

## New perspective: History of the Perspectives series

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In the May 1998 issue, then editor Olaf Andersen introduced to the *Journal of General Physiology* a novel publication form, the **Perspectives in General Physiology** (*JGP* 111:615). The stated purpose of the Perspectives is “to provide a forum where scientific uncertainties or controversies can be discussed in an authoritative yet open manner.” After that initial Perspective on “Molecular Identity of the Outwardly Rectifying, Voltage-Sensitive Chloride Channel,” the *JGP* has published nine Perspectives, whose titles include “**Ion Channel Assembly**” (February 1999; *JGP* 113:161), “**Ca<sup>2+</sup> Sparks**” (March 1999; *JGP* 113:363), “**Ion Channel Permeation**” (June 1999; *JGP* 113:763), “**Ryanodine Receptor Adaptation**” (December 2000; *JGP* 116:865), “**Movement of Voltage Sensors**” (October 2002; *JGP* 120:447), “**Identity of the H<sup>+</sup> Channel Involved in the Respiratory Burst**” (December 2002; *JGP* 120:757), “**Membrane Protein Insertion, Protein–Bilayer Interactions, and Amino Acid Side Hydrophobicity**” (May 2007; *JGP* 12:351), “**How to Drug an Ion Channel**” (May 2008; *JGP* 131:395), and “**TRP Channel Structure and the TRPA1 Puzzle**” (March 2009; *JGP* 133:227). Perspectives are distinct from traditional reviews in that there is no expectation that they provide a comprehensive summary of the work in an area of physiology. Rather, they are intended to present the viewpoints of experts, sometimes at odds with each other, on problems of broad interest to the readership.

The Perspectives have been highly successful partly because they present balanced viewpoints. Although the individual contributors are expected to present

their own perspective on the problem at issue, the submissions are reviewed, and thus ideas and attributions are subject to critical feedback.

The Perspectives are solicited by the editors, often based on recommendations by members of the editorial board, who may be asked to coordinate the process. To frame the issue, two or more experts are invited to present a brief point of view on the problem, which are published consecutively in the journal. The Perspectives are accompanied by a few editorial paragraphs, often by a guest editor, that introduce the problem and invite the submission of comments, in the form of Letters to the Editor, to be published in a single, predetermined issue of the journal.

### Introducing Perspectives Editor Olaf S. Andersen

This year the *JGP* anticipates the publication of several new contributions to the Perspective series. In the effort to find an appropriate editor for one of these, the associate editors turned to Olaf Andersen, whose scientific expertise and familiarity with the contributors identified him as particularly suited for the task. Additional discussions led to the idea that it would be very valuable for *JGP* to have a special editor whose sole task was organizing and guiding Perspectives from conception to publication. The Rockefeller University Press was enthusiastic and created the position of Perspectives Editor, which Olaf has graciously accepted. We look forward very much to working with Olaf on Perspectives dealing with many topics of current interest in general physiology.