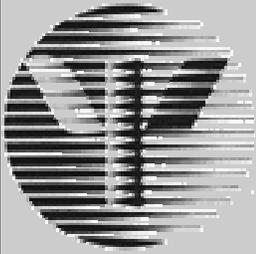


American Psychological Association Division 15: Educational Psychology



Newsletter for **E**ducational **P**sychologists **/15**

New Year Edition - Winter 2006 Volume 29 Number 1

An Interview with Past President Merlin C. Wittrock

Mary Anne Duggan, Deidre Hahn, & Jenefer Husman
Arizona State University



For this installment of the historian project, we present an interview that Deirdre Hahn conducted with Merlin Wittrock. Mary Anne Duggan created an abbreviated version of this interview for the Newsletter.

I think it is especially important for students to understand their deep historical roots and to honor those roots through their future contributions. In this excerpt of his interview, Dr. Wittrock uses his experience of our history to lay out an optimistic path for our future.

Merlin C. Wittrock is Professor Emeritus in the Psychological Studies in Education program at the University of California Los Angeles. In addition to serving as President of the Division, Dr. Wittrock was the Thorndike Award winner for Distinguished Psychological Research Contributions to Education. His dedication to both the application of powerful psychological concepts to education, and the expansion of psychology through the learning sciences, is made clear through an examination of his research and this interview. - JH

DH: How did you come to be the President of Division 15? What did you have to do before considering that position?

MW: Mainly, I was active in the Division from the very first time I got in it to every opportunity I had to serve on a committee or chair a committee or do something for the

Division. I did it because, to me, my conception of Educational Psychology was so different from what most people had. That is, I wanted to move beyond an applications-only concept that I think really has held the field back. When you stop to think what has happened over the 20th century, Educational Psychology has been right at the core of psychology and education. Thorndike and all the people who did work on human learning were all employed as Educational Psychologists. Stanley Hall, James McKeen Cattell, Hugo Munsterberg, Charles Judd -- they all got their start as Experimental Psychologists but found jobs in this country as Educational Psychologists. All of these really wonderful contributions to psychology came out of Educational Psychology, and we are not given credit for that. That bothered me a lot, and I wanted to do something about that. So, I was always writing about conceiving the field as the scientific study of psychology and education so that we get credit for making some seminal contributions to psychology and we also get credit for leading in education, where we have received a lot of credit that has been deserved. But my goal is always to try to show the world we are not just people who take and borrow other people's ideas and apply them to education.

DH: From your perspective, then, when you became President, what was the state of the Division?

(Continued on page 4)

**Newsletter for Educational Psychologists
American Psychological Association
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From the Editor

This is my first edition as Editor of the Division 15 Newsletter. I would like to thank the Division 15 officers for giving me this opportunity to serve as editor of NEP/15 for the next three years. I look forward to working with all of you and with the rest of the APA Division 15 membership.

I would also like to thank Chris A. Wolters, the outgoing editor, for all of his work on the newsletter in the past three years and for his help and support in my transition as editor.

The highlights of this issue are an interview with past-president Merlin C. Wittrock (a continuation of interviews initiated by Jenefer Husman) and an article by Michael Mayrath and Dan Robinson that focuses on publishing, reviewing, and editing from the perspective of journal editors.

One of the topics that I would like to pursue in upcoming issues is the *future* of educational psychology. I am hoping an interesting and fruitful dialogue on this can be a part of the information provided in the newsletter. If you have any ideas, contributions, etc., along these lines please feel free to contact me (NEP15@unlv.edu).

Happy New Year!

Lisa

NEP/15 is the official newsletter of Division 15 - Educational Psychology - and has a Spring, Summer, and Fall/Winter issue each year. It is mailed from the US Post Office in Washington, DC 20002-4242. Mailing addresses are those listed on the official APA roster. Corrections and changes of address should be sent directly to the APA Directory Office, 750 First St., NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242.

NEP/15 will publish minutes of official business meetings, committee reports, news items, and information on topics and issues of interest to the Division 15 membership. Items and articles for NEP/15 should be sent to Lisa D. Bendixen, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, via email NEP15@unlv.edu.

