

Interpretation

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A Brief but Heartfelt Tribute to Hilail

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Like so many others, I remain deeply grateful to Hilail for founding and dutifully editing *Interpretation* for forty-five years. It continues to make an invaluable contribution to the serious study of political philosophy.

I will add only one personal reminiscence: early in my academic career, when I was seeking to publish an excerpt from my doctoral dissertation (completed only some two or three years earlier) on Montaigne, Hilail invited me to visit him in his Manhattan apartment, bringing a copy of the dissertation with me. He subsequently agreed to publish the introductory chapter titled “Montaigne’s Intention and His Rhetoric,” helping to advance my career (and to qualify for an NEH fellowship) by first putting my thoughts on Montaigne into print. There were few if any other respectable journals that would have considered publishing those particular unconventional thoughts at the time. I know that Hilail was similarly gracious and magnanimous towards many other scholars younger than he, while always maintaining the highest academic standards for *Interpretation*.

When I think of Hilail, I picture first his twinkling, genial, and witty manner—as I saw it displayed most recently in a panel on Leo Strauss held at the University of Chicago and recorded and displayed on the Strauss website. I admire as well his scholarship, as exemplified by his book on Rousseau and his essay “Leo Strauss on the Politically Better and Worse.” His life and career were a blessing for all who came in contact with him, as they will be for those influenced by the people he taught and helped, or those who benefit from his scholarship, in the future.