

Jeanne Addison Roberts, 87, retired professor of literature and former president of the Shakespeare Association of America (1986-1987), died at her home Tuesday, April 3, 2012.

A noted feminist scholar, Roberts taught for 33 years (1960-1993) at American University in Washington DC and started summer programs at the Folger Shakespeare Library, supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Folger gave her an award (2010) for innovative teaching.

Roberts was chair of the Shakespeare Division of the Modern Language Association, president of the Southeast Renaissance Conference, and recipient of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association Lifetime Achievement Award.

Roberts wrote three books and many articles with a feminist approach to gender in Shakespeare and other major literary figures, including Milton, Swift, Johnson, Margaret Cavendish, and Elizabeth Cary. She served on the editorial boards of Shakespeare Quarterly, Shakespeare Survey, Shakespeare Studies, and the Upstart Crow.

Her books include Shakespeare's English Comedy, (1979), The Shakespearean Wild (1991), and Literary Criticism as Dream Analysis (2009).

Born in Washington DC in 1924, Roberts was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Agnes Scott College. She held an MA from the University of Pennsylvania and a PhD from the University of Virginia. She was a teacher of English for four years in Bangkok, Thailand, and chair of the English Department for four years at the Lebanese American University in Beirut, Lebanon.

In retirement she gave literature courses at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in Washington DC. She was a member of the Cosmos Club.

Roberts is survived by her husband, Markley Roberts, two children Addison Masengill and Ellen Coster, four grandchildren, and a brother John W. Addison.

###