Division 15 Announcements



SCIPIE Inaugural Conference



The Department of Educational Psychology and the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) hosted the Inaugural 2005 Conference of the *Southwest Consortium for Innovations in Psychology in Education (SCIPIE)* on November 4 - 5. The theme of the conference was: *Student Beliefs: Motivation, Cognition, and Epistemology*. Over 90 faculty and graduate students from the U.S. and abroad attended the conference.

SCIPIE was formed by a group of universities/researchers from the Southwestern United States (University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Arizona State University, New Mexico State University, and University of Oklahoma). The aims of SCIPIE are to establish and support research partnerships with area universities and to focus scholarly attention toward innovative theory, research, and practice designed to impact teaching and learning in the Southwestern U.S. An additional goal of the consortium is to support graduate students in their research by providing a venue for them to work with national and international scholars.

An additional goal of SCIPIE is to conduct a series of "working" conferences such as the first one held at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas to allow for extended conversations about innovative research in educational psychology. The emphasis is on research currently in progress, or "sticky problems" that researchers face in these areas. The conference was also intended to provide new scholars and graduate students with opportunities for legitimate participation in conversations about difficult, leading-edge research problems. For more information see also: <http://www.scipie.org>

SCIPIE Program Committee:

Jenefer Husman, Program Chair, ASU

Lisa Bendixen, Conference Coordinator, UNLV

Program Committee Members:

Ralph Reynolds, UNLV

Gale Sinatra, UNLV

Florian Haerle, Graduate Student, UNLV

Denise Winsor, Graduate Student, UNLV

Journal of Developmental Processes



The *Journal of Developmental Processes* is an interdisciplinary journal including contributors from educational, cognitive and developmental psychology, anthropology and human development. We are interested in timely (print or electronic) avenues and those incurring none to little cost first, and options that carry a fee second.

An invitation for submissions has been sent by:

Meghan Habas Siudzinski

Department of Anthropology

College of William and Mary

Williamsburg, Virginia

Join the Division 15 Listserv!

Send a message to listserv@lists.apa.org. In the body of the note type the following: subscribe div15
firstname lastname substituting your own first and last names instead of those words. Do not include anything else in the note, and do not put anything in the subject line.

Alternatively, you can send a note to Keith Cooke at kcooke@apa.org asking to be added to the Division 15 listserv.

Any questions can also be directed to Keith Cooke, (202) 216-7602 American Psychological Association

Submissions to *Educational Psychologist*

Gale M. Sinatra, Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas is the editor of *Educational Psychologist (EP)* and invites members of Division 15 to submit manuscripts to EP for blind, peer review. EP is currently the highest ranked journal in educational psychology according to the Web of Science Impact Index figures. EP publishes scholarly essays, reviews, critiques, and theoretical and conceptual articles, but does not publish results of empirical studies. Please submit manuscripts through following webpage:

www.editorialmanager.com/ep

MW: It was, as it is now, the APA home for Educational Psychologists. Educational Psychology has always been in departments of education. In education departments you have people who felt their role was to take whatever they could get out of psychology, think about what it meant, and then see if there wasn't some place to apply it. That has been pretty much the accepted model for 100 years now, and I think that is a useful model. I do not really feel there is anything wrong with that except it is only half of the pie or the cake, whatever analogy you want to use. The more important thing is to focus directly on the problems of education and then from the study of those problems develop some ideas and theories that have a lot of use in psychology as well as in education. I do not see it as looking around for things which we can apply. I think the better model is to start with the real world problem in education with all its complexity. Look upon it the way you would look upon research in sociology or research in any other social science. Then, ask, "Okay, from the study of that problem how can we develop some theory and some ideas that will help solve that problem but also make fundamental contributions to the field of sociology or the field of economics or whatever it is you are studying?" At the same time, we have the responsibility to generalize and develop theories and ideas from our educational problems in our research that feeds back into psychology. In fact, after looking at this for many years I would go way out on a limb to say that there is no one branch of psychology that has made any more seminal contributions to the field of psychology than has Educational Psychology.

DH: I am going to combine two questions together. What is Educational Psychology? I feel like that has been embedded in every answer you have given.

