Dr. Andrew Huvos (1934–2006) Retrospective: A Tribute to the Pathologist and the Man

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Abstract Andrew G. Huvos was born in communist Budapest, Hungary, in March of 1934. At twenty-four he immigrated to New York City, working as a cytotechnologist at Delafield Hospital. Dr. Huvos attended the University of Gottingen Medical School in Germany, where he was awarded his MD degree. He completed a 1-year internship at New York Hospital, going on to Residency at Delafield Hospital and Fellowship at Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Huvos ascended through the ranks to Attending Pathologist and Member at Memorial Hospital for Cancer and Allied diseases, at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) in New York City. Concurrently, he was appointed to Weill Medical College of Cornell University, where he was Professor of Pathology for over two decades. Dr. Huvos was an editorial referee for over half a dozen highly esteemed publications, including the *New England Journal of Medicine* and *Cancer*. He trained over a thousand oncological surgical pathology fellows, head and neck fellows, and surgeons. Dr. Huvos spent nearly 40 years at MSKCC and his career was accompanied by his authorship of 388 peer-reviewed publications and eighteen book chapters. His legacy leaves behind a generation of pathologists who have greatly benefited from his tutelage.

Keywords Andrew Huvos · Andrew G. Huvos · Bone pathology · Head and neck pathology · Salivary gland tumors

Húvös

- **Cold** (*adjective*)
 - unfriendly
- His manner was cold.*

One may use many adjectives to describe the late Dr. Andrew (“Andy”) Huvos, but *cold* would never summarize nor define the man. After nearly four decades at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, and interactions with over a thousand trainees, one could certainly wager one of Dr. Reuter’s nickels, dimes, or quarters, that not a single person would choose *cold* to describe Dr. Huvos. Au contraire. Andy was quite a unique gentleman, well-versed in adulatory responses with a mastery of English idiom that never ceased to amaze (Fig. 1).

Andrew G. Huvos was born in communist Budapest, Hungary, in March of 1934. He grew up during a period in history of great turmoil, in a country under the influence of Nazi Germany, Communism, and later, rule by the Hungarian Socialist Party (also known as the Arrow Cross Party). One would expect that as a young boy, Andy would have witnessed firsthand consequences of the Allied bombings and invasion by the Red Army. As a young man, in all probability by conscription, he served in the military. After the war, he attended the University of Budapest Medical School, which was subsequently renamed Semmelweis University School of Medicine. Story has it, that during the last days of the Hungarian uprising in 1956, he escaped Hungary by bribing a boarder guard with a bottle of wine. At the age of twenty-four,

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Fig. 1 Dr. Andy Huvos in his office at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center 2006

he immigrated to New York City, where he found himself living in Morningside Heights, working as a cytotechnologist at Delafield Hospital. Delafield Hospital was once a cancer research hospital and part of Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center (1948–1979). It was also there that Andy met Phyllis, the woman who would become and remain his lifelong partner. Shortly thereafter, in furtherance of his medical education, Andy attended the prestigious University of Gottingen Medical School in Germany, where he was awarded his MD degree. Once again returning to New York, he completed a

1-year internship at New York Hospital. Determined to remain in New York City, on August 27, 1962, at the age of twenty-eight, Dr. Andrew Huvos became a naturalized US citizen (Fig. 2). He then went on to Residency at Delafield Hospital and Fellowship at Presbyterian Hospital (Fig. 3).

Nine years after first setting foot in the United States on the Upper West Side of New York City, Andy relocated across town. It was there on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, where he would remain for the next 37 years, fulfilling both personal and professional aspirations. Dr. Huvos ascended through the ranks from Fellow (Fig. 4) and Chief Fellow, to Attending Pathologist and Member at Memorial Hospital for Cancer and Allied diseases, clearly dedicating himself to both his patients and his students. Concurrently, he was appointed to Cornell University Medical College (which later became Weill Medical College of Cornell University), where he was Professor of Pathology for over two decades.

Dr. Huvos' career at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center was accompanied by his authorship of 388 peer-reviewed publications and eighteen book chapters. His unparalleled contributions to the morphologic diagnosis and prognostication in oncologic bone pathology are punctuated by his seminal textbook, *Bone Tumors: Diagnosis, Treatment and Prognosis* (1979; 1991, 2nd edition), published in both English and Spanish [1–3]. This monograph further defined his stature as one of the world's foremost authorities on bone pathology and oncology. Not only legendary in the arena of bone tumors, he was an internationally recognized expert in the discipline of Head and Neck oncology, in particular, salivary gland neoplasia. In the annals of Memorial Sloan-Kettering history, from the era of Dr. Elliot Strong, followed by Dr. Ronald Spiro, through Dr. Jatin Shah's Chairmanship of the Department of Head and Neck Surgery,

