



# Medical History Society of New Jersey

c/o UMDNJ – Special Collections  
G.F. Smith Library of the Health Sciences  
30 Twelfth Ave., P.O. Box 1709, Newark, NJ 07101-1709  
Tel: 973-972-7830 Fax: 973-972-7474  
email: [vietrora@umdnj.edu](mailto:vietrora@umdnj.edu) web site: [www.mhsnj.org](http://www.mhsnj.org)

October 2009

## Newsletter

Volume 29 Number 2

### SEVENTH UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND DENTISTRY FOUNDATION LECTURE

The fall meeting of the Medical History Society of New Jersey will be held on Tuesday, October 13th, at The Nassau Club in Princeton. Dr. David Rosner will present the Seventh University of Medicine and Dentistry Foundation Lecture, entitled “Toxic Torts and Retorts: The Trials and Tribulations of an Historian in the Courtroom.” Dr. Rosner is Ronald H. Lauterstein Professor of Sociomedical Sciences and Co-Director of the Center for the History and Ethics of Public Health at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health. His recent books co-authored with Gerald Markowitz include *Deceit and Denial: The Deadly Politics of Industrial Pollution* (2002), *Deadly Dust: Silicosis and the Struggle for Workers’ Health* (new expanded edition, 2006), and *Are We Ready?: Public Health Since 9/11* (2006), among many other books and articles. MHSNJ past president Frederick C. Skvara, M.D. will display medical philately related to the program. Registration begins at 3:30 pm, and the program begins at 4 pm.

#### [MHSNJ Business Meeting](#)

Karen Reeds, Ph.D., President

#### [New Jersey’s Dr. Evil: Edwin Katzen-Ellenbogen](#)

Michael Nevins, M.D., Director of Long-Term Care, Bergen Regional Medical Center

#### [Travels to Pathology Past: An American Medical Student in India](#)

Jonathan Reisman, B.A., UMDNJ-RWJMS, Camden

#### [Not the Intended Result of Drink: Delirium Tremens as a Defense to Murder](#)

Michele Rotunda, Ph.D. Candidate and Lecturer in History, Rutgers University

#### [How the Lead Industry Obstructs Public Health: A Case Study](#)

Richard Wedeen, M.D., Preventive Medicine & Community Health, UMDNJ-NJMS

Cocktails and Dinner (6-7:30 pm)

[Medical Stamp Exhibit](#) – Frederick C. Skvara, M.D.

Seventh University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey Foundation Lecture:

#### [Toxic Torts and Retorts: The Trials and Tribulations of an Historian in the Courtroom](#)

David Rosner, Ph.D.

Ronald H. Lauterstein Professor of Sociomedical Sciences

Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health

Members, students, and friends are invited to attend the dinner meeting. Cost is \$50/members, \$58/guests; advance registration is required. For information, contact MHSNJ, c/o UMDNJ Special Collections, G.F. Smith Library, 30 Twelfth Avenue, P.O. Box 1709, Newark, NJ 07101-1709 or contact [vietrora@umdnj.edu](mailto:vietrora@umdnj.edu) or [moss.sandra@gmail.com](mailto:moss.sandra@gmail.com).

---

⇒ MEMBERS IN THE NEWS ⇒

Vincent J. Cirillo, Ph.D., published “‘More Fatal than Powder and Shot’: Dysentery in the United States Army during the Mexican War, 1846 to 1848.” *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 52 (3): 400-413.

Dr. George J. Hill was interviewed by John Demmer for the Nutley Museum on the “History of the Essex County Medical Society from 1816-1966: The First One Hundred and Fifty Years.” This video-recorded interview was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Essex County Medical Society in Nutley, NJ, on May 20, 2009. Dr. Hill will be presenting a lecture, “Edison’s Environment – The Contradictory Legacy of the Great Inventor,” at the West Orange Public Library on December 6, 2009.

