

## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

It has become a tradition to include comments from the new Editor in the first issue containing articles submitted during his or her term. In the present case this editorial will serve mainly to assure the readers and contributors that I intend to make no major changes in editorial policy. *Memory & Cognition*, under the outstanding leadership of the previous Editors, including the most recent Editor, Robert A. Bjork, has flourished and developed into one of the leading journals in the field of cognitive psychology. My primary aim is to maintain the high editorial standards that have been established.

The purview of *Memory & Cognition* will not change. We will continue to publish articles in human experimental psychology that relate to memory, cognition, and information processing, including such topics as reading, speech perception, pattern recognition, sensory memory, attention, learning, forgetting, concept formation, knowledge retrieval, psycholinguistics, text processing, problem solving, reasoning, thinking, judgment, and decision making. We also will try to accommodate articles from related fields, such as cognitive development, social cognition, and applied cognitive psychology, as long as they illuminate basic memory and cognitive processes. As in the past, we wish to encourage articles that report converging evidence from several experiments, but we will also welcome reports including a single experiment with clear-cut results, purely theoretical articles, literature reviews, and norms for stimulus materials, if they make important contributions to or represent important tools for our understanding of memory and cognition.

*Memory & Cognition*, like other healthy journals, receives many more manuscripts than it can publish. In fact, more manuscripts were submitted this year than in previous years. Our rejection rate has been high, running between 70% and 80%. However, I do not see it as the Editor's role simply to make an accept/reject decision. Rather, my goal is to provide the authors of rejected manuscripts with useful comments that will help guide their research and writing so that their chances of publication in the future will be improved. Toward this end, each manuscript that I receive is assigned to an action editor, either one of the Associate Editors or me. The action editor then normally sends the manuscript out for review by two or three experts, who are asked not only for their recommendations concerning publication, but also for detailed comments that are made available to the author. Typically, at least one of the experts is a member of our board of Consulting Editors, who, like the Associate Editors, were selected both because of their research expertise and because of their demonstrated ability to produce

thoughtful and insightful reviews. The action editor, who also carefully reads the manuscript, then makes a publication decision and, in a letter to the author, explains the reasons for the decision and tries to provide some guidelines to the author for revision, if necessary, and for future submissions.

Most of the advice given by the reviewers and action editor is specific to a particular topic of investigation. However, there are a few points that seem to come up so often that they are worth repeating here. First, comparisons across experiments are often dubious and better replaced with a single experiment that includes the various conditions to be compared, so that the differences among conditions are not confounded with a host of irrelevant variables. Second, inferential statistics, like *t* and *F* tests, should not be reported without the relevant descriptive statistics, such as the means. Third, some measures of variability (e.g., standard errors of the mean, standard deviations, or mean square errors from analyses of variance) should accompany the means or other measures of central tendency reported. Fourth, authors should carefully check their references. Often I find studies cited in the text but not included in the reference list or inaccuracies in the journal volume or page numbers supplied. The Publications Office of the Psychonomic Society cannot provide a check of the references; such a check must be the responsibility of the authors. Finally, authors should make certain that the format and style of their manuscripts conform to those specified in the "Information for Contributors" on the inside cover of the journal and in the *APA Publication Manual*. Although we will typically review manuscripts that deviate from the specified format, no manuscript will be accepted for publication until its style and format are appropriate. All authors should expect the action editor to request at least minor revisions of their manuscripts, but the number of changes requested should be considerably reduced for manuscripts prepared according to the APA guidelines.

Providing the kind of editorial service outlined here is necessarily a time-consuming process. Nevertheless, it is our goal to inform authors concerning the action on a manuscript as soon as possible. We try to notify authors within 90 days, and when we cannot meet that deadline, we send the authors some notice at that time concerning the status of their manuscripts or the reason for a delay.

We look forward to your submissions and welcome your comments about our editorial policy.

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