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The First Five Years (1987-1991)." The Public-Access Computer
Systems Review 2, no. 1 (1991): 77-90.

1.0 Overview of the Journal's History

The Syracuse University Kellogg Project began in 1986 with a mission to provide broader access to the university's adult education materials and to facilitate the exchange of information and learning using the very latest technologies where possible. In the fall of 1987 the Project initiated an electronic journal, New Horizons in Adult Education. The electronic journal, as initially conceived, was to (a) provide a means of disseminating, via computer, current thinking within the field of adult education; (b) develop new avenues for connecting adult educators worldwide; and (c) generate dialogue among researchers and practitioners. It was decided from the onset that the journal would be student run [1].

This clear statement of the purpose and direction of New Horizons glosses over the serendipity and the hard work that was the process out of which New Horizons emerged. The graduate student who took on the job of initiating the journal, Michael Ehringhaus, set about the task of clarifying the purpose and structure of the journal, identifying students to serve on its editorial board, gaining a command of the technology that would be required to support such an effort, and establishing publication procedures. Each of these formative activities consisted of many decisions, all of which had consequences that the student editor had to consider for this innovative venture.

1.1 Clarifying the Purpose and Structure of the Journal

At the time New Horizons started, there were few templates to follow other than those offered by traditional, print journals. Kellogg Project staff interested in the journal concept discussed what the journal should look like, not in terms of its visual appearance, but rather in terms of the locus of control, who would publish it, and what relationship the journal might have to the field of adult education [2].

Some wanted a radical journal that would serve to rattle the established views of academic adult education. Others suggested something more like a bulletin board. Using electronic mail (e-mail) communication networks, the student editor extended this conversation to other students and faculty in the field of adult

education.

The ensuing dialogue brought forth several issues. The consensus was that the journal should be student-run, yet remain open to all for refereed publication. In addition, students, many of whom already felt marginal within the field of adult education, recommended that the journal not increase this feeling by positioning itself in opposition to the field at large (e.g., being a "radical" journal) or by being a student-only publication. It would be important that contributing to New Horizons be perceived by the field as something that would benefit both student authors, who were being initiated into the publication process, and seasoned professional writers. In other words, the journal needed to have credibility with academic adult educators. Concern over these issues led the editor to define the journal in these ways:

(1) The journal would be student-run with graduate students serving as editors and on the editorial board. As such, it would serve as a unique learning environment for students. It would be a chance to blend the technological skills that must be developed to obtain computer proficiency with an added opportunity to learn more about the theoretical and practical aspects of adult education.

(2) The journal would use a double-blind review process to adjudicate articles.

(3) The journal would consider submissions on a range of adult education topics (research based or not) from academics, students, or practitioners outside of academic settings.

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Since the fundamental purpose of the journal was to expand the boundaries of what electronic information was available to adult educators and to develop new avenues for connecting adult educators worldwide, part of clarifying the purpose and setting the structure had to deal with financial issues. Would the journal be free or not? The decision was made to make it free, and it would be distributed via a BITNET list server. Unfortunately, while the Kellogg Project and Syracuse University could absorb the costs related to managing, assembling, and disseminating the journal, they could not control the policies in place at other sites accessing BITNET or related networks. For example, educators in New Zealand and Australia were charged per page by those controlling the electronic traffic at their end of the transmission. The Kellogg Project could not absorb those costs.

The result was two-fold. First, prohibitive costs on the receiving end eliminated some readers. Second, the editor and editorial board had to grapple with the question of producing paper copies of the journal. In the end, the desire to

disseminate the ideas presented in the journal superseded the desire to have a purely electronic journal. In cases where the reader's context made access to the journal impossible or costly, the editors printed copies from mainframe files and mailed them out.

1.2 Identifying Students to Serve on the Board

The first editor of the journal selected graduate students to serve on the editorial board. In order to be eligible for the editorial board, students needed to be able to use mainframe communication networks. Journal discussion, decision making, and article reviews were to be done electronically over BITNET.

"To take advantage of the medium," wrote the first editor, board members "must have a fairly sophisticated knowledge of their mainframe computer and how to manipulate lengthy electronic files" [3].

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The names of potential board members came from the early e-mail discussions about the structure of the journal. In 1986, finding graduate students with either network access and experience or with a willingness to learn and institutional support for network access was difficult. For example, a member of the original board had to share a mainframe account with a professor in her department, and another woman who wanted to be on the board could not participate because her institution did not have the computer support services to assist her.

