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"Structural Biology of RNA-mediated Gene Regulation and cGAS-STING-mediated Immune Regulation"

Monday 27 February 2017 12PM, AUDITORIUM

Host: Prof John Mattick & Prof Robert Graham

I received my PhD in Chemistry from New York University (NYU) in 1968 for research in the photochemistry. I decided next to shift the emphasis of my research to the life sciences and hence completed postdoctoral training (one year) in Biochemistry at NYU School of Medicine followed by postdoctoral training (two years) in Biophysics at AT&T Bell Laboratories. I was next promoted to permanent Member of Technical Staff at Bell Labs and spent the next 15 years undertaking NMR-based studies of the structure and dynamics of cyclic peptides, proteins and nucleic acids. I moved to Columbia University Medical School in 2004 as a tenured Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics where my group spent the next 8 years doing NMR-based research on DNA mismatches, bulges and junctions, on DNA triplexes and G-quadruplexes, and drug-DNA complexes. I was recruited in 1992 as a tenured Member to the Cellular Biochemistry and Biophysics Program at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center to set up a Structural Biology component to the program. My group's research during the 1990s focused on NMR-based studies of covalent chiral carcinogen-DNA adducts, and complexes of antibiotics and peptides with natural and *in vitro* selected RNA targets.

My laboratory began to increasingly use x-ray crystallography starting around 2000 with the emphasis initially on RNA-mediated gene regulation, with subsequent extension to histone-mark and DNA-mark mediated epigenetic regulation, to lipid transfer proteins, and more recently to nucleic acid pattern recognition receptors. We have complemented our structural efforts with functional studies undertaken by collaborators to deduce mechanistic insights into the biological systems of interest.