

## In Memoriam Steven H Ferris

*Neuropsychopharmacology* (2017) 42, 2655. doi:10.1038/npp.2017.184



Our friend and colleague Steven H Ferris, PhD, was the consummate ‘gentleman scholar’, who was an active member of ACNP since 1982. He was internationally recognized for his contributions to the cognitive assessment, pathophysiology, and treatment of patients with age-associated dementia, particularly Alzheimer’s disease (AD).

Steve passed away on 5 April 2017 from complications of lymphoma at the age of 73. He was raised in Queens, New York City, and attended Stuyvesant High School. He received BS and MA degrees in psychology from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Queens College, and a PhD in experimental psychology from the City University of New York. He completed postdoctoral training on deep underwater vision at the US Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory in Groton, CT. In 1973 he joined Samuel Gershon’s Psychopharmacology Research Unit at New York University School of Medicine and Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital to spearhead an NIH-funded trial testing whether hyperbaric oxygen might improve age-associated dementia. NYU remained Steve’s academic home for the next 43 years.

In 1974 Steve founded the Aging and Dementia Research Center, and over the next several years he developed a multidisciplinary team that included Barry Reisberg, Mory de Leon, and Mary Mittleman, among many others. This team established one of the earliest NIMH-funded, state-of-the-art, aging and dementia research centers. Steve also led an NIA-funded P30 AD Core Center since 1990. This Center has emerged as a leader in the early diagnosis of AD. Key contributions include the first PET studies in AD (1980) and the first identification and early characterization of mild cognitive impairment (1982), a high-risk condition that often precedes AD. For 25 years he chaired the Instrument Development Committee of the Alzheimer’s Cooperative Study. Steve’s team developed an internationally recognized program for dementia caregivers. Their contributions to cognitive assessment now help identify patients at risk for AD and enable disease-modifying trials aimed at halting progression. He led and participated in over a hundred pharmacology trials, and served as an advisor to both the pharmaceutical industry and the FDA.

Steve was equally passionate about science and life and was particularly fond of combining professional activities with travel, dining, and close colleagues and friends. He was an enthusiast of liberal politics, the latest tech gadget, obscure foreign films, long bike rides, and long days at the beach. He authored over 300 publications, mentored hundreds of graduate students, medical students, residents, and fellows, and fostered many long-term friendships with colleagues around the world. Many of us considered him among our more trusted, loyal and enjoyable, life-long friends.

Most of all, Steve loved spending time with his family, including his wife Arlene, his sons David and Marc, their wives Catherine and Amy, and his grandchildren Simon, Sophia, Tyler, and Leo, as well as many friends. Steve’s kind heart and generous spirit will be missed by all his family and friends.

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