

## Stanley Ivan Dodson: Distinguished Ecologist and Mentor and Friend (1944-2009)



Stanley Ivan Dodson

Stanley I. Dodson passed away after a tragic bicycle accident on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009, leaving the world and scientific community to deal with the loss of a great man and mind, whose contributions to freshwater ecology are legendary. He will always be remembered for all his contributions to the study of community ecology of zooplankton and population ecology of *Daphnia*. We will always remember Stanley for his keen insight, generosity, positive outlook, and ability to guide without force but with respect and love. We will miss witnessing his ability to draw elegant conclusions from simple experiments, and how he managed to enjoy every day of his life. He was an incredible man, amazing mentor and loyal friend. We were blessed to have had the opportunity to be mentored by him and share his friendship.

We met Stanley long after the bell bottoms and long hair were gone, yet it was impossible to miss the fact he had grown up during an era which strongly believed in peace and love. It was easy to quickly realize you had just made a friend soon after meeting him. Most of us knew of him from his well known contributions to ecology, but we signed up to be mentored by him because of his love for science and teaching. From the moment you entered his life, you realized Stanley would help you

reach your potential, and would allow you to follow your passion without ever imposing his own. He treated our ideas with respect and helped us clarify our goals, in and outside the laboratory. He was never selfish or arrogant, and this allowed for easy exchange of ideas between mentor and student.

Stanley was a generous mentor and colleague. Throughout his career he shared his insights and time with many graduate students, undergraduate students, and scientists. His kind and helpful demeanor allowed him to provide effective guidance to a variety of individuals at all levels of their training and education: from a brief advisory visit with a prospective undergraduate to an extended residency with him in his lab, he always had time to teach. This generous nature and open policy led to collaborations across the globe and helped him and his graduate students find success in multiple niches of the professional world. You will find Dodson students contributing to scientific endeavors at the highest levels of academia, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and business. Stanley's contributions to teaching and mentorship were intrinsic to his approach to science. Stanley impressed upon his students to work with others, and encouraged his students to think about research from different perspectives and develop elegant conceptual hypotheses, as he did in his own career. Being part of Stanley's laboratory was a doorway into learning about all aspects of nature. As easily as he could teach us about zooplankton and all their beauty, time in his office could also turn to discussions of natural history of other organisms. A lesson on orchids could easily begin after being lured into his office by the smell of chocolate (given off by his chocolate *Oncidium*), one of the many plants he kept throughout his office. From the smallest antennules, swimming behavior, induced morphology, toxicological effect, to patterns and controls of zooplankton species richness on a continental scale, Stanley Dodson was a free thinker with an obsession to explain the patterns of nature. Stanley never minded taking the time to enlighten you with his knowledge (See Havel 2009 for an overview of Stanley's scientific contributions). Although Stanley was terribly humble and modest, his contributions to the limnological world are sublime and will endure for some time to come.

Stanley always had an easy smile and an occasional proclivity for the far-out. A regular morning occurrence at Birge Hall was to hear Stanley sing out a booming "Good Morning" or dancing "what a beautiful day" to less than wakeful graduate student smiles, this after

cycling more than 13 miles into work. After arriving he would often tend to the first order of business, making a good cup of tea, which he offered to everyone around. He would often have lunch with his students out past the windowsill on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor ledge of Birge Hall. You could find him leading a class of budding ecologists kneeling face down in the grass observing the diverse fauna and flora of the Bascom Hill lawn in the afternoon. In the field you may have found him standing on his head on the top of a mountain, leading a class of in a tai chi crane movement, or staring into a jar of zooplankton. If you were lucky enough to spend time with Stanley you understood that there was always explicable purpose to the unconventional exercises Stanley so openhandedly shared.

In celebration of Stanley's life and legacy John Havel, Howie Riessen and Charles Ramcharan are co-hosting a special Dodson tribute session at ASLO/NABS next June in Santa Fe (June 6-11, 2010). And in

addition there will be a special Dodson issue of *Hydrobiologia* for later in 2010 (contributions are due June 1<sup>st</sup>); other editors for the special issue are Henri Dumont, Piet Spaak, and Ramesh Gulati, and Koen Martens is the regular editor in chief.

We thank you Stanley Dodson for all of the gifts you have given.

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#### REFERENCE:

John Havel. 2009. Stanley Ivan Dodson: a distinguished ecologist, naturalist, and teacher. *Hydrobiologia*.