Professor Lynne Abel (Classics), who served for a quarter of a century (1977-2003) as Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education in the College of Arts and Sciences, passed away after a courageous struggle with multiple myeloma. She is survived by her husband of 42 years, John Abel (Professor Emeritus of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Cornell), by her sister, Karen Lee and brother, William Snyder, by her daughter, Britt and son, William, and by her grandchildren, Will and Natasha. In accordance with her wishes, there was no memorial service after her death. Her memory was, however, honored posthumously by the College of Arts and Sciences Advisory Council on September 27, 2007, when the creation of the Lynne S. Abel College Scholar Endowment was announced. Another fund at Cornell, the Virginia K. and William Snyder Cornell Tradition Fellowship for under-represented students, was created by Lynne in collaboration with her mother and bears the names of her parents. It reflects the determination to support education and to work for social justice through which Lynne Abel, loyal to her parents, chose to give meaning to her life.

Lynne graduated from Cornell with a B.A. degree in 1962, a major in History and German, and spent a DAAD fellowship year in Freiburg, but her growing interest in ancient Greece led to graduate study in Classics at Stanford, where she studied Greek history with Antony Raubitschek and earned an M.A. degree in 1966 and a Ph.D. degree in 1974. When her husband, John, accepted a position in Civil Engineering at Cornell, she began working as an assistant to the Dean of Arts and Sciences in 1974 and an Adjunct Assistant Professor in Classics soon thereafter. In 1977, she assumed the position of Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, adding to her duties as the dean in charge of the College Scholar and Independent Major programs, the responsibility of supervising the college’s Academic Advising Center and Office of Records and Scheduling, as well as the task of chairing the two most important faculty committees of the college, Educational Policy and Academic Records. Over the years, Lynne became well known not only to the college’s entering students, but also to their parents, conducting a legendary orientation session for parents and family members, and eventually developing a printed guide for parents that continues to serve the greater Arts College community. Countless students have testified to the importance that Lynne’s kind, insightful, yet exigent counsel had for them both personally and academically.

During the late 1990s, Dean Abel’s position was further enlarged to include the direction of the Arts College’s Office of Admissions. In that role, she presided over an unprecedented merger that brought together the staffs of Admissions and Advising in a single organization, redesigning the positions of the assistant deans so that they could be involved in all the stages of
undergraduate students’ careers. Lynne’s incisive direction thus touched every aspect of the college’s work—managing admissions and advising, guiding faculty members in their work on the curriculum and as academic advisors, and counseling the five deans with whom she worked on all the affairs of the college, including alumni relations, collaborations with the other undergraduate colleges at Cornell, and interactions with the university administration. She was, in sum, a leader of consummate judgment and all-pervasive influence.

Dean and Professor Abel was a scholar (her monograph on the Athenian legal procedure of Prokrisis was published in 1983) and teacher at heart, member of the Classics Department and the program in Women’s Studies. Amidst her administrative work, she took great pleasure in teaching courses on the Greek historians and Ancient Constitutions, and co-teaching Women in Antiquity with Judith Ginsburg, Aristotle’s Constitution of Athens with Kevin Clinton (who will never forget their conversations on classical antiquity during their 100-mile bicycle trip around Cayuga Lake), and the freshman honors seminar, “Initiation to Greek Culture,” with Pietro Pucci. On her retirement from the Dean’s office in 2003, she turned exclusively to teaching, and became Director of Undergraduate Studies in Classics.

In her classes, she sought to convey to students the understanding and pleasure she drew from a vast historical and artistic culture anchored in her devotion to opera, theater, music, literature, and disciplined scholarship. With John Abel’s confident partnership, Lynne nurtured a far-reaching network of colleagues and friends whose bonds were an invaluable institutional resource for Cornell and Ithaca. Her personal generosity and her exemplary commitment to the academic community’s well-being and integrity set an uncompromising standard. For the colleagues who survive her, the memory of Lynne Abel—reinforced by the self-effacing dignity she asserted in dying—will remain a source of inspiration.

*Philip Lewis, Chair; Kevin Clinton, Pietro Pucci*
M. H. Abrams, Class of 1916 Professor of English, Emeritus, who died in Ithaca at age one hundred and two, was one of the most distinguished and influential scholars produced by the American academy and an almost mythical figure in literary studies, and not just because he remained intellectually active to the end (Norton published his *The Fourth Dimension of a Poem* in his one hundredth year). He was the inventor and general editor of the *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, the first and dominant anthology presenting the literary canon, and for nearly fifty years he presided over the gradual expansion of that canon. He was also, as Wayne Booth of the University of Chicago put it, “the best historian of ideas, as ideas relate to literature and literary criticism, that the world has known.”

A beloved teacher of undergraduates and mentor to graduate students, Mike spent his entire academic career at Cornell and was a fervent Cornellian: a devoted supporter of Cornell athletics, and a generous benefactor of the Johnson Museum and the Kroch Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Mike Abrams was born in 1912--long enough ago to remember hearing a speech by President Wilson. The son of Russian Jewish immigrants, he grew up in the seaside town of Long Branch, New Jersey, where his father owned a house painting business. During his school years his parents insisted that he concentrate on his studies above all else, and while photographs of the time show a muscular young man, his interest in sports did not develop until his college years. He was, from his earliest days, an avid reader; in an interview in 2001, he recalled:

“I used to devour books as a kid; it never occurred to me that I would write one. There was a time when I read three novels a day. I read fast; sometimes if I really enjoyed a novel I read it three times in one day, the same novel. It was during the Depression that I was in college, and there was no living to be made in anything really, so I thought I'd start doing something I enjoyed rather than something I didn't enjoy.”
He entered Harvard in 1930 as a scholarship student, and in 1934 won the prize for best honors thesis in English, which Harvard published in a run of 350 copies. *The Milk of Paradise*, later published with a new preface in the 1960s, concerned the relationship between opium and the literary imagination in several romantic writers.

Graduating from Harvard in 1934, Mike won a Henry Fellowship to study at Cambridge University with the critic I. A. Richards and attended seminars by such distinguished philosophers as Ludwig Wittgenstein, C. D. Broad, and G. E. Moore. Mike’s celebrated gifts of stylistic clarity and precise distinctions may owe something to virtues emphasized by British philosophers. During his year in England, he travelled to Germany and Italy and witnessed first hand the rise of fascism.

Mike returned to Harvard for graduate work in English and in 1937 married Ruth Gaynes, also from Long Branch. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1940 with a dissertation, now in Kroch Library, that took off from Richards's interest in the functioning of metaphors in systems of thought by examining the metaphors structuring romantic critical theory. The two fat volumes of “The Mirror and the Lamp” would eventually be transformed into a revolutionary and prize-winning book.

