

Martin T. Orne (1927-2000)

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Martin Orne's family emigrated to the United States from Austria in 1938. He attended Harvard University (BA, 1948), and received his MD from Tufts (1955) and his PhD (1958) from Harvard, where his advisor was Robert W. White. Subsequently, he was Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania (Kihlstrom, 2001; Kihlstrom & Frankel, 2000).

As a researcher, Orne was primarily concerned with the objective, scientific study of private, subjective experience, and hypnosis was the primary vehicle for pursuing this interest. He introduced the real-simulator design to identify certain procedural artifacts (Orne, 1971), and suggested that "trance logic" – which he often characterized as a "peaceful coexistence between illusion and reality" – was a characteristic feature of response to hypnotic suggestions (Orne, 1959).

Many of Orne's papers on hypnosis were critical of popular, long-standing claims about the "wonders" of hypnosis, leading some to view him as a skeptical debunker, while his ideas about trance logic and search for real-simulator differences led others to view him as a more traditional "state" theorist. In fact, Orne's view of hypnosis was subtle and nuanced, characterizing hypnosis as an alteration in consciousness which took place in a particular interpersonal context. In the debate between "state" and "social-psychological" views of hypnosis, his stance is best characterized as "both/and" rather than "either/or" or "nothing but". Instead of offering an overarching theory of hypnosis, he preferred to expand our understanding of specific hypnotic phenomena.

Trained as both a researcher and a clinician, Orne never acquiesced to the "split" between science and practice, insisting that clinical practice should be grounded in empirical research. He was a central figure in the debate over the use of hypnosis to recover ostensibly repressed memories of trauma memories. Because hypnosis is unduly suggestive, and can lead subjects to confabulate or have undue confidence in their

memories, he argued that any memories recovered through hypnosis required independent corroboration (Orne, 1979). Orne's commitment to bridging the laboratory and the clinic led him to serve as an expert witness in a number of cases involving issues broadly related to hypnosis – most famously in the "Hillside Strangler" case (Orne et al., 1984).

Beyond hypnosis, Orne made seminal contributions to research methods. In a paper that was named a "Citation Classic" by the Institute of Scientific Information, Orne (1962) argued that laboratory experiments have special features, which he called "demand characteristics", which may convey to subjects the true purpose of the experiment and how they are expected to behave. Therefore, researchers must always be concerned with the "ecological validity" of their experiments; they cannot assume that findings obtained in the laboratory would automatically generalize to the world outside (Orne, 1970). In order to identify demand characteristics, experiments should be evaluated from the subject's point of view (Kihlstrom, 2002, 2021).

In addition to his substantive empirical, methodological, and theoretical contributions to the field of hypnosis, Orne was Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis* from 1962 to 1992. Among many honors, he received the Benjamin Franklin Gold Medal from the International Society of Hypnosis, and the Distinguished Scientific Award for Applications of Psychology from American Psychological Association.

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