

Listening post

Christoph E. Schreiner

Auditory Neuroscience. Editor-in-chief Peter Dallos. *Harwood Academic*. 4/yr. ECU83, \$108 (personal).

THE increasing amount of important work in auditory neuroscience has led to the need for a new publishing outlet. *Auditory Neuroscience* is an attractive new addition to the sparse field of periodicals devoted to basic auditory research. According to Peter Dallos, the eminent editor-in-chief, not only is a journal needed to provide a forum for publication of important work, but it also has to be a first-class journal that promotes scientific excellence. It should have the highest editorial standards and be worthy of attracting the best papers in this sub-field of neuroscience. Judging from the sample issues, the editors are well on their way to achieving this goal. But it remains to be seen how well they can compete for top-quality work currently found in the main neuroscience journals.

This new journal attempts to cover all facets of auditory neuroscience, including cell and molecular biology; anatomy and physiology of the developing and the mature peripheral and central auditory system; behavioural and neuroethological aspects; and computational approaches. Each area has been assigned a prominent and capable associate editor.

About six or seven substantial, full-length papers appear in each issue, totalling around 16 printed pages. Short communications and reviews are also considered, although none has appeared so

far, and an informative editorial article prefaces the first two volumes. The reviews seem thorough and helpful, a fact apparently appreciated by many authors, who often acknowledge them in their papers.

The time between submission and acceptance is fairly short, averaging three-and-a-half months. The delay between acceptance and publication is harder to judge, as the issues do not indicate the month of publication, but it seems to be around three or four months. The layout, paper and figures, including half-tones, are all of high quality. There are no page charges or fees for colour plates, and the personal subscription rates are reasonable. The handling of the colour figures, though, is rather outdated and could be improved: they are assembled at the end of each issue rather than incorporated into the article.

Auditory Neuroscience follows in the best tradition of classical paper journals. Unfortunately, many libraries are having to reduce their subscription portfolios, which may impede the dissemination of this excellent material. In this age of widening computer networks and burgeoning electronic publishing, the journal might have a greater impact if, like many other leading neuroscience journals, it was computer-accessible. Nevertheless, it is already attracting consistently excellent research and is obligatory reading for anyone seriously interested in basic auditory research. □

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Neuro-specialist

Sten Grillner

Invertebrate Neuroscience. Editor-in-chief Peter N. R. Usherwood. *Sheffield Academic Press*. 4/yr. \$350, £245 (institutional); \$100, £70 (personal).

EACH species is of interest in its own right, whether mite, man or mollusc. Some, however, may also provide experimental preparations that reveal general biological principles common to all or part of the animal kingdom. Invertebrate neuroscience has provided several influential experimental models such as the squid giant axon and the crustacean stomatogastric ganglion. The main finding from these preparations went into the best journals available at the time. Of course, one hopes that this will always be the case. In neuroscience, there are now several excellent journals that primarily accept reports considered to be of broad significance. So why a journal specifically directed at members of only one large part of the animal kingdom with only one thing in common, the lack of a spine?

As a rule, studies in neuroscience provide new facts about a particular neural system or function. Most studies provide new findings but do not in themselves lead to new insights, and they may not even be particularly interesting. They are nevertheless needed to generate the factual base from which new bold hypotheses can be properly formulated. These 'fact-accumulating reports' often do not make it into the leading journals. So there may well be a place for a specialized journal for invertebrate neuroscience that can publish detailed high-quality reports.

Invertebrate Neuroscience has a very competent editorial board. Its format is similar to *Neuron*, with a few timely and brief reviews, followed by original papers. In each issue there is also a bibliography of the invertebrate papers published since the previous issue. So far, there have been several interesting original reports and well-written reviews.

The risk is that this attractive journal will receive due attention in the invertebrate neuroscience community but be overlooked by the rest of the neuroscience community. In the best of all possible worlds, one might instead wish for several specialized and problem-oriented journals, publishing both invertebrate and vertebrate papers on, for instance, learning and memory, development or motor control. In my view, such a scheme is more advantageous in the long run for both invertebrate and vertebrate neuroscience. □

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New Journals 1996

CRITERIA for journals to be considered for review in this issue were published in *Nature* earlier this year. They were that:

- (1) the first number appeared during or after June 1994 and at least four separate numbers were issued by the end of May 1996;
- (2) the journal is published at least three times a year;
- (3) the main language used is English; and
- (4) where possible at least four issues should be made available for review, including the first and the most recent numbers.

The time criteria ensure that a reasonable sample of issues is available for judgement by the time reviews are commissioned.

Several journals known to satisfy the criteria were not submitted for review or arrived too late for inclusion. It proved difficult to find reviewers for other, doubtless worthy journals, while some titles were considered to be of marginal interest to *Nature's* audience. Journals covering any aspect of science were eligible although those dealing with clinical medicine and pure mathematics were excluded, as were abstracts publications. A list of eligible titles submitted but not covered

appears below.

The brief given to the reviewers was to limit themselves to comments on the publications sent to them, and to avoid discussion of general questions of periodical publishing. As in previous years, the preponderance of journals in the biological sciences reflects the bias of the material submitted.

Details of editors and frequency of publication, and the subscription rates appearing at the top of each review, are given in most instances for 1996. This information is not complete in all cases, and readers interested in subscribing to a particular journal should check the rate with the publisher concerned. □

Journals also submitted for review

Archives of Suicide Research; Chemistry — A European Journal; A Section of Angewandte Chemie; CVD: A Section of Advanced Materials; Current Opinion in Solid State and Materials Science; Environmental and Ecological Statistics; European Addiction Research; International Journal of Bio-Chromatography; International Journal of Rotating Machinery; Journal of Difference Equations and Applications; Journal of Dynamical and Control Systems; Journal of Inflammation; Journal of Neurovirology; Lifetime Data; Mental Retardation and Development Disabilities Research Reviews; Mineral Resources Engineering; Real-Time Imaging; Tissue Engineering.