

In Memorium

Dr. Lyman Wynne

Dr. Lyman C. Wynne, a psychiatrist and family therapist whose research helped lay the foundation for family-based therapies for mental disorders died on Jan. 17 in Bethesda, Md. He was 83.

Dr. Wynne's studies of families coping with mental illness, particularly schizophrenia, prompted therapists to include family members as allies in treatment plans when possible, and also clarified the understanding of how genetics influences mental disorders' progression. His research was "essential to debunking the blaming notion that a child's early family environment, particularly the mother, causes schizophrenia," said Dr. Eric C. Caine, Chairman of the psychiatry department at the University of Rochester, where Dr. Wynne was professor for more than 30 years.

In recent years, Dr. Wynne with Dr. Pekka Tienari, Dr., Karl-Eric Wahlberg and others, published findings from a landmark study of Finnish adoptees at risk of developing schizophrenia, demonstrating the stressful social environments can increase the likelihood that genetically vulnerable people will develop the disorder. "His main contribution was to use social environment as a support and help in treatment of severe disorders," said Susan H. McDaniel, director of the Wynne Center for Family Research, based at the university of Rochester and founded and financed by Dr. Wynne's family. - excerpted from the New York Times, Jan. 27, 2007

Dear colleagues, A real passing of an era. His recent papers in Family Process were so powerful in demonstrating the complexity of the gene environmental interactional process, and the context of human development and its vicissitudes, a fitting memorial to a man who has contributed so much to our field, Arnon Bentovim, M.D., Past President, IFTA.