Leila M. Hover, D. Med. Hum., gave a presentation on concierge medicine to the Bioethics Committee at Overlook Hospital in Summit, NJ in May 2009. Her presentation included a history of medical retainers for physicians from biblical and medieval times to the present.

Dr. Wolfgang Jöchle published “History of Non-Surgical Contraception in Dogs and Cats.” *Veterinary History* 15:16-30, 2009 (UK).

Frank F. Katz, Ph.D., published “A Remembrance” of Leon Z. Saunders, D.V.M., Ph.D., in the American Veterinary Medical History Society’s *Interim News & Comment*, September 2009, 4-5. This article will eventually appear on the AVMHS website: [www.cvm.missouri.edu/avmhs](http://www.cvm.missouri.edu/avmhs). Dr. Katz conducted his doctoral dissertation research in Dr. Saunders’s laboratory at Brookhaven National Laboratory, and is starting a biographical project on Dr. Saunders, a preeminent veterinary pathologist and historian who died in March 2009.

Ellen D. Mandel, D. Med. Hum., M.P.A., PA-C published a book review of Roy Porter’s *A Social History of Madness* in the Winter 2009 issue of *The Journal of Psychiatry and Law*.

Dr. Sandra Moss was named to the Osler Medal Committee of the American Association for the History of Medicine in April 2009. This fall, she is teaching a five-lecture course called “Great Men and Great Ideas in Medicine” for sixty students at the Institute of New Dimensions, an education program for Bergen County adult learners. She is writing a book chapter on William Thalheimer for a new multi-author history of dialysis, in press.

Dr. Michael Nevins is curating an exhibition, “Art & Medicine at Terezin,” which will be on view at the Ehrman Medical Library of New York University School of Medicine through November. A companion booklet “Two Doctors of Terezin” is available by contacting Dr. Nevins at [mnevmd@att.net](mailto:mnevmd@att.net). Dr. Nevins’s newest book, *A Tale of Two ‘Villages’: Vineland and Skillman, NJ* is available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and [www.iuniverse.com](http://www.iuniverse.com).

Dr. Victor Parsonnet was featured in the August 20, 2009, issue of the *West Orange Chronicle*. He encouraged his grandniece, high school senior Sarah Fletcher, in a project to catalog rare books from the Aaron E. Parsonnet M.D. Cardiology Collection held by Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. More than 160 books were catalogued for the first time, including classic works by Austin Flint, Paul Dudley White, and Louis F. Bishop.

Karen Reeds, Ph.D., is finishing transcribing numerous oral histories she conducted concerning the history of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. The transcriptions will be available at Special Collections at UMDNJ – Newark, and at the State Archives.

Brian Regal, Ph.D., is teaching “Social and Cultural History of Health and Disease: Introduction to the History of Medicine” at Kean University. MHSNJ President Karen Reeds will be a guest lecturer. The course is part of

Kean's new minor degree in the History of Science, Technology and Medicine. The course web page, which contains links to many resources in the history of medicine, is <http://www.kean.edu/~bregal/HIST2050.htm>

Dr. Alan R. Rushton's newest book, *Genetics and Medicine in Great Britain 1600 to 1939*, is available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and [www.trafford.com](http://www.trafford.com).

Amit Sharma, B.A., UMDNJ-NJMS (3<sup>rd</sup> year), had his paper on the Weitlaner retractor accepted by the *Journal of Trauma*. He has completed another article about Harris Branham of Branham's sign, which is under review by the *Annals of Vascular Surgery*.

Dr. Allen Weisse hosted the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Weisse Lecture on the History of Medicine on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009, at UMDNJ – Newark. Professor Alan M. Kraut of American University lectured on "Dr. Joseph Goldberger and the Hunt for the 'Pellagra Germ.'" The lecture and subsequent luncheon were enjoyed by many MHSNJ members. Dr. Weisse also published "I Was a Mole in an IRB," *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 52(3): 435-41.

