

Editorial

This editorial note has been prompted by the concurrence of two major events, involving the Journal “*Antiviral Research*”: (i) the fact that I was honored by a Special Issue of the Journal (vol. 71, pp. 75–414, 2006), at the occasion of what is called at our University, “promotion” to the rank of Emeritus-Professor, and (ii) the 25th anniversary of the birth of the Journal (in 1981). Both events deserve some explanation.

First, my colleagues within the Group (Division of Virology and Chemotherapy) (Jan Balzarini, Graciela Andrei, Lieve Naesens, Johan Neyts, Christophe Pannecouque, Dominique Schols, Robert Snoeck), secretly conspired to concoct a special issue of the Journal, which eventually consisted of 39 articles, all dedicated to my ascending to the Emeritus Professor stage, which at our place is linked to reaching the age of 65 years. I tried to prevent becoming 65 years old, but, unfortunately, I failed. I can assure you that I was surprised to see this failure honored by a special initiative of the Journal with so many colleagues from both within the Group and outside the Group participating in this friendly conspiracy. I wish to thank them wholeheartedly for this unique tribute, which I deeply appreciate and fondly cherish.

Second, it is exactly 25 years ago that the Journal “*Antiviral Research*” was conceived, and, shortly thereafter born and baptized. The first volume of the Journal, which some day may become a collector’s item, had a totally different appearance from the present one (Fig. 1), and, also the Editorial Board, with as the two Executive Editors (Alfons Billiau and myself) and the three Associate Editors (Royce Lockart Jr., Rolf Zinkernagel, and Huub Schellekens) and the other members of the Editorial Board (Fig. 2) are quite different from those featuring nowadays on the Editorial Board.

The Journal, now 25 years old, has definitely come of age, and has acquired a prominent place in the antiviral research arena at large. This is attested by the rapidly increasing number of submissions, the number of papers published, and the growing impact factor. The field is booming, the journal is thriving and I look forward, as an Editor-in-Chief, to see the Journal “*Antiviral Research*” further maturing to the “gold standard” in the field. In return to the many accolades that were bestowed on me, and equally many reminders of me reaching the for our University obligatory retirement age (vol. 71, pp. 75–414, 2006), I have to add that I will continue to put the best of my efforts into the

Journal, which I started 25 years ago and which I hope I will further guide through the next 25 years.

The Journal “*Antiviral Research*” (AVR) was born in Leuven in 1981. The International Conferences of Antiviral Research (ICAR) were born with the first meeting taking place in Rotterdam in April 1985 (then not called “first” as we did not know there would be a “second” one), and the International Society of Antiviral Research (ISAR) originated in Il Ciocco (Italy) in May

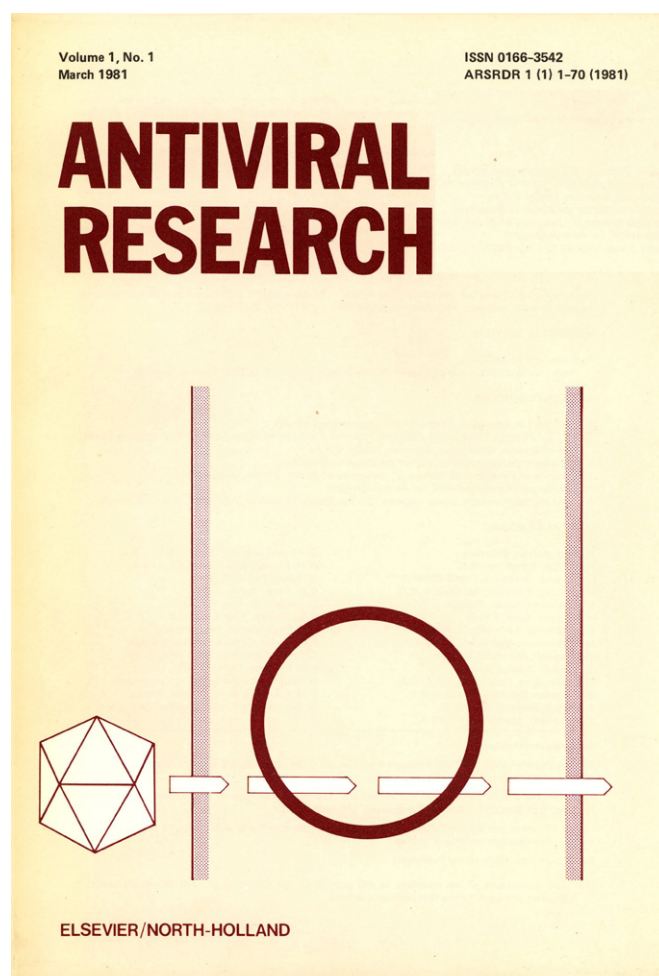


Fig. 1.

