A history of Learning Difficulties Australia: part three – the Journal

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Abstract

Part three in this series continues the story of the *Australian Journal of Remedial Education*, which had by the early 1970s become one of the most important – and certainly the most publicly visible – activity of AREA. It concludes in the early 1980s, soon after publication of the 50th issue. During this time the journal expanded its print run to 2000, and distribution was extended to every Australian state and more than 20 overseas countries. It attracted a wide range of articles from within Australia and overseas, becoming more focused on the reading process, but still including a great variety of approaches to the remediation of learning difficulties.

Within a few years of its introduction, the official journal of AREA, the *Australian Journal of Remedial Education* (*AJRE*) had become a lifeline for communicating with members on issues that were central to the diagnosis and management of learning disabilities. The journal filled a gap by providing an Australian educational periodical devoted to learning disabilities and helped to establish AREA as the peak organisation in that field well beyond the association.

Chris Davidson had been the editor of the journal from its beginning, and in June 1975 he acquired a co-editor, Richard Weigall, to share the considerable work-load involved in producing a good quality publication four times a year[1].

The journal was now reaching a much wider readership and by 1975 subscriptions had grown to a point at which Davidson and Weigall could announce a new "streamlined format and presentation"[2]. The hours of volunteer labour operating a messy duplicating machine were long since gone. Such a significant publication required a professional appearance that could only be achieved through a commercial publisher. Jeff Prentice's company, Australian International Press (AIP), had taken on this task[3].

By early 1979 Jeff Prentice was no longer involved with AIP and at the end of that year the Council cancelled their contract with the publishing firm and decided to take on full responsibility for the journal. Jeff Prentice would continue to assist with production and printing on the basis of an annual letter of agreement and an honorarium[4].

Despite the professional appearance of the journal, the *AJRE* was not seen as an academic publication and contributions were not submitted to blind review. Articles ranged from chatty presentations of individual experiences to more serious discussions of issues such as curriculum, teacher training, child abuse, specialist units and how they functioned, and giftedness and learning disadvantage. In addition to articles, there were letters to the editor, verse, cartoons, photographs of conference activities, notices of seminars, and summaries of government reports. In many ways the journal duplicated the *Information Bulletin* by including notices of forthcoming events and conferences, but it reached a much wider readership than the *Bulletin*. If it appeared to lack a single focus, it was never lacking in interest.

By 1978 the journal was celebrating ten years of publication, and a circulation that had risen from 500 at the end of 1969 to close to 1400. Acknowledging this achievement, Jeff Prentice claimed that over the decade there had been "a greater awareness of problems confronting children in our classrooms with a resultant uplift in the standards of remedial teaching". With branches in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia, and another branch expected to be established in 1978, the journal now had a much more national approach than it had at the beginning. Cliff Pacey in Sydney and Peter Westwood in Adelaide, as consultant editors, encouraged articles from members of state branches. In addition, Prentice noted, the journal had published "significant articles from well known, respected people in special and remedial education in Australia and from overseas". Further, it could now boast subscriptions from 25 overseas countries[5].

With Chris Davidson as editor over the first decade, now assisted by Dick Weigall and most recently by Di Bedson, editorial policy had remained unchanged, maintaining a balance between theoretical and practical articles for remedial and classroom teachers. The future of the journal, Prentice continued in his editorial, depended on students now training in special and remedial education. Students must see the journal as being of practical use if it was to survive.

Contributors to early issues of the journal had largely

focused on problems and programs that were believed to be related to the reading process but not a part of it, such as visual or auditory perception, perceptual-motor coordination, and neurological development. The debate about causes and cures for learning difficulties remained unresolved, and when Dick Weigall joined Chris Davidson the editors took the opportunity to reiterate the aims of the journal:

> For six years *Remedial Education* [*sic*] has aimed to serve as a vehicle for new ideas, ideas which will help the child who simply cannot learn in a typical classroom situation. To save you ferreting through numerous journals which teachers would not have access to, we do this for you and reprint those which will be [of] relevance[6].

