

From the Editor

Arthur N. Popper



Our goal for *Acoustics Today* (AT) is that each article be interesting to, and readable by, every member of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA).

Thus, I encourage everyone to take a look at each article and each “Sound Perspectives” essay in this issue. I trust most people will find something of interest and/or value in each.

The first article by Grant Eastland discusses computational methods in acoustics. Grant provides an insightful introduction to the topic and explains complex issues in ways that will help many readers appreciate that the techniques discussed could apply to their own research.

We then have a very substantial switch in topics to an article on ultrasonic hearing in non-flying terrestrial mammals. The article, written by three students, M. Charlotte Kruger, Carina Sabourin, and Alexandra Levine, and their mentor, Stephen Lomber, points out that ultrasonic hearing is actually quite common for many mammals, and that such sounds are used for communication. It is also interesting to note that this article may have more student authors than any other article in the history of AT. I point this out to encourage future authors to consider engaging students in articles they write for the magazine.

Our third article is by Linda Polka and Yufang Ruan. Linda and Yufang write about “baby talk.” But this is not what you would immediately think of, baby language. Instead, the authors delve into the fascinating topic that a large number of ASA members are familiar with, how adults talk to babies.

The fourth article also addresses an issue that should be familiar to many (especially older) ASA members, tinnitus. Christopher Spankovich, Sarah Faucette, Celia Escabi, and Edward Lobarinas discuss this very common affliction of the auditory system and explain some of its etiology and describe how tinnitus is studied using animal models.

The fifth article by Johan Sunderg, Björn Lindblom, and Anna-Maria Hefele has another first for AT. Anna-Maria is not only an author but is also the subject of much of the

work described, and the amazing sound files are of her special singing. Although the article focuses, to a degree, on the fascinating topic of how one singer can produce two voices at the same time, it also is a wonderful introduction to the singing voice in general.

The final article is by Lora Van Uffelen. Lora talks about global positioning systems (GPSs) and how positioning is done over land and in the water. Considering that most every reader of AT carries a device using GPS with them most of the time, this article provides insights into how such systems work.

This issue also has three “Sound Perspectives” essays. “Ask an Acoustician” is by Zoi-Heleni Michalopoulou. Eliza (as she is known to friends and colleagues) shares insights into her wonderful career that spans a number of ASA technical committees including Acoustical Oceanography, Signal Processing in Acoustics, and Underwater Acoustics.

The second essay is by Tyrone Porter, chair of the Committee to Improve Racial Diversity and Inclusivity (CIRDI). Tyrone introduced this committee in the December 2020 issue of AT (available at bit.ly/348Gbyk), and he will continue to report on this very important work in subsequent issues. In this issue, he tells us about one of the first CIRDI initiatives, working toward getting more people of color to enter the field of acoustics. As part of this article, Tyrone shares a personal story about how he became an acoustician and uses this to make the point that young people need great opportunities and great mentors to bring them into our field.

The final essay is part of what I hope will be a series over the next few years about how acoustics research is funded. These are in recognition of the fact that a significant number of ASA members pursue funding from various sources for their work, including agencies of the US government. These agencies often have compelling missions that connect to the diverse work of many of our ASA members. Thus, over the next year or two, we will invite senior leaders of these agencies to submit essays with insights about their work and passions and, where possible, information about funding opportunities. The goal is not only to share information about interesting funding organizations but perhaps also to

introduce members to agencies that they might not know about but that might actually be a source of funding for their work or perhaps collaborative work with other members.

The first of these essays is by Debara L. Tucci, director of the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, MD. The NIH is an agency within the US Department of Health and Human Services. I invited Dr. Tucci to contribute this lead essay in part because the NIDCD provided me funding for much of my career but mostly because the NIDCD has supported many ASA members, including a number of our past presidents and our current president. I am therefore quite familiar with the NIDCD's research on hearing and speech sciences as well as the NIDCD's research on communication disorders and in the areas of taste and smell. The NIDCD has a profound impact on ASA members as the source of research and training funds to many members in animal bioacoustics, physiological and psychological acoustics, and speech acoustics.

I would also like to invite ASA members to suggest other funding agencies we might invite to provide essays. Or, if anyone reading this issue of *AT* is a funder, feel free

to suggest that you do an article. The only ground rules are that the article must provide a broad overview of a program or agency that funds a large number of ASA members, perhaps across multiple technical committees. And I'd be glad to have an essay about foundations and funders outside of the United States as long as they have an impact on a substantial number of ASA members.

I also want to emphasize the interest of *AT* in having more essays on diversity and accessibility. This can be about ASA in particular or generally in relationship to STEM issues. If any member has a topic that they would like to write about, please get in touch with me. I am particularly interested in getting essays that discuss personal experiences, as Tyrone wrote in his essay in this issue, but other topics are most welcome.

Finally, I am announcing a one-time *AT* "contest." Somewhere in this issue is an advertisement that is in another language about books. The first person to find that statement and send the correct translation (as per the translation provided by the author of the statement) to the *AT* editor (apopper@umd.edu) will be mentioned in this column (along with the translation) in the summer issue and receive a small prize (a gift card) from the ASA. Good hunting!



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