Following the leads that his sometimes serendipitous e-mail turned up, the editor garnered the names of enough students from around the United States and Canada to constitute the initial editorial board, which had seven members. Many of them had limited technical sophistication when they started, but acquired skill as they participated.

Electronic mail played a key role in the journal's development:

E-Mail has been used to exchange information about technical problems, set up editorial board meetings at national conferences, discuss various topics, get feedback on the journal, and survey the board for their views concerning the operation, management, and substance of New Horizons [4].

A by-product of this national and international interchange was that people began talking about the journal, giving the journal some visibility and publicizing its existence and purpose.

One unanticipated challenge underlying both issues discussed thus far was the founders' naivete about how much formative work was involved in getting an electronic journal started. This was clearly brought home as the New Horizons editor and editorial

board learned to use the technology and developed the journal's infrastructure.

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1.3 Gaining Command of the Technology

Getting the journal into an accessible form on the network was like "nailing jelly to a tree," according to the Kellogg Project network specialist Dan Vertrees [5], who assisted the editor in identifying and solving technical problems. When they began, there were few tools to do it with and little communication with the technical experts who had the tools. However, Kellogg Project staff established a vital liaison between themselves and the campus computer network services. This liaison was responsible for breaking electronic logjams having to do with collecting, moving, formatting, uploading, and downloading files; insuring adequate mainframe space for journal activities; and working with different computer systems.

Because electronic communication is rapid, there is an accompanying myth that anything connected with such communication would be rapid. Surely, putting out an electronic journal would be a streamlined, fast process! This expectation exemplified the naivete surrounding the development phase of the journal. As the founding editor commented in a recent conversation:

Push a button and it's [the journal] in Australia, [or] in Vancouver. We can disseminate instantly. We can receive instantly. [However], the actual process of electronic formatting doesn't fit the myth of the speed of an electronic product [6].

Gaining command of the technology involved not only learning which communication packages to use and which commands did what, it also involved formative tasks such as training others, experimenting with the technology at each phase of publication, exploring the consequences of doing file transfers instead of using e-mail, and helping board members, authors, and readers grapple with technical problems on their end of the process. A spirit of playfulness and adventure were key qualities the editor brought to this aspect of the journal's development.

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1.4 Establishing Publication Procedures and an Editorial Policy

It was not the intention of the Kellogg Project to clone a print journal. However, those involved with shaping the journal wrestled with the pros and cons of taking advantage of electronic publishing while at the same time keeping recognizable formats that were the boundaries set by print journals. There were few models to follow for developing an electronic journal in an academic context where credibility, equitable access, and bibliographic retrieval are important. "It was too early in

electronic journaling," noted Dan Vertrees, "to push too many of the boundaries because people were just beginning" [7].

Most of the journal's policies and procedures evolved over time from discussions with people in the field of adult education, computer technology, and library science. For instance, the editor did not set a publication frequency because it wasn't known how long the entire publication process (from submission to final publication) would take using e-mail and mainframe-PC communication. In addition, as a student-run journal read mainly by those in academic settings, it became apparent that New Horizons' publication cycle needed to mesh with the academic calendar, taking into account things like exam periods, vacations, and the special demands of the beginning and end of semesters.

After a little over a year's experience with the journal, a formal editorial policy was codified. The editorial policy guidelines, published in the third issue (Fall 1989) of New Horizons, were designed to be as encompassing of "high tech" and "low tech" options as possible in order to highlight the journal's overall commitment to access.

The following areas were addressed within this policy statement:

(1) Purpose of the Journal

New Horizons in Adult Education was founded to enhance international dialogue within the field of adult education.

(2) Nature of the Publication

Categories of acceptable submission forms were broadly defined to include research articles, thought pieces, book reviews, point/counter-point articles, case studies, and invitational columns written by graduate students, professors, and practitioners involved in adult education and allied areas.

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(3) Manuscript Submission Requirements

New Horizons in Adult Education would accept articles in a variety of formats including computer disk (ASCII files), e-mail, fax, and paper copy. Submissions could be sent to an electronic address or by regular mail to the journal's office. There were no explicit length limitations, although authors were informed that the editorial board reviewers would evaluate each piece to determine if the subject and substance warranted the length. Authors were also advised to use written text explanations of concepts and data rather than diagrams or graphics; simple tabular data, when necessary to article content, could be included.

(4) Submission Style

While the electronic medium would not accommodate strict adherence to the rules governing manuscript style and references outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), APA was the preferred style of New Horizons and was recommended as a model for manuscript preparation.

2.0 A General Description of New Horizons

As one of the first electronic journals distributed via computer networks, New Horizons had to blaze the trail and establish a variety of editorial and operational procedures that were appropriate for the new electronic medium.

