

Walter M. Booker Biography

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Biography

Walter M. Booker was a biologist, physiologist, and pharmacologist who served for twenty years as the chairman of the Department of Pharmacology of the College of Medicine at Howard University, Washington, D. C. As the author of over one hundred scientific papers, Booker studied liver damage in trauma, the effects of anesthesia, and gastrointestinal physiology. He was very active even after his retirement, focusing on such important issues as drug abuse and addiction.

Walter Monroe Booker was born in Little Rock, Arkansas on November 4, 1907. A 1928 graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, where he obtained a B. A. degree, he received a master's degree from the University of Iowa in 1932, and a doctorate in physiology and chemistry from the University of Chicago in 1943. During those years, he also taught biology and chemistry at Leland College in Louisiana and at Prairie View College. After receiving his Ph.D., he accepted a teaching position at Howard University in 1943, and became an associate professor in 1948. He was appointed Chairman, Department of Pharmacology of the College of Medicine, Howard University in 1954. Booker remained in that position until 1973 when he retired as a full professor.

Booker had done a great deal of research on the heart's response to drugs, and participated in conferences on the subject in nearly a dozen nations. Besides running the pharmacology department at Howard University, Booker was a consultant to the Walter Reed Army Research Institute where he taught during the 1960s and 1970s. He was a consultant to the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. His specialization proved useful to the Washington Heart Association, and he was a representative of the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics to the National Research Council.

Among the many groups to which he belonged were the American College of Clinical Pharmacology and the American Physiological Society. He was a fellow of the American College of Cardiology and a charter member of Sigma Xi, an honorary scientific society. As a senior Fulbright scholar, he studied at the Heymans Institute in Ghent, Belgium during 1957 and 1958.

When he died of cardiac arrest on August 29, 1988, at Howard University Hospital, he was survived by a son, Walter Jr., a daughter, Marjorie Courm, and four grandchildren. His wife, the former Thomye Collins, died in 1986.