

# Daniel Landis: Award for Distinguished Contributions to the International Advancement of Psychology

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## Citation

“For his unparalleled contribution to the field of intercultural research in a distinguished academic career spanning almost half a century. Daniel Landis has shaped the field of intercultural research through scholarship of the highest order, reflected in his publications on cross-cultural training and research, the measurement of equal opportunity climate, individual-differences research and methodology, evaluation of social programs, development of theory in social psychology, and cross-cultural aspects of human sexuality. He is the founding editor-in-chief of the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* and has edited three editions of the *Handbook of Intercultural Training* (1983, 1996, 2004). He received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Academy for Intercultural Relations in 2007.”

## Biography

Daniel Landis was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on July 20, 1936, to Edythe and Samuel Landesberg. Edythe's father, Morris Volovick, was a well-known Russian-born cantor who, though blind from birth, participated in High Holy Day services throughout the eastern half of the United States. However, at the age of 7, Edythe found herself without a mother when Dora Volovick died in the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918. Morris was unable to raise his five children (ages 7 to less than a year) on his own, and they were farmed out to relatives and orphanages. Shortly after Landis's birth his parents separated, and he was raised as an only child by his now single mother. He was a sickly child afflicted with lung conditions, and he and his mother sought a more favorable climate by moving to Arizona shortly after the start of World War II. Edythe found work at the numerous Army Air Force bases that surrounded Phoenix; Landis became a latchkey child before there was a name for it. Though his mother was uneducated as far as formal schooling was concerned, she had a decidedly liberal outlook on the essential goodness of people of all races. Many of her close friends were Mexican Americans, several of whom were married to Filipinos. The positive affect that came from those relationships transferred in the young Landis easily to other groups, for example, African Americans. As Landis grew and became aware of the history of the Jews and the Holocaust, he felt

that as a member of that group, he had no right to look down on any other group or any individual.

After the war ended and the servicemen returned, jobs for women in the war industries rapidly disappeared, and the mother and son were thrown onto the welfare system, primitive though it was in Phoenix in 1945. Landis's development was dealt a severe but strangely fortuitous blow when at the age of nine he contracted rheumatic fever. This disease required a year of bed rest. It was sheer luck that Maricopa County was then experimenting with a visiting home teacher program for poor youths with physical problems that prevented them from attending in-school classes. Landis was able to progress rapidly under this program, completing both the fifth and sixth grades in one year. Also, he was able to read widely since his mother would go to the public library each week and simply take a random number of books home for him. So by the time he was able to return to school he was well into reading at a high school level.

Even before the enforced bed rest Landis had had the good fortune to become something like a mascot to several men's clubs as well at least one fire station. These organizations provided a needed masculine presence in his life that his mother was unable to provide; they even raised enough funds for him to spend summers at the YMCA camp near Prescott. Similar Good Samaritans appeared as he progressed through elementary and high school. There were several teachers who took a special interest in this rather shy skinny kid with a stammer. The maintenance staff at the high school spirited out his needed textbooks from the lost and found so that he wouldn't have to purchase the books.

After he graduated from high school his lack of funds meant that he would attend the local state college called Arizona State College (ASC) at Tempe (now Arizona State University). He had decided when still in high school to major in psychology with the intent of becoming a high school counselor. Over time, that goal shifted to psychotherapy and finally to experimental psychology. ASC had two faculty members who had important influences on Landis: a philosopher, Vernon Dolphin (who introduced him to the work of both Jean Piaget and Gordon Allport), and a developmental psychologist, Rachel Stutsman Ball (she of the Merrill-Palmer Infant Development Scales and who encouraged him to consider Wayne State University for graduate study). Arthur and Carolyn Staats, then in their first jobs out of graduate school, were people with whom he could argue, incessantly, the merits of experimental design. All of these people helped Landis give form to an inchoate and undisciplined mind.

After receiving the bachelor of science degree in 1957, Landis returned east to work on a master's degree at Temple University. To provide funds for graduate study he took a job teaching racially mixed classes of "developmentally disabled" children. Toward the end of 1958 Landis decided that his fortune would lie in attending a doctoral program in experimental psychology full time, and so, at the invitation of Ross Stagner (whose personality psychology text Landis had used in undergraduate school), he set off in the summer of 1959 for Detroit and what would turn out to be the best three years of his intellectual life at Wayne State University.

The atmosphere at Wayne State was highly collegial, involving both the faculty and graduate students. There was none of the competition that often destroys programs. The students and the faculty were all scholars working toward understanding and solving important theoretical and practical issues. While the intellectual environment was an important benefit, another one occurred to Landis one evening in the basement of the Student Center over his first Christmas holiday break. He was introduced to a quiet and very attractive senior education major with the deepest dimples this side of Kirk Douglas's chin. Of course they didn't initially like one another; she considered him insufferably arrogant, and to him, well, she *was* an education major. Four months later Rae Morris became his bride; they have been together for 52 years. Their first child, Michael, was born 13 months later and their daughter Michele arrived four years after that.

