Introduction

This volume of *Annual Review of Microbiology* includes a recent high for us of 38 reviews, covering the range of topics shown in a word cloud generated from the titles. Some of these topics appear most years. Antibiotics—resistance, the natural roles of these molecules, and novel approaches to interfering with the establishment of pathogens to help minimize antibiotic use—continue to be an important concern for microbiologists. The continuing growth of sequence information allows us new insight into evolution, reflected in five reviews in this volume, including the evolution of mating, RNA polymerases, and drug resistance in bacteria and fungi, as well as the evolution of the CRISPR defense system. Other topics highlight aspects of microbiology that many of us (or at least this Editor) may not be so familiar with. Two reviews discuss extracellular electron transfer, from the possible impact on geochemistry to biotechnological applications: D. Lovley focuses on direct transfer from one species to another, while D. Newman and coworkers describe the roles of extracellular electron shuttles. We thank all of our authors for the time and energy they have put into these reviews and hope our readers find them as exciting as we do.

The planning meeting for this volume was held in Chicago in 2015. We thank Katherine Borkovich, whose term as an invaluable Editorial Committee Member ended with the planning of this volume. Kasturi Haldar and Dale Gerding provided very useful suggestions as ad hoc guest members of the Committee. Joseph Heitman’s broad knowledge of fungal topics, clearly appearing in our word cloud, was invaluable; he attended this meeting as a guest and has since joined the Editorial Committee. As usual, we are indebted to our Production Editor, Leslie Parker, for keeping everything running smoothly, and my personal thanks go to Michael Gottesman, for providing support and comfort while I negotiated the trip to and from Chicago with a broken arm.

Susan Gottesman
Editor
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