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### Report to the James Rennie Bequest Committee

A grant of £200 contributed towards the cost of my travel (£270), and enabled me to attend the VIIth Congress of the European Society for Evolutionary Biology. This meeting took place in Barcelona, Spain, 23-28 August 1999.

Over 800 evolutionary biologists attended the meeting, which was organised into twenty-six symposia covering a broad range of topics. In addition there were 7 plenary lectures giving an overview of several fields. The meeting attracted experts from all around the world.

My main objectives were to:

1. Present my work to an international audience of scientists.

This was achieved with a poster presentation entitled "clonal virulence and its impact on total virulence", after my request for an oral presentation was declined.

2. Receive feedback on my results and ideas.

There was a lot of interest in my results during the poster symposium. Although some of the questions did not directly relate to what the implications of my results were, others were more insightful. Thirty handouts of my poster were taken away and several people requested additional information and copies of the manuscript that will be produced from this work.

3. Hear about the latest results in my field that are unpublished at present.

Unfortunately, there were not many results presented that I was not already aware of. But some very exciting new work that is directly related to my own was presented on a poster. I did not manage to meet with the author to discuss them, but I have sent them a letter and hope to hear from them soon.

In addition I have made contact with a potential collaborator in Oxford since I returned. He is addressing very similar questions to what I am, but is approaching them from a theoretical angle. Currently he is attempting to model the dynamics of mixed clone infections in a microparasite system. We are both keen to discuss ideas further.

Generally, I have found the process of producing a poster very focussing. I am pleased with the interest that it stimulated, and talking about my work with different people at the conference has given me lots of new ideas and boosted my confidence.