

---

## In Memoriam

### Paul Satz, Ph.D. 1932–2010

---

Ken Heilman first met Paul Satz Ph.D. in 1970 when Ken joined the faculty at the University of Florida (UF). Jack Fletcher interviewed for graduate school with Paul in 1973 and began working with him after admission to the graduate training program in clinical psychology at UF. Paul had joined the UF faculty in 1964 and was developing into one of the world's most outstanding neuropsychologists. He had already written several seminal papers on neuropsychological testing, cognitive deficits associated with brain damage, and laterality. He and his coworkers also started developing a research program aimed at better understanding developmental cognitive disorders.

In Boston, where Heilman received neurology training, neuropsychologists worked very closely with neurologists, but in several other areas of the country there was some antipathy between neuropsychologists and behavioral neurologists. Although Ken's interests in neuropsychology were different than Paul's, Heilman was concerned that Paul might not be happy about having a behavioral neurologist at the same institution and view him as competitor; however, from the minute they met these two were friends and colleagues. Paul was the type of person who physically and mentally embraced people who shared his interest in brain behavior relationships.

Paul had many passions, including learning-teaching-mentoring; discovering and caring for children and adults with cognitive disorders; the piano; and of course his family and friends. The teaching component was apparent in his dedication to the development of graduate students and post doctoral fellows. After Fletcher's interview with Paul, they met again in a graduate pro-seminar on developmental psychology, where Paul was lecturing on language and dyslexia. Fletcher had been exposed to recent theories of language development and disagreed with some principles of Paul's theory. Rather than expressing offense, however, Paul asked Fletcher to meet with him. This meeting and subsequent meetings led to Fletcher's dissertation (supported by Paul's research program) as well as several decades of productive collaboration and friendship. Many of Paul's students had this kind of experience with him. Paul was very formal about student meetings, especially defenses. For example, his first graduate student, Sara Sparrow, was expected to feed her dissertation defense committee over the course of several hours, which she did lavishly and is still part of the Satz legend at UF.

Paul Satz was born in 1932 in Ware, MA. He wanted to be a musician, but was also interested in education and loved learning. When it was time for him to enter college, Paul

went to the University of Miami, where he received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees. He then received his PhD in Clinical Psychology from the University of Kentucky in 1964 and subsequently joined the Clinical Psychology faculty at UF in 1964. While at UF he established a Neuropsychology Clinic and a Neuropsychology Research Laboratory, as well as developing some of the country's first neuropsychology educational programs.

Shortly after coming to UF, Paul applied for and received grants from the National Institutes of Health investigating sensory and perceptual factors in laterality that continued for over 25 consecutive years. Through collaboration with Sara Sparrow, Paul developed a theory of developmental dyslexia and received funding from NIMH to perform a longitudinal study of the predictors and developmental course of dyslexia in children from kindergarten to the seventh grade. Many graduate students and post docs, such as Sara Sparrow, Gerry Taylor, Jack Fletcher, Robin Morris, and Eileen Fennell helped collect, analyze, and interpret this data, as well as learning research techniques and the skills needed to write reports and dissertations. This study was one of the earliest investigations of a school-identified population of children with reading difficulties. The study demonstrated among other things that mass screening and intervention for reading problems was possible before the onset of the reading problem. These concepts are now major features of public policy in education.

In addition to his skills as an academician, Paul was a wonderful friend and companion, who had the ability to make people laugh and induce euphoria. He and his wife of 50 years, Gladys, loved parties and Paul always entertained people on the piano. There are many Satz stories that we would like to share, including the time Paul, Bob Watson and Ken Heilman were having dinner at a restaurant near Orlando. While Paul was eating his salad we noticed that he kept the same food in his mouth for several minutes. He kept chewing and moving the salad from one side of his mouth to the other. Then he said, "They sure serve some unusual roughage at this restaurant." We looked at him without understanding what he meant. Then he put his fingers in his mouth and pulled out a large false fingernail. When our waitress came over to remove the salad plates he handed her the fingernail I and said, "I think you lost this." She immediately said, "It is not mine," but as she was lifting his plate from the table he said, why doesn't your forefinger have the same nail as your other fingers?" She put down the

plates and ran back to the kitchen. In a few minutes another waiter came to our table to remove the salad plates and provide us with our main dishes. Paul asked, "Where is our waitress?" The waiter replied, "For some reason she is in the kitchen balling her eyes out." Paul asked the waiter if we could go into the kitchen and see her. He said, "Sure, just walk in." In the kitchen, we saw her sitting at a table crying. Paul went over to her and she lifted her head up. Paul said, "Mistakes happen. We are not angry and I did not mean to make you cry. Please come out and be our waitress." She stopped crying and said, "I am so sorry."

As a graduate student, Fletcher worked on Paul's study of neuropsychological factors in chronic marijuana users in Costa Rica. When Paul was invited to present the initial results at a special meeting of the New York Academy of Sciences in 1975, he insisted that Fletcher be invited and then roomed with him because of typical graduate student finances. Over the years, many of Paul's students were supported to attend meetings of the International Neuropsychological Society (INS), which was Paul's favorite professional venue. Paul's students were always taught that ideas and theory were most important and not to bog down on technical details. In his INS presidential address in 1975, Paul presented data on his dyslexia study and reported grip strengths that were astronomically high for children (he always spoke extemporaneously and never used notes). In the audience, Fletcher heard Manny Meier laugh and tell Chuck Mathews that the participants "must be gorillas." When Fletcher rushed up after his presentation to tell him of the error, Paul smiled and asked if he liked the ideas and the modification of the theory.

In 1979 we were devastated to learn that Paul and Gladys were leaving UF to go to the University of Victoria, as a Visiting Professor. After remaining in Victoria for a short time he moved to Los Angeles, where he was Professor and Chief of the Neuropsychology Program at the Neuropsychiatric Institute. He remained in this position until his retirement, developing a

post-doctoral training program that added to his legacy of producing many of today's foremost neuropsychologists and continuing his neuropsychology research program. Paul was an author or co-author of more than 300 publications about learning disability-dyslexia, as well as laterality, handedness, and assessment in children and adults. He was always interested in theory and spent his later years focusing on his ideas about cerebral reserve, working up to the time of his death on June 25, 2010. Many of his papers and chapters helped revolutionize neuropsychology. Based on his outstanding research and mentoring activities he received many awards, including the American Psychological Association's Award for Distinguished Contributions in 1998. He was on the editorial boards of several of our most prominent neuropsychology journals. Paul also played an important role in the development of the INS, the American Board of Clinical Neuropsychology, and he was President of INS in 1974.

After retirement from UCLA, as a Professor Emeritus, he and Gladys moved to Vancouver to enjoy their retirement and then to Hawaii to be close to their children. Gladys, his beautiful, kind and gentle wife, died shortly before Paul died. They are survived by their 3 children, Scott, Mark and Julie, as well as 5 grandchildren.

Teachers-mentors as well as researchers-investigators can make life better for many people. Paul has passed on, but his contributions have certainly improved and will continue to improve the lives of many people.

Kenneth M. Heilman, M.D.<sup>1</sup> and Jack M. Fletcher, Ph.D.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The James E. Rooks Jr. Distinguished Professor  
Department of Neurology  
University of Florida College of Medicine  
Gainesville, FL. 32610

<sup>2</sup>Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Professor  
Department of Psychology  
University of Houston  
Houston TX 77204-5053