When I began my tenure as editor in chief of *Human Factors*, I thought it would be informative to look at previously published editorials in the journal. I was intrigued by what I found in the first issue, published in 1958. Stanley Lippert, the first editor in chief, introduced the publication with an informal, conversational essay titled “A Home of Our Own.” He wrote about human factors specialists finally having their own journal, no longer forced to publish in the “literary homes of friends and relatives.” A glance at the other articles in the first issue stood in stark contrast to the more recent articles to which I have become accustomed.

**WHERE WE HAVE BEEN: CHANGES IN HUMAN FACTORS SINCE THE FIRST ISSUE**

My intrigue led me to more closely investigate how the journal has changed since its inception by comparing Volume 1 (1958–1959) with Volume 55 (2013). It quickly became obvious that the journal has prospered dramatically in the past 55 years. Its content has grown in quantity and rigor and has diversified in several ways. Here, I comment on differences I found most interesting, providing the context for discussing my goals as editor in chief.

The first salient change is that we write much more than we did in 1958–1959. The first issue contained a mere 47 pages. There were only four brief issues in the journal’s first volume, with an average of about eight papers per issue. In contrast, Volume 55 (2013) contained six issues (this increased to eight in 2014). The first issue alone had 241 pages, almost surpassing the total number of pages in the entirety of Volume 1. There was an average of about 13 papers per issue in Volume 55. By total page count, our output has increased more than fourfold since 1958–1959.

As would be expected, the number of people needed to produce the journal also has grown. In 1958, there were only nine individuals on the editorial board. Volume 55 shows a ninefold increase to 81 board members! In addition, the rise in quantity of submissions has allowed us to become more selective. Between 1957 and 1959, there were 50 submissions, of which 25 were accepted and 19 were rejected (6 remained under review), representing a 38% rejection rate (Simon, 1959). In contrast, in a journal editor report to the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES) Executive Council in March 2013, between 2011 and 2013, there were 527 new submissions, and on average, 66% were rejected. In short, our journal increased in both quantity and quality.

My second observation is that our writing is more precise and evidence based. In Volume 1, only a quarter of the papers presented experiments or empirical data. Other contributions consisted of book reviews, letters to the editor, editorials, and other materials now typically reported in the *HFES Bulletin*. Of the empirical papers in Volume 1, only 63% reported any form of inferential statistics. In Volume 55, 92% of the papers were empirical, and 96% of those reported statistics, reflecting the development and use of statistics over the past five decades.

Another interesting change is in the quantity and demographics of contributing authors. The average number of authors on a single paper was 1.5 in Volume 1, compared with 3.5 in Volume 55. Only 6% of the first authors in the first volume were women, growing to 39% in Volume 55. Similar changes in the male-female balance

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Vol. 56, No. 5, August 2014, pp. 813–815

DOI: 10.1177/0018720814541069

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were observed for the editorial board: None of the members of the first editorial board was female, compared with about 25% in Volume 55. In terms of geographical origin, none of the authors in the first volume listed affiliations outside the United States, whereas about 37% did so in 2013.

The employment sector of first authors also has changed. In Volume 1, only 35% of the papers listed authors from academia, whereas industry and government were listed on 42% and 10% of the papers, respectively. In Volume 55, academics claimed 77% of the papers, whereas industry and government accounted for 8% and 15%, respectively, of the remaining, showing a substantial shift from industrial to academic contributors. It will require further research to know whether that shift led to the change in the number of papers supported by external funding; 16% of the papers in Volume 1 listed funding support, compared with 62% in Volume 55.

My final observation about changes over the journal’s lifetime is that the breadth of the topics about which we are writing has expanded dramatically in scope. When I subjectively classified the first volume’s articles into 1 of the 30 topic areas printed on the back of this current issue, only 7 (plus 1 additional topic, defined as trends and philosophy) were addressed in the first volume. Skipping forward 55 years, 17 of the topic areas were addressed in Volume 55. There is a wider range and distribution of topics now compared with the first volume. This is likely to increase as technologies permeate more domains and the need for human factors/ergonomics (HF/E) grows.

The changes in the journal reflect the development and success of HF/E as well as the evolution of science. Since the 1950s, the field of statistics has evolved (and is continuing to evolve; see Cumming, 2014), and our methods and analyses have become more quantitative, rigorous, and precise. Research has become more collaborative and interdisciplinary. Worldwide communication is much faster and easier now than it was in the 1950s. Our science applies to an increasing number of domains. Funding agencies are calling for more translational research that provides clear benefits for society.

WHERE WE ARE GOING: BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS OF THE PAST 55 YEARS

Under my tenure, I hope to continue the upward trajectory of the journal toward increased rigor and to expand the reach of the journal. A major focus of my tenure as editor in chief will be to solicit and publish the highest-quality scientific papers. Toward this aim, I have appointed a group of outstanding scholars to serve as associate editors and reviewers on our editorial board. I have also started to solicit submissions for an exciting new feature, “At the Forefront of Human Factors/Ergonomics,” through which leading scholars in the field will provide concise, focused, expert mini-reviews of emerging areas in HF/E. An exemplar of this new feature appears in the current issue: Raja Parasuraman contributes an exciting paper on the use of noninvasive brain stimulation to accelerate learning and enhance performance.

To improve the recruitment and quality of reviews, I am placing a greater emphasis on triage. Associate editors will screen papers that are unsuitable for the journal or that have writing and formatting issues. Thus, reviewers will see a greater proportion of higher-quality papers. Reviewers will be asked to focus on evaluating the science and innovation rather than on writing, formatting, and topic suitability. Authors will be encouraged to submit additional supplementary material so that more details about the studies can be accessed by readers. To help train our future scholars in the rigors of our science, a student review program is being considered so that graduate students can become involved in the review process.

Finally, to help expand our reach, authors will be asked to explicate the impact of their work: Every manuscript must include an explicit discussion of practical implications. This was motivated in part by the substantial number of papers (even those of high quality) I saw as an associate editor that were rejected because of questionable practical relevance. I also will solicit manuscripts from potential authors in a wider array of domains to expand our connections in related domains of research.
CONCLUSIONS

To come full circle from Lippert’s (1958) editorial, we have progressed a long way from simply finding a home to call our own. Our home has expanded and is inhabited by a much more diverse family. The next decade promises even more diversity as technology permeates an increasing number of domains. I look forward to seeing our sphere of influence expand. In partnership with my editorial board, I will ensure that our growth continues while adhering to the scientific rigor that is the hallmark of *Human Factors*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to Megan D. Johnson for assistance collecting the data for this editor’s note.

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