

Editor's comment

We all owe a debt of gratitude to Abe Amsel, who shepherded the *Journal* from its early, uncertain days to its present benign maturity. It's not easy to turn one's creation over to somebody else, and yet only once, while discussing matters of transition at a hotel bar during the 1975 Psychonomic Society Convention, did I get the feeling that Abe might be having second thoughts. Actually, however, apart from the new cover on the *Journal* (which was management's decision, not mine), the change in editorship will hardly be noticed. Like Abe, I have decided to disburse responsibility among a fairly large group of associate editors. Indolence only partly explains this decision. Hopefully a faster and sharper review process will result, and as we know from other biosocial processes, creativity often occurs in conjunction with heterogeneity.

As for *Journal* policy, we will continue to publish substantial contributions in the areas of animal learning and behavior, broadly conceived. I think that the wide spectrum of research topics published in the *Journal* is one of its main strengths. We will continue to be selective in the papers we accept, but hopefully not to the point of setting our criteria so high that those small innovative gems, that only in retrospect are recognized as such, elude us. (According to their authors, most rejected papers fall into this category.) While the majority of the contributions will continue to be based on empirical research, theoretical papers and critical reviews of timely topics are encouraged. It is extremely useful to take stock now and then of where a research area has been and where it seems to be going, or should go. Plausible, integrating theory is always in short supply, perhaps even more so in our field. Consequently, we are eager for theoretical contributions, and now and then we might even prod such activity in problem areas that seem to be in particular need.

We would like to share the review process with as many capable persons as possible. Anyone who wishes to serve as a reviewer should send me a list of the areas of their competence, along with the title of a recent publication. We also want to encourage feedback from our readers. If you think a paper is bad in methodology or scholarship, let me know about it. I guarantee you will get a reply. Comments regarding the coverage of the *Journal* or other aspects of its operation are also welcome. Most important, though, send us your work, your best work.

For reasons that have never been altogether clear to me, it is customary to draw a sharp line between the products of outgoing and incoming editors. Credit Abe Amsel with the first four papers in this volume.

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