

“**E**ndnote” was a title I had reserved for short notes that followed editorials in an issue. The fact that this is at the beginning of an issue is not a good sign.

I am sorry to report that this is the final issue of **ecp**. This decision reflects budgetary pressures for both of our sponsors, the American College of Physicians–American Society of Internal Medicine and the Alliance of Community Health Plans. At the same time, I am happy to report that the leadership of both organizations has consistently expressed how pleased they were with our efforts to make challenging material accessible and interesting without sacrificing scientific rigor; particularly our emphasis on clear writing, use of graphics, primers to help readers develop critical reading skills, and journal sections such as “Back of the Envelope” and “Marketing Medicine.”

This creativity reflects the hard work of many individuals whose efforts I greatly appreciate. The contributing authors immediately come to mind, many of whom had to work much harder than expected in responding to multiple requests for revision. Nevertheless, judging by their response to an e-mail we sent about the journal’s closure, most found the experience positive (see soon-to-be-written Primer on Selection Bias). I particularly want to thank Drs. Schwartz and Woloshin for their help in shaping **ecp** and for guiding the journal while I was away on sabbatical. The editors you find on the masthead and Dr. Black, one of the original editors, also come to mind—all of whom worked harder than expected ( $P < 0.0001$ ). Then there is a less visible group whose contribution is every bit as important—the editorial staff over the past 3 years: Linda Baczek, Deborah Johnson, Jennifer Snide, and Nikki Kanakis. Finally, I want to express my appreciation to those in Philadelphia who transmitted our ideas to paper—in particular, our editorial production manager, Mary Boylan.

Not surprisingly, this final issue also inaugurates a novel (not mine) idea: what was to be a new section on using federal health databases. The purpose was to make readers aware of the wealth of public data that are now readily available and to help them learn how to take advantage. We planned to publish articles for each featured database—the first to describe the database, and the second to provide an example of research performed using the data. In this issue, we include as much of the planned material as possible—an overview of the Health Care Cost and Utilization Project and five abstracts from Web publications that focus on other databases (the complete papers are available on the **ecp** Web site <http://ecp.acponline.org>).

I hope you find it useful. And thanks for being a reader.



H. Gilbert Welch, MD, MPH  
*Editor*