2.1 Frequency of Publication, Scope, and Content

Since its inception, five issues of the journal have been "published" or distributed across AEDNET (the Adult Education Network). AEDNET, an electronic network sponsored by the Syracuse University Kellogg Project, is a VM/CMS-based list server, networked to BITNET, CSNET, Internet, NSFNET, and NYSERNet. Several participants also connect to AEDNET via FidoNet and CompuServe. In 1991, a biannual publication policy with Fall and Spring issues corresponding to the academic year was instituted in response to an increase in the number of submissions to the journal.

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The manuscript acceptance rate for this journal has been 32%. Article submissions have been both theoretical and practical in focus, and they cover many fields of inquiry. The complex mosaic of submissions to date share common threads of interest to education scholars, practitioners, and students alike who are concerned with topics relevant to the field of adult education. For example, past issues have carried articles on adult development, propaganda and adult education, feminist research methodology, functional literacy in Nigeria, women and literacy in Tanzania, physical learning environments, adult education in Nicaragua, and a comparison of computer and audio teleconferencing.

2.2 Reader Access

The editorial staff of New Horizons has attempted to facilitate access in two ways.

First, the journal is sent out free of charge to over 400 adult educators in ten countries, including Australia, Canada, Finland, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom,

and the United States. In addition, through AOLIN (Australian Open Learning Information Network), another 95 individual participants as well as the members of seven organizations have access to AEDNET. Back issues of the journal, in both electronic and paper form, are available free of charge. Although most back-issue requests have been for paper copies, there is an increasing demand for electronic copies.

Second, since the Kellogg Project was concerned about access for readers who were not on the network, it approached the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education. New Horizons has been indexed and abstracted by ERIC. To further enhance bibliographic access, an ISSN number has recently been applied for.

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In his recent editorial on a journal readership survey conducted over AEDNET, Ehringhaus [8] highlighted the concerns regarding access to the technology that were expressed by respondents to an e-mail questionnaire:

Network access is not pervasive throughout the world or within those areas of institutions in which adult education departments are housed. Some readers of New Horizons, for example, have to share computer accounts with colleagues while other readers find it next to impossible to gain the necessary institutional support (both technical and training) to engage in the level of mainframe communications necessary to interact with AEDNET, in general, or with New Horizons, in particular. Any publication distributed via an electronic network is, therefore, limited in its readership to those who have means and institutional support necessary to log on and use the system.

It is issues of equity and access such as this, which the editorial staff of New Horizons has tried to consider from a number of possible angles, that will remain a challenge to electronic journal publication in the future.

2.3 The Editors and the Editorial Board

New Horizons has been edited and published by a total of five graduate students from Syracuse University: (1) Michael Ehringhaus, 1987-1990; (2) Jane Hugo, 1989-1990; (3) Linda Newell, 1989-1991; (4) Joan Durant, 1990-1991; and (5) Mary Beth Hinton, 1990-1991. Also, David Price of the University of Missouri-Columbia left his position on the editorial board in 1990-1991 to join the editorial staff.

The editorial board, which was initially comprised of seven graduate students from across the United States and Canada, has now grown to fourteen members. The editorial board members represent a wide range of disciplinary interests within the field

of adult education. Like the editors, they are nontraditional students who bring many years of adult education theory and practice to their position. Selection criteria for the editorial board include graduate student status (once a board member completes his or her degree, she/he is no longer eligible to participate as a reviewer) and access to a personal computer and mainframe account.

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New Horizons offers a unique informal learning opportunity for the graduate students who volunteer to serve on the editorial board. Although most of the editorial board members are graduate students in adult education, two board members have been from related disciplines.

2.4 The Editorial Dynamics

A series of snapshots of the editorial responsibilities would include the following activities as the major operational components.

2.4.1 Requests for Information

Staff must respond to ongoing written, electronic, and telephone requests for information about the journal.

2.4.2 Promotional Materials

Promotional materials such as letters, calls for manuscripts, newspaper articles, and newsletter articles must be prepared on a regular basis.

2.4.3 Communication with the Editorial Board

The editors must engage in frequent e-mail communication with editorial board members to provide information updates on the receipt of new submissions and the status of work-in-progress.

2.4.4 Article Submission

Authors can send articles to either the journal's e-mail address, HORIZONS@SUVM, or to its regular mail address: New Horizons in Adult Education, Syracuse University Kellogg Project, 310 Lyman Hall, 108 College Place, Syracuse, New York 13244-4160.

