



Laurence Tancredi



Laurence Tancredi is regarded by many colleagues across continents as the primary renaissance personality of his generation in the field of Law and Psychiatry. Dr. Tancredi did his undergraduate degree in English Literature and Theater. Following that, he completed his medical studies at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and thereafter, his psychiatry residency at Columbia and Yale Universities. In addition to his medical education, Dr. Tancredi received a law degree from Yale Law School, where he distinguished himself in creating a no-fault medical injury compensation system. This was a landmark research project wherein he demonstrated that adverse avoidable events could be identified to serve as a basis for compensation and quality assurance.

The American Bar Association's Commission on Medical Professional Liability invited him to conduct a more extensive study, referred to as "Designated Compensable Events." The Commission subsequently indicated that the feasibility of DCEs had been demonstrated for use in an automatic system of compensation and quality assurance. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation engaged Dr. Tancredi to apply his work to the areas of general surgery, obstetrics, and orthopedic surgery. In recognition of these contributions, Dr. Tancredi was called upon to testify before the Joint Economic Committee of the United States Congress on no-fault medical injury compensation.

After a period of professing at New York University in the faculties of both Law and Medicine, Professor Tancredi accepted the Kraft Eidman Professorship in Medicine and the Law at the University of Texas. While directing a Health Law program, he did foundational research on Positron Emission Tomography, focusing on repeated violent acts. These were pioneer studies using imaging to assess brain metabolism as an indicant of brain function. He determined that compared to controls, offenders had decreased cortical blood flow and hypometabolism in their non-dominant frontal and temporal lobes. His findings were that some showed decreases in the function of their bilateral prefrontal lobes, which affect cognitive understanding. A substantial number of the latter were individuals who had been charged with

murder and manslaughter. His studies were regarded as significant because they pointed to biological factors related to violence.

After a decade of devoted activities in research and teaching, Professor Tancredi returned to New York City, where he developed a robust clinical practice while serving as Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at New York University. Simultaneously, he commuted as Professor to the University of California at San Diego. During recent decades, Professor Tancredi has been active as a senior consultant to civil law cases in New York and Chicago. Since 1981, he has been a member of the New York Bar.

His administrative functions have included being on the National Advisory Board of the National Institute of Mental Health Center for the Study of Issues of Public Health, the Advisory Committee on Ethical and Legal Implications of Genetic Testing for the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the task force on Scientific Responsibility and Integrity in Medical Research at the American College of Cardiology, and on the Advisory Panel on the Quality of Medical Care for the United States' Office of Technology Assessment. He has been active on the American Psychiatric Association's Council on Government Policy and the Law, as a member on the Board of Directors of the Milbank Memorial Fund, and as a Trustee of the HealthCare Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Association. Professor Tancredi has been appreciated as a longstanding fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine and the American College of Psychiatry. In summary, he has been a key figure on advisory boards to a host of universities, societies, foundations, and departments of governments both in the U.S. and Canada.

Dr. Tancredi is the author of numerous academic papers and chapters in seminal books in the field of Law and Psychiatry. He has also been a member of a substantial number of editorial boards of leading publications in the field. Professor Tancredi has authored more than a dozen books, which have established his reputation as a thinker and creator of syntheses of themes present within Law, Medicine, and the Social Sciences. In this respect, he stands out among his peers. Recent books of note have been: *When Law and Medicine Meet: A Cultural View*, published by Springer; *Dangerous Diagnostics: The Social Power of Biological Information*, with the University of Chicago Press; and *Hardwired Behavior: What Neuroscience Reveals About Morality*, with Cambridge University Press.

On July 21st, 2019, in the *Aula Magna* of the Sapienza University of Rome, Professor Tancredi will be inaugurated as President of the International Academy of Law and Mental Health.

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