Jack Gunnell's distinctive approach to his own sub-field of political theory and the broader field of political science was in fact driven by a strong personal ethic that is all too rare in academia. While much of his work was driven by debates with parts of the subfield of political theory and of political science more generally, Jack was anything but combative in his personal relations to his colleagues, friends, and students. Indeed, he was unstintingly loyal to those around him, uncommonly cheerful, and always ready to engage in discussion on a moment's notice. Above all, he was a great friend to so many of us, always available for support both personally and intellectually

For those of us who knew him, he will be much missed.

—Peter Breiner, University at Albany, State University of New York

Althea Nagai

Independent scholar Althea Keiko Nagai, aged 70, passed away on August 21, 2024, in Rockville, Maryland after a short battle with gallbladder cancer. Born on June 30, 1954, in Hilo, Hawaii, Althea was a revered scholar, a dedicated researcher, and a loving presence in the lives of her family and community.

Althea grew up on a plantation in the rural town of Keaau, on the big island of Hawaii, 45 minutes outside of Hilo. She was the eldest daughter of Kaoru and Yaeko Nagai and grew up alongside her younger sister, Natalie. An alumna of Hilo High School, Althea's pursuit of knowledge led her to the University of Hawaii and later to the University of Chicago, where she earned her doctorate in political science. There she met and married Robert Lerner, who was also earning his doctorate in sociology. Their only child, Joshua, was born in November of 1989, and, following in his mother's footsteps, earned his doctorate in political science and is now a social scientist at NORC (National Opinion Research Center) at the University of Chicago.

Her career was distinguished by her time as a professor at Smith College, where she collaborated with political sociologist Stanley Rothman and co-founded Lerner-Nagai Quantitative Consulting. Her scholarly work, particularly her seven co-authored books with her late husband, ranged in topics from elite public opinion formation, the organization and funding of nonprofits, to the efficacy of different adoption laws—which captured the breadth of her interests and expertise.

Althea's most prominent political and intellectual legacy includes her time as a Senior Fellow at the Center for Equal Opportunity, where her research contributed to exposing the breadth and depth of racial preferences in college admissions. This work helped shape public opinion and laid the groundwork for nine statewide ballot initiatives to ban racial preferences. Her work provided the cornerstone for the landmark Supreme Court cases against Harvard University and the University of North Carolina prohibiting the use of racial and ethnic preferences in college admissions. Moreover, CEO, led by then-General Counsel Roger Clegg and Chairman Linda Chavez, provided Althea with an environment in which her statistical and analytic talents could flourish.

Her personal attributes—her kindness and her thoughtful and caring nature—were the heart of her family's life. Althea's love of music, whether playing the piano or guitar, was a source of great pleasure and the foundation of many cherished family memories. As she was proud to point out she was a professional musician, having played lounge piano and served in a backing band during college and graduate school. She also loved to watch and argue about sports and politics, two of her favorite pastimes.

Her life exemplified love and dedication, particularly in her role as a mother and grandmother. The happiness she derived from her family, especially her granddaughter Eliana, was unmatched.

After Robert's passing, Althea later married political scientist Ken Masugi and adopted his Boston terrier, Yoda, as her own. She also became close with Ken's daughter, Vera Yevsukov, who was a great source of comfort and support throughout her battle with cancer.

Althea was preceded in death by her parents, Kaoru and Yaeko Nagai, her sister Natalie Nagai, and her first husband, Robert Lerner. She leaves behind her husband, Ken Masugi; her son, Joshua Lerner; daughter-in-law, Catherine Lerner; and her beloved granddaughter, Eliana Lerner.

Althea was a lifelong member of Puna Hongwanji, her hometown Buddhist temple, where she found spiritual solace and community. In recollecting her life and contributions, a memorial conference will be held in the greater DC area in late March. This seminar will pay homage to Althea's impact on others and celebrate her rich and meaningful life. She will be interred at the Puna Hongwanji alongside her parents and grandparents at a private family ceremony next year.

— Joshua Lerner, National Opinion Research Center and Ken Masugi, Claremont Institute

Sven Steinmo

Sven Steinmo, Emeritus Professor of Political Science at the University of Colorado, passed away unexpectedly in July due to a rapid development of ALS. Political science, and the social sciences in general, have lost an extraordinary scholar, a great teacher, an admired mentor, and a beloved colleague. Steinmo was a leading scholar in establishing what became known as historical institutionalism in the discipline and played a decisive role in developing this approach.

