

Allan Griswold Johnson died December 24, 2017 at his home in Canton, Connecticut. After a childhood in Washington, DC and Oslo, Norway, Allan came to Dartmouth from Andover, Massachusetts. A Sociology major, he participated in ROTC and the Ledyard Canoe Club. He received his PhD from the University of Michigan; his dissertation was on women's roles in Mexico City, where he lived for eight months. Allan taught sociology at Wesleyan University, and later at Hartford College for Women. He had a lifelong commitment to understanding systems of oppression and privilege. In the late 1970's, Allan began volunteering at a Rape Crisis Service, and later was a consultant with the National Center for the Prevention of Rape. An author of multiple books, he is best known for his non-fiction *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy* and his 2010 novel *The First Thing and the Last*, which addressed domestic violence. Allan was an avid swimmer and musician; he swam a mile a day until just before his death. He also studied jazz piano as an adult.

He is survived by his life partner of 37 years, Nora Jamieson, three children, Paul Johnson, Karla MacDonald and Emily Johnson, and four grandchildren. "He was a man of integrity and depth of soul"

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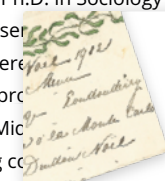
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ALLAN JOHNSON

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Noted sociologist and novelist Allan G. Johnson, an influential figure in the profeminist men's movement and the broader progressive movements for social justice, died on December 24 at his home in Canton, Connecticut, surrounded by family and friends. He was 71. Author both of nonfiction books and novels, his work coupled keen analysis with engaging, accessible writing in books addressing gender, race, and class. Best known among them are *The Gender Knot*, and *Privilege, Power, and Difference*. "Allan was passionately committed to ending men's violence against women, which is how I was initially drawn to his work, and to him," said the author and cultural critic, Jackson Katz. "He made a major contribution to our theoretical and practical understanding of how men-especially white men-can and should [play](#) a role in the struggles for gender, racial and economic justice." Paula Rothenberg, editor of *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States* said by unraveling society's patriarchal legacy, *The Gender Knot* was "one of the best, most readable, and most comprehensive accounts of patriarchy that is available in print." Born on January 26, 1946, the son of Valdemar Nels Johnson of Sequim, Wash., and Alice Griswold Johnson of Newburyport, Mass., Allan lived in Washington, D.C. until he was six, when his [family moved](#) to Oslo, Norway for two years, where his father was posted with the [U.S. Navy](#). Upon returning to the U.S., the family settled in Andover, Massachusetts. Johnson began writing while in high school at Philips Andover Academy, graduating with prizes in poetry and short fiction in 1964. He earned his B.A. in Sociology and English at Dartmouth College, and a Ph.D. in Sociology at the [University of Michigan](#). His disser on women's roles in Mexico City, where he lived for eight months. It was while he was a pro sociology at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, that he began a lifelong co



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society. The issue that first drew him to these problems was men's violence against women. In the late 1970s, he began volunteering at the Rape Crisis Service in Hartford, Conn. He developed an undergraduate course on the sociology of gender to explore the structure and culture of patriarchal systems and male privilege. A consultant with the National Center for the Prevention of Rape, he served on the board of the Connecticut Coalition against Domestic Violence, as well as testifying before the state judiciary committee on laws to protect the rights of sexual assault victims. His first book, *Social Statistics without Tears*, was published in 1976. After leaving Wesleyan, he wrote his next book, *Human Arrangements: An Introduction to Sociology*. During this time he also rediscovered his love of fiction, writing short stories and working for a brief time in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, with the American novelist, poet, and editor, Leonard Wallace Robinson. Returning to the U.S., he joined the faculty at Hartford College for Women where he taught sociology and women's studies. During this period, he wrote his most important nonfiction works, including *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy*; *The Forest and the Trees: Sociology as Life, Practice, and Promise*; *The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology*; and *Privilege, Power, and Difference*. In 1995, he began speaking and conducting trainings around the country addressing topics of race and gender, initially on behalf of diversity consulting firms in corporate settings. Following publication of *The Gender Knot*, he shifted his focus to presentations and workshops at colleges, universities, and non-educational settings. He also blogged regularly at <http://www.agjohnson.us>. His first novel, *The First Thing and the Last*, was published in 2010 after meeting with considerable resistance from mainstream publishers because of its realistic portrayal of domestic violence. *Publishers Weekly* recognized it as a notable debut work of fiction, and *Oprah Magazine* listed it as one of ten "Great Reads" in April, 2010. *Nothing Left to Lose*, his second novel, was published the following year and revolved around an American family in crisis during the [Vietnam War](#). *Not from Here* was his last book, a memoir published in 2015 that explored the meaning of being white in North America. In addition to his writing, Allan was an avid swimmer and musician. He continued to swim a mile a day at a local pool until just before his death, and passed his love for swimming on to his children and grandchildren. He studied jazz piano as an adult and his house was always filled with music. Allan is survived by his beloved life partner, Nora Jamieson, a healer, writer, and gatherer of women with whom he shared his life for 37 years; his sister, Annalee Johnson of Newburyport, Mass.; his brother, Dudley Paul Johnson of Alberta, Canada; his children, Paul Johnson of Arlington, Mass. (Karla MacDonald), and Emily Johnson of Los Angeles, Calif.; his niece, Petra Jamieson Gillette of Alstead, NH, and four grandchildren, Andrew,

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Fiona, Oscar and Simon. He also is survived by his beloved dog Roxie. "He was a man of integrity and depth of soul," Nora said of him, "who carried and wrote of suffering, creating exquisite beauty that pierced the heart. More than anything, Allan wanted to walk the path of a real human being." Following a home funeral and family-led graveside service, Johnson was buried in the North Canton Cemetery on December 29. A memorial gathering to honor his life is being planned for a later date. For updates on details please subscribe to <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/allanjohnson5>. Individuals wishing to make a contribution in his memory can do so by donating to WorldTrust (<https://world-trust.org>).

Published in The Hartford Courant on Jan. 7, 2018

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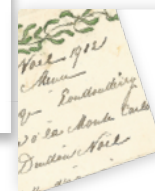
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