



## **Joseph M. Stycos**

March 27, 1927 – June 24, 2016

Professor Emeritus of Development Sociology Joseph Mayone Stycos, who taught at Cornell for 43 years, died on June 24. He was 89.

Professor Stycos was an early pioneer in demography, and in particular an expert in the study of the interrelationships between population dynamics and societal development. He joined the Cornell faculty in 1957. In 1962 he founded the International Population Program, subsequently renamed the Population and Development Program, and served as its director until 1992. The IPP was one of the first U.S. population centers that focused its training and research efforts on international population and development issues. He also served as chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology during 1966-70, and as director of the Latin American Studies Program during 1962-66. In 1988, he joined the Department of Development Sociology, retiring in 2000 as professor emeritus.

Professor Stycos was born March 27, 1927, in Saugerties, New York. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors from Princeton University in 1947. In 1954, he earned a doctorate in sociology from Columbia University. As a Ph.D. student, he worked as a research analyst at Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research where he served as field director of the Puerto Rican fertility survey. That study was one of the first international studies of fertility knowledge, attitudes and practices. His doctoral field research led to his frequently cited and reproduced book, "Family and Fertility in Puerto Rico: A Study of the Lower Income Group" (1955). Later books included "The Family and Population Control: A Puerto Rican Experiment in Social Change" (1959, co-authored with Kurt Back and Reuben Hill); "The Survey Under Unusual Conditions: The Jamaica Human Fertility Investigation"

(1960 co-authored with Bach); and “The Control of Human Fertility in Jamaica” (1964 co-authored with Bach).

By the late 1960s, Professor Stycos’ interest spanned the Western Hemisphere, as reflected in his books “Human Fertility in Latin America: Sociological Perspectives” (1968) and “Ideology, Faith and Family Planning in Latin America” (1971). A prolific author, he published six major research volumes, several monographs and more than 150 articles on birth control, fertility, socio-psychological dimensions in husband-wife relations, and survey research. Most of his work focused on Latin America, but he also published field research conducted in Egypt, India, China, Poland, Spain, Turkey and the United States.

In the 1990s Professor Stycos turned his attention to the interrelationships of population and the environment. He served on the planning committee for the Global Omnibus Environmental Survey of the Human Dimension of Global Environmental Change Programme 1993-99, which he chaired in 1996. With Max Pfeffer, Cornell professor of development sociology, Professor Stycos received several grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to carry out sociological research on contentious politics and community development in the New York City watershed.

He served as a member of many national and international committees including the Latin American Science Board of the National Academy of Sciences (1963-65), as trustee of the Population Reference Bureau (1964-68), as a member of several National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) training and research panels on population dynamics, the executive committee of International Planned Parenthood, Western Hemisphere (1965-71); the Advisory Committee in Population and Development, Organization of American States (1968-70); and the Population Task Force, U.S. Commission for U.N.E.S.C.O. (1972-73). He was a Fulbright-Hays Distinguished Professor at the University of Warsaw (1979) and received a Fulbright Program Research Award for fieldwork in Costa Rica (1986). He was elected to the board of the Population Association of America (PAA), 1971-74, and was recognized as one of PAA’s “Honored Members.”

Throughout his career, Professor Stycos was an avid photographer, and illustrated a number of his books with photographs taken during the course of his field research. His photography books include “Children of the Barriada: A Photographic Essay on the Latin American Population Problem” (1970). His lifelong pursuit of photography culminated in a collaboration with photographer Cornell Capa on “Margin of Life: Population and Poverty in the Americas” (1974). His photographic work was exhibited at Cornell and at several Ithaca area galleries. He was also an accomplished

pianist and singer.

*David L. Brown, chair; Douglas T. Gurak and Mary M. Kritz*

