DR. FREDERICK DEFOREST WEIDMAN

No individual in American medicine is more deserving of the honor of a Festschrift Number of the Journal of Investigative Dermatology than Dr. Frederick D. Weidman, Emeritus Professor of Research in Dermatology and Mycology at the University of Pennsylvania. One single fact may be cited as complete justification for this statement. Dr. Weidman is the first American scientist to have devoted himself solely to basic laboratory research and teaching oriented toward the problems of diseases of the skin. He embarked upon this career in 1917, following eight years of basic training in anatomy, histology and general pathology. Since making this decision, he has steadfastly continued his career in dermatologic investigation and the application of his basic knowledge to clinical problems. All American dermatologists are thankful for this decision made some thirty-three years ago, because it has given us knowledge which we otherwise would not have had, and has afforded to more physicians the opportunity of contact with a stimulating well-trained mind and the pleasant warmth of a kind and delightful personality.

To one who has known him for well over twenty years, the fact that Dr. Weidman has reached the age of seventy is an almost unbelievable fact. He seems to have aged neither in heart, mind or body. At the time of his retirement as an active Professor two years ago, his appointment as an Emeritus Professor, by no means a routine custom at the University of Pennsylvania, was promptly confirmed. The release from certain duties of teaching and administration which this change in status made possible has afforded Dr. Weidman greater time and opportunity for the informal advice and help which he has long given to many persons within and without his own department and institution. This Festschrift issue is almost unique in that it does not consist of a series of papers ground out on special invitation or request, but is composed of presentations from one department (with a single exception) at a single annual meeting of the Society for Investigative Dermatology. To many of these papers Dr. Weidman made a distinct contribution which might well have justified his inclusion as a co-author. It is a source of much satisfaction to the writers of these papers that the work recorded therein is a living and current testimonial to the vitality of investigative dermatology, which Dr. Weidman has so long nurtured.

Dr. Weidman was born on October 16, 1881. Following his graduation from the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania he served as assistant demonstrator in pathology and normal histology. He was made an instructor in gross morbid anatomy in 1914, and in 1917 became Assistant Director of the Laboratory of Dermatological Research. He was Acting Head of the Department of Dermatology and Syphilology from 1921–23. In 1923 he became Professor of Dermatological Research, which position he held until his retirement on age in 1949, following which he was appointed Emeritus Professor. From 1934 to 1946, Dr. Weidman was Head of the Department of Dermatology and Syph-
ilology in the Graduate School of Medicine. It is of special note that during the war years he maintained the basic course in dermatology in the Graduate School almost singlehandedly, which required a phenomenally heavy routine of teaching in the fields of histology, dermatopathology, mycology and clinical dermatology. Throughout his career, Dr. Weidman has maintained his interest and competence in the field of general pathology. He was Professor of Pathology at the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania from 1914–1917, and Associate Pathologist at the Philadelphia Zoological Garden, 1910 to date. He was a Visiting Dermatologist at the Philadelphia General Hospital from 1920–1947. His memberships in scientific societies and organizations are numerous. He was one of the earliest members of the American Board of Dermatology and Syphilology, maintaining his activity in this organization for some fifteen years. He is a member of the American Dermatological Association, the Society for Investigative Dermatology, the American Medical Association, the American Mycological Society, the Philadelphia Pathological Society, etc. He has served as Associate Editor of the Archives of Dermatology and Syphilology, and of Mycopathologia. He is a collaborator in Davis' Cyclopedia of Medicine and in Appleton's "Practitioner's Library."

Dr. Weidman's published scientific articles number ninety-six. In addition to the editorial responsibilities mentioned above, he has written one monograph, "Xanthoma," published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1941. It is unfortunate that considerations of space make it impossible to list his complete bibliography, because the reader could not help but be impressed by the wide range of subjects dealt with, and particularly the number of observations having important general medical implications. Dr. Weidman is a first-rank acknowledged authority in the fields of medical mycology and dermatopathology, and his publications furnish full justification for his reputation in these disciplines. It is an interesting but almost forgotten fact that Weidman, in collaboration with Stanley Chambers, was one of the first to demonstrate the antibiotic properties of certain micro-organisms in his report on "A Fungi-static Strain of Bacillus subtilis Isolated from Normal Toes," published in 1928. This observation was received with some incredulity at that time, but it stands as an unchallenged observation of antibiotic activity. Another important observation was that dealing with pseudoepitheliomatous hyperplasia at the margin of cutaneous ulcers. It would be difficult to estimate the number of patients who have been spared unnecessary destructive surgical procedures, on the basis of this observation. Weidman was one of the early "popularizers" of fungous infections, particularly deep fungous infections of general medical significance. His studies in comparative dermatology and pathology are interesting and important. He has maintained a consistent interest in the medical and dermatologic implications of disturbances of lipoid metabolism. The number of publications is all the more remarkable to anyone who has seen the stream of individuals who have come to Dr. Weidman's laboratory or have approached him elsewhere asking for an opinion on a slide or a culture. No matter what the circumstances, these opinions have been given fully and with care, but at the
expenditure of a formidable amount of time and effort. Such contributions do
not reach the printed page, but they may often represent the outstanding
cumulative accomplishment of any basic scientist whose work has clinical ap-
lications.

Dr. Weidman has been honored by numerous offices in scientific organiza-
tions, including presidency of the Philadelphia Pathological Society, of the
Society for Investigative Dermatology, and president and secretary of the
American Dermatological Association. He served as co-president of the Section
on Mycology of the Third International Congress of Microbiology, and has
been a Vice-President of the American Board of Dermatology and Syphilology.

Weidman's professed hobbies are horticulture and fishing. To anyone who
has known him well, certain other activities might be included, such as the
collection of a surpassing number of anecdotes, informal group singing, and the
invention of practical jokes for the education and enlightenment of the unwary
or pompous.

The publication of a Festschrift issue, or any similar honor to a distinguished
person in science, is often accompanied by some misgivings in the minds of the
friends of the person so honored, lest he feel that he is being gently and af-
fectionately impelled to a regimen of professional inactivity. No such concern
exists in the minds of the friends of Dr. Frederick D. Weidman in connection
with this honor. He may enjoy a little more leisure, but his working hours are
as productive as ever. In particular, he continues to exert an extraordinarily
healthy and stimulating influence upon American dermatologists, both young
and old, and his continued activity in the years to come is a source of comfort
to the many who have long depended upon him for advice and guidance. More-
over his guidance has always been exerted in a spirit of basic kindliness, and
this is the hallmark of a great person.

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