

David Kritchevsky

By ACSH Staff — January 6, 2007

The January 6, 2007 issue of the British science journal *The Lancet* included an obituary, written by Hannah Brown, for Dr. David Kritchevsky, which featured comments from his fellow ACSH Advisors Dr.s David Klurfeld and Jon Story as well as ACSH president Dr. Elizabeth Whelan:

Candid and irreverent in the face of what he considered junk science, David Kritchevsky was unafraid of flouting the political orthodoxy when it came to nutritional truths and myths. And during the few months leading up to his death, New York City's plan to ban trans fats in restaurant food was one of his particular vexations. "He thought the detrimental effects of trans fats had been exaggerated and was worried that more saturated fats would be used as a substitute", explains David Klurfeld, a former postdoctoral student of Kritchevsky's, who is now the human nutrition national program leader at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Research Service, MD, USA. So it is something of an irony that just a fortnight after Kritchevsky's death, the ban was approved. "That noise you just heard?", says longtime colleague and friend Jon Story, a professor at Purdue University, IN, USA, "that's Dave rolling over in his grave".

Kritchevsky's commitment to exposing pseudoscientific thinking was not the only thing that made him an unusual scientist. He was known for his brilliant communication skills. Elizabeth Whelan, President of the American Council on Science and Health, a consumer education organisation, who knew Kritchevsky for 30 years, recalls that he was so comfortable in front of a microphone that he once did an entire radio show by himself when clashing appointments meant she had to cancel their arrangements. "I said I can't interview you, I have to run. He said don't worry I'll interview myself. I came back an hour later and he was still going. How many prominent scientists are there that could do that?"

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