Editorial

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As part of our efforts to make *Astrophysics & Space Science* an essential research and reference utility for the astronomical community we have recently inaugurated a new category of “Invited Reviews”. These are particularly aimed at covering emerging research topics in considerable depth, so as to provide a one-stop reference for both those wishing to know more or those interested in moving into these research fields. These reviews will concentrate on outstanding issues and unsolved problems at the leading edge of research, and therefore may contain material of a more speculative nature than typical review articles. Ultimately, we hope to publish such articles at a cadence of one per volume of the journal.

The authors of these invited reviews will be either established luminaries in their fields or else young researchers who have already made a significant impact. The Editor welcomes any suggestions for both topics and authors from the general readership of *Astrophysics & Space Science*. These suggestions should be sent to me via e-mail to Michael.Dopita@anu.edu.au.

In this first issue of the new year I am pleased to welcome the latest of these reviews “*Organic matter in space: from star dust to the Solar System*” by the highly-reputed expert Prof. Sun Kwok of the University of Hong Kong. This review brings out the startling progress which has been made in recent years relating to the identification of complex molecular species in space. The techniques that have been employed include microwave astronomy, interstellar dust studies, and direct sampling of cosmic dust.

In a future issue, look for a comprehensive review by M. Catelan of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile on “*Horizontal Branch Stars: Observations, Theory, and Insights into the Formation of the Galaxy*”. Further on down the track, we look forward to receiving an article by Christopher Matzner of the Canadian Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics, University of Toronto. He will be writing on “*Feedback Processes in Turbulent Star Formation*”.

Let me thank all of our contributors and referees in 2008. During the year we have made satisfactory progress in a number of aspects, and the citation impact of the journal is starting to reflect this progress. Best of all, we have substantially improved the accountability of the journal to our authors. The typical time between submission and first decision has now been reduced to just over 40 days on average, largely thanks to our referees, who have been more timely in furnishing their reports, and who have substantially assisted our authors in improving the quality of their papers.

Finally, authors should note that we have our own ASTR LaTeX style based upon *aastex*5.2. Use of this style shortens the time between acceptance, and the article appearing on-line, so we strongly encourage authors to use this style in their submitted papers. This relevant style files can be downloaded from our home page: <http://www.springer.com/apss>.

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