

Guest Editorial: 25 Years of Memories

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If you search the “Journal” section on the OEP website (www.oepf.org) you can find every article and editorial published in the 23 volumes of the *Journal of Behavioral Optometry (JBO)* since 1990. Leave the ‘author’ and ‘title’ fields blank and click ‘apply.’ Twenty-nine pages of articles come up with about 18 articles per page. Do the math. That is well in excess of 500 articles in about 140 issues. That makes over 2000 pages of information from some of the best and brightest in the field. If you figure 20 hours of writing and editing (probably a low estimate) per article, that is over 10,000 hours of focused, concentrated effort on the part of hundreds of people to bring you, the *JBO* reader, the OEP Associate, meaningful content, and hopefully a few smiles along with a tear or two.

OEP paid a writer’s fee for only two articles in all that time. *JBO*, as is the case with much of what has been produced by OEP since 1928, is a labor of caring and sharing. Amiel Francke, OD once told us that every OEP Associate owes a debt of gratitude, and a good portion of their career earnings, to OEP. We will take Amiel’s word on that; he is much older, wiser and perhaps brasher than we are! But there is probably a semblance of truth in his statement.

We told the story of the birth of *JBO* in 2008: *JBO*, Volume 19/Number 1. Unfortunately, the series of tributes to retiring Editor-in-Chief Dr. Irwin Suchoff are not on the website, so you will have to get the hard copy to read the comments by Norman Haffner, Glen Steele, and Bob Williams. In brief:

The OEP Foundation Board of Directors held a Long Range Planning meeting in August 1987 at Pacific University.

During that session, the Board made several decisions that changed the face of the Foundation’s educational program.

Gone were the “OEP Papers.” Gone was the *OEP News*. The new kid on the block was the *Journal of Behavioral Optometry*. Conceived as a modernization of a more than 60-year old tradition of print education initiated by OEP in 1928, the *Journal* along with bound publications in lieu of the loose-leaf chapters, would be the new face of the Foundation.

Deciding to publish a journal was the easy part. We needed to develop the logistical capability. Get the right computer programs; find a quality printer; start seeking out advertisers; develop an editorial philosophy and policies. None of the leadership in OEP, Board or staff, had ever been involved with such an endeavor. Frankly, we had no idea of how to go about it. In reading the multitude of professional periodicals that cross the desk, we did notice one common denominator: they each had an “Editor-in-Chief.” That seemed to be a key and consistent element of all these publications. An editor, we had to find an editor!

Baxter, a fellow New Yorker, was President of the OEP Board of Directors at the time. As we sat around the table in Forest Grove reflecting on the tentative decisions made during that 1987 meeting, Baxter said, “Hey, what about Irwin?”

We Westerners asked, “Irwin who?”

“Suchoff, the guy from SUNY. He was the Editor of *Optometry Times*, and they just stopped publishing. Maybe he would be interested.”

The meeting broke up at Pacific with a plan to ask Dr. Suchoff if he might consider taking on a new editorial job. Bob was assigned to the OEP Eastern States Congress in May of 1988, so it was agreed that he would stay an extra day in Latham after the Congress if we could get Irwin to come up for a meeting to discuss the *Journal*. Irwin agreed and even found his way to Dr. Swartwout’s Latham office in the backwoods of Upstate New York without a GPS.

The three of us talked and talked. “Who would determine editorial policy?” “Can we find and recruit an adequate peer review board?” “Does OEP have the resources to sustain a journal?” “Are there advertisers, writers, clinicians who would submit case reports?”

As the afternoon wore on, we got into the sensitive stuff. “You know,” Irwin told us, “the academic community does not think much of the OEP. And, we will need some support from that sector to make this work. Writers, researchers, editorial board members, those kinds of people who have ready access to optometric libraries and learned colleagues.”

Baxter acknowledged the reality of his statement and said, "That is one of the main reasons we want to do this. The Extension Program should have more credibility among the academics than we do. I don't think we are that far apart, maybe just the language we use. We want a scholarly, but clinically relevant, publication that will be read and appreciated by both academics and private practitioners. That's one of the main reasons we want you as Editor-in-Chief. You live in both camps."



W.C. Maples OD, MS
second editor-in-chief of JBO

After more than a year of planning, the first issue was published in January 1990. The two articles in that issue were by Marty Birnbaum and John Tassinari. The first word in the first article, the one by Birnbaum, was "Skeffington." Irwin's smiling face at the bottom of his Editorial on the page facing the start of the article, "The Use of Stress Reduction Concepts and Techniques in Vision Therapy," seems to shine in success.



Sally Corngold
JBO's one and only
Managing Editor

Over the past 25 years, Dr. W.C. Maples served with distinction as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal*, followed by our current Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Marc Taub, all ably supported by the only

Managing Editor JBO has known, Sally Marshall Corngold. Only Sally has seen, and improved, every article and every editorial that has appeared in *JBO* since 1990. We can safely say that without Mrs. Corngold, the OEP Journal would not have become the highly respected publication that it is.

When he retired as President of OEP in 1987, Dr. Jimmy C. Tumblin told a story to the incoming Board of Directors that comes to mind here. "How many Past Presidents does it take to change a light bulb?" Dr. Tumblin does have a genteel Southern sense of humor, so we and the other members of the Board gazed at him with a questioning look, waiting for the answer. "Six," he said, "one to change the bulb and the other five to talk about how good the old bulb was!" Well, we are about to change another 'bulb.' JBO has served OEP well, and all who contributed to its excellence can be very proud of the accomplishment.

JBO has evolved since that day in Latham nearly 25 years ago. The new digital version that all of you receive has features that would have sounded like Star Trek (or Harry Potter had he been around) in 1990. The only constant in life is change. That change takes place regardless of, and sometimes despite, all of us. The ability to imbed interviews, videos, references, and other features makes the current *JBO*, and will make the new *Optometry and Visual Performance*, light years ahead of anything of which we could have conceived in 1987. We change with the times and we move forward. If we stand still, in effect we are moving backwards. So, it is with a fair amount of pride in what has been done, as well as no small amount of nostalgia, we bid farewell to the *Journal of Behavioral Optometry* with this 142nd and last issue, Volume 23, No. 6. And, we welcome the new kid on the block, *OVP*, a joint project of the OEP Foundation, College of Optometrists in Vision Development, and the Australasian College of Behavioural Optometrists: a symbol of cooperation among the three organizations and a glimpse of the future.