From the Editor

With this issue I begin my last volume as editor of the *Review*. My successor, Rick Lempert, will assume intake responsibility for manuscripts in the late spring or summer of 1982. *Until then*, manuscripts and communications should continue to be directed to me; an announcement of the official opening of the "Michigan Office" will be posted in the *Review* and in the Newsletter.

From May 15, 1978, when I became editor, to November 1, 1981, when this note was drafted, we have received 607 manuscripts, excluding those in the special plea bargaining issue (13:2) and those in the special issue on sociolegal research (14:3). Of these, 79 were accepted and published (in Volumes 13, 14, 15 and 16:1). Nine additional manuscripts have been accepted for publication in Volumes 16:2 and 16:3, and an additional five manuscripts, undergoing final revisions, are likely candidates for publication in the remaining pages of Volume 16.* Our overall ratio of manuscripts considered to manuscripts published is thus approximately 15 percent. It would be somewhat higher if manuscripts which we rejected immediately (as inappropriate or obviously of poor quality), and did not send out for review, were excluded from our calculations.

The flow of new manuscripts remains episodic, but sufficient to maintain a small backlog. Only those who have edited a journal can appreciate the comfort and utility of such a backlog. Without it one is often scurrying to find suitable manuscripts to fill space, and at times this involves considerable rewriting of a manuscript that otherwise might have been rejected. With such a backlog, the editor can be more selective *and* put out the *Review* on a fairly regular schedule. Thus, as I am writing this, our special issue on dispute processing and civil litigation, Volume 15:3-4, is in the final stages of production. All the manuscripts for 16:1 have been edited and sent to the printer. And most of the manuscripts for 16:2 have been edited and will be sent to the printer shortly. Since it takes about three months from the time manuscripts are sent to the printer to produce an average-

* Some of these manuscripts were commissioned, but most were selected through the standard evaluation process.

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size journal, Volume 16:2 should appear in March, 1982. If we can maintain the same schedule for 16:3 and 16:4, my final issue will appear during the summer of 1982.

Keeping a high quality *Review* on schedule is our greatest challenge—and headache—but not the only one. Cost containment is of the utmost importance. Neither the *Review* nor the Association are currently in financial trouble—at least not by comparison to many similar enterprises in the social sciences. A number of journals have begun to charge authors' fees. Some now require the authors of accepted manuscripts to subscribe to the journal (or join the parent association) for the following year. There is no present need for us to take such drastic action, but I have recommended to the Board of Trustees that authors of submitted manuscripts be invited to join the Association if they are not already members. Such a practice has been adopted by the *Social Science Quarterly*, with considerable success.

The Trustees approved my suggestion at the national meeting in Amherst last June, and the new practice will begin shortly. Every author of a manuscript submitted for publication will receive an acknowledgement of our receipt of the manuscript and a noncoercive invitation to join the Association. All responses to that invitation will be made directly to the Association's office in Denver, so that an author's membership status will play no role in consideration of the manuscript. This acknowledgement/invitation will be sent to all authors without prior determination of membership. If you are already a member of the Association, just disregard the invitation; better yet, pass it on to a friend. Individual memberships in the Association have risen substantially in the last two years. Continued high levels of support from our constituents is the best assurance of continued financial good health.

JBG
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