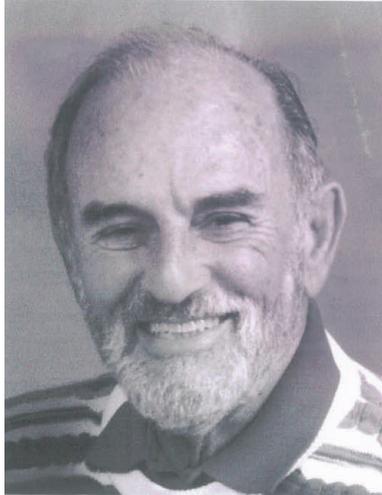


Obituary

Solomon C Goldberg, Ph.D., 1924-2007



Solomon C. Goldberg died in December, 2007. He was 83 and had been retired from active academic life for ten years. He fit into retirement in the same seemingly relaxed mode that had characterized his work. He shifted his tennis game from singles to doubles and enjoyed an active life with his wife Pat. His research career and contributions helped forge the field of clinical psychopharmacology clinical trials and I was privileged to work for him and learn from him during many of those years.

Sol was born in Annapolis, Maryland and served in the military during World War II as an Army Air Force gunner, flying 35 missions. He spoke casually about that commenting that, at the time (he was only 18 when he was drafted), he felt no danger, something he recognized only after the fact. He was trained as a psychologist, receiving his PhD from Catholic University in 1952 with a focus on social psychology. He was a research psychologist at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and the American University before joining the NIMH and the Psychopharmacology Service Center (PSC) in 1960 just as the first NIMH collaborative clinical trial in schizophre-

nia was getting underway.

He became the third member of the triumvirate that included Jonathan Cole and Gerry Klerman. Together, they designed the study comparing the then-new neuroleptics to placebo that was reported in the Archives of General Psychiatry in 1964. To this day, the study provides a key citation for the short term efficacy of the neuroleptics in schizophrenia. The craft of clinical trials in psychiatry was very new at that time and Sol's methodological skills served the field well. His continued efforts led to additional important studies of medication for schizophrenia. A six month study provided evidence for continued improvement over time, A two year study (with Jerry Hogarty and me) serves as a major source of evidence for the efficacy of anti-psychotic medication in prevention of relapse and was the first trial to study the interaction of medication and psychosocial treatments in this patient population. His work also presaged the current burgeoning interest in personalized treatment – then described as “the right drug for the right patient.” The models used focused largely on characterization in terms of symptom patterns, but Sol would have been right at home in the current efforts.

Following his work in schizophrenia he was instrumental in developing the first clinical trials in anorexia nervosa – now working with Katherine Halmi, Regina Kaspar and Elke Eckert. Here again, he brought methodological rigor to a new area, by designing multi-center trials, critical in this patient population to assure adequate numbers in a reasonable

time frame. . These studies also provided the first comparative data regarding pharmacologic treatment in anorexia nervosa.

The Psychopharmacology Service Center became the Psychopharmacology Research Branch and Sol served the NIMH and the field well as the Executive Secretary of the Psychopharmacology Research Review Committee and also as the Assistant Chief of the Branch. He was a Fellow of the ACNP and was Assistant Secretary Treasurer and Vice-President of our society. His other honors included the Hofheimer Prize for Research from the American Psychiatric Association in 1969.

Sol left the NIMH in 1979 to accept a position as Professor of Psychiatry at the Medical College of Virginia (MCV). There, a new group of investigators benefited from his experience. Robert Hamer, Ph.D. now Professor of Psychiatry and Biostatistics at the University of North Carolina was one of them. When I asked Bob for his recollections he said "Sol served as my primary mentor in psychiatric and medical research and helped turn a quantitative psychologist and statistician toward a productive and fulfilling career in psychiatric and other medical research. Without him, I would not be where I am today." Another one of Sol's colleagues at MCV was S. Charles Schulz MD, now Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at University of Minnesota School of Medicine. Chuck expressed his gratitude to Sol by a commemorative event at an early meeting of the International Congress on Schizophrenia Research.

Sol's expertise in research methodology and statistics are reflected in the statistical techniques that he was often the first to use in clinical psychopharmacology and in the authorship of articles and chapters with biostatisticians.

Sol was a very mellow person but had a wry and wicked sense of humor. The cartoons pinned to his bulletin board were sly. In one that I particularly remember, two scientists in lab coats face one another with fencing foils in hand. The caption reads: It's agreed, the survivor will be first author. Sol didn't wear a lab coat and he was generous to a fault with authorship. His CV reflects that generosity and the colleagues that he encouraged will remember his support, encouragement and intellectual stimulation.

He is survived by his wife, D. Patterson (Pat) Goldberg, three children from his first marriage, Jan Kaplan, Nancy Heyman and Richard Goldberg and four grandchildren.

My personal professional debt to him is great. He was my mentor before I knew what the term meant. He invited me to my first ACNP meeting in 1969 and nominated me for membership in 1976. I learned of his death just as I was leaving for the 2007 meeting. Preparing this obituary essay gives me the opportunity to say a last thank you.

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