

# Introduction

The history of cancer is spectacularly told in Siddhartha Mukherjee's Pulitzer Prize-winning story *The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer* and in a riveting documentary from Ken Burns and Barak Goodman that followed publication of the book. Mukherjee traces the origins of cancer back to tumors observed in Egyptian mummies, then fast-forwards to the remarkable advances in cancer research over the past century.

Now we present the inaugural volume of the *Annual Review of Cancer Biology*. Although one might wonder why this journal does not have a similarly long history, there are reasons for the delay. Quite simply, cancer biology came of age as a distinct field only recently, emerging from independent efforts in tumor virology, chemical carcinogenesis, cell biology, molecular biology, and other disciplines that have come together in a remarkable and entirely unpredictable way. The past decade has seen a further convergence with cancer drug development and clinical practice, as insights emerging from cancer biology have resulted in dozens of new medicines that prolong the lives of cancer patients around the world today. Harold Varmus touches on many of these themes in his outstanding autobiographical contribution to this first volume of this journal.

Going forward, our goal is to populate each volume with articles covering a broad spectrum of the rapidly moving cancer biology field, including the fundamental biology of tumor cells and interactions with the host, cancer genomes, cancer drug targets, resistance to cancer drugs, and more. We work closely with our Editorial Committee to select these topics and invite leaders in these areas to contribute articles of exceptional quality and content.

When planning an Annual Review of a field in such rapid flux, we recognize that readers looking for late-breaking findings will turn to the many excellent journals now available at the click of a mouse through electronic publishing. Here we hope you will settle into a comfortable chair on a relaxing afternoon and read the *Annual Review of Cancer Biology* as if it were a favorite book or periodical (but on your iPad or other e-reader since it is an online-only publication, available at <http://www.annualreviews.org/journal/cancerbio>).

We hope you enjoy the volume and look forward to sharing many future ones.

Tyler Jacks and Charles Sawyers

Co-Editors