

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION****PETER LINDENBAUM****(November 4, 1938 – January 20, 2010)**

Peter Lindebaum's final publication appeared in December 2010, the year in which he died, as the lead essay in *The Library*, a prominent journal in the study of the history of the book. In "Publishers' Lists in Seventeenth-Century London," an essay which Peter thought was the best he ever wrote, he shows how the printed lists with which publishers advertised their books can serve as guides to communities of political and religious affiliation whose members patronized the publications of certain booksellers and met in their shops. Peter had much more to contribute to this rich and expanding realm of literary and historical scholarship. His book on how Milton helped to change the profession of authorship by moving from a tradition of patronage to a market system in which writers and publishers negotiated contracts will remain unfinished. But his last essay properly stands as a fitting culmination to his long and steady study of literary forms and traditions and of the book as both an index and an agent of social connection and change.

Peter Lindenbaum earned bachelor's degrees at Harvard (1960) and Cambridge (1962) before entering study for the doctorate in English at Berkeley. He completed that degree in 1970, but he had already come to Bloomington as a lecturer in 1967. In these first decades of his work he wrote essays about how important writers used important literary genres and forms: Sidney and the pastoral, Shakespeare and the romance, Milton and his Puritan practice of the epic. Peter's book on Sidney and the status and meanings of the pastoral – *Changing Landscapes: Anti-Pastoral Sentiment in the English Renaissance* -- -- was published in 1986, an exercise in "sane, serious, and humane scholarship," in the judgment of the readers who recommended the book to its publisher, which exhibits "the values of hard, active, engaged work."

At the beginning of the next decade Peter opened a new topic in his study with two essays whose titles suggest the ground onto which he had moved: "John Milton and the Republican Mode of Literary Production," and "Milton's Contract," the latter essay published in a law journal. (Peter was very pleased by that placement.) He continued to lecture and write on the formal aspects of the writing of Sidney, Milton, and Shakespeare, and several of his earlier essays on these topics were reprinted in collections of literary commentary. But in the years before and after his retirement in 2003 his heart and first energy were given to studies in the history of publishing in late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century England, not just the publication of writings by Milton, but also the publication of music and of sectarian religious tracts and commentary. He lectured frequently on these topics, in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Italy as well as in the United States. And he continued patiently and methodically to dig into books, pamphlets, and historical records to find and organize information about how English writers and publishers did business, and what their business had to do with the literary, intellectual, and religious cultures of their time.

The meticulous habits of his scholarship mark all of Peter's professional work. His management of a departmental committee awarding fellowships and teaching assistantships to graduate students, for example, has been described by one of his colleagues as "the stuff of legend." He became a master of putting together packages of financial aid, and he diligently pursued promising candidates by letter and telephone. (Had e-mail been available in those years, his screen would never have been dark.) Year after year during Peter's conduct of the committee, about half of the applicants whom his colleagues thought to be most promising came to Indiana, and even those who did not went away impressed by the persistence and particularity of Peter's attention: "You are a very persuasive man," one such student wrote, and he suggested that if Peter ever left the academy, "you might well engage in nuclear reduction talks."

Outside the Department of English Peter worked hard in the Bloomington Faculty Council ("one of the four or five indispensable members of the BFC," one of its faculty

presidents wrote); on the campus honors program (“the most valuable of any faculty member with whom I have worked as director of the Honors Division”); and on a series of committees whose members and chairs praised his “sheer energy and hard work,” his “Puritan intensity,” his capacity to “think clearly, argue cogently, and listen tactfully,” his skill at playing the role, as one colleague put it, of a “gadfly with a memory.” Peter did especially important work in the revision (twice) of the procedures by which faculty members lodged and prosecuted grievances. After the death of William Riley Parker, a distinguished Milton scholar, Peter almost singlehandedly arranged that part of his library be housed in the Department’s conference room for use by colleagues. He helped to revive and reorganize the interdepartmental program in Renaissance studies, and before his retirement he was one of the founders of a still-active faculty-graduate student seminar in the history of the book.

Peter thought of himself as a demanding teacher, in part because he and his students read complicated literary texts, but mostly because he required a lot of writing and responded to it with characteristic thoroughness. He devised schedules of writing assignments which moved undergraduates through increasingly advanced modes of study and thinking so that they were not always replicating the habits of understanding that they had learned from his lectures or the tactics that had earned them good grades on previous essays. The teaching assistants who worked with him in undergraduate lecture courses consistently praised him. A piece of the lore of the department was his custom of asking one of his colleagues to dress in the costume of a bear, enter the hall while he was lecturing in the big undergraduate course in the plays of Shakespeare, and chase him from the podium, thus dramatizing a stage direction in *The Winter’s Tale*, “Exit, pursued by a bear.” He taught in the departmental honors program as well as all along the standard run of historical surveys of literature and courses in the writing of the English Renaissance. In addition to graduate seminars in the topics he was writing about, he sometimes collaborated with colleagues in seminars on the study of style, Milton and Wordsworth, and courses in Renaissance studies. In 1995 he was the first faculty member in English to teach in a summer program in London which enrolled undergraduates from Indiana

and several other universities, and the director of the program wrote that the strength of Peter's teaching had set the standard for the faculty members who followed him.

After Sheila Lindenbaum, Peter's wife, retired in 2005 from her fruitful career as a teacher and scholar of medieval literature in the Department of English, they spent most of their time in London, where they continued to write and lecture. Shortly before he retired Peter received a departmental award for excellence in teaching, and after his retirement he was awarded a Mellon fellowship to support research for his book on Milton and the profession of authorship. He received other recognition during his career: an NEH Younger Humanist Fellowship when he was just starting out, fellowships for study in the Folger Library and in Venice, an appointment as a visiting fellow of the Institute for English Studies in London, research grants from both the American and the British Bibliographical Societies. As his friend and a collaborator in some of his many enterprises, I often thought that he did not receive the recognition that he deserved. But he kept on patiently putting together the pieces of the work he cared about, and before he was done he had created institutional and intellectual structures that still stand, from the Parker Library and the seminar on the book to his essays on authorship. Mary Burgan, his colleague and department chair, wrote about him, "he has given consistently and ungrudgingly to our common enterprise." Those words, especially the last two, precisely honor Peter Lindenbaum's contributions to his profession, his discipline, and his academic community

Be it resolved that this tribute to Peter Lindebaum be presented to the members of the Bloomington Faculty Council, that a copies be sent to his widow, Sheila Lindenbaum, to the office of the University President, and to the Department of English.

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