

ASCB PROFILE

Pamela J. Hines



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Stuart-Rodgers Photography

When Pamela Hines left the research lab to become an editor at *Science* in 1989, the world seemed to speed up. “When you are at the bench, you think about how slowly your own research goes,” says Hines, “and how difficult it is to add one little bit of solid information to your field. In an editorial post, you look at the amalgamated work of thousands of researchers around the world. You see new questions arise and get answered, all within months. There is progress. Topics change. It’s exciting to see how quickly, we, as a scientific community, learn

new things.”

Now Senior Editor at *Science*, Hines is credited by colleagues with widening the journal’s coverage in new fields such as embryonic stem cells and by paying closer attention to areas such as plant physiology where

molecular techniques are breaking new and sometimes controversial ground. Hines embarked on a rapid self-education in plant biology to also expand coverage in that field.

Nature Immunology Editor Linda Miller, a colleague of Hines for a dozen years at *Science*, notes that editors must always walk a line between underplaying a “breakthrough”

paper and overplaying an “interesting” result. The decision to publish is made through the journal’s elaborate peer review system, but an editor’s lay summation is critical to the paper’s reception. “Pam is always cautious to avoid hype,” says Miller. “You want to make a *Science*

paper understandable to those who don’t follow every little step in the

field, but it’s so easy as you simplify to lose the detailed context and to sound like you’re trumpeting the paper. Pam is awfully good at not crossing that line. That’s part of why she’s such a good editor.”

“It’s the perfect position for Pam Hines,” says Merrill Hille, a friend, colleague and fellow ASCB member at the University of Washington (Hines has been an ASCB member since 1985). “Pam has always enjoyed the breadth of science,” says Hille, “plus she was always very interested in writing. Once she got to *Science*, Pam pushed for broader coverage of developmental biology and plant physiology. As an editor, she also has a way of seeing if there’s something buried in a paper that could make it a *Science* article. Even if the authors haven’t written it well, she’ll work with them to make it acceptable.”

The second of five children and the oldest of three sisters, Pamela Hines was born in Detroit but grew up in suburban Chicago. Her father was a physics professor at Northwestern, which may explain, says Hines, why all three sisters became scientists. “As small children,

when we’d ask the standard questions like, ‘Why is the sky blue?’ my father would tell us in detail. He wanted to show us that we lived in an orderly universe.”

A pianist, singer, and omnivorous reader, Hines spent her junior year of high school as a student at an English sixth form college in Cambridge. The experience contributed to her choice of a liberal arts college, Oberlin, with its special music program. Indeed, Hines has been an enthusiastic singer in choral groups from Seattle, Washington, to Washington, DC.

Biology, though, was her career choice. Hines earned a Masters at the University of Wisconsin and taught undergraduates at Purdue University before earning her doctorate with Robert Benbow at Johns Hopkins in 1983. The Benbow lab focused on chromatin and DNA replication. “By today’s standards, we had only the bluntest of tools,” Hines recalls, for studying how patterns of transcrip-

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tion factors affected early development and how DNA replication functions in early embryos.

From Baltimore, Hines went to Seattle for post-doctoral work, first with Amy Baaken in the Zoology Department at the University of Washington and then with George Stamatoyannopoulos at the UW Medical School. The Stamatoyannopoulos lab was working on gene switching in globin production, an amazingly complex process in mammals because hematopoiesis moves from the peripheral yolk sack in embryos to the liver in fetuses and finally to the bone marrow in adults, switching genetic variants along the way. In the lab, Hines looked for higher order control functions that could produce the three variant patterns of globin gene expression, a knotty problem at the bench in the mid-1980s, but a background that would come in handy later when the embryonic stem cell burst upon the scene.

Hines edited some of the first ES papers to appear in *Science* and continues to closely cover stem cell work. "When you do research, you're most effective when you really dig down in one area," says Hines. "But editors must take a broader view of what's going. You have to look sideways at things and look for the ways that different things begin to connect."

She joined the *Science* staff in 1989. "This job has really held my interest in a good way. It's interesting to go to work every day and has been since the day I started at *Science*. I think that's worth a fair amount."

For years, Linda Miller watched in awe as Hines solicited writers, edited copy, and re-designed the entire production system for the magazine of the Association for Women in Science, all in her "spare" time. "I rank Pam as one of the finest time managers I've ever seen," says Miller. She's one of those people who announce that she's coming in at such a time and leaving at such a time. Then she gets everything done. Those of us who don't have her time management skills can't help wondering, 'How does she do that?'

Hines lives in northern Virginia with her husband, Robert Lerner, a market analyst in the information technology sector, and their two-and-a-half-year-old son, Alexander.

Hines volunteers a bare outline of her current activities, but her friends fill out the details of her skills as mother, seamstress, glacier and mountain climber, backpacker, musician, co-investigator on an NSF grant to create a secondary school web site about controversies in sci-

ence, volunteer editor for the AWIS magazine, and membership on an NAS advisory committee looking at overhauling American high school science labs. Only on the subject of Alexander does Hines volunteer a hint that science and real life have unexpected gaps. "How organisms develop never ceases to fascinate me," says Hines, "and I think embryos of all sorts are beautiful. Our youngster makes me even more fascinated with development, and with the vagaries of just how devious a two-year-old can be!" ■

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Social to be Held at Women's Arts Museum

The ASCB Local Arrangements Committee has chosen the National Museum of Women in the Arts for the 2004 ASCB Social. Located blocks from the Convention Center at 1250 New York Avenue, N.W. in Washington, DC, it is the only museum in the world dedicated exclusively to recognizing the contributions of women artists.



Great Hall at National Museum of Women in Arts

The Social will be held during the ASCB Annual Meeting on Monday, December 6, at 7:30 pm.

To register for the ASCB Meeting and Social, go to www.ascb.org. Discounted prices are available until October 1. ■