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REMEMBERING LYLE V. JONES (1924–2016)

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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Lyle V. Jones, long-time director of the L.L. Thurstone Psychometric Laboratory at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, passed away quietly at his home on April 13, 2016. He was 92.

Lyle Jones was a quiet force in the field of quantitative psychology for the second half of the twentieth century. He made contributions to psychological scaling, the use of computers for data collection and analysis in psychology, and large-scale educational testing. His service contributions to the university and the field were extraordinary.

Lyle was at Reed College for one year before he served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from 1942 until 1946. He received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from the University of Washington by 1948. Paul Horst and Lloyd Humphreys were both at UW then; they piqued Lyle's interest in statistical aspects of psychological research. Lyle completed his Ph.D. at Stanford University in 1950, and then he spent a year with a group of postdoctoral fellows working with L.L. Thurstone at the University of Chicago, before joining the U. of C. faculty.

In 1952, Thurstone reached Chicago's mandatory retirement age and moved to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Lyle inherited Thurstone's Psychometric Laboratory at Chicago. Jones and Thurstone continued their collaboration, largely on psychological scaling, until Thurstone's death in 1955. Lyle was briefly a visiting professor at the University of Texas, before he (again) succeeded L.L. Thurstone in 1957 as director of the Psychometric Lab, this time in its incarnation at the University of North Carolina.

Except for a five-year hiatus during the decade he was the Vice-Chancellor and Dean of the Graduate School at UNC, Lyle remained director of the Thurstone Lab (so-renamed in 1977) until his retirement in 1992. During that time he was formal or informal mentor to dozens of graduate students who became a large part of quantitative psychology in the past fifty years.

In the late 1950s, Lyle, along with Bert F. Green, Jr. and others, attended a workshop on the use of the JOHNNIAC computer at the RAND Corp. in Santa Monica, CA. The workshop was intended to accelerate the use of then new electronic computers in social and psychological research. It had the intended effect; upon his return to Chapel Hill, Lyle organized the acquisition by the Psychometric Lab of the first computer at UNC, a Royal McBee LGP-30, in 1959. That was the first of a series of small and mid-sized computer installations that made the Lab one of the few places in the world where computers were used for psychological data collection and statistical analysis in the 1960s (Jones, Johnson, & Young, 1973). Lyle's personal fascination with the use of computers in psychological research was the topic of his presidential address to the Psychometric Society, "Beyond Babbage" (Jones, 1963).

R. Darrell Bock joined Lyle at the Psychometric Lab in Chapel Hill for a period in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Together they continued Thurstone's work on psychological scaling and used that work as the basis of *The Measurement and Prediction of Judgment and Choice* (Bock & Jones, 1968). That volume served as the capstone for Thurstonian theories of psychological scaling and the measurement of psychological attributes; it also served as the training manual

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for a generation of quantitative psychologists learning to use electronic computers for statistical analysis with complex nonlinear models.

In 1965, Lyle joined with Robert Abelson, Lee Cronbach, and John Tukey to advise Ralph Tyler's Exploratory Committee for Assessing the Progress of Education (ECAPE); their task was to offer advice "on the design of a project to periodically monitor levels of achievement and change in achievement over time of the nation's children and young adults" (Wainer, 2003, p. 392). ECAPE begat the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); the advisory committee became the NAEP Technical Advisory Committee with Tukey as chair. Jones and Tukey continued in their roles with NAEP until 1983, when NAEP's operations shifted from the Education Commission for the States to ETS. Lyle continued to be involved with NAEP throughout the rest of his career; in 2004, he and Ingram Olkin published the definitive history of NAEP, *The Nation's Report Card: Evolution and Perspectives* (Jones & Olkin, 2004).

One thing would lead to another; while Lyle was working with John Tukey on the development of NAEP, Tukey invited Lyle to join the team of statisticians working at NBC election nights to make statistical predictions for the national elections in the United States, calling winners on live TV. One of the photos prominently displayed in Lyle's office showed him in a headset, at a computer terminal, analyzing data as they poured in on election night.

Lyle's record of service is too long to summarize here. Salient features for *Psychometrika* include his term as Managing Editor (1956–1961), and his terms on the Editorial Council (1968–1975) and the Board of Trustees of the Society (1968–1975 and 1979–1982). One of Lyle's greatest sources of pride was his service on several National Research Council (NRC) panels; after his retirement, he was an active member of the NRC Report Review Committee. Lyle worked tirelessly in that role, managing the reviews of a sequence of NRC reports that appeared during the following decade.

Lyle was recipient of many honors; some include his election as president of the Psychometric Society, the Division of Evaluation and Measurement of APA, and the Association of Graduate Schools. He was also elected to membership in the Institute of Medicine and as a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Lyle was an avid bridge and tennis player, and he did like his sporty cars!

Lyle is survived by his daughter and son, Susan Edison Hartley and Tad Whitcomb Jones, and granddaughter Shawna Edison Hartley.

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