



## Gerald J. Massey

February 11, 1934 - September 13, 2024

Renowned philosopher Dr. Gerald (Jerry) Massey of (Pittsburgh/Slippery Rock) passed away peacefully with family by his side on September 13, 2024. Brother of the late James Massey (twin) and the late Joanie (Massey) Kramer, and grandfather of the late Helen Christine Riordan. He is survived by four children with Dr. Ann Massey: Charles (Lena), Mary, Stephane (David) Lubin, and Roberta (Tim) Riordan. He is survived by eight grandchildren, Jason Lubin, Daniel (Bre) Lubin, Rachel (John) Simpson, Jonathan Massey, David Massey, John Riordan, Catherine Riordan, and Joseph (Grace) Riordan; as well as four great-grandchildren, Leilani Massey, Izabella Massey, Emilio Massey, and Ari Lubin. He is also survived by his constant companion and feline best friend, Chai.

Jerry spent most of his youth in Mendota and Ottawa, Illinois. His deceased mother Ethel (Pry) Massey and father Charles Massey (tragically passing when Jerry was 7 years old), and his beloved grandfather William (Bill) Pry were instrumental in developing his passions for education, patriotism, and sharing a good story. Grandpa Bill was a U.S. Army veteran of WWI and fought in the trenches in France. After his return to the U.S., Bill continued to farm and served as a Deputy Sheriff. Jerry loved to regale his family with stories of his escapades with his grandfather. After graduating from the University of Notre Dame on a Navy ROTC scholarship where during his senior year he was student commander of the Navy Battalion and the ND ROTC regiment, Jerry served three years (1958-61) on active duty (field

artillery) as a Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps, from which he was honorably discharged from the Reserves at the rank of Captain in 1971.

After his service in the Marine Corps, Jerry took M.A. (1962) and Ph.D. (1964) degrees in philosophy at Princeton University, where Dr. Carl G. Hempel directed his dissertation and Dr. Alonzo Church served as First Reader. Apart from a semester as Visiting Associate Professor at the University of Michigan in 1967, he taught from 1963 to 1969 at Michigan State University, where he was promoted to Associate Professor in 1966 and then to Professor of Philosophy in 1968. From 1963 to 1970 he served as Managing Editor of the journal *Philosophy of Science*, and from 1964 to 1970 as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Philosophy of Science Association. He spent 1969-70 as an Andrew Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Pittsburgh.

In 1970 Dr. Massey accepted the position as Chair of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh, charged with the task of pulling the department together and moving it forward. His seven-year chairmanship has been called the "Golden Age" of the Pittsburgh Department, which by 1975 was ranked as the second-best philosophy department in the nation by the National Research Council. He served as President of the University of Pittsburgh's Faculty Senate in 1976-77. In 1988, Dr. Massey began what Dr. Adolf Grünbaum called "an action-packed" nine-year term (1988-1997) as Director of Pitt's renowned Center for Philosophy of Science, greatly expanding its international reach, influence, and prestige. In 1992, Dr. Massey was appointed Distinguished Service Professor of Philosophy. Dr. Massey taught undergraduate and graduate courses until 2007. He continued his research and writing until 2022.

Dr. Massey had a love for languages and conducted research and writings in English, German, Greek, and Latin. His love of German and the history of philosophy of science was very important for the University of Konstanz,

Germany, and its philosophy of science department, as well as for philosophy of science in Germany. Several important initiatives stand out. First, Dr. Massey initiated a cooperation between the two philosophical archives (Pitt and Konstanz) and let Konstanz make copies of the Pitt holdings (Carnap, Reichenbach etc.). His second initiative was the establishment of the "Pittsburgh-Konstanz Colloquia in the Philosophy of Science." The first took place in Konstanz in 1991 to celebrate the 100th birthday both of Carnap and Reichenbach. The colloquia continued for seventeen years, with the last event in Pittsburgh in 2008. Dr. Massey also initiated a student exchange between Konstanz and Pitt and supported fellowships of German philosophers to Pitt.

To honor Dr. Massey's exceptional merits for his contributions to German philosophy and the academic cooperation between Germany and America, the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Roman Herzog, bestowed on him the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (Bundesverdienstkreuz 1. Klasse) on September 10, 1997. The Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany is the highest tribute the Federal Republic of Germany can pay to individuals for services to the nation.

