

In memoriam: Richard L. Dobson, MD

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Richard Lawrence Dobson, MD, an icon of dermatology in the late 20th century, passed away on February 16, 2019, at the age of 90 (Fig 1). During his long and illustrious career, he served as president of the Society for Investigative Dermatology (1976-1977), the American Academy of Dermatology (1983-1984), and the American Board of Dermatology (1988-1989). He was one of the founders of the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology* and served as its second editor (1988-1998).

Richard Dobson was born on April 12, 1928, in Boston, Massachusetts, the son of the late Celia Segal Dobson and the late Joseph Dobson. After attending the University of New Hampshire (1945-1949) and the University of Chicago School of Medicine (1949-1953), he completed his internship at Cincinnati General Hospital (1953-1954) and a fellowship in dermatology at the Dartmouth Medical School (1954-1956). He was a Public Health Service research fellow at the National Institutes of Health (1956) before becoming an assistant in dermatology at the Hitchcock Clinic in Hanover, New Hampshire (1957).

His distinguished academic career included organizing the original dermatology program at the University of North Carolina, serving on the faculty at the University of Oregon, establishing the Department of Dermatology at the State University of New York at Buffalo, and founding the Department of Dermatology at the Medical University of South Carolina. He mentored scores of residents, fellows, and young faculty members, 5 of whom went on to become chairmen of departments of dermatology and 1 of whom became a medical school dean.

Dr Dobson was an accomplished investigator who served 2 terms as a member and chairman of the General Medicine A study section of the National Institutes of Health. Although his main research interest involved the physiology, chemistry, and pharmacology of the eccrine sweat gland, Dr Dobson is best remembered as a master clinician.



Fig 1. Richard L. Dobson, MD (1928-2019).

His morning Kodachrome sessions with the residents were informative but stressful to the unprepared. Whether on rounds with an entourage of trainees or one on one in the clinic, he always willingly shared his knowledge and expertise, which were so legendary as to earn him the Master Dermatologist Award from the American Academy of Dermatology in 1992 and the Stephen Rothman Millennial Gold Medal Award from the Society for Investigative Dermatology in 2000. His Westwood Conferences on Clinical Dermatology were among the first of the regional dermatology conferences that are so prevalent today.

He was so esteemed for his wisdom, knowledge, and administrative abilities that he served not only as chairman of dermatology at the Medical University of South Carolina, but also as interim chairman of the Department of Anatomy and Cell

Biology and interim dean of the College of Medicine. Always the life of the party with his renowned wit, he worked hard but he also enjoyed life to the fullest. Travel, writing, publishing, wine,

and art were among his passions, but none surpassed his love of his family.

Richard Lawrence Dobson, MD, was in every sense a Renaissance man. He will be sorely missed.