

Editorial

A balanced global journal for the global reader

Balance is hard to achieve. Whether it be in life, in balancing professional requirements with the demands of family life and the need for personal time, or whether it be as editor of *Quintessence International* where it is a real challenge to balance the wishes and needs of a highly varied global audience of readers.

My thoughts on this issue came to a head recently when I was being tugged in two different directions—"Cut down on the research articles and give us more clinical articles" said one. Why are you "bombarding dentists with articles that I would not consider being worthy of publication in any journal, let alone one which I once believed was informative, namely *Quintessence International*," cried the alternative viewpoint in a letter from an irate undergraduate student from Cardiff, Wales.

Balancing the wishes of undergraduate students with the needs of a specialist in periodontics or oral surgery, or the needs of a general practitioner from Russia with those of a general practitioner from Thailand or the United States, is not easy dear friends!

The dental student from Wales complained that the recent articles of Dr Ted Croll "fall far short of what dental students would consider to be the most basic tasks performed routinely." Yet Dr Croll's articles are exactly the sort of blend of beautifully illustrated basic and advanced clinical concepts that the person wanting less science had requested. While Dr Croll's articles receive high praise from specialists in pediatric dentistry as well as general practitioners from all over the world, they are apparently of little use to undergraduate students from Wales.

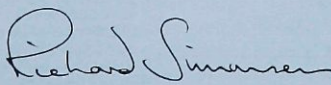
So what does an editor do to balance the needs and desires of such a broad and varied audience as our global audience? I can only ask for your understanding and for your appreciation of the fact that you are not the only reader and that your needs and wishes need to be balanced with the needs and wishes of others who may come from entirely different backgrounds.

The student from Wales complained that he performs routinely many of the concepts documented by Dr Croll. Did he ever stop to think that the farsighted faculty who have apparently taught him so well may

not be representative of the level of education in another country? My experience of dental teaching faculties leads me to believe that it generally takes a long time for new materials and techniques to be incorporated into the teaching curriculum. So when Dr Croll recently submitted to *QI* the first article that would be published in the dental literature using the new light-cured glass-ionomer materials, I certainly thought it worthy of publication. The faculty at the University of Wales in Cardiff deserves recognition if they have introduced light-cured glass-ionomer materials, the subject of Dr Croll's paper in the February 1993 issue of *QI*, into the teaching curriculum so soon after market introduction.

I get complaints that some articles we publish are too esoteric, some too scientific, some too basic. I get complaints that we publish articles from third world countries—the underlying, but unspoken, accusation is that standards in the underdeveloped areas are not high enough for Western dentistry. However, *balance* is what I hope to achieve, and we are an international journal, which makes achieving balance, in the eyes of each reader, extremely difficult.

The Editorial Board and I do our best to give the readers of *QI* a fair selection of articles that we believe are of interest and useful for the broad spectrum of readers that we have from many countries around the world. I welcome letters addressing the needs of you, the readers. Please realize, however, that no one can be happy with *all* the articles in our pages. I can only strive to attempt to balance the needs of our global readership with the needs and desires of the publisher, our staff, and, not to be forgotten, our authors. This is after all the joy of *Quintessence International*—a global journal for the global reader—and, I hope, a balanced journal.



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Editor-in-Chief