

Statesman Articles About Ashley Schiff

The Gripes of Wrath

The Statesman: March 8, 1968, p.3

by Bob Passikoff

Attention all students! Take the heat off the hippies! This is Hate “Schiff” Week. The Schiff I am referring to is Dr. Ashley Schiff of our Political Science Department, also known as the ‘master’ of Cardozo College.

That’s right, students, you should be hating Dr. Schiff, if you live anywhere but at Cardozo College. Not only have he and his associate masters “stolen” all the good ideas for various activities run them most successively, and wooed all of the most interesting speakers to Cardozo College, but they have also created a spirit of camaraderie and fellowship among the residents, the likes of which no other College Plan is likely to see. Envy will not help the situation unless the do-nothing dormitory masters and legislatures stop resting on their laurels and start using the money allotted to the colleges for some constructive activities.

I should, at this time, like to commend Dr. Schiff and the associate masters and legislature of Cardozo College for the fine work they have been doing. I hope that in the future I will be able to point to the success of the College Plan as a working effort of all the colleges, for Cardozo College has proven that, with hard work and capable guidance, the College Plan can and will work.

Ashley Schiff: A Great Loss

The Statesman: unknown date, p.5

Ashley Schiff is dead. His death has numbed those who knew him well and creates a void even for those who never met him. Schiff stood up for what he believed and worked tirelessly to translate his thoughts into actions. Cardozo’s College Plan was a model to the rest of the University. Likewise his devotion to conservation has left the University with a small park surrounded by the social sciences building.

Perhaps the most suitable way for us to pay last respects to him is by naming both the Social Science’s park and a new dormitory after him; in this way we can keep at least part of him with us forever.

Prof. Schiff, College Master, Dies

The Statesman

Friday October 3, 1969

Dr. Ashley Schiff, Political Science Professor and Master of Benjamin Cardozo College, died suddenly Wednesday morning. He was 37 years old.

Death came to the popular professor in Mather Hospital, where he had been hospitalized briefly for a bronchial infection. He is survived by his widow and three children.

Dr. Schiff was widely recognized at Stony Brook for his ceaseless devotion to undergraduate education. His reputation as the faculty member most concerned with making the Residential College Program an integral part of student life was widespread. As a College Master, Ashley Schiff provided the residents of Cardozo College with a seemingly unending flow of celebrity guest visitors, with a calendar of educational events unmatched by any of Stony Brook’s twenty other residential colleges.

It was Ashley Schiff, more than any other man in this University, who proved that with the proper spirit and energy it was possible for living and learning in one setting to be a truly meaningful experience. He had once refused to bring a belly dancer to Cardozo, as his students had requested, because this was not an educational experience. But he did arrange a speaking engagement in the gym for Boston Celtic

star Bill Russell – only after making certain that Russell had something more than locker-room stories to tell students.

Schiff was directly responsible for the Stony Brook appearances of such celebrities as Albert Shanker, Alfred Lowenstein, and for for last Spring's Cardozo dedication dinner speaker former Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Goldberg.

The University's first fully credited course sponsored by a residential college was given in Cardozo last semester, as a result of the energies of Ashley Schiff.

Dr. Schiff was also an ardent conservationist and an excellent teacher. By now nearly everyone knows of his efforts to save Stony Brook's trees from the bulldozers of progress.

The graduating classes of 1968 and 1969 both named Schiff one of the five professors whose teaching meant most to them.

His death saddened all members of the University Community. President John Toll called him "a close friend whose valuable contributions to his University will long live after him."

Polity President Lonnie Wolfe said, "our lives will be better for having known him."

Plans for a University memorial service wo be held on campus will be announced early next week.

Dr. Schiff: Naturalist and Scholar

By Merton Reichler, Profesor

The Statesman

Friday October 3, 1969

Ashley L. Schiff, Associate Professor of Political Science and Master of Benjamin Cardozo College, died Wednesday morning, October 1. He was 37 years old.

Although born and brought up in Brooklyn, New York, and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Brooklyn College, it was his boyhood experience in the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens that served to direct most of his later professional life. There he developed as interest in natural resources, and, combining the passion of a devoted naturalist and conservationist with the scholarship of a brilliant and imaginative political scientist, he produced his first work as an extension of his Harvard doctoral dissertation , his book published by Harvard University Press in 1962, Fire and Water: Scientific Heresy in Forest Service.

The titles of the courses Mr. Schiff taught at Hofstra University, at the University of Southern California and at Stony Brook indicate clearly the breadth and depth of his professional interests: administration and the social sciences, politics of city planning, the administration of natural resources and the politics of administration.

At the time of his death he was preparing a full-length comparative study of Canadian and American forest research administration. His work had received extensive support from Resources for the Future, Inc.

