

Preface

The papers in this issue of *Molecular Neurobiology* were presented at an IBRO-sponsored symposium organized by the University of Göteborg, Göteborg, Sweden and the University of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica on "Transmissible and Nontransmissible Neurodegenerative Disorders" that was held February 28–March 3, 1993 in Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

In his 1817 essay on Parkinson's disease, James Parkinson stated:

An important object...to be obtained...is the leading of the attention of those who humanely employ anatomical examination in detecting the causes and nature of diseases particularly to this malady. By their benevolent labours its real nature may be ascertained and appropriate modes of relief or even of cure, be pointed out.

After 176 years the nature of many neurodegenerative disorders is now better understood. However, the causes, cures, or preventions of these diseases are still being researched. Since neurodegenerative disorders are usually considered as either transmissible or not, it is instructive that the papers in this volume disclose overlapping molecular mechanisms among transmissible and nontransmissible neurodegenerative disorders. Rapid advances at both the molecular and cellular levels have pointed out shared abnormal proteins, genetic linkages, neuronal breakdown, and other pathologies. Collectively, these studies provide new insights for the diagnosis and treatment of neurodegenerative disorders. Our intent in assembling these proceedings has thus been to stimulate novel strategies for investigations of the causes, cures, and prevention of the broadest spectrum of neurodegenerative disorders.

The remainder of the contributions to this theme will be included in Volume 8, Nos. 2–3 (Part II: Transmissible Neurodegenerative Disorders) and Volume 9, Nos. 1–3 (Part III: Nontransmissible Neurodegenerative Disorders).

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