

## **Kenneth L. Dion (1944-2004)**

---

***Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto***

***Research Associate, Centre for Urban and Community Studies***

***Submitted to CUCS by Professor Dion in June 2003.***

***See the Universality of Toronto's "In memoriam" below.***

Kenneth Dion teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in social psychology, focusing on attitudes, intergroup relations, relationships, and research methodology. His research interests include the social psychology of prejudice and discrimination, immigration and acculturation, ethnicity, group and intergroup processes, as well as interpersonal relationships. In 2001, he was awarded the Donald O. Hebb award from the Canadian Psychological Association for distinguished contributions to psychology as a science.

His current research includes exploring the "ultimate attribution error" – that is, the tendency for members of majority or dominant groups, especially prejudiced individuals, to discount and explain away the achievements of oppressed group members – in collaboration with Karen K. Dion. This research documents the acceptance of intergroup inequalities as a key individual difference correlate of the ultimate attribution error toward racial minorities and seniors, respectively.

Other recent collaborations include the Housing New Canadians project and the Photographing Your Identity project in collaboration with Twila Tardif and Taryn Tang. The latter is a cross-cultural study conducted in Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Toronto that explores autophotography as a way to explore aspects of individuals' personal and cultural identity.

Professor Dion is an associate editor for the *European Journal of Social Psychology* and a consulting editor for the *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. He is a fellow of the American Psychological Association, the American Psychological Society, and the Canadian Psychological Association. He is cross-appointed to the Joseph L. Rotman School of Management Studies as well as the Centre for Urban and Community Studies. He also serves as a member of the programme committee for an interdisciplinary Master's Programme in Ethnicity, Immigration and Pluralism Studies at the University of Toronto.

Professor Dion earned his B.A. in psychology at the University of New Hampshire and his Ph.D. in psychology at the University of Minnesota.

### ***Recent Publications***

**Prejudice, racism, and discrimination**, in T. Millon & M. J. Lerner, eds., *Personality and Social Psychology*, Volume 5 of the *Handbook of Psychology*, I. Weiner, ed.-in-chief, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2003, pp. 507-536.

**The social psychology of perceived prejudice and discrimination**, *Canadian Psychology* 43, 2002, pp. 1-10.

**Immigrants' perceptions of housing discrimination in Toronto: The Housing New Canadians Project**, *The Journal of Social Issues* 57, 2001, pp. 523-539.

**Prejudice, racism, and discrimination**, in I. Weiner ed., *Complete Handbook of Psychology: Personality and Social Psychology*, Volume 5. New York: Wiley, in press.

**Gender and relationships**, in R. Unger, ed., *Handbook of the Psychology of Women and Gender*, Chapter 17. New York: Wiley, 2001, pp. 256-71. Co-author: K. K. Dion

**Canada**, in A. Kazdin, ed., *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, Volume 2. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 5-12.

**Group cohesion: From "field of forces" to multidimensional construct**, *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 4 (Special Issue: One Hundred Years of Groups Research), 2000, pp. 7-26.

**Gender and acculturation in relation to traditionalism: Perceptions of self and parents among Chinese students**, *Sex Roles* 41, 1999, pp. 17-29. Co-author: T. Tang.

**Advances in psychological science: social, personal, and cultural aspects**, Volume 1. Hove, England: Psychology Press, 1998. Co-editors: J. Adair, D. Bélanger.

**Racial prejudice and stereotype activation**, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 24, 1998, pp. 407-416. Co-authors: K. Kawakami, J. Dovidio.

**Acculturation and immigration: Social psychological perspectives**, in D. Taylor, ed., *Diversity with Justice and Harmony: A Social Psychological Analysis*, Chapter 2. Ottawa, Ontario: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1996, pp. 6-51.

**Ethnicity and perceived discrimination in Toronto: Another look at the personal/group discrimination discrepancy**, *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science* 28 (Special Issue on Ethnic Relations in a Multicultural Society), 1996, pp. 203-13. Co-author: K. Kawakami.

## In memoriam: Professor Kenneth Dion

April 25, 2005

Professor Kenneth Dion of psychology, a well-known and respected social psychologist, died Nov. 16 of a heart attack. He had just turned 60.

Born in Laconia, N.H., Dion attended the University of New Hampshire, graduating summa cum laude with a BA in psychology. After graduating Dion spent a year at the State University of New York at Buffalo before transferring to the social psychology program at the University of Minnesota where he received his PhD in 1970, the same year he joined the psychology department at U of T.

Dion's principal area of interest was the study of prejudice and inter-group relations. His groundbreaking research in the 1970s on prejudice from the viewpoint of the target was a radical departure from the prevailing research at the time — which focused on the perpetrators of discrimination — and effectively turned the study of prejudice on its head, setting a new agenda for the way prejudice would be examined in the years to come. His concern for understanding the effects of prejudice and trying to identify



**Professor Kenneth Dion, 1944 - 2004**

personal and collective resources to combat it continued throughout his academic career. At the time of his death he was involved in two collaborative research projects at U of T, examining the impact of prejudice and discrimination in diverse community contexts. He also made significant contributions to several other areas of social psychological research including group cohesion, immigration and acculturation and interpersonal relationships. Within the literature on close relationships, the study on romantic love he co-authored with his wife and colleague, Professor Karen Dion of psychology, for example, is considered a classic.

For his outstanding contributions, Dion received the Donald O. Hebb Award in 2001 from the Canadian Psychological Association for distinguished contributions to psychology as a science. As well he was a fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association, the American Psychological Association and the American Psychological Society.

All through his career, Dion was known for his generosity and willingness to share his knowledge and expertise not only with students but with colleagues, serving as a mentor and friend. "Although Ken was a senior, well-respected researcher, he treated everyone, especially junior colleagues, as if they too were important," said Professor Vicki Esses of the University of Western Ontario, a colleague and friend, at a memorial service held at Hart House Jan. 29.

Dion was also a major contributor to psychology outside of his research program. Among other commitments, he was a member of the board of directors of the Canadian Psychological Association and the Humanities and Social Sciences Federation for several

years and early in his career he served as associate editor of the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. Most recently he was associate editor of the *European Journal of Social Psychology*.

"The incisive critiques and insights drawn from his vast knowledge of the social sciences will be sorely missed by both students and colleagues as will his affable personality, his wry humour and the generous support he so unselfishly offered," longtime friends and colleagues John Adair and Brian Earn wrote in an obituary for *Canadian Psychology*. "He set a high standard for personal and professional conduct as an academic and as a psychologist for the discipline that he loved and lived."

---

Department of Public Affairs, University of Toronto, 21 King's College Circle  
Toronto, ON, Canada M5S 3J3  
Tel: (416) 978-8638, Fax: (416) 978-1632  
Web: [www.news.utoronto.ca](http://www.news.utoronto.ca)  
Email: [news.events@utoronto.ca](mailto:news.events@utoronto.ca)