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Dennis WM Moran: In Appreciation and Gratitude

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On July 1, 2017, Dennis William Moran retired after working for the *Review of Politics* for forty-seven years. He worked for six of the seven editors in chief—M. A. Fitzsimons, Thomas Stritch, Frederick J. Crosson, Donald P. Kommers, Walter Nicgorski, and Catherine H. Zuckert. Since these editors came from a variety of disciplines—history, journalism, philosophy, law, and political science—Dennis became the voice of continuity who recalled the distinguished history of the journal for those who did not remember or perhaps even know it. Over the years he served in a wide range of capacities—as an initial reader and evaluator of manuscript submissions, copyeditor, book review editor, production, marketing, and sales manager, and student employer; he negotiated agreements with publishers and digital libraries such as JSTOR about permissions and copyrights. His title was “managing executive editor,” but as one of the former editors in chief put it at his retirement dinner, Dennis was the “heart and soul” of the journal.

The *Review* has a distinguished history. It was founded in 1939 by an emigré from Nazi Germany, Waldemar Gurian, as a journal devoted to philosophical and historical studies of politics. The authors it has published include such luminaries as Hannah Arendt, Carl Friedrich, George Kennan, Alasdair MacIntyre, Hans Morgenthau, John Nef, Yves Simon, Leo Strauss, and Eric Voegelin. But, as Dennis observed, with time have come many changes in both the content and production of the journal. He has been there to oversee and facilitate them all.

Some years ago in a report he was asked to submit to the dean of the college, Dennis recalled that when he started doing editorial work for Professor Fitzsimons, manuscripts were often still being submitted in handwritten form. There were no computers in the office. Everything was typewritten and then sent to the printers to be typeset. The refereeing of manuscripts also was a very time-consuming proposition. Before Internet, before e-mail, the search for referees and their addresses and other information required constant snail-mail, repeated trips to the library, phone conversations, and the like. And finally, all subscriptions, both institutional and individual, all across the world were managed by the office staff. They had to collect the money as well as to see that copies of the journal were delivered to all subscribers. One of Dennis’s funniest experiences was struggling with the First Bank to have a money order from the USSR converted into US dollars.

Before the current editor in chief contracted with Cambridge University Press in 2006 to publish and distribute the *Review* online as well as in print, Dennis supervised a series of graduate interns who helped find reviewers and evaluate manuscript submissions, as well as undergraduates who did a great deal of the work preparing the final copy to be published and distributed by a local press. The current copyeditor spoke for many, if not all of these students when he wrote “Dennis is the best boss I have ever worked for, and as good a guide to the publishing world that a novice to the industry could hope to find. I could not begin to account for all that I’ve learned from Dennis; suffice it to say that it goes well beyond the minutiae of the editing process. The wealth of knowledge at Dennis’s command is simply staggering, and I have never known him to be anything but forthcoming and generous in his willingness to share any of it upon request.”

Dennis’s extensive knowledge has proved invaluable to all the editors of the *Review* who have sought his assistance in selecting articles to publish as well as books to review and scholars to review them. Having earned a PhD in English at the University of Notre Dame, Dennis knows a great deal about literature. He specialized in medieval studies, which includes history and philosophy as well. Having double majored in classics and philosophy at Youngstown University, he also learned ancient Greek and Latin. And having worked at the *Review* for forty-seven years as well as for the Democratic Party in Indiana, he has come to know a great deal about politics—theoretical and historical as well as practical. He has thus acquired the breadth of knowledge needed to evaluate manuscripts and books dealing with the broad range of topics treated in this interdisciplinary journal. He also possesses unparalleled knowledge of the history and achievements of the journal itself. He thus often concludes his assessments of manuscript submissions by observing that “this is a potentially interesting manuscript, but the author has ignored what we published here on the topic.” He takes pride in the journal and thinks quite reasonably that authors who seek to be published in it should also read it.

Despite his great learning, Dennis is no pedant. On the contrary, he has regularly and consistently extended himself and his assistance on a personal as well as a professional level to editors, staff, and students alike. If necessity forced him to find ways to survive without formal tenure, he has turned that necessity into an occasion for virtuous action and friendship, that is, he acts as one might expect a broadly learned good Christian humanist would. He is genuinely interested in getting to know both the staff and students who work with him. He wants to understand each person’s whole situation; his own struggles with health and the problems of his loved ones have made him sensitive to what others might be enduring. He always expresses compassion and tries to be helpful. He has also shown himself to be a courteous gentleman. For example, he never forgets to send flowers to the women working in the office on Valentine’s Day. However, demonstrating

that he is not simply a romantic, but has his ironic side as well, he just as regularly celebrates Machiavelli's birthday.

Dennis's retirement marks the end of an era at the *Review of Politics*. The office is moving and the editor in chief changing again. There will, no doubt, be other changes as well. But those of us who have worked with Dennis Moran will never forget his many contributions to making the journal such a rewarding place to work and publish for so many, many years.