AIMS AND SCOPE

Antiviral Research publishes full-length original articles, short definitive papers and review articles (one per issue), pertaining to the effective control of virus infections in animals and man as well as in plants or lower organisms.

Its scope encompasses:

- the mechanism of natural and acquired host resistance against virus infections, including aspecific cellular resistance; interferons; cellular and humoral immunity in virus infections; chemotherapeutics which influence host resistance;
- the development of new vaccines or novel forms of serotherapy against viral diseases, including virological characterization of vaccine strains or vaccine preparations; preparation and characterization of antiviral immunoglobulins; safety and efficiency assessment; field trials;
- the development of new antiviral chemotherapeutics, including chemistry; in vitro activity; mechanism of action; activity in animal model systems; clinical trials.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The overriding criteria for publication are originality, high scientific quality, adequate documentation by experimental evidence, and relevance to the aims and scope of the journal.

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Advertisements: apply to the Publisher.

N.B. For explanation of the code-line at the bottom of the first page of each article the reader is referred to page iv of the first issue of a volume.

ANTIVIRAL RESEARCH

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Fig. 3.

1987 at the occasion of the NATO Advanced Study Institute on Antiviral Drug Development. In Brussels, in April 1990, at the third ICAR (the second was in 1988 in Williamsburg, Virginia) I pledged for a close association between the Journal (AVR), the Conference (ICAR) and the Society (ISAR). This plan has been materialized, thanks to the efforts and dedication of those who were the fostering parents for all three organizations (AVR, ICAR and ISAR), Alfons Billiau, Huub Schellekens, George A. Galasso, A. Kirk Field, Hugh J. Field, John C. Martin, Karen K. Biron, Jean-Louis Imbach, William A. Shannon, Earl R. Kern, Richard J. Whitley and myself (Fig. 3).

In the first editorial of the first issue of *Antiviral Research* 1: 1–3 (1981), the Editors wrote: “This, dear Reader, is the first issue of a new journal, *Antiviral Research*, which will appear bimonthly and in which we expect to publish review articles and original contributions covering the field of antiviral research in its applied as well as its fundamental aspects . . . The new biotechnology may also allow the design of new strategies for vaccine manufacturers . . . may lead to the development of vaccines for those viral diseases for which the causative agent may continue to elude classical isolation attempts . . . Recent

developments in the interferon field . . . Understanding of aspecific resistance against viruses such as that mediated by natural killer cells may also lead to new antiviral strategies . . . Our new journal will cover the most promising area of antiviral research for the immediate future, that of antiviral chemotherapy. With the advent of specific and non-toxic antiherpetics (acycloguanosine, bromovinyldeoxyuridine, a.o.), the widespread scepticism, which continued to prevail even after the discovery of the adamantane amines as anti-influenza virus agent has now definitively subsided. The concept of specific antiviral substances has received support from the discovery and extensive characterization of various virus-coded enzymes which differ in several aspects from the analogous enzymes present in uninfected cells, and which may thereby constitute suitable targets for new antiviral chemotherapeutics”.

I am pleased to note, that, despite the enormous progress made in the antiviral research field, the same aims as formulated 25 years ago, albeit in a more updated, refined and extended version, still prevail. Host defense mechanisms to viral infections, whether natural or acquired, or generated by antivirals targeted at specific viral enzymes or processes, will likely remain

within the primary scope of the Journal. The hallmark will be excellence in the development of therapeutic and/or preventive measures to control virus infections. I thank all those who have contributed to *Antiviral Research*, as either author or editor, or both, to achieve this goal and, I trust, will continue to do so in the future.

On behalf of the Editors-in-Chief, Earl R. Kern and Richard J. Whitley.

Editor-in-Chief, Antiviral Research
Erik De Clercq