

editor's page

I Laughed So Hard I Cried

Sometime in the future, someone looking back at *Journal* statistics will say, "Ah yes, 1977 was a good year." And good it was, as far as article submissions and professional interest are concerned. Over the 12-month period, your Editorial Committee was busy evaluating 150 *Journal* articles. This is good for the *Journal* and represents a 61% increase over articles received in 1976. No wonder I'm so happy, for it indicates a verified, growing interest on the part of Extension professionals to creatively express their accomplishments in their journal.

"What happened to all these submitted articles?" Well, 35 were published, 35 others are being reviewed, 27 were referred to the Idea Corner, Forum, or Research in Brief sections with about half accepted for publication, 3 others were withdrawn, and 50 rejected.

The *Journal* currently publishes about one of every four articles received (23%). When compared with 4 other social scientific-oriented journals, their article submission totals ranged from 164 to 658 per year and publication rates for these range from 9% to 17%!

If we look at the *Journal's* outright article rejection rates for 1977, about a third (50) of the submitted articles were rejected. The rejection rates for the other 4 scientific journals ranged from 46% to 90%. Under the existing criteria, as the *Journal* continues to receive more articles, the yearly acceptance rate will drop and the rejection rate will increase. Current article quality is high, but there's always room for improvement . . . and more articles mean greater competition.

And here's where I start to cry. Often the *Journal* receives two or three articles on the same subject. My dilemma is compounded when Editorial Committee members score all three articles in the acceptable range. Yet in trying to maintain *Journal* balance, two of the three acceptable articles must either be staggered over a long period of time or be rejected and returned to the author—not because they fail to meet *Journal* standards, but because the *Journal* tries to reach all audiences.

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