

DAVID MARTIN REISLER



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BORN: Dec. 1, 1935, Galesburg, Ill.

PREPARED AT: Tucson Senior High School, Tucson, Ariz.

YEARS IN COLLEGE: 1953-1957. HOUSE AFFILIATION: Lowell. DEGREES: A.B., *cum laude*, 1957; M.D. (Washington Univ., St. Louis), 1961; M.P.H. (Johns Hopkins Univ.), 1971.

MARRIED: Frances Fredman, June 8, 1961 (Smith Coll., '59; Washington Univ., J.D. '62; M.IN TAX, *ibid.*, '77). CHILDREN: Michael, 1963; Ronald, 1964; Susan, 1967; Lawrence, 1969.

OCCUPATION: Physician.

WIFE'S OCCUPATION: Attorney.

OFFICES HELD: Councilor, St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society, 1981; assistant professor, Clinical Neurology, St. Louis University, 1981; chairman, Department of Clinical Neurology, St. Louis University, 1981.

LOOKING back over twenty-five years since that sunny day in June when I received a crimson envelope containing a diploma lettered in elegant Latin, I have often wished I had better understood and appreciated the multi-faceted process of education in Cambridge. At the time, financial struggle diluted the impact of the experience. Yet, I survived idealistic, self-confident, debt-free, accepted to medical school, and keenly aware of the scientific method.

Medical school seemed relatively easy after college. I had a series of love affairs with scientific disciplines: nucleic acid chemistry, endocrinology, epidemiology, and finally, neurology. For six months I wrestled with a very inviting offer to become a pure scientist instead of a pill pusher. The security rendered by the medical degree won out. Although my presumed preceptor shared the Nobel Prize in chemistry last year, I am not unhappy with my decision.

Part-time jobs weren't permitted activities for first-year medical students when I arrived in St. Louis. I was able to demonstrate to the dean that work and academic performance are not mutually exclusive. Although I had reasonable success, achievement through academics and research seemed to be less important than my sense of relative self-sufficiency.

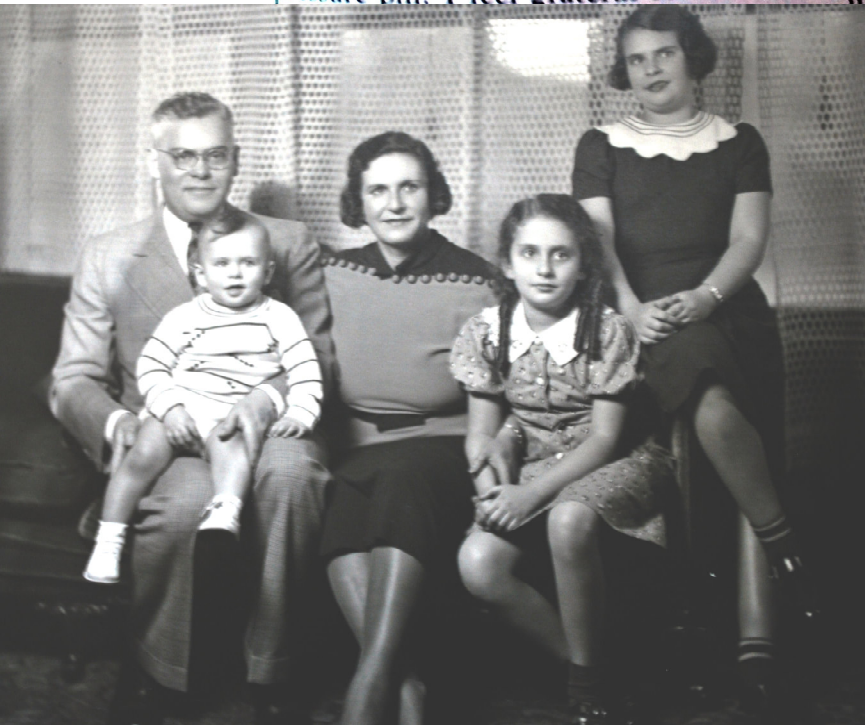
During the second half of medical school, my horizons widened. I became aware that I had lived essentially alone for seven years. I wasn't getting any younger. Choosing a mate involved looking for someone who liked me and had similar values but also had intellectual capacities and interests of her own. I succeeded. Career conflicts have not put any permanent strain on our twenty-year marriage. Harvard

failed me in one respect. I didn't find out about ZPG (sociological concept of zero population growth) until I had four children and a life in academics was no longer feasible.

