
The Journal of the American College of Cardiology: Editor's Perspective

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Role of the Journal

This inaugural issue introduces the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* (JACC), which replaces the *American Journal of Cardiology* as the official journal of the College. For the first time, the College owns its official journal and controls its editorial and business policies. This is a significant step because the Journal represents the most important educational activity the College can render its membership and the cardiovascular community. There will be complete cooperation among the College officers, the Journal Editor and Editorial Board and the Journal's new publisher, Elsevier Science Publishing Company, to provide a publication of the highest scientific and literary caliber commensurate with the academic standards of the College. We are all committed to maintaining our official Journal as one of the leading cardiology journals in the world.

The new Journal will provide scientific reports on new and developing knowledge of the causes, diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular diseases. Its primary emphasis will be clinical cardiology. The Journal will provide original clinical research reports and reviews to keep readers informed of current advances in diagnosis and treatment. It will also be a medium for original basic and laboratory research that has clinical relevance and application. I intend to achieve a balance between clinical and experimental research and among all the subspecialties in cardiology that have provided the clinician with major tools in cardiovascular diagnosis and treatment. The Journal will include articles on all aspects of adult and pediatric cardiology, invasive and noninvasive diagnostic procedures, drug therapy and cardiovascular surgery. Clinical reviews and updates, case reports, editorials and letters will be considered, as

well as symposia and seminars on selected topics of current interest. I am impressed with the prompt and enthusiastic response by authors from many cardiology centers who submitted such a large number of articles so promptly after the July 1 announcement of the new Journal.

Role of the Editor

When Carl F. Schmidt, Emeritus Fellow of the College, succeeded Carl J. Wiggers as Editor of *Circulation Research* in 1958, he wrote (1) "It is the duty and responsibility of the Editor to strive for the highest possible scientific and literary standard in each manuscript." He believed that "the Editor and his Editorial Board have the responsibility to forestall substitution of quantity for quality wherever they can." He derided the "tendencies toward superficiality and haste, not only confined to laboratories operated and staffed by clinical departments, but also seen in basic science departments and institutes. Therefore, it is the duty of the Editor's office to control these tendencies. Basically, this implies a search for the greatest possible quality in each manuscript, an insistence on adequate control observations and calibrations and an avoidance of fragmentation of a set of related observations into a number of separate publications."

These sage words are truer now than they were in 1958 when I became Editor of the official Journal of the College (2). It has become even more difficult for an editor to carry out Schmidt's prescribed duties and responsibilities. Although he spoke of the "complexities that lie concealed within the multichannel electronic recorders, amplifiers and stimulators in use," he could not foresee the explosive advances in technology and computers that have produced even more complex equipment and devices for the diagnosis and treatment of heart disease. No single individual is now capable of critically reviewing each manuscript to detect faulty study design and errors in methodology. The Editor

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needs the expert help and advice of an Editorial Board whose members are trained in basic and clinical research and who have expertise and experience in a variety of subspecialties in cardiology. Nevertheless, the ultimate decision on acceptance of a paper must rest with the Editor. I will exercise my best judgment on a paper's suitability for the Journal based on my clinical and editorial experience and the availability of text pages. I will be open to original and provocative ideas even though they are controversial and are not completely proved. The Editorial Board and Associate and Assistant Editors who have worked with me for so many years will continue to play an important role in maintaining the high quality of our Journal.

In addition to its scientific content, a submitted paper must be judged on its scholarship and readability. As Editor, one of my primary concerns has always been the many readers of the Journal. Each subspecialty has introduced its own technical terms and jargon which may be appropriate for intradepartmental discussions and conferences but not for a journal that is read by a wide variety of clinicians and investigators. Some authors assume that all readers will understand the technical jargon and turgid writing and decipher the many abbreviations and acronyms in their text. No matter how technical and scientific a paper is, it must be written clearly, be free of jargon and abbreviations and be understood by all readers (including the Editor). This also applies to the abstract which, although the most frequently reproduced or quoted part of an article, is often unreadable because of its "alphabet soup." An abstract submitted to the College's Annual Scientific Sessions or other forums must be rewritten completely before it is suitable for an article in JACC. I hope authors submitting their articles will help me maintain the reputation of our Journal for a high level of scholarship, writing and scientific content.

The 25th Anniversary

This inaugural issue celebrates the 25th anniversary of our official Journal. I owe special thanks to Charles Fisch, Associate Editor and Past President, who has honored me and the College by serving as Guest Editor of Volume 1, Number 1 and to the 32 invited authors who have summarized developments in their respective fields of cardiology during the past 25 years and their application to the treatment of the patient. A mark of these authors' devotion and loyalty to the College and its official Journal was their enthusiastic

acceptance of their assignment and their prompt submission of papers to meet the early deadline for publication in this inaugural issue. The papers not only highlight the important advances in clinical cardiology in the past three decades, but also project future progress and innovations in diagnosis and treatment. Of course, not all aspects of cardiology could be covered adequately, but subsequent issues of the Journal will review important developments in other areas.

I accept with pride the honor of continuing to serve as your Editor. I am grateful for the overwhelming support, encouragement and vote of confidence provided by the College officers (particularly Suzanne Knoebel, President; Dan McNamara, Immediate Past President and Charles Fisch, Past President) and Executive Director, William Nelligan. I appreciate the numerous letters of support from members of the College, its Editorial Board and from cardiology centers throughout the world!

I must emphasize that there will be continuity in the editorial supervision of our Journal by the same dedicated Editorial Board and Associate and Assistant Editors. I am particularly pleased that Ira Gelb, Raymond Harris, Melvin Kahn and Leslie Kuhn will continue as Assistant Editors and that Ruth Ohman has joined Elsevier and will continue as Executive Editor. In addition, Arthur Selzer, a loyal friend of our Journal and a past member of our Editorial Board, has recently been appointed Chairman of the Publications Committee of the College.

Elsevier Biomedical, our new publisher, needs little introduction as a highly respected publisher of medical journals and books in this country and abroad. Charles Ellis and Paul Weislogel, President and Senior Editor, respectively, have impressed us with their special interest in the educational goals of the College. They and their staff have contributed their professional skills to provide a Journal that is well designed, dignified, elegant and readable. They have made the transition period a smooth one for the College and its Editors. We are all committed to enhance the College's role in the worldwide dissemination of advances in clinical cardiology and to maintain the high scientific stature and reputation of its official Journal.

References

1. Schmidt CF. On changing editors (editorial). *Circ Res* 1958;6:1-3.
2. Dack S. Looking ahead (editorial). *Am J Cardiol* 1958;1:1-2.