

In Memorium: Jasper Daube, MD

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Wordcount: 1500

Running Title : Obituary Jasper Daube

Ethical publication statement: We confirm that we have read the Journal's position on issues involved in ethical publication and affirm that this report is consistent with those guidelines.

Disclosures of conflict of interest: The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

This is the author manuscript accepted for publication and has undergone full peer review but has not been through the copyediting, typesetting, pagination and proofreading process, which may lead to differences between this version and the [Version of Record](#). Please cite this article as doi: [10.1002/mus.26916](https://doi.org/10.1002/mus.26916)

Jasper Rolf Ludwig Daube, M.D. died April 18, 2020 at age 84 from complications associated with Alzheimer disease. He was born in Uterson, Germany on February 16, 1936 and moved to the United States as a child with his family, including two sisters, living in Chicago Illinois until he graduated from high school.

He attended Princeton University, where he excelled academically and as a track athlete, graduating in 1956 with a BA (Biology). He attended medical school at the University of Rochester and received his MD in 1962 while at the same time obtaining an MS (Neuroanatomy). Post-graduate medical training included an internship at North Carolina Memorial Hospital and a Neurology residency at the University of Wisconsin in 1966. During his neurology training, he was introduced to clinical electromyography by Dr. Jack Petajan.

Following residency training he served as a Medical Officer in Japan, where he met and married his wife of 52 years, Cynthia (Sokol). As he often said, he had three loves in his life, Cynthia, his children and grandchildren, with clinical neurophysiology a distant third.

After his military service, Dr. Daube completed a two year fellowship at the Mayo Clinic in what later became known as clinical neurophysiology and joined the staff as a Consultant in Neurology in 1972. During fellowship he worked initially in EEG but also met Dr. Edward Lambert and under Ed's mentorship solidified his love, expanded his knowledge, and made a lifelong commitment to the field of electromyography. Jasper spent the remainder of his career at the Mayo Clinic and became a Professor of Neurology in 1982. He held several leadership roles at Mayo Clinic, including Director of the EMG Laboratory, Chair of Clinical Neurophysiology, and Chair of the Department of Neurology.

The three of us were fortunate to meet Jasper in the mid-1970s, early in his remarkable career. The personal qualities that led to his success were obvious even to young trainees. His intelligence, vision, innovation, inventiveness, organizational skills, perseverance, and ethic of hard work and play are qualities that could not be missed. His accomplishments as an educator and teacher are most well-known, but his achievements as a leader, administrator, and mentor should be recognized, too. Throughout his career he was a mentor to many in Neurology but also to people he met in other activities in his life.

As an educator, Jasper demonstrated his skill as an innovator and visionary early in his career. Even before taking on the role of Director of the EMG Laboratory he organized the formal

educational portion of the training to make an already world-recognized laboratory even better. Residents and Fellows, to this day, benefit from the training program formalized by Jasper. He used these materials and ideas to start one of the earliest formal training programs for clinical neurophysiology technicians, the Clinical Neurophysiology Technology Program, in 1991. When Mayo Medical School opened in 1972, Jasper and three colleagues created and organized the neuroscience program for first year medical students, and the format is still in use today. It was unique and controversial for its time, exemplifying his vision and innovation skills. He also created several popular courses for practicing physicians taught by Mayo staff over the years. These include an EMG course that evolved into the present day Clinical Neurophysiology course and an Intraoperative Monitoring course.

Outside Mayo Clinic he participated in numerous educational programs sponsored by the American Association of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine (AANEM), American Academy of Neurology, and other neurophysiology organizations.

All of these activities led to many publications and books, including *Medical Neurosciences* for medical students and *Clinical Neurophysiology* for trainees and practitioners. He also collaborated with colleague Devon Rubin, MD to create *Sounds of EMG*, a video program used by many to learn EMG.

Those who knew Dr. Daube best will remember him as a dedicated teacher. It is what he loved and enjoyed. He rarely if ever left anything to chance, and his didactic lectures were no exception. His presentations were crisp and precise, and important details were emphasized by asking seemingly spontaneous questions.

