From the Editor

The JTE: Retrospect/Prospect

The first issue of the *Journal of Technology Education* made it's way to the profession in the fall of 1989. Five years/volumes later, it seems appropriate to reflect on its brief history and future potential. From the onset, the JTE has been a modest venture, a stature pretty much assured by its focused scope. The Editorial Board has steadfastly promoted research and publication relating to the teaching *about* technology, the tradition begun perhaps with William E. Warner's "Curriculum to Reflect Technology" in 1947. The Journal has consistently turned away manuscripts that do not somehow relate rather directly to technology education.

While specific in scope, the JTE has drawn contributions from researchers throughout the world who are wrestling with many of the same issues that confront us here in the States. Articles describing technology education in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Canada, the People's Republic of China, Japan, and Australia have been published in the JTE. Contributions from leaders in Science, Technology, and Society have also appeared regularly in the *Journal*. And JTE readers in dozens of countries attest to the interest worldwide in the research of the profession.

The JTE Editorial Board has given generously of their time to review scores of manuscripts for publication consideration each year. They have attended to this task with great professionalism, providing encouragement and constructive feedback to all authors who submit to the *Journal*. At the same time, authors have been forthcoming with their manuscripts and understanding of the rigorous review process that the JTE employs. Prospective authors have been universal in their praise of the work of the reviewers, whose primary task is to recommend ways in which manuscripts may be strengthened. Working with authors in this respect has been a primary role for the JTE. Similarly, regular presentations on writing for the JTE at the annual ITEA conference have helped to bring prospective authors along in the process.

One of the most significant developments in the publication of the JTE during its first five years has been the advent of the electronic version (E-JTE). In the Spring of 1992, the E-JTE became one of the first handful of refereed professional journals in history to enjoy worldwide electronic distribution via the Internet. As I reported in Volume 5, #2, that venture has progressed far

beyond original expectations. Thousands of individuals from all over the world now routinely download articles published in the JTE. Our ideas and issues are being read by many who have previously had no understanding of our profession or the task that challenges us–teaching young people about the technological world in which we live.

It isn't surprising to me that research, in the traditional sense, is relatively sparse in technology education. Our profession is rich with very capable and creative individuals who have focused more on *doing* than on *reflecting* and *reporting* the results of this developmental work. As a result, our teachers, instructional methods, and curriculum models are among the very finest in education. They represent a brand of scholarship that is rarely recognized; the scholarship of transforming theory into practice. The curriculum, methods, and laboratories that gifted technology teachers develop *are* their scholarship; they reflect a unique and effective model of constructivist education. Our laboratories routinely employ the methods other disciplines desperately seek–hands-on problem solving, collaborative learning, authentic assessment, and of course, integration of technology with the curriculum, to name but a few.

My point in all of this is to suggest that we need ways to recognize the particular brand of scholarship represented by those engaged in these developmental activities. Academic journals have been the traditional means of disseminating the ideas of a profession, but print is not a very good medium for showing off the work of creative practitioners in our field. Electronic publication offers us a new opportunity to do just that. Through the World Wide Web, (a hypertext system that enables the dissemination of digital text, graphics, audio, and video across the Internet) for example, we could depict the uniqueness of our curriculum, laboratories, and methods for *all* to *see*. I've considered using the electronic version of the JTE to do this, but this concept is probably too far askance from the relatively traditional JTE to "fit" in that format. Perhaps it would work as an electronic supplement to the JTE?

Whether it occurs through the JTE's electronic version, as an electronic supplement to the JTE, or through another vehicle, our profession *needs* to capitalize on the evolving global information infrastructure as a means of highlighting the "action research" taking place in technology education classrooms. Though we have much to offer, we have thus far not done a good job of communicating our ideas and efforts to those *outside* our profession. The outstanding work taking place in many of our laboratories is visually rich and the World Wide Web represents a potential showplace for our work in this regard.

If you have something you think is appropriate for this format, contact me and we'll talk. If we agree that your material might "work," the JTE stands willing and able to sponsor an electronic "multimedia" supplement to it's more traditional print and electronic formats.

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