

REVUE

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Échos du théâtre voltairien



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*La Revue Voltaire a tenu à dédier ce numéro à la mémoire de Patrick Lee,
qu'elle s'honore d'avoir compté parmi ses collaborateurs.*



JOSEPH PATRICK LEE (1942-2006)

Pat Lee, like Voltaire, was educated by the Jesuits. Born on 30 November 1942, in Leitchfield, Kentucky, he studied for his bachelor's degree at Brescia College in Owensboro, Kentucky, majoring in French with minors in English, Spanish and history. Thereafter he earned his PhD at Fordham, the Jesuit University of New York, with a major in French and a minor in Spanish, producing for his doctoral dissertation a critical edition of Voltaire's *Sermon des cinquante*. That it was the Jesuits who trained him to think critically about one of Voltaire's most outspoken attacks on Christianity is a nice irony which Pat would have enjoyed.

Following his graduation from Brescia in 1963, he stayed with the college as an instructor and assistant professor of French until 1971, when he took up a similar post at the University of Georgia. In 1978, Pat moved to Belmont Abbey College in Belmont, North Carolina, as academic dean and associate professor of French, and a year later he was promoted to Vice-President for academic affairs. His intellectual clarity and his evident humaneness made him well suited to academic administration, and in 1981 he was appointed as Provost and senior Vice-President for academic affairs at Barry University, a Catholic university in Miami Shores, Florida. For the next twenty-five years he directed the academic business of the university, transforming what had been a small college of just under 2,000 students when he arrived into today's institution of more than 9,200 students. During this time he earned the universal respect and affection of all those he worked with, staff and students alike.

His work as Provost was onerous and allowed no time for research leave, but Pat became nonetheless one of the pre-eminent experts on Voltaire in the USA ; he played an active role in the Voltaire Society of America, and from 2000 was a member of the editorial board of the *Complete works of Voltaire*. A gregarious and assiduous conference-goer, he regularly organised panels on Voltaire at the annual conferences of the American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies. The last two such panels which he oversaw and chaired in Montréal in 2006 were sponsored jointly by the Voltaire Society of America, the Voltaire Foundation and the Société des études voltairiennes, so it is eminently appropriate that some of the papers given on that occasion under his chairmanship are published in the present volume. Pat's publications were almost exclusively devoted to Voltaire, and at the time of his death he was working on a book provisionally entitled *Voltaire in America, 1800 to the present*. His articles cover a wide range, and many reflect his considerable familiarity with eighteenth-century bibliography and the richness of his private library. His article on « The apocryphal Voltaire : problems in the Voltairian canon¹ » is a remarkable piece of synthesis drawing on wide knowledge of Voltairiana, while his « Bibliographie des éditions illustrées américaines des œuvres de Voltaire² », drawing on the resources of his personal collection, is testimony too, in its illustrations, to his catholic (with a small « c ») sense of humour. Pat was especially proud of his work on the translator John Lockman : « The unexamined premise : Voltaire, John Lockman and the myth of the *English letters*³ » uses extensive documentary evidence to demonstrate that Lockman translated (at least a part, and perhaps the whole, of) the *Letters concerning the English nation*, thereby casting doubt on Harcourt Brown's thesis that Voltaire had composed part of the *English letters* in English. Pat was preparing the critical edition of the *Sermon des cinquante* for the *Complete Works of Voltaire*, and his most important and enduring research concerns this work. He located manuscripts, and made a crucial contribution to our understanding of the text's complex history of composition and publication, research published in a series of articles which will form the basis of the future critical edition⁴.

1 In *The Enterprise of Enlightenment : a tribute to David Williams from his friends*, ed. T. Pratt and D. McCallam, Berne, 2004, p. 265-273.

2 *Revue Voltaire*, 5 (2005), p. 285-307.

3 *SVEC* 2001:10, p. 240-270.

4 « La genèse du *Sermon des cinquante* », *SVEC*, 256 (1988), p. 49-82 ; « The textual history of Voltaire's *Sermon des cinquante* », *SVEC*, 304 (1992), p. 1080-1083 ; « Le *Sermon des cinquante* de Voltaire : manuscrit clandestin », in *La Philosophie clandestine à l'âge classique*, ed. A. McKenna and A. Mothu, Oxford, Voltaire Foundation, 1997, t. 1, p. 455-465 ; and « The publication of the *Sermon des cinquante* : was Voltaire jealous of Rousseau ? », in *Voltaire et ses combats*, ed. U. Kölving and Ch. Mervaud, Oxford, Voltaire Foundation, 1997, t. 1, p. 687-694.

Pat was a kind and generous man, charitable in all senses of the word, and he lived his life according to deeply-held values : he discreetly offered financial help to many students in need at his university, to help them pursue their studies. An outgoing man, with a warm personality and an infectious laugh, Pat enjoyed travel as an opportunity to renew acquaintance with friends – and with book-sellers. He especially loved visiting France, ever since as a young professor he had shepherded visiting groups of his students. He was a frequent and welcome visitor at Voltaire conferences in France, and we saw him recently in Grenoble and in Nice. His last visit to France was in June 2006, when he came to attend the *Journées Voltaire* at the Sorbonne, and also to collect from the Bibliothèque nationale de France, where it had been on display, his prized manuscript of M^{me} Du Châtelet's « Recueil de poésies » ; he liked to tell of how he had acquired this manuscript on the web, and it was the subject of one of his last publications⁵.

Pat's death on 29 July 2006, at the age of 63, robbed us of a distinguished scholar and of a dear and life-enhancing friend. He is survived by his wife of 34 years, Louise, and visitors to their home in Florida, given the freedom of the library and the swimming-pool, warmly recall their generous hospitality. To Louise and family we send our deep condolences. We long treasure the blessing of Pat's friendship.

Nicholas Cronk

5 « Le *Recueil de poésies* : manuscrit de M^{me} Du Châtelet », in *Emilie Du Châtelet : rewriting Enlightenment philosophy and science*, ed. J. P. Zinsser and J. C. Hayes, SVEC 2006:01, p. 105-123.