MW: It is the scientific study of psychology and education; it is not just the applications-only thing. You know, if you get me going on this I will just never stop. It just is a dead-end notion. It leads people to think anything original that comes out of Educational Psychology must have been done by people who were not Educational Psychologists. The only way to make any progress is to start with that problem you are studying; maybe it is measurement in education. Look at Binet; he started in a French school, and that is how we got the IQ test. He did not start with some abstract notion coming out of psychology or out of medicine. He started out with a very practical problem: How do we measure in French schools those kids who can

succeed and those kids who likely can not? From that came this test of all human ability or intelligence, which really is something phenomenal when you stop to think about that. It seems to me we have got to think in those same kinds of ways. Start with the problem, and then develop your theory and make your contribution to psychology. Take whatever you need from psychology, put all the stuff together, but do not think your job is only to borrow other people's ideas and peddle them. I am too coarse and too blunt about that. I apologize.

DH: You are not. I think this is going to be a good segue way from what you just said. What forces outside of the Division, and when I say forces I mean political events, historical events, or societal changes, have impacted or have shaped the work that has come out of Division 15?

MW: I think that is a great question, and I think the answer is so comprehensive it is mind boggling. When you stop to think how a lot of progress has been made in Educational Psychology, let's go back to the Second World War. There was a sudden need in the Second World War to take people who were doing such things as working in local drug stores or in grocery stores or on farms and put those people quickly into jobs such as flying airplanes, driving trucks and tanks, or building airplanes – Rosie the Riveter for example, all these things had to be learned quickly. By the way, I was an air force

officer. I was a base education officer for awhile, so these things I am going to tell you now come directly from that experience. What goes on in the training in those facilities on the military bases is incredible. They had simulation models for teaching people how to wire an atomic bomb up that would just blow your mind, and this was many years ago. I went to an electronics course for 18 weeks, and by the time you got out of there you were troubleshooting airborne radar. It is horribly complicated, and you take guys just literally off the street -- art majors, music majors, business majors, and the first week you teach them what capacitance and resistance and currents are. The next week you put all three of those things together in a little circuit; the next week after that you move to another classroom, and now you have that little circuit in with another little circuit. Pretty soon they have you working on television sets and airborne radar sets, and before you know it everybody graduates. One guy in my class tried to flunk out because he figured out if he could flunk for one week he would be past the time they could send him overseas. So he tried his best to fail, and he could not

I think the better model is to start with the real world problem in education with all its complexity.

fail it. So what I learned was those kinds of facilities were all designed by Educational Psychologists such as Robert Glaser and former Presidents of Division 15. So that is one kind of social event. I think another important social event is the emergence of major ideas in education in our society, for example learning for everybody, equality, and social justice. I think those kinds of things all impacted Educational Psychology and the research that goes on in Educational Psychology. Try to think of any important social problem, one that involves human beings interacting with each other, that is not in Educational Psychology. There is almost none that you can think of. I do not care whether it is in medicine where one of the breakthroughs now is to teach people how to care for their own health rather than depending upon health professionals. By the way, I understand in medicine they think this is going to be next big breakthrough. It is not going to involve more technology, where they are way ahead of everyone else anyway. The next big breakthrough is going to be to get people to take responsibility for their own wellness. That is a role for Educational Psychology.

DH: What do you recommend for people going into the field now? What would you tell your students to do?

MW: What I recommend for people going into Educational Psychology is that first of all they see these outstanding opportunities in the field and that they do not view themselves as a shrinking middle, as not needed by educators who can handle cognitive science terms and not needed by cognitive science people who are now studying things like reading and mathematics, science, and all of that. Rather I want them to see themselves in a much more comprehensive way, as the people who are going to make these outstanding contributions to psychology and to theory and research in education through direct study of the applied problem. Let say a goal is to help every kid in the world to read, and that is really a noble goal and just a wonderful thing to do. If you sink yourself into that problem, you will find all the ways in the world to contribute by not only helping children learn how to read but by making fundamental contributions to semantics, to comprehension pragmatics, all of these kinds of things. They all tie together these artificial disciplines that we have in cognition and cognitive science. They are all starting to come together in some kind of beautiful symphony where you have all these different people studying different facets of the same thing, and the trick is to put all this together. Then, as part of that I would have students look upon as fair game problems in learning, teaching literacy, science, not only all the subject matter areas but social justice, all these kinds of things that are supposed to go on in schools. In Educational Psychology our goal cannot just be to take ideas and give them back to the parent dis-

cipline but to take those ideas and make learning better for the kids. Also, I want students to see themselves not only as people who are going to do great things in solving education's problems, but people who are going to make fundamental contributions to psychology as well. These are not really divorced. If you look at them the way I do, they are one and the same. By working on one you contribute to the other; it is a reciprocal kind of thing. So what it all comes down to is the theme on which we started, and that is we have to move beyond this other old notion of an applications-only field to one that says we are the scientific study of psychology and education. That is my hope.