Travelling about looking for an internship in the East made me again aware that I wasn't as wonderful or unique as I had come to believe. I was ready to move away from St. Louis but the internship computer match placed me back at Barnes in St. Louis. When I finally left St. Louis for the Public Health Service after internship and a year's medicine residency, I had become fascinated with the intricacy of neurology and committed myself to a three-year post-service residency back in St. Louis. By this time I was aware that I might be a permanent St. Louisian.

My three-year Public Health Service career included solo and team assignments in Santo Domingo, Tel Aviv, New London, Connecticut, and Cherokee, North Carolina as well as some of the best known southern state prisons. I matured. The experience helped me to understand myself and my capabilities. I was still convinced I wanted to try academia and after my neurology residency, decided to take a position with Johns Hopkins. Economic realities made themselves apparent and after completing my two-year commitment, I entered private practice. I accepted an invitation to return to St. Louis.

The last ten years have been busy with my family growing up around me. My work has left little time for relaxation. Fortunately, I have been able to be active at the edge of academia and have maintained a continuous teaching appointment over the past seven years. I diet constantly, try to jog a little, and take my blood pressure pill. I feel grateful for an education which reinforces ideals and values as science.



David Reisler's father Sam was born in Bucharest Rumania in 1892. Sam's parents had a book stall. They came to the U.S. in the early 1900s and lived in West Chicago where they sewed ties in their apartment.

Sam had 2 brothers and two sisters. One Brother, Simon Reisler was a physician in Indianapolis. Sam helped his brother get through medical school and wanted to become a doctor. A Sister, Ethel Bell married a man named Balaffski. As an adult Sam became a manager in various cities of a Midwest chain of department stores (Kline Brothers) that sold clothing and bedding.

Sam was in France at the end of

the First World War. Post discharge, while working in Milwaukee, Sam met and fell for Ida Seidelman. They wrote letters, saw one another, and married.

Ida and her older brother Joe were born in Russia. Shortly after Ida's birth her mother died of an infection—child bed fever. On one level Ida always felt responsible for her mother's death.

Henry, their father, remarried and came to the U.S. There were half brothers and sisters. Sam and Ida had three children, Fritzi, Elaine, and David.

Ida's brother, Joe saved the life of the son of an important movie mogul and later became president of Universal International. He lived much of his adult life in New York City. When World War 2 broke out Sam and family were living in Clinton Iowa. A merchant in town was drafted and sold his business to Sam—and Sam ran the store until 1950.

In the 40s Ida developed crippling rheumatoid arthritis and asthma. They took her to Duluth to escape the big city fumes, but it apparently didn't work that well. In 1950 Sam sold the business and moved **Reislars, Ida Fritzi Elaine, Little David, and Sam** the family to Tucson



Arizona where he hoped Ida's health would improve. David was 15 at the time.

When David was a senior in Tucson High School he was a top notch student, and had applied to various colleges. One day a fellow student, a thespian who was a good, but not outstanding student announced he got into Harvard. The Boston school was thought to be the "best" and most prestigious institution in the country—and if this guy got in, David thought, maybe they'll take me. David applied, was accepted, and was given a 25 percent scholarship---not nearly enough considering his family's financial struggles.

Ida told her brother Joe Seidelman about the dilemma, and Joe gave David \$500 a year. The money, plus the scholarship and a series of jobs got David through Harvard.

His first year in college David was part of the crew that cleaned dorm rooms once a week. He later worked at the archeology museum. He assisted in putting up displays—and when there wasn't much to do, he was given a box of shards and asked to try to reconstruct a piece of ancient pottery. One year he helped organize the abstracts of a famous geneticist who had died and left his papers in disarray. While David was still at Harvard, the famous Nucleic acid scientist, James Watson, returned from England and became a professor. Though an undergraduate, David was allowed to take some of the graduate seminars that Watson taught, and he became interested in nucleic acid research. He chose to attend Washington University medical school, in part at least, because Arthur Kornberg was doing Nobel Prize level research at the institution. While in medical school, David worked in his lab.