(After August 1991 when the Syracuse University Kellogg Project ends, the electronic mail address for New Horizons will remain the same; however, its regular mail address will change to New Horizons in Adult Education, Department of Adult Education, 350

Huntington Hall, Syracuse, New York 13244-2340.)

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Once submitted articles are received, staff create office files for all submissions, including author's original paper or electronic disk copy, duplicate editorial copies, and copies of all correspondence with the author. An article submission checklist has been prepared to capture the sequential details of this process.

2.4.5 Article Annotations

Staff prepare brief annotations of each article for use by the editors and the editorial board. Such documents give the editorial board members a more detailed picture of what the submission is all about than a title alone could provide.

2.4.6 Preparation of Electronic Review Documents

Articles submitted in an electronic format need to have identifying materials removed (e.g., author's name and institutional affiliation) from the original electronic file, which requires the creation of duplicate files on each submission. Electronic copies are requested for all submissions; however, depending upon the location and resources of the author, exceptions are made, and some documents are keyed by staff.

2.4.7 Review Cycle

Based on interest, expertise, and time constraints, board members select articles to review. An electronic article review form facilitates the review process. This form consists of three sections.

The first part asks for criterion ratings (on a scale of 1 to 4) on importance of the problem/subject of the article, the adequacy of background information, the clarity of purpose, the adequacy of literature reviewed, the soundness of the methodological approaches, the adequacy of the findings presented, how well-supported the inferences and conclusions are, and how well-organized and well-written the article is.

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The second section calls for a narrative assessment of the article's strengths and weaknesses as well as details on any problems that must be resolved for the article to be acceptable for publication.

The final section asks the reviewer to provide an overall recommendation for subsequent action to the editors: accept with

minor revisions, accept with major revisions, or reject.

Reviewers are requested to complete their critiques within two weeks. Detailed written summaries of the reviewers' comments are then drafted, and a letter is sent out--either via regular mail or by electronic mail--informing the author of the decision. If accepted, the article's publication status is conditional pending a careful review to make certain that the requirements for acceptance have been met.

This part of the process, from receipt of a submission through the editorial board review, was originally envisioned to take about six weeks. It often takes much longer and it is dependent upon a number of factors. It is the unwritten policy of this journal to make every possible effort to accommodate the needs of the editorial board and of the authors themselves. It has been observed by the editors that this flexibility serves to encourage both new and experienced authors to consider New Horizons as an avenue for the dissemination of their writing. The goal has been to have four reviewers for each submission. However, this ideal has often proved to be problematic; occasionally, guest reviewers have been selected when a submission falls outside the range of interest and/or professional opinion of the editorial board.

2.4.8 Publication of a Completed Issue

This is the most time consuming aspect of the entire process, although it has been completely done via electronic means. Assistance from campus and Kellogg Project computer support services is invaluable at this stage. Many hours are spent on each individual article--with five articles per issue on an average--to assure that the format meets APA style and that the finished product, once deemed ready for to be sent out over AEDNET, is able to be received by computer systems of all kinds.

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Since many users are uncertain as to how to go about receiving an electronic file, issue files are not sent. Rather, an explanatory cover letter precedes the journal which is distributed as an e-mail message. If future issues consist of more than about 30 pages, the editors will need to decide on an alternative distribution strategy, such as sending the journal out in two parts or as two separate e-mail messages.

3.0 Conclusion

As one of the major components of the Syracuse University Kellogg Project, New Horizons has served as an effective means of linking a dispersed community of adult education scholars, practitioners, and students throughout the world. During our first five years, the editorial team has attempted to capitalize on the benefits of the electronic medium, while at the same time learning to accept

the new and often idiosyncratic nature of this communication channel. When the Kellogg Project grant at Syracuse University ends in August 1991, New Horizons will assume a new home base in the Adult Education Department at Syracuse. The editorship will also change helm at that time, and a new team will continue to learn to negotiate the peaks and valleys of the world of electronic publishing.

Notes

1. Michael Ehringhaus, The Electronic Journal: Promises and Predicaments, Syracuse University Technical Report No. 3. (Syracuse, NY: School of Education, Syracuse University, 1990), 3-4, ERIC, ED 316732.
 2. Michael Ehringhaus, personal communication, March 1991.
 3. Michael Ehringhaus, The Electronic Journal: Promises and Predicaments, 4.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Dan Vertrees, personal communication, March 1991.
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6. Michael Ehringhaus, personal communication, March 1991.
 7. Dan Vertrees, personal communication, March 1991.
 8. Michael Ehringhaus, "New Horizons in Adult Education: A Readership Survey Report," New Horizons in Adult Education 3 (Fall 1989): 14.

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