Master Teacher, Playwright, Legal Scholar

SMG’s Jeffrey Beatty was accessible and inspiring to his students

Jeffrey Beatty was a popular teacher, known for his wit, his sense of drama, and his deep experience in the law. The School of Management associate professor of business law, who had decades of private legal practice behind him, believed that law classes should never be dull and stuffy. The law is about people, said Beatty (LAW’78), also a playwright. “And people in conflict — that’s what makes drama, and drama should be engaging.”

His teaching was recognized in 2007 with the Metcalf Cup and Prize for Excellence in Teaching, the University’s highest teaching honor.

Beatty died in Boston on December 20, 2009, after a long struggle with leukemia. He was sixty-one.

Students describe Beatty as accessible and inspiring, saying he worked hard to engage them, staging scripted in-class discussions to demonstrate legal principles at work or simply staying after class to help them with their problems or concerns.

“Professor Beatty’s commitment to his students can be seen both inside and outside the classroom,” Michael Younis (SMG’09) wrote about the Metcalf winner. “Whether he is standing on the muddy banks of the Charles cheering on ... a member of the crew team or holding office hours all night to answer the seemingly endless stream of questions about the next day’s exam, Professor Beatty continues to show his love of teaching and learning.”

Beatty was born in 1948 in Cleveland, Ohio, and graduated from Sarah Lawrence College in 1972. He spent several years in New York, where he danced with the Sandra Neels Dance Company and the Connecticut Ballet. After earning a J.D. at the School of Law, Beatty worked for the next ten years at Greater Boston Legal Services.

In 1988, Beatty joined the SMG faculty. He was known as a generous colleague, training novice teachers and offering legal advice to faculty and students. The school named him a Master Teacher, a title recognizing outstanding teachers who have most improved the curriculum.

In 1994, he began work on a series of textbooks, Business Law and the Legal Environment, with Susan Samuelson, an SMG professor of business law.


His comedy The Funhouse Mirror, produced in 1999 at Boston Playwrights’ Theatre, was named one of the ten best plays of the year by the Boston Globe. He also wrote several episodes for a Dutch television comedy.

“A Challenger, a Rebel, and a Popular Teacher”

Freda Rebelsky was a role model for women in the field of psychology

By Samantha DuBois (COM’12)

A trailblazer for women in her field, Freda Rebelsky had an extensive career as a researcher, a teacher, and an advocate of community service.

Rebelsky, a College of Arts & Sciences professor emerita of psychology, died on July 20, 2009. She was seventy-eight.

Rebelsky, a BU professor for thirty-four years, was the first woman to join and the first woman to earn tenure in the psychology department, according to the college.

Born in New York City, Rebelsky grew up in a neighborhood rife with poverty, an upbringing that would later influence her career choice and spark her passion for helping others. She earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Chicago and then enrolled in the university’s law school. While there, she took a course with renowned psychologist Bruno Bettelheim, who offered her a job as a counselor to mentally disturbed children at the Orthogenic School, a residential treatment program run by the university. She abandoned law and pursued a master’s in psychology instead.

Rebelsky later earned a Ph.D. from Harvard University and worked as a research associate at MIT. She joined