
IN MEMORIAM

CHARLES H. BACKSTROM

As a 19-year-old 2nd lieutenant in the 6850 Internal Security Detachment, Charles Backstrom was assigned to the Nazi War Crimes trials in Nürnberg, Germany. At times, he was put in charge of the entire prison: 21 major war criminals and hundreds of other lesser officials. Charles came into contact with people such as Hermann Goering, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, General Alfred Jodl, Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz, Julius Streicher, Fritz Saukel, Albert Speer, and more than two dozen other Nazi officers. Writing home about Hermann Goering's suicide, he offered his parents a first-hand explanation of events that night:

I had been making the rounds with the German doctor. We just got as far as [Arthur] Seyss-Inquart, so I did not visit Göring, but Lt. MacLinden went with the doctor the rest of the way. I went on guard. Pretty soon Lt. Roska the doctor came rushing in, and then Col. Andrus, so when Lt. Pace came down ... I asked him what was the matter. He really looked excited. He says, "Göring committed suicide." ... As far as we can figure, this is what happened. He must have put the vial into his mouth when the guard changed, because, although there isn't supposed to be one, there probably was a second or so when no one was looking in. The guard changed at 22:30. Then [Göring] just lay there, and about 22:45 crushed the vial. The guard saw him stiffen a little, then make a choking sound. He yelled for the corporal of the guard, who called the prison office. Lt. Croner and MacLinden rushed down with the Chaplain ... Croner went for the German doctor, but Göring died a few seconds later. The chaplain grabbed his wrist and said, "My God, this man's dead." And he was. His face was twisted in agony as only a violent poison death can do.¹

After his military service ended, Charles Backstrom began his civilian career in 1949 as a high school social science and journalism teacher in Morehead, Minnesota. In 1956, he received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Wisconsin, where he won the Genevieve Gorst Herfurth Award—still given today—for the best

social studies dissertation. His first position as a political scientist was at Eastern Michigan University from 1955–59. He then taught American politics and research methods at the University of Minnesota from 1959 until his retirement in 1996, attaining the rank of full professor in 1970. Throughout this time, Charles continuously promoted professionalism, excellence, and mature scholarship, all the while imparting a steady flow of wisdom and insight to his younger colleagues. He embodied excellence with a humane face, at all times. That is just part of his continuing legacy in the University of Minnesota political science department.

When Charles did his graduate work in political science, the discipline was experiencing the behavioral revolution, a major challenge to traditional modes of research that had dominated the field. He was among the earliest scholars in the broad area of electoral behavior, and he developed impressive competencies in statistical analysis and computer programming. Along with Gerald Hursh-Cesar he published *Survey Research*, an impressive and very early tour de force introducing systematic data collection and analysis methods to an emergent cohort of behavioral political scientists. Published by Northwestern University Press in 1961, it set high standards of rigor and professionalism for this new field of scholarship during the 1960s and 1970s. It stood the test of time by being rewritten, more than doubled in size, and re-published by John Wiley & Sons in 1981. This entirely revised and expanded second edition continued to be influential through the 1980s and 1990s.

With Ronald Stinnett, Charles wrote the definitive work—*Recount*—on the contested Minnesota gubernatorial election of 1962. Until 2008, this was the closest statewide election in Minnesota history, and after recounts and court challenges, Democrat Karl Rolvaag defeated incumbent Republican Elmer Andersen by 91 votes. As we write this today, an equally close statewide election is being decided in essentially the same way. It is ironic that Charles Backstrom passed away in the summer of 2008 because he would have reveled in the Coleman-Franken election and subsequent recount. Charles would

have been the resident expert and could have provided wise counsel to those overseeing and re-creating the process. Health permitting, he would have studied every twist and turn that this 2008–09 recount took in preparation for an article or a follow-up book. (The Minnesota secretary of state noted how helpful *Recount* was in preparing for and conducting the recount of 2008–09.)

In the mid and later 1960s, while working under a grant from the National Science Foundation, Charles developed RAFT (Rapid Analysis Fiscal Tool), a method for evaluating the geographically differential effects of changes in state public policies. This study was quite farsighted and was akin to the types of things done today to estimate the budgetary implications of policy change. His study was read and used by state legislators and legislative staff when they enacted the state of Minnesota's pioneering Fiscal Disparities Act of 1971, an attempt to address increasing disparities in property tax rates. According to the *Urban & Regional Planning Economic Development Handbook*, Minneapolis and St. Paul represent the only metropolitan area in the U.S. that has such a tax-base sharing policy.

