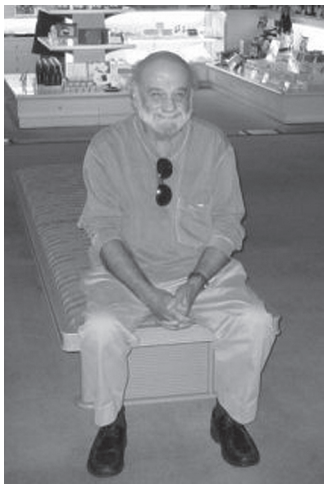
In Memoriam: Erwin Roy John, PhD August 14, 1924–February 28, 2009

THE PASSING OF DR. ERWIN ROY JOHN is a loss to family and friends, to thousands of neuroscience students and colleagues, and to patients with neurocognitive and psychiatric disorders. All have benefited from his teaching, his dedication to advancing understanding of the neuroscience underlying brain function, and his friendship.



Erwin Roy John was born in Brownsville, Pennsylvania, and grew up in Long Beach, Long Island, New York. A child of the depression, he never forgot his past. He was a dedicated sympathizer in the cause of the worker and the common man. This dedication to a cause found its outlet in his attraction to the neuroscience underlying brain function, from which all have benefited. He became a world-renowned neuroscientist, highlighted by his pioneer efforts in the field of computerized quantitative neurophysiology (neurometrics), by his codiscovery of the P300 cognitive evoked potential, by his leadership in the understanding of consciousness, and by his contributions to source generator localization of the recorded electroencephalographic response (i.e., the Loreta analysis). His contributions, together with those of his laboratory colleagues—led by his wife and colleague, Leslie Prichep-John, PhD—were published in more than 200 articles in books and peer-reviewed journals. Collaborations with scientific leaders were worldwide and long-term and included research efforts in Cuba, Denmark, France, Germany, Mexico, Switzerland, and Turkey. His contributions included development of instrumentation having applicability to diagnosis and treatment of blast injury, coma, posttraumatic stress disorder, learning disabilities, autism, and monitoring of brain function during surgery.

Significant for both current and future tinnitus patients is the clinical translation of the hypotheses of brain functions—particularly those of consciousness—proposed and published by Erwin John and members of his laboratory. The hypotheses have clinical application for developing theories of tinnitus production, providing objectivity for diagnosing tinnitus on the basis of electrical activity in the brain. They are also critical for developing drug and instrumentation therapies attempting tinnitus relief and for making available a monitoring system that would objectively assess the efficacy of therapeutic modalities affecting brain function, highlighted by consciousness.

My initial contact with Dr. John came in 1982 at the Brain Research Lab (BRL) at New York University as a result of our investigations of auditory brainstem response in tinnitus patients at the State University of New York Downstate. Immediately, I was impressed by the dedication and loyalty of his colleagues, chief among which were Leslie Prichep-John, and his secretary, Ms. Jacquie Howard. He was "Roy" to one and all. That he was a man of few words became quickly apparent. His nonconventional informality was impressive. Here was an individual who was a listener who would not hesitate to tell you what he thought and who had a concern for the clinical application of his research for the benefit of patients: a rebel and an honest man. He introduced me in 1982 to the field of computerized quantitative neurophysiology (neurometrics) and its clinical application for the diagnosis and treatment of neurocognitive and psychiatric disorders.

This thinking was applicable to tinnitus. I returned to the BRL in 2005 to collaborate in our evolving clinical experience with quantitative electroencephalography and its clinical application for tinnitus. His interest in tinnitus was and continued to be real and shared with his staff as an extension of their ongoing efforts for understanding brain function and the clinical application for neurocognitive and psychiatric disorders and pain. Roy and his staff made available advances in the Loreta system of analysis, which included an introduction to Roberto Pasqual-Marquis, PhD. The BRL's interest in transcranial magnetic stimulation and its effects on pain are under discussion for its translation to the symptom of tinnitus. This information has, in turn, been translated to our research and clinical efforts at diagnosing and treating tinnitus, particularly the severe disabling type.

On behalf of the board of directors of the Martha Entenmann Tinnitus Research Center, Inc. and the editorial staff of the *International Tinnitus Journal*, we express our loss at the passing of Erwin Roy John, PhD, celebrate his recognized contributions to neuroscience, and renew his and our dedication to advancing neuroscience for understanding brain function and its translation for tinnitus, particularly of the severe disabling type.

Abraham Shulman, MD, FACS