



Herman Grossman, MD, MS (1924–2018)

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Herman Grossman passed quietly on Feb. 11, 2018, at the age of 93. His entire radiology career was in the academic arena, founded in education for the advancement of imaging care of children. Herman was an early member of the circa 1960 community that established pediatric radiology as a subspecialty. Herman's life was one, then, that

started with personal and professional promise, kept and amplified together with the many friends and colleagues who had both the pleasure and opportunity to walk with him during his celebrated life.

Herman was born in Connecticut on April 25, 1924, and graduated in 1947 from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (an acknowledged and reconciled “betrayal” of his many years at Duke). These early years were punctuated by service to our country during WWII as a lieutenant in the Navy, on a landing ship tank (LST) as troop and heavy equipment support for amphibious operations at the Pacific Front. He returned stateside and completed a master's program in chemistry from Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Herman received his medical degree in 1953 from Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons. The fiber of his commitment to the care of children and highly praised ability to engage with pediatric health care providers began immediately afterward with a pediatric internship at Bellevue Hospital in 1954 and residency at Babies Hospital from 1954 to 1956. He was board certified in pediatrics in 1958 and from 1956 to 1961 was an attending pediatric physician at Columbia University and Hackensack Hospital. It was during these clinical days, both forged and fortified by the era and aura of house calls, that he made the fortuitous decision to change to radiology. This is not entirely coincidental, because John Caffey was an attending physician at Babies Hospital, a Columbia affiliate, until the early 1960s. Herman completed his radiology residency at Columbia in 1965 and was then on staff at Cornell, Memorial Hospital and New York Hospital as a pediatric radiologist.

Herman Grossman was recruited to establish the first pediatric radiology section at Duke University Medical Center in 1972, quickly rising to the level of professor of radiology and pediatrics. His administrative successes were recognized early and he served as an interim chair of the Department of Radiology from 1976 through 1977. He formally retired from clinical practice in 1997. His legacy is partly sustained through now 20 years of the Herman Grossman Lectureship,

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the first of several current annual orations at Duke. His tenure included many years with colleagues Eric Effmann, David Merton and Kate Feinstein.

Herman's contributions to medical literature began in 1964 with two publications, one with David Baker on hypertrophic osteoarthropathy and cystic fibrosis and a second sentinel paper with Walter Berdon, with whom Herman maintained a lifelong friendship, on necrotizing enterocolitis in the premature infant. Herman went on to establish a recognized and remarkable expertise in pediatric genitourinary radiology that was underscored by numerous peer-reviewed publications and chapters, and two textbooks. Although he had much more than the customary engagements with professional societies, including the American College of Radiology, in preparing pediatric content, his most enduring legacy is through the hundreds of residents and fellows he trained during his tenure as an academic pediatric radiologist.

“Herm” and Eunice, whose bright eyes and grace have never dimmed, were married in 1949. They had daughters Gayle, Wendy and Phyllis. Herman was an avid tennis player (when he injured his right elbow he learned to play left-handed) and remained active throughout most of his life. His true sport love affair was with Duke men's basketball and he often knew of significant recruiting and other behind-the-scenes happenings well before the local newspapers. He and Eunice enjoyed traveling, especially in parts of Africa. During his retirement years, he learned woodworking and made striking works of art out of exotic hardwoods. One memorable story from my training that gives a glimpse into Herman's “winking” character was when he would ask an unsuspecting but eager resident, “Would you like a cup of coffee?” The resident would say “Sure,” upon which he would answer, “Well then get me one, too!” Herman Grossman, we all miss having a cup of coffee with you.