



IN MEMORIAM

Robert W. Jackman
Distinguished Professor of Political Science
UC Davis
1946-2009

Robert W. Jackman, Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Davis, died peacefully in San Francisco on October 8, after a long, courageous struggle with pancreatic cancer.

Bob was born on October 31, 1946, in Oamaru, New Zealand, to David and Helen Jackman, both of whom taught in rural Maori communities. Bob's early years were thus spent among the Maori, living in homes without many modern amenities. He recalled with fondness that he did not wear shoes until he was 8 years old.

Bob admired American social science, and his ambition was to undertake graduate study in political science in the United States. He was accepted into the political science graduate program at the University of Wisconsin- Madison with a teaching assistantship, and, after working for four months in a bread factory to earn the money for the journey, Bob arrived in Madison, Wisconsin in August, 1968. He was joined there by Mary Peretz, and they were married that September just as Bob began his graduate studies.

Bob was awarded the Ph.D. in December, 1972, shortly after he had joined the faculty of the Political Science Department at Michigan State University, where he remained until 1989, when he joined the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Davis.

Over the course of his career, Bob was the author or coauthor of four books and more than 40 papers, most of which were published in the most prominent journals in political science and sociology. His work lay at the intersection of political science and sociology, driven by questions about political institutions, political behavior, and social inequality. He focused primarily on the macro level and he developed a prodigious understanding of the issues that impede democratic representation and social equality in nation states, as well as of the methodological hurdles that confront the statistical analysis of cross- national data. At the same time, he maintained an active interest in the political attitudes and behavior of individuals and the structural and institutional factors that shape individuals' political orientations and behavior.

His initial work sought to deepen our understanding of the relationship between the economic and political development of nation states and social inequality. This research resulted in Bob's first book, *Politics and Social Equality* (New York, Wiley, 1975). This book was important on both theoretical and methodological grounds. In a systematic, cross- national, statistical analysis, Bob challenged the received wisdom that the advent of democratic government brings social and economic equality in its trail. His analyses, instead, identified the significance of economic growth in leading to some diminution of economic inequality and underscored the limited degree of change in economic inequality that had been achieved in the world. These analyses were built on a definition of the empirical elements of democratic government that pointed to the multifaceted, fragile, and malleable nature of the democratic form. The theoretical contribution of the book is

in Bob's careful exposition of the flaws in prior work and in his refinement of a complex model of political structures and social inequality. One reviewer compared the book to the style of Simenon's Inspector Maigret in which suspects were examined and either cast aside or saved for the ultimate dénouement. This line of research was developed in further work over subsequent years and brought a series of collaborative papers with sociologist Kenneth A. Bollen, several of which were published in the *American Sociological Review*.

Bob also maintained a strong interest in the political attitudes and behavior of individuals. As a graduate student, one of his early published papers was on support for democratic principles among political elites and the mass public in the United States, and later he worked with his wife, Mary R. Jackman, on a project that explored the popular American understanding and interpretation of social class, as a component of Americans' identity and political awareness. This research culminated in the publication of their joint book, *Class Awareness in the United States* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1983).

Over his career, Bob's research turned increasingly to the effects of the political institutions of the state on patterns of political behavior. The evident failure of numerous new states that followed the wave of decolonization sparked an interest in state capacity. In *Power without Force* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), Bob undertook a searching examination of the interrelated ideas of political development and state capacity. The overall thrust of the book's argument is that the persistent exercise of power within a legitimate institutional framework is the hallmark of political capacity, and that what makes institutions legitimate is their repeated ability to resolve conflicts without resorting to force.

