

## Raymond George Sr, 1939-2018

**R**aymond George was a mountain of a man, larger than life, and, truth be told, often a walking, talking contradiction. He was one of a kind. He was forceful and steadfast in his beliefs, but also sensitive, exuding thoughtfulness. He was smart and always prepared for any event or discussion. A man who could deliver a perfectly executed presentation before the AAO, only to come home later, throw on tattered clothes, and weed his strawberry patch on his hands and knees for hours until he was filthy and dripping with sweat.

Dr George received his DMD degree from Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, Cum Laude, in 1964 and his Certificate in Orthodontics from Boston University Graduate School of Dental Medicine in 1966. He served 2 years as a Captain in the U.S. Army Dental Corps. In 1969, he began his private practice in East Providence, Rhode Island.

One could wonder how Ray had time to serve in such an incredible number of positions as President: for the Rhode Island Association of Orthodontists, Northeastern Society of Orthodontists, Rhode Island Dental Association, American Association of Orthodontists Foundation, Eastern Component of the Angle Society, American Association of Orthodontists, and College of Diplomates of the American Board of Orthodontics, among others. He also served for years as a director of the AAO Insurance Company.

Dr George lectured nationally and internationally on many subjects, including functional appliances, surgical orthodontics, TMJ treatment, and the value of 2-phase orthodontic treatment. In addition, he wrote scientific articles that were published in professional peer-reviewed journals.

During Ray's orthodontics career, he received many awards, including the U.S. Army Meritorious Service Award, Boston University School of Dental Medicine Alumni Award, Massachusetts Association of Orthodontists Frederick M. Moynihan Memorial Award, and Massachusetts Dental Society James W. Etherington Award.

Above all else, Ray loved his family. His 3 children, Semia, Christiaan, and Chafic, are all highly accomplished in their chosen fields. They could have done no less with the guidance and example set by their parents. Dr Raymond George Jr, the son with whom he practiced orthodontics, died in 2013. Ray always found time to play with his 3 grandchildren, and "kvelled" in their presence. But he saved his almost incomprehensible love for



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the woman who stole his heart so many years ago, his wife Sonjia. He made it perfectly clear that he felt that she had more style, class, and grace than any other woman he knew. And those of us lucky enough to be touched by Sonjia would probably agree.

Ray was passionate, determined, intelligent, generous, inspiring, and loving and possessed the greatest work ethic of any man I knew. But do you know what else he was? He was suffering. His body was riddled with intractable pain and fatigue, caused by a failed back surgery, a congenital heart condition, and a blood dyscrasia. The only thing that eases my anguish, is knowing he is no longer wincing in pain, no longer trying to find the strength to walk to the kitchen.

In summary, despite Dr George's extremely busy private practice, he found the time and fortitude to contribute so much to the leadership of organized dentistry. He told me once that he couldn't imagine not living his life as an orthodontist. He said that he felt it was so very important to him to give back to the profession. He has fulfilled his wish.

Rest in peace, my brother.

*Perry Opin  
Milford, CT*