Charles Backstrom was also one of the world's experts on redistricting and gerrymandering. His most important work on this subject is undoubtedly "Issues in Gerrymandering: An Explanatory Measure of Partisan Gerrymandering Applied to Minnesota," published in July 1978 in the *Minnesota Law Review*. (This article was co-authored by Leonard Robins and Scott Eller, reflecting Backstrom's characteristic generosity toward research assistants.) The specific measure of partisan gerrymandering presented in this article published some 30 years ago has been superseded by subsequent work, as predicted and indeed welcomed by the authors themselves. Its contribution to how we think about partisan gerrymandering has, however, endured. Prior to this article the dominant narrative concerning partisan gerrymandering focused on the geographic shape of districts and the remedy prescribed to preclude it was a requirement that districts be compact. In this article, Backstrom and his colleagues

demonstrated that plans with nearly identical degrees of compactness could have widely differing partisan effects. They argued that we needed a political measure for a political problem and to this day, that has remained the predominant frame for partisan gerrymandering research.

In the last years of his academic life, Backstrom's major scholarly work was with Robins on the politics of AIDS. It did not receive the degree of attention or obtain the influence he and Robins would have liked, but it was important for Backstrom to show that even (or perhaps especially) the study of the most explosively emotional subjects could benefit from an honest and objective perspective. And no matter his personal beliefs, he always exhibited honesty and objectivity.

Charles Backstrom was passionate about practical politics and he brought his careful, scholarly analysis to bear on the political process throughout his life—although his professionalism put strict limits on how he did this. Along with John Turner, in 1961 Charles helped his colleague Art Naftalin become elected mayor of Minneapolis by creating a quantitative measure of precincts' "Naftalin potential." They served as Naftalin's consultants and helped him win the primary election. They then conducted an entirely new statistical analysis to re-rate Minneapolis's precincts, creating a new general-election strategy, also successfully. This solidified a reputation as a remarkably successful, data-driven campaign consultant. Charles also developed a very successful set of 100 bell-weather precincts for Minnesota elections that was used successfully by the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* and others to avoid significant errors in "calling" elections based on early returns. Shortly thereafter, Charles took over and professionalized what became a model internship program in the political science department (see below), and because of these new obligations, he curtailed his partisan activities and consulting because he knew he would have to work intimately and successfully with politicians and students from all across the partisan spectrum.

At the start of his academic career, Charles received an APSA Congressional Fellowship, working for Congressman Carl Elliott of Alabama. A racial and economic progressive, he sacrificed his career to promote racial equality. Years later, when the Kennedy Library Foundation's Profiles in Courage Awards were created, Charles and

Elliott's administrative assistant, Mary Ellen Jolley, nominated Elliott and he became the very first recipient in 1990. One of Charles's particularly prominent characteristics was his ability to recognize and appreciate the good work and excellent qualities of others, and to promote them accordingly. We saw him do this on several occasions where his own self-interest was sacrificed in order to reward more extensively the extraordinary achievements of others. He was not self-effacing but he was overwhelmingly committed to quality and he was totally devoted to rewarding it.

In addition to his scholarship, Charles Backstrom helped create and run a remarkable student internship program. At a time when many such programs lacked a scholarly emphasis and were largely applied internships, Charles insisted that all students who participated be trained to understand and apply analytic scholarly perspectives about their applied experiences. His unwavering commitment to the disciplined scholarship of political science was never compromised whether dealing with undergraduates or colleagues.² Even today, the University of Minnesota's undergraduate internship program is a testimony to the direction set by Charles Backstrom. It bears his imprint more than anyone else's, and that imprint is remarkably positive. Today's students may not know it, but the high quality of their internship experience owes much to Charles's vision and dedication.

A few additional words are required about Backstrom the man. The extent of his kindness and generosity to colleagues, students, friends, and even strangers was remarkable, but others of course also share these qualities. His combination of deep religiosity and complete tolerance and non-judgmentalism was, however, in this age of culture wars, extremely rare.

