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Publisher *Taylor & Francis*

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## Journal of Liquid Chromatography & Related Technologies

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713597273>

### Foreword

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**To cite this Article** Scott, Raymond P. W.(1986) 'Foreword', Journal of Liquid Chromatography & Related Technologies, 9: 14, vii – viii

**To link to this Article:** DOI: 10.1080/01483918608074166

**URL:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01483918608074166>

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## FOREWORD

The ubiquitous robot is now invading all areas of industrial technology and two of its more recent conquests are the industrial analytical research and control laboratories. The robot can offer much to analytical services as a whole. It can carry out tedious procedures without tiring and as a consequence improve the precision and accuracy of the results. It can work twenty hours a day without coffee breaks or lunch breaks, requires no vacation and its hourly rate is only equivalent to its capital depreciation and maintenance. Furthermore, it also releases staff from boring and frustrating work to contribute more effectively and professionally to the organization's activities. The latter advantage of the robot, however, may well be overstated as it is also likely that some members of existing staff may well be rendered redundant as a result of the introduction of the laboratory robot. Nevertheless, we cannot 'stop the world and get off'; progress is inexorable and society (as it has in the past) must find the appropriate socio-economic solutions to the problems that the evolution of robots is producing. We must not impede progress, but at the same time must not be callous and each of us must bear some of the social responsibilities that will arise from our use of robots.

Liquid chromatographic analysis is one of the obvious areas where the laboratory robot can operate very well. Hence, this special issue of the Journal

of Liquid Chromatography. The robot can provide a number of services in LC analyses and many of these are covered by the individual contributions to the issue. I would like to thank the authors, not only for their valuable contributions, but also for their prompt production of the manuscripts. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Mrs. Carol Nash for the preparation of the camera ready copy of the issue.

Raymond P.W. Scott