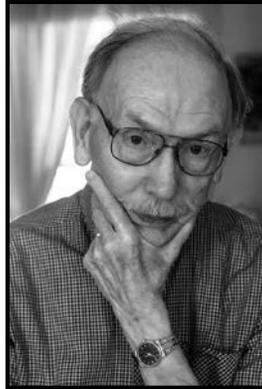


In Memoriam

Douglas M. Parrott
Professor of Religious Studies, Emeritus
UC Riverside
1927- 2019



Dr. Douglas M. Parrott, Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies at the University of California, Riverside, passed away Saturday, August 17, 2019, at Kaiser Hospital in Moreno Valley of complications from a stroke. He was 92.

Born July 16, 1927, in Utica, NY and raised in Stamford, CT, Doug was a graduate of Hamilton College and Union Theological Seminary. After serving as a Presbyterian minister in Cold Spring, New York and Ringwood, New Jersey, he decided to pursue an academic career. In 1965 he moved his young family to California, where he earned a Ph.D. from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.

From 1968 to 1971, Doug was part of an international team of scholars based at the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity at Claremont Graduate School (now Claremont Graduate University) that translated the Nag Hammadi Codices – fourth-century Gnostic papyrus texts found in an earthenware jar in 1945 near the city of Nag Hammadi, Egypt – and studied the impact of Gnosticism on early Christianity. Doug published extensively on these codices throughout his career, and even contributed an article to Dan Burstein’s *Secrets of the Code*, a collection of scholarly writings on the Nag Hammadi texts aimed at a general public that had become entranced by but poorly informed about Gnosticism following the publication of Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code*.

In 1971 Doug joined UCR’s nascent Religious Studies program, where he taught courses on the Hebrew Bible and New Testament, the history of Christianity, science and religion, and Islam. He served as the chair of Religious Studies for

well over a decade, beginning shortly after he was hired as an Assistant Professor, and he played an instrumental role in shaping the growth and development of the department. He remained active in department affairs throughout his retirement, including attending the most recent Sikh Studies Conference in May 2019. Doug was also beloved by students, who would return to take multiple classes from him once they had experienced his engaging and supportive approach to teaching. Nor did he leave these qualities in the classroom; Doug is remembered fondly by all who worked with him.

Doug had a lifelong commitment to and passion for social justice. He participated in the March on Washington in 1963 and heard Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. He was active in the civil rights movement and in promoting interfaith dialogue. In his back pocket he always carried a worn and dog-eared copy of the Constitution. He was devoted to his family and supported them in both large and small ways, always showing up for events that mattered to the people he loved. His dry wit, sharp mind, and gentle, compassionate spirit will be deeply missed.

Doug Parrott is survived by his wife of 31 years, Christine Petzar of Riverside, CA; son Kirk Parrott (Dina) of Yuba City, CA; daughter Elizabeth Parrott (Michael) of Concord, CA; stepdaughter Elena Ambriz (Jose) of Riverside; and their families—nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. He also leaves a brother-in-law, John Cochran of Hamilton, NY, and numerous nieces and nephews in New York and Connecticut. He was predeceased by his parents, William C. and Helen Morris Parrott; his brother, W. Clinton Parrott; his sister, Ann Cochran; and his first wife, Anne Elder Parrott.

Prepared by Melissa M. Wilcox with input from from Christine Petzar, Kirk Parrott, Elizabeth Parrott, Melissa M. Wilcox

Sources:

<https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/DougParrottAcademicObituary.pdf>