

Remarks

On the occasion of my retirement as Editor-in-Chief of *The Journal of Cell Biology*, I was asked by some of the Associate Editors to recount a bit of the history and growth of *The Journal* during my tenure. *The Journal of Biophysical and Biochemical Cytology* was the precursor to *The Journal of Cell Biology* in its current form. The original journal was created in 1955 by a group of pioneering individuals who had a common interest in defining the components of cells. The original group of scientists who served as the Editorial Board for that journal included Richard Bear, H. Stanley Bennett, Albert L. Lehninger, George E. Palade, Keith R. Porter, Francis O. Schmitt, Franz Schrader, and Arnold M. Seligman. These scientists are responsible for creating a forum that defined the area that became pivotal for understanding contemporary biology, the discipline of cell biology. The editorial activities of *The Journal* were guided by Raymond D. Griffiths who served as the Executive Editor to direct the manuscripts for consideration by the Editorial Board and external reviewers. *The Journal* was, and is still owned by The Rockefeller University. As *The Journal* and its contents matured into the discipline that became recognized as cell biology, *The Journal* changed its name from *The Journal of Biophysical and Biochemical Cytology* to reflect the recognition of the discipline of cell biology, as well as its association with a new society bearing the same name. A formal association was established between *The Journal* and the American Society for Cell Biology that provided for *The Journal* to be “edited in cooperation with The American Society for Cell Biology.”

The activities of the Editorial Board were managed successfully for many years by Raymond B. Griffiths. I can still recall my first visit to The Rockefeller University in 1970 when I was introduced to Raymond Griffiths in his office on the fifth floor of the South Laboratory. At that time, Ray directed all of the manuscript traffic associated with *The Journal of Cell Biology* from a small office that was armed with rubber bands, paper clips, freshly sharpened pencils, a few ball point pens, and shelves of packing materials. Those items were the weapons of the trade, and they were masterfully applied by Ray Griffiths together with his charm, good taste, and an unwavering respect for the experimental scientist. When Ray retired from his position as Executive Editor of *The Journal of Cell Biology*, an Executive Committee of the Editorial Board was appointed to direct the activities of the Editorial Office that was located at The Rockefeller University. Sam Silverstein served as the Chairman of the Executive Committee, and when he stepped down in 1981, I was asked to serve in that position. During that year, I worked together with members of The American Society of Cell Biology, members of *The Journal of Cell Biology* Editorial Board and Bradley Hundley (Director of The Rockefeller University Press), to discuss the type of leadership that we felt would best serve the needs of *The Journal* and the community. That Committee included myself, Bill Brinkley, Marilyn Farquhar, Jim Jamieson, Dick McIntosh, David Sabatini, Sam Silverstein, Bradley Hundley, and others. From those discussions, we decided to select an Editor-in-Chief to direct the activities for the Editorial Board, as well as to take new initiatives for selecting the scientific content that would be housed in *The Journal*. Further, the Editor-in-Chief would be selected by a Committee consisting of a member of *The Journal of Cell Biology* Editorial Board, a member of The American Society for Cell Biology, and the Director of The Rockefeller University Press; with the final selection of an Editor-in-Chief being subject to the approval of The Rockefeller University. This mechanism was put into place so that the Editor-in-Chief would be insulated from the direct influence of members of The American Society for Cell Biology or members of The Rockefeller University community. In essence, that selection mechanism insured that *The Journal of Cell Biology* would go forward as a strong forum that would be independent of direct influence from the related parties. I was selected by the Committee to serve as Editor-in-Chief, and I served in this capacity from 1983 until January 1, 1999. During my tenure, there have been four Presidents of the University, three Directors of the Press, and sixteen Presidents of The ASCB. Through all of these transitions, I received guidance and support from my friend and colleague, David Luck, who passed away last year.

