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Preface

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Preface

The fifth International Conference for Rickettsiae and Rickettsial Diseases was held in Marseilles, France, on 18–20 May 2008, organized by the European Study Group for *Coxiella*, *Anaplasma*, *Rickettsia* and *Bartonella* (ESCAR) and by the American Society for Rickettsiology. Much of the Conference was devoted to original scientific work and this supplement contains those papers presented at the meeting.

The rickettsias and the bacteria formerly associated with the order Rickettsiales, namely, the genus *Coxiella*, are of major importance for the study of obligate intracellular microorganisms and their potential use as biological weapons. In addition, studies on some members of the genus *Bartonella*, also formerly placed in the Order Rickettsiales, are increasingly recognized as important human pathogens. Although the clinical and epidemiologic spectra of rickettsioses have been studied for years, new observations and discoveries are still being made, as exemplified by many of the papers in this supplement. Particularly noteworthy in the area of basic science is the increased appreciation of the obligate intracellular rickettsia's interaction with the eukaryote host cells.

The scientific range of papers presented at the meeting and contained within this supplement is wide. As a result, we have particularly enjoyed editing the supplement, as the opportunity to do so has provided us with an in-depth opportunity to reflect on the important contributions of our colleagues. We are grateful to all the contributors for their work, which so vividly shows the new advances that can occur in what many might consider an established field, unlikely to offer new horizons.

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TRANSPARENCY DECLARATION

The guest editors declare no conflicts of interest.