

Vision statement



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Many years ago, when I had been possessed by an antisocial fetish for clocks and watches, as many a schoolboy did no doubt, I read a rather profound statement on the art of watchmaking: a good watchmaker merely contributes to design; the complicated mechanism itself develops over time through innumerable incremental refinements – in effect, evolution not revolution! It is this same philosophy that shall guide me in my new role as Editor and in so doing give recognition to the achievements of my predecessors: Ann-Marie Anderson-Mayes and David Denham (although, I dare say my shirt isn't as flamboyant as David's!). For those who have been dutiful enough to retain their early copies of *Preview*, I encourage you to flip through these early editions to come to appreciate how careful refinement has brought *Preview* to its current form. But, in my first contribution I would like to reintroduce our 'Letters to the Editor' section, and I invite all our readers to view *Preview* as a virtual tea-room within

which you can discuss at leisure matters of relevant interest. But children, play nicely and no squabbling over the legitimacy of climate science, as it runs against the grain of the ASEG's respective impartiality.

In earlier issues there has been a great deal of discussion on the state of science in education – canvassing aspects such as depth, authenticity and pedagogy. Need I say that many of our readers have expressed concern that science in general, never mind geophysics, is not properly dignified within our current education system. But I can ensure my troubled readers that your concerns and protestations aren't entirely in vain. A few years ago I tried my hand at teaching and came face-to-face with a system in a state of flux – one such progression: inquiry-based learning displacing traditional 'chalk-n-talk' pedagogy. Now, what one needs to fully appreciate is that the low take-up of new strategies such as these has little to do with a non-progressive teaching mass, but more to do with limited funding and ever-increasing class sizes resulting in many teachers being chronically time and resource poor. It seemed to me that teachers by virtue of circumstance are compelled to teach from the book and by the book – making for dry and dull lessons. Straying beyond the safe confines of a textbook is a risky and time-consuming endeavour (job security inclusive) – although stimulating and highly rewarding for the student. Therein lays the great dilemma of science

education! One of the most illuminating and uplifting of all experiences during my brief time in teaching occurred when a teacher who helped coordinate change at his school said that to do so is risky, but we did so in response to a call from students (paraphrasing their declaration): we want an education that is global in context and outlook, but relevant locally – his students wanted an education that is both authentic and relevant.

Some issues ago, my predecessor Ann-Marie Anderson-Mayes (see *Preview*, Issue 152, p. 25) voiced her astonishment that few teachers, if any at all, are members of professional societies representing their respective field of expertise. This is no slight against teachers, but a point of concern that many in technical areas are missing out on vital support networks and resources. She went on to encourage teachers to join these societies and become acquainted with the abundance of quality online journals – *Preview* included. So it is here I come full circle. My second little contribution shall be to foster the educational role of *Preview* in a twofold manner: I shall endeavour to extend the research section to include regular submissions by our graduate and postgraduate students, and reinforce our partnership with TESEP to build a reliable resource kit for secondary and primary schoolteachers. However, all this is to be achieved authentically through embedding these articles within a resource that serves the geophysical community entire.

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