

An Interview with Jane R. Madell, Ph.D.

C.M. Seymour



JANE R. MADELL, Ph.D., CCC-A/SLP is the Director of Audiology at the New York League for the Hard of Hearing in New York City. She is completing a 3-year term (1984-1986) as Vice President for Standards and Ethics of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Prior

to assuming that vice presidency, she was a member of the ASHA Legislative Council, a member and then Chair of the ASHA Professional Services Board as well as a member of several other ASHA committees. She was President of the New York State Speech-Language-Hearing Association, a convention chair, and a member of numerous committees for that association. She has been the chair of the licensing board of New York State and has been active in lobbying for the interests of the profession of speech-language pathology and audiology. She is a fellow of ASHA, has received the honours of the New York State Speech-Language-Hearing Association and holds the ASHA ACE for continuing education. She is about to begin a term as a member of the ASHA Scientific and Professional Programs Board.

Seymour: In reviewing your resume it appears that you have many professional interests. Would you like to describe them?

Madell: I would be delighted. I am primarily interested in pediatric audiology, aural habilitation for hearing-impaired children and the dispensing of hearing aids. In 1975, I began a program of hearing aid dispensing at the New York League for the Hard of Hearing, and we are now one of the largest dispensing programs in the United States. I coauthored a text book entitled *Hearing Aid Dispensing for Audiologists* which has been well received. I very much enjoy my work with infants and young children, and most of my current writing and lecturing has been in that area. The program in which I work is an auditory aural one, and we have been doing some very exciting things with amplification that I believe will make a significant difference in how deaf children maximize their residual hearing.

Seymour: December 31, 1986 marks the end of your 3-year tenure as ASHA Vice President for Standards and Ethics. In retrospect, would you identify some of the issues which commanded your attention; particularly those that would be of interest to our Canadian associates?

Madell: There are several issues that I believe were crucial to the Standards and Ethics program of the profession of speech-language pathology and audiology. A major issue was the certification status of applicants who have received their training outside of the United States. According to the ASHA Code of Ethics, clinicians who provide services to communicatively handicapped individuals must be currently certified in the area in which the services are rendered. As all Canadians are aware, there have been problems with some foreign applicants' being able to meet the requirements for ASHA certification. Both the Standards Council and the Clinical Certification Board of ASHA have worked very hard to develop procedures that facilitate the granting of certification to interested professionals in other countries. Hopefully, these new procedures will make it possible for members of the profession who were educated in foreign countries to work in the United States and to supervise students and entry level professionals.

Seymour: Are there other issues which might be of interest to Canadians?

Madell: Yes. I would like to encourage Canadian programs to seek accreditation by the Educational Standards Board (the accrediting body for graduate education programs) or the Professional Services Board (the accrediting body for clinical service delivery programs). Both boards have developed some procedures that should facilitate foreign programs receiving ASHA accreditation if they wish to do so.

Seymour: How is this being done?

Madell: Both accreditation boards require that in order for a service delivery program to be accredited, whether it is an independent setting or part of a graduate education program, the service provider must hold current certification from ASHA. However, this requirement is clearly a problem for many programs operating outside of the United States since most of their clinicians are not ASHA certified. Therefore, ESB and PSB have developed procedures whereby foreign applicants who work in any clinical setting and who do not hold ASHA certification can demonstrate that they meet the equivalent of ASHA certification. This will permit the program to become accredited by ASHA and to receive the benefits of an ASHA accredited program.

Seymour: Do you see any form of reciprocity on the horizon for either certification or accreditation of programs between the United States and Canada?

Madell: I hope so. As everyone realizes, the process is a very complicated one compounded with state licensure regulations. But in countries as close in proximity as ours, with such a large number of people wanting to

work on both sides of the border, it certainly seems worth the effort to have reciprocity. However, considering the difficulties within the United States that some state licensure boards have in agreeing on reciprocity, I am not optimistic that it will be accomplished with the speed that some of us would wish.

Seymour: I understand that you have recently been a consultant to CASLPA to develop a program for the accreditation of Canadian service programs in speech-language pathology and audiology. Would you like to comment on that?

Madell: I would love to. Working with CASLPA was one of the most exciting professional activities in which I have participated in a long while. I truly believe that as a profession we must monitor ourselves, or we will find ourselves monitored by outside groups who will probably not fully understand what we do and how we serve the communicatively handicapped. It is for this reason that I applaud CASLPA's effort to develop an accreditation and certification program. It is through these efforts that the profession in Canada will be in a better position to control its destiny. They are embarking on a very exciting adventure.

Seymour: What are some of the other issues that you see the profession facing in the next few years?

Madell: I think there are several concerns that we must face if we are to be able to direct our profession rather than have others direct it for us. One concern is

that we continue to have difficulty in receiving the recognition that will enable us to function autonomously. We must market our profession to ourselves, to our colleagues, and to the consumers of our services, making it clear about what we do and the ways in which we are uniquely qualified to provide services. Until we market ourselves effectively, this profession is not likely to receive the recognition it deserves. Another concern is that we also need to work to attract the most highly qualified students into the profession. In the United States we are having difficulty attracting the best students into the profession because the salaries of speech-language pathologists and audiologists are not competitive. I believe that as we work on the issues of autonomy and marketing, we may be able to increase our value and, eventually, our salaries. Finally, we must also continue to encourage researchers, scholars and clinical scientists in communication disorders to add to the knowledge base of the profession.

Seymour: Do you have any last words you would like to share with our readers?

Madell: Yes. I don't want to leave the impression that we have so much to work on that there is a gloomy future ahead. Quite the contrary. I think the work we have done as a profession both in the United States and in Canada has given us a solid base on which to expand. By working within countries and across borders, I feel certain that there is a great deal of success ahead for all of us and for the communicatively handicapped we serve.