Editorial

As this is my last issue as editor, I would like to thank those who contributed to the journal during the last 3 years, report the accomplishments of the journal, and predict its future. Although the ultimate evaluation of whether the journal is succeeding comes from the readers, I think it is safe to say that the journal is in good shape. We have not accomplished all the goals that I set at the beginning of my term as editor, but we are making headway.

Thank You

First I would like to thank the authors. Without authors writing provocative, informative, and worthwhile manuscripts, a journal cannot meet its first and foremost goal: to make a difference to the readers. Those who submitted manuscripts met and succeeded my call for strong conceptual and interpretive manuscripts. We published special sections on private events, statistical inference, and the history of the behavior analysis. Authors contributed provocative book reviews that kept our readers abreast of topics in the allied disciplines of development, cognition, evolutionary biology, and education as well as books in our field. Intellectual controversies were addressed on the role of quantitative reviews and meta-analysis, person-centered approaches to the treatment of developmental disabilities, and gender issues in science. And the scope of feature articles provided a broad view of the issues and problems behavior analysts are working to solve. I thank the authors for their contributions and for cheerfully working with the editorial staff who often called for revisions at the last minute in order to beat our publishing deadlines.

Second, I would like to thank the members of the editorial board, especially Associate Editor Carol Pilgrim,

for continuing a fine tradition of providing informative feedback to the authors. This journal, like many others, relies on the voluntary contributions of the reviewers. Beyond the customary reviews obtained from many journals, however, our reviewers provided very detailed scholarly reviews. One of my favorite pastimes as an editor has been reading these reviews, which often are as informative as the manuscripts being reviewed!

I would also like to thank most of the board of editors for providing timely reviews to the action editors. Although the journal still does not provide feedback to authors in a timely fashion (I think 3 months from submission is a reasonable latency), this is not the fault of the editorial board. For most manuscripts the action editors had at least two reviews to inform their editorial decisions. Most delays have occurred because of competing contingencies for Carol's and my behavior. The solution to this delay problem, though, may be right around the corner, and I will discuss it below.

Finally, I would like to thank Kathy Hill. As managing editor she has been responsible for managing the details of a well-written, attractive journal that is published in a timely fashion. These management skills are hidden from most people because they only see the final product. But my experiences with this journal as well as attempts to copyedit other manuscripts, just one of Kathy's many jobs, have shown me how rare a craft Kathy practices. Kathy's perfect performance of these duties is greatly appreciated.

Accomplishments

The journal continues to make progress in becoming a first-rate archival journal. Three accomplishments are illustrative. As mentioned above, the solution to the lengthy delays in process-

ing manuscripts seems apparent. This potential solution came from comparing data collected for *The Behavior Analyst (TBA)* in 2000 with data collected in 1999 for the *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior (JEAB)*. As I suspected, the average processing latency for manuscripts submitted to *JEAB* was substantially shorter than those submitted to *TBA* (2.4 vs. 5.4 months). This processing latency was defined as the number of months between the date a manuscript was received by the editor and the date the action letter was sent to the author. This 3-month difference continues for accepted manuscripts in that on average it took 3 months less time for *JEAB* to process accepted manuscripts than *TBA* (11 months vs. 14 months). This latency was defined as the number of months between the date a paper was received by the editor and the date the editor informed the author that the paper had been sent to the managing editor to be published. An unexpected finding, though, was the number of manuscripts managed by each action editor for *JEAB* versus *TBA*. With 8 action editors and 91 manuscripts submitted to *JEAB*, the average number of manuscripts per action editor was approximately 11, whereas the 2 action editors for *TBA* handled 39 manuscripts. This difference will be alleviated because the Association for Behavior Analysis (ABA) has approved the addition of another associate editor. This action editor, who will begin work with the incoming editor, should reduce the processing time for manuscripts.

Another accomplishment that is worth mentioning is that we received permission from ABA to establish a more complete Web presence for the journal. With special assistance from Steve Scherer, a graduate student at West Virginia University, and Vic Latties, Executive Editor of *JEAB*, we designed and proposed a Web site for the journal. The new Web site for ABA publications was then programmed by the ABA staff and is now operable. It

serves at least two important functions: It improves the Web presence of scholarship about behavior analysis, and it finally provides *TBA* with an index. This is great news.

Probably the most important accomplishment is that the manuscripts submitted and published in the journal continue to be strong. As reported to ABA in the Spring of 1999, 2000, and 2001, the journal had 45, 65, and 49 submissions, respectively, and a 46%, 36%, and 41% acceptance rate. The journal published more than 700 pages of high-quality scholarship in the last 3 years. The number of substantive pages published also grew from 76 pages in the Spring issue of 1999 to approximately 160 pages in the current issue. Thus, even though the number of submissions and the number of articles published could be increased, they are not a major concern.

If we are to become a first-rate publication, however, we need to publish articles that matter to readers and scholars. The traditional way of measuring whether articles matter is to look at citation indexes. Such citation statistics can be obtained from the *Social Science Citation Index* and the *Science Citation Index*. Detailed analysis of these data might be helpful for understanding whether *TBA* matters to others; forthcoming articles are likely to report on these analyses.

We need to be cautious, however, in our interpretations of what these data mean. The number of citations per article published may be lower for a journal like *TBA* because behavior analysis is not united by a topical field, like psychology with its hundreds of journals. As just the last 3 years of publications indicate, *TBA* publishes many kinds of articles. Some are relevant only for behavior analysts (e.g., articles on the history of ABA, policies such as accreditation for behavioral graduate programs, and memorials to our deceased colleagues). Others are relevant to common allied fields (e.g., therapy, education, special education, philosophy of science, pharmacology,

social work, and statistics). Still others stretch behavior analysis into new fields; examples include the recently published article on human geography (Norton, 2001) and a review of a book on cultural evolution (Lamal, 1999). It is difficult to imagine what journals to compare *TBA* to in order to get a good measure of its worth. It does seem important to keep track of such data, particularly over time, but it is equally important to remember the purpose of *TBA*: to publish general interest articles on behavior analysis. Perhaps the relevant measure is how often *TBA* is cited by other behavior analysts or in other behavioral journals. *TBA* is also the mouthpiece of ABA, so perhaps the best outcome measure of its worth is as part of the outcome measures for the association as a whole. Although the successes of ABA are the result of many activities, if ABA continues to grow and the scholarship of its members continues to grow, then we are succeeding. As reported over the years in the *ABA Newsletter*, this appears to be the case.

The Future

I predict continued growth, better management of the journal, and other successes. These are easy predictions because Carol Pilgrim has agreed to

accept ABA's invitation to be the next editor. As a past president of ABA, a past associate editor of *JEAB*, and the current associate editor of *TBA*, Carol is well known to all of us. With first-hand experience working with Carol, I can attest to the skill, style, and sensitivity that she will bring to editing *TBA*. Carol and I started the transition process at ABA's May meeting, and she will now be responsible for all new submissions.

In ending, I will repeat my call to the readership from the Spring issue of 1999. For the journal and the field of behavior analysis to continue to prosper, we all need to take responsibility for making our scholarship relevant to the world. I look forward to many years of reading about solutions to behavioral problems that are so relevant. And I will try to remember that worthwhile growth is often gradual.

REFERENCES

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Philip N. Chase
Editor