
Biographical Sketches: Some Notable Optometric Educators

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MEREDITH WALTER MORGAN, JR. (1912-1999)

Meredith W. Morgan, Jr., was born in Kingman, Arizona, and grew up in Richmond, California, near Berkeley.^{1,2} His father, a certified railroad watchmaker, became interested in optometry from encounters with persons who needed spectacle repair in a jewelry store he operated and took a correspondence in optometry. He later completed a six month optometry course at night at Benson's College of Optometry in San Francisco. Morgan, Sr., then set up a private optometry practice in Richmond, California.

In 1934, Morgan, Jr., completed a B.S. degree in physics/optometry at University of California Berkeley, when the optometry program there was operated within the physics department. He then went into practice with his father, where he continued on at least a part-time basis until 1960.² After deciding to prepare himself for a career in optometric education, Morgan started graduate study in physiology at the University of California Berkeley in 1936. He completed his M.A. degree in 1939 and his Ph.D. in 1941. His doctoral dissertation research was on neural control of accommodation.^{2,3} He published several important papers on clinical and basic science aspects of ocular accommodation and convergence in the 1940s to the 1960s. He is well known for the "Morgan's norms" he derived for dissociated phoria, fusional vergence, and relative accommodation tests.⁴

Morgan was an optometry faculty member at University of California, Berkeley from 1942 to 1975 and was Dean of the optometry school from 1960 to 1973. During his 33 years on the faculty he taught all but two courses in the optometry curriculum at one time or another and he had a "regular schedule in the clinic, where he excelled in squint diagnosis and the emerging field of low vision rehabilitation."¹ During his years as Dean of the optometry school, he oversaw the expansion of the professional curriculum to four years, allowing the awarding of the O.D. degree, and the recruitment of well-known vision scientists to the optometry faculty.^{2,3} Morgan was president of the American Academy of Optometry in 1953 and 1954 and president of the Optometric Historical Society from 1991 to 1995.

In recognition of his extensive activity in teaching, research, administrative work, committee service, and optometric organizations, Morgan received the American Academy of Optometry Prentice Medal, the American Optometric Association Apollo Award, the Berkeley citation for exceptional service to the university, four honorary degrees, induction into the Optometry Hall of Fame, and the naming of the optometry school's clinic in his honor.^{3,5} Colleagues remembered his "booming, contagious laugh" and valued "his friendship, his integrity, his strong sense of fairness and ethical behavior,

his tolerance, his ability to mentor and provide sage advice, and his ability to recognize excellence in a wide range of interests outside of his own.”⁵

Morgan was also the author or editor of some significant optometry books, most of which were completed after his retirement from teaching in 1975. In 1948, he wrote *The Optics of Ophthalmic Lenses* with Henry B. Peters. It was a 96 page book which was printed at the University of California and used in the ophthalmic optics course there for 30 years.⁶ In 1978, Morgan was the sole author of a completely rewritten 377 page book of the same title. The 1978 book dealt with characteristics of ophthalmic lenses, methods of determining their refractive power, ophthalmic prisms, absorptive lenses, aberrations, multifocal lenses, high power lenses, magnification, and lens reflections. A review of the book found it to be “well written” and “readily understandable by a student of ophthalmic optics.”⁶

Vision and Aging: General and Clinical Perspectives (1986, 393 pages) was edited by Alfred A. Rosenbloom and Morgan. They had both been contributors to Hirsch and Wick’s *Vision of the Aging Patient*, and they observed that in the more than 25 years since its publication, the number of older individuals had increased greatly. The 27 contributors to Rosenbloom and Morgan’s book represented a wide variety of academic backgrounds and discussed epidemiological, sociological, physiological, pathological, optical, and other aspects of vision and aging. Rosenbloom and Morgan “had in mind a primary readership of vision care colleagues, both practitioners and students.”⁷ A review of the book praised it for “commendable emphasis on practical solutions to real life problems” and assessed it as “the best available book on vision and aging.”⁸ Rosenbloom and Morgan edited a second edition in 1993 and Rosenbloom edited a third edition in 2007.

Rosenbloom and Morgan also edited *Principles and Practice of Pediatric Optometry* (1990, 589 pages). Here also, they were both contributors of Hirsch and Wick’s important book *Vision of Children*, but they noted that there had been great increases in knowledge in the 25 years since the publication of the Hirsch and Wick book. In the preface Rosenbloom and Morgan said that their book emphasized vision care for children in the first six years of life and that it was written for advanced optometry students and practicing optometrists. The book was organized into three parts: growth and development, diagnosis and management, and specific conditions. There were 32 contributing authors.

ALFRED A. ROSENBLOOM, JR. (1921-2015)

Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Alfred Rosenbloom completed a B.A. degree from Penn State University in 1942 before joining the U.S. Army during World War II.^{9,10} During the war, his work with some optometrists while he was a master sergeant in a medical unit on a base in Georgia got him interested in optometry. After the war, he studied at Northern Illinois College of Optometry (NICO), graduating in 1948. Upon graduation, he started working in the NICO clinic, beginning a long career at that Chicago school. He was Dean of the Illinois College of Optometry (ICO) from 1955 to 1972 and President of ICO from 1972 to 1982.

