

Indiana University Bloomington Faculty Council Circular B21-1992

February 04, 1992

Memorial Resolution

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JOHN HENRY SINCLAIR

(August 14, 1935 - October 29, 1991)

John Henry Sinclair was born in Oakwood, Texas, on August 14, 1935, and died in Bloomington on October 29, 1991. He is survived by his wife Sabina (nee Wagner) and one son Eric, both of Bloomington.

John received his B.S. (1958) and M.S. (1959) from Texas A and M University, and his Ph.D. at University of Chicago (1966). While at the University of Chicago he met and married his wife Sabina. Prior to his arrival at Indiana, he spent two years at the Carnegie Institute of Washington, Baltimore.

John did his Ph.D. work on mitochondrial DNA of various organisms, and on arriving at Bloomington established a program on somatic cell genetics, with emphasis on the mitochondria. He pioneered research in amphibian cell culture and later moved to a study of plant mitochondria. A number of graduate students, including Okot Nyormoi (from Uganda), Robert Storti, Samuel Ramirez, Gioviana Chinchar, and Keith Iams passed through his laboratory and received Ph.D. degrees.

John loved to teach at all levels. His laboratory was always full of undergraduates working on L490 projects. For many years he taught honors cell biology (undergraduate) and molecular biology. In more recent years he also taught a mini-course on recombinant DNA technology for the School of Continuing Education. This was a class primarily of researchers from other universities or industry, who spent one week learning the basis of biotechnology. John twice received the Biology Senior Teaching Award, and the Faculty Teaching Award - School for Continuing Studies.

Although John arrived at IU only in 1968, he was appointed an associate professor in 1972 and became chairman of the Zoology Department in 1973, remaining chairman until 1976. He gave unselfishly to the department--to some extent--at the expense of his research career.

John had a very profound effect on his students and his colleagues. His was a very rational mind; he was able to sit down and think through complex problems, whether scientific or personal, in a very logical manner. When he realized he was ill, he did a thorough literature search on the illness and discussed the prognosis with colleagues in a scientific, disinterested fashion.

In the last year John devoted a large part of his time to his hobby--farming and breeding Welsh ponies. He did this also in a thoughtful, logical manner.

This memorial resolution will become part of the minutes of the Bloomington Faculty Council. Copies of this resolution should be sent to Mrs. Sabina Sinclair and Mr. Eric Sinclair of Bloomington and to Mrs. L. Sinclair, mother of the deceased, in Oakwood, Texas.

Milton W. Taylor

Yean Chooi

George Malacinski