Editorial Notes – Acknowledgement

After 23 years of function, the journal first titled ‘Biologia Neonatorum’ (published in three languages) and later ‘Biology of the Neonate’ (published in English) now appears ready for revisions in its editorial board and certain aspects of its editorial policy. I am pleased to announce that J.P. Relier has agreed to serve as managing editor. Dr. Relier will be assisted by several new editors, who will carry on the functions performed for so long and so well by scientists who are now less active in the editorial work. Their long-term assistance has been instrumental in maintaining the scientific level of the journal, and their contribution is acknowledged with sincere appreciation. ‘Biology of the Neonate’ will soon show some new trends in its editorial policy, as will be explained here by Dr. Relier. I will continue to provide personal supervision of the general policy of the journal, assisted in this task by the new editorial board. Thank you for your support.

A. Minkowski

Having served for a few years on the editorial board, I can well appreciate the honor of being asked by A. Minkowski to act as managing editor of ‘Biology of the Neonate’. The position is a difficult one and I hope to find policies acceptable to the editorial board and most beneficial to our readers. Under the authority of A. Minkowski’s editorship, the journal pioneered and developed a new area of medical science exclusively concerned with fetal and neonatal research. The success of the journal in aiding the development of this field is now evident in the large number of other areas which both contribute to fetal and neonatal research and benefit from its progress. As Prof. Minkowski has noted, it now seems appropriate to expand the policy of the journal in keeping with this trend. Following the requests of numerous members of the editorial board as well as many subscribers, we have decided to give ‘Biology of the Neonate’ a more contemporary outlook through the incorporation of carefully selected clinical papers. Responses from editors and readers indicated a clear need for an international forum where the particular clinical problems of the fetus and newborn could be explored. At present, data concerning these distinctive problems are scattered in multiple journals and may lose their impact when appearing as isolated reports. It is not, however, our intention to transform ‘Biology of the Neonate’ into a clinical neonatology journal. Throughout its history, the great merit of the journal has come through its devotion to science and scientific accuracy. The degree of this devotion is apparent in both the large number of manuscripts received and the high selectivity of their acceptance: from among the more than 150 manuscripts submitted each year for the II
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past 2 years, less than half passed the scrutiny of the reviewers and editorial board.
In keeping with this history, only those clinical articles demonstrating a significant scientific basis will be considered for publication. Such a policy is intended to maintain the overall standard of publication which is essential to the ongoing ability to attract first-class scientific articles.

Thus, the new editorial board has decided to consider clinical articles with the stipulation that these be submitted to especially careful evaluation. In addition, the journal will now be open to the communication of brief information in the form of abstracts of neonatal meetings or ‘short reports’ which can receive especially rapid publication. Under ‘short reports’, we mean case reports, brief laboratory observations, preliminary communications, and any other brief reports. To be considered for rapid communication, such reports should not exceed a length equivalent to two printed pages of the journal, i.e., in general not more than 1,000 words of text, accompanied by 2 figures or tables and from 5 to 10 references.

The editorial board would also like to publish a few ‘review articles’ and is further considering the possibility of releasing, once a year, a special issue dedicated to a selected topic and edited by representatives of both research and clinical work.

Concerning delays in publication, the past years have not always been fair to all papers. Our present aim is to have all original articles in print within 6 months following acceptance. Careful and adequate refereeing will continue to demand time. Nonetheless, authors can themselves do much to achieve prompt publication by sending back, as quickly as possible, their corrected paper according to the changes proposed by the reviewers. Authors should also realize that the shorter paper has a much greater chance of acceptance than the longer manuscript.

These new trends, as outlined in these remarks, should help to assure the ‘jeunesse’ of our journal. We wish ‘Biology of the Neo-nate’ a long life!

J.P. Relier

Acknowledgement

The editor and associate editors of Biology of following referees in 1982:

F. Alvarado, Meudon, France
J.V. Aranda, Montreal, Canada
R. Ardaillou, Paris, France
J.M. Bassett, Oxford, England F.C. Battaglia, Denver, USA
E. Beaulieu, Le Kremlin-Bicêtre, France
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A. Freminet, Lyon, France
J.M. Garel, Paris, France
C. Gaultier, Paris, France
F. Geubelle, Liège, Belgium
A. Girard-Globa, Meudon, France
J. Glowinski, Paris, France
J.P. Guignard, Lausanne, Switzerland
P. Hahn, Vancouver, Canada
M. Hallman, Helsinki, Finland
the Neonate gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the
A. Hatt, Paris, France
S.J. Henning, Houston, USA
D. Hull, Nottingham, England
A. Husson, Mont-Saint-Aignan, France
O. Koldovsky, Tucson, USA
J.C. Larroche, Paris, France
J. Legrand, Montpellier, France
C. Merlet-Benichou, Paris, France
J. Metcoff, Oklahoma, USA
D. Milner, Sheffield, England
N. Monod, Paris, France
Y. Najean, Paris, France
R. Nava, Le Kremlin-Bicêtre, France
G. Odievre, Le Kremlin-Bicêtre, France
M. Papiernick, Paris, France
J. Paul, Meudon, France
J. Peret, Meudon, France
G. Picon, Paris, France
D. Putet, Lyon, France
M.F. Radvanyi, Paris, France
N. Raihia, Malmö, Sweden
R. Rappaport, Paris, France
R. Raul, Strasbourg, France
G. Richet, Le Kremlin-Bicêtre, France
D. Ricquier, Paris, France
J. Roffi, Orsay, France
S.A. Rooney, New Haven, USA
B. Salle, Lyon, France
J.M. Saudubray, Paris, France
R. Schwartz, Providence, USA
J. Shaw, London, England
L. Stern, Providence, USA
L. Strang, London, England
E. Swierczewski, Paris, France
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Acknowledgement

J.L. Tassin, Paris, France
G. Tchernia, Clamart, France
C. Tchobroutsky, Paris, France
K. Thiringer, Göteborg, Sweden
C. Tordet, Paris, France
P.L. Toubas, Oklahoma, USA
M. Tubiana, Villejuif, France
H. Versmold, Munich, FRG
E. Vigouroux, Paris, France
D.H. Williamson, Oxford, England
R. Zetterstrom, Stockholm, Sweden