In 1941, when the U.S. entered World War II, Mike joined the team of the Psycho-Acoustic Laboratory in Cambridge, under the direction of the Harvard psychologist S. S. Stevens, which was charged by the government to solve the problem of vocal communications in noisy environments. Mike and his colleagues developed the "Abel, Baker, Charlie" code, which consists of English words least likely to be garbled or mistaken for each other. After the war, when the group's reports were no longer secret, Mike published two of them—his first professional publications, which as it turned out, were in a scientific rather than a literary field. This work in acoustics eventually contributed to the book he published in his 100th year, *The Fourth Dimension of a Poem*.

In 1945, Mike was offered a job as assistant professor of English at Cornell. He recalls: “the only thing I knew about [Cornell] came from a Saturday Evening Post article, a double-page spread showing the outside platform in Willard Straight which is still in use. It displayed tables with Cinzano umbrellas and undergraduates sitting there luxuriously sipping a tall drink, a view of Cayuga Lake in the distance. I said to myself, ‘Is this Eden, or an American university?’ So I decided to go for an interview, and was charmed by the place.” As he told it, he phoned his wife Ruth to tell her the news: “Ruthie, we’re moving to Ithaca.” She replied, “Where’s Ithaca?”

As a Cornell professor, Mike set to work developing the material in his doctoral thesis. Mike’s memory of writing what became one of the foundational works of twentieth-century literary scholarship involved Cornell colleagues, such as David Daiches, Robert M. Adams, Morris Bishop, Arthur Mizner, and of course Vladimir Nabokov: “When you walked into the hall [of Goldwin Smith] you could hear a typewriter clicking at one end and a typewriter clicking at the other—with the smell of my pipe smoke in the middle . . . At one end was Bob Adams, who never stopped typing; at the other end was David Daiches, who stopped typing only to talk once
in a while. And they drove you crazy because you knew they were just churning out this fine prose.”

_The Mirror and the Lamp_, when it was published in 1952, met with immediate acclaim. (A Modern Library survey ranked it 25th among the one hundred most important books of the twentieth century). The book begins, “The development of literary theory in the lifetime of Coleridge was to a surprising extent the making of the modern critical mind.” “Surprising” because Abrams argues that critical theories usually thought of as post-Romantic, if not anti-Romantic, have their roots in the Romantic period. Specifically, he argued that a paradigm shift had occurred during the early nineteenth century from what he called mimetic theories of literature to expressive theories. The book presented itself as the history of an intellectual transformation, but, more important, in outlining different possible theories of literature, for the first time it made the study of literary theory and theories an explicit topic of academic inquiry.

His second major scholarly work, _Natural Supernaturalism_ (1973), which Mike frequently claimed to prefer to _The Mirror and the Lamp_, is a grand synthesis of Romantic literature and philosophy, exploring in particular the secularization of structures of religious thought as an animating force in nineteenth century culture. In a discussion moving across theology, poetry, history, and philosophy, and ranging from St. Augustine to Hegel and from Blake to Carlyle, Mike foregrounds Wordsworth’s claim, as he undertook to write an autobiographical epic, that the great “fables” of religious poetry--paradise, heaven, and hell--have their ultimate existence “within the mind of man,” which alone is capable of achieving “a new heaven and a new earth.” That faith, Mike argues, enabled Wordsworth and his contemporaries to produce works that conceive of the extraordinary in the ordinary and the supernatural in the natural.

Another contribution to critical theory is his _Glossary of Literary Terms_, which he continued to edit and augment into his nineties; its modest title conceals succinct essays on all the topics germane to thinking about literature and culture. The most recent edition contains an entry on rap, testimony to his continuing intellectual openness.

A number of Mike's essays over nearly seventy years have become classics; collections include _The Correspondent Breeze, Doing Things with Texts_, and _The Fourth Dimension of a Poem_. A set of lectures delivered to celebrate his life's work were published (along with his lengthy response, delivered without notes at the end of the conference) as _High Romantic Argument_.

In his nineties he developed a new interest in the acoustic aspects of poems and how a reader’s experience of articulating the poem’s sounds contributes to its effects. He called this “the fourth dimension of a poem,” and beautifully performs these effects in readings available on YouTube. The phrase became the title of his final collection, _The Fourth Dimension of a Poem_, published on the occasion of his hundredth birthday, when he also appeared before an audience of students, colleagues, and other admirers.

But what made Mike Abrams famous the world over is the _Norton Anthology of English Literature_, the first anthology of its kind and the widest-selling literary anthology in use today. Mike assembled a team of editors, including his colleagues Robert M. Adams and David Daiches, and brought out the first edition in 1961, expecting to sell perhaps ten thousand copies;
instead, the anthology sold a hundred thousand in its first year and eight million copies subsequently. In the course of eight editions, the two volumes of the anthology have expanded to more than six thousand pages, as Mike oversaw the gradual expansion of the literary canon, adding more women and minority authors in every edition. He consistently supported a flexible approach to canon-formation and dismissed complaints about "watering down" the quality of approved writers by resisting the implication that literary judgments are a zero-sum game. "It's all good," he liked to put it, referring to both new and old writers in a recent edition. "And Keats is still good no matter who else is included."

When Mike was approached to take on the job of anthologist, he had already inaugurated at Cornell the perfect match for the new publishing project: the course called “The English Literary Tradition.” He ended up teaching the survey to several generations of Cornellians. His conception of literature as a human act of transmission was bound up in pedagogy: the conversation of teaching might be said to continue in the conversation of criticism. During the heyday of the New Criticism, which dealt with a poem or novel in isolation, Mike insisted that this approach ignored “a really important aspect of a student's introduction to literature”: “the order in which it was written, where you deal with the earlier poets before you deal with the later poets, who set themselves up against their predecessors or in important ways learned from them.” He loved to teach, and he loved being with young people; in return, he was consistently popular among students. His lectures, unsurprisingly, were models of clarity and compression; he never rushed, never ran over time. But there was nothing cut-and-dried about his presentation, and when he read the texts, in his richly expressive but slightly understated baritone, he demonstrated that reading aloud is also a form of interpretation and understanding.

Among his most famous students are the literary critics Harold Bloom, Sandra Gilbert, Gayatri Spivak, and E. D. Hirsch, and the novelists Thomas Pynchon, and William Gass. Asked about his students, Mike replied, "I've been fortunate in having so many good students who've done so many good things, and I certainly wouldn't want to single any one -- or two, or three -- out."

Though one of the preeminent critics of the century, Mike Abrams had none of the qualities we associate with academic superstars. He did not fly around the country speaking at conferences or in prestigious lecture series; he declined visiting professorships, preferring to remain at home in Ithaca. He did not seek academic power, either within the university or in professional organizations. He did not want a center of some sort to direct, though he worked to help found the National Humanities Center in North Carolina. He was never president of anything. And at Cornell he was a benign figure, supportive even of colleagues whose approaches to literature differed from his own. As one of his admirers put it, he didn’t seem to notice how distinguished he was. What struck one in conversation were qualities of generosity, modesty, dignity, responsiveness, self-deprecation and a willingness to be amused. It took some effort, in the aura of his charm, to remind yourself of his standing in the world.