Complementing his extraordinary compassion, empathy and generosity was an almost stereotypical professorial disorganization. The wonderful, warm stories about all of his characteristics are legion. One of the authors of this in memoriam piece was an undergraduate of Backstrom's in the 1960s who left Minnesota to obtain a Ph.D. and then taught for a few years at various universities elsewhere. He returned to Minnesota as a professor eight years after leaving it with a BA in hand, and he swears that some of the messy piles on Charles's desk that were present when he left in 1967 were still there when he

returned in 1975. Perhaps his memory is faulty and perhaps he has created an apocryphal story, but when told to Charles's friends and colleagues, it seems so likely to be true that it doesn't matter. As related by Charles's longtime friend and colleague, professor emeritus Robert Agranoff of the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University, Charles once said, "I have 16 file drawers in my office and they are all labeled miscellaneous."³ He is greatly missed.

John L. Sullivan

Regents Professor, University of Minnesota
Leonard Robins, Professor Emeritus,
Roosevelt University

NOTES

An abbreviated version of this in memoriam was written for the Election Law Journal.

1. "Making History: The Life and Times of Charles H. Backstrom," <http://charlesbackstrom.com/lifestory.html>.
2. Largely due to these successful efforts, Charles became the first faculty member to win the College of Liberal Art's John Tate Award for academic advising.
3. Robert Agranoff, "A Tribute to Charles Backstrom."

SAMUEL H. BEER

Samuel Hutchison Beer, Eaton Professor of the Science of Government Emeritus at Harvard University, died in his sleep at the age of 97 in Washington, D.C., on April 7 2009. He was president of the American Political Science Association from 1976–77.

In brief compass, one can never do justice to a life, and that is doubly true for Sam Beer. He lived far longer than most of us can hope for, as fully as anyone can live a life, and over what was almost a full century of tumultuous politics—of which he was not only the keenest observer but in many cases also a participant.

As a child, he visited the White House and shook the hand of Warren Harding. As a young man on a Rhodes scholarship, he traveled around Europe, watching from the woods while troops of young Nazis marched by. He returned to the U.S. to work for the Democratic National Committee as an occasional speechwriter for Franklin Roosevelt. He could describe how Roosevelt stood under the platform at the 1936 Democratic convention, fine tuning and firing up his own speech by listening to the cadence above him. Sam was a police reporter for the *NY Post*—not a bad

training for a would-be political scientist. He took his doctorate at Harvard in 1943 and then went to war, landing on the Normandy beaches on June 9, 1944, in charge of an artillery battery that he took so close to the front lines that his commander threatened to have him drummed out of the army. Instead, he was awarded a bronze star, and served, as a captain, in the American Military Government of Occupied Germany. One of his duties was to interview ordinary Germans to find out why they had joined the Nazi party. Transcripts of those interviews are on deposit in the Kennedy library and others of his papers are in the Harvard archives.

Most of the rest of Sam's life was spent at Harvard, which drew so much benefit from his scholarship and teaching that a grateful university awarded him an honorary degree in 1998. He served as chair of the department of government from 1954 to 1958, retiring in 1982 to take up the inaugural Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Professorship of American Politics at Boston College, endowed in honor of his old friend, the former Speaker of the House of Representatives. Since 2002, he had been a senior scholar of the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C.

At Harvard, Sam Beer was famous for the two-semester course in General Education, Social Sciences 2: Western Thought and Development, which he taught for more than 30 years, the longest period in which a single course has been offered at the university. The course was a magisterial affair designed to raise the most fundamental issues in political theory and explore how they are worked out over the course of Western political development. His teaching fellows included some of the most distinguished social scientists of the twentieth century, from Michael Walzer to Charles Tilly. The weekly meetings of section leaders were marked by high-level debates about how to apply theory to history, reflected in the volume dedicated to the course, *Essays in Theory and History* edited by Melvin Richter.

Sam was a charismatic teacher. He would stride into the classroom, dressed, as often as not, in boots, a plaid shirt, and tweed jacket, with books under both arms. He did not so much lecture as think aloud at length about both sides of a debate. Like all great teachers, he knew that the objective was to leave the students, not with answers, but with questions and a more profound understanding of their importance.

