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FOCUS | Repeat instability

“*Nature Reviews Genetics* is all about the big picture. What are the foundations and implications of today’s genetics? What’s new? Where is the excitement and controversy?” These were the opening lines of our first ever From the editors (then known as In this issue) 5 years ago. Yes, *Nature Reviews Genetics* is 5 years old! As could be expected, the journal has matured. As could be hoped for, it has become well-established. Five years on, our goals have not changed. We continue to be “all about the big picture” and to provide coverage that ranges from the foundations of genetics to the cutting-edge, emerging topics. And so over the past 5 years we have brought you articles on the history of genetics to emphasize how it affects our thinking today, alongside reviews on new and emerging topics such as systems or network biology. Perhaps uniquely for a reviews’ journal, we have continued to publish articles on policy and bioethics, providing our readers with coverage of topics that they might otherwise find difficult to gain access to. We have tackled controversies in genetics by exploring a new format — the Viewpoint — in which we have posed questions to experts representing different aspects of a given debate. A notable example of this was published in October 2003, in our Focus issue on Genetic modification.

We intend to continue with coverage of the traditional, the sometimes-forgotten, the cutting-edge and the controversial. After all, this is what genetics is all about.

Many of these characteristics can be attributed to the topic of this month’s Focus issue: Repeat instability — a unique dynamic mutation mechanism that underlies many disorders characterized by muscular and neuronal degeneration. As usual, there is an accompanying web focus which can be found at www.nature.com/nrg/focus/repeatinstability.



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