* * *

Publishing, Reviewing, and Editing in Educational Psychology Journals: Comments from Editors in 1996 and 2004

By

**Michael C. Mayrath & Daniel H. Robinson
University of Texas at Austin**

Journals shape and mold the field of educational psychology. They are the primary means for disseminating knowledge throughout the field and extending science into new areas. Editors are the gatekeepers of journals and thus have power to influence the direction of the field. Graduate students, faculty, and other researchers all participate in a dance with these editors called publishing. Publishing can be a daunting task especially for those new to the field. They may spend several hours working on a manuscript never knowing if it will be positively received by editors and ultimately if it will ever be published anywhere. Many do not know the intricate rules of the dance such as which journals are appropriate for their manuscripts, how long reviews actually take, and what they should expect. Further, many new researchers do not know what goes on behind the scenes of the editorial process. And finally, many aspiring researchers may not know how editors, editorial board members, and reviewers are selected. At the annual meeting of AERA each year, special sessions are organized so that potential authors can meet with editors to get answers to these and other questions. Unfortunately, these "meet the editors" roundtables reach a limited audience and cover an even more limited range of questions.

The present study has three purposes. First, we hoped by surveying editors we would obtain answers to important questions for potential authors, editorial board members, and editors. Second, we sought to compare the different journals along several editorial policies to allow potential authors to better align their values and goals with their selection of journals to which they might submit manuscripts. And third, we sought to uncover differences between 1996 and 2004 in terms of editors' views on certain issues.

In 1996, we surveyed six then-current editors of journals we felt comprised a good coverage of the educational psychology field: Mike Royer (*Contemporary Educational Psychology* [CEP]), Gary Natriello (*American Educational Research Journal – Teaching, Learning and Human Development* [AERJ]), Steve Benton (*Educational Psychology Review* [EPR]), Mike Pressley (*Journal of Educational Psychology* [JEP]), Paul Pintrich (*Educational Psychologist* [EP]), Patricia Campbell (Research News and Comment section of the *Educational Researcher* [ER]), and Gene Glass (*Educational Policy Analysis Archives* [EPAA] & former editor of *Review of Educational Research* [RER]). Glass, Pintrich, and Pressley did not complete the 1996 survey but did participate as panel discussants in the 1997 AERA session. The session was audiotaped and we used their responses.

In 2004, we again surveyed six current editors: Karen Harris (JEP), Patricia Alexander (CEP), Steven Ross (*Educational Technology Research & Development* [ETR&D]), Lyn Corno (EP), Howard Wainer (*Journal of Educational & Behavioral Statistics* [JEBS]), and Bruce Thompson (AERJ). In both surveys editors were asked 26 questions* regarding how they were selected as editors, how they selected editorial board members and ad hoc reviewers, how they handled reviewers who were late, etc., and finally, their thoughts on issues such as requiring effect sizes, using electronic journals, etc. In comparing the two surveys over the eight years from 1996 to 2004, we expected differences in how editors perceived the effects of technology on the editorial review process. We also looked for reactions from the editors to trends such as the decreasing number of articles reporting experimental studies (Hsieh et al., 2005). The results of both surveys follow.

How are Editors Appointed?

The selection process and length of editors' terms varied and depended on whether the journal is sponsored by an organization. For example, APA publishes a call for nominations for editor of JEP in several of its journals. Self-nominations are permitted but, according to Dr. Pressley, no editor has ever been chosen who self-nominated. The nominated editors then submit a statement of purpose to the publications committee. The entire proc-

ess is quite secret, according to Dr. Pressley. Only persons with a successful publication record and national reputation are selected as editors of JEP. Dr. Harris added that editors must also have a record of responsible reviewing of manuscripts. Editors of JEP serve six-year terms. Editors of EP and ETR&D are chosen in a similar way – by a call for nominations and then selected by recommendation of a publications committee. For AERJ, the AERA President selects the editor, upon recommendation from the publications committee. Dr. Glass noted that “in the old days” the AERA President basically appointed the editor of the RER. In the mid-1970's, Charles Bidwell at the University of Chicago took over the publications committee and radically changed the entire process. Today's process, where the publications committee makes the selection, reflects his changes, according to Dr. Glass. In contrast, journals like CEP and EPR that do not represent a national organization, select editors differently. For CEP, the publisher, Academic Press (Elsevier), consults with prior editors and a panel of scholars to select an editor. For EPR, the publisher, Springer, simply selects the editor. Finally, another way editors are chosen is by starting their own journal. John Glover founded EPR in 1989 and served as its first editor. Also, Dr. Glass founded EPAA in 1993.