Thousands of students took this course, including more than a few who found their way to Washington, and Sam was constantly encountering those who had once taken it. The last time was in early March, when the person who settled into a neighboring seat at the Kennedy Center introduced himself and said how much he had learned in that course, a mere 60 years ago. At Harvard graduations, which Sam attended with regularity, it was not uncommon to see scores of alumni stand up and applaud as he marched by.

Born in Bucyrus, Ohio, on July 28, 1911, Sam attended Staunton Military Academy, where he played football with Barry Goldwater, and then the University of Michigan, from which he graduated in 1932 with a Rhodes scholarship to study medieval history at Balliol College, Oxford. Asked why he chose that subject, he would reply that he wanted to study the Crusades, a "subject on which you could get some distance." He graduated with first class honors, the first American to do so in that degree.

After three years on a continent headed inexorably toward war, Sam returned to America in the midst of the Depression with a new interest in politics that drew him to the Democratic Party. In later years, when asked how he was going to vote he would say that, having failed to vote for Roosevelt in 1932, he had made up for it by voting for him in every election since then. But he did much more than vote. As an active member of Americans for Democratic Action, he served as head of its Massachusetts branch and then national chairman from 1959–62. He was a member of the McGovern Commission that redesigned the Democratic primary system; a frequent consultant to state and federal government, notably about issues of governmental organization; and a confidant of many in public office, including senator Edward Kennedy who has described Sam Beer as his favorite teacher. In 1998, he testified before the House of Representatives, criticizing the politicization of impeachment in the case of President Clinton. An appointment as ambassador to Uruguay, of all places, was in the works when John F. Kennedy's assassination put an end to it.

If a loss for Uruguay, this was a gain for the study of politics. His first book, *The City of Reason* (1949) was a study of Alfred North Whitehead in the tradition of Oxford idealism that sees reason inherent in

human things rather than hovering above our irrationalities. Casting aside the vague complacency of such a view, however, Samuel Beer went on to make signal contributions to the study of two prominent fields, American federalism and British politics.

Beginning with a series of essays on the modernization of American federalism that culminated in the publication in 1993 of *To Make a Nation: The Rediscovery of American Federalism*, Beer brought the sensibilities of a political theorist to bear on the practical dilemmas of the American republic. Conscious of the advantages of a federal system but concerned that a fixation on states' rights could waylay the republic, he tried to explain why power shifted periodically between Washington and the states and how the American founders conceived of a federal system. His answer was that their concept of federalism was always underpinned by a national idea, rooted in the sovereignty of the people and hence in the practical need to create such a people. He traced the origins of this conception to the influence on the founding fathers of seventeenth-century English political thought, itself the result of a debate with Aquinas, and he found echoes of it in the writings of Walt Whitman, Herbert Croly, and Walter Lippmann.

Beer's reputation in political science was made with his 1965 book, published in the U.S. as *British Politics in the Collectivist Age* and in Britain as *Modern British Politics*. A remarkable treatise on evolving conceptions of political representation in Britain, it argues that the conflict over scarce resources at the basis of that politics is mediated by an evolving political culture, seen as a progression of ideas about how the interests of society should be represented in the halls of government, whether through the legislature or the producer group politics around it. Beer linked the collectivist politics that emerged in Britain after World War II to the Old Tory, Whig, and Liberal concepts of representation of previous centuries. Impeccably informed, remarkably detailed, and complexly argued, in this and subsequent editions, that book became the text to read to understand British politics. As a portrait of how the multiple strands of society, polity, and economy are woven together, it has no peer.

A book on the British Treasury preceded this one, and Beer followed it up in 1982 with *Britain Against Itself*, a discerning diagnosis of British politics in the 1970s

when a “romantic revolt” dissolved the restraining bonds of deference, unleashing conflict over resources that threatened pluralistic stagnation. Equally influential were his later essays that saw, in the Labour governments of Tony Blair, the legacy of the “new liberalism” that had gripped Britain at the turn of an earlier century. Widely seen as the American political scientist who best understood Britain, Beer was made a corresponding fellow of the British Academy in 2000 and awarded honorary degrees from the Universities of Ulster and Sussex as well as the Isaiah Berlin prize of the Political Studies Association.

