

## Murray Burton Levin

Murray Burton Levin, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Boston University, died December 8, 1999, of heart problems at the age of 72. A native of Brookline, Massachusetts, Murray was educated at Harvard (B.A., 1948), where he wrote his honors thesis under the direction of Louis Hartz, and at Columbia (Ph.D., 1955), where his principal mentor was Franz Neumann. Upon these influences, and with insights taken from study of the theoretical and methodological writings of Freud, Marx, their forbears, and their followers, Murray developed an original and highly coherent intellectual perspective.

After teaching at Columbia from 1951 to 1953, and serving a brief stint in the Navy, Murray came to Boston University in 1955. From that time until his retirement in 1990, he was arguably the single most popular teacher and most recognized individual on campus. By his own estimate—which may have been a rare understatement—Murray taught more than 18,000 students during his BU career. Most experienced him as a lecturer of rare power and magnetism, who challenged students to think critically and to question conventional wisdom in Introduction to American Politics or American Political Thought. For others, his seminars on Marxism, Post-Marxist Thought, or Class and Consensus in American Politics provided model experiences in critical textual analysis and logical rigor. After retiring from BU, Murray taught at the Harvard University Extension School and at Stonehill College, where he was a visiting scholar in the Joseph Martin Institute for Law and Society from 1995 to 1999. In both places, he rapidly developed enthusiastic followings of students and faculty attracted by his unique blend of intellectual and personal magnetism.

Murray's published works, taken together, comprise a wholly original and rewarding exploration of the inability of American political culture and electoral processes to address the persistence of poverty, hunger, intolerance, and structural

inequalities. In *The Alienated Voter* (1960), Murray identified and explored the previously unrecognized phenomenon whereby "voters feel impotent, believe that all politicians are crooks and assume that the outcome of elections is meaningless." Political strategies and campaign technologies developed by candidates to appeal to alienated voters are detailed and deconstructed in *The Compleat Politician* (1962) and *Kennedy Campaigning* (1966). *Political Hysteria in America* (1971), *Edward M. Kennedy: The Myth of Leadership* (1980), and *Talk Radio and the American Dream* (1986) all in different ways deal with mechanisms developed by elites to shape and channel mass discontent in directions that reinforce or protect the status quo. When he died, Murray was working on a critical analysis of the role media consultants play in modern elections to be titled *Political Consultants in the Age of Illusion*. In an electoral season characterized by the near total absence of real issues, aggrandizement of style over substance, and blatant week-by-week manipulation of candidates' images, the importance of Murray Levin's intellectual legacy has never been more evident.

Murray's last book, *Teach Me: Kids Will Learn When Oppression Is the Lesson* (1998), grew out of two years' experience as a volunteer teacher at an alternative high school serving Boston's minority community. During those two years, the 70 year-old Jewish intellectual earned the friendship and trust of some of the city's most disadvantaged and disaffected young people. In remarkably vivid and evocative language, Levin portrayed the worldview of these young people, explicated the mechanisms by which America's social institutions, educational system, and communications media tacitly conspire to keep poor children dysfunctional, and describes the pedagogical techniques which helped them achieve beyond any of Murray's expectations.

The qualities that made Murray Levin a great teacher and insightful critic of American democracy also made him a great colleague and friend. He brought an enormous

energy and sense of expectation into every room he ever entered. His passion and the depth of his commitment to both the people and the ideas he cared so much about was always evident, as was his unparalleled generosity of spirit and mind. And finally, no one who knew him could fail to remark on Murray's astonishing and ever present sense of humor.

Murray's humor, like his politics, was an expression of a fundamental irreverence. It sometimes appeared that Murray took it as his life's mission to deflate the self-important, to debunk the conventional wisdom, and—to borrow one of his favorite phrases—to delegitimize authority. This irreverence, and his willingness to challenge authority, was more than stylistic or intellectual. He had rare courage, placing friendship and principle before self on numerous occasions. For many years, the university administration froze his salary on account of political disagreements. When Murray and four other faculty members honored the picket line of a staff union that had supported the faculty's own successful unionization effort, they were threatened with termination; the threat evaporated in the face of overwhelming community and national support.

Murray married for the first time in his fifties. He was a devoted husband to Helen (Jacobson) and quickly established close and loving bonds with her three children, Seth, Jessica, and Jacob. When their son Joshua (now 14) was born, it was the happiest event of his life. He was as extraordinary a father as he was a teacher, a colleague, and a friend.

Edward E. Berger, Ph.D.