Sven Steinmo was born in 1953 in Minnesota, to parents who had just emigrated from Norway. His first language was Norwegian, and he always remained attached to his Scandinavian "Viking" roots. After receiving his BA from the University of California Santa Cruz in 1976, Steinmo moved to Norway to work on an oil platform in the North Sea. His experience there sparked a life-long interest in comparative politics. This interest led him to the graduate program in political science at University of California-Berkeley, where he took the advice given to him by Aaron Wildavsky, to "take a comparative look at taxation." The result earned Sven APSA's highest award for a dissertation in comparative politics (the Gabriel Almond Award). It also resulted in his first book, *Taxation and Democracy: Swedish, Brit-*

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ish and American Approaches to Financing the Modern State, published by Yale University Press in 1993. In this book, a comparison of the politics of taxation in Sweden, the UK and USA covering nearly a century, Steinmo coined the term "historical institutionalism." It received the William Riker Award for the Best Book in Political Economy by the APSA in 1993.

At this time, the social sciences were for the most part divided between individualist behavioral approaches and various forms of structuralism such as Marxism and modernization theory. Steinmo found that these approaches could not explain the cross-national differences in taxation policy he was observing; instead what mattered were the political institutions (especially the electoral systems and the political role of the courts) that accounted for variation in tax policy. While this seems obvious today, focusing on the role of institutions in comparative politics was a bold and important departure at the time. A breakthrough for historical institutionalism as an approach came after Sven, then an assistant professor at the University of Colorado, brought a group of then "young and promising" scholars together with senior colleagues in Boulder for an intense two day meeting. The result was the co-edited volume, *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press 1992). Measured by the number of citations, this book has had a major impact in the field of comparative politics. It has been reprinted four times and the introduction to the book has been translated into many languages.

In several subsequent books, Sven developed and refined the historical institutionalist approach. These include the co-edited volumes *Growing Apart? America and Europe in the 21st Century* (Cambridge University Press 2008), and *The Leap of Faith: The Fiscal Foundations of Successful Government in Europe and America* (Oxford University Press 2018). It includes as well his influential monograph *The Evolution of Modern States: Sweden, Japan and the United States* (Cambridge University Press 2010), which won the Gunnar Myrdal Prize in 2011.

In 2007, his academic career took a new turn as he accepted a Chair at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence. There, he began to wonder why citizens' attitudes toward taxation in the high-trust societies of Scandinavia seemed so different from those in his new home in Italy. Always driven by compelling research questions rather than wedded to a particular method, this time Sven turned to experimental methods to address this puzzle. Based on five years of generous funding from the European Union, the result was a co-authored book *Willing to Pay: A Reasonable Choice Approach* (Oxford University Press 2022).

Sven Steinmo was not an "armchair" comparativist. His scholarship was deeply influenced by the long periods he lived and worked in other countries. As he put it in an interview: "I honestly believe that every one of those experiences, whether in Japan, Norway, Sweden, Britain, or Italy, has helped me better understand other societies, and also my own country, the United States." All in all, Steinmo has published eight books and the database Web of Science counts thirty published articles in scholarly journals. At the time of his death, Sven had been working on a new book, under contract with Yale University Press, titled *America Divided: Why Americans Love Their Country and Hate Their Government*. The manuscript, almost complete when he passed away, will be finished by one of his close collaborators for posthumous publication.

Sven Steinmo will be remembered for his many important scholarly achievements. But he was also something of a renaissance person. He was a skilled carpenter who built his own Norwegian style cabin (aka "hytte") in the Rocky Mountains, a superb downhill skier, and an avid fisherman. He was a devoted husband, a loving father and grandfather, and a tremendously good friend with a huge laugh, a wonderful sense of humor, and a special feel for the many ironic situations that we experience in this world, not least in this profession. He will be remembered for his boundless energy, his passion for politics, and the exuberance and joy with which he lived his life. He will be dearly missed by his many friends, colleagues, former students and of course his family.

Those who did not know him can get a glimpse of his wonderful, winning personality in this short clip: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2308961689403496. ■

— Bo Rothstein, University of Gothenburg
and Kathleen Thelen, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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