

EDITORIAL:

Some Observations on a Year's Worth of Manuscripts

The present issue is the first to contain articles submitted since I began my term as Editor 1 year ago. After looking at a year's worth of manuscripts, there seem to be several matters that merit comment.

First of all, having spent a substantial time considering certain changes in the format and emphasis of *Memory & Cognition*, and having consulted with my Associate Editors, Consulting Editors, and certain other individuals, I have decided to make none of those changes. As one of the major vehicles of communication among researchers in the cognitive field, *Memory & Cognition* has grown in stature during the editorial reign of my predecessor, Robert G. Crowder. Given that progress and given the diverse and generally high-quality manuscripts submitted to me during the last year, I see little benefit and certain possible costs of trying to shift the direction of *Memory & Cognition* in terms of content or style. In terms of its role as a journal of the Psychonomic Society, *Memory & Cognition* should be open to the full range of empirical, theoretical, and scholarly efforts that fall within its broad domain. I have made and will continue to make changes in the Board of Consulting Editors to reflect ongoing changes in the level of research in different subfields; beyond that, however, I do not intend to tinker with the journal as long as it is thriving.

Second, there is an aspect of current custom in research publication that I feel has gone too far, namely, the emphasis on multiexperiment papers. There is an increasing frequency of papers in which a couple of flawed experiments (known as "pilot studies" in the old days) lead up to the one experiment that deserves publication, or papers in which one strong experiment is followed by a couple of insubstantial follow-up experiments, carried out in the interest of putting a multiexperiment face on the manuscript. It is also the case that authors sometimes use what might normally

be considered as a between-group manipulation in a single experiment as a basis for treating each group as a separate experiment. In any event, number of experiments is hardly the best measure of experimental power. Given a well-defined experimental question, a single experiment of sufficient power to answer that question may sometimes suffice. It is also possible to mention preliminary pilot studies in a general way in the Introduction to a paper; similarly, follow-up experiments designed only to validate some assertion or to rule out some artifactual interpretation of the obtained results can be cited briefly in the Discussion.

Finally, I feel that it is essential to maintain a relatively short editorial lag, even if on occasion the effort to do so introduces a little more noise into the decision process. Maintaining a rapid turn-around time is difficult, however, and I in particular have been less than completely successful in that regard during this past year. Toward the end of reducing editorial lag, you, as contributors to *Memory & Cognition*, can help greatly by making sure that your manuscripts correspond in format to the APA style required by this journal. Authors are, I think, often unaware how much inappropriate style can slow down the review process. When reviewers and editors must constantly attend to the surface structure of a given paper, not only is their evaluation of the paper's deep structure impaired, but also the time necessary to complete the evaluation is increased. There is then further delay at the time a reviewer or editor must actually convey, in written form, the changes in format that are required. Since any given paper will have to be put in good form at some point prior to publication, you can not only be kind to reviewers and editors by putting the paper in such form to begin with, you can also reduce the time you wait for feedback on your paper.

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