Editorial

I am stepping down as Chief Editor of *Molecular Neuropsychiatry* with the last issue of 2019, and the stewardship of the journal will be taken over by two very capable co-editors, Joel Gelernter and Renato Polimanti. I wish to devote the last few years of my academic pursuits to finishing up my “Palau study.” I am pleased to report that the journal is doing well, and by the summer we had enough papers to finish out 2019. *Molecular Neuropsychiatry* should have an impact factor in the not too distant future. I will continue to help out as an editorial board member. I owe a great deal of debt to the board as well as many others for making the journal viable, including my colleagues at Karger. I am looking forward to the continual success of the journal under the leadership of Drs. Gelernter and Polimanti.

After the Palau study is a “wrap” I will fully retire from academics. But first a brief review of a stirring sojourn in science. To begin, I cannot appreciate enough how fortunate I have been on my academic journey which focused on the molecular genetics of schizophrenia and manic depression. There are too many people to thank, but I would like to single out Ray White (recently deceased), Jean-Marc Lalouel, and Mark Leppert for teaching me molecular and mathematical genetics and launching my academic career. I need to give a very warm thanks to Dr. Anthony Polloi (deceased in 1997), whom I consider to be the “father” of the Palau study. Starting in the early 1970s, he made a family tree of every psychiatric patient he treated in Palau. The numerous pedigrees he constructed laid the foundation of our study.

The shifts in technology for the molecular study of genetic diseases continues to amaze me. I was there in what seems like only yesterday when DNA markers were first

applied to genetics: the laborious restriction fragment length polymorphisms (RFLPs) for genotyping. Then the advance of PCR-based DNA markers made genotyping “a piece of cake” compared to RFLPs. Next were SNP chips or SNP arrays, and then finally whole exome or genome sequencing. Among other breakthroughs we now have pluripotent stem cells (iSPCs) that can be programmed into neuronal networks or even brain organoids. These studies will be invaluable for understanding many of the gene variants predisposing to psychiatric disease, and the journal hopes to publish its fair number of these findings.

One of my favorite Winston Churchill quotes is “If you find a job you really love you’ll never work again.” For most of my research career this has certainly applied to me. I recall many days waking up in a hurry to get to my lab so that the fun could begin! I am proud to be part of the field that has so far identified ~10% of the genetic variance in schizophrenia and a significant percent in bipolar disorder. While I will not be a participant that will uncover most if not all of the remaining genetic liability, I will assert that I have done my duty. To wit, I had the good fortune to hear the late Sidney Brenner give a talk early in my career. At the end of his lecture he was asked a difficult question to which it was obvious he would not be able to respond. He quipped “it is incumbent for each generation to leave questions to be answered for the next generation”! In my academic afterlife I will have many different pursuits. And new ones may come along. As Shakespeare said “There are more things in heaven and earth... Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.” The problem with full retirement is that you never get a day off!

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