

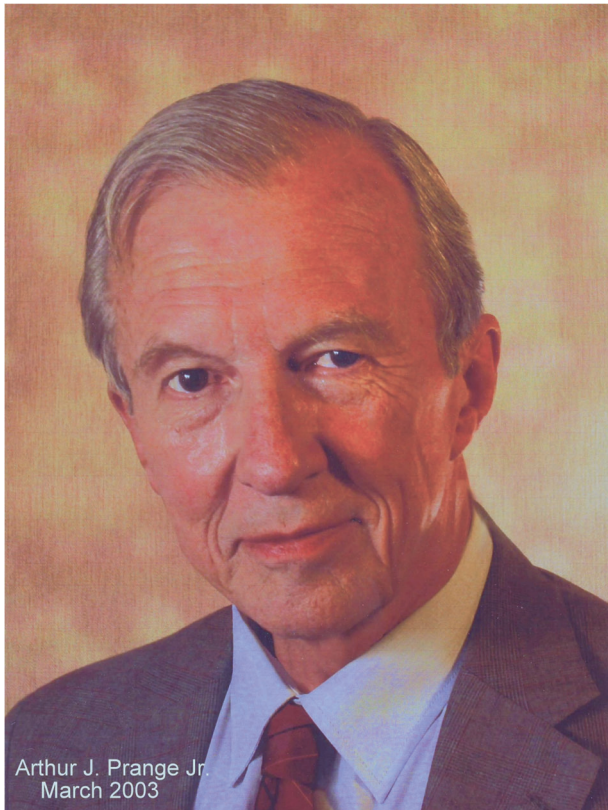
IN MEMORIAM



In memoriam: Arthur J. Prange, Jr., MD

© The Author(s), under exclusive licence to American College of Neuropsychopharmacology 2024

Neuropsychopharmacology; <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41386-024-01883-6>



Arthur J. Prange, Jr. died in Hillsborough, North Carolina on April 6 this year, at the age of 97. He was accepted into ACNP membership in 1965 and was a Fellow Emeritus at the time of his passing. After graduating from East Grand Rapids High School in 1944, he enlisted in the Navy at age 17 and was selected for the Navy College Training program, reporting to Muhlenberg College. One year later as a pre-med student, he was transferred to Swarthmore College and after World War II ended he enrolled at the University of Michigan, receiving his BS degree in 1947, followed by his MD degree in 1950. He interned at Wayne County General Hospital and completed a year of residency in anesthesiology at Detroit Receiving Hospital. The Navy sent him to its hospital in Key West, Florida and after 8 months he was transferred to Norfolk, VA where he completed his 2 years of service as the medical officer aboard the USS Briareus. His experiences there led him to enroll in a career in psychiatry and he was in the very first class of psychiatry residents at the University of North Carolina (UNC) beginning in July, 1954. Art remained in

the UNC department for 40 years and he served as the Boshamer Professor of Psychiatry until retirement in 1994.

Space constraints will preclude a comprehensive review of his prodigious contributions to psychiatry and more specifically the then burgeoning field of psychoneuroendocrinology. In order to accomplish his visionary work, he required both basic laboratory space which was provided by the director of the research facility at UNC, Morris A. Lipton, MD, PhD, himself a former president of ACNP and a clinical research unit which Art was able to develop at the nearby Dorothea Dix Hospital in Raleigh, a state facility. His research was supported throughout his career by the National Institute of Mental Health.

He was recognized for his pioneering research, largely focused on the bidirectional relationship of the hypothalamic-pituitary-thyroid (HPT) axis and depression. He was the first to demonstrate the lack of physiological effects of antidepressants in hypothyroid rats, the efficacy of thyroid hormone (T₃) to accelerate the antidepressant effects of tricyclic antidepressants and to recognize the extra-pituitary effects of thyrotropin-releasing hormone (TRH) in the central nervous system. His research was highlighted in the October 30, 1972 issue of *Time Magazine*. For these seminal publications, he was honored with election to the ACNP presidency in 1987, the Gold Medal Award from the Society of Biological Psychiatry, the Selo Prize from the Brain and Behavioral Research Foundation (formerly NARSAD) and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Society of Psychoneuroendocrinology. He published more than 250 peer-reviewed publications.



None of the aforementioned accomplishments even begin to capture Art's true contributions, namely the impact he has had on all of those around him—his students, colleagues and family. By his own account, his greatest pleasure was in enabling the success of young investigators, residents, and faculty. He collaborated with (and helped train) a myriad of young (and not so young) people who went on to become giants in our field. These include Fred Goodwin, Peter Whybrow, Garth Bissette, Peter Kalivas, Peter Loosen, Dwight Evans, Bob Golden, Cort Pedersen, Bill McKinney, JC Garbutt, George Breese, and myself. A few brief anecdotes might illustrate the remarkable impact he had on all of us.

At our very first meeting in which he agreed to serve as my PhD mentor, he handed me a copy of Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style* and told me to read it because grammar was important.


As a student alone in Chapel Hill, living in a 2 room apartment in 1974 with few friends (and no girlfriend), I was drinking coffee on Thanksgiving morning, largely feeling sorry for myself. The phone rings and it is Art, asking me whether I'd like to come to his home and spend Thanksgiving with his family. There I was welcomed by his wife and 4 children, David, Laura, Marnie and Christy. They were the most important figures in his life and over the ensuing many years Art and I worked together (often at his home preparing grants or going over manuscripts), I came to learn how important family was to him. Other than his work, his passions included fishing and duck hunting but above all else, all things UNC especially basketball. He had UNC season's tickets for decades. He also remained loyal to the Maize and Blue of the University of Michigan but that was reserved to football. In a

Received: 2 May 2024 Accepted: 3 May 2024
Published online: 21 May 2024

recent conversation with his daughter Christy, she indicated that over the years he “almost” forgave me for leaving UNC for Duke University. Finally, Art was a lifelong environmentalist, passing on his beliefs and lessons onto his progeny.

Charles B. Nemeroff ¹ 

¹*Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, The University of Texas at Austin Dell Medical School, Austin, TX, USA.*

email: cnemeroff@austin.utexas.edu