### ≡ IN MEMORIAM ≡

#### **Donald F. Kent, M.D.**

On June 20, 2009, Donald F. Kent of Maplewood, formerly of Chatham, died at his home at the age of 95. Dr. Kent was a longtime regular attendee of MHSNJ meetings, and presented papers at several meetings, including presentations on the history of anesthesia in 1982 and 1995. Lois Densky-Wolff remembers him fondly as a regular patron of Special Collections while conducting his doctoral research in the history of anesthesia: "He was a dear man and such a gentleman." He regaled Lois and Barbara Irwin with delightful stories about medicine and other subjects.

Dr. Kent was born October 4, 1913 in Newark and grew up in East Orange. He received B.A. and M.D. degrees from the University of Pennsylvania. He was married to his high-school sweetheart, Virginia Golden, for 68 years until her death in 2005. In 1945, he returned from service as an Army Physician in England and established a private practice in Chatham. As a General Practitioner, he attended to the town's medical needs, making house calls and serving as the high-school physician. He was also active in the community as a member of the Historical Society, Wheelmen's Society, and especially the Chatham Community Players, where he performed in many plays. He also had one professional theatrical role, in *The Crucible*, with the New Jersey Shakespeare Festival.

In 1973 at the age of 60, while continuing to care for his longtime patients, he took on a new career. As founder and director of the Overlook Hospital Family Practice Residency program, he taught and mentored new doctors until his retirement in 1988. He then began new academic pursuits, and at the age of 82 he became the oldest person to receive a doctorate from Drew University. His dissertation was entitled "The Medical Use of Ether and Chloroform in the Nineteenth Century: How Medical Uses Contrasted with Surgical Uses." He was a founding faculty member of the doctoral program in medical humanities at Drew. At the age of 95, he was still teaching a course in the history of medicine (which he alternated with one on the history of plagues) in the fall semester of 2008. He also wrote a biography of Peter Roget for the fifth (and current) edition of the famous *Thesaurus*.

He will be missed.

---

≡ **NEW JERSEY PROFILES** ≡

**Leo Henryk Sternbach**

by Vincent J. Cirillo, Ph.D.

Leo H. Sternbach (1908-2005), a chemist born in Croatia, joined Hoffmann-LaRoche Pharmaceuticals in Basel, Switzerland, in 1940. With anti-Semitism rampant in Europe, and with the fear of possible Nazi occupation of their country, Hoffmann-LaRoche transferred its top Jewish scientists to its American headquarters in Nutley, New Jersey. Sternbach worked in the Nutley laboratories from 1941 until his retirement in 1973. He remained on staff as a consultant until 2003.

In the mid-1950s, in order for Hoffmann-LaRoche to compete with Carter-Wallace's novel tranquilizer meprobamate (Miltown®), Sternbach directed a program to develop a new chemical entity that was safer and more effective. Sternbach and his team invented the class of anxiolytic drugs known as benzodiazepines. The first of these, chlordiazepoxide (Librium®), was introduced in 1960 and was followed three years later by diazepam (Valium®). The most potent of this class of drugs, Valium started a psychopharmacological revolution that "changed the face of madness and transformed the lunatic into an ordinary patient."

Valium proved to be a remarkably safe and effective treatment for anxiety disorders. It was the most prescribed drug in the world until the mid-1980s, reaching its peak in sales in 1978 when Americans consumed nearly 2.3 billion of the little yellow pills. Valium was the first blockbuster drug in the history of the pharmaceutical industry. Its very success, however, led to indiscriminate prescribing in the 1970s and 1980s by physicians who saw the drug as a panacea for the stresses and strains of everyday life. Surveys of clinical practice have revealed that the benzodiazepines are still the drugs of choice for the treatment of mood and anxiety disorders. (Ninety million prescriptions for benzodiazepines were written in 2001.)

