

EDITORIAL

My delight in embarking on a four-year term as Editor stems largely from my view of *JEAB* as the most exciting and definitive publication in the experimental analysis of behavior, indeed, in all of psychology. Thus, I was tempted to limit this Editorial to a brief paragraph promising to maintain its current standards of excellence. There are, however, at least two changes I would like to see in *JEAB*. The first involves broadening the conceptual scope of articles that appear in the journal. The second involves narrowing the temporal gap between submission of manuscripts and notification of their suitability.

To encourage an increase in breadth we are planning at least three special issues of *JEAB*. The three will focus on articles with a biological emphasis (see Vol. 48, p. 34), on phenomena that are typically characterized in terms of cognition, and on the experimental analysis of human behavior. In addition to interdisciplinary work on aspects of foraging, promising work with a biological emphasis includes research on the neural substrates for the reinforcing properties of drugs, on the effects of biorhythms on performance, and on the Pavlovian conditioning of immunological reactivity. We would also be receptive to articles on the experimental analysis of animal welfare. At the same time we hope to encourage the recent surge in the popularity of human subjects, a development nurtured enthusiastically by my immediate predecessors, Philip Heline and Tony Nevin. But behavior analysts not only have turned increasingly to human subjects but also to behavioral domains not often contemplated by researchers focusing on pigeons and rats. In the past, many behavior analysts have shied away from the study of cognitive phenomena. True, there are several exceptions—for example, the writings of B. F. Skinner; studies of concept formation, especially natural concepts; behavioral approaches to timing; and many empirical investigations of memory with delayed-matching-to-sample techniques. But behavior analysts have certainly not been at the forefront of the recent movement in cognition. This is disappointing because behavior analysts, more than any other group, should have important statements to make and fruitful experiments to conduct in a functional analysis of language and cognition. Articles in recent volumes of *JEAB* have begun to redress this neglect. I believe that basic research in behavior analysis has much to gain by contemplating our research issues in the context of related perspectives such as the biological and the cognitive. Phenomena addressed in these areas have relevance for our own work, and we are often in an optimal position to make important contributions to the analysis of these phenomena. Behavior analysts are sometimes as guilty as other psychologists of pursuing their particular basic research interests narrowly without pausing sufficiently to appreciate the potential ramifications of that research. Yet of all psychologists, behaviorists have the most to offer to contemporary psychology in its broadest sense. In addition, too seldom do authors in this journal make clear the applied implications of their research. Contemplation of the applied relevance of basic research may lead to important ideas for basic work (just as consideration of the empirical underpinnings of applied research may lead to new ideas for applied work). Fortunately there are investigators who are pushing newly developed behavioral techniques forward on both basic and applied fronts.

In summary, I am optimistic about the current state and progress of behavior analysis. I think we can enhance that progress and its impact if we are more open to interdisciplinary perspectives and to the potential applications of our basic research. We have a great deal to offer to interdisciplinary enterprises and a great deal to gain from them as well.

There is a limited amount an Editor and Associate Editors can do to broaden the scope of *JEAB*. We can encourage but not guarantee the submission of quality manuscripts in particular areas. There is more that we can do to further reduce the journal's publication lag and, in particular, to shorten the delay between submission of manuscripts and editorial decisions. The leading alternative journals publish every three months, whereas *JEAB* publishes every two months. Thus we already provide more timely publications in that respect. There is reason to expect that further improvements, however modest, may influence the likelihood that authors will choose to submit their best articles to us, rather than to other journals. For example, some in our field have suggested that outcomes are chosen on the basis of their correlation with a reduction in time to reinforcement. It can be shown that the delay reduction authors experience can be maximized by a timely review process. Thus, we pledge ourselves to the solicitation of prompt reviews and to acting on those reviews as soon as they are in hand.

On a more personal note, if this Editorial, or more generally my stewardship of *JEAB*, is found wanting, the fault will lie not in my mentors and colleagues, for I have been fortunate in the richness, diversity, and creativity of my environmental context. One source of intellectual brilliance and collegial support for the past 26 years was lost to me while I was preparing this Editorial. George S. Reynolds died on September 13, 1987. With profound sadness I dedicate this volume to him.

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