

A Tribute to Howard A. Eder

1917–2004

We note with sorrow the passing of a man who played a major role in the history of this journal. Eder was intimately involved from the very beginning—as an editor, as a contributor, as a senior advisor, and as a member of the governing body, the Board of Directors of Lipid Research, Incorporated. Fittingly, in 1984, as President of the corporation, he wrote a history of the *JLR* on the 25th anniversary of its founding (1). All who have been involved with the *Journal* owe a debt to Howard Eder for his untiring efforts on behalf of the *JLR*.

In 1951, as a young assistant professor at Cornell University Medical College, working with David P. Barr, Chair of Medicine, and with Ella Russ, a medical technician, Eder published a pair of important papers (2, 3). Using the relatively crude ethanol fractionation methods developed at the Cohn laboratories during World War II, they were the first to show that the levels of α -lipoprotein (HDL) were higher in premenopausal women than in men or in postmenopausal women. They suggested that the higher HDL levels might somehow account for the relative immunity of premenopausal women to coronary heart disease. And they were right!

In 1953, Eder came down to the newly established National Heart Institute in Bethesda to learn more about lipoproteins and their metabolism. In collaboration with Richard J. Havel and Joseph H. Bragdon, he published a new method of lipoprotein fractionation using the preparative ultracentrifuge (4). This method quickly displaced the expensive and complex analytic ultracentrifugal method of Gofman's lab and continues to be the most widely used tool in lipoprotein metabolic research. It is probably to the lipoprotein field what the Lowry protein method was to biochemistry.

Howard made a number of other significant contributions in the areas of cholesterol, bile acid, and lipoprotein metabolism, publishing over 100 papers and monographs. He continued to be a thought leader in those fields to the end of his career. His trainees benefited greatly from his generous spirit and were encouraged to find their own wings. Two in particular worked with Eder for a good many years—Paul S. Roheim and Lewis I. Gidez. Through Eder, Gidez became involved early on with the *JLR* and continued as Executive Editor for 31 years until illness forced his resignation in 2000. Through his friend and colleague, Lew Gidez, Eder had an additional close continuing link to the *JLR* as it grew and thrived over the years.

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Eder's important contributions did not go unrecognized. He received the Distinguished Research Achievement Award from the American Heart Association and he was elected to the Institute of Medicine.

Eder was a triple-threat man—a first-rate clinician at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, an outstanding and respected teacher, and also a researcher at the top of his field.

Howard Eder was a warm and generous man. I knew him as a friend and colleague for 50 years, and I cannot remember ever seeing him angry. He might be sardonically amused, but never angry. He was a loving man, selflessly devoted to his wife and children and always available to his colleagues for avuncular advice. With his inevitable pipe clamped between his teeth, he seemed imperturbable and wise. He was.

His insights and his gently prodding questions will be sorely missed.

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