

*RETIREMENT: THE TIME IS RIGHT*

MARY LOUISE WRIGHT

About 10 years ago, I was elected treasurer of Sisters in Crime, an organization of mystery writers and fans. The organization was operating at about a zero bank balance. I suggested financial changes based on those principles that Vic Laties and Kay Dinsmoor have used to guide *JABA* and *JEAB*. I'm pleased to say, Sisters in Crime is on firm financial footing, with funds set aside for 6 months operating expenses should we have to terminate the organization. This group thinks I'm a genius. Do I 'fess up that I learned from the best and followed the program Laties and Dinsmoor have used for the journals? Nah.

Living in an academic community and being Sisters in Crime representative to the Authors Coalition, I have had exposure to how a number of other professional journals operate and have changed (or had to) in the last few years. Many professional organizations have turned their journals over to large for-profit publishing houses. The result (to the grief of the professionals) is to lose editorial control and increase the cost to members and subscribers (and libraries) of their journal.

Thanks to the sound financial base of the journals, the editors of *JABA* and *JEAB* don't have to worry about a budget. They are not limited (by financial constraints) in the number of pages they can publish, so the editor can accept any and all articles deemed worthy of publication.

Our *JABA* editors (and *JEAB*'s also) are a very special group, who devote many hours to make the journal great. Being elected an editor is like being elected to political office. It's a real high for a day or two. Then the work sets in, the gripes begin, and decisions have to be made. Not only the editors but the associate editors and editorial board de-

vote many hours, for no other reason than to make sure the best of behavior analysis, basic and applied, is presented to the world.

And *JABA* does go to the world, to every state in the U.S., every province in Canada, and over 40 countries around the world. In the last few years, Vic Laties has spent countless hours getting a Web site designed and up and running. It reaches people who wouldn't ordinarily know about *JABA*, especially parents of children with special needs. Phone queries have increased 10-fold since the Web site was launched in 1994. Faxes and e-mails from overseas have increased significantly.

I can't emphasize enough the good will of many individuals, giving their time to the field of behavior analysis, assisting students in their work and studies, and consulting with parents concerned about their children. Another giver is Murray Sidman, who places an ad in each issue of *JABA* and *JEAB* for books his little printing company publishes—classics. I can assure you that he does not make enough sales to cover the cost of the ads, but in his generous way, helps defray some of the costs of the journal. So check out the Authors' Cooperative ad and buy a book.

Many of you have benefited from *JABA*'s collection of reprint volumes: *Developmental Disabilities, Education, Methodological and Conceptual Issues, and Applications and Extensions*. These volumes are the brainstorm of Brian Iwata. He has corraled, coerced, and charmed others to join him in selecting appropriate articles, putting them in a logical order, and writing introductions—just quite simply making these volumes happen. The reprint volumes have proven to be so popular that they've had to be reprinted and updated several times (yet more demands on Iwata et al.'s time).

In 1993 (gosh, that was 10 years ago), then-editor Nancy Neef asked me to write some reminiscences of *JABA* for an anniversary issue (Vol. 26, No. 4, Winter 1993). The one thing I might add to that article is that a subscriber wrote and said he'd like to see a picture of the *JABA* office. I responded that I would pay big money to most any charity NOT to have such a photo published. Now my *JABA* office is history; everything has moved to Kathy Hill, the very capable new business manager. The "business office" for both *JABA* and *JEAB* is actually several rooms (and other space that can be grabbed) in the business manager's home. I am already welcoming getting my house back again after 35+ years with *JABA*.

I appreciate Wayne Fisher, the current editor of *JABA*, allowing me to share with you, as I exit, my thoughts on how remarkable this journal is and how many people share the responsibility for making *JABA* just the best there is.

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Dear Mary Lou,

Thirty-five years? How could that possibly be? When we began *JABA*, Mary Lou was the only person who could spell or knew grammar. So we always knew that if we didn't spell "time-out" or such exactly right, she would catch it. Also, we began with a whole truckload of manuscripts because we were trying to encourage people to try out *JABA* for a change. This meant a lot of work for Mary Lou every issue, because we were trying to do things as fast as we could.

Thirty-five years? How can that be, Mary Lou? Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Gratefully and affectionately,

Montrose Wolf  
 First Editor of *JABA*  
 Professor Emeritus  
 Department of Human Development  
 University of Kansas

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I remember working with Mary Lou on trying to increase the advertising for *JABA*. We worked as a team in the exhibit area at APA. I would track down likely prospects based on whether they made any products likely to be of interest to behavior analysts, or perhaps published a behavioral book or two. I would make my list and pass it off to Mary Lou, who would then follow up later, going into her cheery selling mode with selected exhibitors. It was an exhausting job, but she was such a trouper, cold calling on each one, telling them a little about our *JABA* subscribers, and then closing the deal. Mary Lou will be greatly missed by all who love the journal. She was part of our history and our family.

Jon S. Bailey

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Mary Lou Wright recounted some of her remembrances as *JABA*'s business manager for 25 years in a piece called "How time flies!" (1993). Since then, she has talked periodically about retiring, but we mostly put it on extinction, so she has finally replaced words with action. In the meantime, she added almost another 10 years to her tenure, which I can only sum up by saying "How time flew!"

An intangible yet very rewarding aspect of being *JABA* editor is the opportunity to meet some terrific people. Most are researchers for whom *JABA* business (i.e., manuscript reviewing) may be the sole basis of our interaction. Mary Lou has been an exception.

I probably met Mary Lou at my first meeting of the SEAB Board of Directors, although I had known who she was prior to that from conversations with my adviser Jon Bailey about his grad school days at Kansas. He described her as the lovely and delightful, yet efficient and brutally frank person

who essentially “ran” *JABA*. It was a perfect description, and I consider myself fortunate for having been able to see all of these sides. When I became *JABA* editor, Mary Lou patiently guided me through the business workings of the journal; she also listened enthusiastically (usually) to my suggestions for making various changes, as if I were the first to utter them. Without her support, for example, the highly successful *JABA* reprint series would never have gotten off the ground. I recall her describing how she managed to locate good copies of old articles by applying razor blade to actual issues of the journal. To express my appreciation, I took Mary Lou and Sherrill Bushell (then managing ed-

itor) out to dinner and became ill after ordering, so we all had to leave the restaurant hungry. During the course of these and other adventures, we shared many personal experiences (kids, mutual interests in books and collecting blown glass), which solidified our friendship over the years.

*JABA* has benefited immensely from Mary Lou’s dedication and from the continuity she brought to the position of business manager for many years. I am especially appreciative for the good advice and help that she has given me, and I look forward to stories of how she finally got around to all of those unfinished projects.

Brian Iwata