It was this focus on the needs of teachers that helped to set the journal apart from more academically oriented, refereed journals.

Although the editors were keen to promote discussion on new ideas in remedial education, Davidson and Weigall also had some cautionary words about innovation for its own sake:

> Unfortunately the rules for effective innovation have not been learnt in the sphere of education. The practice of "throwing the baby out with the bath water" has become an only too familiar one. Whether it has been ITA, Look and Say method versus Phonics, Open Plan Schools, Spelling Reform, Creative Writing, to mention only a few of the legion of ideas that have been thrown into the educational arena, the technique has been the same. Whatever is in vogue replaces, so it seems, everything else, with little regard or responsibility for the individual and his specific needs[7].

ITA, or the Initial Teaching Alphabet, was a modified English alphabet which provided a single symbol for each of the 44 main sounds of the English language, thus avoiding ambiguities of spelling-sound correspondences. Devised by Sir James Pitman, ITA became a popular tool for the early teaching of reading in the 1960s, but its popularity did not last (Williams, 1991).

While acknowledging that these innovations might suit some children, Davidson and Weigall warned of the dangers of innovation and experimentation "without the support of what has been tried and proved successful in the past", before accepting new methods and discarding old ones.

The medical contribution

This endeavour to avoid endorsing programs that lacked a sound knowledge base of learning difficulty led to substantial reliance on articles by established professionals and academics whose main role was not in education. Examples were an article on the role of vision in spelling by an optometrist (Woodland, 1975), and a lengthy paper on diagnosing and treating school problems by a paediatrician based in the United States (Kinsbourne, 1975). Although Kinsbourne's claim that "the great bulk of illiteracy in this country derives from socioeconomic diversity and cultural alienation..." was not necessarily helpful to Australian readers, the article contained a great deal of common sense that would help to dispel some of the myths about learning disabilities.

Medical practitioners continued to make a substantial contribution to the journal both through original articles and through reprints from other journals. Generally they provided a sound antidote to any claims that aberrations in neurological development would inevitably lead to learning difficulties. Fearon (1977) discussed the role of the medical practitioner in diagnosis and treatment of learning disabilities, emphasising the role of the doctor in compiling a developmental history, but was cautious about interpreting variations in development: "Departures from normal patterns of motor development and coordination do not indicate a learning difficulty will be present. They do indicate a greater likelihood of that" (Fearon, 1977, p. 21).

In another medical contribution Manson (1977), Director of Neurology at the Adelaide Children's Hospital, discussed the definition, possible causes, diagnosis and remediation of dyslexia. Definitions of dyslexia, according to Manson, emphasised the disparity between a child's intellectual ability and the ability to read, despite normal educational opportunities. Manson excluded psychiatric and socio-economic factors and impairments of ocular movement as having a causal relationship with dyslexia, and pointed out that both dyslexia and incomplete cerebral dominance could be common effects of a developmental defect in the left cerebral hemisphere, rather than one being the direct cause of the other. He also pointed to the lack of neurological evidence that dyslexia was due to a failure to proceed through normal stages of motor development, such as crawling, and noted the absence of any support for programs that required children with a range of disorders, including dyslexia, to be retrained and taken through these stages before they could learn to read.

Manson (1977) argued for a co-operative team approach to assessment and treatment of dyslexia, with the medical practitioner carrying out a complete physical examination to exclude visual and hearing impairments and obvious psychiatric or neurological disorders. An educational psychologist would conduct assessments of intelligence and identify areas of strength and weakness, while class teachers should be thoroughly informed about

the nature and implications of dyslexia. Students should be allowed time out of class for remedial work.

It was an approach that fitted well with AREA's philosophy.

Hopkins (1977), a neurologist at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, advocated discarding the term "minimal brain dysfunction" because of the difficulty of proving its existence and the unnecessary alarm that use of the term caused parents and teachers. He did, however, acknowledge that some degree of minimal cerebral dysfunction could occur in learning disabilities, even though it could be difficult or impossible to establish.

