

Maurice Yaffé

Maurice Yaffé, M.Sc., Ph.D., Principal Clinical Psychologist at Guy's Hospital, died under tragic circumstances on 27th October 1989, at the early age of 44.

Maurice took his Psychology degree at Birkbeck College and his clinical training at the Institute of Psychiatry. He established his reputation in no less than three areas. He was an authority on the psychology of sex, ranging from the legal aspects of pornography to counselling. His last book was the popular *"Sexual Happiness: A Practical Approach"*. He was the first psychologist to become a member of the

British Olympic Association's medical advisory committee and his lectures on clinical sports psychology established this subject in BASM's syllabus. He served a term on the BASM Executive Committee. However, the widest media attention came from his introduction of remedial sessions for travel phobia, working closely with British Airways and using a cabin simulator; his book *"Taking the Fear Out of Flying"* established this reputation. He is survived by Francesca and Alexander to whom go our love and deepest sympathy.



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Maurice, In Memoriam

I dropped in on Maurice and Min with my sons after a local race. His warm reception and joyously empathic chat won their hearts and then, to cap a visit to that art museum and cartoon wonderland, the Honda 250 was unveiled and two young boys in turn were thoroughly toggged and helmeted then carefully roared round the streets of Herne Hill in what Maurice would have recognized as an early peak experience.

Organizing lectures will never be quite the same without Maurice's battered VW and breathless last minute arrival, winsome smile and charismatic seduction of the audience. Everybody loved Maurice. On his day, he was one of that rare band who could do anything with an audience. Some charge hung in the air, electrifying listeners perched alike on edge of seat and mind.

*No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest
Till half mankind were like himself possess'd*

Cowper

On a bad day, he was never less than competent and I know how meticulously he prepared all his work in that library-cum-gallery of a study so that the disciplined framework of his subject was always clear. But sometimes I think Maurice got bored and would delight in whipping up all his interests into an intellectual soufflé of sport, sex and psychology.

Last but one off the plane, I recognized the head of the last – the thinning fair mane of Maurice, laid back in the jumbo journey home from a book-launching tour. The same cheerful greeting as ever; the weary description of his latest tour and tribulations; we would meet again soon at home; I left him in the transit lounge; we were both so busy and full of good intentions; time flew; I never saw him again.

Pheidipides

Maurice Yaffé came into my mind like a torchlight procession fourteen years ago then, as now, on my birthday. Through all that time, Maurice was enormously prodigal of himself, giving his wit and humour, advice and cautions, ideas and data and above all, his time, freely and generously.

*Being too prodigal of him I am, has made
me so much less the man I was*

Stewart Conn

But the very opposite was with Maurice. The more he gave out, the richer was his thought. And ten days ago, he died.

*Holding the rebel post since set of sun,
Against those odds he knew resistance vain,
Yet fought all night, that fierce and foolish one.
Not till morning's bugles blew a last
'Cease-fire' he bowed his ravaged head and cast
Weapons aside; climbed down the shattered stair,
Unbarred his doors, and made a friend of pain.*

Anon

And, from Ecclesiastes

*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose
under the heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a
time to pluck up that which is planted;*

Ecclesiastes, 3:1, 2

To paraphrase Julian Barnes, time has turned Maurice into history. The evidence lies before us and in our minds and in our remembrances of him. Time turns all of us into history and the process is often painful and full of anguish. We have three main defences against the pain of time's rendering us into history.

First is Religion. However, this solace is not for everyone. Next is the Arts – all of music, drama, literature, poetry, the cinema art and dance. But these too are not for everyone.

The last is Love: love of our spouses, our families, our friends, each other. Love is our ultimate defence against time. It is that which must sustain us now. And Francesca and Alexander.

For Maurice, time has ticked a heaven around the stars. For Maurice, Heaven was in him, before he was in Heaven.

From the Memorial Service Address,

Craig Sharp