

Editorial

Neuropsychopharmacology: The 2013 Transition in Leadership

William A Carlezon Jr*¹¹Department of Psychiatry and Neuroscience, Harvard Medical School, McLean Hospital, Belmont, MA, USA*Neuropsychopharmacology* (2013) **38**, 257–258; doi:10.1038/npp.2012.206

Scientists often use the analogy of standing on the shoulders of their predecessors. As I begin my term as the next Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of *Neuropsychopharmacology*, I find this analogy to be particularly appropriate. The outgoing EIC, Jim Meador-Woodruff, has handed me the reins of a journal that is clearly on the rise, with improvements in numerous key metrics under his leadership. Jim has been gracious in every respect, sharing with me the smallest details of how to run a successful journal in a highly competitive field while leaving time and energy for my other job (running an externally funded basic research program).

The fact that Jim shared so much of his time and insight during this transition has made it possible to rapidly implement changes that debut in this issue. Some changes are more noticeable than others, but all should contribute to the continued strengthening of the journal.

First, there have been changes in the way that the journal is run. Although these changes are not easily visible, they are noteworthy. As one example, *Neuropsychopharmacology* and *Neuropsychopharmacology Reviews* have been administratively fused, ending an era where they were essentially separate journals under one umbrella. This consolidation will make the process of putting together the annual review issue, which has a major influence on our impact factor, much more efficient. In addition, having more of the journal's senior editorial team involved in the review issue ensures a steady stream of fresh ideas for themes. This change was part of the rationale to modify the organization of the senior editor team, which now comprises the EIC (a basic researcher), two Deputy Editors (both clinicians), and nine Associate Editors (a mix of basic researchers and clinicians). The team has been assembled to handle the types of manuscripts we have received in the past, as well as those we will endeavor to attract in the future. Each member of the Editorial Board has expressed their commitment to being a timely and responsive advisor to the senior editors. Consistent with the desire of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP) to offer all of its members more opportunities to participate and learn, we

have set aside slots on the Editorial Board for early-career investigators who have a history of submitting thoughtful reviews and carrying a heavy workload for the journal.

There is a prominent change in how the journal looks. We have added a tagline—"At the Intersection of Brain, Behavior, and Therapeutics"—to the front cover, below the title. This sharpens our brand and helps authors understand the type of work we want to attract, which now goes beyond traditional pharmacology to include devices and biological approaches such as vaccines or gene therapies. The tagline also distinguishes us from other journals with similar names, thereby facilitating the process of getting appropriate manuscripts into the hands of reviewers.

There are also changes in how the journal educates its readership. We have added a feature called "Archival Perspectives". Found at the bottom of each issue's table of contents, it identifies (and provides a link for) the most-cited paper from the same monthly issue 20, 10, and 5 years earlier. This feature will highlight some of the seminal discoveries that have been reported in *Neuropsychopharmacology*, and provide objective insight on their impact upon the field. We will explore adding other features, including one where the authors take opposing sides on an issue, but in the end work together to provide a proposal for how to move the field forward.

Finally, there have been changes in how the journal and its content are promoted. Our publisher, the Nature Publishing Group (NPG), has a tremendous network of resources that can be used to highlight the work published in *Neuropsychopharmacology*. NPG has already started producing 10-min Podcasts in which the lead authors of high-impact papers describe their work and answer the questions about its broad significance for the scientific community as well as the lay-public. Recently, NPG introduced a new feature called Accepted Article Preview, in which a non-typeset version of each new paper is posted on-line within 72 h of acceptance. This means that the abstract will be searchable in PubMed (and the research citable) earlier than ever. The editors will continue to send every accepted paper to the ACNP Public Information Committee, which works with NPG to generate press releases for reports of great public interest. We are also working with ACNP to enhance the journal presence on the public portions of its website.

*Correspondence: Dr WA Carlezon Jr, Department of Psychiatry and Neuroscience, Harvard Medical School, McLean Hospital, Belmont, MA, USA, Tel: +1 617 855 2021, Fax: +1 617 855 2023, E-mail: bcarlezon@mclean.harvard.edu

Some of these changes may seem provocative for a journal that, similar to the organization it represents, is steeped in tradition. Although change is often accompanied by risk, the fact is that *Neuropsychopharmacology* represents a field that is rapidly evolving at a time when there are dramatic changes occurring in the publishing business. Many researchers now find the papers they need via on-line searches rather than by reading the hard-copy of their favorite journal from cover to cover. Indeed, the distribution of hard copies of scientific journals is declining, whereas the number of exclusively on-line journals is increasing. There is also intense competition to attract the best work from the most innovative scientists, who without exception want their discoveries to appear in journals that have a high impact while being easy to work

with in terms of submission process, pace of review, and efficiency of production. All of the changes described above are intended to attract the manuscripts that are most appropriate for *Neuropsychopharmacology*, to hasten the pace of the review, and to maximize the audience size for each paper that gets published in our pages. The success of this approach will be evident in contemporary metrics such as impact factor that, for better or worse, have an influence on the fitness of any scientific journal. Jim leaves us with an impact factor of 7.991, among the highest in the field of Psychiatry.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure that each paper published in *Neuropsychopharmacology* or *Neuropsychopharmacology Reviews* is a source of great pride for authors, and great admiration for readers.