

BRIEF REPORT OPEN ACCESS

Dr. Leena Krogerus: A Grand Old Lady of the Finnish Cytopathology and My Cytopathology Mum

Ivana Kholová^{1,2,3,4} 

¹Institute of Clinical Medicine, Pathology and Forensic Medicine, University of Eastern Finland, Kuopio, Finland | ²Department of Clinical Pathology, Diagnostic Imaging Center, Kuopio University Hospital, Kuopio, Finland | ³Tampere University, Faculty of Medicine and Health Technology, Tampere, Finland | ⁴Pathology, Fimlab Laboratories, Tampere, Finland

Correspondence: Ivana Kholová (ivana.kholova@tuni.fi)

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ABSTRACT

The communication introduces former President of the Finnish Society of Clinical Cytology and organizer of the European Congress of Cytology in Rovaniemi, Dr. Leena Krogerus. She played an important role in the formation of my cytopathology career as she led my path in cytopathology education, research, and leadership.

1 | Introduction of the Mentor

A grand old lady of Finnish cytopathology and my cytopathology mum, Dr. Leena Krogerus graduated from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Helsinki, Finland in 1981, the very same year as I started primary school.

The Pathology laboratory of Maria Hospital of the city of Helsinki where Leena started her career was a small place where clinicians knew pathologists and communicated daily. Leena spent time by the microscope, improving sampling techniques with clinicians and fostering laboratory skills. The Millipore samples were initially done by her. She also developed an in-house cell block method [1] as a part of her PhD studies. The paper has been cited 22× so far [1, 2].

The author of the only cytopathology textbook in the Finnish language, Dr. Ari Koivuniemi, was available as a consultant during Leena's early career. Her first boss, Dr. Gustav Tallquist, encouraged her to learn cytopathology despite his own knowledge being limited. So, Leena attended a famous course in the Johns Hopkins Hospital led by Prof. Erosan and Prof. Bonfiglio in 1989. Soon after she passed the International Academy of

Cytology fellowship examination in Vienna in 1994, the same year as I attended the pathology course as a medical student at The Charles University Medical Faculty in Hradec Králové, Czech Republic.

2 | Our Common Journey

Dr. Krogerus was an important team member of the European Congress of Cytology Organizing Committee. The congress was held in Rovaniemi, Finland, in 2008. Soon after, she became the President of the Finnish Society of Clinical Cytology, and I became the secretary of the Society. Our common journey in the Society led to regular microscopy workshops with the generosity of ECC budget leftovers. We started to organize microscopy workshops covering various cytopathology fields yearly. At the beginning, they took place on Saturdays after the Finnish International Academy of Pathology meetings, but as the younger generation started to value their free weekends more, we changed the format into workday meetings and started to organize separate 1–2 days meetings, including microscopy for half a day. Now, microscopes are a big challenge as the education of medical students has switched fully to digital form and

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FIGURE 1 | Dr. Leena Krogerus was giving a talk during a Companion Meeting of the Finnish Society of Clinical Cytology at the European Congress of Cytology in Budapest, Hungary. [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



FIGURE 2 | Dr. Leena Krogerus actively participated in a discussion during the European Congress of Cytology in Budapest, Hungary. [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

many departments have also digitalized the histopathology flow. Only a limited number of places have a facility to organize a microscopy workshop. Nevertheless, we keep going, and it is a great honor that despite that Leena has retired, she still shares her tremendous experience with the younger generations. Cell morphology has not changed despite the development of ancillary techniques. The chromatin texture is still irregular in malignant cells, as Leena often says.

Our yearly attendance at the cytopathology conferences abroad has been long-awaited retreats. We eagerly attended lectures and workshops as well as tried to do some sightseeing with me as a motor primus (if there are three museums and four towers, we will indeed visit all of them either on lunch break or after lectures). In the evenings, we discussed everything from cells to cell blocks and childcare. Shared rooms were a must to keep budgets, but also a great time to get to know each other closely and become lifelong friends (Figures 1 and 2).

Leena has always been ready to read my drafts and comment on research ideas: nothing was crazy or stupid. She has always been encouraging and supportive. It has been easy to grow up

with such great support. She keeps supporting me during my own presidency of the Finnish Society of Clinical Society, enjoying hosting our foreign speakers. Surprisingly, we only have a few papers in common [3–5], despite Leena reading most of my cytopathology papers as the first person and giving them her blessing.

Leena has always valued cytotechnologists and their work. Her high sense of equality was visible also in the field of cytopathology, where she always appreciated the work of all participants. In Finland, cytotechnologists are educated mainly at their workplaces after their graduation from non-university tertiary schools for laboratory technicians. Unfortunately, there is no curriculum for cytotechnologists. Dr. Krogerus was always ready to participate in cytotechnology courses and cytotechnology society meetings as a lecturer and tutor.

In Finland, cytopathology is the Cinderella among pathology disciplines. An unfortunate general view is that if you handle histopathology, your knowledge of cytopathology comes automatically. Leena has always done her best to destroy this approach by a strong education of colleagues and cytotechnologists.

As her mother tongue is Swedish and she practiced also at Karolinska University Hospital, she regularly hosted Swedish colleagues at the Finnish cytopathology meetings, especially Prof. Anders Hjerpe, who lectured to the Finnish audience regularly and was awarded an honorary membership of the Finnish Society of Clinical Cytology.

3 | Conclusions

Dr. Krogerus is an important person for my personal growth in the field of cytopathology, but her role is indispensable for the whole cytopathology community in Finland. Leena, the Finnish cytopathology field hopes you will still be sharing your knowledge with us!

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

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