Preface to special issue: in honor of John Riew

When I was working on my doctoral dissertation, analyzing data on high-school achievement and its determinants, I came across an article written by John Riew on economies of scale in high school operations (Riew, 1966). I was so impressed with John's work that it served as a benchmark for developing my own work in the area (Cohn, 1968).

I met John for the first time when I arrived at Penn State for an interview in January 1968. During my tenure at Penn State, John was my mentor, colleague and friend. It was a rewarding experience collaborating with him on an article (Cohn & Riew, 1974). John would carefully weigh each word and sentence, and pay careful and meticulous attention to all aspects of the arguments, analyses, and writing. He would not allow the paper to be submitted for publication until he was totally satisfied with all of its aspects. As a result, the paper was quickly accepted for publication.

After leaving Penn State, John and I continued to keep in touch through correspondence, lengthy long-distance telephone calls, and, more recently, e-mail. When the Economics of Education Review (EER) was founded, John was one of the first to submit a paper to the new journal (Riew, 1981). In 1984 he joined the Editorial Board, and then served as one of the EER's Associate Editors from 1990 till his retirement in 1998. Subsequently he has been handling manuscripts that were assigned to him prior to his retirement but for which no final decision has yet been made.

John's editorial work resembles his teaching and writing: Paying meticulous attention to detail, providing timely and detailed reports to authors, and maintaining contact with the editor. As associate editor, John accepted full responsibility for the manuscripts that he processed, from submission until final acceptance or rejection. His work helped upgrade the quality of the journal and was exceedingly helpful. Dedicating this issue of the EER to John represents only a small token of my appreciation for his friendship and support over the past 32 years.

David Rihar, a former colleague of John at Penn State, now at George Washington University, graciously agreed to edit this issue, solicited all of the manuscripts, and arranged for them to be refereed and revised (except for his own paper which I handled). Many thanks to David for a job well done.

John's list of publications is printed at the end of this issue. It is a testimony to the breadth and depth of his writing. Despite his retirement from Penn State, John continues to teach, lecture and write, so his current list of publication is certain to grow. I wish John the very best in all of his endeavors and thank him for his editorial work on the EER and for his contributions and dedicated service to the profession.

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References