



I am honored to have been selected as the new editor of *Acoustics Today*. This is a daunting responsibility since Dick Stern founded and developed a truly fine magazine. And so “filling his shoes” is not an easy task, nor is it one that I take lightly. Indeed, I

see my role as taking a magazine that we are all very proud of and making it even better, and perhaps moving it in a few new directions that will increase its value to ASA and the broader acoustics community.

I want to make it clear, though, that while I have a number of ideas for the future of the *Acoustics Today* “enterprise,” I am firm in my conviction that the heart of what we do is the print magazine sent to all ASA members. It is my belief that even in these days when most of what we read is on a screen, there is a significant value to have something one can carry around, read on a plane or subway, and browse cover-to-cover. And for some of us, there still is nothing like print for reading and learning!

I want to take this column to share with you some of my thinking about where I would like us to take *Acoustics Today*. At the same time, I am also very much open to other ideas and suggestions, and I want to encourage ASA members who have thoughts about my plans, or about *Acoustics Today*, to drop me a note (apopper@umd.edu) and share your thinking.

My primary goal for *Acoustics Today* is to ensure that it has a broad set of articles that are of wide interest to all ASA members, and that these articles are all understandable, and readable, by every member of the ASA, whatever their specialization may be. Thus, I want to ensure, especially starting in future issues, that every article is not only understood and appreciated by members from the same specific discipline as the authors, but also that the articles will be read and understood by members from all of the numerous disciplines within ASA. I do appreciate that writing articles for a more general acoustics audience is a greater challenge than writing for one’s peers, but the feedback I have already gotten from prospective authors and other ASA members is that moving in this more “general” direction is highly desirable and appreciated.

Over time, I also want to ensure that each year we publish articles from the broadest possible range of disciplines within ASA. I realize this won’t always be feasible, and it may be impossible for my first few issues since I am still early learning the job and working to get articles, but I see this as a long-term goal. That said, as we say in other places in this issue we are looking for interesting articles and I encourage potential authors to drop me a note to discuss ideas.

We are also, even with this issue of *Acoustics Today*, making a few interesting changes. First, we are instituting a “Letters to the Editor” department. This will be an opportunity for members to (in up to 150 words) comment on past articles, raise issues of interest to our community, and share observations. We will review all letters (send them to me please, in Word format) and retain the right to select which we use. But, assuming we don’t get inundated by letters, we will certainly try and use as many letters as we can within our space constraints.

Another development is to initiate book reviews. In the past, *Acoustics Today* has had book announcements. While these have been useful, their presence depended on the authors

sending material to Dick, and so not every new book was included. Our new policy is to have actual reviews, and we have invited the JASA book review editor, Philip Marston, to also be the *Acoustics Today* book review editor. In fact, we have decided to generally have the same book reviews in both venues. The rationale here is that with JASA being on line, many readers never really see book reviews. By including reviews in *Acoustics Today* we very much expand the opportunity for ASA members to see reviews and learn about new books, and for ASA reviewers to get a wider audience.

I anticipate other changes in the magazine in the future, and am open to new ideas, but let me assure you again that I only intend to build on the excellent magazine that is Dick Stern's legacy, and make it even better.

Allow me to share a few other ideas that we are working on for the *Acoustics Today* "enterprise." Most importantly, we are already working on developing AcousticsToday.org, a new web site that will contain, ultimately in searchable form, all current and past articles from the print magazine. Thanks to the very effective leadership of ASA Editor-in-Chief Allan Pierce, all *Acoustics Today* articles starting with the very first issue are now open access. This is a really important change since it means that articles can be read by ASA members and non-members alike – and our goal is to make the articles from *Acoustics Today* accessible to, and used by, courses, regulators, and anyone else who has an interest in acoustics. This means that *Acoustics Today* has the potential to be a real leader in acoustics and help ASA increase its value to the community well beyond our membership. A related goal is to have AcousticsToday.org the center for that information. Please watch this space for an announcement of our web site – we hope to have it up no later than May 1.

I will only briefly mention two other initiatives that we will be working on over the next months. One is to initiate what we are calling "Acoustics Today Interns." These interns will be ASA graduate students and postdocs selected to work for the magazine for perhaps a year (with an expected work load of no more than a few hours a week, so as not to detract from their education) to do specific tasks that will enhance *Acoustics Today*. This would provide young acousticians with an opportunity to learn about journals and publishing and contribute skills that we would not otherwise have. Interns might be involved in getting *Acoustics Today* (and perhaps ASA) more involved with social media, helping develop *AcousticsToday.org*, and perhaps working with news and other sections of the magazine. More details about Acoustics Today interns and how to apply to be part of the first intern group can be found under Announcements in this issue.

The other project is to develop a reader survey to find out how the magazine is used by members, their views on content, and perhaps solicit articles. This will help us learn how the magazine can best serve ASA members and our community, and we would hope that once this is launched you will fill out the survey.

In summary, my approach to *Acoustics Today* is to make it an even more valuable part of our community. I intend to work with the *Acoustics Today* Advisory Committee to develop ideas, but I also look forward to hearing from readers about their thoughts about the magazine.

Finally, I want to thank Allan Pierce for his exceptional job as acting editor for *Acoustics Today* and for being an invaluable and willing mentor as I learn my new job. And, for any ASA member who wants to find out a bit about me, please don't hesitate to check my website at www.popperlab.umd.edu.

Arthur Popper

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Paul Schomer's comments (Schomer 2013) on my paper (Leventhall 2013a) contain errors, whilst employing two typical methods of false criticism:

1. Create flawed opinions, which were not in the original, and censure these whilst side-stepping the main issue (Straw Man).
2. Undermine credibility by frequent use of "assertion."

Some of the Straw Man examples are:

"Professor Leventhall goes on to assert with absolute certainty that no problems are generated by low frequency sound whatsoever."

"The assertion that every single person world-wide is being affected only by non-acoustic factors is totally unfounded."

"He categorically rules out research in the infrasonic region; that research is unacceptable to him."

These, and other statements, are not in my paper and are not my opinion, but are Paul's creation. Toward the end of his comments, Paul goes off topic, referring to unrelated matters, such as his dispute with Duke Energy.

One of Paul's errors concerns the round window as a shunt which was taken into account in deducing that the levels in the vestibule from heartbeat and breathing are considerably greater than levels from wind turbine noise at similar frequencies.

Geoff Leventhall
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Leventhall, G (2013a) "Concerns about infrasound from wind turbines." *Acoustics Today* 9(3): 30-38

Leventhall, G (2013b) "Infrasound and the ear." Proc 5th International Meeting on Wind Turbine Noise, Denver, Colorado August 2013

Schomer, P (2013) "Comments on recently published article "Concerns about infrasound from wind turbines"." *Acoustics Today* 9(4): 7-9.

Persons wishing to submit "*Letters to the Editor*" are welcome to do so. Letters can be on any topic related to acoustics, and may be comments on material in recent issues.

Letters will be published on a space-available basis. Submitters should feel free to express their opinions, but are expected to follow the normal rules of polite writing. Letters should be free of commercialization. Submission implies giving the Editor and the Publications Office Staff the authority to make minor editing changes to improve the quality of writing and clarity. Inclusion of any letter is at the discretion of the editor. Letters should be no more than 150 words (no figures or mathematical equations) and may include up to two citations in the form of footnotes (citations are not included in the word count). Citations should include full title, all authors, and source.

**Want to Contribute to
Acoustics Today?**

**To suggest ideas for articles
or inquire about authoring one,
contact Arthur Popper at:
apopper@umd.edu**