

M. E. BITTERMAN

Morton Edward Bitterman, professor emeritus at the University of Hawaii, known by friends and colleagues as "Jeff," died at the age of 90 surrounded by family and friends on May 10, 2011 in San Francisco, California. Born in Brooklyn, New York, in the same house as his mother, and a graduate of New York University, with an M.A. from Columbia University and Ph.D. from Cornell University, Bitterman was an experimental psychologist who was internationally-recognized for developing the methodological and theoretical foundations of the comparative analysis of animal behavior. His academic homes were Cornell University, the University of Texas at Austin, the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, Bryn Mawr College where he chaired the Department of Psychology, the University of South Florida, and the University of Hawaii where he served as Director of the Békésy Laboratory of Neurobiology. Over a period of 68 years he published extensively and was an editor of the American Journal of Psychology, the Journal of Animal Learning and Behavior, and the Journal of Comparative Psychology. He was a recipient of the Humboldt Prize from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation of Germany and was a Fulbright professor in Argentina, Germany, and Yugoslavia. Bitterman's visiting academic appointments took him to Mexico, Brazil, the Bahamas, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Japan, Taiwan, Canada, Italy, France, Poland, Russia, and the United Kingdom. He was a grantee of NSF, the Office of Naval Research, NIMH, the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. He was awarded the University of Hawaii Regents' Medal for Excellence in Research in 1992 and was a Fellow of the Society of Experimental Psychologists, receiving its Howard Crosby Warren Medal in 1997. He was honored by the American Psychological Association in 2001 with the D. O. Hebb Distinguished Scientific Contributions Award and he received the Ernest R. Hilgard Award for Lifetime Career Contributions to General Psychology in 2004.

Bitterman is survived by his devoted wife of 43 years, Mary Gayle Foley Bitterman, three daughters, Joan (Keith Morrison), Ann, and Sarah Fleming, and two grandchildren, Johanna and Jeffrey. He also is survived by his brother-in-law, California Superior Court Judge Robert M. Foley, and by a niece and several nephews.

Bitterman was known for his academic rigor, intellectual curiosity and honesty, elegant writing, discriminating taste, and lifelong commitment to his students in North and South America, Europe, and Asia. His word was his bond and he was a faithful friend. He believed with Goethe that nothing was more characteristic of man than his ability to live on hope and he lauded those who repaired the world. "He was a man, take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again." Family members will scatter his ashes in the Pacific Ocean. May he rest in peace. Donations may be made to Project Dana, 2720 Nakookoo Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826.