In 1953, Rosenbloom earned an M.A. degree from the University of Chicago. His thesis was titled “Aniseikonia Among Good and Poor Readers.” Rosenbloom was well

known for his clinical work in low vision, and he was heavily involved in service activities throughout his career. He was a consultant to the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind and helped found their Low Vision Clinic in 1954. He was a president of Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity, and in 2007 he was given their Humanitarian of the Year award.¹¹ Rosenbloom was a member of the Board of Directors of the American Foundation for the Blind and received their Migel Medal. He also served for several years as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Optometric Historical Society. Awards he received include the William Feinbloom award (1995) and the Carel C. Koch award (1999) from the American Academy of Optometry, the Distinguished Service Award from the American Optometric Association, and induction into the Optometry Hall of Fame (2010).

WILLIAM RUSSELL BALDWIN (1926-2014)

William R. "Bill" Baldwin was born in Danville, Indiana. He attended Indiana University for one semester before enlisting in the United States Navy. After his military service, he attended Butler University in Indianapolis for one year and then enrolled at Pacific University. In 1949, he completed his B.S. degree at Pacific and in 1951, he received the O.D. degree.^{12,13}

After graduation from optometry school, Baldwin set up in private practice in Beech Grove, Indiana. While in practice, he took courses in psychology at the Indianapolis campus of Indiana University. Baldwin was one of the first three students accepted into Indiana University's graduate program in physiological optics on the Bloomington campus.¹⁴ He completed an M.S. degree in 1956 and a Ph.D. degree in 1964. His Ph.D. research advisor was Henry Hofstetter and his thesis included an extensive review of myopia literature and an original investigation of relationships between refractive error, the ocular refractive components, height, and other anthropometric measurements.

Baldwin had appointments at Indiana University as a lecturer in optometry from 1954 to 1960 and as an assistant professor of optometry from 1960 to 1963, after which he served in optometry school administration for many years. He was dean of the Pacific University College of Optometry from 1963 to 1969, president of the New England College of Optometry from 1969 to 1979, and dean of the University of Houston College of Optometry from 1979 to 1991.

Baldwin had extensive involvement in many service activities. He chaired American Optometric Association (AOA) committees on academic facilities and research in the 1960s. He chaired the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) Committee on Academic Policy from 1963 to 1970, and was president of ASCO from 1974 to 1976. He was on the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Vision Working Group on Myopia Prevalence and Progression. Baldwin was chairman of the First World Congress on Optometric Education in 1991. He was a co-founder and the chief executive officer of the River Blindness Foundation, formed to combat river blindness in Africa and Latin America.

Baldwin was awarded life fellowship in the American Academy of Optometry in 2002, received four honorary degrees, and was elected to the National Optometry Hall of

Fame in 2011. He also received distinguished service awards from Indiana University, Pacific University, the American Optometric Association, World Council of Optometry, Prevent Blindness America, United States Public Health Association, and New England Methodist Conference.

The author of papers on myopia and optometric education, Baldwin also published two books, *Corneal Contact Lenses: Fitting Procedures* (1962, 144 pages) and *Borish* (2006, 444 pages). In the preface to *Corneal Contact Lenses*, Baldwin and his co-author Charles Shick noted that because there was “substantial lack of agreement as to what represents proper technique in fitting,” their goal was “to present a general procedure that has grown out of the use of various lenses and various methods in an attempt to make contact lens fitting as certain and as simple as possible...” (p. vii). Their procedural guide included chapters on determining corneal lens specifications, checking finished lenses, patient adaptation, symptomatology, procedures in special cases, and modification of lenses, with appendices containing sample forms, tables, and other information. A review of the book found the book’s pictures of finished lens edges to be of “particular interest” and suggested that the book would “serve both the student and practitioner well in supplying the necessary ingredients for the firm foundation upon which to build a successful contact lens practice.”¹⁵

The book with the simple title *Borish* is Baldwin’s biography of Irvin M. Borish. It extends from Borish’s childhood through his remarkable career to his retirement. The book was based on material provided by Borish and his friends and colleagues. It details Borish’s activities as optometric practitioner, teacher, writer, lecturer, and leader. Along with numerous black and white photographs, there is a section of color reproductions of some of Borish’s paintings, a hobby he undertook after taking painting lessons in the 1950s. A reviewer found the biography to be “both interesting and helpful in providing a deeper understanding of the struggles and accomplishments that have led to optometry’s extraordinary development during the twentieth century.”¹⁶

CHARLES RILEY SHICK (1928-2013)

Charles R. “Charley” Shick was Baldwin’s co-author on *Corneal Contact Lenses* and a significant optometric educator in his own right. Shick was born in New Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.¹⁷ After service in the United States Marine Corps, he attended the Indiana University Purdue University Extension Center in Fort Wayne and Indiana University in Bloomington, where he graduated from optometry school in 1958. When an Indiana University faculty member suddenly resigned in 1958, Shick was convinced to take a position as an instructor soon after his graduation. In his 35 years as a faculty member, he taught courses in contact lenses, ophthalmic optics, low vision, and practice management, and progressed in rank from instructor to full professor. Shick served the Indiana University School of Optometry in several leadership roles, including Director of Clinics, Director of Continuing Education, and Directory of Residency Programs.¹⁸ In 1979, Shick received the Foley House award, given in recognition for important contributions to the IU School of Optometry.

Shick practiced optometry part-time for 28 years, and often used experiences from his practice as examples in his course lectures. He was a frequent continuing education lecturer, giving presentations in thirty states and three countries. A particular area of expertise was contact lenses. He invented various contact lens modification tools and techniques, patented a reversing prism contact lens, and consulted for several contact lens companies. In 1962, he published a proposed modification of keratometer mires to improve the accuracy of their measurements,¹⁹ a design which was adopted by some manufacturers. Shick also contributed to four chapters in Irvin Borish's classic 1970 third edition of *Clinical Refraction*.

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