

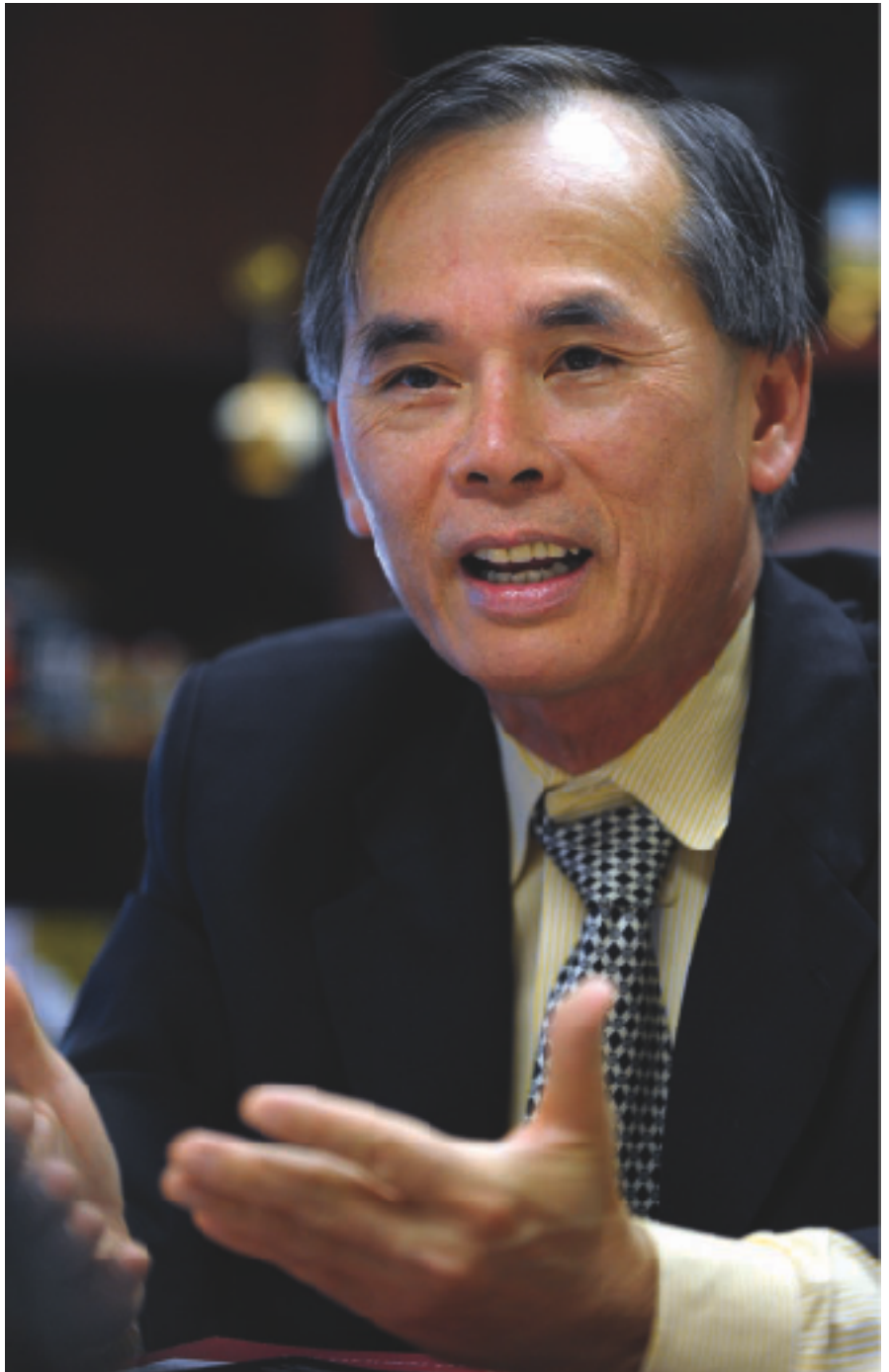
BRAIN MATTERS

DR. DANIEL TRUONG

"THE MIRACLE WORKER"

I BECAME AWARE OF THE WORK OF DR. DANIEL TRUONG SEVERAL YEARS AGO. MY FRIEND CATHERINE N. FROM NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, WHO KNEW ABOUT MY INTERESTS IN VIET NAM, VIETNAMESE CULTURE AND PEOPLE, BEGAN DESCRIBING TO ME HER RELATIONSHIP WITH DR. TRUONG. TALKING TO ME, HER SPEECH WAS BARELY A FAINT WHISPER WITH A VERY STRAINED AND STRANGLERED VOICE. SHE WAS HARDLY ABLE TO COMMUNICATE A BASIC MESSAGE, UNINTELLIGIBLE, BEING VIRTUALLY MUTE. SHE WAS IN THE MIDST OF ONE OF HER BOUTS WITH SPASMODIC DYSPHONIA. A RARE DISEASE THAT DISRUPTS THE VOCAL ABILITIES OF THE SUFFERER. IN THE UNITED STATES, AN ESTIMATED 100,000 PERSONS ARE AFFECTED BY RELATED TYPES OF THESE MOVEMENT DISORDERS.

