



# Herbert Leroy Abrams



*Photograph courtesy of John Abrams*

Herbert L Abrams, Chair Emeritus of the Department of Radiology at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Dana Farber Cancer Institute, as well as Emeritus Philip H Cook Professor of Radiology at HMS, passed away on Jan 20, 2016 at the age of 95. Dr Abrams was one of the leading clinicians, educators, and researchers in the field of Radiology of his era, both internationally and in this country. A native of New York, Dr Abrams completed his Radiology residency at Montefiore Hospital. He then joined the faculty at Stanford Medical Center, eventually becoming the Director of Diagnostic Radiology.

In 1967, Dr Abrams was recruited to Boston, where he became the first Philip H Cook Professor of Radiology at Harvard Medical School. He was simultaneously appointed radiologist-in-chief at the Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Dana Farber Cancer Center. The intellectual environment of Boston invigorated him, and he devoted himself to building a leading radiology department that included a multidisciplinary research center of excellence and an outstanding teaching program. He was greatly successful in both of these efforts.

Dr Abrams was an internationally-known authority on cardiovascular radiology. He wrote more than 190 articles and seven books on cardiovascular disease, as well as others on decision analysis, presidential disability, and health policy. His book *Abrams: Interventional Angiography* was a bible in this field for many years. He was founding editor-in-chief of the journal *Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology*.

In addition to his signature career in radiology, Dr Abrams was a passionate advocate for international security and arms control. He was the founding vice president of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War and a shared recipient of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize. He served on the National Board of Directors of Physicians for Social Responsibility for 20 years and was a national co-chair during the 1980s.

When Dr Abrams returned to Stanford in 1985, he spent most of his time in research at the Center for International Security and Cooperation, working to link various disciplines and philosophies in the political, international, and academic arenas to create a better understanding of international security

during the nuclear age.

Dr Abrams served in many important leadership positions at BWH and HMS, as well as in several national radiology organizations. He was the recipient of Gold Medals for lifetime achievement from the Association of University Radiologists and the Radiological Society of North America.

During his distinguished career, he was recognized as a creative and effective thought leader who presided over the maturation of diagnostic radiology into a distinct and respected academic discipline. He is widely regarded as being one of the most important radiology leaders in his generation, and he also catalyzed the careers of protégés who went on to be international leaders in fields such as image-guided therapy and decision analysis/cost effectiveness.

Over three decades ago, BWH Radiology recognized and memorialized Dr Abrams' achievements with creation of the 'Abrams Conference Room' on L-1 the main meeting point and class-room in the department. In addition, a named endowment, the Hebert L Abrams Directorship in Angio/Interventional Radiology was established at BWH to acknowledge his enormous impact on his subspecialty.

He is survived by his wife of 73 years, Marilyn; daughter, Nancy; son, John; three grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Seltzer MD, *chairperson*  
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