

## EDITORIAL

This issue of the *Digest* and the issue to follow take "Optics at APL" as their theme. Optics as a branch of physics has a long and honorable tradition at The Johns Hopkins University. Henry A. Rowland's 1880s engine for ruling optical diffraction gratings is still resident on the Homewood Campus at the hall bearing Rowland's name. Ebert's folded optical monochromator carries its inventor's name and forms the basis for large numbers of spectrometers currently at work in science and technology. In addition, the presence of the Space Telescope Institute on the Johns Hopkins campus is not unrelated to the history of spectroscopy in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. On the more technical and en-

gineering side of the subject, optical instruments and sensors are found in a broad range of modern technological systems. William J. Tropf, Guest Editor of this issue and the next, has assembled examples of optical research and development at APL ranging from basic materials science and biomedical research through optical computing and optical sensing in space, in the atmosphere, and under the sea. His guest editorial summarizes the optics-oriented papers in this issue and places the work into some programmatic context at APL.

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