



BCRT: a brief valedictory

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For nearly 28 years, I have served as the Editor-in-Chief of Breast Cancer Research and Treatment. I had previously been an associate editor, and when Bill McGuire tragically died at the height of his career, I was asked to assume his role. Now, nearly 3 decades later Dr. William Gradishar will become the new Editor-in-Chief.

It is hard for me to believe that in that time I personally handled approximately 50,000 submissions to the journal. Nearly every morning I would wake up to find a new cohort of manuscripts waiting for me. I examined every one of them and made some sort of decision on each of them ranging from a rejection for a variety of causes, to assigning reviewers myself, to assigning the manuscript to one of my incredibly hard working associate editors, to reviewing the manuscript myself, and occasionally accepting a manuscript as is. I cannot for one second imagine my decision making was perfect. Not by any means. Occasionally, I would hear from authors complaining about the review or decision they had received. I truly welcomed these rebuttals as I passionately believe in the rights of the author to defend their work. And far from uncommonly, the points raised led to a re-consideration of their work. I am very glad we could correct those errors.

I am amazingly grateful to the thousands of physicians and scientists who chose to share their work with our journal, and while I know we failed at times, we tried energetically to provide each submission with an ethical and fair and speedy review. Let me publicly and sincerely apologize to anyone who ever felt they didn't get the help, support, and disinterested criticism from me, our editors, or reviewers that they felt they deserved. I have published a fair number of papers myself and have been on the opposite side of the discussion with editors or reviewers who I thought were poorly informed, biased, or worse! So we always tried to

exercise particular care and scrupulousness when authors complained about the review process.

A few years ago, we began screening every submission using ITHENTICATE technology to detect text re-duplications and on at least one occasion participated in a lengthy effort to ferret out figure manipulation. I must say that one of the least happy aspects of my role as editor is discovering that less than satisfactory submissions from these vantage points are not uncommon.

I would like to spend some time particularly thanking my colleagues who gave so much time and effort to their editorial duties. Obviously, this includes many dedicated reviewers. I continue to be amazed and delighted by the care and consideration and thoughtfulness that so many anonymous colleagues give to others. The current group of Associate Editors who have worked with me for multiple years have forged a very effective working relationship together and our journal would be far worse off without them. Steve Ethier, Ben Park, Kevin Hughes, Steven Narod, and Kathy Miller have made the journal as successful as it is and I prize them as colleagues and friends. I additionally want to acknowledge my multidecade working relationship with Laura Walsh. I could't have asked for a more responsive and engaged publisher.

Finally, I want to discuss what a privilege it has been to witness [and hopefully help speed] the extraordinary progress that has occurred in breast cancer. Who would have dreamed 30 years ago that mortality rates would be rapidly falling, that we would have effective [if not uniformly applied] means of preventing breast cancer, that we would have seen an end to mastectomy for most patients, that we would have demonstrated both inherited and acquired genetic causes for many breast cancers and in some cases extraordinarily effective targeted therapies.

These have been exciting times and it is my hope that our journal will continue to contribute to that wonderful progress.

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