

IN MEMORIAM

Thomas Marshall Ostrom
(March 1, 1936-May 16, 1994)

From 1980 to 1987 Thomas M. Ostrom served as Editor of the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. Under his leadership, the journal grew and flourished, publishing innovative research on a wide spectrum of topics. His vision for social psychology and his ability to nurture research into high-quality publications are visible in the impact of the papers published during his tenure.

Tom Ostrom was born in Mishawaka, Indiana, on March 1, 1936, and he lived for most of his life in the midwest. He received his bachelor's degree from Wabash College in 1958 and his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1964 before joining the faculty at Ohio State University, where he remained until his death in 1994. Here, Tom not only developed his own successful research program but also, with his colleagues, built an internationally acclaimed training program in social psychology.

Tom's research and administrative careers were central to the evolution of social psychology in the second half of the twentieth century. Always at the vanguard of new approaches, Tom's prescient forging of connections with cognitive psychology shaped the emerging subfield of social cognition in indelible ways. His interests in political science and cognitive science were evident in the capstone programs at Ohio State that linked psychology with those disciplines. His long-term interest in methodology and his statements of its interdependence with theory were original and bold. He made psychological measurement downright exciting for his students, even for those who were slow to appreciate that psychological events, just like physical events, could be precisely measured.

Tom's lasting scholarly contributions span many areas of social psychology. With Harry Upshaw, his mentor at UNC—Chapel Hill, he developed the variable-perspective model of psychological responding that challenged the reliance on content-ambiguous rating scales. His work on the interrelationship between the affective, cognitive, and behavioral components of attitude continues to inspire current thinking about the tripartite model. From the late 1970s, Tom championed the advent of a new way of examining social phenomena, and his vision for social cognition contributed to its defining role in modern social psychology. His research program on impression formation

and person memory successfully challenged prior conceptions and provided fundamental demonstrations of the role of memory in person perception and judgment processes. He felt passionately about social psychology as a science, and he spoke and wrote about it equally passionately. Late-night discussions, continuing long after exhausted colloquium speakers had nodded off, were inspirational—at least to those brave enough to match him aquavit for aquavit.

Tom also left his mark on social psychology by initiating small, highly interactive conferences. He was the original organizer of “social cognition week” at the Nags Head Conference Center. More importantly, for more than a decade he organized the annual pre-SESP meeting of the Person Memory Interest Group. Tom’s role in creating these gatherings was a natural extension of his personality: there was nothing he enjoyed more than bringing people together in an informal (often rustic) setting for free-floating discussion of ideas, mixed with heavy doses of laughter and camaraderie.

As Editor of the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, Tom treated authors and their work as he did his own students—with great interest and with the utmost respect. He relished the accomplishments of his students and downplayed his own role in their achievements. Likewise, his own exquisite editorial improvements were accomplished with self-effacing modesty.

Thomas Ostrom’s influence on the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* and on the field is profound and permanent, and the journal is proud to recognize its association with him.

MAHZARIN R. BANAJI

Yale University

DAVID L. HAMILTON

University of California at Santa Barbara

STEVEN J. SHERMAN

Indiana University

Acknowledgment. Many thanks to Timothy C. Brock for comments.