



Robert Bryan Payne (1914-1996)

Bryan Payne, as he was best known, was born on October 23, 1914 in Mt. Sterling, IL. He died on May 10, 1996 in Athens, GA. His father was George M. Payne and his mother's maiden name was Iva Tipton Bryan. Both earned college degrees at Maryville College in Maryville, TN, and Bryan's father earned a M.A. degree in English literature from Princeton University. Bryan's father served in the Presbyterian ministry. His mother died when Bryan was 8 months old, and his father deemed it best that he be raised at least temporarily by his Grandparents Payne in Maryville, TN.

Bryan attended the first four years of elementary school in Maryville. At that time his newly remarried father came for him to live with him and Bryan's step-mother in Winchester, ID where George Payne was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. Bryan graduated from Winchester High School and enrolled at Maryville College to study journalism, but in his junior year he switched to experimental psychology and graduated in 1936 with the A. B. degree. He enrolled in graduate school at Indiana University and continued his studies in psychology where he was influenced greatly by behaviorism in general and Clark Hull's theoretical approach in particular. He earned the M.A. degree in 1938 and the PhD in 1942.

Bryan entered military service in 1941, and served as a Research Psychologist in the U. S. Army Air Corps performing a range of duties related to aviation medicine from 1941-1949. From 1949-1957, Bryan was a Research Psychologist and the Head of the Department of Psychology at the USAF School of Aviation Medicine, Randolph AFB Texas where he supervised a staff of 10 Research Psychologists and 30 laboratory assistants. He also taught general and applied psychology to physicians undergoing training as flight surgeons. He continued to serve in related capacities at Ladd AFB and Brooks AFB until 1968, when he joined the faculty of the Department of Psychology at

UGA with the rank of Professor. At UGA he affiliated with the Experimental Psychology Program where he specialized in teaching learning courses and in conducting research on the effects of variables such as age, sex, etc., on motor learning. He supervised 10 M. S. degree and 8 PhD degree students.

Bryan served one year (1977-1977) as Acting Department Head. He was well regarded and respected by faculty and students. He was a candidate for the Headship, but the department was enduring significant inter-program conflicts, centering on the Clinical Psychology Program, that predated Bryan's Acting Headship, and the Dean believed that it was best to bring in an experienced Department Head from outside UGA to try to restore the peace.

Bryan's publications included 60 articles in refereed psychology journals, 31 refereed USAF Aerospace Medical Research Reports, and 5 chapters in books. Bryan was a consummate gentleman of the old school and always ready to assist colleagues who so requested. This writer was very appreciative of Bryan's essential statistical advice in one my early publications. This biographical sketch will end with this writer's favorite Bryan Payne quotation

“A world of speculation would be well swapped for a single, simple fact.”

R. B. Payne

A more complete and informative *autobiographical* essay by R. B. Payne that includes a copy of his CV and copies of most of his publications may be found in the Psychology Department section of the University of Georgia Archives in the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, a subdivision of the University of Georgia Libraries.

Biographical Sketch by Roger K. Thomas
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