MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

ALFRED (“FREDDY”) DIAMANT

(September 25, 1917 – May 11, 2012)

Freddy Diamant was born in Vienna, Austria. Following the Anschluss, and after a series of adventures in which he displayed his characteristic fortitude and concern for others, Freddy reached the United States in 1940. Not as yet an American citizen, Freddy volunteered for the army the day after Pearl Harbor. Shot in the back during the Normandy invasion, Freddy was officially designated partially disabled. Later when Congress passed legislation giving special health benefits to people in this situation, he (typically) expressed the strong desire that this aid be given to someone who really needed it.

After the war, Freddy at last was able to pursue his intellectual and professional dreams, receiving his A.B. from Indiana University in 1947 and his Ph.D. from Yale in 1957. He embarked on a distinguished academic career -- first at the University of Florida (1950-1960), then at Haverford College (1960-1967), and finally at Indiana (1967-1988). While at Indiana he served as Chair of Political Science and on two occasions as Chair of West European Studies. He also received a number of academic awards including a Guggenheim, a Fulbright Senior Research, and an Alexander von Humbolt Stiftung Fellowship. For a number of years after his retirement as Professor of Political Science and West European Studies, Freddy continued to teach his graduate seminar, “Bureaucracy and Public Policy in Western Europe,” and he remained active in university affairs, serving, for example, in the Students Advocates Office.

Freddy’s academic work fell primarily in two areas: Political Theory; and Comparative Public Administration and Development. Freddy connected these seemingly discrete fields by focusing on the potentialities for collective social and political betterment. In his book, *Austrian Catholics and the First Republic: Democracy, Capitalism and the Social Order, 1918-1934* (Princeton University Press), Freddy showed how Catholic thinkers and political leaders attempted to grapple with the demise of the Hapsburg Empire and the challenges of 19th-century Catholic social thought, represented in the Papal Encyclical “Quadragesimo Anno,” which asserted the right of the state “to adjust ownership to meet the needs of the public good.” Freddy argued that the reaction, the concept of “corporatism” enshrined in the Austrian Constitution of 1934, was a sham, a “convenient disguise for perpetuating the predominance of big business and of authoritarian political leaders.” He continued his interest in the political
impact of ideas in his studies of workplace democracy and of the political and policy implications of the “neo-corporatist” revival after World War II.

His concern with historical context and the focus on politics as a key explanatory variable underlay his contributions to Comparative Public Administration and Development. Institutionally, Freddy was a founding member of the Faculty Research Seminars in Comparative Administration and Development as well as a member of the Program Committee for an eight year Ford Foundation grant for the study of development administration. In over twenty articles and book chapters Freddy argued against dichotomizing “Western” and “non-Western” political systems, against “reducing politics to a dependent variable,” and for a nuanced appreciation of the relationship between the political and administrative order. For example, he argued that in the case of France, “in the presence of a weak political consensus the administrative machinery necessary for a modern nation state will develop its own rules and procedures.” These positions were, and remain, contentious. Freddy advanced his views with tenacity and courtesy.

It would be a mistake, however, to delimit too starkly the scope of his intellectual interests. Instinctively curious, always looking for unexpected connections, prepared to do the work necessary to engage in an array of fruitful conversations, Freddy was a valuable member of our discipline as a whole. The breadth of his attention is seen in the diversity of graduate dissertations he directed, with countries, to cite just one example, ranging from Argentina (religion in politics) to the United States (labor market policy).

This reference to dissertations brings us to Freddy’s relations with students and colleagues, the most personally satisfying and in my view the most important of his academic achievements. Remembrances from colleagues: Russ Hanson—“Freddy read my work, and critiqued it, accurately, but gently. And when it appeared that I could fly on my own, he stood back and cheered me on. His sense of mentoring was enduring, endearing, and eminently humane.” Dick Stryker—“Freddy provided a model for junior colleagues in the selfless spirit with which he encouraged and read our work.” In my own case, Freddy, by his critique of my work and by his professional example, led an overly prickly new Ph.D. toward better listening and greater attentiveness.

From graduate students: Joyce Mushaben—“Freddy was my Doktorvater in a figurative and literal sense. He was devoted to infusing the study of institutions, public policies and administrative processes with democratic values. He combined the wisdom of Winnie-the-Pooh with the profound lessons of Hannah Arendt and Victor Klemperer, followed up with a strong dose of Studs Terkel.” Hans Michelmann—“I received important guidance about university teaching. I have used the same basic course structure, applied the lessons I learned watching him teach, and in general followed his pedagogic advice.” Margaret and Richard Hayes—
“Freddy taught us much, as a professor and as a friend. It is only now that we understand the importance of his work with the Comparative Administration Group. It is so relevant to our focus on ‘governance’ in Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa. Freddy’s wisdom has left a profound mark on our understanding of contemporary world events.” David Robertson—“I learned from Freddy to care about students. Caring about students is the foundation of quality teaching. Without it, techniques don’t matter. I learned to understand the world, to really understand it in the sense of Max Weber’s Verstehen, to see the world from someone else’s point of view. I learned diplomacy, the skill of being both firm and kind.”

Although this is an academic review, an understanding of his life would be fundamentally incomplete without noting the deep love and respect Freddy had for his wife Ann (who died in 2003), their children Alice and Steve, and their grandchildren. I also should record how Freddy and Ann were the Bloomington family for so many students and colleagues including myself.

Teacher, mentor, colleague, and fast friend—Freddy’s legacy is seen in the lives and in the work of those privileged to have known him.

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