An early initiative was to create an Appointments Committee to select members to serve on the Editorial Board. This Committee consisted of representatives of The American Society of Cell Biology and *The Journal of Cell Biology* Editorial Board. This mechanism for selecting Editorial Board members was very successful from its inception until the unfortunate decision was made by The American Society for Cell Biology to end the long standing cooperative association that existed between the Society and *The Journal*. Secondly, we decided to select a second tier of individuals to serve as Associate Editors who could work together with me to direct the editorial selection process for the manuscripts that would be published in *The Journal*. The initial group included Günter Blobel, Joe Gall, Luis Glaser, Tom Pollard, and Harold Weintraub. We took an additional initiative to appoint Kai Simons, a member of the European cell biology community, to handle papers submitted directly to his office in Heidelberg, Germany. In effect, a distributed editorial management process with a computerized tracking system was created so that manuscripts could be submitted to any one of the Associate Editors' offices for subsequent handling and consideration. Recently, a significant management change was made by hiring a talented young scientist, Mike Rossner, to serve as the Managing Editor for a centralized office in New York City.

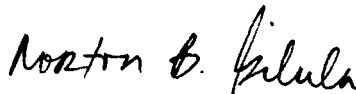
In those early days, we made a commitment to treat every manuscript that was submitted as if it were a manuscript that was submitted from our own laboratories. An effort was made to give every author the same consideration that we, as working scientists, would like to have extended to our own manuscripts. Furthermore, we accepted the fact that mistakes

can be made in the manuscript review process, and we were prepared to do whatever possible to correct mistakes that were made. Finally, we felt that decisions should be made as quickly as possible to give authors every opportunity to direct the ultimate fate of their manuscripts.

The multi-tiered system that we created was very attractive to us at that time, and still is for many reasons, since it enabled us to participate in the editorial process much like we function together as colleagues in the context of Study Section grant reviews. In essence, we rely on the expertise that is appointed to the Editorial Board to select the manuscripts that are submitted from the diverse areas of cell biology. We were guided at that time to a large extent, and even more today, by selecting the papers that are not only of an acceptable scientific standard, but those papers that offer some interesting and novel insights. Along the way, *The Journal* went through various cosmetic changes: a change from a light blue, small format to an "orange" 8 1/2 × 11 format, from a plain cover to a cover with a photo highlight, from one issue per month to an issue every two weeks. However, the most challenging and gratifying accomplishment was to continue to apply the highest standards for selecting the exciting progress that is being made in cell biology.

In Appreciation...

Now that I have retired as the first Editor-in-Chief for *The Journal of Cell Biology*, I am leaving with a sense of tremendous gratitude to the generosity of all the members of our international community of cell biology who have unselfishly given their time to *The Journal of Cell Biology*. In addition to the original Associate Editors, a number of other outstanding individuals served as Associate Editors including Richard Anderson, Don Cleveland, Werner Franke, Elaine Fuchs, Ira Mellman, James Nelson, Lou Reichardt, Randy Schekman, and Ken Yamada. Ken served with me on the Board since 1981! I am proud that we have been able to nurture the evolution of *The Journal of Cell Biology* through a period of time when the excitement of discovery in cell biology has never been greater. We have guided *The Journal* through this era without compromising our commitment to maintaining *The Journal* as a strong independent forum that is guided by members of the community who are engaged each day in carrying out research in their own laboratories. This has created a spirit of commitment and pride amongst members of the Editorial Board, members of the community who have served as reviewers, and authors; a relationship that has been truly unique in the contemporary world of scientific journalism. Finally, I am very confident that the current group of individuals who are serving as Associate Editors will maintain the commitment to our standards of excellence, and to improve *The Journal of Cell Biology* so that it can continue to serve as a major forum for publishing novel and exciting contributions in cell biology. We are fortunate that Ira Mellman will serve as Editor-in-Chief through the next transition period since it will be a critical time to take new initiatives so that *The Journal of Cell Biology* will exceed what has been accomplished thus far.



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