

Editorial

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Retrovirology and young Turks...

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It is 2004, and as a virologist and retrovirologist for the past 18 years, I pause to survey the publishing landscape of our field of science. Without a doubt, today, we have two outstanding journals published in the United States dedicated to basic virological research, *Journal of Virology* and *Virology* as well as several other authoritative journals dedicated to virological research published in the US and elsewhere. Is there then a need for *Retrovirology*?

If *Retrovirology* were simply to be a smaller facsimile of any of these other publications, then the short answer would be "No". The fact that we are launching a new initiative, and you are reading this Editorial suggests that *Retrovirology* will be different in some ways from those two very well-established publications. Prior to agreeing to commence *Retrovirology*, the first question that I asked was whether there is room for this journal. Off the shelf, I took two recent issues of *Journal of Virology* and *Virology* respectively and manually counted the number of retrovirus papers in these two publications. In *Journal of Virology* I counted 18 retrovirus papers out of a total of 54 published articles, and in *Virology* I counted 4 out of 17. Depending on how you view this cursory and unscientific survey, you might agree that retrovirologists are highly productive researchers responsible for between one-third to one-fourth of all basic virological papers. Accordingly, retrovirology is indeed a large and vibrant field of basic research, and I am confident that *Retrovirology* will successfully compete for and attract outstanding authors and insightful discourses.

How will *Retrovirology* be different? First, unlike currently available virological journals *Retrovirology* will never come "off the shelf". This new journal will be exclusively online, although the final format of our published articles will be

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in every way professionally type-set and graphically attractive. We will also provide our authors with unprecedented immediacy of publication. Every accepted manuscript will be available for reading on its date of acceptance by any person who has access to the web. Second, *Retrovirology* will be Open Access. Open Access policy changes the way in which articles are published. All articles become freely and universally accessible online, and so an author's work can be read by anyone at no cost. Moreover, you, the author, hold copyright for your work and grant anyone the right to reproduce and disseminate your article, provided that it is correctly cited and no errors are introduced [1]. A copy of the full text of each Open Access article is permanently archived in an online repository separate from the journal ensuring its permanence. *Retrovirology* articles are listed in PubMed and are archived in PubMed Central [2], the US National Library of Medicine's full-text repository of life science literature, and also in repositories at the University of Potsdam [3] in Germany, at INIST [4] in France and in e-Depot [5], the National Library of the Netherlands' digital archive of all electronic publications. The major benefit of Open Access is that your published work will likely be read by more colleagues and will be cited more highly because of their easier availability [6].

Beyond the nuts and bolts of publishing, the quality of *Retrovirology* ultimately rests with the people behind this journal. It is no accident that *Retrovirology* will be edited by experienced Editors guided by one of the best international collection of "young Turks" of retrovirology. In large part, our Editors and Editorial Board members are some of today's younger, albeit outstandingly authoritative, retrovirologists. A previous generation of virologists had seen fit to start and perfect the current virological journals. Good things take time and energy to build and

maintain. Fittingly, a fresh set of virologists should commence and see *Retrovirology* through to a successful path.

On my part, I am excited and immensely privileged by the opportunity to start *Retrovirology*. Having been an author over 165 times and an editor for many years with several well-established journals, I am familiar with both sides of publishing. What I pledge *Retrovirology* will do is be fast, fair, and responsive to all. Tell me what we are doing wrong, and even better, what we are doing right. I will listen, and I will respond to your every query in a timely and reasoned manner. *Retrovirology* will not be a "club" journal. *Retrovirology* will always take your submissions and your science seriously. I shall be actively interested in your work, and where you think that you have not been treated fairly by reviewers, if you ask me, I will read your manuscript and will personally shoulder some of the responsibility for reaching a decision. The day that I am too busy to do that is the day when *Retrovirology* finds another "young Turk" to lead it, and the time for an old "Turkey" to move on to doing something else.

I welcome and look forward to your advice and input.

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