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► **To cite this version:**

Mark A. Creager, Jonathan L. Halperin. Jay Denton Coffman, MD. *Vascular Medicine*, 2007, 12 (3), pp.221-222. 10.1177/1358863X07083183 . hal-00571368

HAL Id: hal-00571368

<https://hal.science/hal-00571368>

Submitted on 1 Mar 2011

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In memoriam

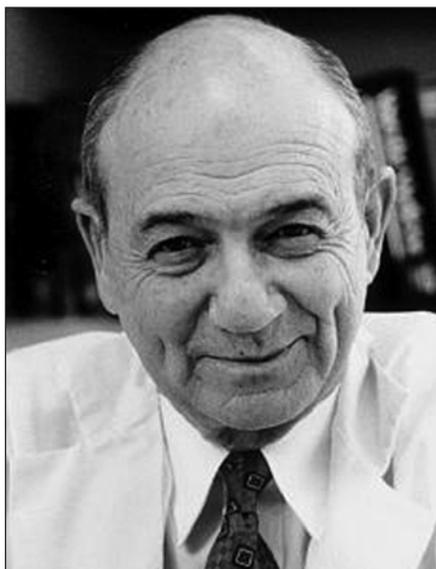
Jay Denton Coffman, MD

Jay Denton Coffman, a founder and the second president of the Society for Vascular Medicine and Biology, died on December 12, 2006 at the age of 78. He was a professor of medicine at the Boston University School of Medicine and directed the Peripheral Vascular Disease Section and the house staff training program at University Hospital, now Boston Medical Center. Jay was an outstanding physician and mentor, and a colleague and friend to many members of the SVMB, whose professional careers were greatly influenced by his personal attention and nurturing.

Jay was among the pioneers of Vascular Medicine. He recognized the potential of this area as knowledge of vascular biology advanced and technological developments improved our ability to diagnose and treat vascular disease. He was the Director of the Peripheral Vascular Disease Section of University Hospital in Boston, which was one of the first academic venues for this area of expertise. He chaired the American Heart Association's Council on Circulation in the 1970s and was a founder of the SVMB, serving as our President from 1992 to 1994.

Professionally, Jay was a 'triple threat' – an astute clinician, renowned investigator and cherished teacher. An accomplished clinician-scientist who exemplified the marriage of the science and art of medicine, he devoted his career to the ideal of translating research findings directly to the care of patients, and passed to those he taught not only a wealth of factual knowledge but a set of binding ideals based on intellectual honesty, scientific integrity and personal commitment.

Jay's writings contributed importantly to the field of Vascular Medicine. He published over 100 research studies, book chapters and reviews. His research enhanced our understanding of the physiology and pharmacology of calf muscle and skin blood flow. He investigated the contribution of the sympathetic nervous system to blood flow regulation and the



pathophysiological mechanisms that mediate Raynaud's phenomenon. He studied blood flow regulation during ischemia and exercise-induced hyperemia and described why vasodilator drugs are generally ineffective in patients with claudication. He was one of the foremost experts in Raynaud's phenomenon and devoted much of his career to seeking effective therapy for this vascular disorder. He authored three textbooks about vascular disease. *Ischemic Limbs: Surgical Approaches and Physiological Principles* (1973), written with Dr John

Mannick, a vascular surgeon, is an enduring resource on the principles of managing patients with peripheral arterial disease that are still relevant today. Another, the authoritative and comprehensive *Raynaud's Phenomenon*, is an important resource for all vascular physicians. His last book, *Peripheral Arterial Disease*, edited with Dr Robert Eberhardt, is another prodigious contribution to the field.

Jay was the consummate mentor and role model – a rare physician who left an indelible mark on those he taught. He brought a disarming humility and objectivity to the bedside and, despite a vast clinical experience and mastery of his specialty, was never self-inflated or arrogant in his approach to research, education or patient care. He emphasized the most basic attributes that make a great physician: attention to detail, careful recording of objective observations, unbiased consideration of all diagnostic possibilities, and engagement of the patient in the selection of treatment. Jay not only ensured his trainees a vast and superb education, he also guided them in career development as would a caring parent – stern at times and always forthright – softened by a twinkle in his eye and a wry smile. He took pride in their accomplishments and measured his success as much by their achievements as his own.

In recognition of his substantial contributions to the science, practice, and treatment of vascular disease, the Vascular Disease Foundation designated Jay Coffman as the recipient of the Julius H Jacobsen Award. Further, the SVMB has honored his memory by designating the Young Investigator Awards in his name. We can think of no honor he would have cherished more than to associate his professional legacy with the young physicians and scientists of this Society.

Jay Coffman was a pioneer whose seminal studies of limb circulation, consultative clinical practice and commitment to specialized training nurtured the field of vascular medicine as a distinct clinical discipline. His renowned approach to diagnosis and management was based on astute incorporation of the emerging literature tempered by the critical mind of the quintessential physician-scientist. His legacy will endure through those he trained, through this Society, and through the field of vascular medicine, which has

blossomed to include countless physicians and scientists.

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