THE INTERNATIONAL AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ANNUAL: VOLUMES I–V

When the first issue of *International and Intercultural Annual* was published, its editor, Fred Casimir wrote: “This is not a new venture, as much as a founding editor may wish to make such a claim...” Casimir saw the publication as a forum for examining and enhancing understanding of the ramifications of life in a “shrinking world.” Beyond that, the *Annual* was to be a medium through which we might reflect upon our own culture and its impact on our research, our thinking and our lives.

Modesty aside, history reveals that in a great many respects, the *Annual* was indeed a new venture, and an important one. The *Annual* was born at a time when McLuhan’s concept of a global village was closer to becoming a reality than ever before; the post-Vietnam War era, detente with the Soviet Union, the emergence of new and powerful communication technologies, greater involvement by North American corporations in other countries of the world, the demands of the Third World countries for equity in the flow of information, and so on.

With a foresight that one can only marvel at in retrospect, the *Annual* was designed to span both international and intercultural communication. Intercultural communication had an ancestry that can be traced primarily to anthropology, psychology, education, and more recently to speech communication. International communication, on the other hand, had its origin in mass communication, sociology, political science and international relations. As anyone who has lived through separation, divorce, or reconciliation between members of these two families can attest, such a marriage is not made in heaven. The very important and difficult role of matchmaker is certainly one of the unique and noteworthy qualities that has characterized the mission of the *Annual* since its inception.

Five volumes of the *Annual* have been published since the effort was undertaken, and now with a new editor waiting in the wings, it is perhaps as appropriate a time as any to inquire as to whether the aims of the publication have been achieved and what directions it has taken. In this necessarily brief overview, we will offer
our comments on the directions of the Annual and a few thoughts on where it might be headed in the next five years.

**CONTENTS AND TRENDS**

A review of the articles in Volumes I through V reveals several interesting trends. First, one cannot help but be struck by the diversity, even eclectic nature, of topics addressed: cross-cultural therapy, counseling, training, persuasion, film, intergroup dynamics, cognitive style, nonverbal communication, comparative media usage, diffusion of innovation, rhetoric of social movements, information processing, multi-dimensional scaling, multi-national management, cultural contact and attitude change, acculturation, adjustment, interpersonal effectiveness, theories and frameworks, taxonomies, gaze behavior, mass communication, organizational dynamics, and others. In addition to competitively selected articles, the Annual has included critical reviews of recent literature, a directory of organizations concerned with international and intercultural communication, and other resource and service items.

A second way to examine the direction the Annual has taken is by looking at the contents of the Annual in terms of the methodologies employed. Articles run the gamut from the highly philosophical to the personally descriptive. Clearly, the preponderance of articles have been non-empirical. Of the first three volumes published, for example, only 4 of 28 articles were empirical studies. The balance between these two sorts of methodologies was more even in Volumes IV and V, with eight empirical and eight non-empirical studies.

A third way in which one might classify the contents of the volumes of the Annual is in terms of the relative emphasis given to intercultural versus international studies. In the parlance of the field, articles which focus on media in cross-cultural contexts are generally termed international, while pieces which center on face-to-face interaction in interpersonal, group, organizational, or public settings are generally regarded as intercultural.

It is not always a simple matter to determine whether a particular piece is one or the other, particularly when it deals with generic issues which ought to have relevance for both intercultural and international scholars. A review of the refereed articles in Volumes I through V (see Table 1) suggests the distribution among three categories.
TABLE 1
Distribution of Articles in Volumes I-V

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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
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COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

It is always tempting to criticize a journal for weaknesses which exist in the field it reflects. This is particularly the case with regard to the diverse and eclectic contents of the Annual. Yet the contents probably very well reflect the state-of-the-art of the field. During the past decade, scholars of a wide range of persuasions have thought to apply their work in, or extract ideas from, the fields of international and intercultural communication. In this respect, any criticism of the unfocused nature of the Annual contents is probably better lodged at the field than the publication. Regardless of the appropriate destination, however, the message is nonetheless relevant and timely.