But Ashley Schiff will be remembered at Stony Brook for his intense and dynamic commitment to the undergraduate body. Soon after he came to Stony Brook in 1964 he took an active interest in the preservation and enhancement of the aesthetic and living qualities of the campus, which he always thought of as an organic community. The culmination of his commitment was found in his selfless dedication to Cardozo College, which he served as Master. By careful, thorough and above all imaginative devotion, he made the cultural and intellectual programs of Cardozo College not only serve the wishes of his students, but also serve as an intellectual challenge in addition to their normal academic program. Not only was there always something going on at Cardozo College, but what was going on was always worthwhile. Ashley Schiff, cited by two graduating classes as a faculty member in a small list of those regarded as having made the greatest contribution to Stony Brook is gone. Surviving him are his parents, his wife, his three children and his brother.

Students will remember his sincerity and concern

By Danny Lazaroff

The Statesman

Friday October 3, 1969

The untimely death of Dr. Schiff on October 1 is both shocking and tragic, but at the same time, typical of the trend which snatches the few people who care, the few who really try, from us. In a community which places little emphasis on the needs of students, Dr. Schiff worked hard and effectively with the undergraduate student body to provide informative and entertaining experiences both inside and out of the classroom.

This writer never had the pleasure of taking one of Dr. Schiff's courses or the experience of living in Cardozo College to benefit from the college program. My sole connection with Dr. Schiff was in my dealings with the Political Science Department, and for the most part, we didn't see eye to eye on much of anything. Yet, rather than have these dealings detract from my respect for Dr. Schiff, they served to perpetuate my faith in him as a human being.

Though our politics did not coincide, the sincerity with which Dr. Schiff spoke, his desire to sit down and talk things through, his very real and human need to work with students and to talk with them rather than at them, served to make Ashley Schiff a person to whom students turned. In an environment that is filthy with dishonest faculty members and administrators, Dr. Schiff's candid and open approach was a welcome change.

To make a martyr of Dr. Schiff is not my intention, because above all, I'm sure he would oppose that sort of recognition. However, to do justice for the services which he has rendered to the student body, we should dedicate one of the Kelly-Gruzen colleges to him. There were few like Ashley Schiff and to name a residential college for him is most appropriate. Certainly those who knew him won't soon forget him; to make him again a part of the University can at least serve to ease the pain of his death.

Memorial Service

The Statesman: October 14, 1969, p.3

BY Marsha Pravder

Last Thursday, a memorial service was held for Dr. Ashley Schiff at Cardozo College, where the late professor of political science was college master. The service was attended by more than 100 people, including the late Dr. Schiff's wife and twin brother. Ward Melville was also present at the ceremony.

A statement adopted by the President's cabinet was read by Dr. Weisinger, dean of the Graduate School: "To him (Dr. Schiff)... teaching was the ultimate expression of all that made him a man: his convictions, his concerns, his commitments, his very stance towards life and its burdens... This University is the poorer by his death; it is the richer for what he did when he was with us and for what he has left us: the example of what it is to be a teacher."

While the crowd stood in silent meditation, undergraduate Jim O'Neil read Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Dirge Without Music": "Quietly they go- the intelligent, the witty, the brave. I know. But I do not approve. And I am not resigned."

It was announced at the ceremony that the residential college program was contributing \$1000 yearly fellowship in honor of Dr. Schiff. This will enable the colleges to invite distinguished guests to speak at Stony Brook and remain on campus for several days.

President Toll's apologies for not being able to attend were relayed by Dr. Pond. He also delivered a message from Dr. Toll saying that Ashley Schiff "set the measure for what an individual can achieve here," and added, "No member of the faculty was so consistently singled out for honor by his students."

The service was concluded with a tape from Howard Scarrow, a Stony Brook political science professor on leave in London. The message ended with the words on St. Christopher Wren's tomb, "If you seek his monument, look around."

Udall Honors Schiff at Dinner

The Statesman: January 13, 1970, p.3

by Paul Frisman

On Wednesday night a dinner was held in Roth cafeteria to honor the memory of the late Dr. Ashley Schiff, former master of Cardozo College. In order to commemorate Dr. Schiff's work with, and love for nature, twenty-seven acres of woodland located on campus are to be set aside and preserved. The guest members of Cardozo College and friends of the Schiff family were invited, as was former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall.

After the dinner attended by more than 150 people, Professor Karl Bottigheimer of the History Department; the new master of Cardozo, spoke of Dr. Schiff as a man of "intense purposefulness" who wished to preserve the natural beauty that he saw being desecrated in the name of progress. Professor Slobodkin accepted the woodland for the Biology Department and expressed the hope that aside from serving the purpose of a learning laboratory for the ecologists, it could also serve as a retreat for students tired of the strains of dormitory life and studying.

Udall then spoke on the environmental problems facing the country now and in the future. The world, he said, is in danger of becoming a sort of "aesthetic ghetto" where all that is now recognized as beautiful will be eventually destroyed and polluted. The former Secretary then spoke of a theory of "limits" to replace the traditional American notion of expansion and growth. These are limits on every aspect of society, not just the environment, though he stressed this above all. Instead of spending time on expanding outward; Udall would rather the country concentrate on improving the quality of what already exists. In referring to the decade just passed, Udall noted that it had already been labeled, and with some justification, "that slum of a decade." He would have the 60's remembered for an improvement in race relations rather than the decade of the moon landing.

