
W. Grant Dahlstrom (1922–2006)

William Grant Dahlstrom, 83, died on June 22, 2006, at the Carol Woods Health Center in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, from natural causes. He was born November 1, 1922, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the son of Arthur William Dahlstrom and Elizabeth Baker Dahlstrom. He attended the University of Minnesota, where he received a bachelor's degree in 1944 and a doctoral degree in clinical psychology in 1949.

After teaching at the University of Minnesota, Ohio Wesleyan University, and the University of Iowa, Dahlstrom joined the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) in 1953, initially in the Psychiatry Department. In 1957, he moved to the Psychology Department, where he remained active until his retirement in 1993. During his 40 years in academia in Chapel Hill, he served a five-year term as chairman of the Psychology Department and directed more than 60 doctoral dissertations. In 1987, he was named Kenan Professor of Psychology at UNC, a distinguished professorship as well as a significant honor.

Dahlstrom's professional work focused on the assessment of personality, and he was acknowledged as the world's leading authority on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). He was the author of six books and numerous journal articles in this area. One of his major contributions to the field of personality research involved the integration of the large body of research on the MMPI, which resulted in the development of the three MMPI handbooks, published across a 15-year time period (W. G. Dahlstrom & G. S. Welsh, 1960; W. G. Dahlstrom, G. S. Welsh, & L. E. Dahlstrom, 1972, 1975). These volumes, which he created in close collaboration with Leona, his wife, and George Welsh, his colleague, have served as the major sources of information on the MMPI for many decades.

Eventually, it became clear that the MMPI would benefit from a restandardization that used an updated and more representative sample for a norm group. Dahlstrom was a significant contributor to this lengthy and time-consuming process, with his careful and meticulous style and high standards helping to ensure that the project would be a success. The final product of this effort was the creation of the MMPI-2 (J. N. Butcher, W. G. Dahlstrom, J. R. Graham, A. Tellegen, & B. Kaemmer, 1989), which has resulted in the MMPI maintaining its role as the most frequently used self-report personality measure in the field.

With his emphasis on individual differences and respect for all persons, Dahlstrom devoted significant energy to trying to understand the role of ethnicity in individual functioning and personality assessment. His 1986 book on using the MMPI with ethnic minority individuals, *MMPI Patterns of American Minorities*

(University of Minnesota Press), which he completed with David Lachar and Leona, was a major contribution to understanding appropriate and inappropriate applications of the MMPI with minority clients. This interest in ethnicity is seen in Dahlstrom's earlier work as well. In the 1960s, he and Earl Baughman conducted research on achievement and ability in African American and White students in what were then segregated schools in the South. A book based on that work, *Negro and White Children: A Psychological Study in the Rural South* (E. E. Baughman & W. G. Dahlstrom, 1968), was awarded the Anisfield-Wolfe Book Award for Best Contribution to Race Relations of the Year (1968).

Dahlstrom was known for his high and unwavering ethical standards and his balanced perspectives on complex issues. In the 1960s, significant concern was being raised about the use of personality assessment and its invasion into personal privacy. Dahlstrom responded with a thoughtful set of arguments defending the value of personality assessment for optimal and humane treatment planning for individuals experiencing psychological difficulties. In addition to his written views on these issues, he testified before a Congressional hearing into invasion of privacy, contributing a balanced, reasoned perspective on this important and controversial matter.

Dahlstrom lived a full life both inside and outside of academia. His contributions to the field of clinical psychology are widely recognized and, in 1991, he was honored with the American Psychological Association Award for Distinguished Professional Contributions to Knowledge. In 1994, the Society for Personality Assessment honored Dahlstrom with the Bruno Klopfer Distinguished Contribution Award and, in 2007, he was presented with the Marguerite Hertz Award. Clearly, his pioneering role in the development of personality assessment did not go unnoticed. Although these acknowledgements were made to Dahlstrom individually, he consistently commented that they really were given jointly to him and Leona, who served as a colleague, collaborator, companion, and bridge for all of Dahlstrom's major activities. They were widely known as "The Dahlstroms"—a team that not only worked together for decades conducting MMPI research but also built a dune buggy together to enjoy when out of the office.

Dahlstrom's scholarly contributions, leadership, and keen judgment will be missed. Memories of his ever-present smile, welcoming handshake, and support of his colleagues and students will continue to serve as an inspiration and model for many who knew and admired him.

Donald H. Baucom
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill