

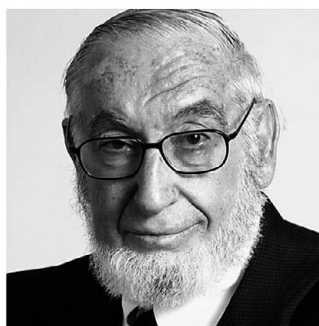
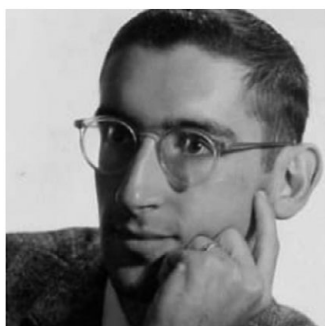


IN MEMORIAM

In memoriam: Roger D. Masters (1933–2023)

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Roger D. Masters (1933–2023)

Roger D. Masters, a “founder” of the field of biopolitics, prolific contributor in the field of political philosophy, and a longtime Professor of Government at Dartmouth College passed away on June 22, 2023, in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Born on June 8, 1933, in Boston, Masters graduated from Harvard in 1955 and completed two years of military service before earning his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1961. In addition to his primary appointment at Dartmouth, which began in 1967, he served as chair of the executive committee at the Gruter Institute for Law and Behavioral Research, as a visiting lecturer at Yale Law School, and as an adjunct professor at Vermont Law School. He retired from Dartmouth in 1998 as the Nelson A. Rockefeller Professor of Government Emeritus but remained active in academia, with his most recent publication appearing in the 2022 book entitled *Biopolitics at 50 Years*.

His work in political philosophy was strongly influenced by his understanding of how the natural world, biology, and environmental factors affect human behavior. Among his primary works are *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau* (1968, reprinted 2015), *The Nature of Politics* (1989), *Primate Politics* (1991), and *Machiavelli, Leonardo, and the Science of Power* (1996). His contributions extended beyond monographs. He was the editor or co-editor of over 12 volumes and authored more than 150 scholarly articles and journalistic essays in multiple languages.

He published five articles in *Politics and the Life Sciences* (PLS). He applied evolutionary theory to gendered responses to facial displays (Masters, 1989) and, later, racial responses to the facial displays of political leaders (Masters, 1994). In other PLS articles, he engaged the early debates and controversies about the role of biology in politics. He discussed early questions about “Can biology contribute to the study of politics?” (Masters, 1984) and what is the role of evolutionary biology in political change and social history (Masters, 2007). He published similar or related research in journals such as the *American Journal of Political Science*, *American Political Science Review*, *Environmental Toxicology*, *Ethology* and

Sociobiology, Motivation and Emotion, Political Behavior, Quarterly Review of Biology, and World Politics.

Beyond academia, he was committed to public service and civic engagement. He served as the Cultural Attaché for the U.S. embassy in Paris from 1969–70 and consulted for the Office of Net Assessment in the U.S. Department of Defense from 1991–97. Among his many local efforts, he chaired a Save-the-Park Committee in his town, from 1964–66, preserving a local park in his community.

In closing, Roger D. Masters leaves behind a substantial and influential body of work that has contributed to our understanding of biopolitics and political philosophy. His academic achievements were complemented by a commitment to civic responsibilities, reflecting a balanced approach to his professional life. As we acknowledge his passing, we also recognize the lasting impact of his scholarship and public service.

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