

In the last few years, almost every aspect of thoracic oncology has experienced research breakthroughs. These range from improvements in how we understand the basic biology of cancer, to how we should best detect it, categorize it, treat it, and monitor it for recurrence or acquired resistance to therapy.

Once each development is presented at an academic meeting the job of truly understanding these new data begins. In this setting, a good discussant – one who follows the presentation, acting as the scientific ‘everyman,’ can make this job so much easier. Indeed, perhaps, in addition to the plethora of ‘best of ASCO’, ‘best of ESMO’, and best of ‘WCLC’ selections which focus solely on the new data, many academic meetings should seriously consider creating ‘best discussant’ awards to highlight the invaluable benefit some of our brightest and best minds contribute through this role.

Once the data are finally published, a good editorial, like a good discussant, can similarly enhance a reader’s appreciation of both the strengths and weaknesses of the science. However, as these commentaries are essentially personal views – opinion pieces that write an essay around a particular paper – more than one point of view may exist. Just as illumination of a building at night and from different angles can change our appreciation of its architecture compared to our view of it in the daytime, the value of several different big thinkers looking at the impact of the same new publication can be very revealing.

In this book, Translational Cancer Research has gathered together some of the best minds in Thoracic Oncology – some established leaders, others the key opinion leaders of tomorrow – and captured their thoughts on some of the newest publications in the field. This collection of commissioned editorials offers a unique opportunity to put a whole range of recent research breakthroughs in thoracic oncology into context. In addition, it should provoke the reader into exploring their own opinions and views on the field, helping everyone to feel like they can contribute to the larger conversation that will continue to drive progress forward.

**D. Ross Camidge, MD, PhD**  
Professor of Medicine/Oncology,  
Joyce Zeff Chair in Lung Cancer Research,  
Director, Thoracic Oncology,  
University of Colorado Cancer Center, Aurora, Colorado, USA