



Editorial

This is a time of much excitement for the *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology*. As Editor-in-Chief of *Part A: Chemistry*, I should like to share with you some of the changes that have taken place recently and some of those that will come to fruition shortly.

First of all, it is the time to say both “farewell”, and “welcome”. We are bidding farewell to our present American Editor, Professor Ron Steer of the University of Saskatchewan, but at the same time we are most happy to welcome his successor, Professor Russ Schmechl of Tulane University, who will continue Ron’s work for the Journal.

Ron Steer has decided that he should change the balance of his activities in research, and has reluctantly come to the conclusion that he will have to relinquish his work for the Journal. This blow is somewhat tempered by his agreeing to remain a member of our Editorial Board, and thus to promote the interests of the Journal in as many ways as he can. Ron became American Editor in 1989, and has thus served the Journal in that capacity for nearly 13 years. This work he has discharged with distinction and energy, with insight and discretion. However, Ron was already a member of our Editorial Board, and indeed had been so ever since the Journal was first published in 1971. I might add that I have known Ron personally for even longer than he has been associated with the Journal. I first met him in 1968, when we both worked with Professor Jim Pitts (in Riverside, California), himself a distinguished member of what might be called the “second generation” of photochemists. Ron and I value our personal friendship most highly, and we were happy when we were able to work together again on the Journal. Editors, authors, and readers will all miss Ron’s contribution, but we wish him success and pleasure in the discipline of photochemistry, as well as personal happiness in the future.

Ron’s departure is balanced by the good fortune that Russ Schmechl has agreed to join us from 1 February 2002. Russ received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina in 1980 and is known in the photochemical community for his work in the general area of inorganic photochemistry. The recent work of his group has focused on preparing supramolecular clusters of chromophores for application as

light-harvesting arrays. The chromophores studied include porphyrins, phthalocyanines and transition metal complexes that possess metal-to-ligand charge-transfer transitions. Energy- and electron-transfer reactions of the systems have been studied using steady-state and time-resolved luminescence methods, quantum-yield measurements and transient-absorption spectroscopy in the nanosecond to millisecond time regime. Russ’s group has also been involved in developing luminescent chemosensors for mono- and di-valent metal ions and investigating electrogenerated chemiluminescence of surface-bound chromophores. Russ thus strengthens our editorial competence in several areas of prime importance in photochemistry. The rest of the editorial team, as well as the publishers, greet Russ most warmly, and hope that he will enjoy his association with the Journal as much as we will benefit from his knowledge and experience.

I have said that Ron and Russ are our past and present American Editors. What is an American Editor? Essentially, such an editor is intended to be someone who looks after the interests of photochemists in the two American continents who are involved with the Journal as authors or readers. The editors and publishers believe that there is considerable advantage in having regional editors of this kind who represent a particular geographical community. Of course, the American Editor’s coverage is immense, as it encompasses not only the United States and Canada, but also all those countries in South America whose distinguished photochemists are frequent contributors of significant and important papers to the Journal. In these ways, the American Editor is the counterpart of our Asian Editor, Hiroshi Masuhara, who is responsible for a similarly large, diverse, and geographically dispersed, as well as highly active, group of scientists concerned with photochemistry and photophysics. The Journal maintains particularly strong links with the Japanese Photochemical Association. This may be an opportune moment to remind authors in the Americas and in Asia that they are encouraged to submit their contributions to their Regional Editor, while those in Europe should submit their materials to the Editor-in-Chief directly. The addresses for submission *by conventional mail* are:

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The changes in the Journal are not just those of the personnel that I have just described. We are also embarking on new ventures such as electronic submission of manuscripts, which we hope will be attractive to authors as a means of sending their materials to us. Delays in the “snail mail” will become a memory for those whose postal services leave much to be desired. The editors will also be able to send papers for review electronically, after assuring themselves that potential referees will welcome papers sent in this form. One expected outcome is that the overall publication times, already shorter than those of similar journals (see later), will be reduced further. All author-related services, including electronic submission, are combined at the Elsevier Science Author Gateway: the URL (“address”) for the *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology A: Chemistry* is <http://authors.elsevier.com/journal/jphotochem> where full instructions for submission may be found. We look forward to receiving the first submissions made in this way.

Electronic submission is balanced by electronic publication at Elsevier! ScienceDirect is now considered by both librarians and users to be the most efficient of all the scientific information databases available on the web. Its presence has had an enormous influence on the usage and visibility of Elsevier’s titles, including *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology A: Chemistry*. The Journal is now available electronically to thousands of scientists in 1700 institutes, and downloads of full-text articles are frequent: each article in the database at the time was downloaded on an average of 41 times between July 2000 and June 2001. Usage will unquestionably stimulate the citation and impact factors favourably in the coming years. ScienceDirect is at <http://www.sciencedirect.com>

The *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology A: Chemistry* is one part of a suite of three journals. *Part A* is complemented by *Part B: Biology* and *Part C: Photochemistry Reviews*. This combination makes a singularly powerful trio dedicated to serving the interests of photochemists worldwide. *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology A: Chemistry* is independent of any society, unlike its main

competitors, and so it is able to dissociate its editorial policy from other interests, and concentrate on scientific excellence. We have enjoyed, over the recent years, a fairly constant number of submissions, and so the publication of each issue is regular and reliable. Nevertheless, we have still been able to find room for some highly regarded Special Issues, with topics on dendritic photochemistry, micellar photochemistry, photochromic materials and atmospheric chemistry currently in preparation. It is a matter of satisfaction to us that this publication schedule has been achieved without the sacrifices that speedy publications call for. Indeed, the figures for the year 2000 show that the *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology A: Chemistry* has been faster in both refereeing and production than journals such as *Photochemistry and Photobiology* or the *Journal of Physical Chemistry A*. Our authors have noted our good publication schedule, and have cited it as one reason why they like to publish in the Journal. As it happens, publication speed has continued to improve since the figures were prepared for 2000, and is likely to benefit further from electronic submission. Surveys have shown high levels of author satisfaction in other areas as well: the standard of refereeing and its reputation, the physical quality of the journal, and the excellence of the Editorial Board have all been cited frequently as reasons for the prestige of the Journal.

That the Journal receives acclaim in these ways is naturally a source of satisfaction to the editors, whose sole aim is to provide a publication that meets a scientific need. On the other hand, complacency is entirely out of place in this situation, and we shall strive to improve further those aspects of the Journal that we deem to be important. What is certain is that exciting times lie ahead of us, and we look forward with keen anticipation to meeting the challenges.

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