



## Dr. Steven H. Gale

August 18, 1940 - February 12, 2023

Frankfort, Kentucky – Dr. Steven H. Gale, 82, passed away on February 12, 2023. He was born on August 18, 1940, in San Diego, California, the oldest child of Dr. Norman Gale and Mary Wilder Haase.

Steve graduated from Duke University, UCLA, and the University of Southern California. He was a professor of English, specializing in modern drama and film, and was the founding president of the Harold Pinter Society and a leading expert on Pinter's work. Steve was a member of the 1964 cultural exchange team, Project India, and was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Liberia, West Africa, in 1973. He also taught at the University of Puerto Rico, the University of Florida, and Missouri Southern State College. He served as the Endowed Chair in the Humanities at Kentucky State University from 1988-2015. Steve authored sixteen books, including *Encyclopedia of American Humorists*, *Encyclopedia of British Humorists*, *West African Folktales*, books on humorist S. J. Perelman, and numerous studies of Harold Pinter's plays and screenplays. He also co-edited fourteen editions of the *Pinter Review*, and published hundreds of articles, essays, reviews, scholarly papers, study guides, and creative works. He served as a Danforth Associate and as president of the Frankfort Arts Foundation, was a member of the Frankfort Rotary Club, and was listed in *Who's Who in the World*. He loved being a family man, and enjoyed caring for his many pets, traveling the world, playing poker, and watching his racehorses run.

Steve is survived by his wife of almost 50 years, Kathy Johnson Gale,

daughters Shannon Gale, Ashley Smith (Jason Smith), and Heather Gale (Joshu Goebeler), grandsons Edison Gale and Paxton Smith, sister Norma Wetzel, and nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Bill Gale.

To honor Steve, we ask that you plant a tree, take a walk in the woods, or donate to Hospice or the World Wildlife Fund.

Services will be held at Harrod Brothers Funeral Home on Monday, February 20, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. with Chaplain Adam Standiford officiating. A private burial will follow. Visitation will be held at Harrod Brothers Funeral Home from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. on Monday.

Arrangements are under the direction of Harrod Brothers Funeral Home & Crematory.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB 20. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Harrod Brothers Funeral Home  
312 Washington Street  
Frankfort, KY 40601  
(502) 227-4526  
hbfh@harrodbrothers.com  
<https://www.harrodbrothers.com>

## Service

FEB 20. 2:00 PM (ET)

Harrod Brothers Funeral Home  
312 Washington Street  
Frankfort, KY 40601  
(502) 227-4526  
hbfh@harrodbrothers.com  
<https://www.harrodbrothers.com>

# Tribute Wall

CM

“ 2 files added to the album Lyon, France - 2007



Chittaranjan Misra - April 03, 2024 at 01:21 PM

CM

*After more than a year I came to know that Dr. Steven H. Gale has passed away on February 12, 2023. It was shocking because I still cherished to contact him. I was in touch with him through email but over the years the mail ID did not work and there was no response to my mails sent to his inbox. I had read his book “Butter’s Going Up: A Critical Analysis of Harold Pinter’s Work” in the eighties while working for my PhD Degree in Sambalpur University, India. I had the opportunity of meeting him in Lyon, France in 2007 in ‘Viva Pinter’, the International Symposium (22 – 24 March 2007). The symposium was held at University of Lyon (Jean Moulin). I felt privileged to interact with him and listen to his lecture. I was a guest speaker, the only participant from India. The affectionate appreciation I received from him after my presentation remains treasured in my heart. Unforgettable are the moments I shared with him, Professor William Baker and eminent theater scholars, filmmakers and lawyers. He was interviewed by Brigitte Gauthier on March 22, 2007. He was accompanied by his wife. We were staying in the same building in Lyon 3 campus. To be in the presence of great people is a matter of good luck. I feel lucky that our paths crossed though for a brief time. My deepest homage to the departed soul and heartfelt condolences to the family members.*  
Chittaranjan Misra

