

In Memoriam - Dr. Erwin Klein

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IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Erwin Klein

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Dr. Erwin Klein on March 14, 2009.

Erwin Klein (1935 - 2009) started his professional life with a law degree from the University of Buenos Aires, followed by a doctorate in economics, Dr. rer. pol. in economics from Kiel and Hamburg, doing his doctoral thesis with Eric Schneider. His specialty area was, broadly speaking, Quantitative Methods: Econometrics and Economic Theory. Erwin was very closely involved with the leftist movement in Argentina, and was a card carrying member of the communist party for some time. He went on to win a scholarship to study economics in Germany. When Juan Peron was overthrown in Argentina and right-wing military dictatorship took over, he decided to come to Dalhousie in 1967, during the time of the heady days of expansion in the Canadian university scene.

While he was a full time faculty member, Erwin went on to simultaneously obtain a MSc in Mathematics at Dalhousie. He started a Mathematical Economics program at the department. He became Full Professor in 1978 and was Chair of the Department from 1983 to 1994. Following his retirement, Erwin and his wife Estelle settled down in Argentina, which had returned to democracy by that time, and during this period he continuously taught as a professor in the graduate program of the Universidad Torcuato di Tella in Buenos Aires until almost the very end.

Erwin's was a complex, interesting and many-faceted personality, above all colourful and engaging. He was a colleague who was highly valued and, as Chair, saw the department through many of the most difficult years of retrenchment. His sensitive political antennae and his skills at coalition building were instrumental in steering the department through difficult times without tearing itself apart. His most significant achievement as Chair, as he saw it, was to steer and oversee the inclusion of Economics within the Faculty of Science during the period when the Faculty of Arts and Science in Dalhousie decided to split into separate Faculties of Science and, what eventually came to be known as, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Erwin was a well-respected and very successful scholar. He authored an advanced

text on mathematics as it relates to economic theory - *Mathematical Methods in Theoretical Economics: Topological and Vector Space Foundations of Economic Analysis*, Academic Press, 1973 - which was very well received (and was very profitable to boot!). He co-authored, with A. C. Thompson of the Mathematics Department at Dalhousie, an exceptionally timely and erudite reference work on the *Theory of Correspondence with Applications to Mathematical Economics*, John Wiley, Interscience, 1984, which still stands as an authoritative work in the field.

Aside from mathematics and mathematical economics, Erwin's major interests were in the philosophy of science and in model theory. He worked on these areas as a Fellow of the Institute of International Economic Studies at the University of Stockholm, when early in his career he was awarded a Canada Council grant, and then again at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences at the University of Uppsala. His interest in the Philosophy of Science made him an ideal person to become involved with the creation of, and participation in, the teaching of the DISP (Dalhousie Integrated Science Program).

Erwin was a raconteur, full of funny anecdotes and had a keen sense of humour; never a dull moment around him. Nonetheless, for all his bonhomie, he was truly an old fashioned Argentine gentleman, with quite a bit of the Southern old world charm. He was very fond of the outdoors and spent a lot of time with his family and friends enjoying the outdoors. He had a special fondness for Cape Breton. When he went back to Argentina, even though he enjoyed very much the atmosphere of the elegant, stylish, glittering, culturally lively Buenos Aires, with its smoky cafes of antiquity and restaurants in every corner which he much appreciated, and although he taught at the Universidad Torcuato di Tella, he made his true home in a wild region in the north of Argentina in the middle of a mountain pass, a bit reminiscent of rural Cape Breton where he once planned to build a cottage and perhaps spend his retirement years.

Erwin leaves his wife of many years, Estelle Hammengren-Klein, his daughter Veronica (Montreal), his step-daughters Rachel (United States), and Maria (Sweden).