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Introduction

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This issue of the *Journal of Industrial Microbiology and Biotechnology* is composed largely of papers presented at the joint 8th Symposium on the Genetics and Molecular Biology of Industrial Microorganisms (GMBIM) and 8th International Conference on Biotechnology of Microbial Products (BMP), held in San Diego on 14–18 November 2004. This combined meeting of GMBIM and BMP, sponsored by the Society for Industrial Microbiology, was designed to bring together scientists with common, overlapping interests, primarily in natural

products and biocatalysis. The joint meeting and this special issue of *JIM&B* are dedicated to Professor Julian Davies, a pioneer in understanding of mechanisms of resistance to antibiotics, in using antibiotic-resistance genes and mechanisms of gene transfer to help develop the field of biotechnology, and in further searching for novel antibiotics produced by microorganisms to overcome the current antibiotic resistances in pathogenic bacteria.

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