Sternbach's many honors include the Medicinal Chemistry Award of the American Chemistry Society Division of Medicinal Chemistry (1978), the Chemistry Pioneer Award of the American Chemistry Society (1979), the Carl-Mannich Medal of Die Deutsche Pharmazeutische Gesellschaft (1984), and induction into both the New Jersey Inventors Hall of Fame (1989) and the National Inventors Hall of Fame (2005). The impressive body of work originating with Sternbach and his laboratory – described in 241 patents, 122 articles, and six monographs – has benefited millions of people suffering from anxiety disorders.

See: Alex Baenninger, et al., *Good Chemistry: The Life and Legacy of Valium Inventor Leo Sternbach* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004).

Stephen M. Stahl, "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, but Benzodiazepines Are Still the Leading Treatments for Anxiety Disorder." *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* 63 (2002): 756-7.

≡ **WHAT'S NEW IN SPECIAL COLLECTIONS** ≡

UMDNJ – Special Collections continues to acquire materials documenting the history of medicine in New Jersey. Thanks to MHSNJ member Dr. George Hill, Special Collections received 5 cu. ft. of records related to the Essex County Medical Society donated by Arthur Ellenberger, the Society's emeritus director. This donation included meeting posters from the 1950s to the 1970s, a run of the Society's *Bulletin* from 1944 to 2007, and a copy of J. Henry Clark's *The Medical Men of New Jersey in Essex District from 1666 to 1866* (1867), autographed by the author's son. Dr. Gene Napoliello and Dr. Jay Weiss donated 6 cu. ft. of materials related to the Essex County Dental Society, including minutes from 1914 to 1971, and a run of its *Bulletin* from 1937 to 1980, along with publications and records of the Newark Dental Club, 1985-2007. Any MHSNJ members involved with local medical organizations and their older records are encouraged to contact Special Collections!

Valerie Josephson donated her mother Viva Hamm's heavily annotated copy of Kimber and Gray's *Text-Book of Anatomy and Physiology* 7<sup>th</sup> edition (New York: Macmillan, 1930), used while a student at Newark City Hospital's School of Nursing in 1933. This item would be of great interest to any researcher studying the teaching of anatomy to nursing students.

The UMDNJ - Smith Library history of medicine lecture series will resume this fall and spring. Speakers tentatively scheduled include Dr. Michael Nevins, Dr. Steven Lomazow, Jun Tashiro, and Professor Sandra Echeverria of the UMDNJ School of Public Health. Details will be emailed to MHSNJ members as the lectures approach.

≡ **AN EVENT OF INTEREST** ≡

#### History of Monmouth Memorial Hospital

Frederic C. Pachman, AHIP, Director of the Medical Library at Monmouth Medical Center, will present a program on the predecessor of today's Monmouth Medical Center. Founded in 1887, the hospital has a long history of community involvement as it grew from a small room over a storefront on Broadway to its current location between Second and Third Avenues. The program will feature a lecture and the twenty-first century preview of a historical 1950s movie, "The Friends of Monmouth Memorial Hospital present 'Your Hospital.'"

Join us on Wednesday October 28, 2009 at 7:00pm in the meeting room of the Long Branch Public Library, 328 Broadway, Long Branch, NJ, or call 732-222-3900 for information.

An exhibit of artifacts and photographs will be on display outside the Local History Room in the Main Library throughout the month of October. This event is co-sponsored by the Long Branch Historical Association.

≡ **AN EXHIBIT OF INTEREST** ≡

MHSNJ President Karen Reeds reports, "Give yourselves a treat and go to the Grolier Club's current exhibition":

In Pursuit of Knowledge:

<http://www.grolierclub.org/>

Six Hundred Years of Leipzig University, 1409-2009  
(through November 21, 2009)

The treasures of the Leipzig University Library represent not only six hundred years of Leipzig University accomplishments, but also more than three millennia of human history – including the Ebers papyrus, the largest surviving ancient medical manuscript, written in the 16th century B.C.

An incredibly well preserved and beautiful piece of the manuscript is on display.

