



## Editorial

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# Psychology & Neuroscience: the birth of a new journal

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Welcome to the first issue of *Psychology & Neuroscience*, a new open access peer-reviewed journal encompassing a large scientific spectrum ranging from psychological areas such as neuropsychological evaluation to molecular biology in the field of hard neurosciences. It is a big challenge to start a scientific journal that plans to incorporate, in a single publication, papers related to multidisciplinary aspects of brain functioning, such as sensation, perception, attention, learning, memory, emotion, motivation, intelligence, thinking, consciousness and language. The journal also recognizes the value of integrating basic and clinical research. Therefore, *Psychology & Neuroscience* considers articles dealing with psychological dysfunctions, including stress, anxiety, depression, drug addiction, and schizophrenia among other psychopathologies, as well as effects on brain functions caused by neurodegeneration, intoxication, metabolic alterations, genetic changes, and other conditions.

*Psychology & Neuroscience* is an initiative of a Brazilian neuroscience group with an educational background in psychology and working in psychological departments. This group gathered for the first time in 2002 at the IX meeting of the “Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-Graduação em Psicologia” (ANPEPP, National Association of Research and Graduate Education in Psychology), and after two very successful publication endeavors – thematic number in the journal *Psicologia USP* (Ventura, 2006) and a book (Landeira-Fernandez & Silva, 2007) – it felt the drive and maturity to launch the project of this new journal in 2006, at the XI ANPEPP meeting in Florianópolis, Brazil. Below is a photograph of this group taken in May 17th 2006, when the decision to start this journal was made.

The initial purpose of the journal was to improve the impact of neuroscientific knowledge in psychological education, since intersection between psychology and neuroscience in Brazil and other Latin American countries

is still incipient (Sanchez-Sosa & Valderrama-Hurbe, 2001). Therefore, a neuroscience journal coming from the perspective of psychology would certainly underscore the importance of housing neuroscience research in psychology departments. As we started to work in this project, we noted that although there are a number of neuroscience journals in our community, only a few of them are dedicated to publish experimental and theoretical research papers in the interdisciplinary field of psychology and neuroscience. For that reason, we decided to create *Psychology & Neuroscience* as an international journal using English as the main language of publication.

The relationship between psychology and the neural sciences is not new. As a basic science, psychology was born in a physiology department at the University of Leipzig, Germany, where Gustav Fechner launched the fundamentals of psychophysics and Whilliam Wundt founded the first laboratory for Experimental Psychology. Also, the Russian physiologist Ivan Petrovich Pavlov discovered the conditioned reflex at the Institute of Experimental Medicine in Saint-Petersburg. As an applied science, psychology was born in neurological hospitals. That is the case of Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, who worked in the Vienna General Hospital and in Paris, in the Salpêtrière Hospital with Jean-Martin Charcot. Currently, neuroscience continues to be a fundamental component in psychology education programs in American (Norcross, Kohout, & Wicherski, 2005) and European (Lunt, 1998) universities. As we approach the end of the first decade of the 21st century, the progress in the understanding of human behavior and of the brain mechanisms associated with its cognitive and affective aspects is remarkable. There is no doubt that as we enter this new era, the panorama for further growth in psychology and neuroscience is fantastic.

This remarkable advance has been fostered by the



**Photo 1:** Working Group present at the XI ANPEPP meeting in Florianópolis, Brazil. First row, sitting from the left: Silvio Morato, Luiz G. Gawryszewski, Sérgio S. Fukusima, Marcelo Fernandes da Costa, M. Ângela G. Feitosa and M. Teresa Araujo Silva. Standing in the back row from the left: J. Landeira-Fernandez, A. Pedro de Mello Cruz, Sebastião S. Almeida, Dora S. Ventura, Rochele Fonseca and Clarice Gorenstein.

development of digital media that enable fast access to scientific information. In this context, the open-access system is an effective tool to accomplish this endeavor. *Psychology & Neuroscience* adopts this system, which allows any article to be accessible online, anywhere, by anyone, at no cost. One of the main consequences of this widespread sharing of knowledge is the fact that open-access articles are cited more frequently (Lawrence, 2001).

The quality of the work published is one of the main concerns for a scientific journal and the manuscript peer review process is a vital element to achieve excellence in the publishing process (Hernon & Schwartz, 2001). Therefore, our international editorial board members play a key role in this peer review practice. Each manuscript submitted to *Psychology & Neuroscience* is sent to two reviewers with expertise in the subject. Acceptance or rejection is at the discretion of the editors and is based on the reviewers' recommendations. Upon acceptance, each paper is copyedited for grammar, clarity, precision, and coherence of the text.

We wish our readers a nice and fruitful reading. It is our hope that this publication will stimulate other

authors to submit their scientific work. Finally, we would like to take the opportunity to thank all authors and anonymous reviewers, as well as librarians, graphic designers, and other professionals who actively contributed to the production of this first issue of *Psychology & Neuroscience*.

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