The length of an editor's term is also typically longer for journals that do not represent an organization. Dr. Benton, former editor of EPR, for example, served as editor for over 10 years. Most editors of the other journals representing organizations held fixed terms, typically three to six years. Comparing 1996 to 2004, we found no changes in the manner in which editors are selected for each journal or the length of their terms.

How are Editorial Board Members and Ad hoc Reviewers Chosen?

Most editors stated that they were solely responsible for selecting editorial board members. And these editors mentioned that persons chosen to be board members typically have a significant publication record and a record of responsible reviewing. Other journals involve publications committees or other editors in choosing board members. For AERJ in 1996, according to Dr. Natriello, the editor submits a list of potential board members that is reviewed and approved by the publications committee. In contrast, for AERJ in 2004, Dr. Thompson noted that editors select board members, with input from the publications committee. With ER, which is also published by AERA, the editor is solely responsible for selecting board members, according to Dr. Campbell.

Ad hoc reviewers are also typically chosen based on publication record and responsible reviewing. Dr. Ross, editor of ETR&D, mentioned that ad hoc reviewers are selected by reputation or nomination. Each is given

about three “guest” reviews. If things work out, they keep the relationship, meaning continued reviewing or even appointment to the board. Most of the other editors noted that being an ad hoc reviewer is a great way to become a board member. And how do new researchers become an ad hoc reviewer if they are not nominated? Several editors suggested they contact editors, send their vitae, and volunteer to review.

In both surveys editors were asked their thoughts on whether it is difficult to find qualified reviewers and how they decide whether a reviewer is qualified. In 2004 most editors replied that finding qualified reviewers was not a problem and that they judged reviewers’ qualifications from their published work. Dr. Thompson, however, stated that finding qualified reviewers is “very, very difficult” for his journal, AERJ.

The 1996 survey reported similar opinions as the 2004 editors. Dr. Campbell, editor of ER, tried to get a mix of reviewers for each paper, “While each paper is reviewed by two reviewers with expertise in the methods/subject I also try to have a reviewer without special skills in the area to read it to ensure the general membership interest issue is addressed.”

How are Editors and Editorial Board Members Compensated?

Most editors receive an honorarium (JEP), travel funds and expense account (CEP), or at least reimbursement for “out of pocket” expenses (AERJ & ER). For editorial board members, typical compensation is a free subscription to the journal. Ad hoc reviewers typically only receive acknowledgement in the journal.

Manuscript Acceptance/Rejection Rates

It can be especially helpful to potential authors to know the percentage of manuscripts that are accepted and rejected by editors of educational psychology journals. It is also interesting to note the change, if any, for the three journals for which we have both 1996 and 2004 data. For CEP, in 1996, Dr. Royer said that about 100 manuscripts were submitted and about 32% were accepted. In 2004, submissions had increased to 170, according to Dr. Alexander, and only about 14% were accepted. Thus, CEP has experienced an increase in the number of manuscripts it receives but with this comes a decrease in the percentage of manuscripts accepted. We should note here that in 1996, Dr. Royer had just taken over as editor and CEP submissions increased to 120 by the time he turned it over to Dr. Alexander in 2001. For AERJ, in 1996, Dr. Natriello said that from 200 manuscripts were submitted. Of these, about 5% were accepted. In 2004, submissions had decreased to 150, according to Dr. Thompson. Of these, 13.5% were accepted. Thus, AERJ, in contrast to CEP, has experienced a decrease in the number of manuscripts it receives but with this comes an increase in the percent-

age of manuscripts accepted. In 1996, when Dr. Pressley took over as editor, JEP received 185 manuscripts. By the time he turned it over to Dr. Harris in 2001, JEP received 310 manuscripts. Throughout Dr. Pressley’s tenure, the acceptance rate was about 20%, thanks in part to APA increasing the number of journal pages. In 2004, JEP received 320 manuscripts and had a 20% acceptance rate. Thus, JEP has experienced an increase in submissions and a constant acceptance rate.

