

# Zalman Amit (1934-2024)

Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Zalman Amit, passed away at his home in Nova Scotia on October 5th. He was 90 years old.

Zalman joined the Department of Psychology at Sir George Williams University in 1972. Together with Roy Wise, he founded the Center for Research in Drug Dependence (CRDD) during the following year, greatly expanding departmental facilities for behavioural and neurobiological research on laboratory rodents. The CRDD attracted an enthusiastic cohort of student researchers and provided a key impetus for the establishment of our PhD program in 1974, as Sir George Williams University and Loyola College merged to form Concordia University. Zalman supervised the research carried out by the first graduate of our PhD program and went on to inspire, guide, and train a legion of postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, and undergraduates. In 1983, he and three colleagues expanded the CRDD to form our current Centre for the Study of Behavioural Neurobiology.

Zalman published well over 200 scientific papers and co-authored six books. The neurochemical and behavioural mechanisms underlying the voluntary intake of drugs such as ethanol, opiates and opioids, and psychomotor stimulants served as the principal focus of his research; he also studied taste-aversion learning and investigated the neurobiological bases of stress in both laboratory rodents and in humans. Four of his co-authored books present behavioural strategies for dealing with phobias, body-weight control, problem drinking, and smoking.

Throughout his 32 years in our department, Zalman exhibited prodigious, productive energy, combining, in his long working days, intensive laboratory research and clinical practice with his academic duties. Imbued with deep passion and compassion, he was profoundly engaged in the world, exceptionally well informed about current affairs, and not shy about expressing his strongly held opinions and convictions. He pursued and shared his interests in a remarkable array of topics, including Canadian folk art, underwater photography, and the turbulent history and politics of the Middle East. Following his retirement in 2004, Zalman became an accomplished wood turner and active member of the Nova Scotia arts community.

Scientist, therapist, mentor, teacher, humanist, and artist, Zalman has bequeathed us a legacy of exceptional richness.