

# OBITUARY

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## Editor of the JBSP

### Wolfe Mays, 1912–2005

**W**olfe Mays had not one but two distinguished academic careers, bringing new meaning to the phrase ‘University of the Third Age’. His first degree was from Oxford, his doctorate from Cambridge, and he then served first as lecturer and finally as reader at the University of Manchester, from which he retired in 1979. He published books on Alfred North Whitehead, principally *The Philosophy of Whitehead*, for the Muirhead Library of Philosophy (George Allen & Unwin, 1959). He worked with Jean Piaget and translated his *Principles of Genetic Epistemology* (Basic Books, 1972). An extract on ‘The Teaching of Philosophy’, an article he wrote in 1965, is even now to be found on the website of *ltsn* (Learning and Teaching Support Network, Leeds). On his retirement, he became a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study, at what was then Manchester Polytechnic. Ten years previously, he had been instrumental in launching the British Society for Phenomenology, setting up the *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*. The first issue appeared in January 1970, with the title ‘Husserl and Phenomenology Today’, and contained among other items an account by Herbert Spiegelberg of Husserl’s London Lectures, held at University College, Gower Street, in June 1922. He edited the journal with distinction up until his death.

His second career was thus launched with his arrival at Manchester Polytechnic and the foundation, with David Melling (1944–2004), of the Human Sciences Seminar, at which he was this term to have presented a paper in memory of his co-founder, who had pre-deceased him. He provided incalculable support and encouragement to the emergent Philosophy Section at the now Manchester Metropolitan University, graciously sharing his office with a Research Fellow from 1994 to 2001. He played a critical role in the support of doctoral supervision, advice on the fulfilment of research degree committee requirements, and on due process in promotions procedures. He took part in all our symposia and day schools, presenting a paper on Husserl’s Fourth Investigation at the 2001 conference of the Society for European Philosophy, which was subsequently revised and printed in the *Journal*. In 1997, he moved from the Institute for Advanced Study, located in the All Saints Building, over to an office in the new Manton Building, as a result of which we had more regular contact with his distinctive style of philosophical discussion, as incisive as it was sometimes vitriolic.

In recent years his mobility had begun to decline, and he ceased to join in the post-seminar entertainment over beer and a curry, but there were a host of willing drivers to take him home, enjoying his company and relishing his observations. He attended a last executive meeting of the British Society for Phenomenology on 14 January, a week before he died, at which he announced his plans for the *Journal* for the coming two years. We shall miss him, and propose to secure the continuing publication of the *Journal* in a style of which we hope he might approve.



Joanna Hodge