



IN MEMORIAM

Harold H. Kelley
Professor of Psychology, Emeritus
Los Angeles
1921–2003

Harold Harding Kelley, professor emeritus of psychology at UCLA and a distinguished pioneer and contributor to social psychology, died on January 29, 2003 of cancer at his home in Malibu, California. Harold Kelley was born in Boise, Idaho on February 16, 1921. At the age of ten, he moved with his family to California, where his father established a vineyard in Delano. It was there that he met and married his high school sweetheart, Dorothy, his dear companion for 61 years. There are three Kelley children, Ann, Sten, and Megan, and five grandchildren.

Kelley received his B.A. and M.A. degrees in psychology in 1942-43 from the University of California, Berkeley. He then performed his military service in the U.S. Air Force Aviation Psychology Program, assisting in the construction and validation of selection tests and analyzing air crew behavior.

With the war over, Kelley continued his graduate work in the new Research Center for Group Dynamics at MIT, then headed by Kurt Lewin, receiving his doctorate in group psychology, and continuing with the Center when it moved to Michigan. In 1950, Kelley accepted an assistant professorship at Yale University and became part of the Communications and Attitude Change program, out of which he developed a landmark publication, *Communication and Persuasion* (1953), coauthored with Carl Hovland and Irving Janis. There followed an appointment as professor at the University of Minnesota, with an affiliation with the Laboratory for Research in Social Relations.

Harold Kelley's long- term relationship with John Thibaut, from 1953 until Thibaut's demise in 1986, is considered an exemplary model of scientific collaboration. It began with their being invited to write a major chapter on group problem- solving and process for the *Handbook of Social Psychology* (1954). That chapter, updated in 1968, not only became a major resource in that field, but it led them to a separate volume, *The Social Psychology of Groups* (1959), which became one of the most influential works in social psychology. Although Kelley was ordinarily modest in referring to his work, he aptly described the result as "a stable focus on phenomena at the group level... hitting upon a comprehensive and systematic theory, the elements of which others might regard as mundane, but the combinatorial nature of which brings order to numerous interpersonal and intergroup phenomena." A second volume, *Interpersonal Relations: A Theory of Interdependence*, elaborating and extending the original analysis, was published in 1978.

In the meantime, Kelley continued important innovations and leadership in several other areas. His research and theory on the processes and manner that we attribute causality resulted in a series of publications and a flurry of activity by many social psychologists. While exploring the conceptualizations and the possible "real life" applications of interdependence theory and attribution theory, Kelley began examining the interactions and perceptions of young couples in harmony and conflict, and the ways in which they negotiated and attempted to resolve conflicts. This work led him to elaborate both attribution and interdependence theories in the context of close relationships, resulting in the important and pioneering 1979 book, *Personal Relationships*. A subsequent co- authored volume (*Close Relationships*, Kelley et al, 1983) encouraged the examination of topics long ignored in social psychology such as attraction, love, commitment, power and conflict in relationships, etc., and gave birth to a new, active International Society for the Study of Personal Relationships.

Well after his retirement, Kelley brought together a group of leading researchers in this new field to tackle an ambitious project – the creation of a taxonomy of prototypical social situations derived abstractly from theoretically distinct patterns of interdependence. This six- year project culminated in *An Atlas of Interpersonal Situations* (Kelley et al, 2003).

Kelley's scientific contributions received numerous awards and honors from the American Psychological Association (the Distinguished Scientist Award), the American Sociological Association (the Cooley- Mead Award), the Society of Experimental Social Psychology, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, and the Society for the Study of Personal Relationships. Of particular distinction are his elected memberships in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences.

While developing this impressive body of work, Kelley maintained his academic contributions as an active professor, teacher, and program organizer. A professor in the UCLA psychology department since 1961, Kelley served as departmental vice chair, chair of the social psychology area, and chaired many dissertation committees and influenced students who would become leaders in the field of social psychology. John Holmes, co- author with Kelley of one final publication, in preparation, *Interdependence Theory: Situations, Relationships, and Personality*, offered a description with which many who knew Kelley would agree: "Despite his towering intellect and intense commitment, he also was a wonderful mentor - kind, patient, encouraging, and ready to 'back off' and be playful. Most of all, he was a man of enormous integrity."

Bertram H. Raven