EDITORIAL

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Filling the shoes of prior editors of the Journal of Experimental Psychology: Animal Behavior Processes (Allan Wagner, Donald Blough, Michael Domjan, Stewart Hulse, Mark Bouton, Nicholas Mackintosh, and Anthony Dickinson) will be a daunting task. But I know that I will be assisted by the many able researchers active in the field today who will serve as authors and reviewers. The goal of an editor and reviewers should be to make certain that what is said by authors is clear and advances the field; it is not an editor’s job to dictate what an author says. Ultimately, the quality of the journal will depend far more on its authors than the editor.

The journal’s focus will continue to be on papers reporting programmatic series of experiments concerned with animal cognition in all of its aspects, with “animal” including humans, provided that the related theory and/or data connect to species other than humans. However, papers reporting outstanding single experiments will also be considered as will relevant theoretical statements and reviews that, due to their focus, are not appropriate for journals reaching broader audiences such as Psychological Bulletin and Psychological Review. “Processes” in the journal’s title will be interpreted to include perception, learning (both Pavlovian and instrumental including operant), memory, motivation, and other cognitive processes. And not only will the journal welcome submissions concerned with these behavioral processes, but given that we are interested in behavior, as Tinbergen suggested, we will also welcome manuscripts that illuminate behavior and cognition in terms of function, ontogeny, and evolutionary history. Papers centrally concerned with contrasts among difference species might better be submitted to the Journal of Comparative Psychology, and papers centrally concerned with the functioning of the nervous system might better be submitted to Behavioral Neuroscience, although reports of research using neurophysiological and neuropharmacological manipulations to illuminate psychological processes will be considered.

The interesting questions that can be asked about animal learning and cognition are almost limitless. Whether researchers like it or not, in recent years most funding agencies have narrowed the focus of their support to proposals that have application. For our field, this often takes the form of animal models of human functioning and dysfunction. Therefore, reports concerning new or improved animal models will be considered for publication.

One of the great strengths of JEP: ABP that makes it the premier archival journal in its field has been the depth and constructive nature of the referees’ reviews provided to authors. This is in contrast to the terse reviews and checklists that in recent years have become commonplace in many journals. I will strive to maintain the tradition of informative reviews. Obtaining penetrating reviews sometimes slows down feedback to authors. While I will strive to provide rapid feedback, I will not to value speed over quality.

Indicators of variance (preferably in figures), effect size with confidence intervals, and power will be required. Tables of experimental design will be welcomed because they often facilitate communication. Additionally, although null hypothesis statistical testing will still be acceptable, appropriate alternative statistical approaches to support hypothesis testing will also be admissible.

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