Part of Mike's legendary quality had to do with the longevity of his energy and creativity. He was a great supporter of Cornell sports, especially the football team, and in his nineties was made honorary co-captain and allowed to call the toss of the coin at homecoming. He claimed never to have missed a home game until his one hundredth year. This “unreconstructed humanist,” as he called himself, was an incurable optimist, not only about the prospects of Cornell football but
also about Ithaca weather. In a fitting culmination of his career, he was able to travel to Washington in 2014 to receive the National Humanities Medal from President Obama.

Jonathan Dwight Culler, chair;
Paul Lincoln Sawyer, Roger Stephen Gilbert
Marvin Israel Adleman was born on April 8, 1933 in Ocean City, New Jersey and was raised there and in Philadelphia. An avid collector of plants from an early age, Marv graduated from Central High School and went on to receive a bachelor’s degree in Ornamental Horticulture from Delaware Valley College, the first member of his family to receive a college degree. His career as a landscape architect began with a Master of Landscape Architecture degree at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design. After graduating in 1958 with a prestigious Jacob Weidemann Traveling Scholarship, he set off on travels through Europe and Israel. This is the moment when he felt his professional biography began.

On his return he secured a position as a designer with the prestigious firm of Sasaki Associates in Cambridge, Massachusetts and lectured part-time at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Hideo Sasaki would remain a great influence throughout his life, as would fellow designers, such as Peter Walker.

After several years, Marv decided to return to Philadelphia, where he worked for the Philadelphia Planning Commission, then opened a practice with John Collins and David Dutot. During this time he met and married Susan Plaut, and their family quickly grew to include Elana, David, and Rachel.

In 1972 Marv received an invitation to apply for an Assistant Professor position at Cornell University, one of the oldest programs in the country, founded by Liberty Hyde Bailey, but one that had languished. During his interview, Marv looked around and told the department chair (James Boodley) that he would accept only if he was appointed as Program Coordinator and given a significantly larger salary. Then he went home expecting that to be the end of it. As his family tells it, they moved to Ithaca a few months later and stayed for forty years. Leading the landscape architecture program from 1973-1985, Marv poured his energies into revamping a program that had only provisional accreditation, restaffing it, and setting it on the road to becoming one of the top three programs in the country today.

Marv taught one of the heaviest teaching loads in the department right up until his retirement in 2008.
and would not have it any other way. His studios stressed excellence in design and strong habits of craftsmanship, precision, and practice. His courses took students from consultation with clients and representatives of communities, to conceptual design (with the thick pencil known as the Marvin Marker), through the realities of construction and grading issues, to a skillful, well-designed and realistic final project. His dedication to teaching engaged Cornell’s Land Grant mission to share new knowledge with clients, current professionals, and communities. His publications and extension activities focused on educating the general public in the issues that underlie well-built landscapes. His extension books, Livable Landscape Design, co-authored with his former partner John Collins, and The Rural Design Workbook, have guided thousands of property owners and rural towns on the issues that affect the design of their properties and communities. For many years an author of questions for the national licensing exam, he had very high standards for design.

He maintained his professional practice in Ithaca, working often with architect Tony Egner. Over the years he designed a number of popular landscapes around Ithaca, including the gardens of the original Laboratory of Ornithology, the Cayuga Medical Center, and the Cass Park children’s pool. He is best known for the original design of the Ithaca Commons, one of America’s first main street pedestrian malls, recently replaced by the designers of his original firm, Sasaki Associates. His family recalls that he was so bothered by poorly designed spaces that he engaged in “something like vandalism”, sneaking into offending sites around Ithaca at night and making small changes to improve bad landscape choices.

Marv was recognized nationally and internationally for his dedication, unique teaching strategies, and contributions to the profession in 1992 when he was inducted into the Council of Fellows of the American Society of Landscape Architects, a career honor. Over the next decade, he continued to expand his teaching to new audiences. In December 2003 an article dedicated to his teaching, “Making the Grade” appeared in Landscape Architecture Magazine, reflected on his decade-long intensive course on site engineering for a profoundly grateful group of professional students preparing to take the licensing exam. That year he was also recognized for his lifetime teaching by the Honor Society of Sigma Lambda Alpha at the Council for Educators in Landscape Architecture. Finally, in 2004, the national ASLA awarded him their highest teaching honor, the Jot Carpenter Teaching Medal for distinguished academic career on the occasion of 30 years of teaching and the 100th anniversary of the department.

Marv Adleman retired in 2008, only when Parkinson’s disease made teaching impossible. After a few years in Ithaca, he and Susan moved to a well-designed senior community in Arlington Heights, Chicago. During these years, he pursued his hobby of photography and enjoyed his grandchildren. There he met local alumni, including one of his first students, Ken Gallt, who welcomed him into the professional sphere. His final reunion with his Cornell students and colleagues took place in 2015, at a special reception at the American Society of Landscape Architects annual meetings in Chicago. The Upstate New York chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects honored him with an Outstanding Leadership award in 2015, “recognizing his enduring commitment to ASLA and the tremendous impact Marvin Adelman has had on generations of young practitioners as a professor, a mentor and friend.” His legacy is recognized by giving his name to the lecture hall in which he taught for many years, 440 Kennedy Hall.

Marvin Israel Adleman died on June 21, 2017 of complications of Parkinson’s disease. He is survived by his wife, Susan, his daughters Elana Feinsmith (Jason) ’89 and Rachel Jordan (Neil) ’96; his son, David; and his grandchildren, Ari and Leora Feinsmith and Emmet and Jacob Jordan.

Written by Peter Trowbridge and Kathryn Gleason
The Section of Soil & Crop Sciences in the School of Integrative Plant Science lost an esteemed colleague with the passing of emeritus professor Martin Alexander in Ithaca at age 87. Dr. Alexander was born on February 4, 1930 in Newark, New Jersey, and obtained degrees from Rutgers University and the University of Wisconsin (Ph.D. Bacteriology 1955, his mentor was P.W. Wilson).

He met Renee Wulf during his senior year at Rutgers, and they were married the summer after his graduation in 1951. Renee (Cornell Ph.D. 1958) served as senior lecturer in Cornell’s Department of Biochemistry, and Molecular and Cell Biology. Martin and Renee were married for sixty-six years, and she survives him. Professor Alexander joined the Cornell faculty as a member of the Department of Agronomy in 1955, and over the course of his career, became world-renowned for his contributions to environmental science, soil microbiology, and toxicology. He was awarded a Liberty Hyde Baily distinguished professorship in 1977 and retired from Cornell in 2000.

