

Editorial

Open Access

Reproductive Biology and Endocrinology – Choose an exciting venture for the scientific future

Antonin Bukovsky*

Address: Editor – Reproductive Biology and Endocrinology, Laboratory for Development, Differentiation and Cancer, University of Tennessee College of Medicine, Graduate School of Medicine, Knoxville, Tennessee 37920, USA

Email: Antonin Bukovsky* - buko@utk.edu

* Corresponding author

Published: 17 January 2003

Reproductive Biology and Endocrinology 2003, 1:1

This article is available from: <http://www.RBEj.com/content/1/1/1>

© 2003 Bukovsky; licensee BioMed Central Ltd. This is an Open Access article: verbatim copying and redistribution of this article are permitted in all media for any purpose, provided this notice is preserved along with the article's original URL.

Received: 13 January 2003

Accepted: 17 January 2003

The Reproductive Biology and Endocrinology (RB&E) journal was established by devoted reproductive scientists from around the world during the spring of 2002 in response to the gap in electronic publishing in this field among the journals associated with BioMed Central, London, United Kingdom (<http://www.biomedcentral.com>), and elsewhere. I am proud of being the initiator of the birth of our journal and have had the honor of being elected Editor-in-Chief by board members. Between the time of the birth of the journal and its launching, the RB&E Editorial Board, in cooperation with our publisher, BioMed Central, gradually developed important aspects of the journal's scope and peer review policy, and other rules required for the successful launch of this revolutionary journal.

Prior to its launch, the RB&E already had 20 research articles to be published. They were contributed by board members and other scientists, and have passed the two- or three-step process of peer review by three experts in the field. Additional manuscripts are under review/re-review or pending resubmission, and several have been rejected. Yet, such is our principal rule – only good science will be distributed globally. Our peer-review policy is that the reviewer's comments provide constructive criticism with the intent to help the authors improve their manuscript.

These are exciting times for revolution in scientific communication through electronic journals. Emerging electronic journals are the basis for the purely electronic distribution of scientific publications in the future. Just imagine no book shelves and mountains of unorganized reprints, no work nights or secretaries required to organize

and search for articles of interest. Yet, this will become reality in the very near future for most active scientists.

To do science without a web connection is not imaginable nowadays, and most 'top ranked' conventional journals offer web access to recent publications and to less or more distant archives. However, not everyone has the luxury of full access through a University or his/her prepaid subscription, or can afford to pay \$35 per electronic reprint. Hence, the traditional journals develop electronic scientific communication through resources from individual subscribers and private and state owned Institutions, page charges from authors, and charges for color illustrations. Altogether, the conventional science publishing industry limits access to scientific contributions to scientists in developed countries while, in many cases, leaving the rest of the world unattended.

In launching the new RB&E electronic journal that aspires to join the 'top tier' of reproductive science and reproductive medicine publications, we have chosen an approach that differs noticeably from traditional journals in several ways. The most important journal rules follow:

Free access to all RB&E articles

The journal is registered in PubMed and PubMed Central, ISSN 1477-7827; Abbr: *Reprod Biol Endocrinol*; Publisher: BioMed Central; NLM ID: b101153627. Unlike conventional and some electronic journals, all articles (research articles, reviews and mini-reviews, methodology, hypotheses and debate) are freely accessible to the general public through PubMed and PubMed Central, the BioMed Central, and the RB&E Home Page (<http://www.rbej.com>). Just one click, no password is required. Free access to all articles is not only a great advantage for

the readers but also a big benefit for the distribution of the science, experience and ideas of the authors.

Fast publication of your research

Our experience is that the selection of reviewers, the review process itself, editorial decision and publication of accepted articles can be completed within six weeks after receiving a manuscript. Contributors may accelerate the primary review initiation, by submitting the Title page and Abstract to the Editorial Office rbe@utk.edu two weeks before the entire manuscript is ready for submission. Publication of resubmitted manuscripts may require less time, since the reviewers remain the same.

Free publication of color figures

Besides open global access to all article types and fast and expert peer-review and publication, the contributors to RB&E will enjoy additional advantages. Since color becomes sine qua non in current research, color page charges are a significant limitation for scientists without sufficient budgetary support. Therefore, one of the most important advantages of RB&E is no page charge for color illustrations. This also eliminates requirements for condensation of color photomicrographs into small miniatures that lack sufficient resolution and detail. Indeed, authors are encouraged to submit charts in color for enhanced clarity and to highlight relevant components.

