

# A Golden Opportunity: Reflections of the First Intern

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The University of Michigan, my alma mater, might boast the largest alumni association in the world and other superlatives, but for me and pharmacy, it boils down to the venue through which I met one particular alumnus named Harvey Whitney Jr. My experience as the first intern at *The Annals* began in Ann Arbor, MI, where I was enrolled in the Doctor of Pharmacy Program in the late 1980s. *DICP, Drug Intelligence and Clinical Pharmacy*, as the journal was known then, had never before had an intern. My advisor at the College of Pharmacy, Peggy Carver (to whom I owe a huge thank you), had learned of this one-of-a-kind opportunity from Harvey and thought I might be interested. Indeed, it fit perfectly with my goals at the time, as I was eager to explore what clinical pharmacy had to offer.

In the summer of 1988, having just completed my second professional year in the PharmD curriculum, I temporarily joined the staff at Harvey Whitney Books as their first intern. The 3 months I spent in Cincinnati left an indelible print on my career path. Harvey provided a wonderful learning experience for me, giving me a chance to work with the staff in each of the departments at the journal. As I got to know Harvey better, I came to understand that this was Harvey at his best, as guide and teacher. I observed firsthand the process from initial manuscript receipt to publication or rejection. I participated in the soon-familiar steps of selecting reviewers, evaluating their comments, and determining whether the manuscript moves on to revision and acceptance or is not acceptable for publication. Once a manuscript was accepted, I observed the internal editing process and learned how each issue of the journal must be proofed and proofed again, internally. I was impressed with the personal attention each manuscript received throughout the process. Beyond the workings of the journal, Harvey introduced me to the book publishing side as well. I recall a lengthy book manuscript he asked me to review preliminarily in-house. I diligently wrote out my comments to the best of my nascent ability, empowered by Harvey's trust. In retrospect, some of my comments might

not have been totally on target, but there is something to be learned from even the most humbling of opportunities. At the other end of the spectrum, that summer a new book was received from the printer—*Pharmacoepidemiology, An Introduction*—and I shared in the excitement of the staff in seeing a long project finally completed.

During my internship, I also had the opportunity to work with Don McLeod, who was then senior consulting editor. With his guidance, we coauthored a manuscript for the “Formulary Forum” column, and I wrote 2 book reviews. It was tremendous to have firsthand experience of being in the author's shoes so early in my career. I recall participating in a phone call with Don in which he discussed with an author specific revisions to a manuscript for the “Formulary Forum” column. It was an example of the personal attention that manuscripts received, but also an indicator of Don's and Harvey's commitment to encourage new authors and maintain high standards for the journal. By shadowing Don, I learned the expectations and function of the “Formulary Forum” column and gleaned my first insight into the world of clinical trials and medical writing.

Notably, however, the internship offered more than just the technical side of publishing. I learned about the “Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals,” the *Chicago Manual of Style*, editorial shorthand, and a little bit about advertisements in a pharmacy journal. On the lighter side, I learned how to accept the unending puns and curious wit of the editorial staff—perhaps their way of staying sane while spending 8 hours a day correcting pharmacists' and physicians' writing styles. I heard Harvey's jingle about how to spell Merck Sharp and Dohme. I learned the correct spelling of ophthalmology (I have never forgotten the 2 Hs). And I learned that wise writers begin book reviews with something other than the words, “This book....”

During my internship, I gained a mentor and friend in Harvey and an enduring friendship with Don McLeod, both of whom impressed me in their humble way with their roles in the development of clinical pharmacy. I felt privileged to be working with these gentlemen and just a few degrees of separation from pharmacy pioneers such as Harvey Whitney,

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Sr. and Don Francke. I realized that my peers likely knew little about the beginnings of clinical pharmacy, who the pioneers were, and how much we all owed them. Harvey Whitney Books, *Drug Intelligence and Clinical Pharmacy*, and the people involved with the journal had been fundamental to where our profession had been and where it was headed. That summer internship gave me a chance to be part of it. Needless to say, it was a golden opportunity in many ways. I returned to Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan with a far broader outlook on our profession and something to share with my fellow students and instructors.

Harvey Whitney Books now has an established internship, in which sixth year clerkship students can spend a month gaining firsthand experience of the workings of *The Annals* and the world of publishing. What a remarkable experience for today's students of pharmacy.

As I look back, during this exciting anniversary year for *The Annals*, it is clear that, in another way, 1988 held something different for the journal. It was its last year to be known as *DICP, Drug Intelligence and Clinical Pharmacy*. Certainly the name was a mouthful for students and perhaps an interesting title for my cohort of new practitioners to ponder. But this was the offshoot of the original title that gave clinical pharmacy a voice and a place to call home, as reflected in other commentaries this anniversary year. In January 1989, the name of the journal was amended to *DICP, The Annals of Pharmacotherapy*. By way of historical context, the American College of Clinical Pharmacy previously had petitioned the Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties for specialty status using the term *clinical pharmacy*, but the request was denied. A subsequent petition, using the term *pharmacotherapy*, finally was accepted. I was too young to appreciate the journal's name transition at that time, but Harvey once again understood the need for change. In 1992, the journal shed the then-anti-quoted *DICP* and moved to the front of the library shelves simply as *The Annals of Pharmacotherapy*. It became

clear to me that the name change was part of a strategy to keep *The Annals of Pharmacotherapy* as the leading international pharmacy journal and establish it among major medical journals. The name change also meant that *DICP* would eventually become a relic unfamiliar to a new generation of pharmacists. Though it is just a name, it holds history, and I hope future graduates will take time to reflect on the evolution of clinical pharmacy now and again.

I feel fortunate that my involvement with the journal started at the beginning of the end of the title *DICP* and that my early career coincided with the emergence of *The Annals*. From 1991 to 1995, I was assistant editor at the journal. The Internet was just emerging then, and *The Annals* had no Web presence or e-mail address. All manuscript correspondence and communication with authors and referees was done by US Postal Service or fax. I remember early discussions among Harvey, Tim Welty, and Milap Nahata about establishing a Web presence for *The Annals*. It was an inevitable step for the journal to take, and today, of course, it is inextricable. The Web site, electronic manuscript submissions, reviewer comments via the Internet, and e-publications ahead of print all have emerged as the way of life for the journal. It is a long way from where *DICP* was in 1988.

It is clear to me now that the name change was a thoughtful strategy to contribute to the development of the journal and the profession of pharmacy. Thanks for the internship, Harvey. Thanks for the name change.

PS, Go Blue.

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Published Online, 6 Jun 2006, [www.theannals.com](http://www.theannals.com)  
DOI 10.1345/aph.1G506