

IN MEMORIAM
WILLIAM LEE HAYS

William Lee Hays died on December 3, 1995. With his passing, the Department of Educational Psychology, the College of Education, and the entire University community lost an outstanding teacher, a superb administrator, an internationally renowned scholar, and a wise and caring friend.

Bill Hays, son of Walker and Edith Hays, was born in Clarksville, Texas, January 20, 1926. He spent his school days in Greenville, Texas, where he graduated in 1942. He attended Paris Junior College in Paris, Texas, and East Texas State College before obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree (1948) and a Master of Science degree (1949) in psychology and mathematics from North Texas State University. He began teaching mathematics and science in the public schools of Greenville even before receiving his Bachelor of Science degree. On July 23, 1950, he married Palma Jean Van Burkleo, with whom he joyously shared the remainder of his life. They had two children: a daughter, Leeann, and a son, Scott Palmer.

In 1955, Bill obtained a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Michigan. He was an instructor from 1954, and he became an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Michigan in 1957. He enjoyed a distinguished career at Michigan that lasted until 1973. During his tenure at Michigan, in addition to his advancement in academic rank to professor, he held several administrative posts, including graduate chairman of the Department of Psychology; associate dean, and later dean, of the College of Literature, Science, and Arts; and associate vice president for academic affairs.

In 1973, Bill accepted the position of vice president for instruction at the University of Georgia, where he remained until 1977, at which time he came to The University of Texas at Austin as Vice President of Academic Affairs and Professor of Psychology and Educational Psychology. Despite the heavy administrative load, he voluntarily taught a course each semester. In 1979, he returned, full time, to his first love, the classroom. During the following years, he carried full-time teaching loads even as he was lured back into administrative work, first as graduate advisor (1981-1983) and later as department chairman (1984-1993) for the Department of Educational Psychology. In 1982, he was recognized with an Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award, and, in 1985, he was named the Charles H. Spence Centennial Professor in Education.

Bill saw the university as a noble and important mechanism in the search for truth and knowledge. He admired the strengths and purposes of universities. As an administrator, he strove to make the institutions he served fulfill their mission, and he adjusted, to the extent principle would allow, with the procedures, postures, and pretenses he encountered. He cared little for the pomp, more for the circumstance—the traditions that spoke to continuity of the enterprise, its values, and its worth. His love of history was one indication of his sense of tradition and place in time. In his rare free moments he could be found chatting about current events, politics, books, and movies. He was rarely without an opinion, and nothing stood in isolation. He placed every topic, text, and happening in relation to others—he factored and rotated them, he compared and correlated them, and he partialled out the worthy from the unworthy. Being a friend and colleague was both an education and a joy. His wit and sense of humor were legendary and he was particularly adept at self-deprecation.

There can be little doubt that his national and international reputation is substantially traceable largely to a textbook he wrote, Statistics, that was originally published in 1963 and is now in its fifth edition and contains more than one thousand pages. During a period of over thirty years,

he averaged over a hundred citations per year listed in the Social Sciences Citation Index. When his book was published, most statistics textbooks could be roughly classified as texts in applied mathematics or as recipe-type cookbooks.

For students in many social science areas, the mathematical prerequisites for the mathematically oriented texts precluded their use, and almost by default, the cookbook became the norm. Although it is possible to bake a good cake with a good recipe, recipes are meager intellectual fare for the brighter student. In the book that Bill Hays wrote, he managed to find some middle ground that made it possible for a student to learn many of the popular recipes and at the same time to develop an understanding and appreciation of the whole enterprise of inference in the face of uncertainty. He did this by providing a richness of context and by employing a conversational style that neither sacrificed necessary rigor nor insulted the reader. Professor Hays was one of the first to recognize and do something about filling the middle ground. After more than three decades, no one has done it better. This book, his other two books, and over eighty papers and reviews are testimony to the quality and usefulness of his thought.

Bill Hays was the consummate teacher. He taught from his teenage years through his sixties. Through his text, he taught students of psychology and the social sciences the world over and through his presence he taught us, his colleagues. He was a member of as many as fifty dissertation committees, chairing six or eight. He spent uncountable hours with students. He brought to each dissertation committee meeting the technical expertise expected of a world renowned statistician and scholar. His wisdom and unusual common sense were inspired and inspiring. We mourn the silence of his voice and the loss of his wisdom.

Larry R. Faulkner, President
The University of Texas at Austin

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a Special Committee consisting of Professors Earl Jennings (Chairman), Beeman N. Phillips, and Diane L. Schallert.