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## Introduction

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Topics related to disinfection, sterilization, and microbial control have been an integral part of the Society for Industrial Microbiology from the very inception of the Society. This interest has been reflected over the years in symposia and presentations at the Annual Meeting and in “Developments in Industrial Microbiology” and in the “Journal of Industrial Microbiology & Biotechnology”. Thus in one sense, the Symposium on Disinfectants and Microbial Control at the Society’s 2004 Annual Meeting in Anaheim, Calif., represents a continuation of a traditional theme. In another sense, however, the 2004 Symposium represents a major change. Since 9/11 there has been an expanded interest in new applications for and also much greater expectations of disinfectants and sterilization products. As a result, new opportunities and new markets are tied to serious, concrete performance.

Separate from the issues that have developed post-9/11, the past 10 years have shown increasing attention

focused on nosocomial infections and device-associated nosocomial infections in particular. The key issues in this area center on the frequency of nosocomial infections, the increasing trend for antimicrobial insensitivity, and the need for more rapid and accurate diagnosis and treatment of nosocomial infections.

At the Society’s 2004 Annual Meeting, a Symposium was held in which it was the attempt of the organizers to capture those major issues that currently face the area of microbial disinfection, sterilization, and control. The organizers wish to thank the Society and Dr. Reinhardt Rossen (Chair of the 2004 Annual Meeting) for the opportunity to present this topic to the Society. The organizers further wish to thank Dr. Joseph J. Cooney (Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Industrial Microbiology and Biotechnology) for the opportunity to present a select number of these papers as a special section within the Journal.

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