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In Memoriam: Edward S. Reed November 20, 1954– February 14, 1997

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The career of Edward S. Reed is described and a list of his published articles, based on his curriculum vitae, presented. Reed was an Associate Editor of this journal and one of the most prominent scholars in ecological psychology.

Ed Reed, one of two associate editors of this journal, died suddenly early in 1997. Those of us who knew him, whether face to face or in correspondence, feel his absence more and more. Whenever a topic in our field was being discussed, people wanted to know Ed's opinion. In appropriately Socratic fashion, he tried to respond by helping people discover their own views first, then using those self-clarifications to arrive at good and true judgments. Now we can only turn to our "internal Eds" to answer the question "What would Ed think of this?" and in doing so discover again the differences between the remembered, the imagined, and the real.

Ed lived to see how his children, Aaron and Emma, would distinguish themselves. He lived to see his wife, Becky, established in her medical practice. What we'll know best about him professionally is that he lived to complete his "trilogy." Using a Guggenheim Fellowship year to full advantage, Ed finished *Encountering the World: Toward an Ecological Psychology* (1996), *The Necessity of Experience* (1996), and *From Soul to Mind: The Emergence of Psychological Ideas, From Erasmus Darwin to William James* (1997). He coedited *Knowledge and Values: Their Development and Interrelation* (1996) with Terrance Brown and Elliot Turiel for the Jean Piaget Society series and was editing the Piaget Society newsletter. What we had to look forward to was the next large biography of William James, for which Ed had a

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contract from W. H. Freeman. He was happily immersed in his research for that biography. Prior to the last flurry of books, Ed had two others to his credit, *Reasons for Realism* (1982), which he and Becky edited, and *James J. Gibson and the Psychology of Perception* (1988). The care in selection of papers, the helpful introductory sections, and the laboriously crafted index made *Reasons for Realism* a paragon of "selected papers" books. This surely is one of the very best of its kind in psychology. The Gibson biography is now a standard reference work and a fine example of strongly articulated theses.

Ed's prodigious breadth of knowledge crept up on people. Even though he demonstrably spent great quantities of time reading and writing, there was still a sneaky quality to Ed's learning. It seemed as if he'd always known what he knew, whether it be about Darwin, economics, labor, civil rights, politics, jazz, or baseball. One could be around him several hours a day, involved in numerous substantive conversations with him and still be greatly surprised at, and very much instructed by, what he said and wrote. Ed knew his baseball before Stephen Jay Gould popularized baseball for Darwinians. In Scotland, on October 2, 1978 (it was already October 3 there), Ed suffered as much as any Red Sox fan when Bucky Dent hit his infamous home run.

STYLE AND ROLE

In Ed's well-known 1982 article on motor systems published in the *Journal of Motor Behavior*, he used the following quotation from Bertolt Brecht: "Don't write that you admire me. Write that I was an uncomfortable person, and that I intend to remain so after my death. Even then there are certain possibilities ..." (p. 98).

In person Ed was very comfortable to be around. He never showed anxiety or doubt. He was not in a hurry. He was eager to attend to whatever social amenities suited the occasion (such as pub customs in Scotland). He was cordial. He was polite. He was a superb listener. Though neither loud nor pushy, he nevertheless became the hub of conversation in most groups of which he was part. His prowess as a listener and conversationalist extended to his correspondence. Many, many people have testified to the powers Ed exercised in correspondence. He sympathized, he gossiped (just a little), he queried, he summarized positions, he sketched ideas, he asked for feedback, he suggested what to read (as well as what to listen to in music), and kept people focused on what was important and interesting. But whether in person or in written correspondence, Ed unfailingly paid people the compliment of his full, comprehending attention, whether they were students, colleagues, teachers, or world authorities.

Ed's professional writing was another story. That's where he pushed harder, asserting strong positions of his own and drawing contrasts sharply. These could make people uncomfortable. For him, one of the best promises of ecological psychology was that the study of meaning and value falls squarely within its purview. The old dichotomies of "pure" and "applied," "theory" and "practice," are not built

into the ecological approach. Scientific and social (in the sense of humane values) ambition are not at odds with one another in ecological psychology. Ed was not shy about reminding people of this scope in our field. He wasn't overbearing either. But he was surely widely regarded as the conscience of our field. Ed circulated drafts of his writing widely and often, eager to incorporate all the good suggestions he could. His first drafts were maximally polemical, calculated to make sure his strongest theses were not missed and to draw comments. He got comments. Then he would soften his points and insert qualifications and details. As a result he always had a variety of works at several stages of development circulating among colleagues. I doubt that I'm alone in sometimes falling woefully behind in the commenting line. He always seemed to be turning out more serious work than one could read promptly.

