

H. Gwynne Jones, 1918–1985

An Appreciation

In writing an obituary, one tends to list the academic achievements and professional triumphs of the person in question, and only mention in passing one's personal sorrow about the passing away of a good friend and stalwart colleague. However, in the case of Gwynne Jones, it was his personal qualities which most struck his many friends and colleagues, and they should therefore perhaps be mentioned first. He was the kind of person who had no enemies, only friends; his disposition was kindly, friendly, helpful and above all calm; he was never known to lose his temper, to say an unkind word to anyone. From the day he joined my Department, first as a student, then as a lecturer, he was a universally popular kind uncle to whom everyone turned with their problems, whether personal or professional. His professional achievements were of course outstanding, but they never led him to abandon his fundamental simplicity of manner, to "pull rank", or to attempt to impress anyone with his importance. He was a member of that very rare species, a really good person, and it is for that, more than anything else, that he will be mourned by all of us.

He was born on August 1, 1918, and went to Llanelli Grammar School before taking his B.Sc. in Botany, and later the same degree in Psychology at the University of London. He also obtained the Postgraduate Diploma in Education from the University of Wales, and finally took the Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical and Educational Psychology at the Institute of Psychiatry. During the war he was a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm from 1940 to 1945, and immediately after the war was a Schoolmaster in Biology for five years.

From 1952 to 1963 he was a Lecturer and then Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the Institute of Psychiatry. He left the Institute to become the Founder Head of the Psychology Department at St. George's Hospital Medical School, which like the Institute is part of the University of London; this position he occupied from 1963 to 1968.

In 1969 he was appointed Professor and Head of Department of Psychology at the University of Leeds, a position he occupied until 1981 when he took early retirement and became Professor Emeritus. After that, and until his death, he was Senior Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham.

Many professional honours came his way. At various times he was Honorary General Secretary, and later President, of the British Psychological Society. He was Chairman of the British Association for Behavioural Psychotherapy, a Founder President of the British Society of Experimental and

Clinical Hypnosis, a Member of Assembly of the International Union of Psychological Science, and a Member of the Executive Committee of the International Association of Applied Psychology.

His sound common sense and wise advice also brought him many honours in a more administrative sphere. Thus he was Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds, a Member of the Courts of Governors, University College of Swansea, and University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology, a Member of the Calderdale Area Health Authority and of Yorkshire Regional Health Authority, a Member of the Research and Advisory Committee of the Medical Research Council, the Social Science Research Council, the Department of Health and Social Security, the Home Office and the Mental Health Foundation. He also was a Mental Health Act Commissioner, and a member of various Medical and Psychological Examining and Editorial Boards.

Second only to psychology, sports was his great love. He played rugby for Llanelli, both pre- and post-war, and he played for Felinfoch when they won the cup. He was an enthusiastic sailor, and won the Class 3 in the first Swansea Bay Regatta in 1983, sailing his Achilles 24 "Dolffyn". At the age of 65 he obtained the qualification of Yachtmaster in 1983.

In all these sailing activities he had the enthusiastic support of his wife Eileen. Theirs was a very happy and contented marriage, resulting in two children, Huw and Sia. His home life was extremely important to him, and he received a great deal of support and help from Eileen.

His contributions to psychology were two-fold. When he became Head of Department at the University of Leeds, the Department had fallen on very hard times, and was in a state of disarray. The combination of psychological knowledge and wisdom on the one hand, and practical commonsense and know how on the other, enabled him to make it into one of the most highly regarded in Great Britain within a relatively short period of time.

He also managed to alter the fairly contemptuous attitude of his academic colleagues towards psychology in a most remarkable manner, and to introduce a study of clinical psychology to the curriculum in an extremely successful manner. He was always a most accomplished and acceptable representative of psychology as far as academic and political bodies were concerned, and this ability proved invaluable in his stay at Leeds.

However, to most psychologists his main contribution must have been his advocacy and early pioneering work in behaviour therapy. This has been amply recognised by the two major historians in this field, A. E. Kazdin in his *History of Behaviour Modifications*, and more recently by Angela Shorr, in her book *Die Verhaltenstherapie*; it is only fitting that on the cover of this book his picture appears together with men like Pavlov, Wolpe, Bendura and others. As Angela Shorr puts it: "Hans Eysenck and Gwynne Jones were the major

forces behind the drive to create modern behaviour therapy at the Maudsley Hospital, Jones in the practical sense, using face-to-face individual teaching for the intensive acceptance of the new prospective, Eysenck in an organisational and science-political sense." To me it seems only just that Shorr thus singled out Gwynne Jones as the most important contributor to the development of behaviour therapy at the Maudsley. I always felt that he, more than anyone else, shared my own attitudes and beliefs in this field, and was able to design clinical and experimental studies in a very novel and unique manner which would serve to convince doubters, as well as help patients who had been given up by everyone else. He possessed, in a unique manner, the ability to translate Claude Bernard's dictum into practice, namely that every patient constitutes a scientific problem that is unique and requires the application of scientific method to a solution. His publications and discussion of case histories of patients he had treated certainly played a vital part in making behaviour therapy acceptable to psychiatrists and psychologists at a time when psychoanalysis was still riding high, and threatened to excommunicate all "symptom-orientated" methods of treatment. There can be no doubt about the debt which behaviour therapy in this country, and indeed elsewhere also, owes to Gwynne Jones and his pioneering ventures in the 1950s. Some of the cases he wrote up have become classics, and are still mentioned in the literature.

Scientists, alas, do not possess the ability to conjure up, as does the poet and the novelist, the unique personality in all its aspects. All we can do is list the accomplishments and achievements, mention a few traits that we find characteristic, and express our sorrow. Gwynne Jones the person was more than all the attributes I have mentioned here; he was a friend whose loss will take a long time to properly sink in. Never to see that smiling face again, never to hear that cheerful voice again, never to be offered his wise counsel again—these are the personal considerations that weigh most heavily in my own mind. Gwynne Jones was a good man; we shall all miss him.

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