

Frank Barton Miller, Jr.

May 2, 1921 — March 2, 2006

Frank Miller was a man of open, generous spirit, a quality that marked his entire personal and professional life. Frank spent much of his youth in Portland, Oregon and attended Reed College majoring in psychology. There he met Charlene Welsh who was to become his wife and close partner for 60 years.

Frank served in the Army, 1943-46, in the South Pacific as a medic and sometimes chaplain's assistant. After the war, now married, Frank worked for several years in various personnel-related jobs before heading to Ithaca and graduate study. He enrolled in the new School of Industrial and Labor Relations with a concentration in areas of personnel administration and human relations. One of his teachers was William Foote Whyte who supervised Frank's research on workplace interactions among the artisans of the Steuben works at Corning Glass.

Frank joined the ILR faculty in 1954. His teaching and research focused on personnel administration, the sociology of occupations, and applied human relations. He was particularly interested in the history and development of the field of personnel administration. He became a supporter to further professionalize the field through writings such as "Why I'm for Professionalizing" and "The Personnel Dilemma, Professional or Not?".

For many years Frank served in a number of administrative positions in the ILR School including Director of the Office of Resident Instruction, Chairman of the Department of Organizational Behavior and Chairman of the Department of Manpower Studies. Especially noteworthy, Frank Miller designed the first course on women in the workplace. He persuaded Professor Emerita Alice Cook, whose career had been significantly devoted to studying issues facing working women, to come out of retirement to co-teach with him. Later they were joined by Professor Jennie Farley in the course, which has become a continuing part of the ILR curriculum.

On sabbaticals, Frank shared his knowledge with students in Turkey, England, Mexico and Canada. At Istanbul University, his lectures were translated into Turkish and became a text for use in personnel studies. His visit also fostered a continuing exchange between Turkey and the ILR School.

For twenty years at university ceremonial events, Frank Miller, decked in his academic robes, would lead the procession as Cornell Mace Bearer. It was a role he enjoyed enormously and performed faultlessly, even though kindly Frank was hardly a menacing presence.

After his retirement in 1985, Frank continued for ten years teaching periodically in New York City as part of the ILR/Bernard Baruch College graduate program. He also served as a leader and volunteer in a variety of Cornell retiree activities including programs in the local public schools and at the hospital.

Within the ILR community, Frank was regarded as the School's own poet laureate, a versifier of great talent. No matter the occasion, he could be counted upon to produce verse of exceptional wit and charm. This talent was always displayed with evidence of his wide reading and taste for language while being delivered with modesty.

Together with wife, Charlene, Frank shared a deep interest in music, theatre, dance and the arts. Besides his wife, Frank is survived by four devoted children, Stephen, Patricia, Kevin, and Brian.

Frank Miller will be remembered for his integrity, as well as the compassion and respect with which he treated everyone. His friends and colleagues miss his presence.

Ronald Donovan, William W. Frank, William J. Wasmuth