Dr. Massey is the author of *Understanding Symbolic Logic* (Harper & Row, 1970) and co-editor (with the late Tamara Horowitz) of *Thought Experiments in Science and Philosophy* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1991), co-editor (with John Earman, Allen Janis, and Nicholas Rescher) of *Philosophical Problems of the Internal and External Worlds* (University of Pittsburgh Press & University of Konstanz Press, 1993), and co-editor (with Martin Carrier and Laura Ruetsche) of *Science at Century's End: Philosophical Questions on the Progress and Limits of Science* (University of Pittsburgh Press & University of Konstanz Press, 2000). Prominent among his latest publications are *A New Approach to the Logic of Discovery in Theoria* 2006, *St. Thomas Aquinas on*

the Age of the Universe: Pious Advocate or Self-Interested Partisan? in *Divinatio* 2006, A New Reconstruction of Zenos Flying Arrow (with co-authors Milos Arsenijevic and Sandra Scepanovic) in *Apeiron* 2008, and St. Thomas Aquinas on the Age of the Universe: Replies to Critics, *Divinatio* 2009. He authored many other essays and articles in mathematical logic, philosophy of science, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and the history of philosophy.

In recent years, Dr. Massey worked to establish a new approach to philosophy, the zoological approach, which takes into account what science and experience teach us about animals. He and Dr. Barbara Massey served as guest editors of a special 1999 book-length issue of the journal *Philosophical Topics* devoted to philosophical ethology and zoological philosophy. He delivered lectures in universities and at conferences in Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Norway, Poland, Serbia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the USA..

Dr. Massey took his family on a month-long camping vacation many summers during his children's childhoods, visiting such places as the Florida Keys, Washington, D.C., and Niagara Falls. Dr. Massey was also an avid sailor often taking colleagues and family on sailing adventures. In retirement, he also pursued his passion for animals on his horse farm in Stoneboro, Pennsylvania, where he made hay and trained, studied, and rode Morgan horses. Combining his passion for service and horses, he served as an Auxiliary Deputy Sheriff with the Butler County Mounted Posse, a volunteer civic organization that conducts mounted patrols at large public events.

Jerry's friends remember him for his mentorship, encouragement, friendship, and service as a role model. He was instrumental in guiding others into very successful military and academic careers. Semper Fi

Friends will be received on Saturday, September 21, 2024 at the D'Alessandro

Funeral Home & Crematory Ltd; 4522 Butler Street, Lawrenceville, from 11 a.m. with a memorial service at 12:30 p.m. Interment with military honors to follow at Calvary Catholic Cemetery, 718 Hazelwood Ave., Greenfield. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the Salvation Army or your local food bank; [www.dalessandrold.com](http://www.dalessandrold.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Calvary Catholic Cemetery

718 Hazelwood Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 21. 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

D'Alessandro Funeral Home and Crematory Ltd.  
4522 Butler St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15201

## Funeral Ceremony

SEP 21. 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

D'Alessandro Funeral Home and Crematory Ltd.  
4522 Butler St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15201

## Graveside Service

SEP 21. 1:30 PM (ET)

Calvary Catholic Cemetery  
718 Hazelwood Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15217



# Tribute Wall

SB

“ I contacted Professor Massey about 5 years ago because of his astonishingly complete discussions of Hume. Not only was he available for that one discussion but was gracious enough to allow and engage in follow-up conversations if it were possible. He told me then that he was ill and only had a limited amount of time, still with things to do.  
Such grace!!  
They don't make 'em like that any more.  
I am terribly saddened by his passing.  
Anyone who wishes to contact me about his legacy may please do so at [blocks@vaniercollege.qc.ca](mailto:blocks@vaniercollege.qc.ca)  
I am still very much intrigued by the enormous wealth of his contribution and lectures concerning Hume.  
Condolences to all affected by this loss. And best wishes;  
Stephen Block  
Montreal

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**Stephen Block** - March 28, 2025 at 05:54 AM

TK

“ Charles, Mary, Stephane and Roberta (and families), Our prayers are with you following your Dad's passing. Though expected, the loss of being able to share daily joys and struggles, laughter and reminiscences remains. As a memory, I recall Thanksgivings where the Kramers and both Massey families would be together. It seemed that the men would frequently get into a spirited conversation about some political topic. I don't know whether they actually disagreed, but I sensed they enjoyed saying things to the effect of "You are so wrong!" (and I am so right).

We were blessed to have been able to join you and your Dad at his 90th birthday celebration of life. It was a wonderful time and tribute.

Love, Chris and Tim Kramer and family

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**Tim and Chris Kramer** - September 21, 2024 at 09:39 AM