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Letter from the Editor

Raymond J. Trybus
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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

With this April, 1988 issue, I begin a four-year term as the editor of the **Journal of the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association**. Accordingly, this is my first opportunity to share with you my views about the future of the **Journal** and to enlist your support in its expansion and improvement.

There are those who take the fact of change in human organizations as an expressed or implied criticism of what existed previously. There is another, more organic, more holistic perspective, however, which is also my own. This perspective is that human activities and organizations, like individual human beings, have stages of growth and development, and that change is simply the revealing of potentials which had not yet ripened earlier. From this perspective, each stage of life has its own character and qualities, which are – one hopes – consistent with what has been in the past, and yet which are not fully predictable from a study of the past. Growth is a story in the process of telling itself.

And so, what potentials are being revealed, what stage of growth is reflected in the **Journal's** new identity? First, the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association is experiencing a new maturity as a professional organization. It has weathered a serious crisis of finance and direction, and has emerged with a renewed sense of energy and assertiveness for the challenging tasks which lie ahead. As part of this new organizational activism, it needs communication mechanisms which reflect its new identity, its strength and its renewed purposes. The **Journal**, along with the revitalized **Newsletter** and the **Monographs** program, is a major piece of this communication system.

“But what happened to the name?” you say. You may recall an advertising campaign a few years ago in which Ozark Airlines asked, “Did you change *your* name when you grew up?” Ozark’s answer was “no.” The ADARA Board of Directors and your Editor, however, agreed that the answer should be “yes” for this **Journal**. With this issue, then, the **Journal of Rehabilitation of the Deaf (JRD for short)** becomes the **Journal of the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association (JADARA for short)**. The new name is meant to remind ourselves of the new maturity of the Association, and of the close identification of the **Journal** with the Association as the Association’s major voice to the professions and to the public.

The primary content of the **Journal** will continue to be **major articles** on new methods, approaches, concepts, and practices in the fields of rehabilitation and deafness, both broadly conceived. The focus will be on the *application* of new knowledge to *practice*. My aim is to make **JADARA** a forum for practitioners and researchers to talk with each other for the purpose of advancing the state of the art in human services. We very much want and welcome reports of high quality, rigorous research, articulately and literately presented; in fact, we need far more of this than we have had in our field historically.

At the same time, we want *research which is relevant to practice*, and which is communicated in ways that are likely to engage the attention of practitioners and help them to improve their work. We are not interested in a journal which merely allows researchers to talk to other researchers, with little regard for the demands of practice. Nor are we interested in a journal which simply allows university faculty members to add items to their list of publications for purposes of promotion and tenure. We seek a genuine and continuing dialogue among the scholars and the practitioners in our field. Neither is the dialogue a one-way street. For every case in which an idea or approach originating in university research becomes accepted practice, there are probably three or four cases in which the observations and actions of professionals in daily practice lead to a new topic for the university researcher to examine, or in which, in some other way, practice leads to research rather than vice versa.

As to content and subject matter, **JADARA** is interested in the full range of activities and concerns of professionals in deafness and rehabilitation. This especially includes attention to *mental health issues*, which are of major concern to all in the rehabilitation setting. Twelve years ago, the National Institute of Mental Health initiated a journal entitled **Mental Health in Deafness** on an experimental basis. It did not survive beyond the experimental period, however. **JADARA** will become the current vehicle for important work being done in this field. Independent living services, supported employment, transition from school to work, family issues, and many other topics are all appropriate content for **JADARA**. If in doubt, please assume that your material is appropriate and submit it for publication, or communicate with the editor by telephone or in writing for advice on the matter.

I invite and challenge the scholars and researchers, then, to speak of their work, their questions, and their findings in a way which excites, energizes, and inspires the work of practitioners. I invite and challenge professional practitioners to describe their work, their observations, and their understanding of both in ways which are amenable to empirical study and demonstration, and which attract the attention of

scholars and researchers to phenomena and issues worthy of their labors. As we engage in this dialogue we become and sustain ourselves as a profession worthy of the name.

In addition to major articles, **JADARA** will publish **Brief Reports**, the first of which appears in this issue. This is a vehicle for new ideas, preliminary findings, research studies with provocative results but limited samples, and other similar materials which are useful to the field, but which for one reason or another are not appropriate for full article treatment.

There will be *book reviews*, as well as *reviews of tests and curriculum and evaluation materials*. From time to time, there will be reports of *official actions of ADARA* itself, or of *other major events* relevant to our lives and those of the people we serve, such as new pieces of legislation. On occasion, there may be *reprints or abstracts of articles and reports* which have appeared elsewhere in the professional or scientific literature, but which are of potential importance to **JADARA** readers. As editor, I expect to weigh in from time to time with *editorial comments*, as well as with the opinions of guest editorial writers. There will also be a brief section listing the *dates and places of major conferences* of ADARA and of other associations and events relevant to our readership.

As another way of facilitating the professional dialogue I referred to earlier, I hope to initiate a section of **Letters to the Editor** and of **Commentary on Previously Published Articles**, in which readers will have the opportunity to respond to and perhaps challenge the statements made by authors in previous issues.

In order to broaden the availability of our deafness-related information to other more general readerships, and the availability of material of more general interest to our specialized audience, I will seek occasional opportunities for *joint publication* of a **JADARA** issue with an issue of another related scientific or professional journal.

As is true of any human endeavor, it is *people* who make journals happen. The key people in the process of publishing a professional journal are the peer reviewers, the members of the Editorial Review Board. These are well known and respected members of the professions who volunteer their time and service to read and comment on articles and other materials submitted for **Journal** publication, making recommendations to the Editor as to whether to accept, reject, or modify the item in question. For each item submitted, the Editor asks one or more Editorial Review Board members with relevant background and expertise to review the submission and make recommendations. It is the general policy of **JADARA** to conduct blind reviews, in which the identity of the author(s) is not provided to the reviewers. However, the small size of our field and the kinds of background information sometimes provided within the text of manuscripts makes it impossible to guarantee complete anonymity in the review process. The Editor and the members of the Editorial Review Board are, however, committed to a review process which is as professional, fair, objective, and impartial as possible.

Appointments to the Editorial Review Board are made by the Board of Directors of ADARA on recommendations from the **JADARA** Editor. The following individuals currently constitute the Editorial Review Board of **JADARA**:

Michael Bullis • Nancy Eldredge • Irene Leigh

Carlotta Lockmiller • Nancy Long

Randolph Mowry • Jerome Schein • Myra Taff-Watson

Additional members of the Editorial Review Board are needed. If you are interested in serving, please send me a letter indicating your interest and the nature of the contribution you believe you can make to the **Journal**, along with a current resume, at the address listed on the inside front cover.

It is my intention to provide energetic editorial leadership to **JADARA** for the next four years, but a journal and an editor can only be as successful as the support provided by the entire membership and those of you who are involved in our field and the related professions. When you write, please consider **JADARA** as your primary publication outlet. Encourage your professional colleagues to do the same. If you are one who doesn't write, or who hasn't written recently, consider making this change in your life (remember the opening comments in this article about stages of growth, not-yet-revealed potentials, etc!). It is only through this professional dialogue that we can learn from each other and thus improve the quality of the work we do with our clients and fellow professionals. I look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead.

Raymond J. Trybus
Editor, **JADARA**

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