

Alan Boulton 1936-2010

Alan Boulton was a Professor with the University of Saskatchewan's Department of Psychiatry until 2002 and was made Professor Emeritus in 2003.

Alan received his PhD in 1962 from the University of Manchester and was immediately instated as an Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Physiology at the University of Birmingham until his relocation to Canada in 1968. He first worked for the Psychiatric Research Division for Saskatchewan Health, with a cross-appointment as a Research Associate with the Department of Psychiatry, and then formally joined the Department as an Associate Professor in 1971. He moved up through the ranks to Provincial Director of Psychiatric Research and to full Professorship with the Department, and took on the Directorship of the now-defunct Neuropsychiatry Research Unit (housed within the Medical Research Building, which has now been replaced by the E-wing of the Health Sciences Complex). Alan was awarded a D.Sc. from the University of Manchester in 1976.

Alan's accomplishments are vast. He was a pioneer in research on trace amines (biologically active molecules in the brain that exert profound effects on neurotransmission) and their involvement in the causes (and as potential therapeutic targets) in many psychiatric and neurologic disorders.

He was recognized as a world leader in the analysis of these amines in the central nervous system, and his work on psychiatric drugs and their effects on levels of these amines led him into research on neuroprotective agents and commercialization of a number of drugs. Several of these drugs ultimately set the foundation for a commercial venture, namely the biotechnology company *ALviva* Biopharmaceuticals Inc. His scientific contributions resulted in Alan being made an Honorary Professor in several Universities, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002, an award bestowed to those Canadians recognized for making a significant contribution to their fellow citizens, their community or to Canada.

Not only was he recognized for his research accomplishments, but anyone who knew Alan would remember that he had a full head of absolutely snow-white hair. Just to put the importance of this iconic head of hair into perspective, at the 1995 meeting of the American Society of Neurochemistry in Santa Monica, the 'buzz' was not about the latest gene cloned or the latest drug to affect cell function. Rather, the buzz was almost exclusively about the fact that Alan had dyed his hair jet black.

In preparation for this summary of Alan's accomplishments, I had the opportunity to peruse his CV, which was a very sobering and humbling experience, as he was very engaged across all aspects of neuroscience and he was a consummate and prolific researcher. He was a founding member of the World Federation of Biological Psychiatry as well as the Canadian College of Neuropsychopharmacology; he was the Chairman, a consultant or an organizing member on numerous panels (SHRC, MRC, Royal Society of Canada, National Research Advisory Board); he organized numerous scientific meetings here in Saskatoon and abroad; he was President of the Canadian College of Neuropsychopharmacology and the International Society for Neurochemistry; he was also a very active mentor (6 MSc students and 14 PhD students) and many of his trainees went on to senior positions in academia, industry and government: these include, but are not limited to, Glen Baker, who was a Tier 1 CRC (D.Sc. UofS) and Director of the Neurochemical Research Unit and past-Head of the Department of Psychiatry (UofA); Lillian Dyck, a researcher in her own right and who is now a Senator in Ottawa; Karen Dewar, a Deputy Director at CIHR; Andrew Greenshaw, who just finished six years as Associate Vice-President (Research) at the University of Alberta and who is Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors of the University of the Arctic, and XinMin Li, a very successful Clinical Researcher who took over the Directorship of the Neuropsychiatry Research Unit upon Alan's retirement, before recently relocating to the University of Manitoba.

Without going into exhaustive detail, I'll just state that Alan helped put Neuroscience research at the University of Saskatchewan 'on the map': his contributions include 48 books (as co-Editor, most with Glen Baker), more than 50 patents, 62 book chapters and/or reviews, 216 peer-reviewed articles (of which approximately 190 were authored while at the University of Saskatchewan), more than 20 technical reports and in excess of 300 abstracts. Aside from annual operational funding for the Neuropsychiatry Research Unit, Alan also managed to obtain more than \$7.6M in research funding (national, provincial, industrial, graduate) during his time at the University. Bear in mind that these were 1970-1980 dollars.

Finally, I'd like to read the opening statement from Alan's obituary, which appeared in the Globe and Mail. Anyone who knew Alan will immediately recognize that this exemplifies Alan's outlook on life and his philosophy about everything he set his mind to; *to wit*, Alan Arthur Boulton, "died reluctantly but decisively on Saturday 13 Nov 2010".

Alan is survived by his wife Anne, three of their children, and by much loved grandchildren.

*Darrell D. Mousseau
Eulogy for Alan Boulton
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(Author's title given as of the time of writing)