

# *In Memoriam*

## Ronald F. Duska

On Tuesday, December 25, 2018, business ethics lost one of its long-time leaders Ronald F. Duska, age eighty-one.

Ron served the Society for Business Ethics (SBE) for many years as executive director and a member of the Board. He was executive director in the early days of SBE, when Ron kept the board meetings short and at least one SBE program was put together over Ron's kitchen table. Later, Ron became SBE president, which required that he serve on the SBE board. He hated the long board meetings of the twenty-first century. Ron's presidential address, "Why Business Ethics Needs Rhetoric: An Aristotelian Perspective," was enthusiastically received and subsequently published in *Business Ethics Quarterly*, in 2014.

Ron worked with Henry Veatch at Northwestern University and as a result, his many scholarly contributions were outside the traditional topics of analytic philosophy that dominated the era. Ron developed an early interest in moral psychology. An important contribution in this research stream is *Moral Development: A Guide to Piaget and Kohlberg* (Paulist Press, 1975).

Ron developed a passion for business ethics after attending a 1980 Hastings Center workshop on applied ethics. His passion for business ethics spanned nearly forty years. Two important publications include *Contemporary Reflections on Business Ethics* (Springer, 2007) and *Ethics and Corporate Responsibility: Theory, Cases and Dilemmas* (American Heritage, 1995). However, it was his article on whistleblowing that made him a fixture in business ethics. Ron's friends knew that he had a contrarian streak, which he exhibited in his 1984 piece, "Whistleblowing and Employee Loyalty." Many business ethicists were cautious about whistleblowing because they felt that one owed a certain amount of loyalty to the corporation. Ron would have none of it. According to Ron's well-developed arguments, one has no duty of loyalty to a corporation, and, thus, a commonly conceived roadblock against whistleblowing evaporated. This paper appeared in numerous collections on business ethics and is still anthologized in many contemporary textbooks.

As a devout Catholic, Ron had an intellectual interest in Catholic business ethics. In the early nineties, he published the results of a symposium held at Rosemont College, *Rerum Novarum: A Symposium Celebrating 100 Years of Catholic Social Thought* (Edwin Mellen, 1991). Later that decade, Ron edited a collection of essays on the work of Clarence C. Walton, *Education, Leadership, and Business Ethics* (Kluwer, 1998). Walton had been president of Catholic University and had written extensively on business ethics.

Ron cultivated an interest in finance and accounting ethics, and toward the end of his career it gave him great pleasure to collaborate with his wife Brenda on their highly acclaimed book, *Accounting Ethics*, now in its third edition (Wiley, 2018).

Ron received his bachelor's degree from Gannon University, his master's from Saint John's University, and his PhD from Northwestern University in 1969. He had already begun his long tenure at Rosemont College in 1963, where he continued to teach as a professor of philosophy after receiving his PhD. He retired from Rosemont as an emeritus professor in 1995.

Ron then joined the faculty at American College where he held the Charles Lamont Post Chair of Ethics and the Professions from 1996 until 2011. This gave Ron an opportunity to discuss issues concerning ethics in the insurance industry and, thus, an opportunity to have an influence on practitioners—something Ron believed to be extremely important but nonetheless overlooked by many of his business ethics colleagues.

He cofounded and served as the director of the college's Center for Ethics, and there he created the Mitchell Forum, an annual meeting that brings together chief executives in the financial services industry with business ethicists. During this period, Ron did not abandon academic institutions, continuing to teach courses at various universities in the Philadelphia area, including Saint Joseph's University and Villanova University.

Music was always an important part of Ron's life. He played saxophone and clarinet as a young man and eventually played in a wedding band. Members of SBE knew of Ron's vocal skills as he, accompanied by Joe Desjardins, Ed Hartman, and spontaneous SBE members, serenaded the SBE and anyone else in earshot at many a conference hotel bar. Ron and Brenda's daughter Elizabeth carries on the family musical tradition as a professional vocalist and instructor in voice.

Ron is the father of seven children, including six by his first wife, Barbara, who died in 1981. After many years as a single father he married Brenda Shay and had one daughter. Ron is survived by his wife Brenda Shay Duska, all seven of his children, twenty-two grandchildren, and his sister, Sister Mary Felice Duska, RSM.

Norman E. Bowie, University of Minnesota

Patricia H. Werhane, DePaul University and University of Virginia