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# Julian C. Stanley Jr. (1918–2005)

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Julian Cecil Stanley Jr. was born in Macon, Georgia, on July 9, 1918. Growing up outside of Atlanta in humble surroundings, he was both extremely bright and tall for his age. He skipped the fourth grade. He was also voted most popular by his high school classmates. Before becoming a high school math and chemistry teacher at age 19, he graduated from West Georgia Junior College (1936) and Georgia Teachers College (1937), now Georgia Southern University. He was not an especially serious student, focusing instead on having fun and spending time with his girlfriends.

In World War II (1942–1945) Julian served in the chemical warfare service. The boredom of this assignment facilitated an incredible thirst for intellectual stimulation and engagement. When he returned, with GI benefits in tow, he was raring to go, like a racehorse about to be released from the starting gates. He entered Harvard and, largely through happenstance, found himself with a new advisor every year: O. Hobart Mowrer, Truman L. Kelley, Gordon Allport, J. Phillip Rulon, and William O. Jenkins. Although he learned much from these luminaries, their professional preoccupations precluded providing much guidance. Julian learned early the valuable skill of taking charge of one's own development. He earned his doctorate in education (1950) studying partial reinforcement with Jenkins, and together they produced a citation classic on this topic ("Partial Reinforcement: A Review and Critique," 1950, in *Psychological Bulletin*). During that time he also married Rose Sanders and together they had a daughter, Susan.

Julian assumed his first academic position at George Peabody College for Teachers (1949), now Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. There he was an associate professor in educational psychology and became president of the Tennessee Psychological Association (1951). In 1953, he responded to the University of Wisconsin's call. Continuing to "work like a dog," he became famous there for his innovations in experimental design and psychometrics; he also formed the Laboratory for Experimental Design, which attracted such figures as Gene Glass, Carl Bereiter, and Andy Porter. Back then, faculty were required to submit "time cards" for the number of hours they worked, which ultimately would be forwarded to the dean. Julian's chair advised him to trim the number of hours reported; while he believed Julian, he was absolutely certain that the dean would not!

Julian's most famous work during this period was stimulated by a *Psychometrika* article ("Analysis of Unreplicated Three-Way Classifications With Applications to Rater Bias and Trait Independence," 1961), which motivated Donald T. Campbell to invite Julian to collaborate with him. For decades, their well-known *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research* (Campbell & Stanley, 1963, 1966) has been required graduate student reading, and it became Julian's most widely cited publication. During this time, Julian was also president of the American Educational Research Association (AERA; 1965–1966) and the National Council on Measurement in Education

(NCME; 1963–1964), vice president of Division 15 of the American Psychological Association (APA; 1964–1965), and Division 5's representative to the APA Council of Representatives (1962–1966, becoming president in 1972). Much later he also served as second vice president of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC; 1977–1979), a position he relinquished because of his wife's struggle with cancer. (Rose died in 1978.)

In 1965, Julian became a fellow of Stanford's Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences and edited *Improving Experimental Design and Statistical Analysis* (1966). Julian's opening chapter, on the selection and training of graduate students, bridged his then-current passion for methodology with his subsequent passion for the optimal development of intellectually precocious youth and was prescient of the final phase of his career.

From Stanford, Julian went to Johns Hopkins University (first in education and then in psychology when the former department was dissolved). There he remained, working until one week before his death at age 87. His testing article in *Science* ("Predicting College Success of the Educationally Disadvantaged," 1971) and his reliability chapter in Thorndike's (1971) *Educational Measurement* stand out during his early years there. The latter was a seminal contribution, but, as Julian often remarked, "it made me sick and tired of dry-bone methodology." And just at that moment, as if by fate, the teacher of a prodigy, Joseph Bates, sought out Julian's advice on how to educate this exceptional young man, who in his early adolescence was outperforming freshmen in the computer science class. This set the stage for Julian's next career at age 53.

Julian began his paradigm-shifting work on giftedness in 1971. With support from the newly formed Spencer Foundation, he founded the Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth (SMPY). He conceived of the talent search concept and then launched the first one in March 1972 by administering the Scholastic Aptitude Test–Math (SAT-M; normally given to 11th and 12th graders) to 450 willing seventh and eighth graders in the greater Baltimore area. The experiment's success exceeded everyone's expectations. The SAT Verbal (SAT-V) was added to the process, and the idea spread, from Hopkins to other institutions such as Duke, Northwestern, Iowa, and the University of Denver. Talent searches have now served several million youths nationally (and internationally). The scholarly impact of his talent search concept manifested itself in several ways. It pioneered out-of-level testing (now included in the educational and psychological testing standards; AERA, APA, & NCME, 1985), augmented more general intellectual assessments with specific intellectual abilities, and illuminated the importance of assessing individual differences within the top 1% (one third of the ability range).

Although the SMPY project was modeled after Lewis Terman's longitudinal study, Julian's project went beyond Terman's study in multiple ways. Julian's talent search, for example, was more far-reaching in terms of identification: larger number of

students, greater geographic area, more abilities assessed, more standardized assessments of nonintellectual personal attributes, and certainly more of an impact on practice within the field of gifted education. Yet Julian was not content with simply identifying gifted youth and characterizing them and their development. Following the tradition of Leta Stetter Hollingworth, he wanted to help the students he identified. Julian aimed to discover the best ways of educating the gifted and of facilitating their educational and vocational development.

