# Contents

**Preface** *xiii*

**1 Targeted Protein Degradation – The Story So Far** *1*
*Daniel H. O Donovan, Laura M. Luh and Philipp M. Cromm*
1.1 Introduction to Targeted Protein Degradation (TPD) *1*
1.1.1 What Can Be Expected from this Book? *2*
1.2 Development of Targeted Protein Degradation: Chronology and Milestones *3*
1.2.1 Milestone 1: Early Monovalent Protein Degraders – The Surprising Biology of Fulvestrant *4*
1.2.2 Milestone 2: The First PROTACs – From Peptidic Degraders to Chemical Biology Tools *6*
1.2.3 Milestone 3: Improving Drug-Like Properties – SNIPERs and Peptidomimetic VHL Binders *7*
1.2.4 Milestone 4: PROTACs on the Rise – Small-Molecule Degraders Achieve *in vivo* PoC *8*
1.2.5 Milestone 5: Sticking It to the Man! Molecular Glues *10*
1.2.6 Milestone 6: Human After All – TPD in Clinical Trials *11*
1.2.7 Milestone 7: Beyond the Proteasome – Inducing Proximity to Modulate Protein Levels *13*
1.2.7.1 Is TPD Just the Beginning? Bifunctional Modulators of Post-transcriptional Modification *15*
1.3 Conclusion and Outlook *17*
References *19*

**2 Cellular Principles of Targeted Protein Degradation** *25*
*João Diamantino and Doris Hellerschmied*
2.1 Basic Principles of Targeting Substrates to the Proteasome and Lysosomes *26*
2.1.1 Ubiquitin-Proteasome System (UPS) *26*
2.1.2 Lysosomal Targeting *27*
2.2 Targeted Protein Degradation from the Cytosol and the Nucleus *29*

2.2.1 Targeting to the Proteasome *29*
2.2.1.1 Regulatory Target Recruitment *29*
2.2.1.2 Target Engagement by the Ubiquitination Machinery *31*
2.2.1.3 Engaging the Proteasome *32*
2.2.2 Targeting to Lysosomes *33*
2.3 Targeted Degradation from Membrane-Enclosed Organelles and the Extracellular Space *34*
2.3.1 Degradation from the Plasma Membrane (PM) and the Extracellular Space *35*
2.3.1.1 Internalization at the PM and Endosomal Sorting *35*
2.3.1.2 Ubiquitination at the PM *37*
2.3.2 Degradation from the Endoplasmic Reticulum (ER) *39*
2.3.2.1 ER-Associated Protein Degradation (ERAD) – Proteoasomal Degradation from the ER *39*
2.3.2.2 ER Lysosome-Associated Degradation (ERLAD) *46*
2.3.3 Degradation from the Golgi *47*
2.4 Concluding Remarks *50*
References *50*

**3 E3 Ubiquitin Ligases as Molecular Machines and Platforms for Drug Development** *63*
*Rafael M. Ioris, Katherine Ferris and Vincenzo D'Angiolella*
3.1 Introduction *63*
3.1.1 Ubiquitin Code and Targeted Protein Degradation *63*
3.1.2 General Concepts of E3 Ligase Mechanism and Regulation *65*
3.2 Substrate Recruitment and Degron Recognition *65*
3.2.1 Regulating E3 Ligases Activity *66*
3.3 RING E3 Ligases *67*
3.3.1 Definition and Discovery *67*
3.3.2 Subgroups *68*
3.3.3 Insights into RINGs Regulation and Function *72*
3.4 HECT E3 Ubiquitin Ligases *73*
3.4.1 Definition and Discovery *73*
3.4.2 Subgroups *73*
3.4.3 Structure and Mechanism *74*
3.4.4 Regulation *75*
3.4.4.1 Intramolecular Interactions *75*
3.4.4.2 Intermolecular Interactions *77*
3.4.4.3 Post-translational Modifications *78*
3.4.5 Insights into Hect Functions *79*
3.4.5.1 Growth Signaling *79*
3.4.5.2 Immunity *79*
3.5 RING–IBR–RING (RBR) *85*
3.5.1 Structure and Mechanism *85*