For 45 years (1955-2000) Martin Alexander led the Cornell Laboratory of Soil Microbiology. This organization was a “beehive” of activity that attracted and supported graduate students, undergraduates, and postdoctoral scholars from around the world (countries included Belgium, Australia, Taiwan, Ethiopia, Mexico, England, Nigeria, Japan, China, Israel, France, Germany, the US, and others). The central research topic was environmental microbiology (especially soil microbiology). The central research questions have always been: “What microbial communities live on our planet? And how can understanding these microbial communities help humanity?” The productivity of Dr. Alexander’s research program was truly impressive, with more than 500 technical papers and scientific articles published over the course of his career.

The detailed research efforts in his laboratory focused on the role of microorganisms (those that dwell in soil and water) in determining environmental quality, agricultural productivity, and ecologically important processes. Specific topics included biological nitrogen fixation, the ecology and biochemistry of other nitrogen-cycling processes, environmental impacts of acid rain, ecological interactions between microorganisms (e.g., predation, parasitism, lysis), and biodegradation and fate
of pesticides (e.g., DDT, herbicides) and other toxic organic and inorganic chemicals.

For decades, the standing crop of researchers in his laboratory numbered from 10 to more than 20—each with one or more projects...and each contributing to an overall collective culture that pursued scientific excellence. Thus regarding scientific training, there was an immense cumulative output from Alexander’s laboratory: approximately 100 scholars (direct scientific progeny of Martin Alexander). Many of these became outstanding leaders at universities across the US (e.g., Cornell, Harvard, Michigan State University, University of Virginia, University Colorado, University of California, Penn State, etc.) and in many other countries around the world (Belgium, Germany, Australia, Mexico, Japan, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Taiwan, etc.). Thus, Martin Alexander’s scientific legacy is immense. His intellectual progeny (“children” and “grandchildren”) continue to push forward the science of environmental microbiology. It can be argued that his basic questions (“What microbial communities live on our planet? And how can understanding these communities help humanity?”) form the basis for the highly successful National Institutes of Health (NIH)-sponsored program on the Human Microbiome (and its many medical and public health implications). These fundamental questions also have led to an understanding of the microbial processes in soil and water that control greenhouse gas emissions and that underlie ongoing global climate change.

Six years after arriving at Cornell, Martin completed a textbook: “Introduction to soil microbiology (1961; John Wiley; later revised in 1977). With this and two other college-level outreach textbooks [Microbial ecology (1971), and Biodegradation and Bioremediation (1994, 1999)], Martin had an immense impact on students in classrooms across the nation and, indeed, the world.

In addition to advancing his discipline through individual scientific papers, books, and training others, Professor Alexander participated in many US government (and international) panels and committees, sponsored by agencies such as the National Academy of Sciences, USEPA, the White House, US Army, NASA, NIH, UNESCO, and the United Nations Environment Program. In this capacity, Professor Alexander directly contributed beyond his research specialty to topics that include Recombinant DNA policy, hazardous waste management, air pollution control, monitoring aquatic and terrestrial environments, oil spill bioremediation, safe drinking water, interactions between atmosphere and biosphere, review of ecotoxicology methodologies, quarantine of extraterrestrial materials, a joint Soviet-American working group on scientific cooperation, military pollution abatement, and many others.

In May 2003, an international gathering of more than 60 people converged on Washington DC for a celebration of Professor Alexander’s long and illustrious career. Also celebrated at this event was Renee, whose contributions (direct and indirect) to the scientific and cultural atmosphere of Cornell’s Soil Microbiology Laboratory were major. A portfolio of testimonial comments contributed by laboratory alumni was compiled. Selected excerpts appear below.

“As I look back on my years at Cornell, I can point to many principles and styles I learned from Martin. I think role model best describes what you have meant to me. You were always very positive to and concerned about all your students, providing the environment for each to grow in knowledge and gain confidence in what they can achieve”.

“Martin, you are a marvel of consistent, daily, unfailing dedication to scientific inquiry. Dedication to clear writing, to word-craft, to logic, to knowing the current literature in many fields. Dedication to the professional academic efforts upon which this all resides: teaching, grantsmanship, and service on and off campus. Dedication to family and to your people. Thanks!”

“You have sown many seeds of knowledge in a large group of disciplines. The fruits of these efforts are written in a vast, ever-expanding, and diverse literature. There may be some facets of this body of
knowledge that, individually we do not know. But we can recognize the ideas, the common threads in
the fabric of our scientific lives. Today, we are happy to celebrate this legacy with you.”

“You taught us how to ask the right questions, to organize our thoughts and experimental approaches,
and how to summarize our results to capture the high points and report results in a meaningful and
succinct manner. The education we received under your tutelage has played an important role in the
success that many of us achieved in science and society. Thanks again for teaching us how to conduct
a science that can make a difference to the world around us.”

Martin was predeceased by his brothers, George and Seymour. Surviving are his spouse, Renee, and
two children: Miriam (spouse: Josh Hurewitz) and Stan (spouse: Catherine Grossman). Martin has
grandchildren in various parts of the country: Anna and Maya Alexander raised in West Lafayette,
Indiana and Laura, Jeremy, and Jonathan Hurewitz raised in Baltimore, Maryland. His great-
grandchildren are Elisheva and Avigayil.

Written by Murray McBride and Eugene Madsen
Robert J. Ames, Professor Emeritus, Department of Communication died October 26, 2009 after a short illness, he was 94. Born on December 7, 1915 in DePeyster, New York, Bob graduated from Gouverneur High School and continued his education at Cornell’s College of Agriculture where he received a degree in Agriculture Economics in 1938. From 1939-1950 Bob worked for the NYS Cooperative Extension service and then went on to become the Agricultural County Agent in Otsego County.

In 1950, he came to Cornell’s College of Agriculture to head the County Information Services. He worked closely with College staff with extension responsibilities in preparing printed materials and news releases for use by country agents and the news media. In addition, he helped select materials featured in the “Cornell Recommends,” a series of publications published annually by the College as a guide to agricultural production.

In 1957, he received the Award of Merit in Written Communications from Lambda Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi, the national honorary extension fraternity. He was also the recipient of the Empire Farmers degree from the Future Farmers of America. Ames also was involved in agent training on the preparation and use of informational materials in their publications and was a contributor to a number of national and regional agricultural publications. Bob was cited for his efforts in coordinating and preparing educational material for the Green Acres Program, a five-year educational program to improve productivity of the land.

In recognition of his outstanding service to the extension field staff, he was cited by the New York State Association of Agricultural Agents in 1970.

