

**Robert Reid Newell**

**1892-1965**

With the death of emeritus professor Robert Reid Newell on August 27, 1965, the Stanford faculty, countless former Stanford students, the international scientific community, and humanitarians everywhere have lost a devoted friend, an indomitable spirit of free inquiry, and an inimitable union of gentleness, humility, humor, enthusiasm and morality. The influence which these personal characteristics had on those who were fortunate to know him is the best measure of this memorable man: he brought out the best in people.

A familiar sight which his colleagues and students still recall vividly is the towering, lean figure of Bob Newell in the front row of a medical rounds or lectures, actively participating in discussion even though the topic may not have been in his own field, and then, with an air of innocence and naiveté, asking the disarming and crucial question. He refused to be satisfied with casual or incomplete answers—thereby illuminating countless clinical conferences and lectures.

His mind was alert to the moral and practical problems of man, and the "Letters to the Editor" column of the newspapers frequently presented his pithy and original ideas. He was fearless in presenting his views even on the most inflammatory subjects and was especially vocal in objecting to the requirement of loyalty oaths for physicians and university faculty members or those requiring state licenses for any reason. His humor was often revealed in his flair for stating his position in rhyming verse. Around the faculty lunch table it was usual to find him in the thick of the liveliest discussion. His was a very unusual talent of being able to argue a position vehemently without introducing the slightest personal element into the dispute—the result being that his opponent, usually the loser, finished the encounter with respect, admiration, and affection for his adversary. It is no surprise that these qualities attracted students and peers to his side; when this occurred he frequently would abruptly drop his own activities and devote his full energies, sometimes for days on end, to problems brought to him by others. He was punctillious and meticulous in his use of words and frequently coined new ones when the occasion required. As a referee reviewing scientific papers for possible publication, he was known occasionally to re-write the submitted manuscript in neat longhand, returning it to the author with his comment that he had tried to improve the conciseness, accuracy, or organization of the work and that the author was free to accept or reject any of his modifications. What young investigator could fail to respond to this degree of interest in his work!

Robert Newell was born at Stockton, California, in 1892, and attended schools at Forrest Lake and Altaville. He received his medical degree from the University of California in 1916, and immediately embarked on a vigorous and varied academic career which continued for 41 years until his retirement in 1957. During the interval 1920 to 1947 he served successively as instructor, assistant professor and professor of radiology at Stanford. In 1947, he resigned as head of the department of radiology to accept a newly-created professorship of biophysics and to organize the first clinical facility at Stanford for the medical application of radioactive isotopes.

Dr. Newell was the author of numerous scientific articles and received national and international recognition for his achievements, serving as a member of the most distinguished committees in medical radiology, as an adviser to military and defense authorities on the important question of permissible radiation dosage, and in executive positions in many of the scientific societies of which he was a member. In 1957, he received the Gold Medal of the American College of Radiology for notable contributions to that medical specialty. Following his retirement he continued his scientific work as a consultant to the United States Navy Radiological Defense Laboratory, concerning himself with the hazards of radiation, brought so acutely to world attention by the development of nuclear weapons. His concern for these hazards caused him to devote increasing attention to the question of disarmament. In all of his activities he retained an appreciation of human values as well as scientific achievement and was able to perceive in an ideal as well as practical sense the ways in which their interaction would most benefit mankind.

Surviving him are his devoted wife, Jeanette, his daughter Anne, and his son Alan. To them, we of the Academic Council extend our sincerest sympathy.

Joseph P. Kriss, Chairman  
Henry H. Jones  
Charles E. McLennan  
Stanford University School of Medicine

### **Radiological Physics**

Columbia University offers a one-year course leading to the degree of Master of Science in Radiological Physics; the course is given in the College of Physicians and Surgeons under the auspices of the Radiology Department and the Radiological Research Laboratory. The work is designed to furnish a foundation for those who wish to assist in research and applications of radiological physics, particularly in radiation protection and dosimetry, and prepares the candidate to carry out the functions of a physicist in a hospital department of radiology. Lectures, seminars, laboratory and clinical work are included. Topics included are elementary and advanced radiological physics, electronics, radiation standardization and protection, radioactive isotopes, biostatistics, radiobiology, instrument design, public health practice, health physics, and clinical applications of radiation physics. Prerequisite for admission is a bachelor's degree with a major or strong minor in physics, or equivalent scholastic background, and a good academic record. A knowledge of general chemistry and general biology is desirable.

The Division of Radiological Health, Public Health Service, has awarded a grant to the University enabling financial assistance to qualified candidates as part of its national program for the training of radiological health specialists. This aid will be in the form of tuition waiver as well as monthly stipend allowances for full time students. Applicants must be citizens of the United States or have filed a Declaration of Intent. Preference will be given to candidates who are sponsored by public health agencies for work in their area of responsibility or in closely related fields.

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