



THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE
Harvard University

Arnold N. Weinberg

Dr. Arnold (Arnie) N. Weinberg was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1929. Arnie was fiercely proud of his Brooklyn roots, and often reflected about the sense of community he felt growing up there, and all of us know the glorious history of the Brooklyn Dodgers and their cherished landmark Ebbets field, thanks to Arnie. As a child, he often visited the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and worked there for one year between high school graduation and beginning college. In fact, he aspired to be a plant pathologist when he entered Cornell University, but was often heard to say that he abandoned the idea because “trees don’t talk”. He graduated from Cornell in 1952, and received his M.D. degree from Harvard Medical School in 1956. Arnie was an intern and junior resident at the MGH from 1956 to 1958, before leaving for 3 years in the Laboratory of Metabolic Enzymes at the National Institute of Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases at the NIH. He returned to the MGH in 1961 to complete a year of senior residency. He then joined Dr. Morton Swartz in the nascent Division of Infectious Diseases at MGH in 1962 and played major roles in the early years of that Division as well as at Harvard Medical School.

In 1969, Arnie set up a course in the second year of the Harvard Medical School curriculum called the “Pathophysiology of Infectious Diseases”, an area of teaching he would focus on over the next nearly twenty years. In 1973, he became the Director of the entire Pathophysiology course sequence in Year 2 and skillfully and enthusiastically guided that for nearly a decade. His original course morphed into a new course entitled “Microbiology and Infectious Disease”, a course with which most of us who went to Harvard Medical School are very familiar. This course introduced generations of Harvard students to microbiology and infectious diseases and is cited by many of us as the inspiration for our careers in the field.

In those early years at MGH, Arnie also conducted some of the important original research on the mechanisms of antibiotic synergy in the Enterococcus with Dr. Robert Moellering, and he and Bob became lifelong friends, tennis partners and had many other interactions. In fact, when one of us (Steve Calderwood) did his ID fellowship, he had the chance to train in the lab with Bob and to work on some of the things he and Arnie had pioneered several years before.

In 1971, Arnie went to Cambridge Hospital as the Chair of Medicine, helping that hospital to flourish in its clinical care, academic and teaching missions. Building on the foundation laid by Arnie, Cambridge Hospital has become a major teaching site for Harvard Medical students, one that teaches them the importance of the community in the prevention and treatment of disease. In 1975, Arnie returned to the MGH to serve as Vice Chair of the Department of Medicine under Dr. Alex Leaf. At that time, we were also fortunate to have him rejoin us in the MGH Division of Infectious Diseases.

I (Steve Calderwood) began my internship at MGH in 1975, and it was during this period when Arnie was an Infectious Disease attending and Vice Chair of the Department of Medicine that I first got to know him. From that year on, I counted him as a mentor, teacher, colleague and friend for the next 40 years. In 1978,

*In tribute to their dedicated efforts to science and medicine, deceased members of the Harvard Faculty of Medicine (those at the rank of full or emeritus professor) receive a review of their life and contributions with a complete reflection, a **Memorial Minute**.*

Arnie left the role of Vice Chair of the Department but continued as an active clinician and educator in the Division of Infectious Diseases and in the Department of Medicine.

I (Steve Calderwood) have to digress for a moment to tell a story of an early encounter I had with Arnie during this time. Arnie was an avid and very accomplished birder. Shortly after I finished my Chief Residency and joined the faculty in the Division of Infectious Diseases in 1982, Arnie came into my office one Friday morning rather breathless and asked if I could cover the upcoming weekend that he was scheduled to cover, as he had an emergency he needed to attend to. Of course I said yes and I covered that weekend. When Arnie returned on Monday, I asked him if everything was okay and if the emergency had subsided. Arnie then recounted that the emergency had been the need to drive to Cape Cod to see a particular bird that was normally only found in Africa but that had apparently flown across the ocean and was now to be seen on Cape Cod for a very limited time; this was one of the few birds Arnie had not yet seen and saw this as perhaps his only chance. I soon realized that Arnie's interests and expertise in birding was a major thread in his life.

In 1986, Arnie assumed the role of Medical Director at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a role he remained in for 14 years, again transforming medical care and preventive services for the MIT community in wonderfully innovative ways. During that time, Arnie also played leadership roles at the Whitehead Institute for Research, the Lincoln Laboratories, and many other important roles at MIT. In 2000, he retired from that role and again returned to the MGH, back to the Division of Infectious Diseases as one of our most active clinicians and teachers. He also assumed the role of Associate Firm Chief in the Department of Medicine, a role in which he taught countless students and residents clinical medicine at the bedside. He also served as a core faculty member for fourth-year Harvard Medical students who were doing their subinternships at the MGH.

Over those years, all of us can recall the Monday ID conferences where Arnie would offer his enormous experience and wisdom on cases under discussion, always with a wry smile, and always the perspective of someone who had grown up prior to antibiotics and much of modern technology, and who firmly believed that so much information was available from listening to a patient and examining them very carefully. We all remember his frequent refrain, "Why is this patient not on penicillin?" He was generous with his time in reviewing complicated patient problems, or even the problems that we as junior faculty found complicated. Many of us recall fretting that cellulitis or another infection was not improving as rapidly as we wanted, and taking Arnie to the bedside, where he taught us to be patient and assess for early signs of improvement. All of our vocabularies are peppered with Arnie-isms: in this case, "don't just do something, stand there." Or the even more famous "locus minoris resistentiae -- infections occur at sites of decreased resistance."

Arnie retired from the MGH in 2014, and it was a wonderful event at which many of us got to celebrate Arnie's many wonderful contributions over his long life and career. Arnie's achievements were numerous. He held the titles of Professor of Medicine at HMS and Professor of Health Sciences and Technology at Harvard University and MIT. He was the recipient of the Centennial Gold Medal from the New York State Veterinary Association, the Boylston Prize for Excellence in Teaching from HMS, as well as multiple HMS clinical teaching awards, and was the 1985 HMS Class Day speaker. Perhaps his greatest achievement was how much his patients, students, and colleagues loved him. Many of the faculty members have a very special place in their hearts for his kindness, humor, intellect, clinical skill, and support over the years. His keen ability to see each of us as diverse, interesting people outside of medicine will always be cherished. Now when we see a special bird, we are reminded of our treasured

Arnie. He is gone but his presence and impact remains strongly with us.

The last few years of his life, Arnie lived in a beautiful home in Rockport with his beloved wife Inge, with whom he shared a life of gardening, music, travel, and wine. In addition to Inge, Arnie is survived by his three cherished daughters, Suzanne, Davida, and Carolyn.

Arnie – you taught us so much, we will continue to try to honor your memory by living up to your example as physicians, colleagues, and people every day. You are gone now from our sight but never our hearts. May you rest in peace.

Submitted by,

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