

## Susan Manning

Susan was a member of our department from 1999 when she moved to Edinburgh to take up the Grierson Chair in the department of English Literature. In 2005 she became Director of the University's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, but continued to have one foot in English, where she was much loved and admired as a teacher and a colleague. She created an academic community in Edinburgh that, in its commitment to sociability and to pioneering intellectual questions, echoed the Scottish Enlightenment that had been one of her most abiding interests. Through her work with the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes, and frequent invitations to speak at conferences, Susan extended this community internationally, inspiring the work of colleagues across the world.

Her influence was enormous, both publically and personally. I would ask Susan to read a piece of work that I hoped was 'almost finished' only to find, when I talked it through with her and listened to her suggestions, that the topic demanded countless other considerations—all much more persuasive than my own. Yet, through her generosity and love of sharing her scholarship, these encounters would always enrich the ideas of the people she worked with.

As we remember Susan today, we can start to think of all the many ways in which her life and work will go on to enrich both those who knew her personally and those who will continue to know her through her work, so I'll speak a little about what she has left us with. At Susan's funeral, her daughter Lindsay read Emily Dickinson's beautiful and haunting poem, 'A Certain Slant of Light', a poem which speaks about 'internal difference, / Where the Meanings are'. It's a perfect comment on Susan's work—the meanings that come from cultural encounters and show how a single literary or philosophical tradition is produced by 'difference'—discontinuities as well as affinities. Instead of one thing *causing* another, Susan showed how the meaning between two texts or ideas could be an *analogy* in which the two never quite touch. As the title of Susan's second - and highly influential - book puts it, ideas can be linked in the form of *Fragments of Union*.

Susan's work was dedicated to making connections—between scholars, between nations, and between ideas. As in the Dickinson poem, these could come to us by 'a certain slant of light', always brilliant, often lateral or surprising. In one of the last talks I heard her give she navigated, with her customary dexterity, from Wordsworth's poem 'To the Daisy' to Henry James's novella *Daisy Miller*, revealing much about Romanticism, national feeling, and transatlantic relations on that literary journey. (This talk has now become a chapter in Susan's final book, which will appear with Cambridge University Press).

Particularly important to Susan's work was the relationship between Scotland and the United States, and this was true both in her research and in the numerous transatlantic

friendships she sustained. Her first book, *The Puritan-Provisional Vision* was a ground-breaking work that showed the relation of Scottish Calvinism to American Puritanism. And in more recent years, she edited with Andrew Taylor a Reader and a series of monographs on Transatlanticism—works that have proved crucial in establishing the field.

Of course it's impossible to give more than a hint of such a rich, complex and brilliant body of work. But it was a characteristic of Susan that there was a seamless line between her scholarship and her friendship. Even where one might secretly be a little daunted by the former, any nerves were always dispelled by the latter. It was impossible not to learn from her and the legacy she has left us will continue to nurture both our memories of her, and the work of generations of scholars in the future.

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24 May 2013