



Otis Monroe Walter

April 20, 1921 - June 13, 2013

Otis M. Walter died on June 13, 2013. He was born to Dr. and Mrs. Otis M. Walter on April 20, 1921 in Chicago, and named Otis Monroe Walter, Jr. After his father's death he dropped the Jr.

He was graduated from Crocket Elementary School, El Paso, TX in 1934, and Oak Park and River Forest Township High School, Oak Park, IL in 1938. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Northwestern University in 1942, as well as his Masters in 1943 and Ph.D. in 1948, majoring in speech and psychology.

Professionally, he decided to study speech because he felt that If we could teach one generation to speak intelligently, we could turn the world around. His greatest professional interest was in classical rhetoric, which focuses on ideas about communication from the pre-Socratics to the present.

He taught at the University of Illinois, (Urbana) and the University of Houston, where he was chairperson of the department of speech for seven years. Most of his professional life was spent at the University of Pittsburgh, from which he retired as Professor Emeritus. He also taught at the University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa), and at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

After retiring, he moved to Bellingham, WA. There he joined the Bellingham

Unitarian fellowship; he had been a Universalist since the age of twelve.

He was the author of about fifty articles, book reviews, sermons, and lectures at various universities. He authored the following books: Thinking and Speaking. A Guide to Intelligent Communication (with

Robert L. Scott). The book had five editions, the second of which was translated into Spanish. Speaking To Inform and Persuade had two editions. His favorite was Speaking Intelligently: Communication for Problem Solving. The books were published by The Macmillan Company.

He was a life-long liberal, a Democrat, and was fond of the arts. He was an atheist and often said, When I see what religions have done, I thank God that I am an atheist. He loved teaching and said that, Teaching is, in part, having desperately to know, and then having desperately to tell others about it.

He was a life Member (#5) of the American Civil Liberties Union, and was a member of Phi Kappa Phi, a national honorary fraternity, conferred on him by the faculty of the University of Houston.

He requested that there be no funeral; he will be buried in his family plot in Mt. Emblem Cemetery near Chicago. He has no survivors. He was most thankful for his neighbors, friends, relatives, both those long gone and those surviving, and especially to his dear companion of nearly fifty years, Ronald L. Vrana.

Farewell Tribute Information

Memorial Services will be announced later

Tribute Wall

JK

“ *My favorite professor, my primary educational mentor. He inspired me to think and learn. I wanted to thank him while he was still alive, but was unable to track him down. Thank you for allowing me to say a few words here. His lessons will always be with me, and I've passed those on to my four children, and they to theirs.*

Jon Kasunic - June 13, 2013 at 12:00 AM