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## ***Foreword***

In April 1999, in an inscription to his autobiography, *Happenings and Hearsay: Experiences of a Biological Anthropologist*, Gabriel Ward Lasker wrote: “To Mike Crawford, co-conspirator with me in promoting human biology in so many ways.”

To Gabriel Lasker, promoting the field of human biology was a driving force throughout his life. In 1953 he “rescued” the journal *Human Biology* (founded in 1929 by Raymond Pearl) by obtaining jointly with W. W. Howells a grant of \$2,000 from the Viking Fund (predecessor of the Wenner-Gren Foundation) for the continued publication of the journal. The publication of *Human Biology* had been suspended by Johns Hopkins University Press because of a lack of financial support. Lasker followed the initial funding by obtaining a more substantial grant from the National Science Foundation, which permitted the outright purchase of the journal by Wayne State University. Lasker began serving as editor-in-chief of *Human Biology* in 1953 and devoted much of his professional energy and career to editing it for almost 35 years. He encouraged and guided generations of young researchers by helping them with the writing style of their articles and even providing suggestions for improving data presentation and analyses. Early on in my career, I was a recipient of Gabriel Lasker’s generous help and attention in the publication of my first few articles in the journal.

When I became editor-in-chief of *Human Biology* in 1988, in Gabriel’s eyes I became a “co-conspirator” with him in the promotion of the field and the journal. He continued to serve as a consulting editor until his death in 2002, and he provided wise counsel throughout my term as editor.

Through the generosity of Gabriel Lasker and his wife, Bernice “Bunny” Kaplan, an annual award was created for the most significant article published in the journal for that year. After his death, in memoriam, Bunny Kaplan continued to financially support the Lasker Award. Through this award, Gabriel Lasker has continued to promote the field of human biology and the publication of the journal.

This special issue of *Human Biology* is a tribute to Gabriel Lasker and his profound influence on the field of human biology. This issue reprints articles written by the Lasker Award winners from 1992 to 2008. Some of the articles are updated by the original authors.

MICHAEL H. CRAWFORD  
*Department of Anthropology and Genetics*  
*University of Kansas*