In Memoriam

Arthur Wesley Cragg

Arthur Wesley (Wes) Cragg died on August 26, 2017. With Wes’s passing, the editors of and contributors to Business Ethics Quarterly (BEQ) lost an esteemed colleague and friend. A Rhodes Scholar, Wes received his BPhil and DPhil from Oxford University. He was a faculty member at Laurentian University before being appointed in 1992 as the inaugural George R. Gardiner Professor in Business Ethics at the Schulich School of Business and York University’s Department of Philosophy, a position he held from 1992-2006.

As the project director of the Canadian Business Ethics Research Network (CBERN), Wes was a passionate and accomplished advocate for corporate ethics and social responsibility. Wes cofounded CBERN in 2007 with the goal of promoting collaborative business ethics initiatives and research across academia, government, NGOs, and industry, shortly after his appointment as a senior scholar and professor emeritus at the Schulich School of Business.

A pioneer in his own right, Wes encouraged the public and private sectors to integrate responsible business conduct into the heart of their operations for decades, and his efforts have undoubtedly contributed to the ascent of the global corporate social responsibility movement. Among the many positions that he held during the course of his distinguished career, Wes was the founding chair and president of Transparency International’s Canadian chapter in 1996. He was also a former president of the Canadian Philosophical Society and the John Howard Society of Canada.

Wes’s scholarly work has covered a variety of interdisciplinary topics, including corporate governance, corporate codes of ethics, corporate social responsibility, sustainability, environmental ethics, business and human rights, ethical investment, the ethics of extractive industries, and economic development affecting First Nations communities. Wes was also a long-time member of the BEQ editorial board. He led a team of coeditors on an important and influential special issue of BEQ (22:1, 2012) addressing business and human rights. Wes was a scholar-practitioner who worked diligently to improve global business practices and had as much influence in this regard as anyone in our field.

A devoted advocate for indigenous rights in Canada and abroad, his research was designed to advance and improve upon issues concerning informed consent and knowledge sharing, particularly within marginalized societies affected by mining. As the Project Director for CBERN, he worked closely for ten years with the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach in northern Quebec to understand the impacts of resource extraction on their traditional lands and to develop tools to mitigate these impacts, striving to ensure that the Naskapi and other First Nations benefited from development activities, while also working to help preserve their history, language, and culture.
Wes passed away in the care of his beloved wife Mary, his children, and his grandchildren at his home in Aurora, Ontario. His legacy will live on, but he is sorely missed as a committed business ethics leader, scholar, and mentor.

Denis G. Arnold, UNC Charlotte and Business Ethics Quarterly
Ian Greene, York University and Canadian Business Ethics Research Network
Otto Faludi, Canadian Business Ethics Research Network
Lauren Turner, Canadian Business Ethics Research Network