

An oversight regarding the Club cell?

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Correspondence

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To the Editor,

I was surprised to see a title including the outdated term “Clara Cell” protein, in reference to CC16, in the title and body of the article by Rallis et al recently published in *Pediatric Pulmonology* (1). It appears that there needs to be an ongoing reminder that due to the association of Dr. Max Clara with the Third Reich and his unethical medical research practices which lead to the identification of this cell type (2-4) that his name was removed in 2013.

In 2012, Editorial boards of American Thoracic Society, the European Respiratory Society and the American College of Chest Physicians, based on recommendations from an expert panel assembled by the Forum of International Respiratory Societies, agreed to convert to use of the terms “club cell (Clara)” and “club cell secretory protein (Clara), and after January 1, 2013, completely transitioning out the use of the (Clara) eponym.

In our day, where cancel culture is so predominant, questions have been raised about what lessons are lost when history is erased. Assuming an oversight was made by the authors, editors and reviewers in not utilizing the now accepted terms “Club cell secretory protein” or bronchiolar exocrine cells, it would only be acceptable to mention the prior term in the setting of an asterisked description explaining the context and involvement of concentration camp prisoners and their association with the prior eponym, for educational purposes.

1. Rallis D, Baltogianni M, Dermitzaki N, Balomenou F, Papastergiou E, Maragoudaki E, Tsaouri S, Makis A, Giapros V. Clara cell protein expression amongst infants with respiratory distress syndrome. *Pediatr Pulmonol.* 2022 Mar 18.
2. Woywoldt A, Lefrak S, Matteson E. Tainted eponyms in medicine: the “Clara” cell joins the list. *Eur Respir J.* 2010 Oct;36(4):706-8
3. Winkelmann A, Noack T. The Clara cell: a “Third Reich eponym”? *Eur Respir J.* 2010 Oct;36(4):722-7.
4. Irwin RS, Augustyn N, French CT, Rice J, Tedeschi V, Welch SJ; Editorial Leadership Team. Spread the word about the journal in 2013: from citation manipulation to invalidation of patient-reported outcomes measures to renaming the Clara cell to new journal features. *Chest.* 2013 Jan;143(1):1-4.