

In Memoriam: Professor Yurii Duplenko (1935–2024)



Professor Yurii Duplenko passed away on October 18, 2024, at the age of 89.

Yurii Duplenko was born on September 13, 1935, in Kyiv, in the family of Dr Kostiantyn Duplenko (1899–1990), who was head of the Department of Social Hygiene and Healthcare Organization at the Kyiv Institute for the Advancement of Doctors (now P. L. Shupyk National Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education) between 1938 and 1969, excluding the years of the Second World War. Kostiantyn Duplenko was also the organizer and first chairman of the Ukrainian Scientific Society of Historians of Medicine. Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that his son Yurii also chose the medical profession. In 1959, he graduated from the medical faculty of the Kyiv Medical Institute, and since 1960, studied at the PhD program of the Institute of Gerontology (now the D. F. Chebotarev Institute of Gerontology of the National Academy of Medical Sciences of Ukraine).

Yurii was fortunate enough to become one of the students, and later a follower, of the outstanding Ukrainian physiologist and gerontologist, Academician of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and the Academy of Medical Sciences of Ukraine, Volodymyr Frolkis (1924–1999). Working under the guidance of this famous scientist determined Yurii Duplenko's further direction as a future researcher in the Frolkis scientific school of contemporary gerontology. Among its representatives are the well-known academicians and professors O. V. Korkushko, V. V. Bezrukov, L. N. Bogatskaya, N. S. Verkhtskyi, Yu. G. Grigorov, T. Yu. Kvitnytskaya-Ryzhova, O. Ya. Litoshenko, Kh. K. Muradyan, V. V. Povoroznyuk, and others. Many members of his scientific school, and others who applied his ideas and

recommendations, have since been recognized as members of academies and heads of institutes. Later, in the recollections of their teacher and mentor Frolkis, Bezrukov and Duplenko noted,

Those who went through his school were very lucky, but it is also a tremendous responsibility: to be a student of Frolkis is an honor, yet very difficult, as it demands full dedication, great and constant exertion of strength and capabilities, systematic and persistent work on oneself.

Therefore, it is not surprising that after the death of their mentor, his followers gathered every year to honor his memory and discuss scientific problems.

Yurii was fortunate not only with his scientific supervisor and mentor but also in his personal life. His wife, Nina Kochubey (1934–2014), became a true friend and assistant. An ophthalmologist by profession, she worked at the polyclinic of the Institute of Gerontology for many years. Sharing his academic interests, Nina helped him in scientific research. Their son Pavel also continued the family tradition and chose the profession of a doctor.

Yurii Duplenko defended his PhD thesis, ‘Age-Specific Features of the Ganglia’s Functional State of the Autonomic Nervous System’ in 1965. After that, he remained at the same institute, where in 1970 he assumed the position of a senior researcher. In 1986, Duplenko defended his doctoral thesis, dedicated to the formation of the issue of ageing in native physiology and trends in the modern development of gerontology. The same range of questions was covered in his monograph *Ageing: Essays on the Development of the Problem*, published in 1985. Between 1986 and 2004, Duplenko led the Department of Information Analysis at the Institute of Gerontology. At the same time, since 1996, he worked as a leading researcher of the Department of History of Science and Technology at the G. M. Dobrov Research Center for Scientific and Technical Potential and History of Science (now the State Institution “G. M. Dobrov Institute for Scientific and Technological Potential and Science History Studies, NAS of Ukraine”).

In addition to his scientific activity, Yurii Duplenko devoted a lot of his time and energy to lecturing. Thus, from 1993 to 1995, he was a professor at the Medical Institute of the Ukrainian Association of Folk Medicine (now Bogomolets National Medical University), where he taught a course on the history of medicine, medical ethics, and deontology. In 1997–2004, Duplenko was a professor at the International Solomon University, lecturing on public health,

history of medicine, biomedical ethics, and scientific information. Since 1996, his activity has been associated with the Department of Ecology at the National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.” Here, holding the position of a professor (since 2006), Duplenko lectured courses he developed on the philosophical foundations of environmental ethics and biosafety, human ecology, and history of natural science.

