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David John Philips (1946-2008)

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Pour Geremek le paysage de la vie urbaine a été enrichi par ce qui est son quotidien, bien que généralement peu reluisant : émeutes et bagarres, vol, abandon d'enfant, mendicité, exécutions, fornication. Dans un chapitre intitulé « topographie sociale », elle s'avère possible si l'on tient compte des problématiques et paramètres mentionnés *supra*, souvent ignorés par d'autres historiens. La source des documents a été puisée dans les archives municipales, les anecdotes, le répertoire de théâtre, la littérature de gangster et les œuvres littéraires.

Bronislaw Geremek est mieux connu dans le monde en tant qu'homme d'État, pourtant c'est aussi un grand historien. En qualité de politicien comme d'historien, il a eu le courage de ses convictions et celui de chercher ce que d'autres refusaient de faire ou ne savaient pas faire.

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(traduction Claude Gauthier)

DAVID JOHN PHILIPS (1946-2008)

It is with deep sadness that we announce the death of our colleague David Philips. He died of a heart attack while on vacation in Queensland last summer. To a good number of us in the world of criminal justice history he was both colleague and friend.

David was born in South Africa in 1946, the son of a well known barrister and judge. He was educated at the University of Witwatersrand and at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he took undergraduate degrees in history. He completed a D.Phil degree at Nuffield College, Oxford.

Before attending university he served in the South African navy, and once described to this writer his feelings as his ship cruised by Robben Island where Nelson Mandela was incarcerated. Because of his detestation of the apartheid regime, he did not return home after completing his doctorate, but emigrated to Australia where he spent a long and productive career teaching at The University of Melbourne.

Although he taught history, he had a life-long attraction to the law. In his later years, while still teaching in the history department, he completed a law degree at Melbourne, took a leave from his academic position and briefly practiced in a local law firm. His return to the history department was marked by a turn to the exploration of recent South African history, producing a number of essays on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Committee. He also researched and wrote extensively on indigenous land rights in Australia and other parts of the British Empire.

The bulk of his academic career, however, was devoted to the field of criminal justice history. He produced numerous articles, a seminal book, *Crime and Authority in Victorian England* (London, 1977), and co-authored (with Robert D. Storch) *Policing Provincial England 1829-1856: The Politics of Reform* (London and New York, 1999). He also published a fascinating biography of one of the little known moral entrepreneurs of nineteenth-century England, William Augustus Miles, a supposed royal bastard who conducted interviews for Edwin Chadwick and who became the chief of police in colonial Sydney, *William Augustus Miles: Crime Policing and Moral Entrepreneurship in England and Australia* (Melbourne, 2001).

Crime and Authority was, in this writer's opinion, one of the founding texts of criminal justice history in the English speaking world. Anyone doing research in the field or contemplating entering it had a copy on his or her bookshelf. I am looking at my own copy as I write this. His writing was precise and clear, and had the qualities of mind of both an historian and a lawyer. I recommend to anyone wishing to understand the complexities of the nineteenth-century English system of prosecution, chapter 4: «The System of Prosecution and the Prosecutors». It is still authoritative.

David was physically imposing, and had a voice to match. He was a man of many talents. Under other circumstances one could imagine a career for him on the Rugby field. Or in the theater. He was an inveterate writer of skits and amusing songs based on historical themes and obscure Victorian personalities in the tradition of Gilbert and Sullivan. His composition on the English «New Poor Law» brought many a group of historians assembled at a party to their knees with laughter. Although a native English speaker, he had quite a repertoire of Afrikaans songs, which he could sometimes be persuaded to boom out. A few years ago when I visited this writer in Wisconsin, I took him on a road trip to Galena, Illinois, an *ante bellum* river town that was General Ulysses S. Grant's home before he rose to command the Union army in the American Civil War. When we toured Grant's house, David ascended into Seventh Heaven, and revealed that he had been a keen American Civil War buff since his youth. He astounded me with his familiarity with the historical literature on both the political and military history of that conflict. David Philips was a unique character, a first class historian and a founder of our field of study. He will be greatly missed.

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