

A Tribute to Exciting Biology

Overview

How do we pay homage to 30 years of great biology in *Cell*? This was the question that the editorial team faced when we first began thinking about how best to celebrate the journal's anniversary this month. After considerable discussion, we settled on the idea of featuring some of the memorable papers from *Cell*'s 30 year history, illustrating the broad range of fields covered in *Cell* and how far biology has advanced over the past 30 years.

Choosing a handful of papers from the vast number of high-quality studies that *Cell* has published was not an easy task. We could easily have filled ten similar issues with excellent papers that have been highly influential in their fields and beyond. Rather than aiming to choose the "best" or "most significant" papers, we set out with the premise that we would select papers or sets of papers from a wide range of areas and from different periods in *Cell*'s history. After many enjoyable hours poring over past issues of *Cell*, lengthy animated discussions within the editorial team and with external advisors, and then a somewhat painful process of whittling down to a manageable number, we found ourselves with the list of 28 papers you see featured in this special review issue and supplement.

The review issue presents 16 review articles on the topics covered by the selected papers. These reviews place the contribution of the selected papers in the context of historical progress in the field and summarize our current understanding. The topics covered span many different areas of biology, including membrane trafficking, apoptosis, cell cycle, and telomeres, to name but a few. As well as illustrating the breadth of *Cell*'s coverage over the past 30 years, the aim of this collection of reviews, as for any *Cell* review issue, is to provide a

valuable resource of information about the current standing of research in the featured areas.

To accompany the original research papers, we have asked the authors of each of the studies to write a brief commentary about their activities and thoughts at the time they carried out their research. These commentaries give personal perspectives on how the ideas for the studies were initiated, how hurdles can be overcome, and in some cases how a splash of serendipity and a keen observational eye can make all the difference on the way to an exciting discovery. The commentaries, along with the first page of the original papers, are included in the special supplement that accompanies this issue of *Cell*. Free access to the commentaries and full text of the original papers is also available online at www.cell.com. To help with crossreferencing, the online table of contents of both the review issue and the supplement highlight the relevant complementary papers, commentaries, and reviews.

We hope that you will enjoy the overall combination of science, history, and personal perspectives that this set of reviews, original papers, and commentaries provides and that thinking back about these papers and how they contributed to biology will be as rewarding for you as it was for us. None of this would have been possible without the support and input of the scientific community. We are infinitely grateful to the authors and reviewers who have contributed to this special issue of *Cell* and to all the issues published over the past 30 years. Their efforts have ensured that we truly have had, and still have, a journal of exciting biology. We are all looking forward to the next 30 years and the excitement they will undoubtedly bring.