are harder to use and are more costly; it is to be hoped that the claims made for interactive video in education are not over-inflated.

At least we now have a better understanding of the media consumer, the audience, the user. We speak familiarly of 'television literacy', though we must concentrate harder on finding out how to teach it. We must continue to seek ways of rendering television effective for diverse *groups* of people, with at least the same energy we devote to individualised learning. We must ensure that the creation of software for computer-based systems becomes easier than it is today. Otherwise, today's microcomputers will join the earlier teaching machines in the school cupboard.

In ten years' time, there will doubtless be no microcomputers as we know them. Diskettes, videotape and the media for playing them will have been replaced by handier, user-friendlier media. But the problems of communicating educational principles with them will remain. By continuing to stress these problems, the *Journal* can play a role of immeasurable importance, guarding against the endless tendency towards innovation for its own sake that has dogged the educational media field since its inception.

I thank Keith Roach for his very kind invitation to contribute to this issue. Under his leadership the *Journal* has come of age, realising *all* the editorial aims I left unfulfilled, and more besides. I also wish to pay credit to those who gave essential support to my own editorial efforts, notably Robin Moss, Harry Creaser and Bob Wilkinson. To Administrator Pat Kelly, backbone and life-support to the whole enterprise, I offer my gratitude and admiration. If journal editors have a heaven, she will be at the gate.

JON BAGGALEY

Information

It is good to report that the Council for Educational Technology has now firmly established its promised Interactive Video Centre for Education and Training. The Director, who was appointed in June, has a wealth of experience in the publishing world behind him and is enthusiastically committed to encouraging the application of and research into IV in all areas of education and training. With the support of the Department of Trade and Industry, the Manpower Services Commission and the two major commercial organisations, Philips and Thorn-EMI, the Centre and its staff (the Director, an Information Officer and Secretary) will by now be fully operational from its base near the Council's headquarters in Central London. We wish the Director and his staff every success in their vitally important task.

The Council has also made public the text of its recent evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology, in which it warned of the danger of 'technological poverty' for the adult population of the country unless technology and design are taught as major, not fringe, subjects in schools, colleges and adult centres. Not only must the education and training system keep abreast of new technologies, it argued, but it must also apply them to the processes of education and training, developing greater individualisation of learning and using independent and distance learning schemes to open up access and opportunity. The Council has proposed to the Government that a series of conferences and training workshops be held for the rapid training of senior staff

of teacher training institutions to further this aim. We wholeheartedly support the Council in this endeavour. The full text of the Council's evidence is available from Simon Newton, Council for Educational Technology in the U.K., 3 Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BA.

This Issue and the Next

This issue has the usual pattern of submitted articles from a variety of sources and viewpoints, and the familiar, regular features of Reviews, Broadcast Notes and Educational Television Abstracts. The papers are once more international in origin. Ernest Choat urges, from the University of London, a closer examination of the television needs of young schoolchildren, and the Honourable Peter Brooke encourages us all, from the Department of Education and Science, to play our full part in the communication revolution in the world of education. Peters (no stranger to these pages) and Hammonds look at our own television commercials as sources of useful media research, from the safe distance of Trondheim University in Norway, while Halford Fairchild describes, from UCLA, a fascinating piece of research into television effectiveness in the affective domain, on a scale few of us could hope to aspire to. This latter paper is itself on a scale unusual for the *Journal*, exceeding by a wide margin our usual (but flexible) rules on length, but it is so rare for ETV researchers to have the funds, time and enthusiasm to carry out a project of these dimensions (producing a 'TV special' for broadcasting, to determine how effective it can be) that a full publication of the background, the research details and an extensive extract of the full results data seemed essential, as we are sure you will agree.

Jon Baggaley hinted above at a new venture involving Abstracts. The Educational Television Abstracts feature of the *Journal* has been, we modestly claim, a very successful one. In fact, it has threatened to become rather too successful, now running to about 70 items per issue and promising to take over the complete journal, while still only scratching the surface of the massive body of published information on 'mediated instruction', as our American colleagues might refer to our field. At the same time, demand for space for articles has increased very encouragingly, and some authors are now having to wait far too long to see their work in print.

For all these reasons, the Editorial Board and our publishers have agreed that, from Volume 11, 1985, onwards, the Abstracts will 'bud off' as a separate and much expanded independent publication, *Educational Technology Abstracts*. Carfax will publish this new information resource four times a year, covering the entire field of the technology of education and training—a field surprisingly not served by a printed abstracting service at the moment. *Educational Technology Abstracts* will have a separate, international Editorial Board, but will carry with it the full, enthusiastic and continuing support of the Association, which can rightly look on the new publication as having been nurtured through its infancy in the pages of its very own *Journal*.

This move will release valuable space for publication of original articles and reviews, and the Editor looks forward to a rapid release of a backlog of papers. The next issue will, for example, have a strongly international flavour, including no less than four linked papers, on media studies, from one source—the University of Klagenfurt, Austria—and two from another—Concordia University, Canada—on television literacy and TV character design, respectively. Quicker publication will, we hope, encourage more of our readers to submit articles on all aspects of educational television.

Our one regret is the loss of the ETV Abstracts service from our pages. By way of compensation, we plan to include a bibliographic feature in their place, listing recent papers on ETV and referring to their indexing in *Educational Technology Abstracts*, and

also hope to announce very special subscription terms to the new *Abstracts* for individual members of the Association.

Clearly, having successfully completed ten years of publication, the *Journal* is vigorously entering its second decade with new ideas and enthusiasm. Its pages are, as ever, open to your opinions, comments, reports and reviews; please take advantage of them.

KEITH ROACH