3.5.2 Insights into Their Regulation and Function *85*
3.6 Conclusion and Insights into Drug Development *86*
References *87*

**4 A Structural and Biophysical Perspective of Degrader Activity Through Ternary Complex Formation** *107*
*Morgan S. Gadd and Marine C. Aublette*
4.1 Introduction *107*
4.1.1 Mechanism of Degraders Through Ternary Complexes *108*
4.1.2 Ternary Complex Behavior *108*
4.1.2.1 Binding Pose *108*
4.1.2.2 Affinity and Cooperativity *108*
4.1.2.3 Stoichiometry *110*
4.1.2.4 Residency *110*
4.1.2.5 Plasticity *110*
4.1.2.6 Flexibility *111*
4.1.3 Observing and Quantifying Ternary Complex Behavior *111*
4.1.3.1 Biophysics *111*
4.1.3.2 Structural Biology *112*
4.2 X-ray Crystal Structures of Ternary Complexes *113*
4.2.1 PROTAC-Induced Ternary Complex Structures *114*
4.2.1.1 PROTACs Recruiting von Hippel–Lindau Protein (VHL) *114*
4.2.1.2 PROTACs Recruiting Other E3 Ligases *123*
4.2.1.3 Assessment of Structure-Guided Design of PROTAC Degraders *127*
4.2.2 Molecular-Glue-Induced Ternary Complex Structures *128*
4.2.2.1 Molecular Glues Recruiting Cereblon (CRBN) *129*
4.2.2.2 Molecular Glues Recruiting Other E3 Ligases *136*
4.3 Future Perspective on the Importance of Ternary Complexes in PROTAC Discovery and Development *139*
4.3.1 Ternary Complexes – Is Seeing Believing? *139*
4.3.2 Each (Ternary Complex) to Its Own *142*
References *143*

**5 Computational Modeling of PROTAC Ternary Complexes and Linker Design** *151*
*Sven A. Miller, Grigorii V. Andrianov, Victoria Mischley, Khadija A. Wharton, Jesse J. Chen and John Karanicolas*
5.1 Introduction *151*
5.2 PROTAC Ternary Complexes *153*
5.3 Computational Modeling of PROTAC Ternary Complexes *156*
5.4 PROTAC Design and Optimization *162*
5.5 Emerging Methods for Computationally Designing and Optimizing PROTACs *164*
5.6 Looking into the Future *168*
References *169*

**6 Molecular Glue Degraders: From Serendipity to Hunting and Design** *177*
*Luis Nieto-Barrado, Ana Domostegui and Cristina Mayor-Ruiz*
6.1 Introduction *177*
6.2 "Molecular Glue" Concept *179*
6.2.1 Natural Compounds *179*
6.2.1.1 Molecular Glues *179*
6.2.1.2 Molecular Glue Degraders *182*
6.2.2 Synthetic Compounds *182*
6.2.2.1 Molecular Glues *182*
6.2.2.2 Molecular Glue Degraders *183*
6.3 Synthetic Molecular Glue Degraders: Serendipitous Discoveries *184*
6.3.1 Molecular Glue Degraders Hijacking $CRL4^{CRBN}$ (IMiDs): Broad Target Accommodation *184*
6.3.2 Molecular Glue Degraders Hijacking $CRL4^{DCAF15}$ (Aryl Sulfonamides): High Shape Complementarity *186*
6.3.3 BCL6 Degraders: Induction of Polymerization *188*
6.4 Synthetic Molecular Glue Degraders: Intentional Developments *188*
6.4.1 β-Catenin Molecular Glue Degraders *188*
6.4.2 Cyclin K Molecular Glue Degraders *189*
6.4.3 Prospective Discovery of IKZF1 Molecular Glue Degraders via "Up Assays" *192*
6.4.4 Structure-Guided Development of Helios (IKZF2) Molecular Glue Degraders *192*
6.4.5 Discovery of VHL-Binding Molecular Glue Degraders *193*
6.5 Conclusions and Outlook *193*
References *195*

