

EDITORIAL: *BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL ISSUES* INTO THE FUTURE

The next issue of *Behavior and Social Issues* will be the first of Volume 15. Since 1990 when the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies took on the journal, and despite major challenges including the shift of ownership from the Cambridge Center back to Behaviorists for Social Responsibility (BFSR) with Volume 11, the intervening years have been good ones for the journal, and for the sciences of behavior analysis and cultural analysis. During the Cambridge Center years, the appearance and quality of production for the journal were dramatically improved, and we have been able to maintain those improvements since the return of the journal to BFSR. Further, looking back, many of the manuscripts published in the first fourteen volumes have stood the test of time well.

Behavior and Social Issues is an open access journal. Open access is itself a social justice issue; as the costs of scientific and professional journals have sky-rocketed (in part due to escalations in real costs, but in larger part due to dramatically increased profits associated with the corporatization of journal publication), many institutions and individuals can no longer afford access to commercial journals (Mattaini, 2004). Libraries are reducing subscriptions due to escalating subscription costs, and are also reducing book acquisitions in order to pay for journal subscriptions that they absolutely need. Open access is a response to these challenges; free or low-cost access over the internet dramatically extends the reach of publications. Open access is an important issue, as noted on the Create Change website: "Scholarly communication exists for the benefit of the world's research and teaching community. Authors want to share new findings with all their colleagues, while researchers, students, and other readers want access to all of the relevant literature." (See www.createchange.org/home.html for much more information about this issue.)

In the case of *Behavior and Social Issues*, people from all over the world with interests in how the science of behavior can contribute to social justice and human rights are able to access the journal online at no cost. Beginning with Volume 9, the Cambridge Center made the journal freely available online, and we have been able to continue that service ever since. At the present time we are receiving well over 5000 online article accesses a month, far more than our hard copy edition has ever had, or is likely to have. As a result, we are probably the most widely accessed journal in behavior analysis at present. (It is critical to remember, however, that the digital divide remains; many around the world have no or very little access to the internet. Many others lack the technical skills and scientific literacy needed to make use of the material.)

With the first issue of Volume 15, we will be initiating further significant changes, which will ensure that the journal survives and thrives over the long term. Managing submissions, the review process and production of the journal are extremely time-consuming for an all-volunteer effort. Non-commercial journals of course lack the

resources that commercial publishers bring to the effort. The open access movement, however, has also spurred significant development of tools for managing some of these tasks, and libraries and professional associations have assisted in important ways. Beginning with Volume 15, we will begin using Open Journal Systems, which is being developed at Simon Fraser University, and is described as follows:

Open Journal Systems (OJS) is a journal management and publishing system that has been developed by the Public Knowledge Project through its [Canadian] federally funded efforts to expand and improve access to research. OJS assists with every stage of the refereed publishing process, from submissions through to online publication and indexing. Through its management systems, its finely grained indexing of research, and the context it provides for research, OJS seeks to improve both the scholarly and public quality of refereed research. OJS is open source software made freely available to journals worldwide for the purpose of making open access publishing a viable option for more journals, as open access can increase a journal's readership as well as its contribution to the public good on a global scale.

OJS is a highly capable and well-developed system with considerable support in place. Moving the journal to OJS requires some expertise and technical support; that support is being provided by the Library of the University of Illinois at Chicago, as well as the UIC Academic Computer and Communications Center, for which we are deeply grateful. In particular we wish to thank Mary Case, UIC University Librarian, and Nancy John, Associate Professor Emerita and Digital Librarian at UIC. In addition, the UIC Library is part of a consortium of university libraries that will provide extensive mirroring and archiving to ensure data protection. The software itself has been installed on the UIC server (and can be moved to our own server if there should be a need at some later point), so we are not dependent on Simon Fraser University. The large number of important library and university sponsors associated with the system, however, also provides some assurance of stability (far more than *Behavior and Social Issues'* current arrangements, in fact).

Users of *Behavior and Social Issues* will notice some obvious changes. The appearance of the website (www.behaviorandsocialissues.org) will change, and its capabilities will be greatly upgraded (these changes should occur about the time this editorial is published). There will be expanded search capabilities; ultimately there may be multiple-language access. Behind the scenes much more will change. Material in the journal will be much more extensively indexed to further increase access. All submissions will be made online, and the review process will also be web-based. When a submission comes in, the Editor will be notified; she or he will then go to the website and assign reviewers, who will automatically receive the manuscript, and will return their reviews on-line. Authors will be able to monitor where their manuscript is in the review process. There will be a bit of a learning curve for everyone involved; to submit a manuscript, authors will need to register, for example (a simple procedure, but one

involving a small response cost). Members of the editorial board and other reviewers will also need to log-on using a user ID and password, a necessary but slightly inconvenient mechanism. We are requesting that everyone be patient with this process as we work it out. The UIC library will be providing technical assistance to all users for the foreseeable future through an email link to the “support contact” on the site. Subscription fulfillment and printing of the hard copy version of the journal will continue to be handled by Boyd Printing, which whom we have a long partnership, but formatting of the files they use will also be simplified by using OJS.

There will be many advantages with the new system, and I believe it will help us to continue our work—to generate, conserve, and translate knowledge from the sciences of behavior and cultural analysis to understand social issues and support social justice and human rights. Less effort dedicated to production of the journal will translate into more time to do the real work. Please continue to engage with us in that work as we move forward with the new system.

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REFERENCE

- Mattaini, M. A. (2004). Editorial: Open Access Journals As a Justice Issue. *Behavior and Social Issues*, 13, 1-5.