

## From the Editor

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Arthur N. Popper



This is my last year as editor of *Acoustics Today* (AT). I'll write more about my "retirement" in the winter issue, but I wanted to mention my stepping down because the Acoustical Society of America (ASA) is conducting a search for the next editor and I would like to encourage readers to consider applying. The application deadline is March 15, 2024. Although most of you have hopefully learned about the position when it was first advertised in December, just in case you missed the advertisement, see [acousticalsociety.org/editor-acoustics-today](https://acousticalsociety.org/editor-acoustics-today).

The only thing I will add is that being editor of *AT* has been one of the most interesting and enjoyable positions I've held over my career, and I trust that other ASA members would equally enjoy being *AT* editor. Indeed, being editor of *AT* has enabled me to make what I think is a unique, and hopefully valuable, contribution to the ASA.

What has been particularly exciting about being editor is that I have had the opportunity to learn an immense amount about diverse areas of acoustics, gotten to meet and know a wonderful group of interesting people, and had a grand time helping educate all of us about the amazing diversity of acoustics. And, I have had the honor of working with a truly grand set of people in ASA Publications. They contribute greatly to making *AT* the quality magazine that it is, and they make the job of editor relatively easy.

Finally, as we look for a new *AT* editor, there will be an additional change starting in 2025. *AT* will be published two, not four, times each year. The magazine will still be delivered to every ASA member and be on the web for members and our many other readers. Most important, the ASA is committed to ensuring that the quality of our content will continue to be of immense interest and value to help our readers learn about the amazing breadth of our discipline.

Now, on to the spring 2024 issue of *AT*! This issue, like all the others I have edited, contains a pretty diverse range of topics. The first article is by David R. Barclay, who discusses passive sensing of sounds in the ocean. David shares how, using modern technology, it is possible to learn an immense amount, not just about things in the ocean but also about things that go on in the oceans such as ocean structure, the seabed, and the physical properties of seawater.

Our second and third articles focus on the soundscape during COVID-19 and its consequences. These articles differ in their approaches but reach comparable conclusions related to soundscape changes and societal challenges. In this common context, the importance of soundscape research in supporting the quality of life in urban areas becomes particularly clear.

Our second article is by André Fiebig and Brigitte Schulte-Fortkamp. André and Brigitte have been pioneers in soundscape research and they extend the topic to consider how soundscapes changed during and after COVID. One of the many issues they consider is whether with the changes in society after COVID, the soundscape will return to its pre-COVID characteristics.

In our third article, Yoshimi Hasegawa and Siu-Kit Lau consider soundscape changes during the pandemic. One of the many fascinating things considered by Yoshimi and Siu-Kit is the acoustic changes that occurred during COVID and how humans perceived the changes in the soundscape.

The fourth article returns to the oceans but from the perspective of mud! The authors, Charles W. Holland, Stan E. Dosso, and Jason D. Chaytor, take mud, something most of us were "expert" at as kids, and show how it plays a critical role in the oceans. In their article, the authors consider the nature of mud and its properties and discuss how investigators use acoustics to understand the nature of mud and the oceans.

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In our fifth article, Cynthia F. Moss and Laura N. Kloepper discuss the career of a truly eminent member of ASA, James Simmons. Jim, as many readers know, has spent the past 55 or more years trying to understand the bioacoustics of bats. In their article, Cynthia and Laura highlight just a few of Jim's amazing contributions, starting with his pioneering studies that involved training bats to tell him what they hear and how they echolocate. Jim continues his work even today, and he discussed some of the work in a recent issue of *AT* (see [bit.ly/AT-Simmons](http://bit.ly/AT-Simmons)).

Our last article is one in a series I have informally had on the architectural acoustics of various spaces. In this issue, Gary W. Siebein, Keely Siebein, Jack Wrightson, Joe Solway, and Raj Patel, talk about the acoustics of VERY large spaces such as those holding tens of thousands of people for sporting and other events. Gary and colleagues show that the acoustics in such spaces are very different than in smaller spaces or from spaces that focus on a single type of event, such as music. See related articles at [bit.ly/AT-BuiltSpaces](http://bit.ly/AT-BuiltSpaces).

We have three "Sound Perspectives" (SP) essays. In our first, our "Conversation with a Colleague" (CwC) series, we meet Karl Grosh. Karl is a biomedical engineer who works on transducers. As readers will see, his interests are broad, but Karl has a particular interest in understanding the fundamental structure-function relationships in the mammalian cochlea by building mechanistic mathematical models.

In our next SP, Andy W. L. Chung and Adrian KC Lee discuss acoustics research in Asia. They discuss such

research in various countries by highlighting the work of a few outstanding researchers. This essay comes out of the work of the ASA International Liaison Committee (ILC). Indeed, I was not aware of this committee, and so I found this an interesting essay and one that taught me a great deal.

Our final essay comes from the ASA Student Council and is by graduate student Marissa L. Garcia. Marissa focuses on the topic of inclusion in acoustics. She does this by sharing short essays about five young ASA members who, through their work, incorporate inclusion in various ways.



The banner features the text "JASA EXPRESS LETTERS" in white serif font on a dark blue background. Below this, it says "Rapidly publishing gold open access research in acoustics" in white sans-serif font. At the bottom, a blue button contains the URL "bit.ly/JASA-EL". The background also includes a pattern of small white dots and stylized light blue waveforms at the bottom.