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Leon Festinger, 69, New School Professor

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Feb. 12, 1989



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Leon Festinger, a leading professor of psychology who developed the theory of cognitive dissonance, died of liver cancer yesterday at his home in Manhattan. He was 69 years old.

Dr. Festinger held the Else and Hans Staudinger Professor of Psychology chair at the New School for Social Research from 1968 until his death. He was the author of several books, including "A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance," published in 1957 by Row, Peterson. In the book Dr. Festinger explained that cognitive dissonance occurs when two simultaneously held thoughts, opinions or beliefs do not fit together or are inconsistent. One example is a person who believes that cigarettes cause cancer but continues to smoke.

Dr. Festinger also wrote "Conflict, Decision and Dissonance," published in 1964 by Stanford University Press, and "The Human Legacy," published in 1983 by Columbia University Press.

Before his tenure at the New School, he was a professor at Stanford University from 1955 to 1968. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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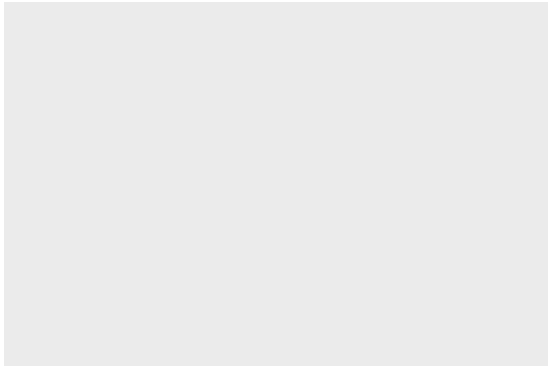
Born in Manhattan, Dr. Festinger held a bachelor's degree from City College of New York, and master's and doctoral degrees from Iowa State University.

Surviving are his wife, Trudy; a daughter, Catherine, of Davis, Calif.; two sons, Richard, of Berkeley, Calif., and Kurt, of Los Angeles; a stepdaughter, Debra Bradley of Northampton, Mass., and three grandchildren.

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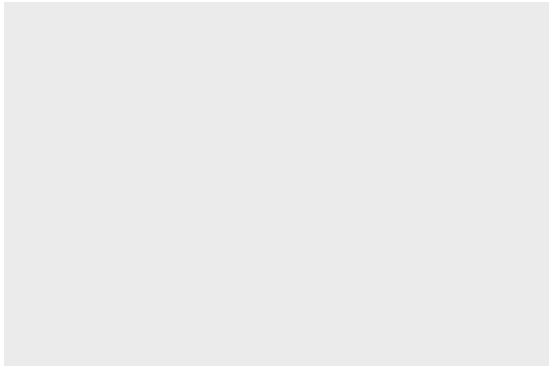
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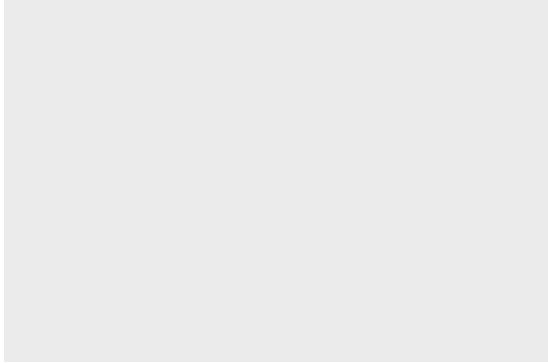
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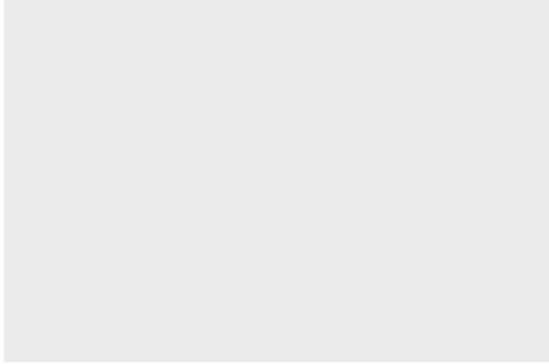
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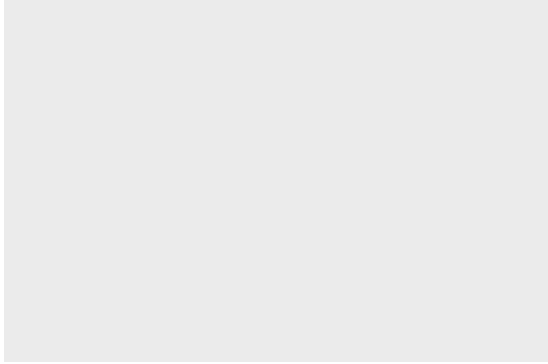
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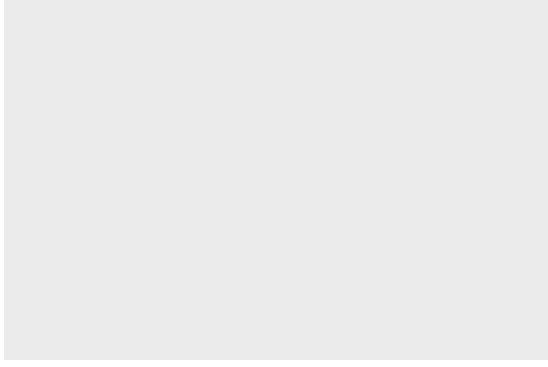
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George Rose/Los Angeles Times

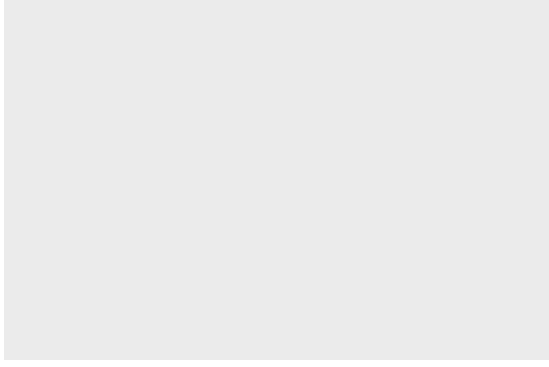
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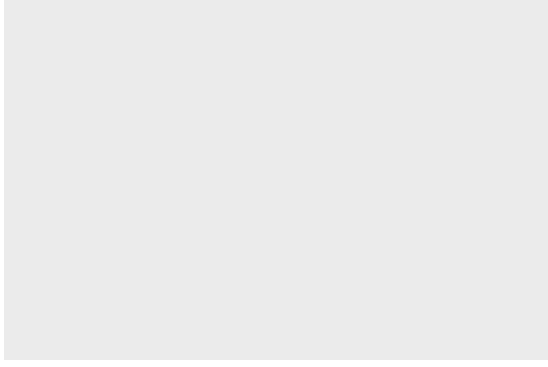
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