

Carol Marie Freeman (7/12/44-10/21/19)



Lecturer Emerita, Writing Program

Carol Marie Freeman died at home on Monday, October 21, 2019 after a short illness.

Born in Chicago, Illinois on July 12, 1944 to Joseph Creanza and Alice Engeson Creanza, she inherited her father's Italian passion and clear-eyed view of the foibles of academe – he was the founding Dean of Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University – and formidable, uncompromising moral clarity from her mother, a public school teacher and the daughter of Swedish immigrants. Raised in a conservative Chicago suburb, she always afterwards claimed to have been a member of the only family in Glen Ellyn whose name ended in a vowel.

She earned her BA in English from Carleton College in 1966, where she was valedictorian and married Michael Freeman. The two of them went off to graduate school at Yale, where she earned her Ph.D in English in 1971.

In 1974, on what they thought was a lark that would last no more than six months, she, Michael, and their two kids moved to California, Michael to join the faculty of the then – from the Yale perspective – radical new college, the University of California at Santa Cruz. After a few months Carol was recruited to run a writing program at UCSC, with the warning from a not very prescient administrator that the position was only temporary.

She taught at UCSC for forty-three years, most of it as the Coordinator and then Chair of the Writing Program. In that time the Writing Program grew to be regarded as one of the most distinguished in the country, with an outstanding faculty and a whole series of innovative programs, both in

cutting-edge pedagogy and in excellent programs in journalism, science-writing, and rhetoric. After retirement, however, she recalled that her greatest achievement was her success early on in fending off predatory deans and vice-chancellors and insisting that every member of the program faculty qualify for UC benefits. She was also proud that she never left the classroom for administration. She genuinely loved introducing new students to the mysterious techniques of thinking and writing with clarity and grace.

In addition to her leadership of the Writing Program, Carol also became the first woman to serve as Provost of Cowell College, in which role she devised several schemes to enrich Cowell's endowment -- so successfully that after her retirement as Provost the central administration put the kibosh on them. She served several terms as a member and then Chair of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, and eventually Chair of the UC system-wide committee. In 1996 Carol won the UCSC Alumni Association Distinguished Teaching Award, and in 2012 she received the Dean McHenry Award for Distinguished Leadership in the Academic Senate.

Carol loved music and sang with several groups, at UCSC, with the Santa Cruz Chorale, and with the Calvary choir. She was President of the Chorale for several years, during which it toured Italy and Croatia and later Spain and Morocco. Carol loved travel, and in her retirement took several trips: to Italy, to China and Japan, Peru, Bhutan, and, last summer, to Norway and Iceland.

She is survived by husband Michael, daughters Adrienne and Kyri Freeman, her brother Philip Creanza and sisters Adrienne Hanley and Kathleen Creanza, and many nieces and nephews. She is also remembered by a whole generation of UCSC students, in big things and very small: "she taught me commas!" and by her talented faculty, for whom she long fought with such unflinching determination and skill.

The Funeral will be held November 10, 2019, at Calvary Episcopal Church in Santa Cruz at 3:00 PM. Reception to follow. In lieu of flowers, gifts in her name are requested to the Choral Scholars program at Calvary Church <https://calvarysantacruz.org/index.php/donate/>, which supports local college and university students as they set out on careers in music.

To send flowers to the family of Carol Freeman, please visit [Tribute Store](#)

Carol Freeman's Memorial Service

3:00 pm

Sunday, November 10, 2019

Calvary Episcopal Church

532 Center Street

Santa Cruz, California, United States

831-423-8787