Causes and cures for learning disabilities

Despite the journal's stated aims, debates about terminology, or even about the causes of learning difficulties, had little that was practical to offer the classroom teacher. Reviewing the debate over the existence and etiology of dyslexia, Western Australian psychologist Margaret White, commented on terminology:

> The controversy which has raged over the term "dyslexia" with unbelievable waste of professional time and energy, has only been in part a controversy over whether we should use a small Greek word meaning "distortion of words" or some three-barrelled euphemism such as "specific learning disability"... (White, 1975, pp. 13-14).

Support for a relationship between sensory-motor problems and reading disability persisted. Problems in visual perception and visual-motor coordination continued to be promoted as a possible cause of reading difficulty, perhaps because both diagnostic tests and remedial programs based on the components of visual perception were readily available and easily implemented (Frostig, 1975). Frostig argued against a unitary view of intelligence as a single cognitive entity, and advocated analysis of children's abilities on the basis of subtest performance on various psychological tests, including tests of intelligence, psycholinguistic abilities, and visual-motor perception.

There was no shortage of criticism of the diagnostic-remedial model (that is, remediation based directly on strengths and weaknesses identified by psychometric testing). An article by Diane Divoky in the New York Times, cited by McLeod (1976), claimed that learning disability was a bandwagon that had got out of control and had reached epidemic proportions. According to Divoky (cited in McLeod, 1976, p. 25), "hyperkinesis, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, mixed dominance, Frostig, Ritalin [a drug commonly prescribed for hyperactivity], and perceptual-motor training are on their way to becoming household words in the suburbs".

McLeod himself had questioned the efficacy of visual perceptual-motor programs in improving reading skills, and, referring to a situation of "attack and counter attack" in the United States, cited further criticisms of auditory-perceptual programs and remediation programs which attempted to teach psycholinguistic skills based on the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (ITPA).

The ITPA was a norm-referenced test designed to identify strengths and weaknesses in three main components of language processing: receptive (decoding), organising (association) and expressive (encoding). These components were assessed using sub-tests of auditory and visual motor coordination, auditory and visual closure (supplying missing parts in incomplete stimulus material or integrating discrete items into a whole), and auditory and visual sequential memory. The breakdown of language processes into various auditory and visual skills had prompted the development of remedial programs based directly on the structure of the ITPA, but with little evidence that the programs themselves yielded anything other than small improvements on individual sub-test scores.

McLeod (1976) claimed that educators were generally poorly trained in experimental method and therefore ill-equipped to judge research, and that many had lost sight of the original purpose of tests such as the ITPA, which was to serve as a clinical diagnostic instrument, not as a model for the content of remedial programs. McLeod did not go so far as to dismiss the role of remedial programs in helping children with learning difficulties, but he did urge caution in accepting any one program as the answer.

Elkins (1976) entered the debate arguing that the problem with using a diagnostic-prescriptive model of remediation was that diagnosis depended on the technical adequacy (reliability and validity) of the method used. Rather than dismiss the use of such tests, however, Elkins suggested that use of the ITPA may enable the teacher "to gain some insight into the child's language... as an important outward sign of cognitive development" (p. 15). While the efficacy of teaching based directly on test results had not gained clear research support, Elkins concluded that there could be no substitute for careful monitoring of actions and decisions in the classroom, and modifying teaching on the basis of observed results.

Similarly, the Wepman Auditory Discrimination test was dismissed by Cameron (1979). Cameron's study demonstrated a lack of validity of the Wepman test for identifying children with problems in auditory discrimination, and also failed to demonstrate any causal link between problems in auditory discrimination and reading difficulty.

The diagnostic-prescriptive model would come under

fire again in 1983 when a correspondent, John Truran, responded to an article by John Munro on "Diagnosis in maths". Pointing out that many primary teachers do not have sufficient expertise in maths to follow detailed diagnostic prescriptions in this area, Truran cautioned that over-emphasis on diagnosis and prescription could be unwise, pointing out that indications of what children could do were far more reliable than indications of what they could not do.

