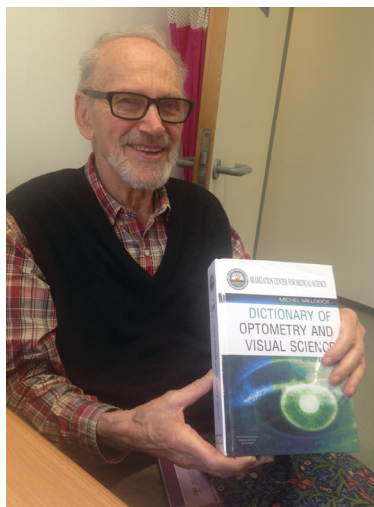


## IN MEMORIAM

# Michel Millodot

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**Michel Millodot**

On October 28, 2021, my teacher, mentor, collaborator and good friend passed away. Michel Millodot, originally a French-trained optician, was no stranger to Canada and Canadian Optometry. In the early 1960s he obtained an OD degree from the College of Optometry of Ontario, the precursor to the School of Optometry at the University of Waterloo.

We met in 1965 when I was a second year student at École d'optométrie-Université de Montréal and he was a new faculty member who taught the subject of Vision Science, then called Physiological Optics. Michel was a classical psychophysicist and a superb teacher. The material he taught me remained with me for my entire career. Indeed, it was Michel who encouraged me to consider an academic life.

Michel arrived in Montreal after completing an MS degree at Indiana University under the supervision of Gordon Heath. In 1967, the year of my graduation from Optometry, he took a leave of absence from Montreal to pursue a PhD with Lorrin Riggs and Mitchell Glickstein at Brown University. His research led to an important and widely cited paper describing the 'small eye artifact', a significant contribution to the science of refractive state measurement.

Michel returned to Montreal in 1970. In 1972, I was hired by the University of Waterloo, after completing graduate studies in the US. For three years, until Michel left to become the head of the optometry program at Cardiff, Wales, he and I collaborated on a series of intriguing experiments: These were designed to measure the chromatic and spherical aberrations of the human crystalline lens by immersing the eye in water in order to neutralize corneal refraction.

We continued our collaboration in 1976, when I travelled to Wales, where Michel and I investigated the effect of longitudinal chromatic aberration on retinoscopic measures of refractive state. We also studied the effect of corneal shape on penguin vision, a study carried out on living animals at the Edinburgh Zoo.

From that point onwards our paths crossed infrequently, either in the UK or somewhere in North America. Michel continued to publish the results of important research projects on topics such as corneal sensitivity, myopia, and more recently, the causes of keratoconus. He understood the critical role of research to the development of the profession of Optometry, an understanding that he imparted to those around him wherever he went.

In 1990, Michel and Susan moved to Hong Kong where Michel played a significant role in the development of the teaching and research aspects of the program in optometry at Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Aside from the world of optometry and vision science, Michel and I were linked by our Jewish backgrounds; he as a survivor of the Holocaust that engulfed many French Jews, and in my case as the son of Jewish refugees from Eastern Europe. Consequently, I was not surprised to hear that Susan and Michel had moved to Israel after their stay in Hong Kong,

My late wife Barbara and I had the opportunity to visit the Millodots in Israel in 1999. We were impressed with how well they had adapted to their new home in Tel Aviv, particularly the ease with which they could navigate in Hebrew. Michel was involved in research at Hadassah Technical College in Jerusalem on the causes of keratoconus, a common disease in the Middle East, while Susan was developing her interest in ornamental Chinese knots.

Michel's collaboration with the College in Jerusalem continued after he and Susan returned to Wales. He also continued to refine and add to his Dictionary of Optometry and Vision Science, a 30 year-long project, completing changes for the 8<sup>th</sup> edition, which was published in 2017.

Michel Millodot was an eminent educator and scientist who was an important influence on many individuals in many different parts of the world. He will be missed by all of us. May his memory be a blessing. ●