

**Professor Tom Keenoy:
November 1943
– January 2019**

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We lost a great scholar, kindly friend, and a mentor with boundless curiosity and searing intellect, when Tom Keenoy died on January 15.

I have a fond memory of Tom when he was here in Australia in the early 1990s as we began our co-authored textbook. To give him some of the flavour of Australia, we took him to the Sydney Royal Easter Show. It was the early days of mission statements in Australia. In the Hall of Industries, government and private organisations displayed their mission statements along with their products and free pencils. Ever the scholar with a fine delight in subtexts and symbols, Tom was delighted, and for the next hour or more, he photographed them all, much to the bemusement of the locals.

Tom was of Irish heritage, grew up in England, and spent much of his working life in Cardiff, Wales. In 1967, he graduated with first class honours in B.A. (Administration), at University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, and was later awarded D.Phil. (Oxon.). He then worked for some years as a professional scholar in various British government organisations, including the Office of Manpower Economics and the Commission on Industrial Relations, before becoming a full-time academic in Department of Industrial Relations and Management Studies, University College, Cardiff (later incorporated into Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University) in 1972. From there Tom went to King's College where he was promoted to Reader in 1997. In 2005, Tom was appointed Professor of Management at University of Leicester, and was later made Emeritus Professor at the same university. In 2008, he returned to Cardiff Business School as an Honorary Professor. Tom was also appointed to numerous visiting fellowships at major institutions in Europe, and, in 1992 at the University of Wollongong, NSW Australia.

Tom was perhaps most characterised by unstoppable curiosity, a relentless perfectionism, and a delight in the absurdities of the world. He brought these attributes to his scholarship, which not only meant photographing *all* those mission statements, but also in questioning everything, and seeking feedback and debating ideas wherever possible. He worked on, and drew on some wonderful analogies in his efforts to understand what, to him, were the increasingly arcane worlds of employment, business and political discourse. For example, his use of holograms to understand human resource management discourse, and, latterly, the Higgs-Boson particles to explore organisational discourse and materiality, attest to Tom's intellectual breadth and capacity for critical theory and scholarship.

Tom also sought to bring those attributes to researching and questioning wider society, because he could not separate his scholarship from his ideals and his apprehensions

about social justice, inequality, and the quality of public politics. As well as publishing in top theoretical / critical academic publications, Tom also worked with unionists and other activists to provide insights in broader publications, particularly on issues of work and alternatives in the management of the employment relationship.

Like a large number of colleagues and acquaintances across the world, I learned a great deal from Tom, who was unstinting (if sometimes unrelentingly rigorous) in his kindly academic mentoring. This kind of collegiality is rare, and was another notable attribute.

Tom is survived by his wife Judy, and children Kevin and Maeve and their partners and families. He was deeply devoted to them and always very proud of them. We will all miss Tom Keenoy deeply. He enriched all of our lives.

Di Kelly
University of Wollongong, Australia