

friend. Those who knew him should easily be able to envision Pat in a way in which he would like to be remembered: in his blue Hawaiian shirt, accented by his ubiquitous Phi Beta Kappa key, the big grin on his face, hands outstretched, saying, "Hey! What can I say? No problem."

Pat is survived by his wife, Dr. Patty P. Hagan, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hagan of South Charleston, WV, and his brother, Dr. Rick Hagan of Berkeley, CA. The family has established the J. P. Hagan Scholarship Fund, c/o Chemical Bank and Trust Co., South Charleston, WV 25303, in Pat's memory.

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Ralph K. Huitt

On October 15, 1986, Ralph K. Huitt, a pre-eminent scholar in the field of congressional behavior, died at his home in Madison, Wisconsin. He is survived by his wife, Mavis Smith Huitt, and by a son, a daughter, and a granddaughter. At age 73, Ralph had for three years been an emeritus professor following a distinguished career at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and in positions of major importance in Washington.

No one who knew Ralph, even as I did only after he came to Madison in 1949, is likely to underestimate the significance of his early experiences in Texas and in nonacademic employment. Born in Corsicana, Texas, on January 8, 1913, Ralph lived from 1918 in Beaumont, Texas, where he was a part-time YMCA employee while in high school and college (1926-34) and a full-time YMCA Boy's Work Secretary (1934-42) after he received a B.A. degree from Southwestern University (Georgetown, Texas) in 1934. He was an assistant professor of social studies at Lamar College in Beaumont from 1942 to 1946, with leave for duty as a U.S. Navy officer from 1943 to 1945. Only in 1946, at age 33, did Ralph begin graduate training in political science at the University of Texas, Austin. He served as a half-time instruc-

tor until 1949 when he completed his Ph.D. (awarded 1950) under Professor Emmette Redford.

Starting to build an academic career at age 36, when Ralph came to Wisconsin as a new assistant professor, was a challenge. But his colleagues quickly realized that Ralph brought to the University much more than a first-class graduate training and a rich experience in personal relations. He read widely, in and out of the social sciences, and he was a gifted user of the English language. Immediately, students appreciated Ralph's extraordinary teaching skills. Among students at every level—from beginners studying American government to our best Ph.D. candidates—Ralph was a favorite professor. With learning and wisdom went a great charm and a genuinely sympathetic understanding of human beings. These attributes made Ralph an effective lecturer well beyond his classrooms; from his first years at Wisconsin he was in demand as a speaker throughout the state. His teaching role was also evident in his directorship of the Wisconsin Center for Education in Politics (1955-65). He encouraged not only students interested in academic careers, but also those considering political and governmental participation of their own.

Plainly, Ralph loved to teach—right through his last class in 1983 and his last popular state radio lectures a few years before. He never found it easy to put teaching and lecturing aside for research and writing. Nevertheless, between 1949 and 1965 what he wrote was of such exceptional quality—innovative, substantial, and insightful—that he became the pioneering figure in his field. Principally through the publication of four seminal articles on the U.S. Senate, he established what can fairly be called the Huitt school for the study of Congress. These articles, with two other important pieces, were republished in 1969 as a book, *Congress: Two Decades of Analysis*, and they are scheduled for publication again in 1987. In a foreword prepared for the 1987 edition, Nelson Polsby captures the significance of Ralph's enduring contribution to our intellectual discipline. Ralph, he writes,

“taught political scientists how to combine the study of political institutions with the study of political behavior. His chosen laboratory, the U.S. Senate, has come alive with the vividness of his writing, and it is Ralph Huitt’s U.S. Senate that gives us the baseline we need to make contemporary sense of that complicated and unique body.”

Ralph Huitt’s special place in his field has been so widely recognized that it was even the subject of a humorous piece in *PS* (Winter 1975, p. 30). Its author proposed the “Ralph Ratio” for evaluating American government textbooks. The number of times a text’s congressional chapters mentioned Ralph Huitt, in relation to the number of times it mentioned Ralph Nader, was suggested as the measure of a book’s reflection of research and scholarship.

Appreciated by congressional specialists generally as the intellectual founder of their research area, Ralph had also a special impact on graduate students in Madison. Among those who followed in Ralph’s path were his own Ph.D.s, several of whom are now themselves distinguished scholars at universities like Michigan, Ohio State, Virginia, Minnesota, and Wisconsin-Milwaukee. One of them, Samuel Patterson, typified many Wisconsin graduate students of the 1950s and 1960s when he said at Ralph’s retirement dinner in 1983: “He made congressional politics come alive. He indelibly influenced my whole scholarly life.”

Ralph’s capacity to make congressional politics “come alive,” the telling phrase used by both Sam Patterson and Nelson Polsby, was enhanced by a rich experience as a participant-observer. Twice during his first decade at Madison (assistant professor 1949-54, associate professor 1954-59, and professor from 1959), Ralph took leave to serve in Washington. He was a staff aide to Senator Lyndon B. Johnson (1953-54) and legislative assistant to Senator William Proxmire (1959). Ralph’s political experience also included speech-writing for Lyndon Johnson’s vice-presidential campaign of 1960, and half-time service as the University of Wisconsin representative in Washington, 1963-65. His most important positions,

however, were yet to come: Assistant Secretary for Legislation in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (1965-69) and Executive Director of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (1970-78). Ralph taught again in Madison from 1978 to 1983.

Ralph Huitt’s Washington service is a shining example of the devotion of professorial knowledge, understanding, and talent to public affairs. His feelings for congressional relations was as evident in his Washington performance as in his scholarship and teaching. Those who worked with him in Washington speak of Ralph’s incisive political analyses of legislative proposals, mutually good relations with politicians, effective championship of public higher education, and capacity to reach and state the heart of every question. He understood congressional constraints, thus what was possible and what was not.

In recognition of his multi-sided accomplishments, Ralph was a vice-president of the American Political Science Association (1973-74), the director of that Association’s Study of Congress (1963-70), Guest Scholar at the Brookings Institution (1969), and the recipient of Southwestern University’s distinguished alumnus award (1970) and LL.D. degree (1972).

Having incorporated the views of others in this tribute, I should like to close on a personal note. I was fortunate to know Ralph as a departmental colleague and friend from the day in 1949 when he first arrived in Madison. We were for a few years struggling assistant professors—a special bond, I think—and later we had, in our turn, the opportunity to make departmental decisions. We spent many hours together in meetings and longer hours in less formal discussions in the nearly adjacent university apartments where we lived during several early years. Then and always, Ralph was an intellectually stimulating colleague and a wonderfully warm companion. Like others who know Ralph, I have lost a good friend even as the profession has lost a major contributor.

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