

## Hugh Silverman—in memoriam

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Hugh J. Silverman August 17, 1945–May 8, 2013

Hugh J. Silverman was Professor of Philosophy and Comparative Literature at Stony Brook University, NY. He was one of the leading figures in the field of Continental Philosophy in the USA and was published widely on twentieth century European philosophy, particularly on French thinkers, such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Paul Sartre, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Jean-François Lyotard, Julia Kristeva, and especially, Jacques Derrida. Hugh Silverman was also well regarded as an American Philosopher and cultural theorist of considerable eminence, whose books, teaching, and international conferences traveled the globe. With his Stony Brook colleague, Ed Casey, Hugh convened the first conference in Philosophy and Literature,

leading to the founding of the IAPL (International Association of Philosophy and Literature), in 1976, of which he remained the executive director (and principal conference convener). His publications include *Textualities: Between Hermeneutics and Deconstruction* (Routledge, 1994, translated into German, 1997, Arabic, 2002, Italian, 2003, and Korean 2009) and *Inscriptions: After Phenomenology and Structuralism* (Routledge, 1987; 2nd edition: Northwestern University Press, 1997, translated into Korean, 2011), more than 25 edited books, over 130 articles and book chapters, as well as translations from French.

Hugh J. Silverman was born on August 17, 1945 in Boston, MA, to Leslie Silverman and Eleanore Riffin Silverman. He leaves behind his wife Gertrude (Gerda) Postl, his son Christopher Silverman, and daughter, Claire Goberman with her family of husband Alexander Goberman plus their four children, Jacob, Lauren, Eli, and Keira, and also three siblings, Julie Besser, Missy Lipsett and Lee Silverman. All family members and friends in his philosophical circle, particularly those connected with the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP) and IAPL will miss him dearly.

When I came to learn of the passing of Professor Hugh Silverman, I was so very shocked and much sorrowful. Hugh was, and remains, a close friend and mentor too. I worked with him at Stony Brook (SUNY) and on IAPL over several years, a project that involved reinforcing the inter-disciplinary/comparative/cross-cultural alongside a/theological and—even 'non-philosophy'—thrusts that Anglo-American philosophy is just beginning to be open to. We last saw each other in Melbourne, July 2008, during the joint mega-conference of AAP (Australasian Association of Philosophy), IAPL, and ASACP (Australasian Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy); it was a magnificent conference and Hugh's presence loomed large. Academic life for me will not be the same without the kind of leadership Hugh provided via IAPL and in other ways for me. Most of all, he introduced students, graduates, and visiting fellows to the burgeoning enterprise of working at the interface between Continental/European thinking and Asian/Comparative Philosophy with a conscious gaze from the pursuits of *philosophical theology and gender studies*. Hugh and his wife, Gerda, exuded great generosity. On that freezing-cold eve of our first New Year in America, they had me and my late wife, Renuka, over for a fireside gathering with Stony Brook graduates and friends, whence we watched on a large TV screen the 'Big Apple' descent on Times Square. And he would only serve the best German beer, ordered apparently by his visiting Austrian father-in-law (a Postl preference to boot). As I stand by the cherry tree (your favorite) in the garden at your Port Jefferson home, my akubra hat off to you, dear Hugh!

Purushottama Bilimoria  
Stony Brook, Long Island, N.Y.