ACADEMIC HISTORY

To think of Ed is to think of history. So here's some history. As an undergraduate student at Trinity College (when I first knew him in 1972 and 1973), Ed designed his own major in Evolutionary Epistemology, with course work primarily in philosophy, biology, psychology, religion, and sociology. He wrote his undergraduate senior thesis on Karl Popper's work, arguing that it was severely weakened by not using more biological and psychological knowledge. He completed his undergraduate degree requirements in December of 1974, taught school briefly, and then entered the Philosophy of Science program at Boston University, absorbing as much as he could from Joseph Agassi, Marx Wartofsky, Abner Shimony, and Judson Webb. Outside of Boston University, he established an important contact with Marjorie Grene. He took a research assistantship in Psychology under Margaret Hagen (also at Boston University) while working on his Ph.D. in Philosophy. Never one to waste an opportunity, Ed used his moonlighting time in the B.U. Psychology Department to acquire research experience, publications, and a wife, marrying Rebecca Jones at the end of July 1977.

In the fall of 1977, he and Becky went to Edinburgh for two years, where they each earned Masters' degrees in Psychology. By this time, Ed already had established himself as a Darwin scholar. The well-known Darwinian Michael Ghiselin (later to win a MacArthur award) chose to spend some of his Guggenheim year in Edinburgh, partly because Ed was there. Indeed, Ed arranged for Mike's housing, as he did mine when I was there in 1978 through 1979. Ed's primary adviser at Edinburgh was Colwyn Trevarthen, but Ed spent much time with Dave Lee and also valued the acquaintance of Andrew Packard in zoology. I dare say that a majority of the graduate students (postgraduate students in UK terminology) who were Ed's contemporaries there could attest to Ed's pervasive, if gentle, influence. He was a kind of virtual dissertation adviser, materializing when needed to listen, ask probing questions, and offer suggestions.

After Edinburgh, Ed returned to finishing his doctoral dissertation. What was his doctoral dissertation topic? Descartes—the arch proponent of what Ed doubted most. Actually, his dissertation was a study of Cartesian ideas as the source of experimental psychology. Ed's argument was that experimental psychology "as we know it" should be dated to Descartes and is therefore as old as any other natural science. Ed always has argued that whatever distinguishes psychology from other natural sciences as well as from philosophy is not based on its relative youth.

Ed's commitment to understanding whatever positions he addressed, even those he did not like—perhaps especially those he did not like—is well represented by this quotation from the introduction to his dissertation:

> I have seen fit to give no criticisms of cartesian psychology. This is not because none could be given .... Being myself a disbeliever in cartesianism, I will not persuade believers by a critique but, if I give the very best account possible for me to give, it may give a few pause for its inadequacy. At any rate, this is what I have tried to do.

For those who know that Ed could write polemically, this might be surprising. But he really did want to get each position right. If he was convinced that he had not, on some occasion, he would work to remedy the error. The article based on Ed's doctoral work won a prize as the best dissertation-based article in the *Review of Metaphysics* for 1982.

Thus, as Ed was finishing his doctorate, he was a budding Gibson scholar, Darwin scholar, and Descartes scholar, with a fair amount of collateral expertise surrounding each one. From Boston University and Edinburgh, Ed went to Minnesota for postdoctoral work with Herb Pick while Becky earned a doctorate in Developmental Psychology. Jim Jenkins, at the Center for Research in Human Learning (the Center has been renamed since then) openly marveled at the organizational energy as well as intellectual vision that Ed brought to Center activities. Not only did Ed participate actively in most seminars, frequently contributing memos for discussion, but he also played a central role in a grant project from the Sloan Foundation. In the scholarly line, his action systems paper (quoted previously) dates from this period.

After Minnesota, Ed and Becky moved to Brooklyn. Ed took a position with the Institute for Independent Social Journalism as business manager of their news weekly, the *Guardian*. At this time, Ed was working hard on collecting the material used in his biography of James Gibson.