Whether this same disclaimer is as appropriate with regard to the balance between philosophical and quantitative articles, or in the balance between international and intercultural articles, is another question. To be sure, editors are constrained in what they can print by what is received and how the reviewers react to these manuscripts. In both of these latter areas, however, an editor can—and we think should—be reasonably proactive, particularly if there are specific goals or aims to be met as has apparently been the case with the Annual.

Though we all have our own preferences as to the relative value of conceptual and empirical research, most of us would be disturbed if either predominated in a journal such as the Annual. In recent years a productive balance seems to have been struck, and one would hope that it would continue, in as much as this is a distinctive and valuable characteristic of the publication.

Probably the most glaring inadequacy with Volumes I through V has been the apparent inability of the editors to have the content reflect the Annual's name in a close-to-balanced manner. This is not simply a criticism of the editors. In a sense, to achieve
adequate balance, the *Annual* has to span what are still fundamentally two distinct fields, with two essentially non-overlapping sets of scholars and practitioners. And that is difficult at best. But if the journal is to live up to its name, it would seem that far greater effort needs to be expanded in the years ahead toward the goal of balance and ideally integration of those two sub-fields.

The *International and Intercultural Annual* has made an important contribution by legitimizing scholarly developments in the fields of international and intercultural communication studies. It is probably fair, however, to conclude that the *Annual* has been less than wholly successful in providing the kind of intellectual leadership that was envisioned by its founders. This is not to imply that the *Annual* does not represent the fields—it may be doing that quite well—but we suspect the goals envisioned by its founders were *to lead* rather than simply *to represent*.

Whether and how the *Annual* might exert greater intellectual leadership is probably well beyond the scope of this review, but we do have a couple of thoughts on the matter.

1. We think an aggressive marketing strategy might be in order to bring the *Annual* to the attention of international scholars, many of whom are affiliated more closely with the Association for Education in Journalism, than with either the Speech Communications Association or the International Communication Association.

2. Perhaps, the editors should also consider doing more to solicit manuscripts—even commissioned manuscripts on editor or editorial board-selected topics. This might be a means of broadening the audience, improving the editorial balance within the *Annual*, and fostering greater integration of the international and intercultural perspectives.

3. Finally, it might be worth considering making the *Annual* a semi-annual or even a quarterly. To some extent, it may simply be impossible to achieve an appropriate diversity of content and balance of methodologies when the *Annual* is publishing as few as 10 or 12 articles a year. Increasing the number of issues per year might alleviate this problem, while also broadening the market for the publication from both an audience and a manuscript-submission point of view.

Professor Casimir’s editorial remark in the third volume of the *Annual* seems to be the best way to end this review. He wrote: “If there is one thing that I would wish for the future, it is that each
new generation of editors and writers will keep vigorous and determined watch over the initial dream of a publication which should do more than serve limited, self-seeking interests, when instead, the entire field of communication needs to make vital contributions to the welfare of mankind.” The charge is an important and excellent one and it is our hope that the Annual will continue to strive to meet these goals.

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CULTURE IN CONTEXT:
SELECTED WRITINGS OF WESTON LA BARRE


Weston La Barre plays the field of human (culture) in context, ranging from the rich but limited offerings of ethology, to the wealth of idiosyncratic material available from ethnology. This book is important, for at least two reasons to anyone concerned with the study of humankind, at the level of culture or the individual. First, La Barre’s rational empirical methodology is edifying; he has created that occasional work that helps one to think. Second, the wealth of perspectives on human behavior in context and the extensive erudite bibliographies could enliven anyone’s studies. While delighting in all this I was also challenged to think about what appears to be a limitation of La Barre’s “model” of religious experience (to be considered later.)

This is a new collection of essays some of which have appeared in the last few years in journals or anthologies, and others of which are classic appearing here with few additions, if any, or having been rewritten to reflect the changes in the field of anthropology or to bring together previous articles on a common topic. The introduction to the book stresses effective methodology in Anthropology. A second section on Psychotropics includes an article on hallucinations and the shamanic origin of religion, and two articles on Cannabis and Soma. The third section of