**7 Targeted Protein Degradation as a Therapeutic Strategy in Neurodegenerative Diseases** *205*
*Fleur M. Ferguson*
7.1 Introduction *205*
7.2 Heterobifunctional Targeted Protein Degraders *206*
7.2.1 Misfolded Proteins *206*
7.2.1.1 Tau *206*
7.2.1.2 Alpha-Synuclein *208*
7.2.1.3 mHtt *209*
7.2.2 TDP-43 *210*
7.2.3 Kinases and HDACs *210*
7.3 Molecular Glues *211*
7.4 Conclusion *211*
References *212*

**8 Insights and Future Perspectives of Covalent Protein Degraders** *215*
*Xiaoyu Zhang*
8.1 Introduction *215*
8.2 Protein Degraders that Covalently Interact with the Substrate Proteins *217*
8.2.1 HaloPROTAC *217*
8.2.2 METAP2 and BTK *218*
8.2.3 KRAS G12C *220*
8.2.4 EGFR, ERK1/2, and ERRα *221*
8.2.5 Monofunctional Protein Degraders *223*
8.3 Protein Degraders that Covalently Interact with E3 Ubiquitin Ligases *224*
8.3.1 RNF4 *224*
8.3.2 RNF114 *225*
8.3.3 KEAP1 *226*
8.3.4 FEM1B *227*
8.3.5 SPSB2 *227*
8.3.6 DCAF16 *229*
8.3.7 DCAF11 *231*
8.4 Technologies for Covalent Protein Degrader Discovery *233*
8.5 Outlook of Leveraging Covalent Chemistry for Targeted Protein Degradation *236*
References *237*

**9 Extending the Degradation Toolkit – mRNA Targeting as an Alternative Means to Affect Protein Levels** *245*
*Andrei Ursu, Barbara Herdy and Hendrik Osadnik*
9.1 Introduction *245*
9.2 Life Cycle of Eukaryotic mRNAs *247*
9.3 Splicing Shapes the Cell's Transcriptome *248*
9.3.1 Aberrant Splicing Impacts the Transcriptome *249*
9.3.2 Therapeutic Strategies to Change Protein Levels Through Splicing Regulation *251*
9.3.2.1 Activating a Weak Splice Site in SMN2 to Increase Protein Production *252*
9.3.2.2 mRNA Degradation of HTT by Inducing Aberrant Splicing in HD *252*
9.3.2.3 Modulating the MKNK2 Isoform Balance with Splice Switching Oligonucleotides (SSOs) *253*
9.3.2.4 Targeting Global AS with a Molecular "Glue" that Degrades RBM39 *253*
9.3.2.5 PROTAC-Mediated Degradation of Splicing Factor 3B1 (SF3B1) *254*
9.3.3 Nuclear RNA Decay *255*
9.3.3.1 Small-Molecule-Mediated Nuclear Decay of CUG Repeat Expansions *255*
9.4 Cytoplasmatic RNA Quality Control Mechanisms *257*
9.4.1 Incorrect Splicing Triggers NMD in the Cytoplasm *257*

9.4.1.1 Harnessing Intronic Poly(A) Activation with ASOs *258*
9.4.2 RNA Binding Proteins Recruit the mRNA Degradation Machinery *259*
9.4.2.1 RNA-PROTAC-Mediated Degradation of LIN28A and RBFOX1 *259*
9.4.3 RNA Interference (RNAi) – microRNA, siRNA, and ASO Gapmers *260*
9.4.3.1 Small-Molecule Enhancement of microRNA Processing *262*
9.4.3.2 SMOL-Mediated Upregulation of miR-124 in Inflammatory Diseases *263*
9.4.3.3 RIBOTAC-Mediated Degradation of Pre-miR-21 via Targeted Recruitment of RNase L *263*
9.5 Conclusions *265*
References *266*