In an Edwin Boring style of history, one might say that Ed then received the call from Philadelphia's Drexel University in 1984, except that people weren't getting positions by being "called" any longer. The position at Drexel was that of philosopher in the Department of Humanities and Communication. Institutions like Drexel (even MIT) that specialize in engineering and science sometimes wonder what to do with their Humanities scholars. They frequently have limited goals, such as teaching writing and critical thinking, but limited expectations for scholarship and even less support. Nevertheless, Ed found ample scope for his abilities and interests at Drexel and in the wider Philadelphia milieu. By the late 1980s, Ed thought of himself as an "applied philosopher of science" whose mission was not so

much to be a philosopher *of* science but a philosopher *in* science. He participated vigorously in science as a scientist, but his deepest roots and habits were those of the philosopher. To promote broader, more critical thinking in his students, he created courses such as Philosophy of Technology, Philosophical Issues Concerning Artificial Intelligence, and Philosophical Issues About the Environment. Ed helped organize the Drexel Central American Forum, which culminated in a 1987 fact-finding trip to Nicaragua devoted to finding appropriate technological sites.

The best academic developments for Ed in his Philadelphia years came in his associations with Nathan Mayer and Myrna Schwartz at the Drucker Brain Injury Center of the Moss Rehabilitation hospital. Here he contributed to therapy and research with people having traumatic brain damage. By the end of the 1980s, Becky had turned from psychology to medicine and was finishing medical school at the University of Pennsylvania. Ed was ripe for seeking a position near whatever hospital she chose for continued training—this turned out to be in Reading, Pennsylvania. Fortunately for all parties, Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, recognized Ed's value and actually created a position, albeit temporary, for Ed. At that time, Ed was establishing a more public presence in developmental psychology. This is represented substantively in his ideas about the "field of promoted action" described in his chapter in Wozniak and Fischer (1993) and organizationally in his moving on to the Board of the Jean Piaget Society and taking on the editing of that Society's newsletter.

Once at Franklin & Marshall, Ed helped raise money from the National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities to establish the Scientific and Philosophical Studies of the Mind (SPM) program at Franklin & Marshall, the first graduates having finished in May of 1997. This is a program with Ed's stamp all over it. It has some features of what are now orthodox cognitive science and neuroscience programs but with a stronger dose of the study of value (through social science and moral philosophy courses) than one ordinarily finds.

THE CONSCIENCE OF ECOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Ed's social and intellectual commitments all focused on the value of learning for oneself. He thought the world was rich enough and that people were skilled enough that they could learn what was true and useful through individual experience. These are liberating, antiauthoritarian attitudes. Social cooperation was crucial for Ed, but as a way to guide and promote what one could ultimately gain only from direct experience.

For all the richness of Ed's published work, his unpublished work, including correspondence, talks, and discussion papers for seminars, exercised considerable influence, demonstrating just how seriously Ed's ideas were regarded. My personal list of such unpublished highlights begins with a 1978 monograph on what would be needed to integrate ecological psychology with evolutionary theory and ecology within biology. Parts of chapters 2 and 3 of *Encountering the World* touch on themes

from this paper. Even though never published, the paper delineated the literature in biology that serious ecological psychologists should know. Given that start, a number of us have tried to keep tabs on those literatures when we can. His deep concerns for the social responsibility of science were reflected in the paper "Ecological Psychology and Nuclear Exterminism," written with Bill Warren and presented to the October 27, 1984, International Society for Ecological Psychology meeting in Binghamton, New York. Related concerns about the role psychology might play in the uses of technology were expressed in a book written for 1992 publication called *The Machining of the Mind: The Degradation of Experience in the Modern World.* This manuscript and a related paper created a great stir behind the scenes, especially among specialists in "Human Factors" and ergonomics. Through correspondence, phone calls, and meetings, new professional relations were cultivated and none of the material was published. A much-transformed version of the ideas now appear in *The Necessity of Experience*, especially chapter 4.

More than anything, Ed served ecological psychologists as a guide to the best in other areas. Important scholars whose work might not have been discovered or appreciated as relevant without Ed's pointing them out include Fernand Braudel, Michael Ghiselin, Jack Goody, C. S. "Buzz" Holling, Alexander Marshack, and Denise Schmandt-Besserat (full citations to representative works from these people are in *Encountering the World*).

At the end of this article is a complete list of Ed's publications, as drawn from his own curriculum vitae. Some of those papers are hard to find, but there is something worth the effort in all of them. We have to be grateful that Ed found writing so compelling. A great deal of what he had to say did get said. Dwelling on Ed's work and on his life can have the effects that many of us could wish for our own. It can bring us back to the greatest of the issues in science and scholarship. Most of Ed's work, from the very beginning, was in an extended epistemology. Yet knowledge, for him, was never to be divorced from meaning and value. Read the work. See for yourself.

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