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Introduction to John Tomer: His Legacy Lives On

These essays honour the contributions of John Tomer the scholar, but also John Tomer the leader and mentor to many of his younger colleagues. He was also a dear friend, who I've known since 1988. I first encountered John during an impressive Advancement of Behavioural Economics (SABE) meeting in San Diego organized by Roger Frantz. I'd only just read his new published, *Organizational Capital: The Path to Higher Productivity and Well-being*. But we became good friends soon after a meeting to revive the newly defunct SABE which took place during an American Economic Association meeting in New Orleans, January 1992, organized by John and Shlomo Maital. John became the first, and long serving President of SABE and under his leadership saw the organization grow from about 30 members in its newly reconstituted form to well over 400 members. John participated in just about every SABE and joint SABE/International Association for Research in Economic Psychology (IAREP) meeting since 1992. We would always hook up and hang out during these meetings, very often with his wife Doris. This was all part of a mission to establish and maintain a rigorous, open-minded academic organization devoted to behavioural economics.

I should say that John and I disagreed on many methodological and even organizational issues. But what was so important about John was his open-mindedness, his imbued sense of methodological pluralism, his view that what counts is the person and her or his research not where they came from or which university they graduated from. This perspective is fundamentally important to SABE. This is what provides SABE with its distinctiveness.

John spent most of his career in Manhattan College. And, in spite of being in a more teaching-intensive university, John remained a heavy-duty researcher and publisher, making significant contributions, especially in behavioural and social economics. He published five books and around sixty peer reviewed journal articles and book chapters. And he was still actively working on research projects at the time of his death.

John was born July 11, 1942 and passed away on December 7, 2019. This was only three months after we met for the last time during his last SABE meeting that took place in Dublin, Ireland. He made this trip in spite of being quite ill with cancer. He was determined to once again meet with his friends and colleagues, make new acquaintances, attend sessions (and

ask questions, of course), and present a research paper, as he always would during a conference. John was only able make it this time around with his wife Doris, who accompanied him on so many of his research trips. We all hung out along with my daughter, Hannah, now an economist in her own right, who attended most of John's presentations during SABE meetings since her birth, 25 years ago. The last paper that John presented was, "Why Buddhist economics is needed: Overcoming large scale biophysical and socio-economic dysfunctions." This was an area that he was interested in for decades and also informed much of his thinking. We promised to meet up again during the forthcoming American Economics Association meetings in January. But this was not meant to be. But John's legacy lives on though his significant organizational contributions and his many contributions to research which are celebrated in this special issue.

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