The reading process

Despite the editors' concerns with "fads", evidence was emerging of greater attention by contributors to the reading process itself. The importance of understanding the reading process was emphasised by Saunders (1973) in a review of a book by New Zealand reading expert, Marie Clay, *Reading: the Patterning of Complex Behaviour*. Clay was interested in the processes involved in beginning reading, particularly the child's concept of print, which, Clay argued, was a prerequisite to the child's understanding of the reading process. Saunders recognised the value of this approach for the remedial teacher:

> The philosophy of analysing the reading process, then analysing the child's performance in terms of skills gained or needing reinforcement, is one that should assist both the class teacher and the remedial teacher in the search for a practical approach to the reading problem. (1973, p. 26)

Growing familiarity with computers was channelling theories of cognition towards a view of the human brain as a processor of information. Several researchers began to extend this analogy to the reading process. Papers that took an information processing perspective of reading were generally more academic; they reviewed current literature and outlined experiments to support their theories.

Parmenter (1977) distinguished two traditional approaches to the study of children with reading difficulties: one – the etiological approach – sought solutions by studying the causes of reading difficulty; the other attempted to find the single "best" method of teaching reading – whether through phonics, sight words, whole sentences, or linguistics. A third, more recent approach, was to identify salient characteristics of the learner and attempt to match them to specific teaching strategies. None of these approaches, according to Parmenter, was clearly supported by evidence. Parmenter proposed an information processing model in which three components – inputs, process, and products or outputs – could be integrated into a single systems approach to the teaching of reading. A series of controlled single-subject experiments with multiple baselines, followed by an experiment with four subjects, demonstrated the effects of intervention based on this approach.

Stanley (1977) also used an information processing perspective to present a more detailed treatment of relationships between visual perception and reading. Stanley described a series of experiments in which the processing of visual information was broken down into several stages. His analysis of these stages demonstrated that children with a specific reading disability do not usually have a generalised perceptual problem. Nor do they appear to have a problem in short-term storage of visual information. Rather, the problem lies in the stage of encoding information into short-term memory, apparently due to a maturational lag in short-term memory capacity.

Miscue analysis

Another approach to understanding the processes involved in reading was that of miscue analysis, a technique for diagnosing reading problems through an analysis of errors made in oral reading, devised by Goodman and Goodman (1977). Miscue analysis had become very popular when the Goodmans visited Australia in 1976 to present workshops for AREA. The basis of the technique is that information can be gleaned about the child's approach to the decoding process from the types of errors, or miscues, he or she makes in oral reading, depending, for example, on whether the miscues consist of substitutions or omissions, have a similar sound to the original word, make semantic, grammatical or contextual sense, or indicate a letter by letter approach rather than an attempt to blend sounds.

Exactly what the processes involved in reading were, and which aspects of reading remedial programs should focus on, remained matters for debate. In a thought-provoking article, Dilena (1979) reminded readers that reading difficulties went far beyond the problem of translating written symbols into speech, because printed text as usually found in books was not simply "speech written down". In printed text cues to meaning such as the speaker's facial expression are absent. On the other hand, signals, such as punctuation, paragraphs and "pointer" words, such as "however", "nevertheless", and "but", which indicate the direction the text is taking, make written text more organised and structured than speech. Dilena suggested that teachers could help by explaining to students how writers organise text in this way, and focus on getting the meaning of written language rather than concentrating on getting every word correct.

Continuing the debate, Cameron (1980) claimed that the two major approaches to teaching reading,

phonics and whole word, were based on behaviourist theory, an approach that had been discarded in favour of a cognitive approach to reading. The cognitive approach encouraged use of contextual clues and did not insist on total accuracy in reading. Cameron defended Goodman's model of reading, in which the skilled reader used contextual information to predict words and could self-correct reading errors if they did not appear to make sense in the context. Miscue analysis could be used to identify children who did not apply these cognitive skills, evident, for example, when the child reads a nonsense word instead of the correct word, or fails to indicate that a misread word does not fit the context.

