

the Inherent Relationships Shape the Reader's Experience," "Parallels between Chronological and Inherent Connections," and "Parallels between the Narrative and the Plot Structures" remain unsurpassed in their clarity and sophistication. While Bob did not intend the book to be a full-scale interpretation (a preface to the 1989 Northwestern University Press republication explains why, with characteristic modesty), such chapters as "*The Nadryv*" and "Divine Grace" have demonstrably changed the way the novel may be understood. His reading neglects none of the novel's darkness, even as it shows, with rare freshness and lack of dogma, how Fedor Dostoevskii strived to make it an instrument of active grace.

Bob's next book, *The Genesis of "The Brothers Karamazov": The Aesthetics, Ideology, and Psychology of Text Making* (1990), integrated a series of conference papers in a study not just of the sources and genesis of the novel, although this is, arguably, our most focused and comprehensive scholarly overview of what and how Dostoevskii read. Rather, it takes an unfashionable topic (genesis, authorial intent), provocatively foregrounds it with playfully old-fashioned chapter titles, and then turns it into an intricate analysis of how Dostoevskii used his sources (reading, notebooks, prior writings, contemporary debates) to shape his text, his characters, and reader response to the text. What seems to start out as *Quellenforschung* becomes highly sophisticated *Ideologiekritik* and rhetorical analysis, without, however, ever failing to ground them in textual detail and pattern.

We will have one more opportunity to witness the workings of this brilliant humanist in action. Just as Bob's second book expanded on his first in range of reference and theoretical implication, so his forthcoming third book, on literary plots, will incorporate a greater range of texts, genres, and literary periods. For those of us who were privileged to hear Bob's dazzling conference presentations, take part in his effervescently dialogic seminars, and engage in all-night symposia at his apartment, it will be a measure of consolation for a career that ended all too soon.

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Karl D. Kramer, 1934–2014

A specialist on Anton Chekhov who shared with his subject a great feel for irony and a very wry sense of humor, Karl Kramer also had that which, according to Chekhov, was a sine qua non for a successful and interesting life: talent. He had talent as a scholar, talent as a teacher, talent as a leader, and talent as a friend. His colleagues, his former students, and all who knew him are deeply mourning his loss.

Karl was a true northwesterner. Born and raised in Seattle, Karl earned all his degrees—BA (English, 1955), MA (comparative literature, 1957), and PhD (comparative literature, 1964)—at the University of Washington. As a participant in one of the first Cold War academic exchanges in the Soviet Union, Karl attended Moscow State University as a doctoral candidate in 1959–60. He left Seattle for his initial academic appointments at Northwestern University (1961–65) and later the University of Michigan (1965–70), where he received tenure. But by 1970 he was back at the University of Washington, where he would teach jointly in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and the Department of Comparative Literature until his retirement in 1999. For ten years—from 1988 to 1998—Karl chaired the Slavic department. Some of these were tumultuous years, as when the department, quite inexplicably, was

slated for elimination in 1994. Under his quiet but shrewd and competent leadership, the department fought for close to two years and finally emerged victorious, having retained its entire faculty and all its degree programs.

Karl's scholarship on Chekhov made him one of the most sought-after authorities on the writer. His works on Chekhov included two books—*The Chameleon and the Dreams: The Image of Reality in Cexov's Stories* (1970) and *Chekhov's Major Plays: Ivanov, Uncle Vanya, and the Three Sisters*, translated with Margaret Booker (1996)—as well as numerous articles, including some in the Norton Critical Editions series. From 1979 to 1981 he served on the editorial board of *Slavic Review*.

Equally as important was Karl's public scholarship. He started serving as a consultant on stagings of Chekhov's plays in 1977, when he helped Megs (Margaret) Booker, the artistic director of Seattle's Intiman Theater, in her staging of *Three Sisters*. In conjunction with this production, Karl also acted as panel leader in post-performance discussions with the audience. In 1980, granting Booker's wish, he provided her and the Intiman cast with a new translation of *The Cherry Orchard*, which they staged in 1980. A third Chekhov play, *The Seagull*, again with Karl's active participation, was staged in 1983. After Booker left, two years later, Karl continued to work with artistic directors at Intiman as well as ACT (A Contemporary Theater) and Seattle Repertory Theater whenever they staged Chekhov. He also flew to Connecticut, where Booker was now artistic director at the Hartman Theater in Stamford, whenever she staged Chekhov there. His familiarity with putting on Chekhov's plays led him to frequently admonish his students to remember that a play is not meant to be read but to be staged. He often described staging a play as "somewhat analogous to solving a Sudoku," which was, in fact, one of his hobbies. "The author gives us a certain amount of information," he would say, "and from that the actors are expected to interpolate the rest."

Karl also brought Chekhov's plays to less traditional audiences. In the late 1980s and through the 1990s he was instrumental in organizing an outreach program, Chekhov Seen and Unseen, which was funded by the Washington Commission for the Humanities. It featured him, a director, and two actors who traveled across the state, in settings ranging from community colleges to prisons, presenting scenes and discussions of Chekhov. Those who participated with him in this project could not say enough about his "splendid work," the "keen interest" he took in the scene rehearsals, and his overall support of directors and actors which, they remarked, "added much of the fun and growth" to them all.

Karl's other talent was indeed teaching. He related exceedingly well to students not only because he was so knowledgeable but also because he refused to take himself too seriously. In a 2011 interview with his former student and close friend Professor Ron LeBlanc, now at the University of New Hampshire, for the UW Slavic newsletter, Karl reminisced about "a rather large undergraduate course" he taught in early years, "when he was—in his words—'ranting on' about some supposedly major issue in Tolstoy. . . . He was about to say something that he obviously considered of enormous importance, when he looked out at the students: all he could see in front of him were pencils and pens poised to catch the Delphic oracle's overwhelmingly significant comment, and he started giggling."

Karl died on 19 February 2014 and former students offered poignant tributes to him. "It was an exceptional academic adventure to immerse myself in Chekhov for an entire semester and to participate in Karl's seminar and absorb his thoughts about our current readings," wrote one. "He was a wonderful, kind, wise, droll human being and teacher." "I will never forget," wrote another, "how he opened my mind to *Anna Karenina*. I learned to love *Anna Karenina* through his excellent guidance." Still another offered a perfect vignette of Karl in a classroom in the late 1980s: "I can see

Professor Kramer as clear as day, delivering one of his many illuminating and amusing lectures on Russian Lit. (Chekhov lectures being my favorite). In a Thomson Hall classroom, he'd sit on one of those tables at the head of class, his arms at his side, and after posing a probing question, with a subtle smile he'd wait quietly, slightly swinging his legs (which for a man of his stature were at least 4 inches off the floor) until someone could offer insight. Forever gentle, may his sweet soul rest in peace."

Karl's wife, Doreen, his partner since his student years, survived Karl by just ten days. They left behind a daughter, Jennifer, her husband, Jim, and two grandsons. A memorial service for Karl was held at the University of Washington Club on 5 April 2014.

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