The Newsletter of the Medical History Society of New Jersey is published in May and October by the Society, and is a benefit of membership. Short articles (250 words) on medical history topics are especially welcome. Please send correspondence and submissions to:

Medical History Society of New Jersey  
c/o UMDNJ Special Collections  
George F. Smith Library of the Health Sciences  
P.O. Box 1709  
Newark NJ 07101-1709  
Tel: 973-972-7830  
Email: [vietrora@umdnj.edu](mailto:vietrora@umdnj.edu)

Thanks to Contributors: Vincent Cirillo, Lois Densky-Wolff, George Hill, Leila Hover, Wolfgang Jöchle, Frank Katz, Ellen Mandel, Sandra Moss, Michael Nevins, Frederic Pachman, Karen Reeds, Brian Regal, Alan Rushton, Amit Sharma, Frederick Skvara, and Allen Weisse.

# Philatelic Sketches in Medicine

Frederick C. Skvara, M.D.

## Tobacco

The tobaccos (genus *Nicotiana*) consist of a group of fifty species of tropical, American, annual plants having hairy and sticky stems, large, simple leaves and funnel-shaped, whitish-yellow flowers. Although originally found in South America, they are now cultivated in warm climates in many parts of the world. The two most popular species are *Nicotiana rustica* (wild tobacco) and *Nicotiana tabacum* (the most commonly grown species of smoking tobacco). The alkaloid nicotine is found predominantly in the leaves and that is the part of the plant that is harvested. The word tobacco is thought to be derived from Tabago, the pipe of Caribes, an Amerindian people in the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies. When Columbus discovered the island Tobago in 1498 he named it after the pipe.

Forest-dwelling tribes in South America are thought to have used the dried leaves of wild tobacco plants as long as 6000-8000 years ago. It was smoked or ingested by shamans to induce an altered state of mind during various rituals and ceremonies and it remained the privilege of priests until the first century A.D. when it began to be used by the general public. Through trade and war it eventually spread throughout Central and South America and the Caribbean and even reached the native American tribes in the southern part of North America.

Europeans got their first look at tobacco from the Indians of San Salvador in the Bahamas who offered dried leaves of the plant as a gift to Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) when he landed on the island on October 12, 1492. Although the leaves were discarded by Columbus, Rodrigo de Jerez, a sailor on *Santa Maria* and Luis de Torres, Christopher Columbus' interpreter, witnessed the act of smoking while exploring Cuba in November, 1492. The result was that Jerez became a confirmed smoker and introduced smoking to his home town of Ayamonte, Spain, on his return from the New World. Unfortunately, the smoke emanating from him frightened his neighbors, the Spanish Inquisition heard of it and he was imprisoned for "sinful and infernal" habits. Ironically, when he was released seven years later, smoking had become popular. On Columbus' second voyage to the New World in 1493, he was accompanied by Ramon (or Robert) Pane who is credited with introducing tobacco to Europe and who, in 1497, wrote the first report to appear in Europe of native tobacco use.



Jean Nicquet (1539-1608), merchant. France 1961 [Erroneously pictured instead of Jean Nicot]

Jean Nicot (1530-1600), a French diplomat and scholar and French Consul to Portugal introduced tobacco to France in the late 1550s and by the end of the sixteenth century, the use of tobacco had spread throughout Europe. The genus name of tobacco plants, *Nicotiana*, is named after him.

In addition to its familiar uses, tobacco has a long history as a medicinal plant and has been used to relieve pain, expel worms, counteract poisons, treat fevers, calm the overexcited and even cure plague. But it soon became evident that the alkaloid nicotine and a number of other ingredients in tobacco are addictive and carcinogenic. Smoking tobacco has been linked to lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, coronary artery disease and peripheral vascular disease. Chewing the leaves has been associated with cancers of the mouth, tongue and pharynx.



Italy 1982

Following the World Health Organization's anti-smoking campaign in 1980, a number of countries issued stamps in support of that effort.



Tobacco. Greece 1953



South Africa - Bophuthatswana 1980