Few writers had considered the impact of children's feelings about the reading process. Johnson (1980) argued that attitudes to reading were "of serious concern", and that early failure in reading may be related to negative attitudes which in turn discouraged further efforts at reading. Maintaining that attitude assessment, combined with assessment of cognitive reading skills using miscue analysis, would give a more complete picture of a child's reading problem, Johnson developed an interview technique to explore the child's attitudes. This technique could be used, not only to find out how the child felt about reading, but also to identify the reasons behind those feelings.

The teaching of reading

More general issues relating to the teaching of reading also received prominence in the journal. Concerns that reading difficulties were not being dealt with effectively at primary level prompted discussion about longer term implications. The last two issues of 1974 focused on the child with learning difficulties in the secondary school. Reading failure at secondary level became a recurring issue, not the least of the problems being the effect it had on a student's self-concept (Leber, 1977).

By the late 1970s, following a wide testing project by the Australian Council for Educational Research commissioned by the Federal Government, concerns were starting to emerge about education in basic skills. Closing the AREA National Conference in 1979, prominent Labor politician Race Matthews stated:

> ...the problem of underachievement in Australian schools does not arise from a shortage of explanations, answers or techniques. It is a product of the shortage of the will and the resources which are needed to translate explanations into actions, and to give effect to answers and techniques. (Matthews, 1979, p. 4)

Teacher training also received its share of the blame. The principal of the Reading Development Centre in the South Australian Department of Education criticised the current teacher training curriculum which focused on a liberal education of teachers at the expense of developing competence in helping children to acquire basic literacy skills (Caust, 1976). Caust advocated a more supportive role for remedial teachers in schools, enabling classroom teachers to become more competent in the teaching of reading so that only the most severely reading disabled students would need to be withdrawn for work in a "clinical" setting.

Concern for the training of specialist remedial teachers was also still evident. Edwards (1976) discussed guidelines for reading specialists established by the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee of the International Reading Association. The recommended training included graduate courses in the foundations of reading, diagnosis and correction of reading disabilities, a clinical or laboratory practicum in reading, and courses in general psychology, child psychology, measurement and evaluation, and literature for children and adolescents. Edwards suggested that education authorities in Australia should reassess the requirements for remedial teachers and begin planning courses along these lines.

Still governments remained unconvinced about the seriousness of reading and other specific learning difficulties. In an editorial in the journal Davidson (1980) discussed a report of a Ministerial Committee on Special Assistance Programs in Victoria. He described the report as "depressing", noting that the single statement included in the report relating to specific learning difficulty had found this issue to be "difficult of resolution". The report opposed "any splintering of educational services on the basis of an assumption of failure in children's learning". While Davidson conceded that the term "specific learning difficulty" was probably too broad to suggest specific solutions, he pointed out that the problem was still there.

More disturbing for AREA was a recommendation of the Ministerial Committee that the term "remedial education" be changed because it implied a separate teaching discipline based on the child's failure. The Committee believed that remedial education should be part of "ordinary effective teaching". The editors' response was to describe the Committee's view as "naïve and disturbingly ignorant of the needs of special children and what is presently available for them". They pointed out that few classroom teachers had the time or expertise to plan and monitor the effectiveness of individual programs based on diagnostic testing. Moreover, there were some children for whom remedial education in the classroom was simply not possible.

In the following issue, the editors reprinted a memorandum on Special Assistance Programs in Primary Schools from the Director of Primary Education in

Victoria, which advised that the term "special assistance" had replaced "remedial teaching" (Collins, 1980). While acknowledging that provision for children with learning difficulties remained a significant problem in primary schools, the thrust of the memorandum was that principals should "develop comprehensive educational policies related to special assistance". A senior "or otherwise qualified" teacher was to be appointed to coordinate and implement the special assistance program within the school, with the primary responsibility of ensuring that children with learning difficulties should remain "successfully" in the classroom. In-service programs would be developed for teachers appointed to be responsible for special assistance. In schools with an enrolment of over 300 students, the special assistance teacher would not have additional responsibility for a grade.

