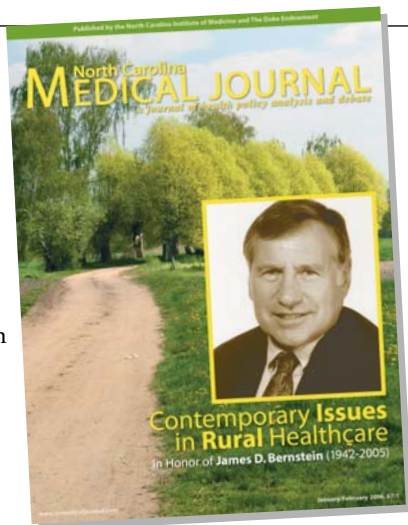


Readers' Forum

To The Editor:

I have greatly enjoyed my issues of the *North Carolina Medical Journal*, but none more than the January/February 2006 issue that honored James Bernstein. He was a remarkable man, and I found Donald Madison's article, in particular, both moving and informative.

The mention in Don's article of the Global Community Health Fellows Program, the brainchild of Bill Stewart, MD, when he was serving as Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, brought back memories of that remarkable group of individuals who were selected for the program. My closest contacts among the fellows were Steve Joseph, MD, who later became Health Commissioner of New York City, the Dean of the School of Public Health at Minnesota, and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health and Medical/Department of Defense; Merv Silverman, MD, who later became Director of Public Health for the City and County of San Francisco and a national and international leader on HIV/AIDS; and Jim Brown, MD, who was the Director of Student Health Services at the University of California Berkley (UC Berkeley) and one of the founders of the Joint Medical Program at UC Berkeley and the University of California San Francisco. All remarkable individuals and contributors as was Jim Bernstein. Jim was what Tom Oliver and others have called "policy entrepreneurs" who could link problems to solutions to the political process, and do it effectively. That is a rare skill.



Leadership is something a lot of people write about, but few practice with the understanding that Jim had for all the elements of leadership. In Don's article, he describes what we might call "Bernstein's principles" on page 35. Very informative.

The January/February 2006 issue was special because of my high regard for Jim and because Don's article triggered so many thoughts about the evolution of rural health service over the past 40 years, including the critical role played by Jim and his colleagues in North Carolina.

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Editor's Note: Dr. Lee served as Assistant Secretary for Health under both Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Bill Clinton

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