

# Jeff Cream

Born 1937 – Died 2008

It is with great sadness that the BAD notes the death of Dr JJ Cream on Tuesday 8th January aged 70.

Jeff Cream was born in Salford, the son of a watchmaker. He was educated at Salford Grammar School and the University of Manchester, qualifying in 1961. After House jobs at the MRI and Withington Hospital and some training in pathology he did general medicine in Cardiff, obtained his MRCP in 1965 and took up a research post in haematology at St Thomas'. He became interested in Dermatology and was appointed Registrar to the Skin Department. He did SR jobs at St John's and the Middlesex Hospitals before being appointed Consultant in Croydon in 1972. Three years later he was appointed to the staff of the Charing Cross Hospital (with sessions at West Middlesex) as a colleague to Dr Oliver Scott. He retired in 2002 but continued to do much valued locum work at the Cross, at Chelsea & Westminster and at Queen Mary's Roehampton.

Medicine and work were very important. He was a consummate clinician, painstaking and exhaustive in differential diagnosis and investigation. These 'physicianly' skills were recognised by others so he was often consulted by colleagues when they or their families were ill. His gentle and compassionate solicitude was recognised and appreciated by all of his patients. Jeff had a lifelong commitment to research. He was awarded his MD in 1972 for original work on cutaneous vasculitis. As a Consultant he continued to pursue this interest but in latter years he published principally on acne and mollusca. He

wrote over 90 papers, case reports, chapters or books. Jeff Cream was a popular teacher and he imparted high quality dermatology teaching to undergraduates for over 30 years. Many Cross students became dermatologists because of their experiences in Jeff's clinics.

He was particularly admired for his high standards, strong values, integrity and wisdom. He had a strong personal moral and ethical code encompassing uncompromising principles of justice and fairness. He had no time for pretension. Colleagues frequently sought him out for advice about thorny and complicated non-clinical problems. He was as generous with his time as he was with life's tangibles. His incisive opinions were frequently obtained for medicolegal cases. Towards the end of his career, Jeff demonstrated great courage in dealing with a devastating challenge to his probity from the GMC, but exhibiting a self-controlled determination verging on stubbornness and with the support of his family and friends he was resoundingly exonerated at a judicial review.

And for 9 years he stoically accepted the debilitations and limitations imposed by labile essential thrombocythaemia. But the disease worsted him and he died from a fulminant blastic transformation that proved refractory to aggressive treatment.

Jeff Cream was a quiet and unassuming man who was interested in ideas and other people. His recreations were classical music and reading, particularly modern history and American crime fiction. Even those who had known him for many years would rarely have heard him



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speaking unprompted about himself or his own family but to them he was devoted and a stalwart. He met his wife Naomi at MRI. She supported him unstintingly in his career and through the vicissitudes of his illness. The BAD extends its condolences to her and their three daughters at this time of mourning.

Abe Guz, Emeritus Professor of Medicine CXHMS, CXWMS and ICSM summed up Jeff Cream better than I can. He was "a much loved, kind and courageous colleague, who did not change over the years. He was the best of us all".

**Chris Bunker**

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital