

# Anthony Gale (1937–2006)

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Professor Maurice Anthony Gale died on 22 August. Uniquely in the history of the British Psychological Society, Tony was both an Honorary Fellow (2001) and a Life Member (1980). He also received the Award for Distinguished Contributions to Teaching of Psychology (2002).

Underpinning those Society honours was an extraordinary wealth of intellect, talent and drive, coupled with a willingness to invest vast amounts of time and energy in helping to shape others in their professional development. It was as though Tony's underlying mission was to help others believe in themselves and realise their potential; and almost nothing was too much for him in that quest. Never afraid of controversy, he fought hard for those he believed were disadvantaged, sometimes at professional cost to himself.

The Honorary Fellowship gave recognition to Tony's outstanding contributions to the advancement of psychology, achieved several ways: through academic research, books and other publications; through his undergraduate teaching; and through the support given to some 30 PhD students plus many staff starting their careers. The Life Membership honoured Tony's distinguished history in the organisational development and life of the Society over several decades.

Tony was also an AcSS (an Academician in the Learned Societies for the Social Sciences), elected in 2003 for the quality of his contributions in work that spanned practising and academic communities of psychologists, for his representation of psychology in the broader UK social-science community, and for the major role he played in maintaining standards and quality within psychology and within wider academic and practitioner fields.

Tony's principal research contribution was in using the EEG to measure brain activity during information processing and during social interaction, and his international reputation extended to his exploration of personality correlates of brain function. In mid-career his ground-breaking qualitative research with families received much acclaim. For 40 years Tony combined publication of research in prestigious journals with a passion for undergraduate teaching and postgraduate supervision. He was in constant demand as external examiner for undergraduate and higher degrees, and for six years he was Chief Examiner (Psychology) for the International Baccalaureate, ending his IB work a few years following a term as Vice-Chair of the Board of Chief Examiners.

He helped develop the profile of psychology through work on ESRC committees, and as Secretary/Treasurer in the Association of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences (ALSISS) during a critical time of re-structuring. From the early 1990s he was a part-time auditor, at home and abroad, for the Higher Education Quality Council and its successor body, the Quality Assurance Agency.

Tony had began studying psychology as a mature student in the University of Exeter as a 26-year-old, and he quickly acquired a national and then international reputation, being promoted in his late-thirties to a Chair in Southampton's Psychology

Department, via a senior lectureship in UWIST (Cardiff) after lectureships in Exeter and Swansea. It was eight years subsequent to his appointment as Professor that he was awarded his PhD, by publication. After twice being a highly influential Dean of Social Sciences in Southampton University, Tony's next move was to be Director of Research and Development in Portsmouth's Psychology Department. He retired from Portsmouth University in 2002, before which time he had switched post to part-time professor. Meanwhile he had been appointed to visiting professorships elsewhere and he had received an honorary doctorate.

From almost the beginning of his career as a psychologist, when he took on the duties of local organiser for the BPS Annual Conference in Exeter, Tony became a known character in British psychology. In due course, in 1989/90, he became BPS President and, between times, he was Honorary General Secretary, Chair of the Scientific Affairs Board, Chair of the Qualifying Examination Board, and much else. In all these roles, and, indeed, in virtually everything he undertook, Tony Gale made a difference, because he had a sharp, insightful mind, he was a good listener and team-player, incredibly well organised, always affable and considerate, and a superb communicator.

It was rare to find that Tony Gale was not in high spirits. He was tremendously invigorating company, invariably displaying a wicked sense of humour and, when on very best form, his powers of mimicry and observation could have his 'audience' in stitches.

Tony Gale is survived by his wife, Liz, and their son and daughter. He will be greatly missed by many, and his contributions to psychology will continue to have impact for many years to come.

**Antony J. Chapman**

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