**10 The Future of Heterobifunctional Compounds: PROTACs and Beyond** *273*
*George M. Burslem*
10.1 Introduction *273*
10.2 Protein Degradation Beyond Cancer *273*
10.3 Emerging Heterobifunctional Modalities for Protein Degradation *275*
10.3.1 PROTAC Variations *275*
10.4 PROTAC-Inspired Technologies *277*
10.5 Highjacking Autophagy *277*
10.6 Degradation of Extracellular Proteins *279*
10.7 Heterobifunctional Compounds Beyond Protein Degradation *281*
10.8 Degradation of RNA *281*
10.9 Modulating Phosphorylation *281*
10.10 Targeted Acetylation *282*
10.11 Potential Applications of Heterobifunctional Compounds to Modulate PTMS *283*
10.12 Conclusions and Outlook *283*
References *283*

**11 Destruction with a Purpose: Targeted Protein Degradation in Drug Discovery** *289*
*Paola Martinelli, Christiane Kofink, Georg Boeck, Harald Weinstabl and Manfred Koegl*
11.1 PROTACs in Drug Discovery: Why? *289*
11.1.1 Targeting Proteins that Do Not Respond to Inhibition *289*
11.1.2 Selective Inhibition of Isoforms *292*
11.1.3 Increase in Potency Because of Catalytic Activity *293*
11.1.4 Prolonged Duration of Effects *293*
11.2 Routes of Application for PROTACs *294*
11.3 Tackling DMPK Challenges of PROTACs *296*
11.4 Molecular Glue Degraders: Definition, Advantages, and Challenges *300*
11.4.1 Serendipitously Discovered Molecular Glue Degraders *301*
11.4.1.1 Thalidomide Analogs *301*
11.4.1.2 Aryl Sulfonamides *303*

11.4.1.3 BCL6 Degrader BI-3802 *303*
11.4.2 PROTACs that Are also Molecular Glues: NX-2127 and KT-413 *304*
11.4.3 Rational Discovery of Molecular Glue Degraders *305*
11.4.3.1 Screening-Based Discovery: CDK12 Inhibitors Degrade Cyclin K *305*
11.4.3.2 Target-Based Discovery: Degraders of S37 Mutant β-Catenin *306*
11.4.4 To Glue or Not to Glue for Targeted Protein Degradation *307*
11.5 Targeted Protein Degradation: Here to Stay *307*
References *308*

**12 Taming the Beast: How to Optimize DMPK–PD Properties of Oral Degraders** *313*
*Caroline Rynn, Arthur Van De Vyver, Antje Walz, Carina Cantrill and Matthias Wittwer*
12.1 Physicochemical and ADME Properties of Degraders *314*
12.1.1 Physicochemical Properties *314*
12.1.2 Permeability *315*
12.1.3 Transporters *317*
12.1.4 Solubility *318*
12.1.5 Plasma Protein Binding *318*
12.1.6 Drug–Drug Interactions *319*
12.1.7 Clearance *319*
12.1.8 Oral Absorption *320*
12.2 Degraders: PK/PD challenges and the Role of Modeling and Simulation *323*
12.2.1 Pharmacological Processes of Degraders and PK/PD Aspects *323*
12.2.2 PK/PD Considerations During Drug Discovery and Development *324*
12.2.3 Translational PK/PD and Human Dose Prediction for Targeted Protein Degraders *330*
12.3 Gaps and Future Perspectives *330*
References *331*

**13 PROTAC® Protein Degraders: Bridging the Divide from Chemical Biology Tools to Clinical Candidates** *337*
*Erika M.V. Araujo and Keith R. Hornberger*
13.1 Introduction *337*
13.2 Physicochemical Properties *339*
13.3 Pharmacokinetics *341*
13.4 *in vitro* ADME Assays *342*
13.5 Pharmacodynamics *342*
13.6 Toxicology *347*
13.7 Clinical Case Studies *349*
13.8 Conclusion *355*
References *356*

**Index** *361*