For those fortunate enough to know him, Samuel Beer was larger than life. A tall, handsome man with a shock of red hair, he brought warmth and wit to every gathering in which he participated. His toughness of mind and body were legendary. He was as manly a man as a professor can be. Taking up skydiving after the age of 50, he made hundreds of jumps, including 199 from 15,000 feet. But he was distinguished, above all else, by an abiding intellectual engagement. He spent his life thinking about the most important questions in politics. His door was always open and, from everyone, he wanted to learn. Whether you were a senator, a colleague, or a freshman, he wanted to know, “what do you think?” To discuss such issues with him was to have a dialogue with the greatest minds of the centuries. He had read them all—in literature as well as politics. He was an enthusiast for the theatre and poetry, not least for the insights they provide into human nature, and he was a shrewd judge of character, as well as a delightful interlocutor.

Although Beer was a discerning scholar of comparative politics, whose perspectives are well reflected in the influential text, *Patterns of Government*, there was no mistaking his fundamental allegiances. He was an Ohio man, committed to the American republic, deeply conscious of its history, and concerned about its future. One of us recalls a dinner party in which Sam and one of his guests discovered that their grandfathers had probably been on opposite sides of the battle of Atlanta during the American Civil War. Characteristically, Sam did some further research and concluded that grandfather had been fighting in Tennessee at the time, but his sense of connection to the long history of the republic was palpable.

On June 22, 1935, Sam Beer married Roberta Frances Reed, who died in 1987.

He is survived by his second wife of almost 20 years, Jane K. Brooks of Washington, D.C.; by two daughters, Katherine Swingly Beer of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Frances Fitzgerald Beer of Toronto, Canada; and by two stepdaughters, Alison Brooks of Washington, D.C., and Camilla Brooks of New York City. He also leaves six grandchildren, three step-grandchildren, and one great grandchild. A son, William, died in 1991. A memorial service will be held at Harvard’s Memorial Church on Friday, October 2, at 3 p.m.

For those of us who were his students, Sam Beer exemplified a greatness of spirit not always seen in the academy. He was a person of great moral as well as physical courage, and his teaching was memorable for the virtue he conveyed in it. His life as well as his work leaves an indelible mark on all who were fortunate enough to have known him.

Peter A. Hall
Harvard University
Harvey C. Mansfield
Harvard University

JACQUELINE DELAAT

Jacqueline DeLaat died on April 24, 2009. She was 66 years old. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Iowa, earned a masters in political science from the University of Minnesota in 1967, and then spent 10 years in Washington, D.C. There she first worked in government as a presidential management intern, and then for the United States Information Agency as assistant to the director of research. She worked later outside of government as assistant director of the Day Care and Child Development Association (a nonprofit lobby), and then as Director of Washington Youth Seminars (an experiential youth-education program). She returned to graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh, where she earned a Ph.D. in public administration and public policy in 1982. She taught political science at Waynesburg College in Pennsylvania (1979–82), at Bethany College in West Virginia (1982–88), and since 1988 at Marietta College in Ohio, where she was the McCoy Professor of Political Science.

One of Jackie’s research interests concerned relations between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. This followed

naturally from her diverse work experiences in Washington. Her dissertation examined problems arising from the privatization of government services by comparing public and private refuse collection practices in Pittsburgh. In the 1980s she published articles on the history of public administration as a discipline, on public-private efforts to keep the Pirates baseball team in Pittsburgh, and on parallels between the public, private, and nonprofit segments of society from the perspective of their common use of volunteers. That last article was republished in a book edited by Susan Ostrander titled *Shifting the Debate: Public/Private Relations in the Modern Welfare State*. More recently she had delivered a paper comparing how Ohio and Massachusetts promoted international trade to benefit their states in the post-9/11 era.

Jackie also published work in the areas of women in politics and gender in the workplace. Always an innovative teacher who used simulations and other in-class activities, she wrote scenarios to illuminate issues of workplace discrimination. The first edition of her book *Gender in the Workplace: A Case Study Approach* published by Sage in 1999, contained five hypothetical cases, along with questions for discussion and analysis, as well as extensive lists of references bearing on the situations in the scenarios. She did extensive interviews with professional women to ensure her cases’ realism. For the book’s second edition, published in 2007, she added cases from China and Germany to provide comparative perspective on workplace discrimination. In the 1990s she wrote articles on Shirley Chisholm, Bella Abzug, and Margaret Chase Smith for the reference work *Women in World History*, and in 2001, along with co-authors Barbara Palmer, Judith Baer, and Amy Jasperson, she published an article titled “Low-Life-Sleazy-Big-Haired-Trailer-Park Girl v. the President: The Paula Jones Case and the Law of Sexual Harassment.” Most recently she planned a research project with Barbara Burrell, which they called their “capstone” project before retirement, to interview female political scientists who had run for public office while they were in academia, and to compile and analyze those experiences. She shared her expertise on gender issues in the workplace by giving presentations at universities like Maryland, Elon, Glenville State, and West Virginia-Parkersburg, facilitating workshops like one at an international

