

# John Daniel Hartman

*August 21, 1909 — June 1, 1993*

A man who thrived on controversial issues. Professor John Daniel Hartman will be remembered by colleagues and friends for his dedication and the countless hours he spent researching, substantiating and writing lengthy reports in support of his beliefs and convictions regarding university and public issues.

John was born in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania. He graduated with a B.S. degree from the Pennsylvania State College University in February, 1930. He took great pride in the fact that he attained the highest grade point average at the college for five of the seven semesters he was in residence. John's humble nature would not allow this fact to be expressed with qualification, "of course at that time there were only 4,500 students on campus". He completed his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees at Cornell in 1931 and 1933 respectively.

Upon completion of his degrees at Cornell he accepted a position at Purdue University and remained at Purdue for eleven years, attaining the rank of full professor. In 1948, John returned to Cornell as professor of vegetable crops.

His major research activity for 20 years centered around research on vegetable handling and marketing. His special interest was the objective measurement of color, texture and flavor of vegetables and the correlation of those measurements with the subjective evaluation of quality as perceived by the consumer. Color and texture was measured by adapting devices used in other scientific areas but flavor was an elusive factor. Many of the volatile compounds contributing to flavor are joined only after the cell membranes are damaged. However John and his graduate students demonstrated that their ephemeral compounds could be identified with suitably sensitized microelectrodes.

At Cornell he taught a course in post-harvest handling and quality grading and measurement with vegetables for 20 years. During his career he served as chairman of special committees of approximately 30 graduate students, seventeen of which were awarded Ph.D.'s.

His research at Purdue and Cornell resulted in more than 50 technical, scientific papers and a number of experiment station bulletins.

The decade of the sixties saw John actively involved with Cornell issues and the list of activities which directly or indirectly resulted in major legislative changes at Cornell is indeed an enviable one.

In 1965, as a member of an Ad Hoc Graduate School committee, he produced an extensive analysis (45,000 word discussion) of the then current status of the general foreign language requirements for the Ph.D. at Cornell, and a survey of some of the practices associated with the administration of these requirements. The study formed the basis for an informational campaign which culminated in 1966 in Graduate Faculty Legislation which abolished the general requirements for most departments.

A 27 page, 14,000 word document provided the rational for a change of faculty government at Cornell. John tediously held to his view and campaigned diligently with a small group of faculty who shared his viewpoint. Their efforts resulted in the formation of the Faculty Council of Representatives.

When impending faculty action threatened the fraternity/sorority system at Cornell, John, although not a fraternity alumnus, took up the cause. The campaign was successful, most fraternities and sororities at Cornell were not forced to give up their national affiliation.

In the late sixties the military, and in particular ROTC, was not a welcome sight on campuses. Faculty resentment threatened the abolishment of ROTC on the Cornell campus. John again donned his Don Quixote armor and took up the crusade. Once again the effort was successful and ROTC remains a viable and active part of the University.

In his retirement years, John continued his quest for answers to controversial issues. He traveled from the east to the west coast in an attempt to document the need and value of solar radiation as an alternative to fossil fuels. Laetrile, a controversial drug proposed as a cure for cancer, intrigued John. His curiosity took him to the southwest and Mexico seeking answers regarding this “miracle cancer drug.”

The combination of being a prolific reader, an individual interested in the philosophy of authorities in other fields, a master of detail and a prolific writer resulted in a personal library of over 500 books in which John took great pride.

John held membership in the honorary societies of the Sigma Xi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Gamma Sigma Delta, Sigma Phi Sigma, Potato Association of America, American Society of Plant Physiologists, Institute of Food Technologists, American Statistical Association, and American Association of University Professors. John was also very active in the Rotary Club.

John was active in an organization involved in vegetable crop production. For years he held office in one of the vegetable, or potato marketing advisory committees for the northeast region of the U.S. During this same period he was active in affairs of the American Society for Horticultural Science.

He was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a Fellow of the American Society for Horticultural Science.

*William C. Kelly, Roger F. Sandsted, Leonard D. Topoleski*