For other journals, in 1996, ER received 35-40 manuscripts and about 20% were accepted; in 2004, ETR&D received about 80 manuscripts and 23% were accepted, JEBS received about 120 manuscripts and 45% were accepted. For the two review journals, EP and EPR, the pattern of submissions and acceptance rates is quite different. In 1996, EPR received about 25 manuscripts and accepted about 22%. Similarly, EP received 30 manuscripts in 2004 and accepted 15%. For those of you doing the math, you may be thinking that both EPR and EP publish only 4 or 5 articles per year. In fact, EPR published 15 articles in 1996 and EP published 25 articles in 2004. Both journals rely on special issues where a guest editor invites authors to write papers. In 1997, Dr. Benton commented how it was difficult to get authors to submit papers to EPR. That same year Dr. Glass remarked that special issues are a sure sign that a journal is not receiving a sufficient number of submissions.

Editorial Board Review Process

We also examined the process of how journal editors review articles. We found that on average that for each manuscript, three reviewers received a copy to review. This was consistent for both the 1996 and 2004 surveys. We also found in both surveys that editorial board members conduct approximately 60% of reviews and ad hoc reviewers conduct the rest. From 1996 to 2004 there was not much change in the amount of reviews conducted by ad hoc reviewers, 38% in 2004 and 39% in 1996.

Next, we asked the editors if reviewers are usually in agreement and if not, how is the disagreement resolved. Overall, the editors reported that their reviewers are often mixed in their opinions on the manuscript. We asked if authors are given an opportunity to respond to the reviewers’ concerns before an editorial decision is made. The majority of the 2004 editors stated that it depends on the situation with the exception of Dr. Alexander who answered “no”.

Editors are extremely busy and we wanted to know if they actually read every manuscript that is submitted to their journal. In both the 1996 and 2004 surveys, all editors except for one reported reading all manuscripts submitted. The only one who did not read all of them reported that he reads “only those where the reviews suggest potential for publication (accept or revise)

(Continued on page 9)



APA EXPERT SUMMIT
ON IMMIGRATION

“Global Realities: Intersections and Transitions”

February 2, 2006

Through his "focus on family" platform, APA President-Elect Dr. Gerry Koocher plans to spotlight three areas that span all of psychology's constituencies, one of which is: Diversity in Psychology: "Our society is becoming diverse in ways that couldn't have been imagined 20 years ago," says Koocher, noting that not only are minority populations growing, but so are transracial marriages and international adoptions. "Psychology has the potential to help to move America in greater acceptance of multiculturalism."

Registration: available beginning 9/1/05 at www.Reisman-White.com

Earlybird Rate: \$135 (before 12/15/05), **Regular and On-Site Rate:** \$150 (on or after 12/15/05)

Confirmed Plenary Speakers:

Dr. Mary Pipher: Clinical psychologist and an adjunct clinical professor at the University of Nebraska; *NY Times* bestselling author of *Reviving Ophelia* and *In the Middle of Everywhere* in which she "unites refugees, people who have fled some of the most repressive regimes in the world, with all of us..."

Dr. Donald J. Hernandez: Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University at Albany (SUNY); had overall responsibility for the National Research Council report titled *From Generation to Generation: The Health and Well-Being of Children in Immigrant Families and Children of Immigrants: Health, Adjustment, and Public Assistance*

Dr. Carola Suarez-Orozco: Co-Director of Immigration Studies at NYU and co-author of *Children of Immigration* and *Transformations: Migration, Family Life, and Achievement Motivation Among Latino Adolescents*. She is also a co-editor of the award-winning six volume series entitled *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the New Immigration*.

A call for Conference Poster presentations is forthcoming through participating Divisions (*Div 12 Section VI, Divisions 12, 16, 17, 29, 35, 37, 39, 42, 43, 45, 48, 51, 52, 53, 54*). Check your newsletters for more information.

