

**Professor Yehuda Bauer**  
**6 April 1926 - 18 October 2024**  
**A Tribute by Dr. Eyal Mayroz**

Scholars and intellectuals departing from the world leave behind their writings, and if they were fortunate then loving families. Yehuda has moved onward leaving both.

Rather than paying homage to his scholarship (as many others have) I'd like to focus this tribute on Yehuda the person, the man. Not only because of the difficulty of separating his writing from who he was, or of the impossible task of summarising his massive body of work in a page or two, but because his importance to me, and to many others I think, was strongly linked to his humane character. To a heroism of sorts.

Heroes tend to be normal people - at times giants in a field, but other times 'ordinary' folks who developed and/or who possess qualities that others admire and would like to grow in themselves. We use such heroes as our sources of inspiration.

I had known Yehuda for 33 years, part of the time long-distance, in countless weekly skype chats between Jerusalem and the Blue Mountains in Australia. We had shared a mum (mine) and wife (his).

Part of Yehuda's life mission and now legacy (at least as I understand it to be) was to motivate others to do good in the world. To leave it a little better than how they had found it.

And as many of us who knew him can attest, he chose to focus his efforts not only on his Holocaust studies (for which he was most well-known), but on harnessing also his sharp intellect, research and distinguished contacts list, to confront the vexing challenges of preventing genocide and other mass atrocity crimes.

Yehuda had not shied away from harnessing these contacts to try to exert pressures on world leaders, governments or international organizations. Nor did he hesitate in placing less than flattering mirrors in front of many of them when needed.

And yet, his desk drawer was full of high medals from states, knighthood titles from kings and queens, and other honours. These trophies, he once told me, symbolized attempts to nudge him toward retirement; to make him stop hassling people in positions of power.

Well, if that indeed had been the goal, then, as we know, they all failed. Yehuda continued to write, speak and hassle almost to the day he passed away at 98. His excuses aside, however, the humble man that he was never showed off his accolades. Only the family knew.

Emails and letters of condolences continue to arrive, many expressing a sense of foreboding at a world without a Yehuda. A momentary anxiety to be sure, soon to pass away.

But the seeds he and many others have sown will continue to grow. Plants or even trees of hope in a difficult world; of uncompromising commitment to truth-seeking, even when the truth is inconvenient. Of wisdom, moral integrity, humanity, and a strong desire to protect vulnerable populations from mass violence. To continue to make the world "just a little safer," as Yehuda would say.

To end, while it would have been presumptuous to try to cover Yehuda's life work in this tribute, one thing I'm quite certain of. Doing his best to make a difference is how Yehuda would have liked to be remembered. And so, we will.