

OBITUARY STATEMENT AUTHORIZED BY THE WATZLAWICK FAMILY:**Paul Watzlawick, PhD, Dies, Philosopher-Family Therapy Pioneer was 85**

Paul Watzlawick, a pioneer in family therapy, system theory and constructivist philosophy, died Saturday, March 31, 2007 at his home in Palo Alto, CA. He was 85 years old.

He died of heart arrest, a spokesperson at the Stanford University Medical Center said. In late 2006, primarily due to ill health related to age, after 46 years he gave up his office at the Mental Research Institute (MRI) entered into full time retirement. Dr Watzlawick donated his body to science. There will be no services held.

Dr. Watzlawick's contributions to system theory and family therapy were many, widely read, and influential. Internationally known for his contributions to Communication Theory and the practice of Brief Therapy, and in the fields of cybernetics applied to human interaction and constructivist theory, he was author of 22 books translated into more than 80 languages, including *The Pragmatics of Human Communication* (1967); *Change – Principals of problem formation and problem resolution* (1974); *The Language of Change* (1977); *The Invented Reality* (1990); and *How real is real?* (1976).

Dr Watzlawick received his Doctorate in 1949 from the University of Venice (Cà Foscari) in Philosophy and Modern Languages. Trained at the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich, since November 1960 he served as a member of the staff at the Mental Research Institute (MRI). At the time of his death he was a Senior Research Fellow at the Mental

Research Institute (MRI) a founding member of the MRI Brief Therapy Center team, and Professor Emeritus at Stanford University School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

Among the best known figures in the fields of communication and constructivist theory, family and brief therapy, Dr. Watzlawick was the recipient of numerous awards and honors including the Prix Psych 19719 Paris; Distinguished Achievement Award, American Family Therapy Association, 1981; Outstanding Teacher Award, Psychiatric Residency Class 1981, Stanford Univ. Med. Center; the Paracelsus Ring 1987, City of Villach (Austria); Lifetime Achievement Award, Milton H. Erickson Foundation, 1988; Distinguished Professor for Contributions to Family Therapy Award, American Association of Marriage & Family Therapy, 1982; Medal for Meritorious Service, City of Vienna, 1990; Doctor honoris causa, University of Liege (Belgium), 1992; Doctor honoris causa University of Bordeaux-III, 1992; Fonorary Medal, Province of Carinthia (Austria), 1993; Author's Award (Nonfiction), Donauland Book Association, Vienna, 1993.

An extraordinarily humble, kind, and generous human being, he will be missed by the thousands of therapists and philosophers throughout the world whom he mentored. His wife, Vera; stepdaughters Yvonne and Joanne; sister, Maria Wünsch and nephew Doctor Harald Wünsch of Villach Austria, and nieces and other relatives survive him.

Wendel A. Ray, PhD
Professor of Family System Theory
The University of Louisiana at Monroe
And
Senior Research Fellow, Mental Research Institute (MRI)

A Selected Bibliography

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