Joel Pokorny, Short biography

Dr. Joel Pokorny is Professor Emeritus at The University of Chicago. He received the Ph.D. degree in Experimental Psychology from Columbia University in 1967.   His entire postdoctoral career has been at The University of Chicago where he was a member of the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science, the Department of Psychology and the Committee on Computational Neuroscience. His research is directed toward understanding the mechanisms that transform visual information in the external world into biological signals in the eye, and the neural codes that convey information to the brain. He employs psychophysical methods to infer the early events in the retina that mediate color vision, twilight vision, and the ability to resolve temporally modulated lights and changes in spatial contrast. Visual function is measured for observers with normal vision, and with vision altered by genetics, disease or age. He also has active research collaborations with physiologists and anatomists that allow evaluation of the plausibility of models generated from the psychophysical investigations of visual function. Here, data are in the form of recordings of the activity of single retinal neurons. The stimulus situations are designed so that direct comparisons can be made between visual function measured psychophysically and the behavior of single neurons.

Dr. Pokorny received the D.Sc (Hon.) from the State University of New York. Other honors include the Edgar D. Tillyer Award (The Optical Society of America), the Godlove Award (Intersociety Color Council), the Verriest Medal (International Research Group on Color Vision Deficiencies), a Research to Prevent Blindness Senior Scientific Investigator Award, and the Rank Prize in Opto-Electronics (Rank Prize Fund, London). He is President of the International Colour Vision Society.