

**NEURAL CONTROL OF
REPRODUCTIVE
FUNCTION**

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Proceedings of the Fifth Galveston Neuroscience Symposium
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Dedication

Harold M. Pinsker was born and raised in New York City. He was a graduate of Queens College in Flushing, New York, and completed a Ph.D. program in Physiological Psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, receiving his degree in 1966. However, the experience that dominated Harold's research career was his postdoctoral training with Eric Kandel at New York University from 1966 to 1972. It was the influence of Kandel and his associates that convinced Harold to investigate how the nervous system controls behavior by using the "simple" nervous systems of invertebrates, such as the sea hare (*Aplysia*), as models. The basic principles of operation of the nervous systems of such organisms are more readily determined than are those of the more complex nervous systems of warm-blooded vertebrates and yet their analysis can yield insights into the functions of complex nervous systems because the latter retain many of the features of simple nervous systems through conservation of successful adaptations during evolution.

Harold was attracted to The University of Texas Medical Branch here in Galveston by the opportunity to continue his work on the nervous systems of invertebrates as a member of the then newly established Marine Biomedical Institute. Harold was on the faculty of the Departments of Physiology and Biophysics and Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, eventually holding the rank of full Professor. One of his continuing interests was in the neural control of reproductive behavior in *Aplysia*. He made the crucial observation that the neuroendocrine bag cells discharged prior to egg laying in animals with chronically implanted electrodes, and he was beginning the analysis of the neural circuits responsible for several of the behaviors accompanying egg laying at the time of his death.

Harold was an active member of a number of scientific societies, including the Society for Neuroscience, the American Physiological Society, the American Psychological Association, Sigma Xi, the International Brain Research Organization, the International Society for Neuroethology, and the



HAROLD M. PINSKER, Ph.D.
1937-1986

Society for Mathematical Biology. He has been listed in American Men and Women of Science. Harold was the prime mover in the establishment of the Galveston chapter of the Society for Neuroscience and served as the chapter's first president. One of his major contributions in this office was the organization of the first Galveston Neuroscience Symposium, which was held in 1978 and its proceedings published in 1980 under the title "Information Processing in the Nervous System." Parenthetically, this was an

unusually well planned and conducted scientific meeting. Typical of Harold's total commitment to his projects, he invited the participants not only to precirculate their papers to assigned discussants, but also to discuss the goals of the symposium in a policy conference held at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience. Naturally, the submitted papers were carefully edited. The publication was so well received that Harold was later invited by the publishers, Raven Press, to write an updated volume on the same topic. Unfortunately, he did not have the time.

Although Harold's research contributions will have a continuing influence in the world's scientific literature, those who were privileged to know Harold and to work with him have a more personal legacy. We will always remember his honesty and rigor, his total devotion to his science, and his concern for the intellectual development of his students, and his joy at their success.

Harold was devoted not only to his science but also to his family. He took great delight in the accomplishments of his wife, Jill, and of his daughter, Annie. They will remember him with pride.

A gift from David and Claire Silver, Jill's parents, has enabled the Marine Biomedical Institute to dedicate a laboratory to Harold's memory. The laboratory is called the Harold M. Pinsker Laboratory of Behavioral Neuroscience.

William D. Willis, Jr.

Preface

Analogous to the integration of the nervous and endocrine systems which are essential to successful reproduction, the success of the Fifth Galveston Neuroscience Symposium resulted from the integration of the neuroscience and endocrine communities at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. The generous contributions of time, energy, and enthusiasm given freely by students, staff, and faculty were essential to the successful outcome of this scientific event and help ensure the continuum of this biennial event organized by the Galveston Chapter of the Society for Neuroscience. In keeping with the tradition established by Harold Pinsker, the symposium provided an important forum in which researchers from a variety of disciplines exchanged insights into a fundamental aspect of nervous system function.

An undertaking such as represented by this meeting and volume could not be undertaken without the numerous contributions of many individuals. Foremost among them, the immediate past president of the Galveston Chapter, Dr. Patricia Shinnick-Gallagher, who provided the go-ahead for this meeting, and the current president, Dr. Kenneth M. Johnson, are to be recognized for their vital contributions. With the generous support of Dr. William D. Willis and his advisory committee, the campus-based Reproductive Neurobiology Group undertook the organization of this scientific event. Finally, the truly essential contributions of Dr. Bernard Haber, Margie Watson, and Griselda Gonzales provided the care and dedication necessary for us to ensure the continuation of a tradition of excellence that has become synonymous with the Galveston Neuroscience Symposium.

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