

# Editorial

This issue of *Studies in Design Education Craft & Technology* marks the completion of our first year of 'three in a year' publication. For some years we have hesitated to take the overdue step — we were afraid that there would be insufficient good contributions to enable us to maintain the high standards which we have consistently achieved.

Fortunately, our fears were groundless and our confidence has been justified. Our first two issues this year have been filled with outstanding material and we have an abundance of important contributions for this issue. In it we focus on four themes that are of central importance to our readers. These are, respectively, developments in the primary schools, craft design and technology for girls, assessment and technical and vocational education.

The issue begins with Cole and Lewis's report on how designing and making activities were introduced into primary schools in Nottinghamshire in a special two-year project. It shows how the open ended, less structured approach of many primary schools can be linked effectively with the more precise quantified aspects of CDT. They write 'it became clear that the most appropriate context for designing and making in the primary curriculum is topic work. Teachers found that their children's designing and making enhances the development of those major concepts and worthwhile ideas being promoted through the topic. The placing of designing and making within a broad thematic context gives the activity a relevance that is difficult to achieve when starting at the 'design brief' level. For example, top juniors working on a topic on 'Food' designed and made balances measuring down to 0.1 grams when the scales available were not sensitive enough to illustrate the quantity of additives in food. The need for improved methods of weighing came from the children's growing understanding'.

Two important articles follow on Girls and CDT by Morgan and Rogers. Based on practical experience in London schools they indicate some of the progress that is being made in making CDT more fully available across the sex divide. However, they do not disguise the magnitude of the change that still has to take place. Morgan notes that there is still 'real need to examine the content of the curriculum on offer in the majority of secondary schools. Many projects and assignments give clear messages as to whom they are aimed at. Design briefs are boy oriented. As well as curriculum we have pupil grouping. It is not enough for pupils to opt for CDT, our aim is to help them to succeed in it'. As Rogers reaffirms 'accessibility is not just the provision of facilities, tools and equipment.'

The extract from the Welsh Office Research Project Schools in Action on Assessment and Recording in Art Design and CDT (reproduced by permission) offers an illuminating account of procedures developed in Clwyd. It offers approaches to assessment that are accessible not only to teachers but also to pupils and shows how assessment itself can have an important creative component that is part of our work rather than an additional and marginal chore.

Lloyd, also based in Clwyd, but building on work undertaken in Hereford and Worcester as well, takes an overall view of the curriculum changes being brought about by the introduction of TVEI. Not only does he provide the context in which CDT linked TVEI is working but he also looks forward to the time when the impact of TVEI will have permeated through the whole curriculum and maps out the changed world that will then exist. The message for CDT teachers is important and timely and Lloyd's article will enable us to anticipate the new situation more effectively and be prepared for the opportunities for CDT that it will undoubtedly offer.

The low achievers project at Coventry, closely linked with the famous Top Shop, has undertaken interesting work in CDT and this is the subject of a detailed report by Johnstone who has worked closely with the project and undertaken a major study based upon it. It is important, in these often heady days of work in CDT, not to forget that the subject has a vital importance in the education of children of all abilities and, perhaps, a particular contribution to make to the lower achievers. Johnstone indicates just how important this contribution is and how it may still be developed to new levels of achievement.

A short contribution by Wilcox indicates how one of the more successful entrants to recent design competitions was generated — one of the short case studies that are always welcomed by readers. The articles conclude with a report on the project on Art and Design in a Multicultural Society undertaken at Leicester Polytechnic; a project in which a range of useful strategies with much relevance to CDT were developed.

As usual the review section and the extensive range of notes of new developments follow; we are regularly told by the organisations featured in our notes of the frequency with which readers make contact with them following publication in *Studies in Design Education Craft & Technology*.

Readers will notice that we have introduced, with this issue, a higher quality of paper. For some time we have been concerned that our previous paper stock lacked the opacity and that in particular dark photographs on one side of the page showed through to the other. Fortunately the increased paper weight is just modest enough to allow us to achieve the same postage rate as before — a major consideration in a non-subsidised, self-financing publication. We are also planning to make a further series of improvements in layout and typography in the next issue and we hope that readers will welcome it and gain from it. We are however still concerned by the quality of many of our photographs. For black and white publication it is impossible to better the really clear black and white negative. Although we do the best we can with the illustrations available we would urge prospective contributors to try to obtain illustrations in black and white with the sharpest possible contrast. Only in this way can we consistently improve the quality of illustration.

John Eggleston