

In Memoriam: Lloyd Ambrosius

Lloyd Eugene Ambrosius, historian and noted scholar of Woodrow Wilson, died unexpectedly in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, on May 7, 2024. He was 82 years old.

Lloyd was born on August 21, 1941, to Sterling and Grace (Baxter) Ambrosius. He grew up in Huntsville, Illinois and attended school in nearby Augusta, graduating from Augusta High School in 1959. He entered the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in the fall of 1959 as a pre-med major but later switched his major to history and minor to philosophy. Lloyd completed his B.A. with honors in Liberal Arts and Sciences and High Distinction in History in January 1963. He married Margery Marzahn on August 24, 1963, while working on his M.A. in history at UIUC, which he completed in August 1964. Marge earned her B.A. and M.A. degrees in history while Lloyd began his doctoral studies under the direction of Professor Norman Graebner and would work for Professor Graebner for 2 years as his research assistant; Marge would complete a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Nebraska in 1986 and was hired as a professor of Political Science at Kansas State University. Lloyd earned his doctorate in August 1967, with a dissertation entitled "The United States and the Weimar Republic, 1918-1923: From the Armistice to the Ruhr Occupation."

Lloyd was the Samuel Clark Waugh Distinguished Professor of International Relations and Professor of History at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he taught from 1967 until his retirement in 2015. He was a Fulbright Research Professor at the University of Cologne from 1972 until 1973. During the 1977-1978 academic year, he held the Mary Ball Washington Chair of American History at University College Dublin. Lloyd received a second Fulbright and served as a Teaching and Research Professor at the University of Heidelberg during the spring of 1996. At Nebraska, he taught the U.S. history and diplomatic history surveys, as well as upper division and graduate classes on U.S.-German relations, international politics, European politics, and the U.S. presidency. While senior scholars might opt to teach only upper division undergraduates or graduate students, he readily agreed to teach the U.S. history survey and develop a recitation component based on thematic and topical readings that explored the concept of an American identity or identities and the U.S. role in an increasingly interdependent and pluralistic world.

Lloyd's influence at the University of Nebraska reached beyond the UNL History Department. He was the founding coordinator and chief adviser for the university's International Affairs program. In a January 1980 article in the *Daily Nebraskan*, Lloyd quipped that "interest in the major runs counter to the observation that Nebraskans aren't interested in foreign relations." He also served as chair of the program committee for the university's E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues, working tirelessly to bring national and international figures such as Shirin Ebadi, Mikhail Gorbachev, Desmond Tutu, Charlayne Hunter-Gault, George McGovern, and Bono to Lincoln. Upon his retirement, he received the university's



Louise Pound-George Howard Distinguished Career Award.

He was a prolific author, writing four books on Woodrow Wilson published during a 30-year span: *Woodrow Wilson and the American Diplomatic Tradition* (1987), *Wilsonian Statecraft: Theory and Practice of Liberal Internationalism* (1991), *Wilsonianism: Woodrow Wilson and His Legacy in American Foreign Relations* (2002), and *Woodrow Wilson and American Internationalism* (2017). In these four works, as well as in countless book chapters and journal articles, Lloyd offered his trenchant assessment of Wilson's diplomacy and how Wilson's liberal internationalism influenced any number of 20th and 21st century policymakers as they

pursued ill-conceived and misguided policies in the name of democracy. In his later writings, Lloyd would assert that Wilson's Protestant Christianity and his racism shaped Wilson's world view and influenced both his domestic and foreign policies.

An enthusiastic and early supporter of SHAFR, Lloyd literally was present at the creation of the organization in the spring of 1967. He served on the Program Committee (1981-1983), Norman and Laura Graebner Prize Committee (1986-1992 and 1999-2003), Nominating Committee (1989-1991), the Editorial Board of *Diplomatic History* (1991-1993), and Council (1993-1995). He organized a session for the first SHAFR conference in 1975 and published an article entitled "The Orthodoxy of Revisionism: Woodrow Wilson and the New Left," in the first issue of *Diplomatic History* in 1977. Lloyd looked forward to attending the SHAFR annual meeting each summer and socializing with old and new friends. He was especially interested in welcoming international scholars into the organization, as well as making time to talk to younger scholars about their research. Lloyd had similar enthusiasm for the Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era (SHGAPE). He served on Council (2002-2005), the Editorial Board of the *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* (2007-2010), Vice President (2013-2014), and President (2015-2017).

Lloyd was preceded in death by his wife Margery Marzahn Ambrosius. He is survived by his sons and daughters-in-law Walter Ambrosius and Leslie Underwood and Paul Ambrosius and Valerie Daugherty; his grandchildren Michael Ambrosius and Em Ambrosius; and his brother and sister-in-law John Ambrosius and Margaret Adams.

This essay cannot adequately convey the important role Lloyd Ambrosius played in my life as professor, adviser, mentor, and friend. I'll just end with a line from Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah* (1984), which suggests that hope exists, both in solemnity and sorrow:

"There's a blaze of light in every word;
it doesn't matter which you heard,
the holy or the broken Hallelujah."

Kristin L. Ahlberg
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