

Editorial

This is my first issue of the Journal as Technical Editor. I have taken over that function from Dr. Steven Dubowsky of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I feel it would be very remiss to let this change pass without a vote of thanks to Dr. Dubowsky who was the founding Technical Editor of this Journal. Dr. Dubowsky took up the fledgling Journal, which originated in the division of the *Journal of Mechanical Design* into the *Journal of Mechanisms, Transmissions, and Automation in Design* and the *Journal of Vibration, Acoustics, Stress and Reliability in Design*, and brought it to its present, well-established status. It was not easy. There have been major problems in generating a sufficient volume of subscriptions and in other aspects of the establishment of the Journal. Steve has been a vigorous advocate, and has established sound policy and a strong infrastructure of associate editors. I hope to be able to build on this foundation. I am sure that all members of the ASME Design Engineering Technical community will join me in thanking Dr. Dubowsky for his service over the past five years.

The Technical Editorship of an ASME transactions journal such as this offers a considerable challenge. It is necessary to maintain the highest possible technical standards, which requires careful review of every paper. At the same time it is necessary to be aware that our field is changing, quite rapidly, and that technical journals such as this are an important part of that change. The journal must provide an organ for the dissemination of new ideas. That is, it must lead the process of technical change, not follow it. This is not always easy when stringent review must also be required.

An example of a new technical area for which there is a growing need to provide a medium for publication, and which this Journal will attempt to serve, is design theory and methodology. An initiative by the National Science Foundation several years ago has led to a vigorous program of research in this area. An interest in serving this area has been expressed by both the ASME Design Division and the Board on Communications. This area is particularly challenging from the point of view of the Journal, since work in this area has a strong element of synthesis, rather than the analytical work to which we are accustomed, and which our review materials are set up to deal with.

I look forward to serving the readers and authors who contribute to this Journal. I hope to maintain and enhance its stature as the preeminent archive in this country for research in the technical area of design of mechanical systems. I will always be interested in hearing from you if you have suggestions on ways in which we can improve the Journal.

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