

# nature REVIEWS

## NATURE REVIEWS MICROBIOLOGY

### EDITORIAL OFFICES

**LONDON** NatureReviews@nature.com The Macmillan Building,  
4 Crinan Street, London N1 9XW  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7843 4624; Fax: +44 (0)20 7843 3629

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4 Crinan Street, London N1 9XW Tel: +44 (0)20 7833 4000;  
Fax: +44 (0)20 7843 4596/7

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**US HEAD OF DISPLAY ADVERTISING:** Stephen Schwartz

Tel: +1 212 726 9256; Fax: +1 212 696 9481

**EUROPEAN HEAD OF DISPLAY ADVERTISING:** Gerard Preston

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7843 4965; Fax: +44 (0) 20 7843 4749

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER:** Claire Hines

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**SOUTHERN GERMANY, SWITZERLAND, FRANCE, BELGIUM:**

Sabine Hugi-Fürst Tel: +41 52761 3386; Fax: +41 52761 3419

**JAPAN:** nature@naturejpn.com

Rinoko Asami, Nature Japan KK

Tel: +81 3 3267 8751; Fax: +81 3 3267 8746

Original design by Jane Walker

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Printed in Wales by Cambrian Printers on acid-free paper

In our launch issue (October, 2003), *Nature Reviews Microbiology* was delighted to announce a major publishing partnership with the World Health Organization Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Disease (TDR). Regular readers will have noticed the first outcome of this collaboration — a two-page monthly section called ‘Disease Watch’ that updates readers on the latest developments in the world of infectious diseases — this month focusing on human schistosomiasis (page 12).

One key aim of *Nature Reviews Microbiology* is to promote the study of infectious diseases that afflict marginalized populations, an objective that is closely aligned with an essential component of the work of the TDR — the communication of issues that are relevant to tropical infectious diseases. In this issue, we are pleased to launch the second part of our collaborative venture: a review series focusing on tropical infectious diseases that impose an inequitable burden on the world’s poor and disadvantaged. On page 15, in the first article in this series, Daniel Hartl discusses the origin of malaria and the implications for understanding and controlling the continuing upsurge in the prevalence of this disease today.

A major concern with many important infectious diseases, including malaria, is the problem of antimicrobial resistance. In the second article of our series on anti-infectives (page 73), David Livermore poses the crucial question of whether efforts to reduce antibiotic use will reverse resistance trends, and, if not, how will clinicians cope with the loss of therapeutic options — especially when much of ‘big pharma’ is abandoning antibiotic development?



### Editor

David O'Connell

### Associate Editors

Susan Jones

Sheilagh Clarkson