Editor's Note

Back in the 19th century, Santiago Ramón y Cajal self-published much of his work, and T.H. Huxley bought a distressed journal – the *Natural History Review* – to publish and promote important papers on primate brain evolution. Nowadays we are more fortunate. There are several journals that publish research in evolutionary neuroscience. Historically, *Brain, Behavior and Evolution* (BBE) has been one of the two main outlets for such work, the other being *The Journal of Comparative Neurology*. As Manger et al. [2008] noted in a recent meta-analysis, BBE has been particularly important for the dissemination of comparative research on non-mammalian vertebrates.

BBE was founded in 1968 with Walter Riss as editor. Glenn Northcutt assumed the editorship in 1985 and worked closely with Mary Sue Northcutt as his assistant managing editor. They nurtured the journal until 1998. Because I was a student of Northcutt's during those years, I know how much love and work the Northcutts put into BBE. It came as a bit of a shock, therefore, when Northcutt let go of the editorship. However, Walter Wilczynski grasped the baton brilliantly. During the 11 years of his tenure, BBE published close to 450 papers, including 16 special issues covering the annual Karger Workshops – generously sponsored by the journal's publisher – and other symposia. Processing so many manuscripts must have been tiring, even with Blinda McClelland as assistant managing editor. Yet it must also have been fun, for the journal has continued to publish many excellent papers.

The scope of BBE has changed subtly over the years. From 1999 to 2008, roughly 42% of all papers dealt with

Fig. 1. As its name implies, BBE publishes mainly papers that integrate neurobiology with animal behavior and/or evolution.

non-mammalian tetrapods, 29% with mammals, 26% with various fishes, and 11% with invertebrates. A comparison of the decade's first half with its second half reveals that the number of invertebrate studies increased a few percentage points, whereas papers on mammals and fishes became proportionately less frequent. Purely behavioral and purely physiological papers decreased from 13% in the first half of the decade to just 3% in the second half. In contrast, the proportion of molecular evolution studies in BBE increased from 1 to 5%. Comparative neuroanatomical papers increased their representation from 50–60%, and neuroethological studies held steady at ~17%. Papers on development, including adult plasticity, likewise came in at a relatively constant 11%. The largest

remaining category is that of broad conceptual papers, which account for 5–7% of all the papers in BBE from 1999 to 2008.

This survey, informal as it is, shows that BBE's identity has nicely tracked recent developments in evolutionary neuroscience, which has become a highly integrative discipline. I expect such change will continue. For example, the journal may increase its proportion of comparative molecular and developmental research. Despite such adjustments in course, I suspect and hope that BBE will continue to be a preferred forum for all sorts of comparative research. By virtue of its name and history, BBE tends to focus on work at the intersections of three principal subject domains, namely (1) the brain, by which I mean all parts of all nervous systems at all stages of development, (2) behavior, and (3) evolution. Of these three domains, the neural one is paramount because BBE is fundamentally a neuroscience journal.

The future of BBE lies mainly with the scholars who submit their hard-earned findings for the journal's consideration. BBE is fortunate to have a loyal following, but interesting studies about nervous system evolution can

now be found in many different journals. One of my goals as editor will be to highlight some of this far-flung work in BBE as 'front matter'. Some of this front matter will probably consist of editorials by members of the editorial board, but I welcome the larger community to offer its own contributions as well. As I think about BBE's editorship, I am keenly aware of Saint-Exupéry's admonition: 'As for the future, your task is not to foresee it, but to enable it'. In my new role as BBE's enabler-in-chief I will attempt, first and foremost, to strengthen the community of evolutionary neuroscientists. I thank Dr. Thomas Karger and others at Karger Publishers for the tremendous opportunity to rise to this challenge.

Georg F. Striedter, PhD, Editor-in-Chief

Reference

Manger PR, Cort J, Ebrahim N, Goodman A, Henning J, Karolia M, Rodrigues SL, Strkalj G (2008) Is 21st century neuroscience too focused on the rat/mouse model of brain function and dysfunction? *Frontiers Neuroanat* 2:1–7.