

THOMAS ELLIOT BOWMAN III  
(1918–1995)



Thomas Elliot Bowman III died on 10 August 1995; he was 77 years old. For 31 years he was a curator in the Division of Crustacea at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution.

Tom grew up in Brooklyn, New York, and received a bachelor's of science in biology from Harvard College in 1941. After service in the U.S. Army in World War II, which included a degree in Veterinary Medicine from the University of Pennsylvania, Tom arrived at the University of California, Berkeley, to continue his study of color changes in decapod crustaceans. After earning a Master of Science degree in 1948, he began research under Martin W. Johnson at

Scripps Institution of Oceanography on pelagic copepods and amphipods; the amphipod data provided the basis for his Ph.D. thesis. After a six-month stay at the Narragansett Marine laboratory in Rhode Island, Tom began his career at the National Museum of Natural History in August 1954.

Tom published 163 papers during his research career; most of them were about crustaceans. He was well known for his work on isopods and copepods, and those papers together comprise about two-thirds of his published work. However, Tom also made significant contributions to the biology of pelagic amphipods, mysids, and sev-

cral other crustacean groups including Mic-tacea, an order of peracaridan crustaceans first described by him with Susan Garner, Robert Hessler, Tom Iliffe, and Howard Sanders (Bowman *et al.*, 1985). In all, Tom described a chaetognath, a suctorian, and about 111 crustaceans new to science, some of which were placed in 18 new genera and a new family; he also proposed many name changes.

Although many biologists knew Tom as a taxonomist, he also studied seasonal occurrences, and regional and geographical distributions of crustaceans. He was particularly fond of crustaceans found in caves, aquifers, and burrows. Using his knowledge of many different crustacean groups, Tom also was able to consider two significant questions about crustaceans: the identity and homologies of the telson (Bowman, 1971) and the evolution of stalked eyes (Bowman, 1984). The issues in both papers were clearly stated. Tom's analyses were logical and complete, and his conclusions both challenging and controversial. An appreciation of the range of Tom's research can be found in the following abbreviated bibliography. No American before him has mastered the crustaceans as Tom did, and I suspect none after him will.

Tom's interest in working with other scientists is apparent in the shared authorships of many of his papers. This interest was basic to Tom's outlook about museum research, which he expressed best in 1985 in preparing his final dossier for PAEC, a committee of museum peers which reviews the work of the scientific staff members here. After an introductory paragraph, Tom presents himself to his peers in this way:

"The primary goal of my research is to make it possible for others to identify accurately and efficiently taxa of the groups of Crustacea that I study."

Tom was 67 then and the statement resonates with his pride of workmanship and his interest in working with other scientists. I can imagine how he might have said this, because he lowered his voice to a somewhat gravelly tone when he spoke about something for which he had a strong conviction.

Tom wrote professional papers with a style particularly associated with this century's great novelists like Ernest Heming-

way and Albert Camus. He preferred simple declarative sentences; nothing extraneous, no excess, each word chosen carefully, and each sentence carefully crafted. Again from his PAEC dossier:

"I try to do this [make it possible for others to know crustaceans] by giving complete but succinct descriptions, and illustrations with clear and complete details."

His writing style was especially appreciated by colleagues for whom English is a second, and difficult language. Tom's style made his observations and his ideas accessible and familiar.

Tom's philosophy of "complete but succinct" is a testament to his clarity of thought and disciplined organization, attributes which he appreciated in others and which he was more than ready to encourage as crustacean editor for 14 years of the Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington. With pencil in hand, he was ready, as his friend and colleague Brian Kensley has said, "to knock off the rough edges" of manuscripts submitted for his scrutiny. When one of my manuscripts was involved, the experience was often painful, but certainly valuable.

Tom was a small, thin man whose twinkling eyes gave him an elfin, somewhat mischievous, demeanor. He had a preference for bold to outrageous colors in dress and office decor. Tom worked hard all day and seemingly every day. Even in retirement he could be found working in his office most days of the week. Of course, he kept a dissecting microscope at home, essential for any study about the input of insects and spiders into a "woodland pond," also known as a swimming pool (Bowman, 1988). Tom did not travel often. About scientific meetings, he confessed in his 1985 PAEC dossier:

"My attendance at scientific meetings has decreased in recent years. This is partly the result of the current emphasis on economy, but also because I find myself falling asleep at seminars which are not really stimulating, and therefore cannot justify the expenses needed to attend most of the meetings which have portions that are of interest to me."

Tom's clear thinking, unpretentious writ-

ing style, and controversial views will be missed by everyone who knew him.—Frank D. Ferrari, Invertebrate Zoology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS OF THOMAS E.  
BOWMAN

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