

Obituary

Editor: Henry R. Rollin

LOIC HEMSI, Consultant Psychiatrist, Mid-Surrey Health Authority

Loic Hemi died suddenly and unexpectedly in London whilst on his way to a medical meeting on the evening of 9 June 1988. He was 54. His death was the cause of great distress among the very many people by whom he was loved and respected and, indeed, held in awe by some. Loic was born in Cairo in 1934 into a Sephardi Jewish family and educated at the English School where he is said to have been evidently brilliant from the outset. He was a remarkable linguist, a talent which was to earn him a living when necessary in the early years, and his command of English was intimidating. He had the habit of introducing me to a new word every few weeks or so. He read European literature avidly.

After coming to Britain he found it difficult to find a medical school place before being accepted at Leeds. After graduating MBChB in 1957 he gained the MRCP in 1961, and then devoted his professional life to psychiatry and, in particular, psychogeriatrics. He was elected a Foundation Member of the College in 1971 and made a Fellow in 1981. His high standards of practice became legendary. Many patients and staff came to worship him. He seemed to know everyone who worked in the hospital and he would frequently do rounds with community nurses and visit relatives after late night domiciliary visits. His intolerance of mediocrity was probably what led him to change jobs every ten years or so. A decade at Long Grove Hospital and rather less at St George's left him poised to contribute mightily at Epsom District Hospital at the time of his death. Typical of his ceaseless effort to increase his knowledge and skills, a few years ago he exchanged jobs for several weeks with a fellow consultant in the north of England. As a clinical tutor he was educationally innovative to an exceptional degree and it was a privilege for those of us appointed to teach to learn from him. His mischievous love of gossip was rarely malicious and essentially subserved his lifelong dismissal of humbug and pursuit of truth. Many people whose views have been sought for this compilation have commented on his integrity and his loyalty towards those he respected. He insisted that trainees saw the references he wrote on them and it is a pity that he isn't around to comment on this one. Many mourners packed the

church for his funeral service which also movingly engaged his family of origin. He leaves behind his wife, Felicity, and three sons.

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IRVING SEYMOUR KREEGER, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Department of Psychological Medicine, King's College Hospital, London SE5

Dr Irving Kreeger, who was born in 1924, died on 10 June 1988. He qualified MB BS from St Bartholomew's Hospital in 1947, and early on became interested in the psychological aspects of medicine. He therefore specialised in psychiatry and was appointed consultant psychiatrist, later psychotherapist, at King's College Hospital. He was elected a Foundation Fellow of the College in 1971.

His interest in psychotherapy and the doctor-patient relationship led him to train as a psychoanalyst, and he became a member of the British Psycho-Analytical Society. There he played an active part in promoting the application of psychoanalysis to medicine and related fields and became a member of the External Relations Committee of the Society.

His main contributions arose out of the recognition that in the practice of medicine and psychiatry the personal role of the doctor, nurse and other professionals plays a major part in the care of patients. He therefore devoted a great deal of his energy to the teaching of medical students, doctors and nurses, helping them, usually in small seminars, to bring psychodynamic understanding to their work with patients. Later, he did the same for psychiatric trainees by supervising their psychotherapeutic work. He was appointed Senior Tutor in the Psychotherapy Unit and Honorary Consultant at the Bethlem Royal and Maudsley Hospitals.

In the College he fought hard for the recognition of psychodynamic psychotherapy as part of the training of general psychiatrists, and for the development of psychotherapy services in the NHS. He was a member and later Chairman of the Psychotherapy Section and an active member of Council for several years.

Irving Kreeger was greatly appreciated by his students and colleagues because of his warmth and enthusiasm as teacher and clinician. He persevered in