

IN MEMORIA

DEOBOLD B. VAN DALEN (1911-1995)

Bruce L. Bennett

Deobold B. Van Dalen died on June 29, 1995 after a protracted illness at his home in Oakland, California.

Van Dalen was born in Flint, Michigan in 1911 and attended the local schools. During the Depression he worked in automobile plants for two years to earn money for college, but was unable to use it because of bank closures. However, he used odd jobs to finance baccalaureate and master's education at Central Michigan University, and the University of Iowa. He earned his doctorate at the University of Michigan under the supervision of Dr. Elmer Mitchell. Van Dalen taught at high schools in Mt. Clemens and Grosse Pointe, Michigan for five years before enlisting in the Navy for four years as a welfare and ship's service officer. From 1946 until 1965 he taught at the University of Pittsburgh, before moving to the University of California at Berkeley as chair of the Physical Education Department for eight years. He continued teaching until he retired in 1978.

Van Dalen made many significant early contributions to the literature of physical education, sport, and education. He was author or co-author of over twenty books, including four editions of Understanding Educational Research and two editions of A World History of Physical Education (co-authored with Elmer D. Mitchell and Bruce L. Bennett). He served as consulting editor for a McGraw-Hill series on health, physical education, and recreation, and for several professional journals, including an associate editorship for the Research Quarterly.

Van Dalen and his wife, Marcella, survived two major earthquakes -- the 1975 quake in Guatemala and the Loma Prieta quake in Oakland in 1988. In 1991 their home burned to the ground in the Oakland fires.

The last ten years of his life were devoted to his courageous battle to combat a serious stroke and physical limitations. He took up painting and walked a mile a day -- walking up to ten days before his death. Marcella has shared with him a life of complete dedication to the physical education profession, and provided loving care during the final difficult years of his life.

Bruce L. Bennett
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