



Robert Rosenthal: March 2, 1933–January 5, 2024

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How to cite: Stewart, R. A. C., & Krivan, S. L. (2024). Robert Rosenthal: March 2, 1933–January 5, 2024. *Social Behavior and Personality: An international journal*, 52(3), e13881

We note, with sadness, the passing of Dr. Robert Rosenthal, a longtime member of the Board of Consulting Editors of *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*. SBP's Editor-in-Chief, Dr Robert A. C. Stewart was privileged to have Dr. Rosenthal as one of his professors while a graduate student at Harvard University in 1964–1965. He well remembers Dr. Rosenthal's easy, inviting manner as a person. Having chosen to join our Board in the early years of the journal, Dr. Rosenthal was to remain, over the decades, a valued member of our advisory team until his death early this year.

Keywords

Robert Rosenthal, obituary

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A native of Germany, Dr. Rosenthal and his parents relocated to the United States during World War II, settling first in New York and then in Los Angeles. His academic career began at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he received his bachelor's degree in psychology in 1953 and doctorate in psychology in 1956. From there, he taught at the University of North Dakota, Ohio State University, and Boston University. In 1963, he took up a short-term, nontenured contract in the clinical psychology department at Harvard University, and a year later was offered a tenured position there, in the field of social psychology. Remaining at Harvard for the bulk of his academic career, he resigned his position in 1999 and moved to the University of California, Riverside, where he continued teaching and researching until his retirement in 2018.

While his initial training and work focused on clinical psychology, particularly schizophrenia, in the late 1950s Dr. Rosenthal developed an interest in social psychology. He gained renown as an expert in nonverbal communication and is possibly best known for his publications on the Pygmalion effect (i.e., interpersonal expectancy, also known as the Rosenthal effect), according to which people are treated differently when there is the expectation of them performing or not performing certain behaviors. Contemporaneously, Dr. Rosenthal put forward the concept of experimenter bias, using himself as a research subject to test whether the way in which he posed questions and behaved toward certain students had a significant influence on their achievement. Of note, he also pioneered the technique of meta-analysis along with statistician Gene Glass, which transformed scientific research by combining studies to compound probability.

His book, *Pygmalion in the Classroom* (Rosenthal & JacobsOn, 1968) is generally regarded as one of psychology's most inspiring books, as well as being one of its most controversial. The book sprang from research areas that had captured

Dr. Rosenthal's attention: self-fulfilling prophecies, experimenter bias, and interpersonal expectations.

The author of dozens of journal articles, books, and chapters, Dr. Rosenthal received a number of national awards, including election to Fellow status in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2009), the Gold Medal Award for Life Achievement in the Science of Psychology of the American Psychological Foundation (2003), the Distinguished Scientific Award for Applications of Psychology (American Psychological Association, 2002), the Distinguished Scientific Contributions Award (American Psychological Association Division 5, 2002), the James McKeen Cattell Award (Association for Psychological Science, 2001), the Distinguished Scientist Award (Society of Experimental Psychology, 1996), the American Association for the Advancement of Science Prize for Behavioral Science Research (1993, with Nalini Ambady), the Donald Campbell Award (Society for Personality and Social Psychology, 1988), and the American Association for the Advancement of Science Socio-Psychological Prize (1960, with Kermit Fode). In addition to these achievements, he was a Guggenheim Fellow, Senior Fulbright Scholar, a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, served as Co-Chair of the American Psychological Association Task Force on Statistical Inference, and was named one of the 100 most eminent psychologists of the 20th century (Haggblom et al., 2002).

Dr. Rosenthal was predeceased by his wife, MaryLu Clayton, who died in 2010. He is survived by his daughters, Ginny Rosenthal Mahasin and Roberta Rosenthal Hawkins, son, David Clayton Rosenthal, and six grandchildren.

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