By the time he helped David, Uncle Joe, Ida's brother, was doing quite well; he had helped his sister a few times. He felt very connected to his family. (He had gotten his half brother's jobs working on international film distribution in South America and Singapore.)

Joe was the vice president foreign distribution for Universal pictures and had a home in Scarsdale New York, an apartment at 40 Park South in New York. David knew him as a kind, smart, man who seemed to be proud of his nephew. When David's parents couldn't make it to graduation, Joe was there. David visited his uncle in New York from time to time and recalls Joe taking him to a baseball World Series game between the Yankees and the Dodgers. When, years later as a newly wed, David was in New York presenting a medical paper, Joe got the young couple tickets to a top notch Broadway show. During the medical school and training years, David didn't see much of his uncle. Then Joe apparently died while David and family were in Israel doing research for the CDC.

David's sister, Frances Louise (Fritzi) Bright wrote down a little family history for her children, things she knew and remembered. (things they could tell their children when the time came.) I used Fritzi's words but edited it some.

Fritzi (and David's) father, Sam Reisler, was born in Bucharest, Rumania, October 27, 1893. He was one of five children. The Reisler family had a hard time in Rumania as all Jews did in Europe at that time.

Sam told the story of a Passover Pogrom that he remembered from his youth. He said that his parents warned him not to go out of the house during the time right around Easter; but one time he didn't listen, and he went out to see what all the noise was about in his neighborhood. He snuck outside to see the people taking away the family that lived across the street and setting them on fire. They were all burned to death only because they were Jews.

Sam's father sold books and was a learned man in Europe. The family was very orthodox. Though Sam didn't go to public school like children do here, he attended a heyder, which was a Jewish school. He learned to read and write Hebrew, and he studied the torah. He was taught by a rabbi who was mean and beat the boys when they didn't know their lesson. Girls weren't allowed to go to school and were taught to do the household duties by their mother. They learned to keep a Jewish home.

Sam's family came to this country when he was quite young. He and his family came through Ellis Island, and they settled in Chicago Illinois. Sam didn't know any English. He had to start over in first grade so that he could learn English. It didn't take him long to catch up with the other kids, and he graduated from high school at age seventeen. He wanted very much to go to college, and he worked nights in the Chicago post office and rode the street car to school and studied on the way. At the end of the first session he decided he couldn't afford to go to school, so he went to see the dean of the school. He told him he wanted to go to school but he just couldn't afford to go. The dean looked at his grades and said he could have a scholarship for four years of college any time he wanted to use it.

Sam was probably one of the brightest men I (Fritzi) have ever known. However, his family needed him to help support them, and he dropped out of school after two years.

He served as a soldier in World War One. He went to France but did not fight in any major battles. He brought back the old field glasses that we have at the lake and the petit point picture of the three little girls that Dinah has in her home. Those things are real treasures, and I thought you should know about them. Sam's parents were **Mayer and Anna Reisler**. Dinah's middle name is after her great-grandmother Anna.

My mother, Ida Seidelman, was born in Russia in a village outside the city of Kiev. (December 16, 1898). She had two older brothers. Her mother died when she was born. She lived with a Russian peasant woman until she was about three years old. The woman nursed her with her other babies, and they lived in a hut with a big oven in the center. They cooked their food in the oven and at night they put a mattress on the oven and went to sleep, all in one bed. Ida's brother died of scarlet fever while they were still in Europe. Her father left the children with the grandparents and went off to the United States with another woman whom he later married.

Ida's grandparents brought the two children, Joe and Ida, with them when they left Russia. They settled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Ida's grandparents died when she was still going to school, so she went to live with her aunts. First one would take her for a while, and then the other. These two wonderful women were Auntie Schifra Rice and Aunt Jennie Pittleman. I have some wonderful memories of these two women in my growing up years.

