

Astrid Nøklebye Heiberg

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On 2 April, our highly esteemed and dear colleague Astrid Nøklebye Heiberg, psychiatrist and professor of medicine, died at the age of almost 84.

Many will know Astrid primarily as a politician and former cabinet minister. To us, she was above all a warm-hearted colleague who took an interest in all aspects of people's lives. The titles of the books she wrote (*Det dyrebare håpet* [*Precious hope*], *Endring og undring* [*Change and Wonderment*]) or co-edited with others (*Så mye ensomhet: skjebner, kriser, muligheter*) [*So much loneliness: destinies, crises, opportunities*] are also keywords that describe her as a person. Her work to change society's prejudices against people who met with condemnation and exclusion only because of their sexual orientation, is legendary. Her commitment to improving people's social and living conditions is also reflected in a number of board positions (e.g. The University of Oslo Human Rights Award, the Lisl and Leo Eitinger Fund, Norwegian Gerontology Institute, the Norwegian Institute for Alcohol Research, the Centre for Medical Ethics), as well as her membership of commissions and committees with a humanitarian focus (e.g. the Norwegian committee for the International Year of the Disabled, the Council of Europe's prison monitoring committee, the Disability Pensions Commission).

Her research similarly reflected her consistent humanitarian engagement, for example her

doctoral thesis about the association between women's lives and myofascial pain. Here also, she was a pioneer. It was no coincidence that she became the first Norwegian woman to be awarded a doctoral degree in psychiatry and later appointed professor of the same discipline. The Norwegian Psychiatric Association was proud to have her as an honorary member. Her commitment to humanist psychiatry also gained international recognition through her honorary membership of the American College of Psychiatry, a distinction which is only rarely bestowed on psychiatrists outside the United States.

However, her warm personality, infectious laughter, friendly smile and kind eyes are what best sum up how Astrid was as a person and fellow human being. We, her close friends and colleagues, will miss her deeply.

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