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Editorial

Bringing Pathobiology into Focus

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This issue marks the midpoint of the 5 year term of the editors of *Laboratory Investigation*. As envisioned in a January 2004 editorial by Editor-in-Chief James Crawford,[1] we have worked toward the goal of publishing original biomedical research relating to mechanisms of human disease as well as new methods of diagnosis. The high quality of manuscripts submitted and published[2] as well as a marked increase in subscriptions speak to the success the journal has enjoyed. We have therefore chosen to build on this success with a new feature entitled *Pathobiology in Focus*.

We view this as a forward step in the evolution of academic pathology and pathology journals as enablers of human disease-oriented research.[3] Until now, there has not been a suitable forum for consideration of topics critical to the future of such research. *Pathobiology in Focus* is intended to fill this void by (i) driving discussion and presenting novel hypotheses of disease mechanisms; (ii) promoting translation of basic research findings into progress in diagnosis and analysis of human disease; and (iii) making complex areas, including technological breakthroughs, accessible to practicing and investigative pathologists.

We hope to publish 8–10 *Pathobiology in Focus* articles each year. These will be subject to rigorous peer-review with the goal of providing the USCAP membership and our general readership with cutting edge articles. These will be limited to 2–3 printed pages, and there will be a focus on accessibility to all readers in this era when research is becoming increasingly specialized and our readers have greater demands on their time. To oversee the development of *Pathobiology in Focus* and ensure the uniform quality of these pieces, we have assembled a separate editorial team consisting of Jerrold R Turner, MD, PhD, The University of Chicago; Anirban Maitra, MBBS, Johns Hopkins University; Yasodha Natkunam, MD, PhD, Stanford University; Brian P Rubin, MD, PhD, University of Washington; Mark A Rubin, MD, Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School; and Michael A Teitell, MD, PhD, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.

Pathobiology in Focus articles will be succinct discussions of disease pathogenesis. Articles in preparation at this time include critical reviews of germinal center lymphoma development, gene regulation in airway disease, roles of intracellular kinases in glucose homeostasis and diabetes, and pathogenesis and genetics of dysplasia in inflammatory bowel disease. Where appropriate, these features will include figures designed to enhance mechanistic-understanding. Animated versions of these figures will be available for download and use in presentations by readers. (An example of this type of figure has been included in the June mini-review 'The oligopeptide transporter hPepT1: Gateway to the innate immune response' http://www.nature.com/labinvest/journal/v86/n6/extref/3700423x5.ppt.) Thus, one goal of *Pathobiology in Focus* will be to facilitate the role of the pathologist as a teacher by providing critical reviews of pathobiology along with advanced teaching tools.

Pathobiology in Focus features will also include discussions of seminal technological advances, including their potential to change our understanding of disease pathogenesis, enhance diagnosis and guide therapy. Topics of future articles that will address these issues include the biology and epidemiology of community-acquired methicillin-resistant *S. aureus*, approaches to detection of novel mutations in solid tumors, and a critical analysis that will help readers understand the development of drug resistance to novel therapeutic agents.

In addition, *Pathobiology in Focus* will serve as a forum for forward-looking commentaries on major breakthroughs, such as the potential of stem cells in regenerative biology. Finally, *Pathobiology in Focus* will be a home for insightful debate regarding human disease mechanisms. We are eagerly anticipating a bright future for this new feature and look forward to it becoming a focal point of each issue of *Laboratory Investigation*.

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