

Dear Patricia,

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to contribute some personal memories of Jim to the web site you are organizing. It is a special privilege for me to do so; with the exception of Bob Solow, Jim was my most important mentor from my earliest days in the profession.

I had met Jim when he visited MIT during my graduate student days there, but my longest and most valuable interactions were during my days as a young Fellow and Lecturer for four years at Oxford. Many memories stand out.

The most vivid, of course, come from Jim's research workshop in his office at Nuffield. The company was amazing: Nick Stern, John Kay, Peter Hammond, and several others who benefited from that experience and went on to become stars. Jim stood intellectually above all of us, in the nicest way without in any way putting us down. When one of us was presenting research in progress, Jim would often wonder whether there was a better or simpler way to do it, and go to the board to work it out. Usually it was a revelation, but occasionally he would get stuck at some step. Then he would lean back, scratch his head, and exclaim: "Help!" We half suspected that he intended a slightly different word, but knowing Jim, probably not!

The other memory is of collaborating with Nick Stern to produce questions for the Mathematical Economics paper for the B. Phil. (as it then was) exam. Our main objective was to produce questions that Jim would respect. The result was incredibly tough questions. I would apologize to the students who faced those in the exam, but they were people like Kevin Roberts and Jesus Seade, so they probably coped with them fine.

After I left Oxford, Jim continued to be helpful, not only commenting on my research and inviting me to present it at Oxford, but also participating in the summer workshops we organized at Warwick. When I moved to Princeton our contacts got a bit less frequent, but one memory that stands out was enjoying Jim's hospitality during a visit to Oxford at the AUTE/RES conference in 1983.

The next memorable and pleasurable event was the day when Jim got his Nobel Prize. Tim Besley and I must have said something right to the right people, because they asked us to write the appreciation article for the Scandinavian Journal of Economics. Beyond the mere pleasure and privilege, I actually learned some new things from re-reading his key papers carefully for this article.

Since 2010 I was a frequent visitor to Lingnan University in Hong Kong, and met Jim and you frequently. On the last of these occasions, I was telling Jim about a model of environmental catastrophes that Tim Besley and I were developing. Our solution method was clumsy, and required complex numerical approximations. Jim pointed out that our differential equation had an integrating factor that allowed a simple explicit closed form solution. He had retained knowledge of this Cambridge

Tripes math after all these years, when I had forgotten all about it. In retrospect, I find it amazing that his brain was functioning at this high level even when the disease that struck him must have been working away secretly inside.

Jim's research and publications will last long after all of us are gone, and will continue to influence the profession. But you are doing the profession a most valuable service by collecting and preserving personal memories of him, so thank you again.

Avinash