

Boren SA (2006). Max Pinner (1891-1948).



© Sue Boren, Department of Health Management & Informatics, School of Medicine, University of Missouri – Columbia, 324 Clark Hall, Columbia, MO 65211, USA. E-mail: borens@health.missouri.edu

Max Pinner was born in Berlin, Germany, on 28 November 1891. He was a medical student at the University of Berlin from 1911-1915, and graduated in medicine at the University of Tübingen in 1919. Pinner worked for two years at Eppendorf Hospital in Hamburg, Germany, before arriving in the United States in 1921. He married Berna Rudovic on 1 March 1924. Pinner was on the staff of a private sanatorium in California before being appointed in 1924 to the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanatorium in Chicago, Illinois, as an instructor in pathology and bacteriology at the University of Illinois. He became a naturalized United States citizen in 1928.

Cite as:

Boren SA (2006). Max Pinner (1891-1948). JLL Bulletin: Commentaries on the history of treatment evaluation (www.jameslindlibrary.org).

Pinner was director of the laboratory at the Herman Kiefer Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, and the William H Maybury Sanatorium in Northville, Michigan from 1926 to 1929. During this time, he contributed to more than 25 articles, including the clinical trial of sanocrysin with his colleagues Amberson and McMahon, in which a coin toss was used to decide which of two matched groups of patients with tuberculosis would receive gold therapy with the drug sanocrysin, and which usual care ([Amberson et al. 1931](#)). A decade later, Scheininger et al. (1941) wrote in the 1941 *Maybury Manual*: "At one time doctors thought they could "lick" tuberculosis by using a gold compound called Sanocrysin and one of the most carefully controlled clinical experiments ever performed was carried out at Maybury in the attempt properly to evaluate Sanocrysin."

From 1931 to 1935, Pinner was the associate director in charge of laboratories and research at the Desert Sanatorium and a consulting pathologist at South Pacific Hospital in Tucson, Arizona. He was the principal pathologist for the New York State District Tuberculosis Hospitals from 1935 to 1938. In this role, Pinner organized the laboratory services for the newly opened state sanatoriums. He was chief of the division of pulmonary diseases at Montefiore Hospital in New York (Levenson 1984) and also served as medical director of an affiliated sanatorium in Bedford Hills, New York, from 1938 to 1945. Pinner held a faculty appointment as a clinical professor of medicine at Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons from 1939 to 1946.

Pinner received the American Thoracic Society's Trudeau Medal in 1946 (Ayvazian 1980), contributed to about 100 papers on tuberculosis and related topics, and published an important textbook in 1945 - *Pulmonary Tuberculosis in the Adult* (Pinner 1945). Pinner served as associate editor of the *American Review of Tuberculosis* from 1937 to 1940 and as full editor from 1941 until his death on 7 January 1948 at the age of 56. He died while reporting his final illness - chronic heart failure - in a book he was editing entitled *When Doctors Are Patients*. It was published posthumously in 1952 (Pinner and Miller 1952).

References

Amberson JB, McMahon BT, Pinner M (1931). A clinical trial of sanocrysin in pulmonary tuberculosis. *American Review of Tuberculosis*;24:401-35.

Ayvazian LF (1980). The fifty-five Trudeau Medalists 1926-1980. *American Review of Respiratory Diseases* 121:753-775. [Pinner won the 21st Trudeau medal in 1946].

Levenson D (1984). *Montefiore: The hospital as social instrument 1884-1984*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Pinner M (1945). *Pulmonary Tuberculosis in the adult: Its fundamental aspects*. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas, Publisher.

Pinner M, Miller BF (1952). *When doctors are patients*. New York: W W Norton & Company.

Scheininger WJ, Burke PE, and the patients of the William H. Maybury Sanatorium (1941). *Fluoroscope Monthly Magazine: Maybury Manual*.

