

On February 7, our beloved colleague Edward Kivie Kaplan, Ed, died peacefully at his home in Newton. In his 37 years career at Brandeis, he was recognized as a proud and committed member of this institution. A wonderful, generous colleague, Ed gave tirelessly his time to the department and the university even after his own retirement in (two thousand) 2015, even as his own health was failing. I will always remember what he told me before I became chair of the department, because it is so different in tone and spirit than the usual undercurrent of skepticism surrounding administrative roles; not that being chair is a burden, but that is a wonderful opportunity to support people's careers and intellectual endeavors. That sense of professional ethics, generosity, commitment, and warm support was Ed's character as a leader; when he was chair Romance Languages and Literatures, and of the Religious Studies program, and when he served this university in numerous other capacities. After his retirement, he was also an active participant in the discussions around diversity, equity and inclusion-- matters that he had embraced as early as 1965, when he marched from Selma to Montgomery in the struggle to achieve racial equality, and that he sustained throughout his life in his efforts to build bridges in the Middle East. Sure enough, Ed's father was the noted civil rights pioneer Kivie Kaplan; but these struggles were consonant with Ed's genuine decency and integrity.

In Ed's writings one can sense not only a learned and critical mind, but also a curious, devoted, passionate reader and seeker. I will quote my colleague James Mandrell, who in his 2003 introduction to Ed on the occasion of being named Kevy and Hortense Kaiserman Chair in the Humanities, said that in two articles that Ed published when he was still while pursuing his PhD at Columbia, he "looked at spiritual knowledge in the French poet Gerard de Nerval and at the possibility of social action in the context of poetry and prayer." These articles "are the key to understanding Ed's research, publication, teaching and service. . . : a concern for spirituality and knowledge, for poetry and prayer, and for the possibility of social action."

He was a prolific scholar of immense range, who leave us with more than 70 articles and well-received, awarded books; plus a record of literary translations and critical editions. Among other

topics, he was a scholar of French Romanticism and modernism, who published widely on key figures of these two time-periods and intellectual currents, such as Jules Michelet (to whom Ed devoted two books and critical editions), and Charles Baudelaire (whom Ed translated and introduced in several books), among other central figures. Ed's biography and book-length critical studies on Joshua Heschel were translated into French: and his *Spiritual Radical: Abraham Joshua Heschel in America, 1940–1972* received the National Jewish Book Award.

Ed played a key role in renewing the interest in Abraham J. Heschel in the US, and also introducing and explaining Heschel to the French-speaking world. A learned and generous teacher, Ed was also invited to teach at highly prestigious institutions such as the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris (2006) and the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, Italy (2012). He also appeared on radio several times, especially in France where he was sought-out to discuss Heschel and other issues dealing with American Jewish culture.

His long-time friend and colleague, Professor Michael Randall wrote that " Ed was an extraordinary man. One of many remarkable things about him was his combination of great intellectual achievement and his truly *menschlike* connection to people." And I will close this memorial moment with words by his colleague and friend Professor Emeritus Steve Whitefield's "Whether in Paris or in Newton or in Waltham, anyone who spent time with Ed found him to be a soul brother. His was a life fully and honorably lived, and therefore his death will continue to sting. May Ed Kaplan's memory be for a blessing."