

KETTIL BRUUN

Jellinek Memorial Award Recipient 1971 in Sociology for outstanding contribution to knowledge in the field of alcohol studies.

Kettil Edmund Bruun (1924-1985) was born in Helsinki, Finland, where he received his education up to the level of a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Helsinki. After working for a number of years in other areas, he entered the field of alcohol studies in 1955 when he was appointed to the dual position of Research Director of the Finnish Foundation for Alcohol Studies and head of Social Studies in the Research Institute of Alko, the Finnish State Alcohol Monopoly. He remained with Alko until 1968, and with the Finnish Foundation until 1980, when he was appointed to a professorship at Stockholm University in Sweden.

His early work on alcohol applied social interaction concepts to the study of behavior of members of drinking groups in Finland. This work, strictly experimental in design and methods, nevertheless shed much light on the importance of cultural influences on drinking behavior. This aspect of the subject was explored in greater depth in a series of comparative studies of drinking practices in the various Nordic countries. He also collaborated in the design and execution of other experimental studies, including a comparison of two different methods of treating alcoholics, and an early study of twins which explored the influence of hereditary factors in alcohol consumption.

Though these earlier studies were of high scientific quality and importance, the work for which Kettil Bruun was best known was of a radically different type. His advice was increasingly sought by national and international agencies involved in the making of alcohol and drug control policies, including the Finnish Parliamentary Alcohol Committee, the WHO Expert Committee on Drugs of Dependence, and the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs. As a result, he became interested in the dynamics of policy formulation and application, and the interactions among the members of policy-making bodies. This new line of research was revolutionary, in that it was focused not on the behavior of alcohol users, but on the interactions among the policy makers, and the factors which guided their policy recommendations and decisions. Among his best known publications is *The Gentlemen's Club*, co-authored with Lynn Pan and Ingemar Rexed, which analysed in detail the power relationships among the participants in international controls of narcotic drugs. Often the attention to policy formation was combined with close empirical analysis, as in the pathbreaking analysis of alcohol epidemiology and policies published in the same year by Bruun and his colleagues under the title *Alcohol Control Policies in a Public Health Perspective*.

In addition to his own research activities, Kettil Bruun made a major contribution to social science research on alcohol through his ability to inspire and lead younger investigators in many countries, and to resist governmental and bureaucratic attempts to limit freedom of scientific inquiry in areas of public policy on alcohol and drugs. One of the most striking tributes to the importance of this latter aspect of his career is the creation of the Kettil Bruun Society by an international group of social scientists, in recognition of his scientific and intellectual leadership.