

## EDITORIAL

*Education for information* has been established in the belief that there is a need to provide a forum for the exchange of theories and experience on the educational and training aspects of librarianship and information science. The face of library and information science has altered considerably over the last twenty years. Expansion in higher education led to increased demand for highly-qualified library personnel and at the same time created the opportunity to establish new departments and schools of library and information science. While this kind of activity has more or less ceased in the developed countries, it has been continued in the developing countries with their considerable need for trained personnel. The period, too, has seen many alterations in practice and attitudes. The extension of public library activities into the community and provision of community information service are examples of a more positive approach to library services. Governments also have begun to realise the importance of information flow within society. Many reasons can be put forward to explain why change has occurred, but it is impossible to ignore the impact of technology. Computer technology has been embraced by multifarious library and information units throughout the world and, while the impact has already been considerable, it is likely that we have only experienced the tip of the iceberg.

Training and educational programs have been forced to react to the many changes but, until now, the exchange of ideas and experience has been hindered by the lack of a suitable internationally-orientated journal. *Education for information* has set itself the task of satisfying this need. All matters related to the orientation, structure, content, philosophy, etc. of programmes, ranging from full-time first-qualification courses to short courses offered as part of a continuing education programme for practising staff, are included in the brief, as are less formal instructional activities. Schools of librarianship and information science have the major interest in the educational sphere, but equally significant is the part played in training by other bodies. Many libraries have demonstrated their concern with training by appointing full-time training officers, and in the area of online searching, for example, training is undertaken outside the library or educational framework by online vendors, database producers and professional associations. Matters associated with the training programmes designed by these organisations are also the concern of this journal. Issues concerning the preparation of professionals able to cope with the new technology available to the information industry will undoubtedly form a major area of concern in the journal, but it is not intended that the more traditional areas of librarianship should be overlooked in this encounter with the electronic age. Certainly *Education for information* opens its pages to everyone (teachers, practitioners and students) who has a contribution to make to any aspect of the debate on

library and information science education – past, present and future.

As well as articles, *Education for information* will include short communications comprising statements of research in progress, observations, etc. The review section forms an important part of each issue and will take note not only of books or reports concerned with education and training per se but also textbooks of interest to teachers and students. Details of forthcoming events such as seminars, conferences and meetings will also be included in a News section. The editors hope that the various submissions will promote a lively discussion, and to this end, letters will be published as appropriate.

This first issue is devoted to an overview of the nature of educational courses in library and information science, and the articles underline the diversity of views amongst educationalists and practitioners. Grogan, in an historical introduction, highlights perennial themes which have absorbed the attention of library educators during the last century. That no consensus has emerged is clearly revealed in the very different proposals set forth by Line, Gerard, Seeger and Wersig. None of these articles is likely to silence the debate, but we are confident that they will succeed in provoking discussion and comment.

As its subtitle (the international review of education and training in library and information science) suggests, the editors are anxious that *Education for information* should adopt a genuinely international perspective. To this end, an eminent Editorial Board, comprising educators and practitioners from over fifteen countries, has been recruited.

It now rests with library and information science educators, trainers and practitioners throughout the world to accept the opportunity to participate fully in this international venture.

R.F. Guy and J.A. Large  
Editors