Location: *St. Anthony- A Wyndham Historic Hotel, 300 East Travis, San Antonio, TX, 78202 (210) 227-4392*

Room Rate: \$139.00 (single/double) before January 9, 2006

Co-Sponsors: Ortho; SRCD (Society for Research on Child Development); CEMRRAT-2 (Commission on Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention and Training), Division 45- Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues, Division 35 - Society for the Psychology of Women, Texas Psychological Association

Summit Co-Chairs: *Toy Caldwell-Colbert, PhD – President of Div 45 and Cynthia de las Fuentes, PhD - President of Div 35*

Continuing Education: *Society of Counseling Psychology (Division 17) is approved by the American Psychological Association to offer continuing education for psychologists. Society of Counseling Psychology (Division 17) maintains responsibility for the program.*

or a very serious disagreement between reviewers.”

We next asked the editors questions about how much time reviewers have to send in their review. For the 2004 editors, the average length of time reviewers had to send in their review was 4 weeks. For the 1996 editors, the average time was about 5 weeks. We then asked the editors “what percent of reviewers meet this time frame?” 2004 Editors reported an average of 65% of reviewers meeting the time frame whereas editors for the 1996 survey reported an average of 55% of reviewers meeting the time frame.

We were also interested in how an editor manages reviewers who are late. All but one of the editors in both surveys reported sending a reminder if a reviewer is late. Often that reminder is sent by email. Also, a few editors stated that if there are already two reviews in agreement and their review agrees with the others, then they will go with what they have. The only editor to not send a reminder if a review is late was Dr. Benton.

We asked the editors if a review never arrives, did they send the manuscript out to another reviewer. There was a mixed response from the editors on this. The majority of the 2004 editors reported that they usually get the review from the original reviewer; however, if they never receive the review and if time permits, the editors will send the manuscript out to another reviewer or make the decision with what they have.

We next asked a two-part question on how reviewers were punished for failing to return a review within the allotted time and failing to return a review even after a reminder has been sent. For both surveys, editors send a reminder if the reviewer fails to return the review in the allotted time. Dr. Ross had an interesting response: “We send many reminders until they comply—usually they find completing the review less onerous than receiving the e-mail reminders.” If a reviewer fails to return a review after a reminder has been sent the majority of the editors reported that they will call the reviewer, send another reminder, and ultimately, if it is a pattern, they will replace the reviewer.

Editor Opinions on the State of the Field

The editors’ opinions were mixed on whether the quality of manuscripts has increased or decreased both in 1996 and in 2004. Dr. Royer (CEP) thought that the quality had increased in every journal. Dr. Natriello (AERJ) said that most editors think it is declining while his view was mixed. Dr. Benton (EPR) thought it was probably decreasing. Dr. Harris (JEP) said the quality has remained the same. Dr. Alexander (CEP) said it was solid and improving whereas Dr. Corno thought the quality in EP had been disappointing.

Advancing technology has had an influence upon the editorial process. Both the 1996 and 2004 surveys show that all journals have embraced email as a primary means of communication. In 1996, 50% of the journals we surveyed accepted electronic submissions whereas by 2004, 86% of the journals accepted electronic submissions. Most editors in both surveys reported that using email and technology in the editorial process has made things faster and easier.

In both surveys we asked the editors if they had a preference for single or multiple experiment studies. In 2004, three editors, Dr. Alexander, Dr. Ross, and Dr. Harris stated no preference. Dr. Harris stated that, “the criteria is high quality and meaningful contribution – whether or not this requires multiple studies depends on what is being studied and how.” Dr. Thompson replied, “In general, yes.” Similar responses were given in the 1996 survey.

We next asked editors if they would welcome manuscripts that report replication studies. All of the 2004 editors responded affirmatively but generally with the condition that the rationale is convincing and the topics are important. The 1996 editors responded similarly. This is rather ironic considering very few replication studies have appeared in the last eight years.

We asked the editors in both surveys for their thoughts on the use of statistical significance testing. We asked if they agree that its use should be banned in favor of reporting effect size information. None of the editors in either survey agreed with a ban of statistical significance testing. They mostly agreed that “effect sizes and significance testing should be used conjunctively,” as Dr. Ross stated. Dr. Harris added that, “confidence interval reporting is encouraged and perhaps required in the future.”

In 1996 when the APA formed a task force to investigate the issue, the editors had strong opinions on the matter. For example, Dr. Campbell said “no” to the idea of a ban and wrote, “If we ban significance testing; does that mean we mandate effect size? I think editors (and reviewers) need to be clear about what they are looking for in terms of evidence and include that in the reviews and let the authors respond.”

