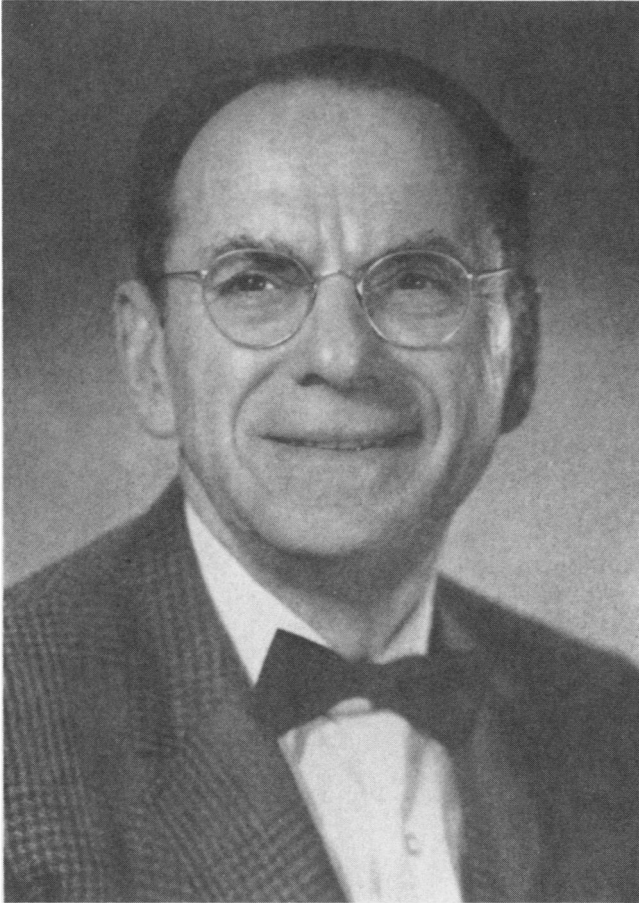


American Association of Avian Pathologists

Tribute to
P. Philip Levine
(1907-1979)



On 27 September 1979, Dr. P. Philip Levine died after a prolonged illness. He was 72. His death is met with sadness by his family, and by his many students, colleagues, and friends throughout the world. In his chosen field, avian medicine, he distinguished himself in scientific achievement in the training of avian pathologists, in leadership at national and international levels, and in

service to his profession and to the field of agriculture. It is appropriate that this tribute be published in *Avian Diseases*, the journal that he established as Founding Editor and later served as Honorary Lifetime Editor.

Dr. Levine was born on 25 September 1907, in New York City. He received the B.S. degree from the City College of New York in 1927, and then entered the Veterinary College at Cornell University. He interrupted his education to teach school in New York City (1930–31). In 1932 he received both the MS and DVM degrees. After spending 2 years with the N.Y.S. Conservation Department, he returned to Cornell and, in 1937, he was awarded the Ph.D. degree under the tutelage of W. A. Hagan. He remained at Cornell University, rising through the ranks from Instructor, in 1934, to Professor in 1944. In 1961 he was named Head of the newly created Department of Avian Diseases, a post that he held for five years. Upon his retirement, in 1973, he was appointed Emeritus Professor.

Dr. Levine's scientific career after receiving the DVM degree was concerned strictly with the field of avian diseases. At heart, he was a parasitologist; his excellent work on coccidiosis is best exemplified by his initiation of the use of sulfonamides for the control of that disease. That breakthrough, and the subsequent research stimulated by it, has permitted the mass production of poultry as we see it today. While he may have had a special interest in coccidiosis research, he was knowledgeable in all aspects of avian diseases and proved himself adept in research with other areas such as mycoplasmal and viral diseases. He was responsible for application of the "egg-dipping" technique for preventing egg-borne mycoplasmosis. Certainly, the impact of this method was felt in eradication efforts toward control of chronic respiratory disease. He first described duck virus hepatitis and provided the control methods that essentially saved the duck industry on Long Island. Altogether, he authored or coauthored more than 70 scientific papers.

His ability to envisage a need, and act upon it, left an imprint around the State of New York. His leadership and personal efforts led to the development of a duck research laboratory at Eastport, L.I., and regional poultry diagnostic laboratories at Kingston, Oneonta, and East Aurora. The latter two laboratories have since been closed, because of changing needs of the poultry industry, but for over 20 years they served as a beacon light to poultrymen in distress. Dr. Levine did not hide in an "ivory tower"; he was quick

to take the opportunity to participate in extension meetings and to rub elbows with poultrymen.

As a teacher he had few peers. Poultry diseases are admittedly low on the list of favorite subjects for veterinary students. But his approach, delivery, and exquisite ability to capture his audience made him a favorite. With graduate students, he was a demanding and skilled adviser. Projects were carried out under his supervision in a careful and searching fashion. Second-rate was not tolerated in terms of the work or the manner in which it was reported. He was always interested in the work of others and he stimulated creative thinking.

His speaking ability was to be admired. With little or no notice, he could address an audience on a wide variety of subjects in a well organized, cogent fashion that held one's attention and sent one home with a lesson learned. He was invariably entertaining as well. Many people made their first acquaintance with Dr. Levine at scientific meetings. His verbal exchanges with colleagues on the floor gained him the respect of those attending. His ability to analyze situations and summarize his conclusions was a trait for which he was admired.