Chittaranjan Misra - April 03, 2024 at 01:24 PM



“ Dr. Steven H. Gale

October 06, 2023 at 03:15 PM

LL

“ My main memories of Steve are from elementary school (Grant). We were both police boys until I was tattled upon for slouching (flat feet made it hard to stand properly for any appreciable time). Thanks to my dislike for authority (in the form of Officer Nettles, the cop in charge), I quit; Steve stuck with it. We got together occasionally in what was looking enough like a "gang" that my folks shoved me into cub scouts. Once again, I couldn't hack irrational authority and bailed. Steve and I shared a delight in Damon Runyon's language quirks. I regret not connecting with Steve to see whether he still appreciated the novel writing style and its collection of adjectives. And whether that interest contributed to his chosen profession. I cherish a memory of his father taking the two of us to Sunset Cliffs to clamber about and explore during an extreme low tide. I relished Steve's friendship and admired him tremendously. I easily understand the glowing comments that others have written.

---

**Lou Lippman** - July 20, 2023 at 04:07 PM

“ I am so sorry to hear about Dr. Gale. Enrolled in the Whitney M. Young Scholars program, I took several of his classes at KSU from 1990-1994. He taught many small town kids and his stories opened the world to us. He could tell a story about a place he'd visited and make you feel like you were right there! He seemed to love what was old, even vintage. Instead of a new Toyota, he drove an old Jaguar. He valued quality, things that were well-made, I remember. He even lamented that Beta tapes weren't being made because the quality was superior to VHS. I've often wondered what he thought about Netflix and other streaming services!

*I have remembered him fondly over the years and I regret I never reached out to thank him (again) before he passed. Despite my admiration for Dr. Gale's world travels, I haven't done near the amount of traveling I thought I would do. I've lived in Central Florida for over 10 years and I've never had a passport. But Dr. Gale showed me that books can take us around the world.*

*He taught his students to embrace cultural differences. I took a class with him once that only had 1 other student, a young man from Central or South America. Dr. Gale asked us what we each saw when we looked at the moon. We stared back, confused. I told him, of course, I always see the "man" in the moon. But my peer saw a "rabbit" in the moon. We were both surprised to learn that we saw the moon differently. It was a small thing, looking back on it, but for 2 young people at the time, it delighted us and broadened our horizons.*

*Dr. Gale taught "How to Read a Film" - my favorite class. Just the other day, I sat down to watch *The Seventh Seal* (Ingmar Bergman) and I remembered his fascinating interpretation of the film. This wonderful, caring man was the professor who taught me that the purpose of criticism was to reveal the beauty in art. These days, I teach English Language Arts at River Springs Middle School in Orange City, FL. Thanks to Dr. Gale, I love exploring a text with my students and helping them understand "what makes it great."*

~Rebecca

Rebecca Harris Howe - March 09, 2023 at 03:54 AM

KG

*Rebecca, thank you for your beautiful comments that bring to life Dr. Gale's unique gift of teaching. He would be so pleased to know that you are an English teacher, carrying on the profession and inspiring your students as he once inspired you.*

Kathy J Gale - March 18, 2023 at 06:27 PM

CS

*Steve was well liked by his classmates at San Diego High School class of 58....Just remember how much fun we had at Roosevelt Jr.High and SDHS. He is remembered fondly. Carol Jean Frandell Spicer*

Carol Jean Spicer - July 20, 2023 at 03:10 PM

AC

“*Steve and Kathy have added so much joy and fun to our Beta Sigma Phi meetings and socials. We will all miss him. What a great friend.*



Ann Crowell - February 20, 2023 at 01:35 PM

AC

*Steve has added so much to our Beta Sigma Phi meetings and socials. We will miss him. He is a great friend.*

Ann Crowell - February 20, 2023 at 01:38 PM

KG

*Thank you, Ann, and thanks to all of our sisters who welcomed Steve at our meetings.*

