

Obituary

Pierre Laberge (1937–1997)

Pierre Laberge died in Ottawa, Canada, of cancer on 18 November 1997. Dr Laberge was an internationally recognized scholar of the works of Kant and, more recently, had become widely known in the area of international ethics. He was a graduate of the University of Montreal and received his doctorate from the University of Louvain in 1974. Dr Laberge published in French, German and English on a wide variety of topics. His best-known work is perhaps *La Théologie kantienne precritique*, although his essays on Kant's political philosophy and, most recently, the problem of humanitarian intervention are also important contributions.

Among his many distinctions, he served as the vice-president of the Society for Kantian Studies and as the president of the Canadian Federation of the Humanities. He was also decorated by the French government with the *palmes académiques* for the promotion of French culture.

After several years as a dean at the University of Ottawa, Dr Laberge did something remarkable. He applied to Carleton University to do an MA in international affairs. His younger instructors and fellow students – many of whom were half his age – were pleasantly surprised that such an eminent scholar earnestly believed that there was something new to learn, and that he was so unassuming and gracious in the seminar room.

Upon graduating, Dr Laberge set out on his new intellectual path into the complexities of international affairs with diligence. He did further research at the University of Geneva and, in 1995, organized a symposium of the World Kant Congress in Ottawa to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Kant's essay on perpetual peace. The event

was special because it brought together a wide group of Kant scholars and international relations experts. The proceedings, which Dr Laberge coedited and helped to translate, were published just a few days before he died.

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