REVIEW

The Most Influential Scientists in the Development of Medical Informatics (26): Dixon J. Wilfrid (1915-2008)

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Wilfrid J. Dixon (1915–2008) is one of pioneers in the fields of Health Statistics and Health Informatics. He received his BA. in mathematics from Oregon State College in 1938, his MA. in mathematics from the University of Wisconsin in 1939, and his PhD. in mathematical statistics from Princeton in 1944. At UCLA, Dixon had a joint appointment in the Department of Preventive Medicine in the School of Medicine and in the Biostatistics Division in the School of Public Health. He was the first tenured statistician in each of these schools. In addition,

Dixon initiated the Biostatistics Division, started its graduate program and served as its first Chief. He organized the Department of Biomathematics in the School of Medicine and served as chair of this department from its inception in 1967 until 1974. In 1973 he was appointed Professor of Psychiatry.

As a member of the U.S.–U.S.S.R. Joint Working Group on Computer Software (1974–1980), Dixon served as liaison to the Kolmogorov Laboratory at the University of Moscow. Many of his over 120 publications result from long-term collaborations in pharmacology, physiology, surgery, neurology, cytology and psychiatry.

His commitment to statistical consulting, coupled with his idea to parameterize computer programs in 1960, led to the development of one of the first general statistical software packages, BMD, Biomedical Computer Programs, which has evolved into BMDP Statistical Soft-

ware. Dixon organized the Statistical Computing Sections of both the American Statistical Association and the International Statistical Institute.

He made major contributions to nonparametric statistics, serial correlation, adaptive (up-and-down) experimental designs, robust statistics and the analysis of incomplete data.

He was a Fellow of the American Statistical Association, the Institute of Mathematical Statistics, the Royal Statistical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science and received the ASA's 1992 Wilks Medal. While at the University of Oregon (1951), Dixon coauthored with Frank Massey a first-of-its-kind statistical textbook for non-mathematicians that sold over 300,000 copies. Dixon: "Statistics is a science in itself, not a branch of mathematics... statistical consulting can be as imaginative and creative as any artistic endeavor."

Dixon's greatest contribution was his ability to bridge the gap be-

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tween theory and applications and therefore, bring insight to difficult applied problems. Wilfrid J. Dixon finished his academic career at UCLA as professor emeritus and a pioneer in statistics.

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DIGITAL PERSONALIZED HEALTH

Welcome message

The European Federation of Medical Informatics (EFMI) welcomes you to the 30th Medical Informatics Europe conference (MIE) at the Geneva International Conference Center (CICG). This conference is organized in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the State of Geneva (Geneva), the University of Geneva (UNIGE) and the University Hospitals of Geneva (HUG).

Medical Informatics Europe was already organized in Geneva in 2005. In the last 15 years, the worlds of medicine and of information technologies have completely changed. Digitalization was seen as a nice to have in medicine, it is becoming a fundamental game changer in the era of Digital Personalized Health and Medicine. Massive amount of data from the molecular biology associated with massive data about the environment, behavior and lifestyle, exposition factors and personal records, the rise of unprecedented processing power and artificial intelligence have changed the face of medicine. The MIE2020 conference is a unique opportunity to meet experts from all involved fields, from deep learning or genomics, up to human factors, ethical and societal aspects. The MIE conferences not only attract senior researchers and top notched experts of the field, it is also, and mostly, a place where young scientists come to present their works, to meet peers, to network, to seek job and career opportunities.

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