Haskell (“Hack”) Fain (July 1, 1926-July 26, 2018) was born in New York City. He joined the U.S. Army at age 17, soon after becoming an Eagle Scout, and served as a private first class during World War Two. The GI Bill allowed Hack to go to college, which opened the door for him to contemplate a career as a university professor.

After earning his Ph.D. from University of California at Berkeley and taking up a Fulbright Fellowship at the University of Oslo in Norway from 1954 to 1955, Hack was a member of the UW Philosophy Department from 1956 to 1993. He was also a philosophical globe trotter. Hack was a senior Fulbright professor at the University of Bergen, Norway, a Visiting Fellow (twice) at Oxford University, and a visiting professor at Berkeley, University of British Columbia, Florida State University, and University of Michigan. Hack also taught in the UW abroad program in Florence, Italy in 1983, which triggered a lifelong love of Italian language and culture. He continued to study Italian for many years, adding this language to the Norwegian he had mastered earlier. Hack was delighted to accept invitations to lecture on his research at numerous universities and colleges around the world.

Hack published articles across an impressive range of important philosophical topics. He also published two books. The first was *Between Philosophy and History: The Resurrection of Speculative Philosophy of History within the Analytic Tradition* (Princeton University Press, 1970). In that book Hack aimed to correct “… some of the distortions and biases which the two dominant schools of Anglo-American philosophical thinking, logical positivism and ordinary language analysis, had introduced into the philosophy of history in the past three or four decades.” By offering and defending his own conception of philosophy, Hack sought “to show that there is indeed common ground between philosophy and history, that speculative philosophy of history lies between philosophy and history, not because it is neither philosophy nor history, but because it is both …” This book was translated into Italian as *Tra Filosofia e Storia* in 1974 and was reprinted in Princeton University Press’s Legacy Library in 2015.

Hack’s second book was *Normative Politics and the Community of Nations* (Temple University Press, 1987). Here Hack decried traditional political philosophy’s failure to recognize that individual nation states are morally obliged to do their part in accomplishing urgent global tasks. He argued that this is a strong reason to think that traditional political philosophy is misguided at a fundamental level, and he laid out a framework for an alternative approach. Hack argued that norms for nations do not derive from the actual political institutions and practices that nations have, but from the moral urgency of certain tasks. Since avoiding nuclear and environmental catastrophes is of such surpassing moral importance, nation states cannot evade moral requirements by appealing to facts about domestic political arrangements. They must participate in multi-state projects even if doing so imposes burdens on the state’s own citizens. Hack’s book was ahead of its time. He said to his students that mainstream political philosophy’s obtuseness, though astonishing, was bound to change, and soon. Sure enough, the turning of the tide that Hack predicted occurred; some ten to fifteen years after the appearance of his book, a major subfield (usually called “global justice”) achieved a robust presence on the philosophical scene.

Hack taught at the first teach-in about the war in Vietnam at UW-Madison on April 1, 1965, and he chaired the Philosophy Department (1968-70 and 1972-73) during some of the most
tempestuous years on campus, when student protestors repeatedly met with police tear gas, and numerous members of the National Guard were deployed in and around Bascom Hall (where the Philosophy Department then was), bayonets affixed to their rifles. Hack was the right person to be Chair then, owing to his ability to take the edge off contention and to blunt directives from the administration that went too far. His irony, balance, and sense of humor were just what was needed. As Chair, Hack also found a way to equalize the teaching loads of junior and senior faculty, and he persuaded colleagues and deans to put that formula into effect. Hack really believed in the quality of the Department. Visiting other universities, he promoted our graduate program to students he took a shine to, and he succeeded in recruiting some of our best graduate students.

Hack loved telling jokes, which often had a philosophical twist. His evident pleasure in his own jokes added to the pleasure of hearing him tell them. Hack put his wry sense of humor to good use in his effective teaching. In the late 1980’s, Hack, like so many, was deeply troubled by the apparently intractable nuclear standoff between the US and the USSR, but his concern existed side-by-side with his judiciousness. At a social gathering, a graduate student argued that every student at UW should be required to take at least one course about the threat of nuclear war. What could be more important? Hack was never combative, but the student noticed a skeptical look on Hack’s face and asked him why. Hack simply replied, “Why not two?”

A student in one of Hack’s classes asked him if he’d rather work on his research than teach. His reply was that he not only loved teaching; for him, teaching was part and parcel of his process for developing new philosophical ideas. Hack also enjoyed playing chess, cooking, and sharing delicious meals with friends and family. After he retired, Hack helped start a popular Madison coffee group that engaged in daily philosophical discussions.

Hack is survived by his wife Linda Fain, his children Jonathan Fain and Madeline Ellis, his daughter-in-law Erin Fain and son-in-law James Ellis, his stepson Kenneth Lopes and stepdaughter-in-law Jenifer Lopes, his grandchildren Robert, Benjamin, Susan and Daniel Fain and Maximo, Levi, and Bram Ellis, and his sister Mary Fain. He was predeceased by his first wife, Elaine Fain, and his parents, Max and Ethel Fain.

Hack was greatly loved and is sorely missed.