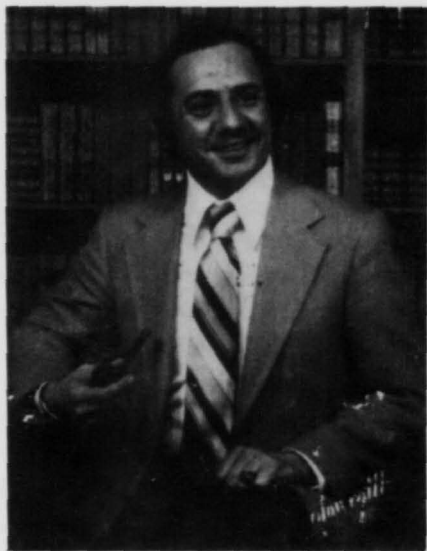


Leonard R. Riforgiato

December 26, 1939 —

January 19, 1999

Associate Professor of History,
The Pennsylvania State University,
Shenango Valley Campus



Leonard R. Riforgiato, Associate Professor of History at The Pennsylvania State University's Shenango Valley campus, died on January 16, 1999, at the age of 59. He was born on December 26, 1939, in Buffalo, New York, to John and Jeanette Panepinto Riforgiato. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in history at Fordham University, and his doctorate in history and religious studies at The Pennsylvania State University. In addition, he received a degree in philosophy from Woodstock College.

In scholarly circles, Professor Riforgiato was best known for his work in American religious history. His doctoral dissertation, "Missionary of Moderation: Henry Melchior Muhlenberg and the Lutheran Church in English America" was published by the Bucknell University Press. Other publications include numerous articles, essays, and book reviews. He frequently presented papers at professional conferences. At the time of his death, he was completing a biography of the Reverend John Timon, first bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Buffalo. His research was supported by grants from Penn State, the Cushman Center of the University of Notre Dame, and the American Philosophical Society. He was also assistant editor of the *Journal of the Eastern Community College Social Science Association*.

He was a member of several organizations, including the Pennsylvania Historical Association, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, American Catholic Historical Society, American Society of Church History, Organization of American Historians, Phi Alpha Theta, and Phi Kappa Phi.

After teaching briefly at Gonzaga Preparatory School, Washington, D.C.; McQuaid Jesuit High School in Rochester, New York; Fordham University; and Mercy College, Professor Riforgiato joined the Penn State faculty at Shenango Valley in 1973. There he taught courses in history, philosophy, and religious studies. A demanding but popular teacher, he was named "Shenango Valley Campus Teacher of the Year" in 1984. He served three terms as chairman of the campus's faculty senate and was a member of various faculty committees. He was advisor to Liberal Arts and Business Students and coached the debate team.

Also active in the community of Sharon, he was an instructor in "gifted programs" in local public and private schools, a judge in "History Day" competitions, a member of the "Mayor's Committee on the Arts," and Mercer County's Child Welfare Board. He lectured frequently to civic, religious, and social groups; and contributed editorials to the community's newspaper.

Professor Riforgiato's place in the profession, campus, and community will be difficult to fill. He served in so many ways. His colleagues, students, and neighbors will miss his helpful contributions, his provocative comments, and his friendship.

John B. Frantz, *The Pennsylvania State University*