Ida's father, Henry Seidelman, had another family by his second wife. They were Ida's half brothers and half sister. Their names were Max, Sam, and Selma Seidelman. My mother was truly an orphan, as she was not welcome in her father's house. She graduated from high school and from the time that she was twelve she worked. She was a clerk at the dime store in Milwaukee, and later she worked for the Milwaukee Bag Company in the office.

Ida's real older brother, Joe, put himself through law school, going to school at night and working as a bell hop at a downtown hotel during the day. He graduated from Marquette University Law School, and World War One broke out. He joined the army and was an officer in the famous Rainbow Division. He went to France and fought in all the major battles that the American doughboys took part in. During his tour of duty, he saved a young man's life who was assigned to his unit. When the war was over, the young man told my uncle Joe that his father wanted to meet him. Joe went to see the grateful father, and the father turned out to be Adolph Zukor, president of Paramount Films. He offered young Joe a job in the film business, so Joe Seidelman began a successful career in the film industry, which was at that time really in its infancy. On my gold charm bracelet you will find a gold ring which has the initials I.S. on it. The ring was made for my mother in Europe and brought to her by her brother Joe. The ring is unusual as it is a locket too. My mother really treasured the ring, as do I. I hope that you, Dinah, will take good care of it and tell its story to the girls so that they too will cherish it. By the way, I think that you should divide the charms on my bracelet between the girls in the family. I will leave that to you.

(Milwaukee journal November 29, 1945

"Biggest" film group officers started here

Two former Milwaukee men and J. Arthur Rank joined in a new alliance.

Two men from Milwaukee and a British multimillionaire have got together to form what is expected to be the biggest motion picture producing combination in the world. the men from Milwaukee are Nate J. Blumberg and Joseph Seidelman, president and vice president respectively of Universal Pictures Inc. The Briton is J. Arthur rank, the industrialist who has vowed to set up a British film industry to rival Hollywood.

Blumberg and Seidelman with several colleagues have just returned to New York from several weeks of conferences with rank in London. Formal announcement of the collaboration of their British and Hollywood studios will be made shortly, it is indicated in New York dispatches.

The amalgamation will produce not only standard size film but will go vigorously into the 16 mm education film, a medium close to the heart of Rank, a staunch Methodist who entered the picture business by making nonprofit religious short subjects.

Blumberg who is widely known in Milwaukee theater circles was born in Racine, 51 years ago. His family moved to Milwaukee when he was a boy, and Nate sold the journal downtown, worked in theaters, ran errands for the actors and took bit roles in plays. As a young man he was named manager of the Rialto theater in Racine, and then became a district manager of Universal theaters in Wisconsin

In 1931 Blumberg joined the RKO radio organization as division manager for western theaters, and he was promoted to RKO vice president and general manager of theater operations. In 1938 Universal named him its president and the company, which had been losing heavily, has shown big profits since.

Another former journal newsboy is Joe Seidelman who operated at 3rd and state streets, (Nate's corner was third and grand Ave). Joe was born in Milwaukee, attended the Siefert grade school and west division high school, and was an office boy for the law firm of Charles I Aarons and John M. Niven. He studied law at Marquette University and was graduated in 1917, just in time to join the army. As a lieutenant he served in France with the famous fighting 69th, and became a good friend of father Francis Duffy, the chaplain and col. William (wild bill) Donovan

Another big man Joe met in his war years was Adolph Zukor the Paramount film executive, who gave him a job in New York. Joe worked up to become chief of foreign distribution for paramount and later for Columbia pictures. When Blumberg became head of Universal, he took Seidelman into the organization as executive vice president and foreign chief.

During the Second World War Seidelman again had the opportunity to serve under his old superior, Col. Donovan, in the office of strategic services.

Joe, who was born humbly, is an American success story. His father, Henry Seidelman who operated an umbrella shop on Vliet St used to tell Joe: America is a land of opportunity my boy. Work hard. You can get someplace.)



