My father, Keith Dixon, who has died aged 86, was a professor of philosophy and sociology. His academic career in Britain and Canada was sparked by a youthful engagement with the philosophy of science as he worked his way up from being a laboratory assistant at ICI to becoming an accomplished teacher and writer.

Born in Ilford, Essex, he was the son of Florence (nee Sturgess), who had been a professional singer and in later life became a school administrator, and Frederick Dixon, a manager in a photographic firm.

As a child Keith and his family moved to Harpenden, Hertfordshire, to avoid the blitz. When the second world war was over and his father returned from military service, they relocated again to Brighouse, in West Yorkshire, where Keith attended the local grammar school. When he left, he was conscripted and served in the UK and Egypt, where he took up a post with British Forces radio. These experiences contributed to Keith becoming a civil libertarian.

After his national service, he went to Leeds University to study education and followed this with a master’s in philosophy at Birkbeck College, University of London.

He went to work as an English and religious education teacher – despite being an atheist – at Wickford secondary school, in Essex, and later at William Edwards secondary in Grays.

In 1964 he moved north to teach philosophy of education and social sciences at Jordanhill College of Education and at Strathclyde University in Glasgow. From 1968 to 1975 he was a member of the sociology department at the University of York, after which he accepted a tenured position at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, Canada, where he stayed until his retirement in 1991.
He was a thoughtful writer and had a fascination with language. In addition to publishing articles in academic journals, he edited *The Philosophy of Education and the Curriculum* (1972) and was the author of *Sociological Theory: Pretence and Possibility* (1973), *The Sociology of Belief: Fallacy and Foundation* (1980) and *Freedom and Equality: the Moral Basis of Democratic Socialism* (1986), all published by Routledge.

He met his wife, Barbara (nee Lister), through the Labour party in Leeds and they married in 1954, going on to have three children. After retirement, they settled in the New Forest, Hampshire. Finally in 2015 they moved with their eldest daughter, Ruth, to a shared house near Bovey Tracey, Devon.

Barbara died in 2015. Keith is survived by his daughters, Ruth, Sarah and me, grandchildren, Rosie, Edward and Sara, great-grandchild, Ella, and by a brother, Ian, and sister, Sheila.

*Helen Dixon*