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# Nixon Scholar Harry Jeffrey of Cal State Fullerton Dies

Memorial Set Friday in Corona Del Mar

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Harry P. Jeffrey, emeritus associate professor of history at Cal State Fullerton, described as always ready to tell a funny political tale, died Nov. 4 of cancer. He was 70.

A memorial service is set for noon Friday, Nov. 9, at the Pacific View Memorial Park Chapel, 3500 Pacific View Dr. in Corona Del Mar.

He lived in the city of Orange and died at St. Joseph's Hospital in Orange after battling leukemia for three years. Another memorial service on campus is being planned by the History Department.

"Harry was a very special professor with boundless energy and enthusiasm," said Thomas P. Klammer, dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. "His devilish smile and sparkling eyes always preceded a hilarious tale of political intrigue, usually with Republicans as heroes. Harry's political background and family heritage gave him an insider's knowledge of Washington, D.C., gossip.

Demanding of his students, he was proud of having high standards, which may have intimidated a few students who were hoping to slide through American history. But, for those willing to show up on time and work hard, he was a splendid teacher."

A specialist in 20th century U. S. history, Jeffrey co-authored with Thomas Maxwell-Long "Watergate and the Resignation of Richard Nixon: Impact of a Constitutional Crisis" in 2004. His also wrote "The Republican Party as a Minority Party in Wartime, 1943-1944" in 1988, and edited the 1983 book "Robert H. Finch: Views from the Lieutenant Governor's Office" and the 1969 book "Preliminary Bibliography of Senator Robert A. Taft."

Jeffrey joined the Cal State Fullerton faculty in 1969 as assistant professor of history and founding director of the Richard Nixon Oral History Project.

The planned move of the Nixon's presidential papers to the Richard Nixon Library — now run by the National Archives — was predicted by Jeffrey more than a decade ago. "I have expected this . . . to happen ever since Richard Nixon died," he was quoted as saying in the spring of 1997. That year, a settlement reportedly



Harry Jeffrey

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was nearing between the National Archives and the Nixon family for the transfer of the president's papers to the library. "Moving the papers to Yorba Linda would add a luster to the Nixon library, which cynics have called a library without a book," Jeffrey was quoted as saying in story published April 6, 1997, in the *Orange County Register*.

At Cal State Fullerton, Jeffrey was the faculty adviser to the Young Republicans, and in 1996, he arranged for two former White House staff members to speak to his "History of Watergate" seminar classes. Alexander Butterfield, who revealed the existence of the Nixon taping system, and John Dean, who exposed the Watergate cover-up, addressed his classes.

A member of numerous professional groups, he was a frequent presenter at historical conferences and served on the publication boards of Houghton Mifflin Co., Little Brown Publishing Co. and St Martin's Press. In the mid-1970s, he took a leave of absence from the university to serve as director and interviewer of the Economic Stabilization Program Oral History Project, Nixon Administration, in Washington, D.C.

Before coming to Fullerton, the Dayton, Ohio, native helmed Columbia University's oral history project on the late Sen. Robert Taft.

Teaching and pursuing a life of scholarship were not his only aspirations. In 1960, Jeffrey was a Republican candidate for the Ohio Legislature. He won the primary, but lost in the general election. He also worked for the Republican National Committee and as a legislative aide on Capitol Hill from 1957 to 1976. He served as chief administrative assistant for Rep. John Heinz, as well as an aide to Sen. John Bricker, Rep. Paul Schenck and Rep. William McCulloch.

Jeffrey was again a candidate, in 1976, when he ran for the Republican nomination to the House of Representatives from California's 40th district. In his announcement for that nomination, he said: "I believe that a public office is a public trust, and I join with the many thousands of voters in this district who deplore and condemn the actions of those who do not share this belief. ... We need positive aggressive leadership. The time has passed when our dynamic district can afford to have a right-wing reactionary in Washington. ... I am carrying forward a long tradition in my family. My father was a founder of the Young Republicans and former congressman. My grandfather served as a Republican city councilman. My great-grandfather became a staunch abolitionist and Republican activist after immigrating to this country. With these deep Grand Old Party roots as a foundation, I intend to make every effort to help my party once again become the symbol of progressive, sensible leadership in our district and country."

Twenty years later, Jeffrey served as Orange County chair of the Californians for an Open Primary, which backed the voter-approved Proposition 198. The U.S. Supreme Court ended the blanket primary in 2000, ruling that it violated the rights of political parties to free association.

A former resident of Laguna Beach, Jeffrey was active in local and county governmental affairs in the 1970s. He held leadership positions on the Laguna

Beach Coastal Development Liaison Committee, Laguna Beach Civic League, Laguna Beach Greenbelt and California Seashore Environmental Alliance. He also was founding president of the Laguna Beach Community Historical Society.

Jeffrey earned a bachelor's degree in government from Dartmouth College in 1959, a master's degree in history from Ohio State University in 1961 and a Ph.D. in history in 1973 from Columbia University.

He is survived by his wife Mee-Young; son, Robert; stepdaughter, Clara; sisters Julie and Susu; and grandchildren Marieke and Lex.

**Media Contact:** **Mimi Ko Cruz**, Public Affairs, 714-278-7586 or  
[mkocruz@fullerton.edu](mailto:mkocruz@fullerton.edu)

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