Fritzi: I am not sure how my mother, Ida, and my father, Sam, met. But I know they were married on December 26, 1922. My father was working for a chain department store called Kline brothers. I was born in Chicago at the Francis Willard hospital on August 23, 1924. My mother was pretty nervous about having a new baby, and she stayed for a while with my grandparents while she learned something about taking care of a baby. My father was managing a store in Clinton Iowa, and we lived in a house that was turned into apartments on the bluff. I don't remember very much of that time. I know that I was sick and had a bad kidney infection and spent a lot of time in the hospital. I also remember standing up on a chair and winding an old phonograph and playing all the popular tunes of the day. I think I learned all the words to all those songs and still remember many of them. Before I was four dad was transferred to Cedar Rapids Iowa. The economy of the country wasn't too stable.

My sister Elaine was born just before we left Clinton. (6-2-28). I remember I went to kindergarten in Cedar Rapids and I remember being picked as postmistress on Valentine's Day and getting my picture in the paper. We lived in a house on the edge of town, and I remember picking violets in the woods with my mom.

The depression came and dad was transferred to Hammond Indiana. We lived upstairs in a very tall house. I remember daddy being very worried as things were very bad in the country, and he worried that he would not have a job. There were a lot of people that didn't have food or shoes or a place to live. Elaine got really sick and my mom had to take us to Chicago on the train every week to see the doctor. Everyone in the house was very worried.

We visited grandma and grandpa in Chicago. Grandpa had a little factory on the back porch of his house. He had a lady who helped him make men's ties. Fritzi loved to sit on a stool and watch them cut the beautiful silk and use the hand machine to make the ties. Their house was full of lots of people. Grandma was always cooking. She kept kosher and had two kitchens: one in the basement for meat and one on the first floor for the milk meals. Fritzi couldn't talk to her as Fritzi didn't understand Yiddish and she didn't speak English. She was so tiny and was always working so hard.

I remember sitting with grandma at the synagogue. No one rode on the Shabbat.

I never remember my grandma sitting down at the table to eat. She was always helping everyone else. Grandpa had a short grey beard and always wore a yarmulke. The house was in the Jewish ghetto of Chicago on the west side.

The family moved to Galesburg Illinois and Fritzi loved school, had friends, read books, and took piano lessons. Ida started a Sunday school and brought a girl from Palestine to teach them Hebrew. Her name was Malkah Friedman.

In 1936 Sam bought a new car and they took a trip to Colorado. Ida was pregnant with David. The depression was terrible and the farmers were in terrible trouble. There had been no rain to speak of and dust was everywhere. The fields looked like piles of dirty sand drifted against the fence lines. A gas station man told Sam that he hadn't raised so much as a radish in almost four years. Sam asked: "why do you stay here?" the man said "I haven't got enough money to move." Sam was making \$60 a week. It doesn't sound like much, but that was a big salary in those days.

David Reisler was born on December 1, 1936. Ida had a rough time as she was 38 years old and having the baby was not easy for her. They had help in the house, and Ida seemed to feel sick a lot of the time. The next spring Sam told the family they were moving to Clinton Iowa. It was a town they had lived in when Fritzi was very little. She was really upset. She loved school and didn't want to leave her friends and teachers. She was in junior high by then, and it was terribly hard for her. She doesn't remember Lanie being so sad as she was four years younger and looked at it as kind of an adventure. Sam said that they would pack up their things and that he had found a wonderful cottage for the family to stay in for the summer at Lake Geneva Wisconsin. He would go to Clinton and look for a house to rent and come to the lake on the weekend when he could. Fritzi remembered they would drive to Elkhart Indiana to meet him when he came to the lake. The lake was a neat place and Fritzi had a lot of friends. She had to help mom a lot as David was a baby and there was a lot to do. FRITZI, MYRON, SENATOR BURDICK, LYNDON JOHNSON