**Kathy Gale** - March 18, 2023 at 06:09 PM

AH

“ *As you know, the International Harold Pinter Society would not exist without the work of Dr. Stephen Gale. Drs. Frank Gillen and Gale worked tirelessly to earn the recognition of the Modern Language Society and promoted Pinter scholarship for many years. Pinter's Nobel Prize award is unthinkable without the work of Steven Gale and many of the scholars he worked with on The Harold Pinter Review.*

*He was also a dedicated and generous teacher and colleague. I know many in the profession whose careers were assisted by Dr. Gale. I frequently meet students who had him in classes at Kentucky State, and they always light up and sing his praises.*

*I know this short memorial does not do justice to his work or life, but we, of the International Harold Pinter Society, hope that the gift of the Memorial Trees will symbolize Dr. Gale's everlasting contribution to drama, film, and Pinter scholarship.*

*With deepest sympathies,  
Dr. Ann C. Hall, President and Professor  
The International Harold Pinter Society  
University of Louisville  
Department of Comparative Humanities*

**Ann Hall** - February 20, 2023 at 09:48 AM

KG

*Thank you for your tribute to Steve and for the Memorial Trees, which he would have loved. It is gratifying to know that his life's work did not go unnoticed. The Pinter Society was such an important part of his life and career that our young daughters renamed it the Pinter Worship Society. He had deep respect for you and all of his colleagues in the field.*

---

**Kathy Gale** - March 18, 2023 at 06:07 PM

IS

“ *International Pinter Society purchased the [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) for the family of Dr. Steven H. Gale.*

---

**International Pinter Society** - February 20, 2023 at 09:34 AM

BB

“ *I met Dr Gale when he began the film series at KSU. Through that series open to the public, he introduced me to films I would not have seen otherwise. We met again a few years later when we (Kathy too) were extras in the movie Dreamer, filmed at Keeneland. My condolences to the family.*

---

**Brenda Bush** - February 18, 2023 at 09:59 PM



“ 61 files added to the album Life Tributes



Harrod Brothers Funeral Home - February 17, 2023 at 10:31 AM



“ Hello, this is Dr. Roger Strunk. It was an honor and pleasure to be Steve's physician for several years and my life is richer for knowing him. I know he will be missed. I actually think of him often. Blessings to all.

Roger Strunk - February 16, 2023 at 12:33 PM

FG

*More than anything I remember Steve for his kindness and gentleness and his tremendous love for his family. I have fond memories of the visit my late wife Marie and I enjoyed at his home, savoring the meal Kathy had prepared and chatting with his daughters, Shannon, Ashley and Heather. Steve had a list of all the things he wanted to do with his family during his lifetime. Owning an island and having a racehorse were among them. At table they were discussing a trip which was part of that list, and I remember thinking what a lucky family.*

*We also worked together in founding and then for 13 years editing *The Pinter Review*. Steve's books had helped introduce Pinter to many of us, and when I found a donor who was willing to pick up some of the publishing costs, Steve's reputation and wide contacts among Pinter scholars made him a natural coeditor.*

*The journal brought both of us into direct contact with Harold Pinter, and through that we were able to publish a number of his manuscripts for use by future scholars.*

*All that now seems long ago. Today it is the rare person Steve was whose life I celebrate along with his family and friends.*

*Frank Gillen*

---

**Francis Gillen** - February 20, 2023 at 11:16 AM

AH

*Thank you Frank!*

---

**Ann Hall** - February 20, 2023 at 11:56 AM

KG

*Thank you for your lovely remembrances, Frank. Steve enjoyed working with you so much on *The Pinter Review*. He was always grateful to you for finding the donor and for all of your hard work on the journal. I am so glad that you and Marie visited us, and we got to know her too.*

---

**Kathy Gale** - March 18, 2023 at 05:56 PM