

**Jay Newman**  
**1948-2007**



Dr. Jay Newman, Department of Philosophy at the University of Guelph, died June 17, 2007, aged 59.

He taught thousands of students during his 36-year career at Guelph, which began in 1971 when Dr. Newman was hired at age 22. Born Feb. 28, 1948, in Brooklyn, New York, he earned a BA at Brooklyn College (1968), an MA at Brown University (1969) and a PhD at York University in Toronto (1971). He became a Canadian citizen in 1986.

An obituary published in the *Globe and Mail* cited his passion and conviction, his broad interests in the philosophy of culture, and his perceptive writing on such topics as journalism and technology in modern culture.

Dr. Newman said that the proudest day of his life was the day he was inducted into the Royal Society of Canada. He received the Distinguished Alumnus Award of Honour from Brooklyn College in 1988 and was former president of the Canadian Theological Society (CTS). In 2009, the CTS inaugurated the Jay Newman Memorial Lecture in the Philosophy of Religion in his name.

He wrote 11 books, including his final volume on the obligations of family, published just before his death. Many of those volumes explored aspects of religion, morality and ethics, including *Fanatics and Hypocrites* (1986), *On Religious Freedom* (1991), *Biblical Religion and Family Values* (2001), *Competition in Religious Life* (1989), and *Foundations of Religious Tolerance* (1982).

Fiercely dedicated to academics, Dr. Newman believed firmly in scholarly integrity and seriousness, values he exemplified in his life and work. In 2001, he received the University of Guelph President's Distinguished Professor Award. Four scholarships in his name are awarded to Guelph students for academic excellence in philosophy and the humanities. In 2009, the University of Guelph presented the inaugural Jay Newman Award for Academic Integrity in his memory.

One former student praised his passion for knowledge and reason and wrote that Dr. Newman's "reverence for the ancient philosophers was as enthralling as a child recounting his favourite superhero's latest thwarting of evil, and one half expected Plato himself to knock on the door." Recalling her semester-end interview with her professor, the student added: "I remember thinking during that hour-long meeting that no one will ever take my ideas so seriously or read my prose as closely as this man, who is practically a stranger to me."

Another former student wrote that Dr. Newman's legacy "was an appreciation for curiosity and to delight in discussion of all things, be they tremendous or trivial."

Dr. Newman was a lifelong fan of the works of Gilbert and Sullivan and wrote articles about W.S. Gilbert and the Savoy Operas. A lecture about Gilbert and Sullivan-related topics is given annually in his name by the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of New York.