Bob retired from Cornell’s Department of Communication Arts in 1973 as Professor Emeritus. At that point Bob started a second career at Cornell working for the Athletic Department taking tickets at football and hockey events. He enjoyed working at hockey games, meeting the players, coaches, officials and their families. Bob was a life member of the Cornell Hockey Association, a life member of the Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture and a member of the Masonic Lodge in DePeyster, New York.
Bob is survived by a daughter Connie Ames and her husband, Bengt Nestell, of Pottstown, PA, a son Thomas Ames and his wife Holly of Newton, PA, and three grandchildren. His wife of 56 years, Eva Ames predeceased him along with three siblings, George, Zaidee and Vivian.

*Office of the Dean of Faculty (Information gathered from Ithaca Journal Obituary and The Division of Rare & Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library)*
Benedict Anderson, the Aaron L. Binenkorb Emeritus Professor of International Studies, and a long time faculty member of the Government department, died December 13, 2015, age 79 in Malang, Indonesia, apparently of heart failure. Ben had retired from Cornell in 2002, and spent most of his time in Asia, although he returned to his home outside of Freeville every summer, and remained active in Southeast Asian studies. An extraordinarily productive scholar and writer, he had just finished drafting his last book, *A Life Beyond Boundaries: A Memoir* (2016), which appeared in print several months after his passing.

Ben gained broad international recognition for his 1983 book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, one of the most influential studies of nationalism, that helped reshape how scholars think of the origins and dynamics of nationalistic ideology. Most students of nationalism had viewed nations as either old and eternal, or ahistorical curiosities of the capitalist age. Ben argued that nations were modern “imagined communities,” that arose as a consequence of capitalism and the explosion of the printed word, which served to unite mass publics around a single vernacular language and a particular sense of a community made up of people one would never meet. His analysis firmly rejected the idea that nations were eternal, but nevertheless insisted that even critical analysts must take this peculiar idea of an “imagined” community seriously. Even imagined communities may be meaningful. *Imagined Communities* has been translated into over 20 languages and Google scholar today credits it with over 70,000 citations.

as a repository for influential, immersive scholarship on Southeast Asia. With Audrey Kahin, he also nurtured the Cornell-edited journal *Indonesia*, still the top outlet for Indonesian studies across the humanities and social sciences.

Ben was born in China in 1936, to an Irish father and an English mother. His father was a commissioner in the Imperial Maritime Customs Service, and the family was forced to leave China in 1941, when it was invaded by Japan. He studied at Eton and Cambridge University in England, where he received first class honors in Classics in 1957. Ben came to Ithaca as a graduate student in the early 1960s. Under the tutelage of George Kahin, he turned his focus on Southeast Asia, and began his teaching career in the Government Department in 1967, never really to leave it until his retirement in 2002. He was also active in leadership roles in the Southeast Asian Studies Program, helping to establish it as the premier center for the study of the Southeast Asia in the US. For much of that time, he lived in an old farmhouse outside of Freeville, 8 miles north east of campus.

He arrived in Ithaca and to the Government Department during the tumultuous years when Cornell was one of the national epicenters of campus anti-Vietnam-war protest and civil rights activism. Ben combined meticulous scholarship with passionate political engagement. He became a vocal critic of the Suharto regime in Indonesia. An essay entitled “A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965, Coup in Indonesia” (co-authored with Ruth McVey and Frederick Bunnell), which challenged the official story of the September 30 Movement and the anti-communist slaughter of almost a million people in Indonesia and later came to be known around the world as simply “The Cornell Paper”, led to him being banned from that country from 1972 until the end of Suharto’s dictatorship in 1998.

Ben was a superb teacher for the Government Department, with legendary courses on militarism, nationalism, as well as Southeast Asian politics. A formidable intellect with little patience for disciplinary boundaries, he served on a large number of graduate student committees in and out of the Government department. He was much esteemed by his Government colleagues, despite his limited interest in much departmental business. For instance, he was known for not saying much at the Wednesday noon faculty meetings, diligently working on the New York Times crossword puzzle—in pen—instead.

Anderson is survived by his brother Perry Anderson, his sister Melanie Anderson and his two adopted sons, Yudi and Beni.

*Nic van de Walle, chair; Isaac Kramnick, Kaja M. McGowan and Tom Pepinsky*
Bruce L. Anderson was born in Chautauqua County, New York and grew up on a dairy farm near Falconer. After graduating from Falconer High School, Bruce attended Cornell University and received a B.S. degree. He attended the University of Uppsala in Sweden with support from a Fulbright scholarship. He received a M.S. degree from Purdue University and a Ph.D. from California, Berkeley. Professor Anderson joined the Cornell faculty in agricultural economics as an assistant professor in 1978 and was promoted to associate professor in 1984. He held a visiting professorship at the Institution of Economics and Statistics, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden during the 1985-86 academic year. His teaching, research and extension efforts were in agribusiness management, management strategies, and cooperative enterprise before his retirement in 2005. Professor Anderson was subsequently accorded emeritus status.

Bruce taught a large financial management course for several years, along with an undergraduate course in cooperative management. More than 1,000 undergraduate students learned about cooperative management, finance, and marketing over the years that he taught the cooperatives course; the course curriculum included many direct interactions with cooperatives operating in New York State and Northeast U.S. In addition to his teaching responsibilities related to cooperative enterprise, he taught a number of business and finance courses including the capstone course for business major seniors in strategic management. In the 1990s, he developed a course on global agribusiness strategy that included an international class trip sponsored by Cargill. He advised hundreds of undergraduate students over the years and took an active interest in graduate student education. Bruce trained several graduate students that subsequently developed successful professional careers in academia or agribusiness management.

Bruce Anderson made a major contribution to Cornell efforts with distance learning. He was a major contributor to an innovative and widely acclaimed two-hour satellite program entitled “Cooperation Works”. This program centered on effective mechanisms to stimulate economic development and improve rural economic development across the
Northeast region. The satellite broadcast was downlinked across New York State as well as by Extension offices in surrounding states.

Bruce served on the board of trustees of the American Institute of Cooperation and on the editorial board of the Journal of Agricultural Cooperation. Bruce was a longstanding member and had leadership positions in a multistate academic research committee on Improving the Management and Effectiveness of Cooperatively Owned Business Organizations.

Professor Anderson was a regular contributor to the department’s long-lived Cornell Economic Outlook Program. He co-authored a chapter on agricultural cooperatives in the department’s Economic Outlook report for many years.

Professor Anderson was presented with an award for Cooperative Education from the National Cooperative Month committee in 1992. The award recognizes an individual who has had a major impact on the cooperative education process.

Bruce was a member of the American Agricultural Economics Association and the Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association.

Bruce is survived by his former spouse Gunilla, daughter Christina, son Phillip and two grandsons.

Written by Nelson Bills, Brian Henehan and Todd Schmit
John Maxwell Anderson ("Andy") died peacefully on October 25th 2011. After a fractured childhood (his mother died during the flu epidemic of 1919 and he was raised by an aunt) and a higher education interrupted by WWII, Andy began his 27-year Cornell career in 1952 in the former Department of Zoology. He had obtained a Bachelor's degree from Southern Methodist University and a Master's degree from New York University before undertaking doctoral study at NYU - a study broken by wartime service in the U.S. Navy during which he met and married his wife Jean (also in the Navy). They subsequently raised a family of three boys.