Although his classroom teaching was impressive, his true gift was the use of the Socratic method to teach the nuances of electromyography (EMG) and electrodiagnosis. Dr. Daube had a major and lasting impact on those who trained at the Mayo Clinic beginning in the 1970s. That impact is best reflected by the many trainees who became academic neuromuscular specialists. Dr. Daube had a particular teaching style that was so natural that few recognized it as unusual. His informal style involved teaching by example and using individual cases to problem-solve, finding a solution grounded in basic science principles. In describing his teaching method, Dr. Daube said, "The critical one (referring to aspect of teaching) is to learn how to test hypotheses to use the scientific method to sort out what is going on." His style encouraged questions, but remarkably, he rarely answered any question directly. Instead, he began asking

questions until somehow tricking trainees into believing they had answered their own question. His style would never be characterized as demonstrative praise, and perhaps the most dreaded question occurred after completion of an EMG study - "You think you are done?" This question at times seemed unanswerable, maybe a trick to make you question your conclusions, because cutting corners was never part of his repertoire.

Dr. Daube's teaching and mentoring did not end with the completion of training. He was always generous with his time and continued to mentor former trainees by encouraging their participation in academic activities and involvement in professional organizations. For so many, his suggestions were critical in developing their academic careers. Dr. Daube may not have been the founding father of EMG, but through education and teaching he was one of EMG's greatest ambassadors.

Dr. Daube was recognized by his peers and students throughout his career with several distinguished honors. Among others, they include the AB Baker Award for Lifetime Achievement in Education, the Herbert H Jasper award for achievement in Clinical Neurophysiology, the AANEM Lifetime Achievement Award, Mayo Clinic Teacher of the Year, Mayo Clinic Teacher of the Year Hall of Fame, and the Mayo Distinguished Educator Award.

In addition to leadership roles at Mayo Clinic, he also used his skills to serve several professional organizations. His work with the AANEM strongly influenced the development of the organization. In 1977 as Secretary-Treasurer he was instrumental in moving the executive offices to Rochester, MN where they remain. He was a member of many committees and served as chair of several. In 1984-85 he was President of the organization. He served on the Board of Directors from 1975 to 1985. During this time, the Board meetings became known for their length and vigorous discussions that led to making the organization stronger, larger, and more relevant to its members.

Dr. Daube was an active member of the American Academy of Neurology throughout his career. He was a participant in the educational programs at the annual meetings and served on several committees. Particularly important to him were the Foundation for Research and Education and Animal Studies Committee. He served as Treasurer from 1997-2001. He was a member of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, and during that time he was the driving force for creating the Certification for Added Qualification in Clinical Neurophysiology. He helped write the questions for the first examination, and it was easy to recognize questions

he wrote. They were reminiscent of his teaching style, just as he would interrogate you about the EMG study you were doing.

The other professional organizations he worked with are numerous. The number of professional journals for which he provided some form of editorial support and peer reviewer is also long.

Besides his Neurology professional activities Dr. Daube was involved in many community activities. He was an active member of his church. He participated in several committees and was recognized for his work as Chair of the Finance Committee. While a member of the Board, and in Annual meetings he exhibited many of characteristics he used as a member of professional boards. It should surprise no one who knew him to learn that he was involved in politics at both local and state levels. He took on many leadership roles, and like everything else he was involved in, he organized things to be more effective while educating members on what their roles could be.

His first love was his family. His wife Cynthia, two children, and six grandchildren were always his focal point, and he was always available for them. When Cynthia started Daube's Bakery she was strongly encouraged and supported by Jasper, in part because of his love of pastries. He helped her with whatever was needed and promoted the business among his friends and colleagues. Dr. Daube loved to travel, and he often took the entire family on trips together after his retirement. The family has fond memories of the times spent together at their lake home, hiking, participating in water sports, and even some fishing. The grandchildren all have different and fond memories, but one uniform memory they have is that he was always teaching. He had a pool table and used it to teach them geometry as they were setting up their shots. Our memory of Dr. Daube and the grandchildren is no matter the circumstance, he would have a big grin when the grandchildren were mentioned.

Dr. Daube, family man, friend, teacher, and mentor will be missed.



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