At the age of 80, Yurii Duplenko suffered a heart attack, after which his health deteriorated. Despite this, he continued lecturing and retired from his post only in 2020. Duplenko remained active in scientific research until the end of his life. In particular, in June 2024, he had planned to participate in the XXXI Baltic Conference on the History and Philosophy of Science in Tartu, Estonia, and present his paper ‘History of Science: Instrumentality for Investigation.’ Unfortunately, his health prevented him from taking part in this scientific event in person. A few months later, Yurii Duplenko was gone. He is buried at the Baikove Cemetery in Kyiv.

Duplenko’s scholarly work can be characterized as diverse. In addition to works on normal physiology, he made significant contributions to understanding the problems of human ageing. In his works on the history of medicine, Duplenko investigated the scientific legacy of medical scientists, issues of gerontology, and the functioning of medical societies. His research interests also included the clarification of the historical roots of strategy in noospheric nature management, studying the impact of anthropogenic and natural factors on urban areas and human health, as well as analyses of modern environmental problems.

Among Duplenko’s numerous scientific works are his monographs on Ukrainian, such as *The idea of deep ecology, its history and current development* (2018), *Vladimir Veniaminovich Frolkis. Scientist and person: Through the eyes of friends and colleagues: A chronicle of life and work: bibliography: publicism: aphorisms* (2002, co-authored), *Presidents of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine for 100 years of its existence* (2018, co-authored). Duplenko successfully combined scientific and administrative work. He was the editor of a number of monographs on the history of medicine, in particular, *Vladimir Konstantinovich Vysokovich (1854–1912)* and *Grigory Nikolaevich Minkh. 1836–1896* (authored by Svitlana Ruda), *History of research on bacteriological phytopathology in Ukraine* (authored by Vira Gamaliia). For many years, Yurii Duplenko was also a member of the editorial board of the academic journal *Ageing and Longevity*. In 2000, he was elected an Academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Higher School of Ukraine, in the department of history of science, education, and technology.

For a long time, Duplenko was a permanent member of the specialized dissertation defense councils at the Institute of Gerontology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (specializing in normal physiology), the G. M. Dobrov Research Center for Scientific and Technical Potential and History of Science, and the State University of Infrastructure and Technologies (specializing in history of science and technology). In addition, Duplenko was repeatedly invited to participate in meetings of academic councils of the Bogomolets National Medical University and Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, among other scientific institutions.

Professor Duplenko was an active participant in Union-wide congresses of historians of medicine, and in post-Soviet times, in congresses of the (international) Confederation of Historians of Medicine. His report at the II All-Union Congress of Historians of Medicine (1980) discussed the historical development of ideas about biological mechanisms of life expectancy, and at the III All-Union Congress (1986), he presented a comprehensive approach to the study of the history and prospects of development of gerontology in the USSR. At the 2nd Congress of the Confederation of Historians of Medicine (2003), Yurii Duplenko submitted a report on Russian-Ukrainian relations in the development of physiology at the beginning of the twentieth century. He also presented his reports at Moscow symposia on the history of medicine, which are regularly held by the N. A. Semashko National Research Institute of Public Health, as well as at annual conferences initiated by Academician A. M. Stochik (now called the “Stochik readings”).

Professor Duplenko’s participation in international forums deserves special attention. He was a regular participant at the International Baltic Conferences on the History of Science, which are held alternately in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. It should be noted that since the Soviet times, Yurii Duplenko presented at the international congresses of the International Society for the History of Medicine. In particular, together with Prof. O. A. Grando, he represented the Ukrainian SSR at the 26th International Congress on the History of Medicine, held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, in 1978. Duplenko also participated in the work of the 38th Congress, which was held in 2002 in Istanbul.

Lecturing was an important part of Yurii Duplenko’s professional life. For many years, he gave lectures to students in higher education institutions of Kyiv, provided consultations to young colleagues, and supervised master’s and bachelor’s theses. He was also a scientific supervisor for several PhDs and one Doctor of Science.

Vira Gamaliia
Kostiantyn Vasyliiev
Borys Vasylykivskyi

Everyone who knew Yurii Duplenko remarked on his exceptional decency, scientific honesty, modesty, benevolence, sense of humor, ability to empathize, and readiness to always help others. That is why Duplenko was loved by both colleagues and his students. He liked to meet his friends over a cup of coffee, and even organized collective gatherings at his favorite coffee shop in the center of Kyiv. The participants jokingly referred to these meetings as “professor’s coffee.”

The bright memory of Yurii Duplenko will forever remain in the hearts of those who knew him and communicated with him.

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