

Handing off the Torch

This is the last issue of *GENETICS* that will carry my name on its masthead. I have served as Editor in Chief for 12 years, overseeing publication of 144 issues of the journal. I've enjoyed (almost) every minute of it; it's been a satisfying and rewarding experience. I leave not because I'm tired of the job, but because turnover—change—is good for an enterprise like this one. Necessary, even. I've stayed long enough; it's time for new ideas and new energy.

We made many changes in the journal since I took on the role, including:

- In 2008 we reorganized the Editorial Board, dividing it into topical sections, each headed by a Senior Editor supported by about a dozen Associate Editors.
- We revised the scope statement to make clear our expectations for papers published in the journal.
- We improved manuscript turnaround times to give authors timely decisions.
- We converted the journal to online only publication, reflecting how the majority of our readers accessed it.
- We established one of the first journal open data policies, ensuring that the data underlying papers published in the journal are available for others to analyze and build upon.
- We were the first journal to partner with bioRxiv to enable seamless submission of manuscripts from that preprint server to our journal.
- We produced YeastBook, WormBook, and FlyBook, to provide authoritative reviews of current knowledge and the state-of-the-art of research on those keystone model organisms.
- We assembled topical series of papers on subjects especially important to our field, such as Genomic Prediction, and Multi-parent Populations, helping to encourage those areas of research.
- We coordinated with *G3: Genes | Genomes | Genetics* editors to help establish our sister journal as a well-respected venue for publishing useful genetic data and findings.
- We developed and implemented a peer-review training program to give early-career colleagues mentored, hands-on experience with peer review.

Of course all of that was mostly done by others. The Senior Editors collaborated with me on all editorial and policy matters; their input was essential. Staff provided crucial input and guidance on editorial and policy issues, then implemented our decisions and plans expertly, efficiently, and effectively. The Books—Yeast, Worm, Fly—succeeded because of the work done by their Editorial Boards, and especially by their Editors in Chief (thanks Alan, Iva, and Lynn!). Our topical series established *GENETICS* as the leading journal for some important areas in our field because of the dedication of the editors who oversaw those initiatives (thanks Lauren and DJ!). A successful journal is the result of hard work by many devoted people; the Editor in Chief does little of the heavy lifting.

I witnessed the commitment of those many dedicated people every day. I saw reviewers who understood the seriousness of their assignment, displaying a genuine interest in providing authors helpful advice. I saw editors who parsed the reviewers' comments, and, along with their own evaluation of manuscripts, came to clear and fair decisions on their suitability for the journal. I watched Associate and Senior Editors collaborate on difficult decisions, always striving to do the right thing. I read nearly all decision letters and saw how our editors almost uniformly give well considered reasons for their decisions and provide authors with clear and helpful guidance for revisions. I wrote 12 years ago, in my first editorial in the journal, that “we have the best editorial team in the business”. Today I'm even more confident of that statement than I was then. Collaborating with all those hard-working people—too numerous to name—has been the highlight of my career. Thanks to them all! They have kept our journal thriving.

I am grateful for the journal's staff, with whom I've been close partners over these last more than 12 years. Anyone who has interacted with our journal knows how responsive, helpful, thoughtful, and efficient they are (thanks Tracey, Ruth, Sarah, Cristy, and Megan!). I learned much from each of them; they made coming to work—even if only virtually—something I looked forward to every day.

I believe our journal will continue to thrive because our field is thriving. Genetics has never been more important, intellectually as well as practically. Technologies that were unimaginable not so long ago have opened research frontiers that are leading to deep understanding of the basis of heredity and variation, and are bringing practical outcomes that improve peoples' lives. Our peer-editors, all of them accomplished, well-regarded practicing scientists, are well-positioned

to bring these advances to the attention of readers in the pages of *GENETICS*.

I leave the journal in good hands. I have worked with Howard Lipshitz for several years in his role as Senior Editor at *G3: Genes | Genomes | Genetics*. I have complete confidence in his abilities, his dedication, and his judgment. We are fortunate to have him as the next Editor in Chief of *GENETICS* (thanks, Howard!). I'm pleased to be handing off the torch to him.

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