Bob's work on political institutions led him to be skeptical about an old idea that had revisited social science and taken it by storm: the idea that variations in political behavior are best explained by idiosyncratic, cultural forces rather than by the structural and institutional constraints that frame the lives of rational, goal-oriented individuals. He became increasingly interested in the nature of rationality and the way in which variations in the institutional enactment of democracy affect the political behavior of elites and the mass public. He wrote a number of papers exploring these topics, and in 2004 he published a book with his former student Ross A. Miller, *Before Norms: Institutions and Civic Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press). The book offers a trenchant analysis of the explanatory merits of theories of political culture versus theories that focus on the preferences of calculating individuals who work to pursue their interests within structural and institutional constraints. The book emphasizes the endogeneity of the mass political behaviors that become known as "political culture." The first chapters of the book present a crisp, penetrating analysis of the shortcomings of prevalent theories about the exogenous impact of political culture and social capital, as well as a sharp empirical assessment of the measurement of social capital. This includes a demonstration that while league bowling may have been declining in the United States (then widely accepted as an indicator of the ebbing of social capital), there had been upsurges in other kinds of voluntary association across a wide variety of activities. The second half of the book explores the empirical impact of political institutions on political behavior by examining the effects of variation in political institutions on the rise of right-wing parties in Europe and on political participation.

Bob's contributions as a scholar and teacher were recognized with a number of awards. He was the recipient of fellowships from both the Guggenheim Foundation and the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, as well as two awards from the National Science Foundation. In 1988, Bob's achievements as a scholar and teacher were recognized by Michigan State University with the Distinguished Faculty Award. The breadth of Bob's recognition is perhaps best shown by the fact that between 1995 and 1998 he was simultaneously on the editorial boards of both the *American Political Science Review* and the *American Sociological Review*. Students and colleagues alike relied on him as an inexhaustible source on a broad array of intellectual and methodological issues, and his knowledge was always shared with generosity, incisiveness, and humility.

In addition to his distinguished research career, Bob was a great colleague and an exceptional mentor to junior colleagues and graduate students. He trained countless young scholars, most of whom are teaching and conducting research in colleges and universities around the country. All of his former students would attest to Bob's selfless style of mentoring. He returned chapters and papers with detailed comments in a matter of hours, not days or weeks! He spent a great deal of his time talking over ideas with students and discussing his feedback in great detail. Bob made a point of co-authoring with his students and junior colleagues. He was also a standout supporter and mentor to women. At a time when there were few women in the field of political science, he strongly promoted the hiring of women, and he actively mentored many women in the field. His assessment of intellectual quality was always gender-neutral. His contributions as a mentor have

lasting significance in that his ideas, his way of conceptualizing questions in comparative politics, his way of seeing the world shaped the research agenda of so many.

Bob's contributions to the Davis department are well known to his colleagues. He was committed to a cross-national, comparative perspective in his field of comparative politics. Although his own contributions to the field emphasized the importance of institutions, he was committed as well to the value of comparative behavioral work, and enthusiastically backed several hiring decisions that emphasized that side of the subfield. As a direct result of his leadership of the comparative field, the Davis department has porous boundaries between traditional subfields, and comparativists regularly collaborate with Americanists and international- relations scholars. Since Bob joined the Davis department, it has grown significantly in its vitality, intellectual energy, and collaborative spirit. Bob Jackman's contributions were critical to this progress, although if asked to assess his own importance to the department, his one- word response would likely have been, "exiguous." His teaching in the department spanned courses on comparative politics, methods, and American public opinion. His unwavering commitment to scholarly principles, coupled with his broad and incisive intellect, communal generosity, and down- to- earth good humor, contributed significantly to the growth of the Political Science Department at UC Davis.

Over the last two and a half years of his life, Bob fought his illness with the same quiet determination and dry humor that he had brought to all his endeavors. He strove to continue living his life as fully as he could, savoring the last undergraduate course that he taught (against medical advice) in the fall of 2008, continuing with scholarly collaborations, and maintaining his generous availability as a colleague and mentor.

Bob is survived by his wife Mary Jackman, Professor of Sociology at UC Davis, his daughter Rachael in San Francisco and son Saul in Palo Alto, as well as other members of his family in Australia and New Zealand.

Josephine T. Andrews
Randolph M. Siverson
Walter J. Stone

Department of Political Science
University of California, Davis