One of the outstanding achievements to his credit was the initiation of this journal, *Avian Diseases*. Having served earlier as Editor of the *Cornell Veterinarian*, he had valuable experience that stood him in good stead. He arranged for financial backing by the *Cornell Veterinarian* and, with the support of many colleagues who also wanted a special-interest journal for the field of avian medicine, he set out with some uncertainty but a good deal of enthusiasm and hope. His job as Editor was somewhat more than is presently expected of the position. He solicited papers and served as major reviewer. Some papers received a very heavy "helping hand" to get them in publishable form. He worked closely with the printer, even to the point of pasting together the "dummy." When the first issue was sent to the presses, in 1957, it was without question a P. P. Levine project. The journal was an unqualified success. From the beginning it was clear that it filled a need, and it has been well supported since its inception. In recognition of the central role he played in initiating and nurturing the journal, Dr. Levine was later named Honorary Lifetime Editor.

In addition to the obvious direct benefits to the field of avian medicine that derived from the publication of *Avian Diseases*, there was also an indirect effect of significance. When Dr. Levine expressed interest in relinquishing the reins as Editor, the need to

find a "home" for the journal was just the focal activity needed to fulfill some of the major objectives of the newly formed American Association of Avian Pathologists. Publication of *Avian Diseases* remains to this day one of the most important functions of the AAAP.

Dr. Levine's sphere of influence was broad. He was a member and active participant of numerous professional organizations. A partial list of some of his positions, honors and awards attests to his stature as a respected leader and scientist world-wide.

Editor, *Cornell Veterinarian*, 1942-1946
 Associate Editor, *Journal of Parasitology*, 1943-1948
 Guggenheim Foundation Fellow, 1947-1948
 Recipient, New York Poultry Council Award, 1953
 Research Participant, Atomic Energy Comm., 1954-1955
 Vice-President, World Veterinary Poultry Association, 1959-1967
 Consultant for Rockefeller Foundation Mexico Project, 1960
 Consultant for USAID Israel Program, 1961-1962
 President, American Association Avian Pathologists, 1961-1962
 Member, advisory committee of the USDA on Poultry Inspection Criteria, 1966-1969
 Director, Post-graduate course on avian diseases, San Marcos University, Lima, Peru, 1966
 Chairman of the session on Teaching Poultry Diseases at the 18th World Veterinary Congress, Paris, France, 1967
 Teacher for Pan American Health Bureau, Brazil, 1967
 Consultant for Rockefeller Foundation Ad Hoc Inspection Committee for Veterinary Colleges in Lima, Peru, and Belo Horizonte, Brazil, 1968
 Consultant for Food and Agricultural Organization in Peru, 1969
 President, World Veterinary Poultry Association, 1969-1973
 Honorary Life President, World Veterinary Poultry Association, 1973-1979
 Awarded the degree Doctor Medicinæ Veterinariæ Honoris Causa by the Veterinary Faculty of Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich, Germany, October 19, 1970
 FAO Consultant in poultry disease control in Peru, 1971
 FAO Consultant in poultry disease control in Israel, 1971-1972
 FAO Consultant in poultry disease control in Mexico, 1972-1974
 Recipient of American Association of Avian Pathologists Special Service Award, 1976

Dr. Levine also served on various editorial boards and was influential in the affairs of many organizations such as the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Northeastern Conference of Avian Diseases.

As a person, there was much to admire in Dr. Levine. First of all, not only was he truly a gentleman in the usual sense, but he was also a gentle man. He commanded the respect of all who knew him, and for good reasons. He did not raise his voice, but used reasoned persuasion to make his point. He would listen to all views and then synthesize constructive advice without demeaning those he felt to be wrong. His judgments were valued and his opinions sought in any group activity or committee with which he was involved. He

had a way of sending persons away with the thought that they had developed an idea rather than having had it thrust upon them. He did not want anyone to go to any trouble for him, and he shouldered a good many burdens himself rather than ask for help. He was seriously ill several times in the past few years but it was not in him to complain, only to look forward to new activities upon returning to good health.

One word that is descriptive of his character is "selflessness." Dr. Levine "pulled strings," created opportunities, provided a boost, encouraged participation, and helped in many untold ways to promote his students, his young staff, and his colleagues in subtle ways that kept him in the background with the spotlight on the person helped. Not only did he do this, but he did it with genuine selflessness. Few persons could lay claim to such a description.

Sincerity and dedication marked his professional life. But there was another side to Phil Levine, to those who knew him as a colleague and friend, and of friends he had many. There was a joviality that was very evident at social gatherings and at informal meetings. He appreciated a good story, and he delighted in telling them. His travels provided him with numerous experiences, which he relished relating. His reputation resulted in many invitations to visit foreign countries — Israel, Germany, Mexico, and many of the Latin-American countries. The warm feeling he had for these people, and the concern he showed in their problems, developed into many lifelong friendships. His visits were particularly appealing to the Latin Americans, because he had the ability to converse with them in their own languages. They loved it, and they had a special affection for him because of it. At any meeting where he and Latin Americans were gathered together, he attracted them like a magnet, and exchanges between them were electric.

As for extracurricular activities, he was an enthusiastic traveler, violinist, handball player, and sports fan. He was a dedicated family man who enjoyed life outside his professional sphere as well as within it.

In all he did, Dr. Levine established high standards for himself. He aimed high. He hit the mark. His imprint was left on the Cornell campus, in the State of New York, in the nation, and in the world. To have known and been associated with a person that had the distinction of P. Philip Levine was a privilege indeed.

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