Landis's advisors, Charlie Solley and Ross Stagner, encouraged him to do pilot studies on more than one dissertation idea. Landis thought that was a good idea too, and he did two pilots: a study of visual perception and a study of housing integration in the Wayne area. The former study showed positive results first, and that one became his doctoral dissertation ([Landis & Solley, 1965](#)). In the summer of 1962, armed with his data and with the approval of his committee, Landis and his young family left Detroit for a position at Wisconsin State College at Oshkosh (now the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh). As it turned out Oshkosh was not a good fit, but it had a wonderful benefit in the person of Harry Harlow, who invited Landis to spend the summer of 1964 working with him at the Primate Center in Madison. Though Landis did not continue in primate research Harry remained a loyal friend.

In late 1964, the family left Oshkosh when Landis was offered a position at the Franklin Institute Research Laboratories in Philadelphia. There he initially studied aspects of visual perception in large-scale battlefield displays. These led to a number of studies using a rather unique game situation (e.g., [Silver, Jones, & Landis, 1966](#)). He returned to this experimental paradigm three decades later, using it to research cultural heterogeneity in work groups (e.g., [Landis, Bakir, Moore, Noguchi, & O'Shea, 2002](#)). More important, Landis and his colleagues were invited in 1965 to carry out an evaluation of Title I programs for the School District of Philadelphia, a project they continued over three succeeding years. In 1968, Sam Messick persuaded Landis to move to the Educational Testing Service, initially to work on the large longitudinal study of disadvantaged children and later on measuring teacher performance. Three years later, armed with a National Science Foundation grant to study teacher subjective culture in an urban environment with colleagues Harry Triandis and John Hayman, Landis moved back to central Philadelphia at the University City Science Center (e.g., [Landis, McGrew, & Triandis, 1975](#)). He also was awarded a contract by the Army Research Institute to develop a technique for training White junior grade officers to work with minority enlisted personnel (e.g., Landis, Day, McGrew, Miller, & Thomas, 1977). By the end of his time in Philadelphia (1975–1976), he developed the first journal focused on intercultural research, the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations (IJIR)*, and he was its editor-in-chief for 35 years (1977–2011). *IJIR* was explicitly interdisciplinary; as he said in the opening editorial, its aim was “to determine what works for whom and

when” ([Landis, 1977](#)). In 1976 he accepted a position as chair of the Psychology Department at Indiana University–Purdue University in Indianapolis.

His years in Indianapolis were filled with administrative duties as the department was being built and a doctoral program negotiated through the two parent universities. These duties were in addition to his developing *IJIR* as the leading interdisciplinary journal in the field; at last count it has achieved an impact factor of over 1.0. By the time he was eligible for a sabbatical, Landis had also obtained a contract for the first *Handbook of Intercultural Training* ([Landis & Brislin, 1983](#)) which was facilitated by an invitation to spend his leave at the East–West Center in Honolulu. Subsequent editions of the handbook were issued in 1996 and 2004. During the sabbatical in Hawaii Landis was able to realize a long-held goal: He became a pilot and later added ratings for instrument, commercial, and instrument flight instructor.

While Landis was at the East–West Center an invitation was extended to him to become dean of liberal arts at the University of Mississippi, an appointment he took up in early 1984. Being a dean was not really in his blood; after 18 months Landis moved across the street to become simply a professor, and there he remained until his retirement in 2002, teaching courses in social psychology, cross-cultural training, human sexuality (a course that became legendary on campus), and graduate seminars in many different topics. While at Ole Miss, he continued to edit *IJIR* and to publish in the field of intercultural relations. In the summer of 1987, he and a graduate student, Gloria Fisher, collaborated with Mickey Dansby at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) to develop a new measure of equal opportunity climate. This measure, the Military Equal Opportunity Climate Measure (MEOCS), became the standard instrument used throughout the armed forces, and versions of it are still in use today ([Landis, Dansby, & Tallarigo, 1996](#)). In 1994 he was appointed the first Shirley J. Bach Visiting Research Professor at DEOMI, and from 1994 to 1996 he continued to work on the MEOCS, expanding it to nonmilitary settings ([Black-Guttman, Chesterton, & Landis, 1997](#)) as well as conducting research on racial disparities in the military justice system ([Landis, Dansby, & Hoyle, 1998](#)).

In 1997, a small group of intercultural researchers formed the International Academy for Intercultural Research ([www.intercultural-academy.net](http://www.intercultural-academy.net)) with *IJIR* as its official journal. Landis was elected the group's first president and continued in that role for five years. He currently is the executive director and treasurer of the organization.

After retirement and the move to Hawaii in 2002, Landis was appointed affiliate professor at both the Manoa and Hilo campuses of the University of Hawaii, where he has been able to advise graduate students on their theses and dissertations. His most recent book, *Handbook of Ethnic Conflict: International Perspectives*, edited with Rosita Albert, was published this year by Springer and surveys in depth 20 ethnic conflicts around the world. He is currently working on two additional books: a fourth edition of the *Handbook of Intercultural Training* and a volume on the relationship of neuroscience and intercultural relations. As he said in a recent publication ([Landis, 2011](#)), “It has been a

great ride and I have enjoyed every minute of it.” And, he can add, quoting the poet: “I don't intend to go quietly into that good night!”

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