

Research with clinical detachment

Fred S. Rosen

AIDS Research. Editor Joseph A. Sonnabend.

Mary Ann Liebert. 4/yr. North America \$95, elsewhere \$123.

Complement: Laboratory and Clinical Research. Editor U. E. Nydegger.

Karger. 4/yr. SwFr. 214, \$102 (institutional); SwFr 150, \$71.40 (individual).

JMCI: The Journal of Molecular and Cellular Immunology.

Editor-in-chief Charles A. Janeway, Jr.

Springer-Verlag. 6/yr. DM416, \$128.

Disease Markers. Editors H. M. Dick, C. M. Steel and R. A. Gatti.

Wiley. 4/yr. UK £60 (institutional), £45 (individual), £30 (student); North America \$115 (institutional), \$86.25 (individual), \$57.50 (student).

Experimental and Clinical Immunogenetics. Editor-in-chief K. Bauer.

Karger. 4/yr. SwFr. 214, \$102 (institutional); SwFr. 150, \$71.40 (individual).

Journal of Experimental Pathology. Editor Robert M. Friedman.

Mary Ann Liebert. 4/yr. North America \$95, elsewhere \$123.

New immunology journals keep appearing with Malthusian enthusiasm. Some of them clearly fill a need in a still rapidly expanding scientific discipline; for others an early demise is devoutly to be wished. Take *AIDS Research*. Every major scientific and medical hebdomadal as well as a number of monthly journals have publicly



stated that they are giving top priority to reporting basic clinical advances in work on the disease. The appearance of this new journal has not so far materially aided the effort. A large part of *AIDS Research* has been devoted to hypothesis, guidelines, commentary and case reports. I have long ago taken against the camera-ready format and this addition to that travesty on the printer's art only reinforces my prejudices. AIDS is a vexing and frightening disease. A solution to the problems of prevention and therapy is urgently needed. Nothing could be more gratifying now than to superannuate this journal.

Not since the Lollards declined to participate in the performances of the Corpus Christi plays has any subject been scrutinized with more scholastic vigour than the complement system. Complement research has survived eight decades without a journal entitled *Complement* and the unheralded appearance at this late date of such a journal raises the spectre of this field's becoming decadent. Frankly, *Complement* is thin in original articles but so far rich in review articles, meeting reports and abstracts from meetings. It had unfortunate beginnings in a historical perspective on the subject by the late Manfred Mayer, that reminded me of the quip that a historian is one who predicts history. The genes of the complement proteins are now being cloned with great rapidity, giving rise to a great deal of excitement in the field, but so far *Complement* has not been

the vehicle for publishing this innovative stuff.

On the other hand, Springer-Verlag has brought forth a highly successful new journal, *JMCI: The Journal of Molecular and Cellular Immunology*. Richard Gershon, the founding editor, had the bright and invigorating idea of publishing reviewers' critiques and the authors' response at the end of each article. Interspersed among the original papers is lively invited commentary. Following Gershon's untimely death, almost coincident with the appearance of the first issue, Charles A. Janeway Jr has continued to steer this journal in the right direction. The content of *JMCI* is of high quality. Lag time from final submission to publication is minimal. The composition of the editorial board and editorial advisory board is outstanding. This journal should be added to every library that aspires to keep up to date with high-quality science.

There was a time when I thought I could define "immunogenetics". The word now

conjures up confused images in my mind. Is it about immune response genes; or linkage markers of immunologically relevant proteins with diseases; or the molecular biology of immunoglobulin genes and T-cell receptor genes; or genetic polymorphisms of cell surface antigens detected with monoclonal antibodies; or all of these things? A large body of information is accumulating with the hori-



zons expanding faster than can be properly assimilated. Of the two new entries in this field, *Disease Markers* and *Experimental and Clinical Immunogenetics*, the former has a slight edge in the breadth and quality of its contents. Both, however, include good review articles and meeting reports, and the editorial boards have a very international flavour which is reflected in the broad geographical origin of the contributions. Both are published quarterly and appear to be good value.

I suppose one should be cheered by the emergence of a publication covering experimental pathology as a whole. In this time of increasing specialization and rising barriers between scientific disciplines, it is very courageous to start up such a journal. The prolixity of the contents of *Journal of Experimental Pathology* is so great as to flatter the appetite of dilettantes. Many good contributions appear in this quarterly, and if it survives the temper of these times I will be gratified — but surprised. □

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Up with the trends

Robert Freedman

BioEssays: News and Reviews in Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology.

Editor-in-chief W.J. Whelan. Cambridge University Press. 12/yr in two volumes. UK £34 (institutional), £15 (individual); North America \$70 (institutional), \$24.50 (individual).

BioEssays is the offspring of the ICSU (International Council of Scientific Unions), just as *TIBS* (*Trends in Biochemical Sciences*), the first of the successful *Trends* journals, was the offspring of the International Union of Biochemistry. This is stated explicitly in the opening editorials of the first issue, where it is also acknowledged that ICSU has made this entry into publishing in order to increase its visibility, its influence — and its income.

Comparison with the *Trends* series is unavoidable; the journals are even published in the same city (Cambridge, England) though by different presses, and the founding editor-in-chief of *BioEssays*, (W.J. Whelan) was the first editor-in-chief of *TIBS*. So it is no surprise that in format and flavour *BioEssays* is familiar. The journal is an unglossy monthly, of about 50 pages per issue, each containing six short reviews (four to five A4 pages), plus features, comment, historical notes and book reviews.

The crucially individual aspect of *BioEssays* is indicated on the front cover by a series of inscrutable acronyms (IUBS, IUPS, IUPHAR, IUNS, IUIS . . .) which refer to the nine distinct international scientific unions which are promoting the journal. Between these these organizations represent the whole range of the biological sciences, and the journal's sponsors have clearly intended it to tap the growing body of work in which