In memoriam Klaus F. Riegel

November 6, 1925-July 3, 1977

It is with great sorrow that we note the death of Klaus F. Riegel on July 3, 1977 at his home in Ann Arbor at the age of 51. Klaus wrote in a recent paper that no individual can work in isolation from the efforts of countless others, so that a discussion of work and labor necessarily converges upon the topic of social cooperation and, ultimately, of love. It was in this spirit that Klaus interacted with his many students, who will remember him as a kind, patient, and generous teacher, always willing to listen and encourage. His office, as well as his home, were havens for several generations of students, who found their widely divergent ideas not only tolerated but also clarified and strengthened. In the scholarly and sociable atmosphere which Klaus created, they learned much both from him and with him. His colleagues will recall his unrelenting energy in contributing to the growth of developmental psychology and in motivating others with his enthusiasm and insights. Many will regard it as an honor to have entered into dialogue with him.

After earning his MA at the University of Minnesota in 1955 and his PhD at the University of Hamburg in 1958, Klaus Riegel spent a postdoctoral year as a Visiting Scientist at the National Institute of Health. He joined the faculty of the Department of Psychology at the University of Michigan in 1959, where he was a participant in the Psycholinguistics Program, the Institute of Gerontology, and the Center for Human Growth and Development. He was the author or editor of many books, and a regular contributor to the journal literature in his several areas of interest, including the development and assessment of intellectual functions of the aged, psycholinguistics, and the history and philosophy of the social sciences. A member of many professional organizations, Klaus was elected as a fellow in both the Gerontological Society and the American Psychological Association. He also served on the Executive Committee of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development, and as president of the Psychological and Social Sciences Section of the Gerontological Society. In memoriam Klaus F. Riegel
1976, the Gerontological Society recognized Klaus Riegel’s contributions by presenting him with the Robert W. Kleemeier Award. He also contributed greatly to the growth and increasing eminence of Human Development, as its editor from 1970 onward.

In recent years, Klaus Riegel labored unceasingly towards the formulation of a dialectical psychology, through his own writing and lecturing and also through annual conferences held successively at Rochester, Toronto, Cape Cod, and, in 1977, at Shimer College. Dialectical psychology, as he perceived it, focuses upon the understanding of activities and changes rather than static traits and balanced equilibria, and recognizes the necessary interdependence of developmental changes in the individual with historical changes in the society. Klaus’s conceptualization is an unusual and a significant one for psychology, emphasizing that dialectics can be and ought to be applied to the discipline itself. In this way, a history of interpretations in psychology is described, appropriate to the succession of historical changes in the society. Thus, Klaus’s work has set psychology on a new and unpredictable course, by helping us to become aware of our own development as a discipline.

From a dialectical perspective it can be seen that Klaus’s efforts should not endure unchallenged and without further interpretations, for this would mean that no one had answered the dialogue which he initiated in his writings. Rather, Klaus’s work provides the context from which new and even more radical interpretations in psychology will be constructed. The premature death of Klaus Riegel is a great loss to his many devoted students and colleagues and to the discipline.
Scientific Contributions


In memoriam Klaus F. Riegel


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1966 Riegel, K.F.: Cross-cultural comparisons of denotative meaning; in General problems of

1967


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In memoriam Klaus F. Riegel

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1975


In memoriam Klaus F. Riegel

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In Press Riegel, K.F.: Dialectical psychologists unite. You have nothing to fear but the dogmatism of
The Members of the Editorial Board and Publisher of ‘Human Development’ heard with great sorrow of the death of Prof. Klaus Riegel. Since he joined the Editorial Committee and took over the responsibility as the Managing Editor, he contributed very much to the progress of this Journal. His emphasis on theoretical contributions gave a very distinct character to the Journal and made it a well-known instrument for the exchange of information in the field of behavioral development.
His efforts and achievements will always be remembered.
Editorial Board and Publisher of ‘Human Development’