

In Memoriam

Professor Jan Ekecrantz (1940–2007)

Jan Ekecrantz, Professor of Media and Communication Studies, Stockholm University, died on July 28, 2007 after struggling with cancer for several months. During his illness he continued to work. He disliked being pitied and was anxious not to be treated as if he were seriously ill. Therefore the news of his death was to many of his friends and colleagues unexpected.

Jan Ekecrantz was a member of the faculty at the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication (JMK) at Stockholm University since the mid - 1970s. He had held the professorship in Media and Communication Studies since 1999 and was also Associate Professor of Journalism. During his entire career in the department he was actively involved in all levels of the programs in both Journalism and in Media and Communication Studies. In his research, he consistently brought out the close ties between the two subjects and insisted that research have relevance for the undergraduate program and for students' careers as journalists and media professionals.

Jan was genuinely international, with a continually expanding network of contacts throughout the world. He was frequently asked to serve as reviewer and examiner in many different capacities, including many dissertations and faculty appointments throughout the Nordic Countries. His popularity for these different accomplishments was undoubtedly due to the breadth of his knowledge and the fact that he was extremely well read, combined with his positive and critical attitude and basic humility in the face of these tasks. Jan was as well versed in the classic literature of the field as in the latest theories, and was quick to understand their implications for the future.

In his research Jan has over the years traversed many broad fields. His work has dealt with such diverse areas as journalism's construction of reality and the media situation in contemporary China, in Brazil and in Russia. In recent years his primary interest lay in processes of globalisation.

In the Jubilee Issue of the *Nordicom Review* (July 2007), Jan contributes with an article entitled 'Media and Communication Studies Going Global'. Here he stresses a new *raison d'être* for cross-disciplinarity since globalization means increased complexity and for Jan this included a focus on global inequalities and social transformation. He was deeply involved in planning the IAMCR congress to be held in Stockholm in summer 2008 and had himself proposed the conference theme, 'Media and Global Divides', well

aware of the fact that there are winners and losers as a result of globalization phenomena. His guidelines through the whole of his career were to identify power domination and to deconstruct the role of media and communication in preserving unfair and undemocratic conditions.

All of us who have had the privilege to work with him have benefited from his knowledge and his intellectual way of discussing scholarly questions as well as more daily personal matters. If you asked him for his opinion you could most of the time expect at least two answers, which had the very good and inspiring result that the discussions were always ongoing.

It goes without saying that we as his colleagues and friends at JMK and Stockholm University miss him enormously and that many of the readers of the *Nordicom Review* share this feeling.

Professor *Karin Becker*, Journalism and Visual Communication

Professor *Håkan Hvitfelt*, Journalism

Dr *Madeleine Kleberg*, Reader in Media and Communication Studies

Dr *Göran Leth*, Head of Department