Commenting on the memorandum, Davidson and Weigall (1980) were clearly sceptical about the adequacy of the special assistance concept, particularly in relation to qualifications of the appointed teacher, but also in relation to the amount of time one teacher could give to the program in a school of over 300 students. Further, in schools of less than 300 students, Davidson and Weigall claimed, the amount of special assistance provision that would be available was not made clear. Editorials such as these clearly reflected the strength of AREA's belief that children with learning difficulties were missing out in school classrooms.

Beyond reading

While most articles were concerned with reading, articles on mathematics also appeared regularly, with frequent contributors on this topic being John Munro and Theodore MacDonald (for example, MacDonald, 1975; Munro, 1977). Other popular topics were language difficulties, including written expression, spelling, oral language, hand writing, adult literacy, and teaching English as a second language. Peter Westwood, then Principal Education Officer with the South Australian Education Department, contributed an article on oral language development (Westwood, 1977), while Weigall (1979, p. 2) used his editorial column to express concern about recently arrived boat people who might have difficulty in "acquiring the basic skills so necessary for leading a normal life in our society", and reminded readers that "our charter is... to help all those who need help".

By the early 1980s a much greater range of topics was starting to appear – it was almost as if everything that could be said about reading difficulty and how to teach reading had been said, and editors (or contributors)

were looking for new material. Topics dealt with in "one-off" articles reflected the wide range of problems encountered in remedial education as well as the diverse areas in which remedial needs might occur. Remedial programs in a prison setting, and pre-school education in remote mining communities occupied one issue alone. Articles on the environmental effects of lead, working with disabled children, teaching history and social studies to "slow learners", calligraphy, and programs for gifted and talented children were included in the second issue of 1981, while the third issue included articles on emotional and behavioural problems, and hyperactivity. Hyperactivity had already been the focus of an earlier article, in which Boyle (1979) described a successful time-out program which had shown some success in eliminating hyperactive behaviours in a group of 11 hyperactive boys. The fourth issue in 1982 (Volume 13 No 4) was considerably expanded – from the usual 40 pages to 56, including 11 pages of book reviews – to accommodate a backlog of contributions. Topics included using the dictionary in primary school, art education, use of a multi-disciplinary approach to support, and cultural disadvantage.

Special issues

By 1980 AREA could boast a print run of 1700 copies, which was 'increasing rapidly at a rate of about 500 copies a year'. The journal was being sent all over Australia and to 15 overseas countries with some articles being translated into Spanish. The *AJRE* was now recorded in major catalogues and retrieval systems for special education[8].

In 1982 the first two issues of Volume 14 were combined into a single, Golden Jubilee issue of 130 pages to mark the 50th issue of the *AJRE*. A lengthy editorial written by journal editor Chris Davidson and AREA president John Munro introduced the issue (Davidson & Munro, 1982). The editorial lamented the lack of feedback on the journal, but took heart from the fact that the print run had grown from 425 in May 1969 to 2000 for the jubilee issue. The journal was now being distributed in 20 countries, and attracted many high calibre contributions.

The editorial included a comprehensive set of recommendations prepared by John Munro, based on recorded feedback from discussion groups at AREA's Fifth National Conference, held in conjunction with SPELD and Melbourne State College in June 1981. The recommendations covered such issues as teacher training, including the need to include a core component at pre-service level to equip classroom teachers to cater for the needs of low achievers; the role of the classroom

teacher; the need for specialist trained personnel both to work with low achievers and to provide support for the classroom teacher; and recognition of the needs of low achievers for a more structured approach to learning. There were also a number of recommendations relating to parents, including parent-teacher communication that recognised the role of the parent; financial assistance; parents' rights; and recommendations relating to medical and paramedical professionals, and to employers. The recommendations were an indication of AREA's increasing concern with the broad spectrum of remedial education, not just the concerns of remedial consultants.

