

**PAA Memorial for J. Mayone Stycos, April 27, 2017, Douglas T. Gurak**

J. Mayone Stycos, Joe, died on June 24 of last year after a struggle with Parkinson's disease. He was residing in Ithaca New York, which had been his home since 1957 when his long, productive, and creative Cornell career began.

He graduated with Honors in Economics from Princeton in 1947

He went on to obtain his Ph.D. from Columbia U. in 1954. I shake my head in wonder regarding the makeup of his **Ph.D. committee** (Kingsley Davis, Herbert Hyman, Paul Lazarsfeld, Robert Merton, and Abram Kardiner): They were all iconic mid-century figures in the domains of both theory and methods. Early on Joe clearly liked challenges.

While a Ph.D. student he served as field director for the Puerto Rica Fertility survey and a book based in part on this work was published in 1955.

The book, **Family and Fertility in Puerto Rico: A Study of the Lower Income Group**, is a great example of the fluid use of multiple methodologies to provide an in depth picture of the people and analytical issues being studied. This focus was to be expanded and refined in the following decade.

He wrote six major research books, several monographs and more than 150 research articles. Joe was exceedingly productive in the 1950s and 60s (not that he was not later).

1959 (with Kurt Back and Reuben Hill): **The Family and Population Control: A Puerto Rican Experiment in Social Change** (U. of NC press)

1960 (with Back): **The Survey under Unusual Conditions: The Jamaica Human Fertility Investigation**

1961 (with Judith Blake and Kingsley Davis): **Family Structure in Jamaica: The Social Context of Reproduction** (Free Press)

The list goes on and on and **SOCIAL CONTEXT (and collaboration)** is the operative terms along with multiple methods (including photography)

In addition to his impressive accomplishments in Sociology and Demography, Joe Stycos was an accomplished **photographer and musician**. He published two thematic books of photos capturing the context of people living at The Margin of Life, which is the title of the 2<sup>nd</sup> book co-authored with renowned photographer Cornell Capa.

**Children of the Barriada: A Photographic Essay on the Latin American Population Problem**  
(Grossman, 1970) and

**Margin of Life: Population and Poverty in the Americas** (with Capa) (1974 also a Spanish version out of Bogota)

He worked as a professional musician as a young adult and maintained his considerable musical abilities throughout his life. He enjoyed performing at IPP/PDP parties and other venues. He had a very impressive collection of tapes accessible from a single console that was well indexed. He was a man of multiple simultaneous careers.

He also had a large collection of African and Latin American art that he collected during his many regular trips abroad. To my knowledge, he did not paint or sculpt but he had a very good eye.

Throughout his career, Joe devoted considerable creative energy toward *institution building*. He was extremely well organized, had impressive political skills, and had a vision: building multidimensional population capacity at Cornell University and beyond. He could have done it elsewhere, but Cornell presented him with some special challenges.

In 1962, he founded the *International Population Program*, based in the Department of Sociology at Cornell. He directed this training program until 1992 (its name was changed to the Population and Development Program in 1988). When he stepped down as Director 8 years before retiring, he left a program that was in excellent shape. I followed Joe as Director and benefitted immensely from his long and careful institution building efforts. I served as PDP director for the next 10 years.

Joe, as emeritus professor, continued to come to his office at Cornell and participate in scholarly activities until the last few years. His efforts laid an important part of the foundation that was to support a broader campus population institution: The Cornell Population Center.

In addition to his contributions at Cornell, Joe served as a consultant for a large number of national and international agencies and private foundations including NIH, USAID, WHO, IPPF, PRB, Pop Council, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Battelle Memorial Institute, UNFPA, UN Pop Division and others. His work with WHO involved efforts in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Although he was always recognized as a strong advocate for family planning and women's reproductive rights, in the last decades of his life he turned his attention to environmental issues and their linkages to population.

Joe was an excellent colleague and mentor. This is attested to by the response from around the world when 63 former students and colleagues supported Joe in the PAA Honor a Colleague campaign, 2012-13.

I met Joe in the mid-1980s when I visited Cornell for the first time. A few years later when I returned for a job interview, I recall looking at Joe listening to me and realized that I felt awkward bringing up references to his multi-method masterpieces of the 1960s (the references were genuine and relevant to the talk but it seemed too much like pandering. Nonetheless, I realized that his work had influenced my own and I talked to him about this later.

Mary and I enjoyed visiting with Joe and Maria over the years and this continued as Joe's health deteriorated more markedly in recent years. Communication became more difficult for him but his mind remained sharp and he continued following activities at CU and throughout the profession.

We have lost someone special but I take pleasure in having known him and having had an opportunity to work with him for part of his long, productive, and creative life.