

MBL SPECIAL LECTURE SERIES

Wednesday, June 29, 2011 • 8:30 AM, Starr 209

The Gail and Elkan Blout Lecture



Illuminating the biology of *Trypanosoma brucei* by next generation sequencing

ELISABETTA ULLU, *Yale University*

Dr. Elisabetta Ullu is professor of Internal Medicine and Cell Biology at Yale University. Dr. Ullu received her doctorate in Biological Sciences in 1973 from the University of Rome, Italy. She was a postdoctoral fellow at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory in Heidelberg, Germany, then held a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry at Yale.

Dr. Ullu's research interests are eukaryotic cells and the mechanism and biological significance of RNA interference. She is a recipient of many honors and awards and sits on the editorial board of several scientific journals.

ABOUT THE GAIL AND ELKAN BLOUT LECTURE

This lectureship is named after Elkan Blout and his wife, Gail.

Elkan Rogers Blout was born in Manhattan in 1919. After graduating from Princeton, he earned a doctorate in chemistry from Columbia in 1942. In the 1950s, Dr. Blout pursued parallel but distinct paths at Harvard and at the Polaroid Corporation, where he was a vice president and general manager of research. At Polaroid, he led the team that worked out the color developing process for the company's signature instant film, creating new photographic dyes and developing agents and discovering ways to make them in quantity. At the same time, Dr. Blout was embarking on biochemical research at Harvard, studying peptides and polypeptides, which are building blocks in assembling the body's proteins. In 1962, he left industry to devote his energy to synthesizing peptides in the laboratory and to examining their structures. A former student of Dr. Blout's at Harvard said he was "highly respected for the quality and rigorousness of his research," but he was also known as a warm and supportive lab head. "Everyone really loved working with him, [and] he fostered a very good feeling wherever he went."

From 1978 to 1989, Dr. Blout was dean for academic affairs at Harvard's School of Public Health. In the 1990s he became a senior adviser for science at the Food and Drug Administration, where he reviewed standards, helped plan for the agency's future staff and laboratory needs, and coordinated research conducted by its scientists. He retired from Harvard in 1991. In 1990, he was awarded a National Medal of Science.

Dr. Blout died on December 20, 2006 at the age of 87. He is survived by two sons, James, of Concord, Massachusetts, and William, of Lexington, Massachusetts; two daughters, Susan Merry Lausch, of Chicago, and Darya, of Cambridge; and 10 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren. Gail Blout lives in Cambridge and Marion, Massachusetts.