



## IN MEMORIAM

Martin Landau  
Professor of Political Science, Emeritus  
UC Berkeley  
1921 – 2004

Professor Emeritus of Political Science Martin Landau died of cancer at Alta Bates Medical Center in Berkeley on December 27, 2004, at the age of 83. He was best known for applying the concept of redundancy (from the design of information systems) to the study of public organizations and showing that duplication — rather than streamlining — of important functions increased reliability.

Landau also was known for his contributions to the philosophy of social science and the theory of public management and large scale organization, and for founding the Hong Kong Project, which trained senior level public managers from Hong Kong to apply concepts of organizational theory to practical administrative decision making and problem solving. Over 17 years, more than 100 professionals participated in the program, financed by the Hong Kong government, which was based initially at the Institute of Governmental Studies and, later, at the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley.

Bureaucratic organizations tend to make rote decisions, without reviewing approaches from new perspectives, said Claudia Archer, who worked with Landau as assistant director of the Hong Kong Project. The project challenged its scholars with a rigorous curriculum aimed at expanding their “repertoire of organizational response,” she said.

Landau also served as a consultant on organizational design in the United States, Thailand, the Philippines, Nepal, Italy, France and elsewhere, said his daughter, Madeline Landau, a political anthropologist. Among other honors, he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship and named a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences and a senior fellow at the National Academy of Public Administration.

The son of a Brooklyn shopkeeper, Landau sparred in neighborhood boxing clubs as a boy and dreamed of becoming a professional boxer. Yet his interest in politics, a positive role for government, the labor movement, and civil rights led him to earn a B.A. in political science from Brooklyn College and a Ph.D. in that subject from New York University, his daughter said.

“He was the most egalitarian spirit I’ve ever met,” she said, adding that he lent personal support to women, students of color, and others from a diversity of backgrounds.

Landau’s early education was interrupted by World War II. He served with the U.S. Army Signal Corps, earning several medals for valor. Landau’s wartime service was spent in Germany, where he witnessed the horrors of concentration camps. Deeply affected by those experiences, Madeline Landau said, her father was always “a profound humanist who opposed all forms of tyranny. He had a lifetime commitment to freedom and social justice.”

After the war, Landau taught at Lincoln University, Brooklyn College, and the City University of New York before coming to Berkeley in 1971. He retired in 1991. Friends recalled Landau's longtime support for the labor and civil rights movements, his sense of humor and storytelling ability, and his love of opera and fine wine.

He is survived by his wife Bernice (Bobbie) and daughters Claudia and Madeline Landau, all of Berkeley; brothers Gerry Landau of Lexington, Massachusetts, and Herbert Landau of Boynton Beach, Florida; and a sister, Bernice Golden of Suffern, New York.

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