Long a mentor with a love and respect for the natural world, at Cornell Andy taught the beginning course in Invertebrate Zoology for the Zoology Major and also a course in the systematics and regeneration of starfish Echinoderms - also the focus of his research activities. In 1963, on the creation of the Division of Biological Sciences by the fusion of several Departments and a new curriculum, most of Andy's zoological teaching in Ithaca was rather abruptly ended. However, after a short hiatus the development by Cornell of the Shoals Marine Laboratory on Appledore Island (Maine) brought Andy and Jack Kingsbury (Botany) together in a
singly fruitful collaboration to forge a program of marine biology courses on the island and a personal involvement in the actual construction of the laboratory buildings. Andy and Jack worked annually at Shoals until close to Andy’s retirement. During that time Andy entered correspondence with Geoffrey Prestedge, a resident and self-taught prison guard of Tasmania who had described the first-known live-bearing starfish. Later, Andy established an eponymous Book Fund at the Laboratory in recognition of this Prestedge liaison.

Prior to retiring, Andy was in charge of the Cornell Health Careers Committee, the function of which was to interview and advise all student applicants to medical colleges and also furnish a letter of evaluation and support. As this charge required some arm-twisting of faculty to participate and the individual and close review of student records, it took a considerable amount of Andy’s time and energy although he did not avoid the responsibility or complain about it.

After retiring, Andy rendered service to the larger Ithaca community by volunteering as a driver for the Gadabout bus service to transport elder citizens to their medical appointments or to local markets for their shopping needs. In this he was aided by his ability to use American Sign Language to communicate with the deaf. He did this work for over 25 years, taking enjoyment from conversing with his passengers, thereby carrying into a new context the long-standing arrangement he had had, before and after retirement, of enjoying coffee and conversation in mid-morning at the Statler with various Cornell faculty and administrative colleagues. This later metamorphosed into a weekly meeting at a local restaurant, and Andy regretted only that the number of colleagues declined as the years went by. The Statler conversations ranged from consideration of the aftermath of the Peloponnesian wars to the difficulties of handicapping racehorses.

Andy had a preternatural respect for the English language, always insisting on its proper usage in general conversation and especially in the published research articles of himself and his students. If this at times gave him an air of aloofness it was also coded into his
behavior; he was unfailingly polite even in contentious situations, only signaling disagreement with his introductory signature “Somehow that does not seem quite right.”

His wife of 67 years of marriage, Jean Anderson; three sons, their wives, and several grandchildren survive Andy.

Antonie Blackler, Chairperson; John M. Kingsbury, Eric Alani, Kenneth Kemphues
Ronald Eugene Anderson ("Ron"), Professor Emeritus of Plant Breeding & Genetics died in Ithaca, NY at age 93. Ron was born in Sioux City, Iowa, and raised on his family farm in northeastern Nebraska, 35 miles west of Sioux City. He was educated in a one-room school, and then graduated from high school in Concord, Nebraska, in 1937. One of seven students in his graduating class, he studied English, Math, Science, History and Latin. His parents, Ivar Hilding and Hanna Pearson Anderson, both college graduates, encouraged their son to continue his education. He received a B.S. degree from the University of Nebraska, in 1948, and M.S. (1949) and Ph.D. (genetics, 1952) degrees from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. At Cornell, Ron was recognized for his cooperative spirit and for his many contributions to the Ithaca community.

Ron first attended State Teachers College in Wayne, Nebraska (1937-1939), only 10 miles from home. He was called back to the family farm after two years, when his father hurt his back and could not work. Even though Ron could have received a permanent deferment for his contribution to agricultural production, he instead enlisted in the US Army Air Corps. He was assigned to the 8th Air Force in the European Theatre of operation during WWII (1942-
Ron’s uncle, notable maize geneticist Ernest Gustaf Anderson (Cornell Ph.D. 1920), encouraged him to continue his education in plant genetics, with R. A. Brink at the University of Wisconsin, in 1948. There, he was a Graduate Research Assistant, supported by a Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation Scholarship. At the time, Brink and his students were beginning to expand their research on transposable elements in maize, which Barbara McClintock (Cornell Ph.D. 1927) had earlier discovered, and for which she would receive an unshared Nobel Prize in 1983. Ron worked on one aspect of Brink’s project, co-authoring his first report in the *Maize Genetics Cooperation Newsletter* in 1950, with fellow students; independent reports soon followed, and by 1952, he published his doctoral research with Brink, in the *American Journal of Botany*. Anderson recalled that his uncle “Little Andy,” introduced his nephew to McClintock at the 1955 Brookhaven Symposium held on Long Island, NY.

Following graduation, he was appointed Assistant Professor, in the Department of Agronomy at the University of Kentucky (1952-1954). Ron’s studies at Nebraska and training with Brink at Wisconsin impressed the new head of Cornell’s Plant Breeding Department, R. P. Murphy, who in 1954 recruited Ron (to replace C. C. Lowe) as an Assistant Professor of Plant Breeding with shared responsibilities in research and teaching, and extension.

At Cornell, Ron assumed responsibilities and made independent contributions to the forage crops breeding and genetics project, and the extension and pure-seed projects. For the latter he developed many reports for the extension activities of the Department, and wrote articles for the County Extension Service Association, Agricultural News Publication. He took responsibility for teaching
classes when faculty members were on leave. He studied the
cytology and breeding of forage crops species; effects of radiation
on forage species; and conducted research on alfalfa with a growth
habit suitable for longer periods between reseeding. For a time he
shifted his efforts to variety evaluation, developing experimental
hybrids of sugar beets in NY. He was making good progress with
this program when the industry elected to discontinue their
operation. He then worked on developing new sources of resistance
to soil borne pests of potatoes and revived his research on alfalfa.

Ron was promoted to Associate Professor of Plant Breeding (1960),
and retired as Emeritus Professor in 1988, after 34 years of service.
He served as a member of the University Committee on Military
Curricula, College Extension Dairy Committee (Chair 1958-1959),
sub-committee on Forage of the Dairy Committee (1959), Chair of
the Annual Cornell Seed School Committee, and Chairman of the
committee on program arrangements for the Forage School for
County Agents (1959). He served for many years as Secretary of
the New York State College of Agriculture/Cornell University Seed
Committee, for which he set the agenda and composed the minutes.
Ron took an active role in assisting the Department Chair in
planning space needs for the department in the new building,
Bradfield/Emerson Hall, during the move from Plant Science.

