Editorial

In 1968, a new Psychonomic Society journal was born, *Behavior Research Methods & Instrumentation* (*BRMI*). The first editor of the journal, Joseph Sidowski, stated that the mission of the journal was to "publish articles covering experimental methods and design, instrumentation and laboratory techniques, and computer technology" (Sidowski, 1968). Thus, the first journal solely dedicated to research methods and instruments began.

For nearly two decades, *BRMI* published articles on all facets of the research process. In 1984, however, the name of the journal was changed to *Behavior Research Methods, Instruments, & Computers* (*BRMIC*). According to a note at the time, the name change was made to better reflect the important role of computers in instrumentation and research methodology (*BRMIC*, 1984). That name change made sense given the times. The 1970s and the early 1980s had seen the beginnings of a computer revolution that continues with no apparent end in sight. Computers went from being instruments for data analysis to major experimental tools. During this period, the personal computer was introduced, changing not only psychological research but many facets of life and culture by making powerful computation available to individual users at a much reduced cost.

With the present issue, the journal again changes its name, this time to *Behavior Research Methods* (*BRM*). There are two main reasons for the change. Again, it reflects the times. The central role of instrumentation and computers in psychology and psychological research is so well established that it seems unnecessary to highlight their use in the journal's title. In addition, the inclusion of the terms *Instrumentation* and *Computers* in the journal name can be charitably described as awkward. But the shortened name does not change the purpose, direction, or editorial policy of the journal. Some people have already expressed concerns about the loss of the word *Computers* from the journal name. Yet, as can be seen from the articles in the present issue and will be seen again in May, the use of computers in psychology will still play a prominent role in the articles published by this journal. In every May issue since 1984, this journal has published articles based on the annual meeting of the Society for Computers in Psychology, and it will continue to do so. The relationship between the society and the journal is still very important to both.

Thus, it seems appropriate to reiterate the journal's purposes. Where appropriate, I will quote from Joseph Sidowski's first editorial. This journal is dedicated to publishing important scholarship concerned with psychological research methods broadly construed. "Comparisons of methods and/or instruments are invited, as are papers concerned with experimental controls" (Sidowski, 1968). Studies of normative data have regularly been published in the journal, and are encouraged as an important element of advancing well-controlled experimentation. Because the most common psychological instrument is the computer, papers and programs related to the use of the computer are invited as well. Since the computer environment is becoming distributed across networks, the use and impact of distributed and networked computers as a method, instrument, and area of study are also invited.

"Reports of experiments are inappropriate except in support of method or instrument evaluation" (Sidowski, 1968). However, as in the original journal, it is expected that new instrumentation, programs, or methods should provide necessary supportive data to demonstrate the validity and utility of the method and/or instrument.

One recently added feature of the journal should be highlighted. A limitation of the journal format for the dissemination of the important material published here is that a journal is not always the best vehicle for sharing the content it is trying to convey. The new Psychonomic Society Archive of Norms, Stimuli, and Data has greatly increased the journal's ability to get data, code and stimuli from author to researcher in a format that facilitates their use. For example, a very large printed table of stimulus norms is difficult enough to read in the journal and can be very difficult to use. The Archive makes the table available electronically, greatly increasing the ease of

its use by researchers who need these norms for their research. A similar argument goes for stimuli, programs, and code segments. To learn more about the Archive, please read Vaughan (2004)

With this issue, I begin my tenure as editor of *Behavior Research Methods*. Let me take this opportunity to acknowledge my predecessors as editors, Joseph Sidowski, N. John Castellan, Robert Proctor, and Jon Vaughan. Their collective work has built a fine journal with a strong reputation. I would like particularly to thank Jon Vaughan, my immediate predecessor. I started as a consulting editor early in his tenure. He has been a great editor to work for, and he did a fine job with the journal. His final two issues on, and the establishment of, the Psychonomic Society Archive represent work of the highest caliber, and the archive itself should be a great legacy for him. He has also been unstinting in his support, advice, and time as I have begun my own work as editor. I am unable to adequately express my thanks to him.

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