



John Wesson Ashford Jr

- Clinical Professor (Affiliated), Psych/Public Mental Health & Population Sciences
- Staff, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

Bio

BIO

Dr. Ashford is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences (affiliated) at Stanford University and has been a staff psychiatrist since 2003 and the Director of the War Related Illness and Injury Study Center (WRIISC) at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System since 2007. Dr. Ashford is a Senior Research Scientist at the Stanford / VA Aging and Alzheimer's Disease Clinical Research Centers. He is a member of the Scientific Advisory Board and Chair of the Memory Screening Advisory Board of the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, a Senior Editor of the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease, and the 14th President of the Society for Brain Mapping & Therapeutics.

Dr. Ashford obtained a BA the University of California, Berkeley in 1970. At UCLA (1970–1985) he attained an MD (1974) and PhD (1984), trained in psychiatry (1975-1979), co-founded the Neurobehavior Clinic, and was the first Chief Resident and Associate Director (1979-1980) on the Geriatric Psychiatry In-Patient Unit. He conducted the first double-blind study of an anti-cholinesterase drug (physostigmine) to treat Alzheimer patients (Ashford et al., 1981), a therapy which is now standard treatment for Alzheimer patients. Between 1980-1985, Dr. Ashford directed the Geriatric Psychiatry Out-patient Clinic at the Neuropsychiatric Institute and initiated the UCLA/Alzheimer PET scan study with Dr. David Kuhl.

Between 1979-1984 under Dr. Joaquin Fuster, Dr. Ashford completed his Ph.D. dissertation, a finalist for the Lindsley Prize for the best in Behavioral Neuroscience in 1984. With Dr. Fuster, he made the first proposal and physiologic demonstration of massive, reciprocal parallel information processing in the cerebral cortex (Ashford et al., 1985); a basis of memory, particularly that aspect of memory affected by Alzheimer's disease (Ashford, Coburn, and Fuster, 1998). His Alzheimer and neurophysiology study led to the water-shed observation that neuroplastic memory mechanisms of the brain are specifically affected by Alzheimer pathology (Ashford & Jarvik, 1985; Ashford, 2015).

Dr. Ashford was an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine between 1985-1990, helping to establish an NIA-funded Alzheimer's Disease Center. There he published the first use of Modern Test Theory in the field of Medicine, "Item-Response Theory" analysis of the Mini-Mental State Exam (Ashford et al., 1989). He was an Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, Davis 1991-1992, at the Martinez, VAMC, and Chief of the Mental Hygiene Clinic. He was at the University of Kentucky from 1992-2003 as a tenured Associate Professor in Psychiatry, Neurology, and the Sanders-Brown Center on Aging, and Vice-Chair for Research in the Department of Psychiatry, where he continued his Alzheimer research. He proposed a "Time-Index" method to measure Alzheimer dementia severity (Ashford et al., 1995; Ashford & Schmitt, 2001), used in the UK Nun Study (Butler, Ashford, Snowden, 1996), and to study loss of cerebral perfusion in Alzheimer patients (Ashford et al., 2000). With Dr. James Geddes he showed the central role of paired helical filament pathology in destroying neuronal processes (Ashford et al., 1998).

Dr. Ashford's long-term research interests are aging, Alzheimer's disease, brain imaging, and memory mechanisms. He has developed early detection and measurement methods for mild cognitive disorders and Alzheimer's disease, currently working on an internet program: www.memtrax.com . He is reformulating theories of Alzheimer pathology. As Director of WRIISC CA, he has studied traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, chronic pain, chronic multi-symptom illness, and other neuropsychiatric illnesses.

Complete List of Published Work in MyBibliography: (140 references)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/myncbi/john.ashford.1/bibliography/48071896/public/?sort=date&direction=descending>