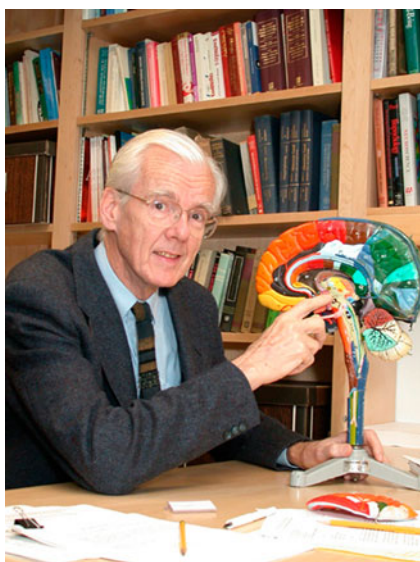


Obituary for Bart Hoebel

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Received: 7 December 2011 / Accepted: 7 December 2011 / Published online: 7 January 2012

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Bart Hoebel

Bart G. Hoebel, internationally known researcher on food addiction and professor of psychology and neuroscience at Princeton University, died of cancer on Saturday, June 11, 2011, in Princeton at the age of 76.

Prof. Hoebel was born in New York City on May 29, 1935. His interest in brain mechanisms that control appetite and body weight began when he was an undergraduate at

Harvard University, studying with the renowned behaviorist B.F. Skinner. He earned his A.B. in psychology from Harvard in 1957 and went on to receive a Ph.D. in physiological psychology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1962. He remained at U. Penn. as a postdoctoral fellow and instructor before moving to Princeton in 1963. He was a past president of the Neuroscience and Comparative Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association, the Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior, and the Eastern Psychological Association and received an honorary doctorate from the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium.

Prof. Hoebel's central interest was in understanding central nervous system mechanisms dealing with motivation, reward, and aversion. This led to a broad array of research projects, resulting in significant findings regarding obesity and eating disorders, addiction, and depression. He was a frequent contributor to *Psychopharmacology*, where he published from 1983 until the last decade of his life, and also served as an editorial consultant.

Prof. Hoebel's interest in reward mechanisms led to many lines of inquiry, resulting in significant findings in the areas of eating disorders, obesity, addiction, alcohol consumption, and depression. He pioneered research into the dopamine and opioid brain mechanisms involved in mediating the rewards of consummatory behavior. Recent research with Nicole Avena demonstrated that sugar can have addictive-like properties, causing neural and behavioral changes in rats similar to drugs of abuse such as cocaine, morphine, and nicotine. He believed strongly in the idea that food is addictive and helped create a new field of research which will increase our understanding of the current rise in dietary obesity and binge eating disorders.

He also worked with Sarah Leibowitz on studies suggesting that the desire for fatty foods has the same neurochemical triggers as alcohol craving, simultaneously deepening

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our understanding of the mechanisms involved in alcohol dependence and demonstrating the neurological link between desiring alcohol and food. In 2010, the Hoebel research team showed that high-fructose corn syrup and table sugar have different effects on weight gain and blood triglyceride levels in rats.

Prof. Hoebel had strong impact on his students and influenced fellow researchers. He was a gifted and gracious mentor, always very generous with his time, ideas, and support, and he also loved teaching, both through classroom lectures and in his lab. He really cared about the outcomes of his students' lives, helping them to reach their goals. He

was unfailingly generous and was motivated by a strong desire to help people, including his students, through his research and his teaching.

In addition to his many professional accomplishments, Prof. Hoebel had many other diverse hobbies and interests, including Christmas tree farming, hot air ballooning, and installing a steam calliope on an antique fire truck to drive in parades. He also ran the Delaware River Steamboat Floating Classroom, a nonprofit organization that provides interactive ecology lessons on board a replica of an 1880 sternwheeler on the Delaware River. He was full of life and enthusiasm, definitely a renaissance man.