

President's Introduction to the Samuel J. Meltzer Biography (44469A)

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The life of Samuel J. Meltzer, the founder in 1903 of the Society of Experimental Biology and Medicine, has received little or no attention since the publication of his biography by Adolf Meltzer in 1993 (1) and the appearance of his abbreviated biography in the *Proceedings for the Society of Experimental Biology and Medicine (PSEBM)* in 1987 (2). Therefore, I am delighted that the editors of the *PSEBM* again have chosen to publish a brief history of Meltzer's remarkable life and career. Revisiting the life of Dr. Meltzer offers a great opportunity for the Society. Meltzer's career and the principle upon which the SEBM was founded offer a model for young investigators contemplating a career in medical science and for the SEBM promoting careers in science and fostering the highest ideals of investigation in medical science.

One of the powerful lessons of Dr. Meltzer's career was that he succeeded on his own initiative and against enormous social and cultural obstacles. He saw the opportunities and seized them! What a tremendous example for young as well as senior scientists today!

The Society that he created in 1903 was open to anyone working in medical science. It was open to both basic and clinically oriented scientific researchers. These characteris-

tics of the SEBM remain today, a Society of Ph.D. and M.D. medical researchers from diverse disciplines, dedicated to the integration of science and the improvement of medicine upon a scientific foundation. Most importantly, the SEBM remains open to students and scientists from all disciplines who have the energy to excel despite differences or disadvantages of background, culture, location, or education. Great science can emerge from those like Meltzer who can overcome formidable obstacles!

For the near future, we will build on the example of Samuel J. Meltzer as a model for success in an increasingly challenging environment. Our vehicle will be the pages of this journal. Following the biography of Meltzer, we will begin a series of editorials addressing current problems in the conduct of basic clinical research and the teaching of medicine in our medical schools. Contemporary leaders in American Academic Medicine will give their views. These opinions may be provocative and may conflict, but we hope that new insights will emerge about the work we do and the directions in which we should move. Maybe a consensus will develop to drive public policy to address the serious problems affecting academic medical science today. Let the debate begin!

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1. Meltzer A. *Breath of Life: The Life and Works of Dr. Samuel James Meltzer*. New York: Vantage Press, 1993.
 2. Meltzer A. Samuel James Meltzer, MD. March 22, 1851-November 7, 1920. *Proc Soc Exp Biol Med* 184:370-374, 1987.