

The ‘Mr Human Reproduction’ experience

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This is the first Editorial from my hands as Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of *Human Reproduction*. I am very grateful to ESHRE and OUP for their confidence in handing me this honorable task on its prestigious journal, *Human Reproduction*, the leading monthly periodical in the field of reproductive biology and medicine. This top position has been obtained through many years of hard work by the editorial office, the associate editors, the deputy editors, and, over the past six years, under the inspiring leadership of, now emeritus EIC, Hans Evers. Hans’ contribution to this success cannot be over-stated.

When Hans became EIC in January 2013, *Human Reproduction* had an impact factor (IF) of 4.475—thanks to its highly esteemed predecessors. Hans made the promise to hit an IF of 5: this came true in 2017. When Hans was appointed, he encountered a prospering journal. Hans initiated many further adaptations that have led to *Human Reproduction*’s current top position. One of the most visible contributions was the design of the innovative abstract format. This extended abstract allows readers to quickly grasp the essentials of a paper; not only a rough outline but, with several new mandatory aspects, novelty is emphasized by placing studies in context of what is already known and limitations and shortcomings are highlighted. The format of *Human Reproduction*’s abstract has greatly improved the depth of information that comes from it. As we all know, the need to keep up with progressively growing amounts of scientific reports, together with increasing time restraints, has put more and more weight on the attractiveness of an extended abstract; a brief yet complete overview of a study. So effective was it, *Human Reproduction*’s abstract format was subsequently successfully adapted by other ESHRE journals. Hans has also emphasised the importance of the title of a paper as the very first attraction. Indeed, titles are one of Hans’ beloved themes, which he eloquently addressed year-on-year during the well-received ESHRE Pre Congress Course, ‘How to present and publish your research’; a course organised enthusiastically by Hans while EIC of *Human Reproduction*.

Please note (and re-read) Hans’ 30+ Editorials, many with witty titles. For example:

- ‘A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse’
- ‘What’s black and white and dead all over?’

- ‘The sun is not hurried by early risers’
- ‘Confessions of a dinosaur’

In Hans’ second Editorial as EIC (‘It’s not the critic who counts, but the man in the arena’), he stated “If there exists one journal that may boast that we are standing on the shoulders of giants, it is HR. Robert Edwards, David Barlow and André van Steirteghem...”. To this impressive list, another giant has just been added. Hans has been an active member of ESHRE from its birth. Aside from his recent invaluable contributions as EIC of this journal, Hans also proved himself when serving ESHRE in many capacities, including ESHRE Chair from 2001 through 2003. Whenever you want to know anything about ESHRE’s history, Hans will be your man. Other clearly visible contributions are the stricter formulations of scope of the individual ESHRE journals; a task done in close collaboration with the EICs of ESHRE’s family of journals. Furthermore, a series of clear objective checks for quality and ethics were introduced. Hans introduced ‘Editor’s Choice’; a selection of articles wisely chosen to highlight important new developments.

I must mention sounds from ‘behind the screen’. The deputy editors and members of the editorial office were unanimous in their praise of Hans’ intense activity and his collaborative and communicative skills:

- “Hans was a great leader”
- “The effectiveness and family feel was really engendered by him. He made everyone feel an equal in the decision-making processes”
- “He had an unwavering focus on an evidence-based approach to reproductive science”

This came along with his in-depth knowledge of statistics, methodology and epidemiology and we should not forget his broad eruditeness. Many, if not all of us, have had their ‘Hans Evers, Mr Human Reproduction experience’, either as reader of the journal or as an author of manuscripts submitted to the journal, via his inevitable personal EIC comments.

This Editorial aims to praise and to express gratitude to the now emeritus EIC of *Human Reproduction*, Hans Evers, for all his contributions to the journal from his very first:

'The reliability of ovulation prediction by a single ultrasonographic follicle measurement'.

to his most cited:

'The spontaneous pregnancy prognosis in untreated subfertile couples: the Walcheren primary care study'

and all other, 160+, contributions including his most recent:

'Human Reproduction's greatest hits: My personal top-10 of 6 years as a Human Reproduction Editor'

Likely not his last one.

Many thanks, Hans. Surely, we will experience your continued collaboration as colleague, ESHRE member and friend for many more years to come.

References

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