



Frank W. Young

May 31, 1928 – April 26, 2021

Frank W. Young, Professor Emeritus of Global Development at Cornell University, died on April 26, 2021, at his home in Ithaca, New York. Frank was born in Chicago, Illinois, on May 31, 1928.

Frank's undergraduate studies program at Deep Springs College (California) had a profound impact on his life. He was tasked with learning Latin, economic theory, political theory, and assisting an irrigation project for a Paiute Native American who did not speak English. After graduating he served in the U.S. military. From there he went on to earn a Ph.D. in Anthropology at Cornell University in 1957. His dissertation included fieldwork in Nova Scotia that investigated the impact of urbanization on two fishing villages.

In 1968, Professor Young spent a year at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences and in 1975 was a senior fellow at the East-West Center. After teaching at San Diego State and the University of Pittsburgh, he returned to Cornell where he spent most of his academic career and taught for 33 years. As a professor of Development Sociology (now Global Development), he was best known for his work on social solidarity, social structure, and

population health. He was widely published in sociological journals and served as the advisor to many doctoral students. Frank's commitment and attention to their careers endeared him to generations of students.

Professor Young's research record begins with anthropological investigations of initiation rites, menstrual taboos, inter-group dynamics, and later included the social determinants of mortality. Professor Young was an outstanding theorist who constantly probed the limits of social science knowledge. His theoretical acumen is perhaps best represented by the paper "Durkheim and development theory" (*Sociological Theory*, 1994).

Professor Young was a skilled polemicist who welcomed challenges to this thinking, and often took the opportunity to challenge the thinking of others. He was also a generous co-author who published numerous papers with students and colleagues.

Frank met Loretta "Lorrie" Rushforth in a mountain lodge near the town of Champéry, Switzerland, in the summer of 1977. After communicating through letters, they were married ten years later in her native Chile. Together, they traveled to Morocco, Spain, Italy, France, Portugal, the Yucatan Province in Mexico, and the Caribbean Islands.

In retirement, Professor Young organized a monthly lunch group with his colleagues called the "China Lunch." He also belonged to the Argentine Tango Club and loved the outdoors—from canoeing in the Adirondacks to snorkeling in the Yucatan. To his children, Christopher and Douglas, Frank was a father who taught strength, patience, love, and tenacity to overcome hardships in pursuit of a better life.

He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Lorrie Young; two sons, Christopher and Douglas Young and their families, including grandsons Alex and Andrew; and sister, Nellvergne. He was predeceased by his first wife and mother of his children, Ruth Young, in 2001.

*Written by Professors Thomas A. Hirschl (chair) and Parfait
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