Authors retain copyright to their work

Authors publishing in RB&E retain free of charge copyright to their work. In other words, a whole article can be published freely on the web, associated with the authors' homepages, submitted to interested readers and colleagues, and the article components utilized in other publications, without a requirement for a request for permission.

Wide RB&E journal scope

The scope of the RB&E is intended to be much wider than for traditional reproductive sciences journals, ranging from basic research in reproductive biology and endocrinology to applied research of reproduction in veterinary and human medicine. In other words, the RB&E scope includes a broad range of topics in the field of reproductive biology and endocrinology, including gametogenesis, fertilization, early embryonic development and control of reproduction, reproductive immunology, neuroendocrinology, and veterinary and human reproductive medicine (except Case Reports). All vertebrate species are covered, as well as invertebrate models of general importance in the area of reproduction. RB&E also covers clinical subjects such as the pathophysiology of reproduction (e.g., sterility, infertility and abnormal pregnancy, and reproductive tract infections), age-associated changes and disorders of the reproductive tract (e.g., peri- and post-

menopausal period, urinary incontinence and other pelvic floor disorders, and the impact of hormone replacement therapy), reproductive tissue cancers (e.g., prostate, ovary, uterus, cervix, breast), and environmental and occupational hazards. With respect to the spectrum of readers and contributors, the journal represents a global platform for all **reproductive and developmental biologists**, **reproductive endocrinologists**, **immunologists**, **theriogenologists**, **infertility specialists**, **obstetricians**, **gynecologists**, **andrologists**, **urogynecologists**, specialists in **menopause**, reproductive tract **oncologists**, and reproductive **epidemiologists**.

Article types

The journal aims to publish high quality peer-reviewed original **Research articles**, invited or unsolicited (subjected to approval) **Reviews** and mini-review forums, relevant novel laboratory and clinical **Methodology**, and scientifically sound **Hypotheses. Debate** (Letters, Research News, and Commentary sections) is included to highlight recent breakthroughs in a given field and to discuss controversial topics published anywhere.

Peer review policy

Fast and professional peer review, resulting in rapid publication of good research, is the priority of the RB&E peer review policy. In most instances at least three reviewers are involved in the review of submitted articles. The Editorial Board consists of more than 250 experts covering various fields of the RB&E scientific interests.

The RB&E review process is strictly anonymous. Reviewers address all manuscript components with particular attention to Methods that are appropriate and adequately described (reproducible), and Results and Conclusions that are scientifically justified. RB&E allows authors a maximum of two revisions of an article, assuming resubmitted manuscripts show significant improvement. When asking for revisions, reviewers may suggest some minor additional experiments. The term minor means that authors who are adequately equipped should be able to complete additional laboratory work requested within no more than two weeks, and the data should not form the basis for another publication. This will, without a requirement for the significant delay of publication, allow for scientific revision if the area is important and the science is good.

Processing charges

Unless supplied by a sponsor, or state or global organization, no publisher can exist without coverage of processing fees. Budgetary independence of publishers is, however, a rare case in the current world. For an accepted article, our publisher will levy a modest charge, which is comparable to the cost of a single color page charge in conventional journals. Details are available at <http://>

www.biomedcentral.com/info/about/apcfaq. However, the fee can be waived for authors without budgetary support. Hence, regardless of a monetary situation, every scientist can contribute to and publish in RB&E. Yet, there will be no charges to authors for articles accepted during the first six months following the journal launch, irrespective of how many articles are published. Therefore, you are encouraged to contribute soon.

In conclusion, the RB&E journal is designed to evolve in response to the global needs of reproductive scientists and clinicians. The goal is broad distribution of results from excellent research in the reproductive sciences that will facilitate education and the exchange of ideas. In addition to making contributions through submission of papers, you can contact the Editorial Office to join RB&E as a registered ad-hoc reviewer. The RB&E is here to serve the scientific community.

Publish with **BioMed Central** and every scientist can read your work free of charge

"BioMed Central will be the most significant development for disseminating the results of biomedical research in our lifetime."

Sir Paul Nurse, Cancer Research UK

Your research papers will be:

- available free of charge to the entire biomedical community
- peer reviewed and published immediately upon acceptance
- cited in PubMed and archived on PubMed Central
- yours — you keep the copyright

Submit your manuscript here:
http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/publishing_adv.asp

