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FAST BREAKING PAPERS - 2008

August 2008

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Paul Kleihues talks with *ScienceWatch.com* and answers a few questions about this month's Fast Breaking Paper in the field of Neuroscience & Behavior.

SW: Why do you think your paper is highly cited?

The reason for the popularity of this article is not due to scientific novelty but rather to its usefulness for the cancer research and clinical oncology communities.

SW: Would you summarize the significance of your paper in layman's terms?

It summarizes the current status of brain tumour diagnosis, with major emphasis on surgical pathology and genetic profiles. It contains a concise description of new tumor entities contained in the 4th edition of the *WHO Classification of Tumours of the Central Nervous System*, published by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in 2007.

This book series was initiated by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1957 and has achieved its major goal: to establish a classification and grading of human tumors that is accepted and used worldwide. Without clearly defined clinical and histopathological diagnostic criteria and, more recently, genetic and expression profiles, epidemiological studies and clinical trials would be difficult to conduct and would not be comparable among different centers, countries, and world regions.

The book is also essential for cancer registries as it forms the basis for histologically and genetically stratified population-based data on incidence, mortality, and survival rates of human tumors.

SW: How did you become involved in this research, and which future trends do you envision in brain tumor research?

I have been scientifically interested in brain tumors throughout my professional career and I was Editor of the 2nd (1993) and 3rd (2000) Editions of the WHO Classification. Future research on brain tumor diagnosis will include genetic and expression profiles of individual tumors since this will form the basis

for personalized treatment with novel targeted therapies. We anticipate that this will lead to an improvement of the prognosis of patients with malignant brain tumors, which is currently still very poor.

Professor Paul Kleihues, M.D.
Department of Pathology
University Hospital Zurich
Zurich, Switzerland

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