At first, she was unable to find a diagnosis for this rare condition. This was in 1991 and many doctors were unable to determine what it was. It was often misdiagnosed as a psychiatric problem. The patient would then have to endure years of lengthy and expensive psychiatric treatment and are often misdiagnosed as having depression. Doctors and scientists now suspect that it is a chemical imbalance in the brain that results in uncontrollable bodily spasms. But a lot about movement disorders still remains a mystery. Finally, she found a doctor who referred her to the University of California, Irvine Medical Center in Orange County, California. There she met with the founder and medical director of the Movement Disorder Clinic, Dr. Daniel Truong, and became involved with his treatment. The clinic has since moved to the Orange Coast Memorial Medical Center in Fountain Valley, California and is known as The Parkinson's and Movement Disorder Institute. Dr. Truong still acts as the medical director, treating many patients



DR. TRUONG, A "MIRACLE WORKER"



Some Of The Books Written By Dr. Truong. "Manual Of Botulinum Toxin Therapy" Reached The Cambridge Best Seller List For Medical Titles

on a personal basis. She is still constantly amazed with his humanity towards his patients and the passion he shows for his research.

Every five months, for over the last twenty years, she has made her trip south from Northern California to receive his treatment. The treatment itself would seem bizarre if it didn't show such astounding results. It consists of injecting a botulinum toxin into the affected muscle area. A small amount of the toxin (around 3000 units can be fatal) is released into the muscle and this quiets the spasm. Called Botox for short, this drug works for most patients but it is not a cure. The patients must return every three to six months for further treatments. So far there have been no long-term side effects discovered.

Without the treatment, many of the patients have mentioned that they would have been driven mad with despair.

In 1991, the Los Angeles Times described Dr. Truong as a "miracle worker" and she absolutely agrees with this description. She had felt absolutely despondent, helpless and a prisoner to the condition. Now she is able to pursue a normal life. Dr. Truong's intimate knowledge of her unknown condition and his compassion in the diagnosis and treatment leaves her in awe. The dedication and devotion he shows to this cause is a source of constant astonishment for her.

Daniel Truong was born in Hai Phong and grew up in Sai Gon (Ho Chi Minh City), in a family of five children. Two of his three brothers are physicians, one living in Canada and the other in the U.S. After graduating from secondary school with an outstanding academic record, Truong earned a scholarship to the University of Freiburg in Germany. There he received training in both neurology and psychiatry. He completed his residency in neurology at the Medical University of South Carolina before becoming a fellow to one of the most famous neurologist in the U.S. at the time, Prof. Stanley Fahn (former President of the American Academy of Neurology) at Columbia University in New York City.

DR. TRUONG IN A CONFERENCE IN HO CHI MINH CITY



He continued as a fellow of the late Professor David Marsden at the prestigious National Hospital for Nervous Disease in London, UK. Both Fahn and Marsden are pioneers in the field of Parkinson's disease and movement disorders.

Following this training, Truong was appointed to set up the Parkinson's and Movement Disorder program at the University of California, Irvine. Throughout his time there, he conducted extensive research. He becomes a celebrity in his field of movement related diseases and neurology. He is considered as an international thought leader.

Dr. Truong has written over 120 articles and has published 6 textbooks. His Textbook of Neurology has been translated into the Vietnamese language and is considered to be the handbook for Vietnamese neurologists. He is an innovative physician and known for doing examinations using internet

webcams for his movement disorder patients living overseas.

Dr. Truong came back to Viet Nam in 1991 after an absence of 23 years, at the invitation of the government. Since then, he has returned more than 20 times. During these trips he has provided treatment to Vietnamese patients with Parkinson's disease and has conducted neurological forums. With Dr. Truong's the first International Neurological Forum (INFO) was held in Viet Nam in 2004. He has organized neurological conferences in many developing countries such as Indonesia, Brazil, Mongolia, and Viet Nam, to name a few, with the support of international neurological organizations. His primary objectives are spreading of awareness, knowledge and training to the developing world. The latest of the International Neurology Forums are being held in Ho Chi Minh City at the end of November, 2010.

Jon Anderholm



Dr. Truong
(Second From Right)
At The Indonesian
National Neurology
Convention, 2009

SOURCE: DANIEL TRUONG