

Editorial

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To witness and to participate in the explosion of a scientific field is certainly one of the most exciting adventures in the life of a scientist. I was happy enough to be exactly in this favorable position during most of my scientific career over the last four or five decades, namely to watch and to be involved in the scientific study of nociception and pain when these fields became a major topic of scientific exploration.

During all those years, I was joined by a great number of students and associates collaborating for shorter or longer periods before continuing their scientific and medical careers at other institutions. And, on the other hand, I had the privilege to collaborate with colleagues in their laboratories in Australia, Japan, Spain and the United States for weeks, months and sometimes even a year or two on more occasions than I am willing to add up.

But as time goes by even the happiest professional life comes to an end. This includes to pass on the—sometimes stressful—pleasure to serve as Managing Editor of Experimental Brain Research. To mark this occasion Dr. Andrea Pillmann of Springer-Verlag, Heidelberg, and John

Rothwell as the current Managing Editor were kind enough to offer that I invite my closest colleagues and friends from all over the world to contribute to a special issue of Experimental Brain Research focussing on the major topics of my scientific interest in the last decades.

Accepting this proposal I was happy enough that Carlos Belmonte and Hans-Georg Schaible agreed to join me in editing such a special issue, and we settled on the topic: “The Building and Transmission of Pain Signals—From Molecules to Neurons” before inviting the authors now assembled in this issue. They all did a wonderful job and the reviews of this issue brilliantly summarize the current state of the art in peripheral nociception and pain. In addition, the authors added their personal interpretation of where present knowledge is and what are the alternatives and future research possibilities.

My most hearty thanks go to all who contributed in one way or other to publish this special issue.

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