



Douglas Charles Berggren

October 28, 1930 - June 17, 2017

Douglas Charles Berggren died at his home on June 17, 2017 surrounded by family and with his wife of 62 years, Barbara.

A lifelong professor, he moved to Sarasota to teach at New College in 1964 shortly before the first students arrived. He was instrumental in developing the groundbreaking concepts of New College's educational philosophy—believing in the power of the mind, and freeing students and faculty from the limits of "lock-step" curriculum and a focus on credit hours and a GPA. He continued teaching philosophy there until 2000. After he retired he became an Emeritus Professor, teaching occasional courses there. He later taught adults at Pierian Spring Academy, and offered seminars through Lifelong Learning.

A lifelong learner himself, Douglas was always reinventing his courses, reading new books, and engaging in philosophical discussions with former and current students and colleagues, and members of the community. He and several intellectuals and professionals in Sarasota formed a local Flaneur Group to reflect on life and have lively discussions. Ever curious and independent, a self-critical thinker who continued to challenge his and other peoples ways of thinking, he was able to synthesize and view issues in novel ways continuing to inspire all those around him to elevate their own thoughts.

Douglas was born on October 28, 1930 in Joliet, Illinois to Grace and Walter

Berggren. Orphaned at an early age, he was raised by Reverend William Thornberg and the Clearwater family of Joliet. After graduation from Carleton College in 1952 he went to Oxford University, attending Jesus College, where he met Barbara Wolfenden. They married in 1955.

After earning a Masters Degree in Philosophy at Oxford, he attended Yale University and received a Danforth Foundation grant and earned a second Masters Degree in Philosophy.

Following his graduation, he returned to Carleton College as an instructor for two years to see if he liked teaching, which he found he loved. He then returned to Yale and enrolled in the PhD program, later teaching as an Assistant Professor for five years before moving to Sarasota as a Full Professor of Philosophy at New College.

Douglas Berggren is survived by his wife, Barbara Berggren of Sarasota; their children Lynne Buchanan of Asheville, NC and Keith Berggren (Darlyn) of Sarasota FL. Grandchildren Ryan Berggren (Andrea) of Valrico, FL, Evan Berggren of Sarasota, Jason Silverman of St Paul, MN, Thomas Silverman of Providence, RI, and Carolyn Silverman of New York, NY; and two great-grandchildren Landon and Brayden Berggren. Douglas is also survived by a brother, Gordon Berggren of Salt Lake City, UT.

A Quaker memorial in his honor will be held at New College in the Music Room (5800 Bayshore Road, Sarasota) this Saturday (June 24th) at 4pm. All who knew him are welcome to attend.

In September 2017 a celebration of life will be hosted by New College. In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory should be made to the New College Foundation (see address above) to be earmarked for an endowment in his name.