University of Nebraska - Lincoln
DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Alan Tomkins Publications | Public Policy Center, University of Nebraska

10-9-2002

Farewell from the Editor of *BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES AND THE LAW*

Alan Tomkins
University of Nebraska, atomkins@nebraska.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/publicpolicytomkins

Part of the Public Policy Commons

Tomkins, Alan, "Farewell from the Editor of *BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES AND THE LAW*" (2002). *Alan Tomkins Publications.* Paper 2.
http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/publicpolicytomkins/2

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Public Policy Center, University of Nebraska at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Alan Tomkins Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Published in Behavioral Sciences and the Law 20 (2002), pp. 1–4.
Copyright © 2002 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. Used by permission.
Published online in Wiley Interscience (http://www.interscience.wiley.com). DOI: 10.1002/bsl.480

Introduction to this issue: Farewell from the Editor

This double issue is comprised of 12 articles on a variety of topics. The issue marks the beginning of the 20th year of Behavioral Sciences & the Law (BS&L). The journal began publication in 1983 with four themed issues, on 'Malpractice,' 'Terrorism,' 'Post-traumatic stress disorders,' and 'Informed consent.' Each of these topics is as relevant in 2002 as it was almost two decades ago.

Over the 20 years, BS&L has primarily published special topic issues. Special topics have distinguished BS&L from other journals in the field. The past few years, however, we have been receiving so many high quality manuscripts on matters outside our designated special topic issues that we have started publishing 'Current Directions' issues on a regular basis. This double issue is the fourth issue we have published as a Current Directions issue.

At the American Psychological Association's 2001 annual meeting, Brian Bornstein asked Richard Wiener, editor of Law and Human Behavior, and me to discuss the use of experimental methodologies in our journals' publications. The discussion prompted me to reflect on the various kinds of article we have published in BS&L over the past five years, the period during which I have served as editor of the journal.

I looked back over the 187 articles we published between 1997 and 2001. In Table 1, I have indicated the number of articles published in each issue that used empirical methods, analytical methods, or other approaches. If any empirical methods were used, then the publication was coded as 'empirical' even if the article also included an extended literature review or legal analysis. If multiple empirical methods were used, then the major method was coded. The 'survey' category included mail surveys as well as personal administration of questionnaires by the investigator. Secondary analyses of surveys were coded as 'survey' methodology. 'Institutional records' included any examination of data (clinical files, corrections data, law enforcement data, etc.) where the original data were collected by others, not the investigators. The 'forensic assessment' category includes instrument development, clinical assessment validation, or other empirical activity related to clinical diagnostic, evaluation, or treatment purposes.

Overall, almost half (48%) of the 187 published articles in BS&L between 1997 and 2001 made use of empirical data, and virtually the same proportion (46%) were reviews of empirical literatures or law/policy issues, or both. The modal publication was a law or policy analysis.

What this five-year review shows is that BS&L publishes a blend of empirical and analytical articles. BS&L is neither a traditional social science journal nor a traditional law journal; it does offer a combination of both types of publication. The journal continues

Copyright © 2002 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Table 1. Articles published in *BS&L*, 1997–2001

		Empirical methodologies							Analytical methodologies			Other	
Issue	No. of manuscripts	Experimental methods	Survey methods	Institutional records	Interviews	Correlation between psycho-social variables & behavior	Case study	Forensic assessment	Research or theoretical literature review/analysis	Law, policy, or ethics analysis	Both research & law/policy analysis	Adversarial forum	Book review
19 (5/6)	7	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
19 (4)	9	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0
19 (3)	8	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0
19 (2)	8	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
19 (1)	11	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	3	2	0
18 (6)	7	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
18 (5)	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	2	1	0	0
18 (4)	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	0	0
18 (2/3)	11	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
18 (1)	8	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0
17 (5)	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	3
17 (4)	10	2	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	0
17 (3)	9	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	3	0	1	0	0
17 (2)	7	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	0
17 (1)	7	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
16 (4)	10	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	1
16 (3)	6	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
16 (2)	8	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	0
16 (1)	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	4	0	0
15 (4)	9	0	2	1	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
15 (3)	8	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	0	0	1
15 (2)	6	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	0
15 (1)	6	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Totals	187	20	19	17	3	15	6	9	21	40	25	4	8

Copyright © 2002 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

to publish leading-edge analysis and research, and it offers readers a diversity of article types. We see no reason to change this approach for the near future.

This issue of BS&L is the last one that will published under my editorship. It has been a wonderful experience to work on the journal for almost a dozen years, first as co-editor under the editorial leadership of Bob Wettstein and then as editor working with Charles Patrick Ewing and Alan Felthous. As editor, I had hoped we could increase the international scope and readership of the journal, and this has been accomplished thanks in no small measure to the four international editors who now assist us. I have enjoyed working with them as well as with the editorial board and with so many of you in the roles of authors and reviewers.

I want to acknowledge the assistance I have had from Eric Elbogen, Jennifer Groscup, Matt Huss, Dennis Stolle, Christina Studebaker and Angela Williams of the Law/Psychology Program at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, and since 1999 from Jenn Elliott of the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center. I also want to extend my thanks to David Carson, Pam Casey, Tom Grisso, Bob Schopp, Dan Shuman and David Wexler, who were colleagues I could always count on to conduct a last-minute review or provide other 'just in time' assistance.

Starting with the next issue, Chuck Ewing will assume the editor's responsibilities. Alan Felthous will become senior editor. We are very pleased to welcome John Petrila as co-editor. I have been privileged to work with Chuck and Alan for the past five years, and I know the journal will continue to thrive and grow under the leadership of Chuck, Alan, and John.

Alan J. Tomkins, J.D., Ph.D., Editor

APPENDIX: BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES AND THE LAW ISSUES 1997–2001

1997

15(1) Professional liability
15(2) Juvenile justice
15(3) International perspectives
15(4) Correctional mental health

1998

16(1) Integrating research & practice in forensic psychology & psychiatry
16(2) Families & courts
16(3) Impulsive aggression
16(4) Law enforcement

1999

17(1) Employment discrimination
17(2) Mental illness & criminal responsibility
17(3) Threat assessment & management
17(4) Current directions
17(5) International perspectives on therapeutic jurisprudence, part I

COPYRIGHT © 2002 JOHN WILEY & SONS, LTD.

2000

18(1) Sexual offenders: part one
18(2/3) Sexual offenders: part two/three
18(4) International perspectives on therapeutic jurisprudence, part II
18(5) International perspectives on psychopathic disorders
18(6) Current directions

2001

19(1) Youth violence
19(2) Public trust & confidence in the courts
19(3) Clinician's duty to protect third parties
19(4) Practice of forensic psychology and psychiatry
19(5/6) Current directions

Copyright © 2002 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.