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Last Words

Robert I. Grossman

AJNR Am J Neuroradiol 2007, 28 (8) 1426

doi: <https://doi.org/10.3174/ajnr.A0779>

<http://www.ajnr.org/content/28/8/1426>

This information is current as
of September 9, 2025.

Last Words

It is amazing how time flies. Yesterday (well, 18 months ago) I had the privilege of being chosen Editor-in-Chief of the *American Journal of Neuroradiology*. It is with mixed emotions that I decided to resign that position after having been selected to be Dean and CEO at NYU Medical Center.

I cannot say enough about the *Journal* and the dedicated individuals who enable this publication to be so stellar. Each and every member of the staff and the Senior Editors are exceptional at their tasks. The ASNR should take pride in our publication which, by any metric, is outstanding. I am certain that Mauricio Castillo, the new Editor-in-Chief, will catapult *AJNR* to new heights and accomplish great things.

The *Journal* occupies a unique niche being totally focused on the science, education, and clinical aspects of the entire spectrum of neuroradiology as viewed through the prism of American radiology. This perspective has served us well, but does give one pause considering that more than half of the *Journal's* submissions are now from countries outside of the United States, suggesting that the rest of the world is catching up academically. The quality of our work is still splendid, yet I am afraid that the academic purpose is being subordinated to increasing demands for clinical services, escalating departmental expenses with shrinking revenue, and a relative value unit (RVU)-generated mission—very shortsighted and destructive to our specialty. Academic effort is now more important than ever! It is the currency that validates our existence as well as our RVUs. Peer review is the imprimatur that endorses investigation and *AJNR* is the vehicle that brings research to the reader. My concern is, at a time when NIH funding is challenging and departments of radiology are looking at the short-term bottom line, we could end up losing our scholarly

legacy. This would be most unfortunate. Academic radiology departments should accelerate, rather than diminish, their research and educational missions. Young investigators need to be supported. Seasoned researchers, whose grants are in limbo, require bridge funding. Science and research must be valued. This challenge is the clarion call for academic radiology department chairpersons to demonstrate leadership in prioritizing what is most important.

ASNR has many constituencies and the *Journal* has attempted to satisfy the needs of these groups. Our future is linked to the harmony of these factions. We must try to be strategic and visionary in our policies while at the same time acknowledging our heritage. A society that does not evolve will rusticate. Change is critical but it must have a rationale. My own view is that the more inclusive we are, the stronger we are. The greater the diversity, the wiser we are. The loftier our aspirations, the more successful we become. For us to think we are the same society we were at the time ASNR was founded is to deny the influence of technology and government. The goals of our leadership should be to enable young members with vitality and passion to rise in our organization. Our society, our annual meeting, and the *Journal* must be a beacon for all those whose wish is to participate in a noble enterprise. Now that is a mission.

Last, I want to comment on how much I have enjoyed my brief time as the Editor-in-Chief. I am old enough to remember the founding of the *Journal* and have had the wonderful opportunity to work with all of our gifted editors. The commitment and perseverance to *AJNR* and ASNR of these individuals was remarkable. Many thanks for giving me this opportunity. I hope in a very small way I have enriched this tradition. Here's to *AJNR*—a magnificent legacy—now in the most capable hands of a superb guardian, Mauricio Castillo.

Robert I. Grossman

DOI 10.3174/ajnr.A0779