

Andrew Jonathan Hughes Hallett (1947–2019)

FRSE, University Professor of Economics and Public Policy at George Mason University, passed away on December 31, 2019, aged 72

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Born in London on November 1, 1947, Andrew Hughes Hallett (AHH) was educated at Radley College and graduated with a BA (Hons) in economics from the University of Warwick and an MSc (Econ) from the London School of Economics. He was awarded a PhD in economics by the University of Oxford. From 1973 to 1977, he was lecturer at the University of Bristol, followed by associate professor at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, the Netherlands (1977–1985), full professor at Newcastle University (1985–1989), and Jean Monnet Professor of Economics at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland (1989–2001). After serving as Professor of Economics at Vanderbilt University, Tennessee, USA (2001–2006), he took up simultaneous positions at the Schar School of George Mason University, Virginia, USA, and the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. In addition, AHH held visiting professorships around the world, including Copenhagen, Princeton, Harvard, FU Berlin (Bundesbank Visiting Professor), Frankfurt, Rome, Paris, and Cardiff, just to mention a few.

Having been a devoted supporter of Scotland's independence from the UK, AHH served as advisor to several Scottish institutions, including the Council of Economic Advisers to the government of Scotland (2007–2014), the Scottish Fiscal Commission (2014–2016), and the Sustainable Growth Commission (2016–2019), which

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designed economic policies for an independent Scotland. For his multiple engagements in Scotland, he was awarded the Fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (FRSE), Scotland's national academy of science and letters. In addition, AHH was an advisor to many UK and international institutions, such as HM Treasury, the European Parliament (2015–2019), the OECD, the IMF, the European Commission, the Federal Reserve, and the ECB, among others.

AHH was an eminent economist researching and teaching on a broad range of interests such as the theory of economic policy, fiscal and monetary policy, international economics and econometrics. He published more than 200 papers in peer-reviewed journals, among them *American Economic Review*, *Economic Journal*, *European Economic Review*, *Journal of Applied Econometrics*, *Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control*, *Oxford Economic Papers*, *Journal of Development Economics*, not to mention five articles in *Empirica*. In addition, he wrote about 100 articles in collective volumes and conference proceedings. AHH (co-)authored or edited 10 books as well. The overwhelming majority of his academic texts were, of course, on topics in economics, but he also contributed to several first class mathematics journals as well as to some in political science and history.

AHH's interests in economics were very broad, ranging from highly theoretical work to problems of immediate political relevance. In the field of the theory of economic policy, he was probably the leading authority worldwide. Already in his 1983 book (Hughes Hallett and Rees 1983), he provided us with a complete and highly original reconstruction of that theory, using econometrics and statistics, control and game theory, and decision theory to extend the theory of economic policy to situations characterized by dynamics, risk and uncertainty, multiple policy makers, and nonlinearities, which are typical for real-world policy problems. If we compare this book, which, unfortunately, is still underrated in the economics literature, to the one published almost simultaneously by Preston and Pagan (1982), it becomes clear how far-reaching the advances made by AHH and Hedley Rees are compared to Preston and Pagan, who treat the linear deterministic one-policy maker case only. During the last decade, AHH collaborated with Nicola Acocella, Giovanni Di Bartolomeo, and other Italian economists on extending the theory of economic policy to a strategic context, using results from dynamic game theory (Acocella et al. 2013) and applying the theory to macroeconomics, with a fascinating overview of its past and outlook to its future (Acocella et al. 2016).

For many years AHH was a permanent active member of the Editorial Board of this journal, *Empirica: Journal of European Economics*. He reviewed many papers in his area of research and published in this journal, on several occasions also after having presented his ideas to an international forum organized on behalf of the Austrian Economic Association (NoeG), one of the sponsoring organizations of *Empirica*. At one of these events, after the 2007 Annual NoeG Meeting in Klagenfurt, Austria, we were glad to present him with a preprint of the festschrift on the occasion of his 60th birthday (Neck et al. 2008).

AHH was deeply interested in the development of European integration. He participated in several Jean Monnet projects and conferences on the topic of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). At the outset of the EMU, AHH participated in a workshop organized by the Austrian central bank (OeNB) on challenges for economic policy coordination within the EMU and co-edited its proceedings (Hughes

Hallett et al. 2001). When, after 6 years of experience with the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP)—a political vehicle which came into force in 1999 to coordinate the fiscal policies of the Euro Area member states—not only smaller Euro Area countries but also France, Germany, and Italy breached its rules (3% deficit and 60% public debt), reform was urgently needed. To evaluate experiences with the SGP and its possible future, the European Community Studies Association of Austria (ECSA Austria) organized a conference in Vienna on March 10–11, 2005. Among other scholars, AHH, using a game-theoretic approach, advocated fiscal leadership cooperating with an independent ECB, a position which might also be preferable in times of the Corona crisis instead of relying on the ECB as sole crisis solver. The conference contributions were published in Breuss (2007).

Personally, AHH was a polite and reliable man, always keeping his promises in spite of a high workload. He enjoyed travelling, music, and history, and especially spending time with his “two families”: the real one (his wife Claudia and their children Davis, Jim, and Nicola) and the group of former and current graduate students supervised by him. To the latter, he provided highly valuable mentoring and enormous inspiration, making them successful in various positions at universities, research institutes, and administrations all over the world (currently in Europe, the USA, Asia, and Africa).

Seven years ago, AHH was diagnosed with cancer, with a prognosis of 22 months. He decided to live as if he were healthy, and survived until the end of last year. Typical of his brave attitude and dry style, we quote a message he wrote to one of us in July 2019: “The hospital is forecasting that, after 7 years of chemo, I should have died 2 weeks ago. I have no intention of doing that.” Sadly, on December 31, he had to surrender: he had wanted to exit with a bang, and at least this wish was fulfilled as he died at the start of the New Year’s celebrations. Along with his many other friends and admiring colleagues, we miss him badly.

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