For many years Ron developed and facilitated the Plant Breeding
Methods Lab course, which continues to be taught in much the same
way with modern updates. The team-taught course is much
appreciated by the students because they get an in-depth education
on the diverse research programs in the department. Although his
responsibilities were mainly in research and extension, he devoted
time to mentor eight doctoral or masters’ students in plant breeding
or genetics. Ron was a member of The American Society of
Agronomy and the Genetics Society of America.

Ron was very active in the community, serving the Cayuga Heights
Fire Department; Cayuga Heights School advising board; the board
of Ithaca High School, Parent Teachers Association; County
Planning Board; the Kiwanis Club Director; the board of the Pee-
Wee Hockey Association; Water Commission; the Athletic Council
of Cornell; and was elected to the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees, and Mayor of Cayuga Heights for 15 years.

Lee B. Kass, Chairperson; Mark Sorrells, Robert Plaisted
with assistance from Judy Singer, Matt Falise and Bridget Cristelli
Gertrude Dorothy Amanda Armbruster was born in Stony Plain, Alberta, Canada, on November 29, 1925. She received her early education in Alberta and carried a love for her Northwest upbringing throughout her life. She earned a B.S. in Home Economics from the University of Alberta in 1947 and completed a dietetic internship at the Toronto General Hospital. After earning a M.S. in Nutrition in 1950 from Washington State University, she worked with Extension programs in Pierce County, Washington.

Professor Armbruster’s 41 year affiliation with Cornell began in 1952 when she was appointed as assistant professor of food and nutrition in the New York State College of Home Economics. She provided educational resources and training for Extension educators and volunteer leaders throughout New York State who worked with youth through 4-H food and nutrition programs. She took a leave from Cornell to pursue doctoral studies in food science at the University of Washington where she received the Ph.D. in 1965.

Dr. Armbruster returned to Cornell as associate professor in foods and nutrition at a time of great organizational change. In 1969, the college was renamed as the New York State College of Human Ecology to emphasize the interdisciplinary study of the human
experience. The Division of Nutritional Sciences was formed in 1974 by combining the Department of Human Nutrition and Food with the Graduate School of Nutrition.

During this time Professor Armbruster taught intermediate and advanced courses in the physico-chemical and nutritional properties of foods as well as experimental food laboratories. Undergraduate students viewed Professor Armbruster as a caring teacher, advisor, and mentor who was very interested in their academic and professional development. She was a role model and inspiration to women students, many of whom credit her for changing their lives as she opened their eyes to opportunities and created contacts for them in the sciences and professional world.

Professor Armbruster was a member of two graduate fields, Nutritional Sciences and Food Science and Technology. She advised more than 50 graduate students and mentored them closely. Many students’ projects examined how cultivar, field conditions, post-harvest conditions, and/or processing methods affected the nutritional, structural, and sensory properties of fruits and vegetables. Professor Armbruster enjoyed taking students on excursions to the fields to harvest strawberries, squash, or tomatoes for their research materials and then teaching them the histological methods for examining cell structures.

As microwave heating became available, Professor Armbruster became a leader in research to understand the effects of microwaves on food quality parameters including nutritional, microbiological, and sensory characteristics. She demonstrated how heating patterns could be managed to improve meat quality and the positive effects of microwaves on the nutritional content of foods especially fruits and vegetables. She was invited to speak about her work on other campuses in the U.S. and abroad.

Professor Armbruster frequently collaborated with faculty members in food science and animal science to understand how different cooking methods affected the sensory properties, nutritional composition, and the residues of environmental contaminants in products such as meats and fish. This research was reported in the
Journal of Food Science, Journal of Food Safety, and Journal of Animal Science. A member of many professional societies, Professor Armbruster was particularly active in the International Microwave Power Institute and the Society of the Plastics Industry. She served on the advisory board to the Journal of Microwave Energy and on the editorial board of the Journal of Microwave Power.

Later in her Cornell career, Professor Armbruster taught the introductory level foods laboratory course. She served as Director of Cornell’s Didactic Program in Dietetics and was the first Director of Cornell’s Graduate Dietetic Internship Program. She developed the proposal for the internship, gained its approval from the American Dietetic Association, and was an active member of this organization. With Karla Longrée, Professor Armbruster co-authored Quantity Food Sanitation with its fifth edition published in 1996. This book has been widely used as a text for dietetic students and by health departments around the world in the training of sanitation inspectors.

In recognition of Professor Armbruster’s many accomplishments, she received the Honorable Fellow Award from the Microwave Power Institute, an outstanding research award from the Major Appliance Consumer Action Panel, and a Human Development Award from the Sears Foundation. She received the Outstanding Alumnus Award from Washington State University and a Distinguished Alumnus award from Concordia University College, where she completed her high school education.

Following her retirement, Gertrude was an active board member with Foodnet of Ithaca and enjoyed life with her husband, Carlton Edwards. Born in New York’s Onondaga County, he graduated from Cornell and was a faculty member in Cornell’s Agricultural Engineering Department before taking a faculty position at Michigan State University. Gertrude and Carlton were married for 18 years living in Ithaca and then Kalamazoo, Michigan, before Carlton’s death in 2010. Professor Armbruster passed away peacefully on November 3, 2012 in Kalamazoo.

Carole Bisogni, Chairperson; Christine Olson, Robert Parker
Robert Ascher -- archaeologist, anthropologist, ethnomathematician, experimental filmmaker -- was never a conventional scholar, although perhaps in some odd way he exemplified a subset of his generation in working around and against the mainstream, sometimes even as an iconoclast. Often provocative, always energetic and challenging, he was fundamentally a humanist scholar in every role he undertook.

Bob was born in New York and grew up in the Queens neighborhood of Far Rockaway. He received his B.A. from Queens College in 1954, and then entered the U.S. Army. In 1956, having completed his draft obligation, he married Marcia Alper Ascher and they both started graduate programs at UCLA. Bob received his M.A. there in 1959, and Ph.D. in 1960. That year they relocated to Ithaca, where Marcia joined the mathematics department at Ithaca College and Bob joined the anthropology department at Cornell as the first archaeologist in the department. He was promoted to full Professor in 1966, and became Emeritus Professor in 2002.
Bob made major contributions to anthropological and archaeological scholarship in several seemingly disparate areas. In the early 1960s he was part of the development of experimental archaeology, including imitative and replicative processes and also the kind of mental "thought experiments" that are creatively used to think about possibilities throughout the process of archaeological research. Also in that period he wrote on the use of analogy in archaeology and anthropology, exploring the kinds of parameters that might be used to control its use and avoid what he called the “Bongo-Bongo phenomenon” -- that is to say, the likelihood of finding in the ethnographic record at least one example of just about anything one might be seeking.

