



ACADEMIC
PRESS

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SCIENCE @ DIRECT®

Bioorganic Chemistry 31 (2003) 1–2

**BIOORGANIC
CHEMISTRY**

www.elsevier.com/locate/bioorg

Editorial

New directions

Bioorganic Chemistry has an interesting past. The first issue appeared in September 1971 with Professor Eugene E. van Tamelen as the editor. The Board of Advisors consisted of 12 members, three of whom (Professors Duilio Arigoni, Ronald Breslow and A. Ian Scott) are currently members of the Editorial Board. Among other interests, Professor van Tamelen, now Professor Emeritus at Stanford University, pursued the synthesis and structural determination of natural products. In an editorial, Lord Todd, one of three editorial associates, indicated that this new journal heralded the importance of bioorganic chemistry and dedicated the issue to Sir Robert Robinson because of his influence in the field, most notably “on the biogenesis of natural products.” Lord Todd wrote “[his] rationalization of structural relations in the alkaloid field in terms of biogenesis from amino acids, backed by his brilliantly simple tropinone synthesis, had a profound effect on the thinking of organic chemists which has lasted to this day.” In 1984, Professor Gordon Hamilton became the second editor and announced that the journal “will publish accounts of research that are at the interface of chemistry and biology.” Dean George Kenyon succeeded Professor Hamilton as the editor in 1997 and expressed a desire to “expand the scope of the types of articles [being published] to include some more biological, biophysical, and bioinformatic overlap areas.”

The field of bioorganic chemistry has changed tremendously over the past 30 years. The impact of biology on the field has been extraordinary. The past 30 years have witnessed gene cloning and manipulation, site-directed mutagenesis, the introduction of the polymerase chain reaction, microarrays, genome sequencing and analysis, proteomics, and the development of the entire field of bioinformatics. Coupled with the advances in computing power and instrumentation, we can now observe, explore, and explain biological phenomena and reactions as never before. One only has to compare our 1970s’ knowledge of the biogenesis of natural products with today’s detailed understanding of the intricacies of these biosynthetic pathways (as well as the individual enzymes) to acquire a sense of the biological impact. In the course of elucidating many of these pathways, all sorts of interesting chemistry have been uncovered and deciphered. Perhaps in 30 more years, our understanding will advance to the point where we can truly and faithfully mimic the chemistry that Nature does so well.

In July 2002, I became the fourth editor of *Bioorganic Chemistry*, after being on the Editorial Board for 5 years. I would like to thank my predecessors for founding, developing, and maintaining the quality of the journal. I would also like to thank

George for leaving the journal in great shape. Submissions have increased and the impact factor has gone up. In addition, I would like to thank the contributors, the members of the Editorial Advisory Board, and the reviewers. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to the editorial office in San Diego and to Elsevier, the new publisher of *Bioorganic Chemistry*, for their commitment to this journal. The journal, albeit a small one, provides an important service to the bioorganic chemistry community as well as to the larger scientific community.

One of my initial goals will be to decrease the time between the submission of a manuscript and its publication (either on paper or online). Electronic publishing makes this goal a realistic one. During 2002, Elsevier introduced improved electronic production processes to speed up the publication of accepted papers. For example, proofs are now e-mailed to the corresponding authors as PDF files. Electronic publishing will also make your articles available immediately via the worldwide web. The journal is now included as part of ScienceDirect, Elsevier's electronic platform consisting of more than 1700 journals and over 4 million articles, which will increase the journal's accessibility and visibility, and make the journal a truly international journal. Moreover, corrected author proofs are published on the web through ScienceDirect Articles in Press as soon as they are available and issues of *Bioorganic Chemistry* are published online in advance of the printed issue being mailed.

Over the course of the next year, more changes will come to *Bioorganic Chemistry*. Future issues are likely to include a new cover and minireviews on timely issues in the field of bioorganic chemistry. I encourage you to submit minireviews on current topics relevant to your research. If the number of submissions continues to increase, then we may be able to change from a bimonthly publication to a monthly one. Further electronic initiatives will be introduced during 2003, including online submission of manuscripts, which will speed up the editorial review and production processes, thereby minimizing time to publication. (We will, however, continue to accept submissions by mail!)

The journal will accept high-quality papers that fall within the general realm of bioorganic chemistry. A list of appropriate subjects appears in the "Guide for Authors" section in the back of the journal. We would also like to encourage the submission of manuscripts from what might be considered less traditional areas of bioorganic chemistry and more cross-disciplinary. The Editorial Board has been expanded to include expertise in some of these areas such as proteomics, bioinformatics, and combinatorial biosynthesis. However, the content, while more biological, should not stray from our chemical roots. I look forward to the next 30 years of developments in the field of bioorganic chemistry and taking the journal devoted to it to a higher level of excellence.

Christian P. Whitman
Editor-in-Chief