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Journal of Magnetic Resonance

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Editorial

Magnetic moments, magnetic personalities: Landmark papers from the pages of JMR – and the scientists behind them

The Journal of Magnetic Resonance (JMR) is one of the oldest and most influential periodicals in our field. JMR has seen the deepest concepts explained and published in its pages, and literally whole sub-fields – including some unanticipated by the community at large and even by the concepts' own originators – sprung from its articles. The quality and quantity of papers that the Journal received, and receives, after 40+ years of continuous activity, is a living tribute to the ongoing vitality of magnetic resonance. As part of the UNESCO-declared 2011 “International Year of Chemistry” and in preparation for the launching of an open JMR Networking Facebook page, our Elsevier publisher Rob van Daalen suggested highlighting this vitality via the compilation of a Special Issue that would try to summarize some of our Journal's accomplishments.

Given that an anthology of JMR's highlights has already been published, and that it reached ≈ 700 pages over a decade ago (Brey W.S., *Magnetic Resonance in Perspective: Highlights of a Quarter Century*, Academic Press, New York 1996), it was not immediately obvious how to deal with such request. Rather than opting for a comprehensive publication, we decided to address this challenge by compiling a Special Issue that would not attempt to highlight all of JMR's classical papers, but would allow us instead to have a glimpse at some creators of these classics. To allow us to better understand, and perhaps some day emulate, the essence of outstanding moments of inspiration underlying Science that impress us to this very day. In an effort to trigger recollections from the authors of these papers, we compiled a list of landmark discoveries published in JMR and approached their originators with a dual request: to contribute a written account that would illuminate such “magnetic moments”, and to give us short oral descriptions of the sagas leading up to these discoveries. To our great delight many of

the contributors agreed to these seemingly overlapping, almost unnecessary requests. In most cases, the videotaped testimonies we received lead to highly complementary – and in some cases truly historic – descriptions which we are confident you will enjoy.

To sift through 200+ volumes looking for papers and personalities that will best highlight 40+ years of research in solids and liquids NMR, in MRI and in EPR, is not a trivial task. To try to confine the ensuing list of absolute “musts” to twenty or so manuscripts that would also allow us to glimpse into the magnetic resonance *Zeitgeist* through the decades, calls for even further biases. And to entice the resulting list of contributors to make time in their already overwhelmed schedules for adding yet another distraction. . . well, I am sure you get the picture. All this is here mentioned as a sort of plea for mercy; a leniency request for all the minuses and preconceptions you may find in the resulting compilation. Still, I also hope that with all its potential defects, the resulting project will still allow us to peek at the circumstances that lead some of our most creative colleagues to their very personal “Eureka” moments; to a better understanding of the implications and ramifications that derived from their work, and as inspiration for our own current and future research.

Lucio Frydman
Editor in Chief,
The Journal of Magnetic Resonance
Rehovot, Israel