Inspired by Robert Browning's aphorism "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, / Or what's a heaven for?" (from the poem "Andrea del Sarto"), Julian began programs for talented youth, using educational acceleration (or "appropriate developmental placement") as a guiding principle. He cooked up a smorgasbord of accelerative opportunities, such as taking advanced placement classes and college courses while still in high school, entering college early, and skipping grades. He also encouraged schools to make special exceptions for his protégés, which created lasting change for other gifted children at the schools as well. Hence, Julian called his approach "benignly insidious." He formed fast-paced mathematics classes, encouraged others to serve the verbal areas, and then followed with similar classes in science. The fast-paced classes not only became critical components of the university-based talent search programs but were also adopted in many other places, such as Vanderbilt and Iowa State, serving thousands annually. In the 1970s these ideas were as iconoclastic as middle school students taking the SAT. Yet Julian was convinced that the scientific evidence was on his side. Of course, he turned out to be correct and thus was called "Mr. Acceleration" by A. Harry Passow, in honor of Julian's dedicated efforts in this area. Julian forced unwilling minds to face the empirical evidence in support of this practice and thereby created a revolution within gifted education.

In his later years, Julian moved away from endorsing radical acceleration, feeling that less extreme accelerative practices now available benefited students more. His modern views are found in two *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* articles (Benbow & Stanley, "Inequity in Equity: How 'Equity' Can Lead to Inequity for High Potential Students," 1996; Stanley, "Helping Students Learn Only What They Don't Already Know," 2000). The former won APA's George A. Miller Award (1999); of the latter, Stephen Ceci remarked, "Who, after reading [Julian Stanley] about high-achieving students let down by the school system, can argue that the present educational practice of treating all students in the same age-graded, lock-step manner is in their best interests? Not I" (Ceci, "So Near and Yet so Far: Lingering Questions About the Use of Measures of General Intelligence for College Admission and Employment Screening," 2000, p. 247).

In 1980, Julian decided that the talent search concept had taken root and become established. He now could focus his attention elsewhere and decided to concentrate on working with those students who scored at least 700 on the SAT-M before age 13 (top 1 in 10,000). He later included equivalent high scorers on the SAT-V. It became a very personal project, if not a passion, with Julian. He spent numerous hours working with these students and counseling them individually. This work not only sustained him in later years (he was in the office

one week before his death) but also led to the formation of the Study of Exceptional Talent at Johns Hopkins' Center for Talented Youth, which in 2005 was renamed the Julian C. Stanley Study of Exceptional Talent in his honor and is directed by Linda Brody.

The Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth lives on at Vanderbilt University. We direct it and are dedicating our careers to completing SMPY's 50-year longitudinal study of intellectual talent with 5,000 individuals currently nearing mid-life. As Julian believed and had predicted (he could cite you an SAT score of one of his protégés not only with accuracy but to the month and year it was earned!), the more extreme the talent (and the earlier it is manifested), the more likely it is that exceptional creative accomplishments will eventuate. Talent by itself, however, is insufficient to account for exceptional achievement. What is critical is the combination of the right talents, commitment to one's chosen field, a supportive but challenging environment, zeal, and the capacity for hard work.

Over his professional career, Julian wrote or edited 13 books and produced over 500 professional articles. For his work, Julian received two honorary doctorates and numerous honors, including APA's E. L. Thorndike Award (1978), the James McKeen Cattell Award from the Association for Psychological Science (1994), the AERA's Award for Distinguished Contributions to Research in Education (1980), the NAGC's Distinguished Scholar Award (1982), and the Mensa Lifetime Achievement Award (2000). In 2002, the ultimate research conference on giftedness, the biennial Wallace Symposium, established a Julian C. Stanley Keynote Address to acknowledge his lifetime contributions. At Julian's retirement celebration in San Francisco in 1992, Lee J. Cronbach captured well the sentiments of the symposium's contributors: "In 100 years, when the history of gifted education is written, Lewis Terman and Julian Stanley are the two names that will be remembered."

Deep, profound, and visionary, Julian C. Stanley led the life of the mind in the best possible sense: He uncovered basic psychological phenomena, invented methods, counseled intellectually precocious youth, and mentored others in implementing his discoveries and revealing important psychological phenomena. He was a rare blend of scientist and practitioner.

Julian loved to travel, had a true passion for movies (he had a list of his personal top 100), and was a remarkably engaging conversationalist. Yes, he could talk! By the time of his death in Columbia, Maryland, on August 12, 2005, from cancer and pneumonia, Julian's persistence and commitment to helping young people develop their talents had changed not only the lives of the individuals he had touched but America's educational landscape as well.

Remembered as Little Cecil, Cecil, Julian, Dr. Stanley, or Stan, he was preceded in death by his first wife of 32 years, Rose, and his second wife of 20 years, Barbara. He is survived by his widow, formerly Dorothy Fahey; daughter, Susan Wilhoft; grandson, Spencer Wilhoft; sister, Lestina Webb; and many nieces and nephews.

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