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AJNR

Editor's Update

Michael S. Huckman

AJNR Am J Neuroradiol 1994, 15 (1) 1-2
<http://www.ajnr.org/content/15/1/1.citation>

This information is current as
of April 19, 2024.

Editor's Update

More Issues and More Pages

With this issue, the *AJNR* reaches another milestone in its history. From its inception, the *Journal* has been a bimonthly publication. The year 1993 showed continued growth of our contributor base and, as a result, the *Journal* finds itself with a surplus of excellent articles from North America and abroad. In an attempt to maintain an average lag time between acceptance and publication of articles of no more than 6 months, the editors, the Publications Committee, and the Executive Committee of the American Society of Neuroradiology have approved a plan to publish 10 issues of *AJNR* in 1994 with a total of 2000 pages.

New Features

In 1994, it is the intent of the editors to continue adding new features. Anatomic Moments, prepared by Drs David Daniels, Leighton Mark, and Thomas Naidich, have been a very popular feature as evidenced by the overwhelming number of reprint requests they have received. Similar enthusiasm has greeted the appearance of Radiologic-Pathologic Correlation, a feature edited by Drs Anne Osborn and James Smirniotopoulos. The Annotated Bibliography feature has increased the depth of our year-end cumulative index and provided a list, filtered by a group of experts, of additional suggested reading in clinical disciplines allied to neuroradiology.

It is the policy of the *AJNR* to begin as many articles as possible on right-hand pages, a convenience for those who "tear" rather than save the entire journal. This leaves occasional empty left-hand pages. An attempt is made to fill those pages with book reviews, cartoons, news items, public-service advertisements, and announcements of importance to members of the ASITN, the ASHNR, and the ASNR. The journal recently received a case report in quiz format. This consisted of a short paragraph of historic information and four photographs. Submissions such as that in quiz format would be welcome and will occasionally appear as "page fillers." The case presentation will appear on one page and the diagnosis and discussion as a page filler elsewhere in

the journal. These submissions will be peer reviewed.

Another new feature will be the occasional appearance of a Radiologic-Clinical Correlation. These should follow the guidelines for case reports in terms of length and describe the imaging correlates of a particular neurologic sign, symptom, or syndrome. There need not be pathologic correlation in these cases, but there must be correlation between the radiologic location of a distinct lesion and its neurologic signs and symptoms. It is essential that, in addition to a point-by-point correlation, such submissions include *professionally prepared* line drawings that correspond to the plane of the imaging study and outline the normal and abnormal anatomy of the area. The discussion should emphasize how the radiologic appearance of the lesion explains the clinical picture. These also will be peer reviewed.

Because the Anatomic Moments have been popular, a suggestion has been made to introduce Physics Moments. These will be prepared under the direction of Dr Leo Czervionke, will appear as page fillers, and will be designed to explain physical principles of imaging techniques and artifacts using a minimum of mathematics and "imaging jargon."

Change In Case Report Acceptance Policy

Part of the reason for the delay between acceptance and publication is the tremendous backlog of case reports. This is indeed an embarrassment of riches. However, at the last editorial retreat, it was decided to give publication priority to major papers and publish a few case reports in each issue. Even this has not stemmed the tide of case reports submitted and accepted on the basis of peer-reviewer recommendations.

Case reports certainly have value. However, their value lies in their ability to teach a *new* radiologic lesson. This may be to explain a pitfall, artifact, unusual radiographic presentation of a common entity, or radiologic finding of diagnostic importance in an entity previously thought to have no specific findings.

Too often, a case report is submitted because it is "only the 14th case in the North American literature," because it is the "first reported case of

carpal tunnel syndrome in association with a branchial cleft cyst," or because it is the "first reported case of metastatic breast carcinoma diagnosed by contrast-enhanced MR scanning." These are only a few of the frivolous reasons used to describe the importance of a case report.

Stating how few or many reports appeared before an author's case report teaches no radiologic lesson, and such claims of priority are often subsequently proved incorrect. The simultaneous occurrence of two unrelated abnormalities without a reasonable explanation of common cause or high frequency is likewise a meaningless observation. If a lesion can be diagnosed by contrast-enhanced computed tomography, it goes without saying that one would expect it to be detectable by contrast-enhanced magnetic resonance because permeability of the blood-brain barrier is operative in both instances.

As the backlog of accepted case reports is brought down by publication, there also will be a change in the manner in which case reports are treated in the future. Reviewers will be asked to grade them not only based on their acceptability

for publication, but also to grade the acceptable ones on a scale of 10. This policy is not meant to discourage the submission of case reports, but they will be more critically scrutinized in the future and the acceptance rate will decrease slightly.

Radiology Centennial

The year 1995 marks the centennial of the discovery of the x-ray by Wilhelm C. Roentgen. The history of neuroradiology began before the turn of the century. Throughout the next two years, the *Journal* will occasionally publish invited and proffered historical vignettes about individuals, institutions, and innovations of importance in neuroradiology. The history of neuroradiology is a most integral part of the history of radiology, and its personalities and milestones deserve celebration. The *AJNR* is an appropriate forum in which to tell the story.

Michael S. Huckman
Editor