In 1964 Bob and Charles Hockett co-authored “The Human Revolution” (in Current Anthropology, reprinted many times since), where they explored what it means to be human, incorporating language into frameworks of biological evolution and cultural change in an effort to bring the subdisciplines together for a more holistic understanding of the human past. Hockett's 1973 textbook Man's Place in Nature was one outgrowth of the approach, but it proved inspirational for many scholars over the years as a way to think about different approaches in the field.

In 1969, working with Charles Fairbanks, Bob undertook the excavation of a slave cabin on Cumberland Island, in Georgia. They published a piece on this work in 1971 that presents the archaeological data and analysis in a framework with a “soundtrack” that frames and contextualizes the information. This is widely credited as one of the first national publications on slave cabin archaeology, an area of study which Fairbanks continued to develop as a major focus, and Bob considered this his most important archaeological work. Also in this period was published his widely cited “Tin Can Archaeology,” which argued for the importance of thinking archaeologically about more recent material culture -- a strand that has seen considerable development in recent years.

Marcia Ascher accompanied Bob in all of his archaeological research, and their working and thinking together on mathematics and anthropology led to many fruitful pursuits. Together, they
published in 1965 an article developing a methodology to scientifically differentiate stone tools from naturally occurring pieces. In the 1970s they turned to what became probably their most widely known subject: quipus, the knotted cords used for record-keeping by the Incas, where their special mix of mathematical and archaeological knowledges led to significant advances in understanding. This in turn led to a more generalized formulation of ethnomathematics in the 1980s, and they both continued with publications on the quipus and other aspects of ethnomathematics through the 1990s and into the 21st century. A website with the data for over 200 quipus is maintained at courses.cit.cornell.edu/quipu/.

In the 1980s and '90s Bob sought new ways to understand and convey cultural meanings. The technique he settled on after some experimentation was “direct animation,” drawing directly on film -- originally adopted as a way to avoid the very high costs of conventional filmmaking. His first film (“Cycle” 1986) drew on Australian aboriginal mythology; others drew on Jewish and Tlingit tales. These films are probably best appreciated by having good knowledge of the stories and their contexts, either from prior experience or contextualizing discussion at screening, and are subject to individual subjective interpretation more than conveying a particular meaning.

This corpus was well received in film circles, playing a number of festivals and garnering considerable interest and invitations to screenings and discussions, but was less widely acknowledged within the discipline of anthropology. There were some reviews in the professional journals, and some key figures in visual anthropology have continued to write on these films, but their abstract qualities did not engage with the mainstream in the discipline.

As time passed Bob became increasingly critical of academic culture and institutions, feeling that they generally failed to meet the goals and standards they claimed (in a 1984 piece published under the pseudonym of George Puck he vented these frustrations). He withdrew from many campus duties, but loved teaching and working
with students and his classes remained popular and are fondly remembered by students.

As one of his last activities on campus before retirement, Bob wrote and staged a theater piece, “The Adventures of Coyote” (2001), with readings of three poems involving the well-known Native American trickster character. This open-ended performance seems a fitting capstone for Bob's career. His last years were largely devoted to caring for Marcia through cancer and its treatments, but in the months between her death and his he had begun to return to some campus activities. As Bob himself wrote in an as-yet unpublished preface, “may the dance go on.”

Cover photo: Marcia Alper Ascher and Robert Ascher holding a quipu

*Frederic W. Gleach, Chair; Bernd Lambert; Vilma Santiago-Irizarry*
Professor emeritus Njoku Ekpe Awa died on July 21, 2013, after several years of illness. Professor Awa was literally a royal: born in Nigeria to a tribal village chief, he retained ties to his traditional community throughout his life. He was buried in Nigeria according to Nigerian customs.

After early education in Presbyterian schools in British colonial Nigeria (in what became the East Central State), and work as a sales manager, Professor Awa came to London for further work, earning a London University General Certificate of Education in 1963. He returned to Nigeria and began his career in education, serving as a coordinator and field representative for the University of Nigeria. At the same time, through correspondence he earned a London University external diploma in history in 1966. Moving to the United States with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development, Professor Awa received a B.A. in Communication Arts from Michigan State University in 1969, soon after his 30th birthday. Academia was now firmly established in Professor Awa’s
life; in the same year, he earned his M.A. jointly in Communication Arts and in Continuing and Adult Education. His thesis showed his commitment to the specific challenges of his native country, while simultaneously recognizing the universal links between communication, education, and democracy; it was titled “University Extra-Mural Education in Nigeria and Biafra, 1947-1967: The Impact of Communication and Adult Education on Nation Building.”

In 1970, Professor Awa moved to Cornell, where he would remain for the rest of his life. He earned a Ph.D. in Education in 1973. By then, he had already joined the department then named Communication Arts (since 1988, Communication) in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. His core teaching focused on interpersonal and small group communication, with a substantial presence in the department’s active oral communication program. But he also introduced courses on intercultural communication, and in 1976 during the national bicentennial he participated in a university-wide course on “America and the World Community.”

Professor Awa joined Cornell’s communication program just as it began its transition from being a service unit tied to production of agricultural extension materials to being a traditional research-oriented academic department. His research was both local and international: At one point, he was working both on a study addressing social participation in low-income, low-density populations in upstate New York, and on a study examining Ibo and Ibibio farmers’ adaptation to change after the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970, when the state of Biafra briefly seceded. His work was published in the Journal of Extension, the Journal of African and Afro-American Affairs, Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization (a journal later renamed Science Communication) and the Handbook of Intercultural Communication. He was an early proponent of participatory research methods, recognizing the value of indigenous knowledge in rural development. He particularly shed light on the underutilization of knowledge held by women, highlighting the effect of stereotypes.
Because of his interest in intercultural communication, Professor Awa became deeply involved in the Department of Communication’s international development activities, including, for 15 years, the Communication Planning and Strategy series that offered training for people from developing countries. He participated in programs that took him back to Africa many times – to Ethiopia, to Egypt, and often to his native Nigeria. At Cornell, he advised many master’s students in intercultural and development communication.

Professor Awa was also active across the university, serving as a faculty senator and as a member of the Faculty Senate executive committee, and on advisory committees to religious affairs programs.

Religion played its part throughout Professor Awa’s life. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, where he was an ordained Deacon and Elder. He taught Sunday School there and, continuing his international work, participated in the church’s International Hunger Program.

Family also played a central role in Professor Awa’s life. He married Ella Awa in 1970; she survives him. Together they raised three children: Njoku, Jr. (“Ogbo”), Adaku, and Apia, and he had two grandchildren. Among his enthusiasms was soccer; he is reported to have carried a soccer ball and shoes in the trunk of his car in case a soccer game appeared, and he informally helped coach the Cornell soccer team.

Illness led to Professor Awa’s early retirement in 1995.

A memorial service for Professor Emeritus Njoku E. Awa was held in Ithaca on July 27, 2013.

_Bruce V. Lewenstein, Chair; Royal D. Colle; Clifford Scherer_