



## The Nobel Duel

*By Nicholas Wade*

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The Nobel Duel is a blow-by-blow account of a closely fought twenty-one year race between scientists Andrew Schally and Roger Guillemin which culminated in their sharing the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1977. Nicholas Wade interweaves the history of an idea -- how the brain controls the body's hormonal system -- with the personal history of these two researchers whose work was closely followed by the scientific community in conference journals and science publications. Wade presents scientific research in way that it is rarely seen -- as a human activity. He takes us behind the scenes, explaining each step in the race to discovery. As Wade points out, in the scientific community, discovery without priority is almost worse than nothing. The Guillemin and Schally contest also highlights the vast administrative panoply of the scientific enterprise. With millions of dollars in research funding and with incredible perseverance for two decades, they achieved success, the two teams identifying the TRF hormone in the brain within days of each other. This remarkable chapter in the history of modern biology takes us behind the façade to show us scientists as people with human passions and failings.

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