

# John Davis, Teacher: A Recollection

I first met John Davis in the late fifties when I was doing a two-year M.A. in philosophy at Western. John taught a graduate course in symbolic logic. It was both a philosophy course and a cross-listed course in the foundation of mathematics. There was, as a result, a mixture of philosophy and mathematics students in the course.

My most vivid memory of John was of an amazingly energetic and enthusiastic teacher who was anything but indifferent to his subject matter and to his students. I, if I may introduce a personal note, suffered from an extreme form of math anxiety--I couldn't even understand a truth-table. John was always extremely patient with me and it is thanks to him that I managed to scrape through.

Another vivid memory was of a man with a kind of Moorean passion for getting it right. When he didn't understand something, he let us know it. He was constitutionally incapable of intellectual pretence. I took away from my time with him the idea that philosophy was extremely difficult; but if one worked very hard, it was possible to get the right answer. And no relativist he, John was profoundly convinced that there was a right answer to get.

*Robert A. Imlay*