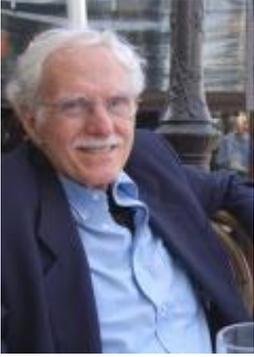

Thomas K. Landauer



Tom Landauer died on March 26th after a long illness at age 81. Tom was born in Highland Park, Illinois to Robert and Ruth Landauer. He was one of three children (Robert Landauer, Jr. and Joseph Landauer predeceased him). Tom's family spent summers at the YMCA of the Rockies camp, which fostered Tom's lifelong love of hiking and skiing. Tom received his undergraduate degree from the University of Colorado. There he abandoned his mother's dream for him of becoming a medical doctor and became intrigued with psychology and anthropology. Tom completed his Ph.D. at Harvard in Social Relations in 1960. He became a psychology professor and taught at Dartmouth, Stanford, Princeton, and the University of Colorado, where he was an emeritus professor. In 1969 he took a job at Bell Laboratories in the basic research area where he began one of the first research groups in human-computer interaction. Tom was a gifted, creative thinker and teacher. He made major contributions to experimental psychology, anthropology, and cognitive science. Tom spent 25 years of his career at Bell Laboratories and later Bellcore in New Jersey. With several colleagues he invented Latent Semantic Analysis, which mathematically models people's knowledge of words and their semantic interrelationships, and has had a

major impact on computational language modeling. His personal genius was used to mentor many younger colleagues, who have gone on to have illustrious careers in psychology, cognitive science and research and development management. Tom believed cognitive theories should be turned into inventions that improved human learning. As an example, his seminal work on Latent Semantic Analysis resulted in a technique to automatically score written text, such as essays. He founded a company to turn research in language into educational technology products. That company (Knowledge Analysis Technologies) was purchased by Pearson plc in 2004 and continues to thrive. Tom worked as chief scientist until 2013. His wife, Lynn was president of the company until 2013. Tom is survived by his three daughters and their spouses, Katherine and John Vernacchia (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), Deborah Landauer (Burlington, Vermont, former spouse. Thomas Kafka), and Elizabeth Landauer of Brooklyn, New York. Tom and his first wife, Cynthia Almy Josephs (now deceased) had three grandchildren, Alexander Landauer, Orion Kafka, and Matthew Vernacchia. Tom is survived by his sister-in-law, Beth Mooney (Cleveland, Ohio), and his wife, Lynn Streeter of Boulder, Colorado. Contributions to the Grameen Foundation or Family Hospice of Boulder would be welcomed.

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