

Editorial

With the publication of the first Australian Journal of Environmental Education, it is perhaps easy to lapse into thinking that this area of endeavour has come of age. Whilst the process of formally presenting ideas in journal form, open to criticism, reflects growth; only a flow of quality articles will indicate that maturity exists throughout the discipline.

The success of any journal depends primarily on the quality of articles it publishes; these of course depend on what is received. A quality journal article is characterized by:

- brevity — the minimum number of words necessary to convey and justify any assertions made,
- originality — in the light of what has come before, it breaks new ground, gives new perspectives or develops concepts.
- discipline — expressed by being scientifically or logically rigorous and succinct.
- clarity — a journal article is a formal method of communication therefore it should consider its target audience, it should have something to say and the expression, punctuation and grammar must be precise and correct.
- structure — points are developed in a logical order.

Literature reviews forming part of an article are brief and to the point. Analyses used are clearly identified, as are justifiable versus opinion statements.

Most of the articles published in this edition of the Australian Journal of Environmental Education have come from papers presented at the Second National Conference of the Australian Association for Environmental Education at Brisbane in 1982. Appropriately for the first edition, these articles review and challenge existing concepts in environmental education. Whilst it is hoped that the biennial conference will continue to attract papers of sufficient quality to be published in the Journal, they will, by the nature of most conferences, tend not to include studies of a truly analytical nature. Such studies which test or evaluate programmes empirically are particularly sought by the editors.

Apart from this direction, it is hoped that the Journal will attract contributions that have relevance to the issues that are facing Australia and the rest of the world today and that will increasingly challenge our lifestyle and established patterns of behaviour in the future. How is environmental education contributing to and responding to new technology, the changing economy, changing community values and social characteristics? What is its priority in comparison to problems

associated with the increasing level of unemployment and poverty? How effective have efforts been when spending on luxury consumer goods is expanding rapidly?

On a more parochial level, how does the law contribute to the resolution of environmental issues? What are the theoretical bases of environmental education and what is its role in attitude change? What in fact, are community attitudes to the environment? How do we perceive the environment and how has our cultural history affected our perceptions? Do environmental educators really exist at all and if so are they credible?

The Journal exists to address these sorts of questions. Increasingly it is hoped that the Journal will move from the general philosophical treatise towards a detailed analysis and questioning of the environmental education discipline.