



NORSK
NEVROPSYKOLOGISK
FORENING

Ivar Reinvang

Kjetil Sundet

Ivar Reinvang ble utnevnt til æresmedlem i Norsk Nevropsykologisk Forening på INS Midyear Meeting i Oslo i 2013.



Ivar Reinvang. Foto: Knut Dalen

På INS Midyear-meeting i Oslo 2013 ble Ivar Reinvang utnevnt til æresmedlem i Norsk Nevropsykologisk Forening.

Tale ved Kjetil Sundet:

Ivar Reinvang received his professional degree in psychology from the University of Oslo in 1969. During his study years he developed an interest in clinical neuropsychology and received his clinical training at the Department of Neurosurgery at Ullevål University Hospital, supervised by Grete Bryhn. After graduation he spent two years as a Fulbright postdoctoral fellow at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston to study language impairments after brain injury, amongst others under the guidance of Hans Lukas Teuber. Returning to Norway, he was in 1973 asked to serve as director of the newly established “Institute for Aphasia and Stroke” at Sunnaas Rehabilitation Hospital outside Oslo.

Neuropsychology was at that time an almost unknown discipline in Norway. The Halstead-Reitan battery was not tailored to meet the demands within stroke rehabilitation, and Reinvang had to build from scratch when faced with the challenge of finding assessment tools and training programs for language impairments. He constructed a Norwegian aphasia test, based on the same principals as laid down by Goodglass and Kaplan, and Kertesz, later translated into the other Scandinavian languages. He wrote a Norwegian textbook on aphasia that has been the standard text for speech therapists. In 1983 he completed his doctoral thesis, based on close to 300 aphasia patients tested neuropsychologically, and for a large part CT-scanned as well, thus making it possible to analyze lesion location with impairment profiles for the first time in Norway. His thesis was later adapted into a textbook at Plenum Press in 1985 (“Aphasia and brain organization”).

At that time, he was newly appointed adjunct professor in neuropsychology at the

Department of Psychology, the first position within our field at the University of Oslo, and was ready to take on new challenges. He became head neuropsychologist at the Rikshospitalet in Oslo, and quickly established new standards for diagnostic assessments of neurology-light impairments, introducing event related potentials (ERP) for the first time in Norway. As within aphasiology, his ERP-work has inspired researchers and clinicians to look for brain-behavior relations that standard testing alone could not encompass.

In 1987 he was certified a specialist in clinical neuropsychology, and has since held a part time private practice providing neuropsychological assessments for clinicians, the court, and the state.

In 1993 the timing was right for a third major move in his professional career when he became the first fulltime professor in clinical neuropsychology at the Department of Psychology, University of Oslo. At that time, neuropsychology was not included as part of the regular curriculum. He introduced a compulsory course for all students combining neuropsychological theory and assessment with clinical case records, and he held classes in neuroimaging and ERP research for those interested. Gradually new groups of students and PhD fellows took interest in his pioneering work and together with him, implemented cognitive neuroscience as part of the Department's strongest research fields.

For the third time in his career, Reinvang defined a new research agenda for himself. This time genes and cognition, or "red psychology", studying normal cognitive development with increasing age and the risk of developing dementia, became his challenge.

His skills and knowledge has been appreciated, and the Department of Psychology has expanded the group of clinical neuropsychologists from him alone to three fulltime and five adjunct professors. Formal in-house clinical training in neuropsychology ("praktikum") was formalized by his initiative, when Sunnaas Rehabilitation Hospital funded Anne-Kristine Schanke for the job.

Reinvang has conducted high impact research all through his career. If you look him up on the web and study his more than 100 peer-reviewed papers and his h-index > 20, you will notice that his production has held a steady high output over the years, not slowing down when increasing age may invite successful researchers to rest upon previous merits. Reinvang has instructed, advised and inspired numerous students, both at the master and the PhD-level, he has given clinical supervision to a large group of Norwegian specialists in neuropsychology, he has served on research and adjudication committees all over Europe, been appointed as Head of Research at the Department of Psychology and on various scientific governing boards, he has been guest professor in Germany, South Africa and the US in his sabbatical years, he has received large scale research grants from the Norwegian Research Council and established a biobank for the study of the aging brain, and he was accredited group leader at the Center for Advanced Study at the Norwegian Academy of Sciences last year.

Together with a group of colleagues, he laid the grounds for establishing the Norwegian Neuropsychological Society in 1996, served as president for the Society, and was program chair for the Nordic Meeting in Neuropsychology took place in Oslo in 2001.

We are many who can say that Reinvang was the inspiring cause for whom we became as professional psychologists. I truly am among them. Ever since I as master student in the late 1970s was sent to Sunnaas to seek guidance for my master thesis, Reinvang has been my point of reference. He doesn't speak up too often, and never use capital letters, but when he offers his opinions and suggests a way out, we listen. We were many who cared when he two years ago suffered a stroke and knew that the expert himself risked becoming the case of his previous studies, but were soon more than assured that his mental faculties went unharmed. Life has become somewhat more physically inconvenient, but

intellectually and socially he is the same. And we love him all the more!

On behalf of the Society, I congratulate Ivar Reinvang as our new honorary member!

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