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THE REVIEWS

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The Association for Symbolic Logic began publishing reviews of books and articles in symbolic logic with the first issue of The Journal of Symbolic Logic in 1936 under the direction of Alonzo Church. (For a very good history of the reviews under Church and somewhat beyond we recommend "Alonzo Church and the Reviews" by Herbert Enderton, this Bulletin, vol. 4 (1998), 172-180, on which we have based our remarks about this period of the reviews.) The endeavor began with the goals of serving as a complete bibliography of the field of symbolic logic as well as providing competent and critical analyses of the works listed. Over the past decades the reviews underwent a number of changes in both scope and approach as well as in the organization of the reviews office.

The 1950's saw an explosion of the publication rate in symbolic logic that resulted in a backlog of unreviewed material. Beginning in 1961, with the financial assistance of the NSF and later U.S. Steel, Church hired assistants and was able to publish the 25-year index, institute systematic procedures for the reviews office and tackle the backlog of material. Church faced mandatory retirement from Princeton and, in 1967, he and the entire reviews operation moved to UCLA with the understanding that the Reviews would be housed and supported there as long as Church remained its editor. The size of the review section grew considerably during this period but even with outside support it was not possible to review everything in the vastly growing literature. As the support from NSF ended, it became clear in the early 70's that the situation as it then existed could not be maintained.

At the request of the ASL Council, Church brought the reviews operation to "an orderly close" with the 1975 volume. In 1976 it was announced that the scope of reviewing would henceforth be limited by financial resources and a system of reviewing books only was instituted and continued until Church's retirement as reviews editor in 1979. The Council appointed Herbert Enderton (who had worked with Church from 1968 to 1973 and again from 1975 onward) and William Craig as review editors. During their first terms, the Council instituted a new policy of reviewing selected articles or groups of articles. Enderton became the coordinating editor for reviews in 1982 and the number of editors working with him was expanded to four.

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He has served the Association and the profession very ably since then and managed the transition from the JSL to the BSL in 2000.

The reviews have continued to be a major resource to our members and the logic community at large. They have provided not only analyses of books but, by their approach to reviewing groups of articles, an important window into developments in all areas of logic through which a wide swath of our membership can glimpse the progress being made in many areas of logic in which they do not have personal research experience. These reviews can be widely read and are much appreciated. Indeed, for years they have provided the main access to specialized areas of logic for many, if not most, of our members.

In 2001, once again due to financial considerations, the Council decided to change the organization of the reviews office. The new plan was to turn it into a volunteer organization patterned on the editorial procedures for articles in the BSL and JSL. Beginning with this year's volume, Alasdair Urquhart has been appointed managing editor for reviews and the number of review editors has been greatly expanded. Each of these volunteer editors will be shouldering some of the work of soliciting and editing reviews that had been done essentially entirely by Enderton for the past twenty years.

The reviews under both Church and Enderton had always maintained significantly higher editorial standards in many ways than the research articles of the JSL and BSL. We cannot hope to continue this with a volunteer staff but we do expect to maintain editorial standards comparable to those of the expository articles of this Bulletin and to continue to provide the same quality of content in the reviews of books and selected articles that Enderton cultivated for these past twenty years. Enderton also continued Church's production of extensive indices to both the reviews and articles published in the JSL and BSL. These indices, the latest of which appeared in the final issue of last year's volume, were an important bibliographic resource.

Enderton provided an outstanding service to the Association and profession as a whole and we all owe him a major debt of gratitude. We hope that his successors will continue to provide us with critical reviews and insights into new books and developments in all areas of logic.

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