

## IN MEMORIAM

## Robert A. Wicklund (1941–2020)

Robert (Bob) Arnold Wicklund was born in Seattle, WA, December 1, 1941. At the time of his death on December 12, 2020, he maintained residences in Bainbridge Island, WA, and Bielefeld, Germany. Bob earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Washington and his doctorate at Duke University in 1968. He held primary faculty positions at the University of Texas at Austin, Universität Bielefeld, and the Università di Trieste, and secondary appointments at numerous institutions, including the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, University of Bergen, Universität Mannheim, and Università di Palermo.

Bob was a scholar's scholar who dedicated his entire life to understanding psychological phenomena, and to sharing his ideas with others. He was famously independent and drawn to "old school" ways of communicating. Given a choice between sending an e-mail message and sending a handwritten missive, Bob would always choose the missive. Bob was also known among friends for his delight in travel, becoming a global citizen long before this became fashionable. He surrendered his secure full professorship in Austin to move to Bielefeld, Germany in 1984. Regarding spontaneity, Bob could disappear for extended periods but then call or appear unexpectedly on one's doorstep, commonly burning with excitement about some fresh insight or obscure publication by which he recently had been inspired. He loved meeting in different locations in Europe and the United States. Bob was always attentive to local customs and made a point to identify and savor cultural offerings regarding food and music. He also had a gift for language and took pains to communicate as much as possible in the tongue native to the people around him. In addition to his native English, Bob was fluent in German, Italian, and Norwegian. And he was an accomplished classical pianist, especially fond of conveying his rendition of Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata, which represented just one piece in his extended repertoire.

Bob was trained in a legendary PhD program in social psychology at Duke established by Jack Brehm, his mentor, and Edward E. Jones. In later years, he described the program as idyllic, a scholarly Camelot. A powerful influence was the intellectual heritage tracing from Brehm to Brehm's mentor Leon Festinger, and from Festinger to Festinger's mentor Kurt Lewin. A core feature of the heritage was its emphasis on theory development. This scholarly influence is evident in Bob's most visible work—the theory of objective self-awareness developed with T. Shelley Duval (1972), and the theory of symbolic self-completion developed with Peter M. Gollwitzer

(1982). Other contributions include the well-received books concerning Brehm's theory of psychological reactance (1974), and Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (written with Jack Brehm, 1976). While living in Europe, Bob published a theory of static versus dynamic thinking (1986), a critical appraisal of zero-variable theories in psychology (1990), a theory of self-knowing with Martina Eckert (1992), and a theory of multiple perspectives with Giuseppe Pantaleo (2001). Bob's skill at getting others involved in intensive discussions of classic topics in social psychology led to a host of jointly published journal articles. Examples include articles with Ottmar Braun on conspicuous consumption, with Jack Brehm on a reinterpretation of the forced compliance dissonance paradigm, with Guido Gendolla on false consensus and egocentrism, with Michael Koller on the determinants of preoccupation with person descriptors, with Gisela Steins on perspective taking, and with Thomas Reuter and Rudolf Schiffmann on the appropriation of ideas.

In 2011, Bob's students, colleagues, and friends organized a conference celebrating his 70th birthday. The event was held at New York University and arranged as a surprise. Bob started off by presenting his ideas on how living by multiple perspectives can enrich psychological understanding. His presentation was followed by talks of other attendees, explicating how Bob had influenced their work and psychological science in general. Speakers included Chuck Carver, Margaret Clark, Allan Fenigstein, Meg Gerrad, Rick Gibbons, Jay Hull, Michael Koller, Jamie Pennebaker, Bill Ickes, Tom Pyszczynski, Fritz Strack, Guido Gendolla, Steve West, and Rex Wright. Bob always felt more comfortable with private, individual exchanges than with public ones involving groups. Still, he greatly enjoyed the event as it perfectly suited his contact sensitivity, flush with affectionate and sophisticated intellectual exchange. Those of us present were honored to share the experience and will recall it as a shining moment not only in Bob's life, but also in our own.

Rex A. Wright<sup>1</sup>, Giuseppe Pantaleo<sup>2</sup>, Guido H. E. Gendolla<sup>3</sup>, and  Peter M. Gollwitzer<sup>4,5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of North Texas, Denton

<sup>2</sup> Vita-Salute San Raffaele University

<sup>3</sup> University of Geneva

<sup>4</sup> New York University

<sup>5</sup> University of Konstanz