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the clinical manifestation of the disease. Second, he moved into the field of epidemiology and showed through a large-scale study in Shanghai, China that lack of education increased the risk of AD, in accordance with the brain or “cognitive” reserve hypothesis. Third, he, Robert Terry, and their colleagues demonstrated that synapse loss, rather than the numbers of plaques and tangles, is the strongest neuropathologic correlate of cognitive impairment in patients with AD. These studies represent a small fraction of Dr Katzman’s research accomplishments.

The impact of Dr Katzman’s research is widely acknowledged by the scientific community and he has received numerous awards and honors over his career. Two of his most prestigious awards were the Potamkin Prize for Research in Alzheimer’s Disease presented by the American Academy of Neurology in 1992 and the Luigi Amaducci Memorial Award from the International Psychogeriatric Association in 2003. It is a pleasure to announce that during this conference, Dr Katzman was recognized by the American Academy of Neurology Foundation as a “Giant of Neurology” with a scholarship fund for new AD investigators established in his name. Included in the articles that follow is a tribute to Dr Katzman that was presented by Dr David Drachman at this event.

The articles and commentaries being published in this special issue reflect the conference proceedings and the progress that has been made in AD epidemiologic research in the 30 years since Dr Katzman published his influential editorial. They are a testament to the extraordinary number of descriptive, analytic, observational,

and experimental epidemiologic studies that the drive to understand AD has engendered. Remarkably, the genesis of many of these studies derived from the seminal observations made by Dr Katzman, as noted throughout the manuscripts. The articles describing this research are complimented by an introduction to the tools of the epidemiologist by Dr James Mortimer, and by a commentary by Dr Zaven Khachaturian on the “History of AD Research,” which places Dr Katzman in the national scene from the 1970’s to the present day.

As we commemorate 30 years of progress, perhaps our greatest challenge for future epidemiologic research will be to thoughtfully distill the results of our studies for translation into targeted investigations that are likely to have impact on this debilitating disease that is so costly in both monetary and human terms. Thirty years ago, Robert Katzman drew our attention to the devastating consequences of AD, but the “prevalence and malignancy” of this disorder continues to be a scientific and public health challenge.

Although officially retired in 2002, Dr Katzman continues to share his wisdom with the scientific community. He continues to write books and to publish scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals, and he continues to mentor young clinicians and scientists in an informal manner. He is a faithful participant in the bi-weekly case conferences at the UCSD Shiley-Marcos Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center where, in the words of the current director, Dr Leon Thal, “When he speaks, we all listen.” Dr Robert Katzman is truly a living legend to his many colleagues across the country and around the world.