Reviewer's report

Title: Loss of Annexin I Expression in B-Cell Non-Hodgkin's Lymphomas and Cell Lines

Version: 1 Date: 29 November 2003

Reviewer: Dan Jones

Reviewer's report:

General

This is well-written and largely carefully done study with an essentially negative result; namely that Annexin I is not expressed in B-cells or B-cell tumors.

Minor Essential Revisions:

The conclusion in the abstract is too broad for the data presented.

The descriptions of the cell lines used is imprecise or incorrect in some cases. I believe that TK-6 is a T-cell line from a CML blast crisis. Also please clarify the origin of DW-10 and WI-L2. This is particularly important for WI-L2 because it appears to express Annexin I protein in Fig 1 (and is not included in Fig. 2). Are these two lines mature or immature B-cell in origin? Also I believe that the line PBE-1 is believed to be Nalm-6 (and not a separate cell line).

The Authors say that all the B-cell lines are negative for Annexin I by RT-PCR but it looks like there are weak bands present for Namalwa and DW-10 and maybe others.

The 3 lymphomas in Fig. 7 all look follicular to me. Maybe they could just be described as B-cell lymphomas.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The Title should be changed to "Absence of Annexin I" since no loss has been demonstrated in the paper.

I am not convinced that the Authors have demonstrated any annexin I expression in normal B-cells. The weak band in adenoid tissue Western blot could be from admixed stromal cells and blood vessels (also the control band is not present in this lane, either). Fig. 6B showed immunostaining in stroma and blood vessels and the cells indicated in Fig6D are blood vessels and possibly stroma. If they want to make this point, the Authors need to use either purified normal B-cells in Western blot or RT-PCR or having more convincing immunohistochemistry.

It may be worthwhile to try a follicular B-cell lymphoma line or other mature B-cell line (a number are publicly available) since all the lines tested are immature and the result may be different.

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No