

Anthony Freeman

*Joseph A. Goguen*

*Editor JCS 1994–2006*

It is a sad duty to report the death of Joseph Goguen (1941–2006) on July 3rd, shortly after a three-day Festschrift Symposium, organized by colleagues from across the world, to mark his 65th birthday and to celebrate his retirement from the University of California at San Diego.

With publisher Keith Sutherland and Professor Robert Forman, Joseph Goguen was a founding father of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, and his leading role in the editorial team was recognized in his formal appointment as Editor in Chief in 1996.

Keith was working for the *Computer Abstracts* index when he first came across the name Goguen as the writer of a series of papers from the Oxford University Computing Laboratory on software design and Buddhist philosophy. Being at that time in the early stages of planning the launch of *JCS*, Keith contacted the author, expecting to be in correspondence with a deranged graduate student. He was pleasantly surprised to receive an enthusiastic reply from the Director of the Centre for Requirements and Foundations, one of only two professors in the Computing Laboratory.

Joseph was largely responsible for the multidisciplinary nature that is the defining characteristic of *JCS*, epitomised by the mission statement that he crafted for the first issue in 1994:

The field of consciousness studies is at a very early stage, characterized by crude theories, most of which are unlikely to stand the test of time. We prefer a broad, diverse and open conceptualization — including political consciousness, and ecological consciousness (for example in the sense of Bateson's 'ecology of mind'), but we do not wish to define for our authors exactly what any of these terms mean. We seek to provoke a spirited debate by actively seeking serious opposing views, for example from cognitive science, biology and philosophy. For if we are to make progress in studying consciousness, we will have to think about

it very clearly, and engage in serious constructive dialogues between a variety of viewpoints. And that is the purpose of this journal.

This was very much an expression of Joseph's own range of interests. Although an eminent mathematician and computer scientist (his listing in the CiteSeer most cited authors in computer science has varied between about 85 and 120) his principal interests were semiotics (he went on from Oxford to be Director of the Meaning and Computation Laboratory at UCSD), sociology, music and poetry (he always spoke with pride of having been a student of Allen Ginsberg).

His view of consciousness studies was thoroughly humanistic — his scepticism over 'machine consciousness' being matched only by his scepticism over parapsychology — so consciousness for him concerned the humanities and social sciences, not engineering. Yet he was the one, early in the journal's life, who quietly commissioned from Donald Michie a robust two-part paper titled 'Consciousness as an engineering issue'. He was putting into practice his own call for 'serious constructive dialogues between a variety of viewpoints'.

It was at that moment exactly what *JCS* needed as its editors sought to establish its coverage of the whole range of consciousness studies, and either Keith or I (I forget which) was unwise enough to describe the paper's arrival as a 'God-send'. No, replied Joseph drily, it was a 'Joseph-send', and proceeded to explain his part in its submission.

Joseph Goguen continued to play a somewhat God-like role in the life of the journal. Largely unknown and unseen by the consciousness community he served, he was constantly on hand with wise counsel (and when needed a firm veto) for his managing editor, a non-academic generously welcomed into the world of scholarly publishing. His best tribute will be a continued commitment to the broad canvas and high scholarly standards that he set and demanded for *JCS*.



Joseph Goguen with his wife Ryoko at the Festschrift Symposium at UCSD to mark his 65th birthday in June 2006