Fig. 2 US naturalization certificate

U.S.	No.	8452715
HUVOS, ANDREW		
Residing at	106 Haven Avenue, New York, N. Y.	
Date of birth	March 1, 1934	Date of order of admission August 27, 1962
Certificate issued	August 27, 1962	
by the		
U. S. District Court at	New York City, New York	
Registration No.	740 086	Alien Registration No. 10 970 066
(COMPLETE AND TRUE SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT)		

Dr. Huvos was an indispensable and integral member of the group. Dr. Huvos' participation at the weekly Head and Neck disease management team further helped define the multidisciplinary approach to specialized cancer treatment at Memorial, educating both surgical and pathology trainees alike.

Dr. Huvos was an editorial referee for over half a dozen highly esteemed publications, including the *New England Journal of Medicine* and *Cancer*. He was an editorial board member and referee for the renowned *American Journal of Surgical Pathology*, the *American Journal of Clinical*

Pathology, and *The Annals of Diagnostic Pathology*. Additionally, he served on numerous committees, including presiding over the New York Pathological Society as both Vice President (1993–1995) and President (1995–1997).

In 2003, on the occasion of the European Congress of Pathology in Ljubljana, Slovenia, following the recommendation by professor Antonio Cardesa, from the University of Barcelona Hospital Clinic, Andy was appointed Honorary Member of the European Working Group on Head and Neck Pathology, in recognition of his outstanding contributions in this field and given his European heritage. In further recognition of “outstanding service to the field of pathology,” in 2005 he was awarded the President's Award by the United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology (USCAP).

As Memorial Fellows, we were instilled with the knowledge imparted to us by Dr. Huvos, viz., that one must always look at the patient as a whole and not just a diagnostic entity. A paramount lesson was that one must *never* diagnose a bone tumor without reviewing the X-ray. An attestation to this philosophy, Dr. Huvos' office was littered with radiographs. Dare he who ever walked into his office and criticized the appearance! On the sixth floor of the Howard building, his office was a small room, filled to the brim, overflowing with papers, files and glass slides; but he knew where everything was or at least that was always what he would have one believe. When the department relocated to the fifth floor of Memorial Hospital, he moved

Fig. 3 Circa 1967 Columbia/Delafield days. Andy at far left, an elegant Gleb Budzilovich at far right. Others not known. Photograph Courtesy of Dr. Marc Rosenblum, MSKCC

Fig. 4 MSKCC Fellowship class 1968–1969

PATHOLOGY FELLOWS 1968–1969

Front row: John Gmelich, Arthur Aaronson, Larry Douglass, Peter Rosen, Henry Tan, Darryl Carter, and Thomas Sparrow.

Back row: Hervey Weitzman, Joseph Eggleston, George Dunn, Andrew Huvos, Dennis Daut, Paul Young, and Robert Lerman.

Fig. 5 Church of Nepomuk First Ave NY, NY. MSKCC Fellowship Class of 2005–2006, Staff, and Dr. Huvos. (Author bottom left corner)

into a much more spacious office, which gave the impression of far less clutter. Early in the morning, one would find Dr. Huvos in this new office with its two north-facing windows, one of which often revealed a hint of the sunrise over the East River, holding a large magnifying lens reading the latest journal. He was a voracious reader and always remained current in general surgical pathology, bone pathology, soft tissue pathology, as well as head and neck pathology.

Dr. Huvos was also a gracious gentleman, whose largess included goulash dinners and history lessons in front of the Church of Nepomuk (Fig. 5) on First Avenue. He believed

in a well-rounded education, which included where the best croissants on the Upper East Side could be found, in addition to the clinical significance of grading mucoepidermoid carcinoma. A connoisseur of both the epicurean delights and the culture New York City afforded, he frequented the Metropolitan Opera as much as free time permitted.

Anyone who had the privilege to countenance the tutelage of Andy knows that he taught us all far more than just oncological pathology.

For those who wish to honor Dr. Huvos, donations in Dr. Andy Huvos' memory can be sent to: Lindemann Young Artists Development Program The Metropolitan Opera, 30 Lincoln Center, New York, NY 10023, (212) 870-7388.

Directly from The Metropolitan Opera web page: *The goal of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, founded in 1980, is to nurture the most talented artists through training and performance opportunities. This program identifies and educates the most gifted young American singers and coach/accompanists for performance not only at the Met, but also with opera companies throughout the country. The program provides specialized training in music; language and dramatic coaching from the Met's own artistic staff and invited master teachers.*

http://www.metoperafamily.org/metopera/auditions/young_artists/index.aspx

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