

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

JEFFREY L. NOEBELS

The Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences

Transcript of an Interview
Conducted by

Arnold Thackray and Frances Kohler

at

Coronado, California

on

4 March 1991

(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This oral history is part of a series supported by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts based on the Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences. This collection is an important resource for the history of biomedicine, recording the life and careers of young, distinguished biomedical scientists and of Pew Biomedical Scholar Advisory Committee members.



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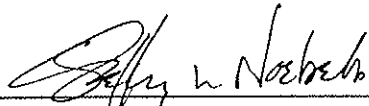
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JEFFREY L. NOEBELS

1950 Born in New Brunswick, New Jersey on 5 February

Education

1972 B.A., Physiological Psychology/Chemistry, Reed College
1977 Ph.D., Neurological Science, Stanford University School of
Medicine
1981 M.D., Yale University School of Medicine

Professional Experience

1977-1978 Harvard Medical School/Children's Hospital, Boston, MA
William G. Lennox Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of
Neuropathology
1981-1982 Instructor in Neuropathology, Department of
Neuropathology
1982-1983 Harvard Medical School/New England Deaconess Hospital,
Boston, MA
Clinical Intern in Medicine, Department of Medicine
1983-1986 Harvard Medical School/Mass. General Hospital, Boston, MA
Clinical Fellow, Neurology
1986-present Baylor College of Medicine/Methodist Hospital, Houston, TX
Assistant Professor, Neurology

Honors

1973 NIH Predoctoral Fellow
1975 Epilepsy Foundation of America Fellow
1975 Western EEG Society Research Award
1978 William G. Lennox Fellow
1981-1984 Klingenstein Fellow in Neuroscience
1982 National Research Council Award
1983 Diplomate, National Board of Medical Examiners
1985 Michael Prize of German Stiftung Michael
1987 Pew Scholar Award

ABSTRACT

Jeffrey Noebels was born in New Jersey, one of three children; the family then lived in southern California until they moved to Geneva, Switzerland, when Jeffrey was twelve. His father was a chemist at Beckman Instruments, Inc., and his mother a housewife. Noebels is now married, and he and his wife have two daughters.

Noebels at first planned to major in French literature at Reed College, but Mary Meikle's class in physiological psychology captured his interest in brain function. He spent a year at University College London, which was then the epicenter of brain study. He decided to get both a PhD and an MD. He began with graduate school at Stanford University, working on epilepsy with Timothy Pedley and David Prince, who were both clinicians and researchers. The American Epilepsy Society's William G. Lennox Fellowship sent him to Harvard University for postdoctoral work, and then he began medical school at Yale University, fully committed to the study of the brain. While doing his neurology residency at Massachusetts General Hospital, he won a Klingenstein Fellowship to work on epilepsy. Having completed his degrees, Noebels was recruited to Baylor, where he was offered a generous startup package and founded the Developmental Neurogenetics Laboratory.

Noebels discusses the importance of sharing information in science. He acknowledges a tension between the need to publish often and finalizing bench work. He agrees that new technology has proved invaluable to neuroscience. He enjoys teaching. He believes we will never fully understand how the brain works.

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