

In Memoriam

Rowland A. "Tony" Sherrill 1944–2003

B.A., Eckerd College, 1966; M.A., University of Kentucky, 1968;
M.A., University of Chicago, 1971; Ph.D., University of Chicago,
1975; Doctor of Humane Letters, Eckerd College, 2003

Rowland A. "Tony" Sherrill, Chancellor's Professor, first holder of the Millennium Chair in the School of Liberal Arts, and Professor and Chair of Religious Studies at Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI), died on May 31, 2003, in Indianapolis after battling cancer for over a year.

He was well known to the readers of this periodical as one of the founding editors of *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation*. For fourteen years, he helped to oversee its development and growth, serving in the capacity of co-editor up until the time of his death.

Tony came to IUPUI with a joint appointment in Religious Studies and English in 1973. Being promoted and tenured in both departments in 1979, he became chair of the Department of Religious Studies in 1980, serving in that capacity for seventeen of the next twenty-three years.

He published two books and authored over one hundred other items, including book chapters, articles, book reviews, notes, papers for scholarly meetings, and public and invited lectures. His work on Herman Melville, for example, has been widely cited; his work on the picaresque in American literature is unparalleled.

Tony exhibited the highest qualities as a teacher, and he served his students particularly well by helping them to discover the joys of critical thinking. He was a popular teacher, a dedicated mentor, and a sure guide to the avenues that lead into the academic study of religion. As with the best of teachers, he opened the doors of the mind for his students, and he challenged them to take full advantage of the opportunities to develop an intellect of consequence and integrity.

He received many awards: major recognitions include the Amoco Foundation Award for Distinguished Teaching in the IU system,

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the School of Liberal Arts Outstanding Faculty Award, the IUPUI Irwin Experience/Excellence Service Award, and the Kadel Medal for Alumni Excellence and a Doctor of Humane Letters, both from Eckerd College. In 2001, he was named Chancellor's Professor at IUPUI, and, in 2003, he was awarded the Millennium Chair, a position that honors faculty who best embody humane learning and civic responsibility. He admirably blended qualities of teaching, service, and scholarship, and he served his students, colleagues, school, university, and the wider community with unfailing devotion.

Of course, more than a model for academic excellence, Tony stood as a friend and counselor to many people—at IUPUI and throughout the country and profession. He was, according to one of his colleagues, the kind of man that Erasmus, speaking of Thomas More, called *aner spoudogeloios*: the perfect man who, in addition to profound learning, combines in himself high moral seriousness and integrity with opportune good humor, levity, and will. We thus mourn the loss, not simply of a good scholar and teacher, but of a good man. He will be missed.