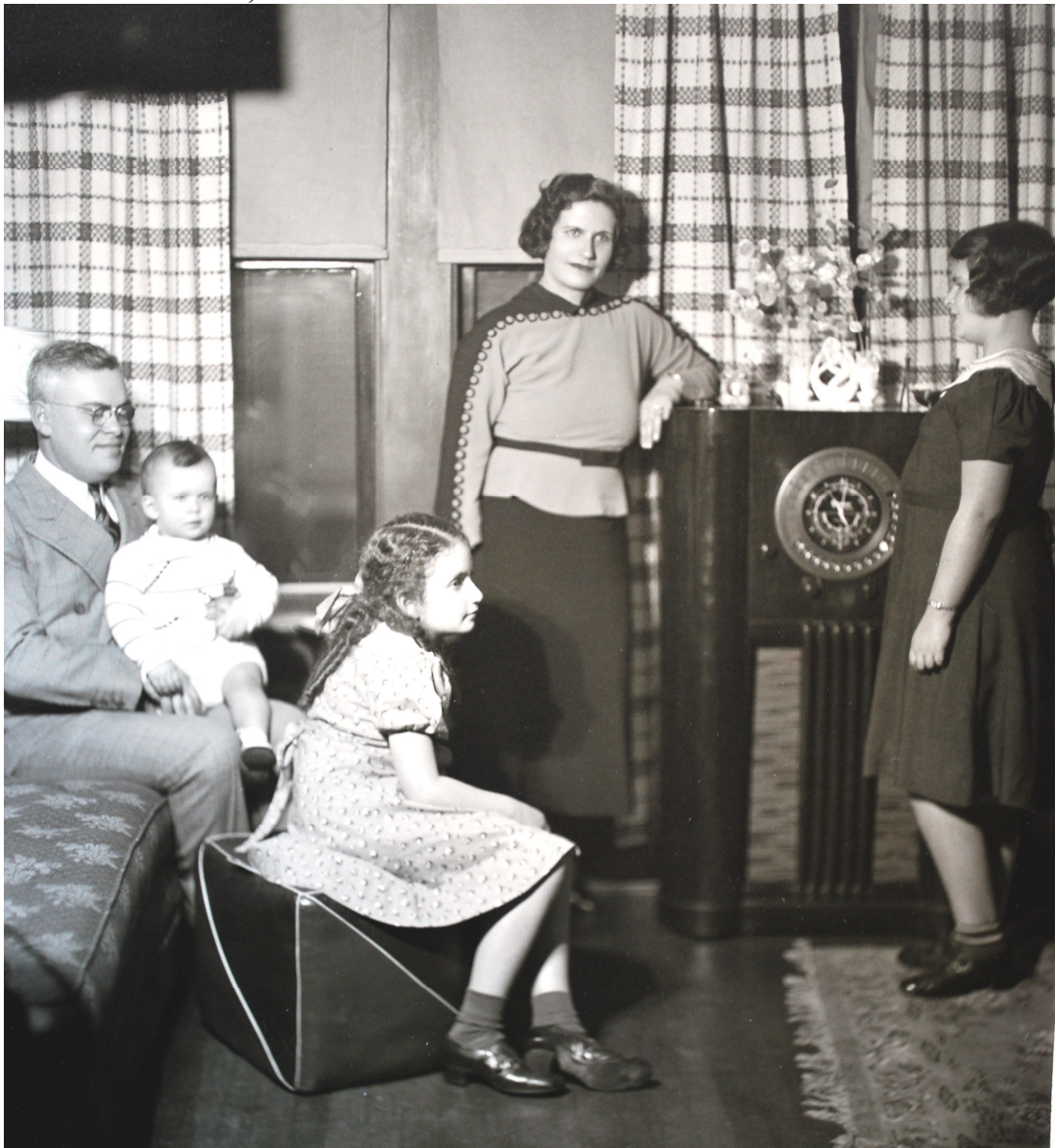
State Historical Society of North Dakota

Just before school started, the family moved from the Lake to Clinton. Fritzi missed her friends and rebelled against authority. There were practically no Jewish families in Clinton so they were practically alone in celebrating the holidays.

While they were in Clinton Ida developed arthritis and was sick a lot of the time. Her knee swelled up and she had a great deal of trouble walking and a lot of pain. The knee never got any better for her whole life. 1

After high school Fritzi went to nursing school in Colorado, but early on got an attack of appendicitis and was really very sick for a while. After she got out of the hospital she worked on the wards for a while, and then joined the navy.

She met Myron Bright on Thanksgiving Day 1946 and married him less than a month later on December 26, 1946.





in Israel. David and Michael on front donkey. Fran and Ronnie on the second animal