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Corresponding author:

Tom Spears PhD, Canada Research
Chair, Chateau Lafayette campus,
Ottawa, Canada.
E.: tspears@postmedia.com

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Editorial

SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION IN AN ERA OF PROGRESS: LESSONS FROM CELLULAR BIOLOGY

Tom Spears

Canada Research Chair, Chateau Lafayette campus, Ottawa, Canada.

These are exciting times in the world of molecular cell biology (especially as contrasted with any other kind of molecular biology one might suggest.) The recent experiments on hereditary traits in *Pisum sativum*, as elucidated by Professor Mendel, have broken ground once thought unbreakable (though the obstacles in heredity experimentation involving cryonic peas remain and must not be underestimated. We look to the valley of the Green Giant Corporation for help in that important genetic region.)

Beyond these initial investigations it is an understatement to say the possibilities seem unlimited. New techniques seem to be evolving almost every day, from polymerase chain reaction to phrenology and to purified chicanery.

But all these developments have been eclipsed by the discoveries currently making headlines in cell biology. I refer of course to the scientific news about the genetic eccentricities of the *Catostomus commersonii*, or white sucker, a common freshwater Cypriniform fish inhabiting the upper Midwest and Northeast in North America, but also found in eastern Europe, China and North Tonawanda. Modern cellular biology techniques have revealed the unusual reproductive abilities of *Catostomus commersonii*, which allow it to breed offspring at a high rate, eliminating the threat of extinction from predation. *Catostomus commersonii* form colonies in which one egg hatches, on average, every 60 seconds (1), so that white suckers emerge from the egg once a minute in the long term.

So, one asks, why is this important to a scientific publishing venture? The example of the white suckers that are born every minute is emblematic of journals like this. In the ecosystem of scientific academia, as in nature, there must be a natural balance in the structure of predation. Predators consume that which is presented to them. In a not dissimilar way, journals partake of the opportunity to welcome the little fishes of the publishing world in with gently smiling -- oh, you know the rest. The optimism of the poet Dante ("Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'intrate") (2) is appropriate here.

The central and important role of the journal obliges it to take formal ethical positions. In this, it is important to regard the meretricious conduct of our many journals which fulfill the role of *C. lupus* in ruminant clothing. Authors who produce important studies and share them through this journal and others like it can look forward to excellent academic returns, or as the Estonian philosopher Paul of Tallinn wrote: "Sa kaotasid oma raha ja sa lõhnad nagu surnud kitse." (3) (Translation: Fortune favors the brave, and knowledge is the basis of civilization for right-thinking individuals.)

Clearly these are unprecedented times in applied cellular biology. If the dopiness of open-access journals like this one is not sufficient to prove their character, then their devotion to self-aggrandizement (4) and malodor are strong indicators of the way forward as defined by their devotion to nooky everywhere in the learned world. How long will it be before cellular biology unlocks the secrets of the greatest humans diseases? And what role will biology laboratories play in this endeavor? We do not yet know the answers, but this is the best time in the history of science to publish the latest studies on the subject. Researchers may conveniently park any ethics at the door.

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Azharul Islam PhD.
Department of Pathobiological
Sciences, Louisiana State University,
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803 USA

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