FROM THE EDITOR

"The More Things Change, the More They Remain the Same"

This week I began my annual fall office "housecleaning." I was resolved to be thorough and even ruthless in tossing items from the last two decades into the recycling bin. I had developed a mental checklist to aid my decision process, and one criterion was that if something hadn't been used or even looked at in the past two years, out it went. This high standard lasted until I reached the third shelf where a precariously balanced stack of professional journals resides. The old journals are full of "timely" topics, and most articles advance a bold stance on one issue or another. The research pieces offer discussions and findings that agree with and contradict each other over the years and then change course and contradict and agree with each other all over again.

As I glanced through the various journal topics I experienced feelings of both professional guilt and responsibility. I reflected on how I introduce and develop ideas, topics, methods, and principles with my new trade and industrial (T&I) teachers, and I found myself pondering some questions that all of us as teacher educators might consider. First, in our enthusiasm for particular ideologies, methods, or programs, do we unwittingly encourage teachers to become followers rather than independent users of professional knowledge? Do we teach our teachers to value research, but at the same time to think critically and not become enslaved by its findings?

Promoting a particular way of teaching, although research-based, may be dangerous. It could lead new teachers to believe that there is only one way to teach T&I or technology education, and that good teaching demands compliance with the tenets of a particular ideology or method or program. What happens when the paradigm shifts, and shifts again?

We need to help our teachers balance professional knowledge and use it in creatively resourceful ways. To be successful in the long run, teachers need to develop the confidence and freedom to adapt and combine methods and materials to fit

the situations in which they find themselves. While we encourage our teachers to teach their students critical thinking skills, are we doing the same for them? As I conduct observations of T&I teachers at their schools, I find that good teachers have perfected this concept of balance. As they lay the foundation of knowledge and skills, they allow their creativity to take flight. These teachers adjust, revise, amend, and invent. They are able to evaluate situations and choose to adapt and modify research-based techniques. Their flexibility allows them to shift and adjust to changing times and circumstances in public education.

I don't think I'll throw those old journals away just yet. They remind me that it's important to keep perspective, balance, and even a sense of humor in the pursuit of knowledge. The journals help me keep track of where we have been along the road to professional knowledge. In a strange sense, the old journals are a comfort as they also remind me that "the more things change, the more they remain the same."

In This Issue

This issue of *JITE* contains three feature articles related to trade and industrial and technology education. In the first article, Jensen and Burr describe a service-learning experience that was conducted with secondary students in a construction technology course. Questions explored in this case study were whether the service learning project helped to engage student motivation and participation and whether the curriculum objectives were mastered by means of this learning method.

Next, Flowers's research addresses the issue of the growing demand for higher education faculty in technical education. Flowers used a survey to examine vacancies, hiring criteria, and attitudes toward hiring those who had earned online doctorate degrees in technical education. The sample was found to be significantly less likely (than neutral) to hire an applicant who had earned a doctoral degree in an online program. Survey participants reported a perception of low quality for online doctoral education.

In the third feature article, Hill discusses issues related to the initiative of implementing an engineering design emphasis in technology education programs. His conceptual piece provides

insights into changes that will be experienced by classroom teachers, teacher educators, and support staff if the trend toward engineering design permeates the profession. Other key aspects of possible change Hill addresses are educational philosophy, curriculum, instructional strategies, and collaborative relationships.

In the "At Issue" section, Kraft proposes that the bicycle provides an ideal topic for technology education. Not only does the bicycle have a rich history of development, its study also offers a gateway to the subjects of energy, power, and maintenance. Kraft contends that another benefit of using the bicycle in middle school technology education may be an increased interest among students in riding bicycles, which could lead to life-long behavior changes.

Finally, Herschbach provides a review of Grubb and Lazerson's book *The Education Gospel: The Economic Power of Schooling*. This book discusses the set of ideas promoting the belief that education raises both personal and public economic wealth and solves numerous social problems.

Following is the *Journal's* "Bits and Pieces" section which contains information for submitting articles to the *Journal* and how to become a member of NAITTE.

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