

John Field (HOF 2014), who died suddenly on 25 March, aged 74 was an outstanding academic (one of the giants of our generation as one close colleague commented to me), whose work ranged across the landscape of lifelong learning and is amongst the most cited in our field. But as the outpouring of comment on social media since his death makes clear, he is remembered just as much for his warmth, his generosity of spirit, for his encouragement of others, and for his wry humour, as for his writing, teaching and speaking. His death marks a major loss to the adult education movement, and for me the loss of a dear colleague and friend.

John will also be remembered as a committed internationalist. He played a key role in the early years of the European Society for Research in the Education of Adults. John wrote and edited a sequence of books on European education and vocational training policy, and promoted a European perspective on lifelong learning in the 1990s. John worked hard to open creative dialogue and partnership with adult education researchers in the post-Soviet bloc countries; and had close relationships with universities and national adult education agencies in Ireland and Germany. He was one of the writers of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning's GRALE 4, and contributed to other editions of the survey. He was inducted to the Hall of Fame in 2014.

John wrote or edited 17 books, around a hundred peer reviewed journal articles, a similar number of chapters, beside a great volume of reports, pamphlets and articles for practitioners. He served on a number of editorial committees, and was much called on for policy advice by the governments of the UK and by the European Union. His books '*Social Capital*' and '*Lifelong learning and the new educational order*' are widely set in university courses, and his writing spanned a focus on participation, well being and mental health, adult learning and the environment, vocational education, and learning in later life. All his writing is infused by a commitment to social justice and the role adult learning can play in enhancing it. But John was, too, a contrarian, uneasy about too easily agreed consensus, sniffing out awkward and inconvenient evidence to test the robustness of a thesis.

John's career progressed from degrees earned as a mature student, to employment as a tutor at Northern College, a residential college for adults offering short-term and long-term courses mainly to working class men and women. In 1995 he joined a new Continuing Education Department at Warwick University with Chris Duke (HOF 2014) and Tom Schuller (HOF2006). Moves to Bradford to head a department, to Ulster University for a professorship in Continuing Education, back to Warwick as the first Professor of Lifelong Learning in the UK, and finally to Stirling, where he served for 6 year as Deputy Principal of the University. It included secondments to the UK government, and the widest range of engagement with the world of adult education outside universities.

It was in this context that I worked most closely with him at the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), where he served on the executive committee, led policy study groups, mentored staff, led external evaluations of major programmes, and supported the organisation to be as broad based and inclusive as the field it served. We sat together on the 1997-2001 National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong learning which advised the then Labour Government; again, ten years later on the National Commission of Inquiry into Lifelong Learning sponsored by NIACE, and later on the Government Foresight Study on Lifelong Learning, Skills and Well being. He was always incisive, encouraging and warm. But in recent years we were more likely to be talking about a shared passion for rugby, where we supported close rivals.

John had the happy skill of combining rigour with a capacity to make complex ideas accessible. He was always curious about new forms of association in the work, as his marvellous blog, *the learning professor* makes clear. He was an exceptional scholar but above all an exceptional man. He will be widely missed.

Alan Tuckett