

Börje Holmberg (PhD)  
Emeritus Professor



Börje Holmberg was born in 1924 in Malmö, Sweden. He studied English, German, Romance Languages and Education at the University of Lund, where he has also earned his doctorate in 1956.

In 1956, Börje Holmberg became educational director of Hermods in Sweden, then largest distance-teaching organisation in Europe, which in the 1955–75 period annually enrolled between 75 000 and 100 000 students. In 1966 he was appointed Director General of Hermods Foundation and resigned from this position, when the Swedish government took over Hermods in 1975. During his time at Hermods Börje Holmberg had published studies in distance education, three monographs and several articles.

In 1976, Börje Holmberg became Professor of distance education methodology and Director of the Institute for Distance-Education Research at the FernUniversität in Hagen/Germany. At the FernUniversität he published several books and a great many contributions to learned journals. Among his works can be mentioned "Theory and Practice of Distance Education", a second and revised edition of which was published by Routledge (London, New York) in 1990, "Growth and Structure of Distance Education" (Croom Helm, London, 1986), "Mediated Communication as a Component of Distance Education" (FernUniversität, Hagen, 1989), a number of research reports, thus, e.g., on his empathy approach and theory of guided didactic conversation.

After his retirement from the FernUniversität Börje Holmberg has continued contributing both to research and debate on distance education, for example by articles in "Open Learning" and "Epistolodidaktika". He is also active as a practitioner in the field. Thus he has taken part in the planning of a new distance-teaching polytechnic in Germany. He is now Rector of this, the "Private FernFachhochschule Darmstadt" which registered its first students at the end of 1997.

Börje Holmberg has been awarded honorary doctorates by Deakin University in Australia and the Open University in the United Kingdom. He is a member of Kungliga Fysiografiska Sällskapet i Lund, an academy of sciences founded in 1792, is a Knight of Royal Order of Vasa, Sweden, as well as of the Order of the White Rose of Finland.