Finally, we asked the editors in both surveys for thoughts on the decreasing trend in the number of articles reporting experimental studies. In 2004, Dr. Alexander said that she was “not concerned at this point given the overall quality of the journal submissions.” Dr. Ross said, “It’s not that experimental is less desirable (in fact, NCLB is increasing its emphasis), but that qualitative studies became more acceptable during the last 10 years. Most accepted studies employ mixed methods.” Dr. Corno said, “the decline in experimental methods may reflect the declining resources available to support research in education as well as changes in doctoral preparation programs.” Dr. Thompson said that he would like to see more experiments.

In 1996, editors responded with unique viewpoints. Dr. Campbell said, "Think pieces are a lot cheaper and faster to write than experimental research." She also said that she is "concerned about the trend because that means we have less grounding for what we recommend." Dr. Royer said, I think it is true that we are more eclectic in research methodology. This is a consequence (I think) of doing more educationally relevant research. When you go into the real world you make do with what you can do. I have an article in press where I report case studies, something that I would never have even considered 10 years ago." Dr. Natriello said, "I would say that there has been a shift to a broader portfolio of research methods. Experimental studies are now competing with a variety of other methods."

Dr. Harris concluded with, "This is also a bit complex for this type of survey. First, I don't know that there is a decrease overall for the field of ed psych, as this decrease refers to study of a few selected journals only. As you noted earlier, there are more journals out there, so there may be more intervention research or about the same amount. There does appear to be a decline in intervention research in JEP. Briefly, I believe there are multiple factors at play. One goes back to the criteria for publication in this journal - high quality research that makes a meaningful contribution. The field has advanced to the point where intervention research that meets such criteria is more difficult to conduct and more time consuming. In short, interventions conducted for a few minutes primarily with college students are of less and less significance to the field - in terms of both theory and practice. Thus, while less intervention research is being reported in JEP, more of that which is being reported appears to me to be more likely to take place in applied settings, with varying age groups, and over greater lengths of time. Such research also typically addresses multiple research and theoretical questions. While this may reduce the number of studies being reported, such studies are likely to have far more impact than brief, lab or lab-like research studies. An investigation into the characteristics of published intervention research is likely to be more informative than is the numbers of such studies published. Further, research likely to meet our criteria is typically more costly - thus requiring greater funding. Funding is not as robust as is needed to conduct research in the many areas of intervention where it is needed. As JEP is open to and has published research using multiple methods, including group/quantitative, single-subject, and qualitative, I don't believe that the increased use of different methods is a large factor in the decrease - and in fact, all methods that produce high quality work of impact are subject to all of the same demands and issues noted here. I do believe that additional factors that may be influencing the decrease relate to issues, challenges, and demands in the training of

graduate students and early career researchers to conduct high quality intervention research. For yet more issues involved, please see the special issue of Ed Psych Review guest edited by Mike Pressley and me a few years back."

In a recently completed study, Robinson, Levin, Pituch, and Thomas (2005) examined the type of research methods employed in articles appearing in several journals in 1994 and 2004. Of interest here are the findings for AERJ, JEP, and CEP. For AERJ, in 1994 30% of the articles used qualitative methods. By 2004, this percentage had increased to 56. Likewise, the percentage of articles that were experimental decreased from 25 to 16. For JEP, the change from 1994 to 2004 has occurred mainly in the number of correlational studies. In 1994, only 46% of all articles used correlational methods, whereas by 2004, 61% were correlational. The percentage of articles that were experimental declined from 52% in 1994 to 35% in 2004. Finally, changes in CEP from 1994 to 2004 have mainly involved a reduction in the number of experimental articles. In 1994, 58% were experimental, whereas by 2004 it had declined to 36%. Thus, it seems as though three of these journals have changed in terms of the types of manuscripts they are publishing.

Our goal in this paper was to provide a closer look at the editorial process for a variety of journals that may be of interest to educational psychologists. We hope that the information obtained from these two surveys will be informative to potential authors and aspiring editorial board members and editors who wish to know the "rules of the game," so to speak, in terms of what happens behind the scenes during the editorial process and also to get a sense editors' views on certain issues.

* For a copy of the 26 survey questions, please contact: Daniel H. Robinson (dan.robinson@mail.utexas.edu)

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