

# NICHOLAS RESCHER



Nicholas Rescher, an internationally renowned philosopher who helped establish the University of Pittsburgh's philosophy program as one of the world's best, died on Friday, January 5, 2024 at the age of 95.

Born in Hagen, Germany in 1928, Nicholas came to the United States at the age of 10 as a refugee from Nazi, Germany. He earned his doctorate when only 22 as

Princeton's youngest-ever philosophy Ph.D. After serving in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Korean War and briefly working at the RAND Corporation in the mid-1950s, he entered into an active career as professor, first at Lehigh University, and then, for over 60 years, at the University of Pittsburgh.

A many-sided scholar and prolific author, Nicholas published over 200 scholarly articles and 100 philosophical books, of which 22 have been translated into 11 languages. He has been awarded honorary degrees by eight universities on three continents, and elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland; the Royal Society of Canada; the European Academy of Arts and Sciences (Academia Europaea); the Institut International de Philosophie; the Academie Internationale de Philosophie des Sciences, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Science. Additionally, he was welcomed as an honorary member of Corpus Christi College in Oxford, England.

Nicholas received numerous medals and prizes (foreign and domestic) for his academic work, including the Aquinas Medal of the American Catholic Philosophical Association and the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. Two significant academic prizes have been established in his name: The Nicholas Rescher Medal for Contributions to Systematic Philosophy was inaugurated by the University of Pittsburgh in 2010, and the American Philosophical Association created a Nicholas Rescher Prize in 2018.

Apart from his prolific body of published work, Nicholas's scholarly contributions range from rediscovery of the medieval Arabic theory of temporal modalities to innovation of the "Rescher Quantifier" in symbolic logic, and include the recovery of specifications for G. W. Leibniz's cipher machine of the 1670s.

In his 60s, in order to deliver lectures in Spain, Nicholas added Spanish to his knowledge of the Arabic, English, French and German languages, and Latin. In his 80s, he took up contract bridge and became a "National American Bridge Championship Master."

Nicholas, beloved husband of the recently deceased Dorothy Henle Rescher, is survived by children, Elizabeth, Mark, Owen, and Catherine Rescher; daughter-in-law, Erika Dirkse; grandchildren, Myles, Felix, and Ivo Rescher, and many nieces and their families.

Friends will be received at **JOHN A. FREYVOGEL SONS, INC.** ([freyvogelfuneralhome.com](http://freyvogelfuneralhome.com)) 4900 Centre Avenue at Devonshire Street on Thursday, January 18 from 4-6 p.m. Funeral Friday, Mass of Christian Burial, St. Mary Magdalene Parish, St. Bede Church 10 a.m.

In lieu of other remembrances, memorial gifts in support of The Dr. Nicholas Rescher Fund for the Advancement of the Department of Philosophy may be made to the University of Pittsburgh, % the Office of Institutional Advancement, 102 Park Plaza Building, 128 N. Craig Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. (Online giving may be arranged via [www.giveto.pitt.edu](http://www.giveto.pitt.edu). For information on donations by phone or check, please call 1-800-817-8943, or, if local, 412-624-5800.)

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