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Dr Doppman: The Lone Radiologist

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Dr Doppman: The Lone Radiologist



Dr. John L. Doppman, Chief of the Diagnostic Radiology Department at the Warren Grant Magnuson Clinical Center of the National Institutes of Health for 26 years, died of cancer on August 21, 2000. He is survived by his wife, Anne-Marie; sister, Cathy; daughter, Corina; son, John Christopher; and granddaughter, Nicole.

Since completing his radiology residency at the Hospital of St Raphael, New Haven, Connecticut, Dr. Doppman devoted his professional life to academic radiology. In 1964 he joined the Department of Radiology at the Clinical Center of NIH and became Chief in 1972.

During the past three decades, he saw the dramatic changes in medical imaging and became a pioneer and active participant. Under his leadership, the Department of Radiology acquired CT and MR scanners as soon as they became available. He, along with many of his collaborators, made original observations on the imaging features of numerous diseases and the diagnostic efficacy of these new techniques. A highly skilled interventional radiologist, he was among the first to perform many diagnostic and therapeutic procedures—some of which he invented. Although his research interests were broad, he was especially interested in two areas: localization and treatment of endocrine tumors and arteriovenous malformations of the cord. He was among the first to use venous sampling for the detection and localization of elusive endocrine tumors and to use arterial stimulation in concert with venous sampling. He pioneered petrosal venous

sampling for the detection of pituitary adenomas and angiographic ablation of parathyroid adenomas. He wrote extensively on arteriovenous malformations and fistulas in the cord and spine and promoted techniques for their endovascular treatment. His research on spinal arteriovenous malformations led to the publication of the first textbook on this subject.

Dr. Doppman was a prolific writer publishing over 516 papers and 38 book chapters. Until shortly before his death, he remained actively engaged in writing and collecting data for future publications. He was a great teacher and helped train many during his professional lifetime. Through his many publications and lectures at national and international meetings, he spread medical knowledge throughout the world. As an editor, reviewer, or consulting editor for several medical journals, Dr. Doppman helped shape the radiologic literature for a generation of radiologists. He was a member of numerous medical societies, both within and outside the United States, and was awarded high distinctions from various scientific organizations and societies.

But merely listing his many awards and scientific achievements does not give justice to John Doppman, the man, and his dedication to his profession. Dr. Doppman loved radiology; his commitment was total and his energy boundless. Those of us who served with him appreciated the tremendous sacrifices he made to provide quality service to NIH patients. Having no residents or fellows, he

had to visit his patients at the bedside and explain the procedure he was about to perform. After many hours of work in the angio-lab he was the one to examine his patients again in the evening. His compassion for his patients was without parallel. I recall his gentleness when talking to his patients to instill confidence and ease their anxieties. Often at the end of the working day as I passed his office, I could hear his happy whistling as he began his evening shift's work of writing a paper or reviewing a manuscript.

Dr. Doppman was always cordial and pleasant to all, regardless of their rank, and irrespective of his state of mind or level of exhaustion. These were the ingredients of a rare gentleman—a gentleman who left a lasting loving imprint on the souls of us who knew him well.

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