women's conference in Dubai, and consulting with organizations like the U.S. Bureau of Public Debt.

A third area Jackie devoted scholarly attention to involved pedagogy. She was a gifted teacher dedicated to helping others become better teachers. This focus also made a virtue of necessity since she spent her career at small private colleges where she had a heavy and diverse teaching load and considerable college-service commitments. She gave presentations, delivered papers, and facilitated workshops on a variety of topics including using case studies in the classroom, eliciting and directing class discussions, incorporating current events into classes, teaching courses with a leadership focus, etc. A Marietta economics professor who co-taught with her in the summer of 2002 at the University of International Relations in Beijing and in the summer of 2004 at the Methodist University of Piracicaba in Brazil was struck by how much she learned from teaching and traveling with Jackie.

Undoubtedly Jackie had her biggest impact on her students. She often came to class early to chat informally with them, which she referred to as "warming up the room." At the same time she was an incisive and demanding teacher, not afraid to push students to do their best work. The term paper in her public policy course and her capstone course for senior majors in particular developed reputations for their copious amounts of work. She recently created a presidential politics course that culminated in students traveling to New Hampshire over their winter break to work on the campaign of the presidential candidate of their choice in the final two weeks before the 2008 primary election. She arranged for students to stay with local political activists, and accompanied them to New Hampshire. As one student said, "This experience has taught me more than I could ever learn in a regular, four-walled classroom. Reading books about campaigning isn't the same as actually working with the campaign, not even close." While Jackie was open about her political beliefs, announcing to classes on the first day that she was a liberal Democrat so students would know her biases, she was also a remarkably even-handed teacher, and she mentored a number of conservative Republican students who have pursued careers in politics. During her final illness, one of them e-mailed me and said that "Dr. DeLaat holds a special place not only as

my advisor and mentor throughout the years, but also as a friend and absolutely my favorite Democrat to talk politics with." For years she administered Marietta's Washington Semester exchange program with American University, always encouraging our students to get an experience in D.C. She was a significant presence in many students' lives, as witness one e-mail message I received from an alumnae after she died: "She sat me down freshman year after taking American Government with her and asked me what I was majoring in at school. I told her 'Broadcasting.' She asked if I liked it and I responded, 'No. But, I like this political science stuff.' She said, 'Good, you are now a political science major and I will be your advisor.' And that was it ... From that point on I had a least one course with her every term and would go to visit her in her office about once a week. I will miss her immensely, but I am thankful for the opportunity to know her."

Jackie generously lent her talents to a wide variety of organizations. In this sense she was a "public intellectual" who tried to promote gender equity in multiple realms. She served on the Lutheran Church's national advisory Commission on Women, which advises the denomination on issues involving the status of women in church and society. She took part in a multi-year study of the political science graduate school experience at Ph.D.-granting institutions in the Midwest to help examine and explain different rates of success between women and men. Along with four co-authors, she published this research in the April 2006 issue of *PS*. She was elected to the Executive Council of the Midwest Political Science Association in 2007. Last year she was selected to chair the campus faculty representatives of the more than 200 colleges and universities that participate in the Washington Semester program. Locally she was a frequent resource for the print and broadcast media when they needed expert commentary on U.S. political issues. In some presidential election years she authored a series of newspaper articles analyzing different aspects of the campaign and provided election-night analysis for broadcast outlets. On campus she reached out to welcome new faculty members, and particularly tried to mentor younger female faculty. She relieved the tedium of faculty meetings with a ready supply of ironic or sarcastic side comments for those sitting near her. Her warmth, wit,

and wise counsel will be sorely missed by everyone at Marietta College.

