



Philip Abbott

October 18, 1944 - April 23, 2019

Philip Reading Abbott, age 74, died on April 23, 2019 at his home in Huntington Woods, Michigan after a long illness.

He was born in Abington, Pennsylvania in 1944, the son of William and Beryl Abbott. He graduated from American University in 1966 with a degree in political science and earned a PhD from Rutgers University in 1971. Dr. Abbott taught for 45 years at Wayne State University in Detroit.

Dr. Abbott is the author of fourteen books and over forty articles on a variety of topics in American politics and political thought. Five books concerned issues in the American Presidency. He was a Distinguished University Professor and held the Thomas Jefferson Chair in American Studies at the University of Amsterdam in 1997. He earned numerous awards for his scholarship, his teaching, and his mentorship of graduate students. Dr. Abbott was elected to the W.S.U. Academy of Scholars in 1996.

He is survived by his spouse, Patricia, his son, Joshua (Julie), his daughter, Megan, and his grandson, Kevin. He was predeceased by his brother, William.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, April 27, at 4:00 p.m. at Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 705 W. Eleven Mile Road, in Royal Oak (4 blocks east of Woodward).

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorial contributions be directed to the American Civil Liberties Union or to Doctors Without Borders.

Please share a memory on the Tribute Wall at www.SullivanFuneralDirectors.com.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

APR 27. 4:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak

705 W. Eleven Mile Road

Royal Oak, MI 48067

(248) 541-7000

royal@sullivanfh.com

<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Tribute Wall

DC

“ Professor Abbott's book *_States of Perfect Freedom_* (1987) was topped perhaps only by a one-time phone call we had about a decade ago.

David Chambers - August 28, 2022 at 04:44 PM

BF

“ Dr. Philip Abbott was an intellectual giant, a colossus. When I first met him in the fall of 1979 he was an assistant dean, but teaching political thought. I was stunned by his intellectual prowess. If, in political ideology, we were going to study the New Left, it meant we had to read C Wright Mills' *The Power Elite*, Herbert Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man*, and Kamu's *The Rebel*. He'd already written *The Shotgun Behind the Door* on the power of the coercive state even with a supposed liberal constitution. My favorite was *States of Perfect Freedom: Autobiography and American Political Thought*. Although he was best known for his analytical historical studies of presidential power, his real talent was as a teacher. Abbott, who taught for some 45 years at Wayne State University, was my Ph.D. advisor. His influence, particularly his regard for Louis Hartz, is reflected in my dissertation. After finishing my Master's, a few people in the department urged me to go on to the University of Michigan, but Wayne State was where Philip Abbott taught and the privilege of studying under him was too great a pull. I owe him more than any other teacher. My condolences go out to his prolific family of writers. He was a gentlemen, he was kind, he loved baseball and the Constitution and he will be sorely missed.

Bob Fitrakis - August 10, 2019 at 10:33 AM

BF

Sorry, spelled Kamus wrong.

Bob Fitrakis - August 11, 2019 at 01:26 PM

BF

Sorry, Camus, Phil would have taken a point off and made me read The Stranger.

Bob Fitrakis - August 11, 2019 at 01:29 PM



“ *My favorite professor from Wayne State. Truly a spectacular mind who changed the way I see things. Great writer and a great teacher. Thanks for paying it forward, for being one of the best, and for having a positive impact on those you taught and met. It is truly appreciated.*

Bill Oldham Jr. - August 04, 2019 at 05:04 PM



“ *Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of Philip Abbott.*



April 26, 2019 at 09:22 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Philip Abbott.*



April 26, 2019 at 06:48 PM



“ On April 23, 2019, I lost a dear friend, who died much too soon. Phil Abbott had many great qualities for which Anthony and I loved him. We shared with him a love of books, films, games, music, beautiful art, and food. Phil and I both shared a passion for gardening and the natural world. I'll recount one salient incident that to me exemplified so many of his gifts--kindness, intelligence, willingness to help even in seemingly hopeless cases, and great expertise in his vocation as scholar and teacher. When my younger daughter, who struggled mightily in high school, was failing social studies, a required course, and was very upset at the prospect of having to take it in the summer, Phil offered to give her some help to prepare for her final. Beatriz had gotten only failing marks the entire semester. Phil tutored her for no longer than an hour. What magic he performed I do not know, but Beatriz got a C+ on the final and was able to pass the class. Phil, we will miss you dearly, and the world now has one less worthy and remarkable person in its ranks, at a time when it needs you most..

Anca Vlasopolos - April 26, 2019 at 03:57 PM



“ Phil and I were both products of the Rutgers graduate program in political science. Although we attended a few years apart we had common members of our dissertation committees. Phil was also the first person I met when I auditioned for my position at Wayne State. He was serving as a dean at the time. I think his kindness and support helped get me through the rest of the ending day. Throughout all me time at WSU Phil was a valued colleague, mentor, and friend. He wrote my endorsements for tenure and promotion. It is not too strong to say I owe him my professional life.

I'll share some anecdotes in other comments.

Susan P Fino - April 26, 2019 at 02:24 PM

SF

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Susan P Fino - April 26, 2019 at 01:30 PM

TM

“ I met him once, briefly, at a small Philadelphia crime-fiction convention, where he was (unsurprisingly) accompanying Patti. He seemed as if genially taking in the interactions of these peers of the women in his family and readers of his wife's and daughter's work, He definitely seemed like he wanted to remain cheerfully in Patti's wake in this situation, not interested in pulling any focus away from her as she met some old friends and new acquaintances (at least in face to face terms, as with me, among others), and she happily presented him to we new faces.

Todd Mason - April 25, 2019 at 09:38 PM