## Frank A. Pinner

Frank A. Pinner, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Michigan State University, was born in Koenigsberg, Germany (then East Prussia; now Kaliningrad, Russia), in 1914. He left Germany in 1933, when the Nazis consolidated their power and went first to Paris, where in 1937 he received a bachelor's degree in economics from the Ecole

Libre des Sciences Politiques. After graduating, he worked for three years as a foreign correspondent for Agence Telegraph-Orient. When France fell, Frank made his way out of Europe through Spain and arrived in the United States in December 1941.

After working in a war plant in Buffalo for a year, Frank served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1946, receiving U.S. citizenship in March 1943. Following the war, he went to graduate school at the University of California, Berkeley, where he received his Ph.D. in political science in 1954 for a pioneering dissertation on political values. He spent a year at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences before joining the department of political science at Michigan State University as an instructor in 1955. He rose through the ranks to become professor in 1965 and retired in 1981.

In 1959, with colleagues Paul Jacobs and Philip Selznick, Frank wrote *Old Age and Political Behavior*, a study of the California Institute of Social Welfare and of its leader, George H. McLain. An early exemplar of behavioral research in the discipline, and an important study in its own right, the book contained data collected from questionnaires sent to a systematic sample of the group's 70,000-plus members, content analyses of McLain's daily radio broadcasts, and examination of files and correspondence of the organization. The authors found the psychological needs of elderly pensioners to be an important component of the group's appeal and of the relationship between McLain and his followers.

Throughout the 1960s, Frank devoted much of his attention to studying student political activism and issues in secondary education. He wrote several important analyses of student movements, including "Student Trade-Unionism in France, Belgium and Holland: Anticipatory Socialization and Role-Seeking" for *Sociology of Education* (Spring 1964); "Parental Overprotection and Political Distrust" for *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (September 1965); "Tradition and Transgression: West-

ern European Students in the Post-war World" for *Daedalus* (Winter 1968); and "Students: A Marginal Elite in Politics" for *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (May 1971). In 1966, he wrote *Relationships Between High School Group Structures and the Development of Orientations Toward Public Affairs*, for which he developed numerous instruments for measuring high school students' social context and political attitudes. Frank's interest in education was also evidenced by his coauthoring of *Decision Making on the Reform of Educational Finances in Michigan: A Report to the Urban Institute* in 1971 with John N. Collins and William A. Sederburg. In fall 1966, Frank taught at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna.

Frank's principal interests lay in political behavior research, especially in political psychology and political socialization, and this led him to play a crucial role in the development of graduate training in both empirical methods of political research and political psychology at Michigan State University. He served as the original director of the Bureau of Social and Political Research at MSU, which in addition to sponsoring research on political processes was also a center for graduate training in research methods.

An active member of the department, Frank was extremely generous with his advice to both students and colleagues; we all benefitted from his insights into political and psychological processes early in our careers at Michigan State. He could be brutally honest but was usually right on target. He was also a good citizen of the larger world, active in many political causes and an important member of the liberal political community in East Lansing. Frank was an eternal optimist, interested in everything, full of vitality, and always planning for his project. He exemplified a generation that endured much but contributed greatly.

Frank's marriage to Virginia Hitchcock ended in 1981 but, still full of enthusiasm and vitality, he married for a second time at age 80 and subsequently moved to East Falmouth, Massachusetts. There, he

gave himself over to his long-time hobby of woodworking and cabinetry and partially built the interior of a new home in a cooperative community. He died on October 28, 1999, and is survived by his widow, Dorothy Carlock, and his two daughters from his first marriage, Bepi Pinner of North Carolina and Karen Parsell of Ohio. He spent his last months in North Carolina, where he was cared for by Bepi. In his later years in East Lansing, Frank joined the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing, where he met his second wife, made many close friends, and was very active in church programs and activities. A touching memorial service was held for him there on February 19, 2000.

Contributions in Frank's memory may be made to the Lansing branch of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Paul R. Abramson  
Michigan State University  
Ada W. Finifter  
Michigan State University

## William B. Prendergast

William Broderick Prendergast, 85, died of heart failure at his home in McLean, Virginia, on December 7, 1999. During a long and varied career, he was, at various times, a political science professor, political consultant, lobbyist, candidate, and author. At the height of his career, from the late 1950s to the mid-1960s, he served as director of research for the Republican National Committee and later for the Republican Conference of the House of Representatives. Theodore White, in one of his classic books on presidential campaigns, noted that Prendergast ran the best research operation in Washington.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the national and congressional party committees still played an important role in national politics. They still had campaign responsibilities and were relied upon by state and local candidates to provide campaign and candidate research. They raised money, planned campaigns, and advised candidates, all activities that have now largely been assumed by political consultants. Bill Prender-