This concentration on improving society itself must be done by the younger generation he continued, for the older has the notion of outward growth too deeply ingrained in it.

For those who would like to walk to the area set aside in memory of Dr. Schiff, it is located to the south of the lecture hall area, is bounded on the east by Nicholls road, on the west by the Tabler-Longhill boundary, and on the south by the Tabler construction road.

Memorial Scholarship to be Awarded Soon

The Statesman: October 16, 1970, p.2

A scholarship in honor of Ashley Schiff, a former Stony Brook professor actively to both conservation and his students, has been set up by the Stony Brook Alumni Association. The first annual scholarship will be awarded in early November.

Conservationist

Dr. Schiff, an associate professor of political science, was one of the first to fight the bulldozers threatening the University trees. He also published many works on conservation, was named by the graduating classes of 1968 and 1969 as one of the five professors whose teaching has meant the most to them and, as Master of Carodozo College, organized a widely acclaimed program of activities and talks by well known people.

Pay Schiff Tribute

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Sophomores Eligible

After his sudden death in October, 1969 the University set aside 27 acres of undisturbed woods in his memory. The Alumni Association has now decided to award two Ashley Schiff Memorial Scholarships of \$150 each to two sophomores who are either political science majors or have made some contribution to conservation efforts.

Letters of application for the cash awards should state a candidates major and year of study as well as an explanation of why he feels he should be considered for the award. A confidential statement of financial need must be filed in the Financial Aid Office (students who have already filed this statement should merely note such on their application).

Send Applications

Applications should be sent to Lynn Hawkins, Financial Aid Office room 118, Administration Building by October 23.

Tree-In Held On Saturday

The Statesman: May 7, 1971, p.3

A "tree-in" will be held on campus tomorrow with the planting of several thousand evergreens. Organized by conservation-minded students, faculty and staff at the University, it is hoped that like-minded residents of the area will join the "tree-in."

The evergreens will be planted along the edges of the Ashley Schiff Memorial Preserve, approximately 28 acres of woods dedicated last year to the late Professor Ashley Schiff, a political scientist and conservationist at the University who died in 1969. The trees will form a living fence around the Preserve located between the main campus and the new south campus along Nicholl's Road.

Dr. Robert E. Smolker, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, and a member of the ad hoc committee which planned the "tree-in," expressed the hope that "biology" students in local schools will join area adults and members of the University Community in this positive demonstration of concern for the environment."

Participants in the "tree-in" are asked to bring shovels with them and to meet at 10 a.m. behind Cardozo College where the late Dr. Schiff served as College Master. In case of rain the "tree-in" will be held on Sunday at the same time and place.

Schiff Award to Sophomore

The Statesman: December 17, 1971, p.3

Varsity baseball pitcher, basketball forward and environmental studies major Christopher Ryba was awarded Stony Brook's 1971 Ashley Schiff Alumni Scholarship last week. The award is presented annually to a student in need of funds who shows great interest and promise in the field of ecology.

The \$200 scholarship presented Ryba last Wednesday by Joseph VanDenburg, Vice President of the alumni association, was initiated in honor of the late Dr. Ashley Schiff. Schiff, who died in 1969, was a dedicated conservationist and had been Associate Professor of Political Science and Master of Cardozo College. Because the award is given in Schiff's honor, the award committee gives preference to applicants with interest in environmental problems. Ryba, a sophomore, was originally a pre-med major but was also interested in law. Soon after arriving here he decided to major in environmental studies where he found that both interests seemed to merge. He explained that he hopes to study law in the future and possibly work with groups such as the Environmental Defense Fund, where he could put both a scientific and legal background to work for ecology. Although not involved with ENACT, Stony Brook's environmental action organization, Ryba "fully supports their actions," but feels that "anybody can pick up cans," and says that he hopes to do more. Concerning scholarships, Ryba believes that "more

scholarships should be offered to those people interested in the environment to attract more people” into this area of study.

Ryba’s major, environmental studies, was established this fall. It provides an interdisciplinary approach to the study of ecology, with students taking courses in physics, chemistry, marine sciences, biology, economics, sociology, and other academic areas.

Spring has Sprung

The Statesman: April 25, 1979, p.7

With the warm weather on its way, finals and term papers usually follow. However, even though most students are burdened with studies, the prospect of spring should be considered for just a few minutes.

At a University known for its fare share of mud, spring is a welcome of event. The few patches of grass come alive and the Ashley-Schiff Nature Preserve blooms into great splendor around this time of year.

But spring does remind us of what this campus needs. The obvious answer is landscaping.

The Physical Plant is currently involved in some beautifying work; however, the success of their project must come from a joint effort. They must take care of their plantings and we must try not to abuse them.

So let us all enjoy these days of spring, but not at the expense of our own natural resources.