In addition to her husband, R. Michael Smith, Jackie is survived by her sister, Christine DeLaat; brother, David Williams; and daughters, Meghan Walt and Michelle Smith. Contributions may be made in Jacqueline DeLaat's memory to a scholarship fund to aid Marietta College students to attend the Washington Semester program. Please contact Linda Stroh in the Advancement Office at Marietta College, 215 Fifth St., Marietta, OH 45750.

Michael Tager
Marietta College

H. PIERRE SECHER

Pierre Secher, professor emeritus of the University of Memphis political science department and chair from 1975 to 1981, died in November 2008. He was a teacher and researcher in comparative government and contemporary politics.

The passing of Dr. Secher leaves sadness in the hearts of his friends and family. But the memory of his admirable qualities outweighs the sense of loss, for in his senior years he left an example well suited for emulation by others in the profession.

To begin with his truly grand finale, nearly everything Pierre did in retirement was exemplary. He not only remained an active scholar, but he published two important books on interesting subjects. Both of them made real contributions. That Austria should have chosen a Jew as chancellor is already remarkable. Pierre developed the story in an unforgettable way. His last book, an edition and translation of familial letters at the time of the persecution by Nazis and the Shoah, will also remain of interest as long as human beings try to understand what happened in hopes of preventing a recurrence.

Even apart from his scholarship, it seemed that everything Pierre did in his final decades as professor emeritus was right. He kept up with some colleagues and mended fences with others. He remained a firm supporter of the University of Memphis library, which sorely needs such boosters. He founded the Germantown Democrats, an organization that started tiny but flourished under his guidance. He married an extraordinary woman who not only charmed his socks off but also enchanted all his friends and colleagues.

He was a solid family man, temporarily gruff when necessary (according to one family member), but by all observations the most sensitive and loving father and grandfather. No one could have delighted more in his family or have identified more closely with them than Pierre did. His legacy will live on, both in the family and at the university and in his writings.

Pierre's long-standing support of the Jewish Community Center was also much to his credit. He never descended into the slightest petty prejudice in this regard, but knew how to take his joy in Jewish things and Jewish ways. When he invited non-Jews to join him at the JCC, no Gentile could have received a warmer reception from anyone. We still enjoy those memories.

Pierre chaired the department at the University of Memphis for six years. During that time he hired a couple of gifted faculty who have had distinguished careers. One of them now has a significant role at the highest level in the administration, politics, and planning of a major university. Another of Pierre's hires at that time is now a leading researcher in comparative studies. Pierre deserves credit for giving these

academicians their start at the University of Memphis.

During Pierre's years as chair, a young professor in our department held a public lecture at the university. He entitled it "Christians and Jews and the Politics of Holidays: Why the Jews are Superior." Notwithstanding the surface impression one might get from this title, the speaker was a non-Jew who wanted to make some serious scholarly observations. Still, it was clearly an imprudent title that risked raising the passions of foolish people. Only after the talk did Pierre Secher tell me with a smile that he had had many complaints about the title, primarily from Jews worried about an ugly reaction. But Pierre truly believed in academic freedom. So he stood his ground no matter who called him, and (fortunately without any untoward incident) the show went on.

We were all blessed, above all in those golden years of his maturity, to have been touched by such a man. He even reacted nobly in the face of the worst catastrophe, the loss of a heroic son, Robert, whom he dearly loved. Pierre set the standard by which all other grieving fathers should be measured. He used the occasion to recount

the most wonderful, true stories about Robert. He planned yet another book, this time about his son. Pierre never showed any anger or desire for revenge over the loss.

Pierre went through some terrible hardships, but we will remember him with a smile on his face. That was most typical. We had during his chairmanship a very difficult, and even more incompetent than difficult, administrator named ZZZZ. Pierre knew the score about ZZZZ, and once a certain faculty member in the department started to get the drift, too, Pierre came to him in a friendly way and asked, "Do you know what a ZZZZ is?" "No," replied the other, "what?" "A ZZZZ," Pierre helpfully explained, "is a unit of inefficiency." Then he flashed that wonderful smile. He had a lot to smile about. Above all, he smiled about his family. He smiled about his wife, his children, his grandchildren. He smiled about his friends. He smiled about his work. He had many of the best reasons for smiling. We will miss him very much, but we will never forget that smile.

J. Harvey Lomax
University of Memphis