



Robert R. Sokal

1926-2012

It is with great sadness that we mark the passing this year of Robert R. Sokal, who contributed so much to biostatistics, systematics, anthropology, morphometrics, and many other fields. It is to his memory that this symposium is dedicated.

The following biographical information was extracted, in part, from the obituary by Ed Hagen posted on the AAPA website (<http://www.physanth.org/news/robert-r.-sokal-1926-2012>).

Robert R. Sokal was born on January 13, 1926 in Vienna, Austria. His family fled to Shanghai in 1939 ahead of a growing Nazi threat, and there he attended secondary school and earned a B.S. Degree in Biology in 1947 from St. John's University. At University, he met Julie Chenchu Yang with whom he shared 64 years of his life.

Professor Sokal attended graduate school at the University of Chicago, where he earned a Ph.D. in Zoology in 1952. He went to the University of Kansas as an instructor in 1951, and went on to become Professor of Statistical Biology in 1961. In 1968, he moved to the State University of New York at Stony Brook to join Lawrence B. Slobodkin in the new and growing Department of Ecology and Evolution. At Stony Brook, he became Leading Professor in 1972 and Distinguished Professor in 1991. He officially retired from Stony Brook in 1995, but remained an active Distinguished Professor Emeritus until the last year of his life.

Professor Sokal is well-known in a number of fields for his Biometry book with F. James Rohlf, which has been cited over 19,000 times. The fourth edition of Biometry was released just months before his death. He is also widely known for his development, with Peter H. A. Sneath, of the field of Numerical Taxonomy that promoted objective, statistical methods for classification. In all, Professor Sokal published over 200 scientific articles and twelve books and has received nearly innumerable citations.

Professor Sokal served as President of the Society for the Study of Evolution, the American Society of Naturalists, the Classification Society, and the International Federation of Classification Societies. He received Fulbright and Guggenheim Awards, the Charles R. Darwin Award for Lifetime Achievement from the AAPA, was a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and was a member of the National Academy of Sciences of the U.S.A.



International Entomological Congress
London, 1964
(<http://www.pandastumb.org/archives/2012/04/robert-r-sokal.html>)