Articles in this special issue were contributed by invited specialists in remedial and special education under the broad theme of "A world overview of trends in helping the learning disabled child". The content was chosen to represent a mixture of the latest in research findings and in practice[9]. Professor Marie Neale of Monash University traced developments in remedial education over the previous three decades, and called for greater support for research into remediation processes. Yvonne Stewart provided an overview of the role of SPELD organisations in Australia. Dr T. D. Hagger, formerly of the School Medical Service and foundation president of SPELD, reviewed suggested causes of learning disabilities. Angela Ridsdale, a past president of AREA, examined remedial education from the point of view of the class teacher, while a contribution from the Netherlands provided a further review of theories of learning disability. The remaining articles were grouped under the headings of editorials and overviews, written by overseas as well as Australian authors.

An uncertain future

"Whither the *Australian Journal of Remedial Education*?", asked a writer in the November 1983 *Bulletin*[10]. The cost of producing the journal was mounting and AREA Council began to consider more economical means of production. Four issues had to be produced each year in order to meet postal registration requirements. The alternative was a change in format, and Council decided to trial the substitution of two regular issues of the journal with two Resource Sets, retaining the existing format for the other two issues. Each Resource Set was to be based on a specific theme, and was organised into a folder containing separate sheets. The format was less convenient, though, and lasted only for a year or two before the journal reverted to four bound issues a year.

More serious questions about the future were beginning to emerge – through the pages of the journal as elsewhere. Weigall (1978) had questioned the relevance of the curriculum for children with learning difficulties and the value judgments on which it was based. Small, isolated moves were taking place in individual schools and in the South Australian Education Department to consider alternative provision from normal hours of schooling, but the move towards integration of students with disabilities into mainstream schools was gaining momentum and separate programs for some students were losing favour. As the 70s merged into the 80s special educational needs were beginning to get more attention. Clearly the changes that were foreshadowed had implications for remedial education.

The Warnock Report (Warnock, 1978) in England was to have considerable influence on thinking about special education in Australia, and especially on the forthcoming review of special education in Victoria, although the Victorian review would eventually go far beyond Warnock's recommendations (see Part Two in this series). A timely article by Chatwin (1983) summarised the report and its implications.

The Warnock Report recommended that categories of disability should be abandoned, and that special education should embrace a much wider range of educational needs. The report had implications not only for the broad range of needs considered to come under the heading of special education, but also for the organisation of special education provision and for the training of classroom and special teachers. Integration was becoming an option for students who would usually have been placed in a special class or school. An article reprinted from the South Australian branch newsletter of AREA cautioned against expecting too much from integration, particularly if adequate support was not provided (Cunningham, 1983). There would still be a need for teachers trained to support students with learning difficulties.

Despite occasional setbacks, the *Australian Journal of Remedial Education* had not only survived but had forged ahead. Although, as a non-refereed publication, it continued to be a mixture of practical advice, opinion, and well-supported research, together with notices of events and submissions, it never lacked interest. Its contents reflected a wide range of changing views and practices in remedial education. It would continue to do so in the years ahead.

Endnotes

1. AREA Council Minutes, 2 June 1975.
2. Editorial, *Australian Journal of Remedial Education*, Vol 7 No 3, 1975.
3. Minutes of AREA Annual General Meeting, 2 June 1975.
4. AREA Council Minutes, 13 February 1979; 12

November 1979.

5. Editorial, *Australian Journal of Remedial Education*, Vol 9 No 4, 1977.

6. Editorial, *Australian Journal of Remedial Education*, Vol 7 No 3, 1975.

7. Editorial, *Australian Journal of Remedial Education*, Vol 7 No 2, 1975.

8. Editorial, *Australian Journal of Remedial Education*, Vol 12 No 3, 1980.

9. *AREA Bulletin*, Vol 13 No 3, June 1981.

10. *AREA Bulletin*, Vol 15 No 4, November 1983.

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