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Changes and being human

by Freddie Theodoulou, Science Editor



Changes are afoot at *The Biochemist*. Following the Society rebrand which, I hope you'll agree, has had a positive impact on the visual appearance of the magazine, we are now looking to give our web presence a makeover. *Biochemist e-volution*, the online version of the magazine, was a trailblazer when it was

launched some 13 years ago, but times have changed and the site is overdue for a facelift. We're taking this opportunity to review **all** of the content of *The Biochemist* and canvass your opinion about what you'd like to see and how best to deliver it. To this end, we'll shortly be launching a consultation with readers, so please send us your thoughts: what do you love, what do you hate (hopefully not too many things!) and what else could we offer you?

Spearheading the web revamp is Helen Albert, our new Community and Press Editor. Helen joins us from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, where she was Research Communication and Dissemination Manager for the Clinical Trials Unit. Before this, she worked in a variety of science journalism, communications and publishing roles, as well as squeezing in a spot of research at the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute between a BSc in Genetics and an MSc in Human Evolution and Behaviour. In this new role, Helen will act as in-house Editor for *The Biochemist* including commissioning and writing articles for the magazine and will also be working with other departments in the Society to enhance our online presence and exploit social media to the full. Sadder news is that Executive Editor Mark Burgess has left Portland Press after 15 years with *The Biochemist*. In addition to his formal role, Mark deftly and politely kept me on track whenever I suggested anything too ridiculous, for which I am hugely grateful. I once unthinkingly proposed a Q&A article with (the late) Michael Crichton, to which Mark replied "Shall I engage the services of a medium?" I have greatly enjoyed working with Mark and will miss his insight, erudition and dry wit.

With all of these transformations, I questioned whether or not it was time for me to have a change too and stand down as Science Editor to focus on research which has been a worryingly dwindling activity in my portfolio of late. Some colleagues are firmly of the opinion that I should devote more time to my day job. However, I decided to stay with *The Biochemist* for a while longer when a friend insisted "It's these kinds of things that make us human", a statement which is particularly appropriate since that is the topic of this month's issue. Brought to you by student competition winners Danielle Stevenson and Rebecca McIntosh of King's College London, *What Makes Us Human?* explores answers to a fascinating question which starts in the primordial soup and ends with the development of the brain and decoding of the human genome. I hope you enjoy it. ■