

# In Memoriam

## Minton Goldman

Soon after I was first hired at Northeastern, my new colleague Professor Minton Goldman invited me into his brick-walled corner office on the third floor of Meserve Hall. He had a prodigious collection of books and stacked files, reflecting both his research on the Soviet Union and his punctilious attention to student papers. But research and teaching were not the main topics we would broach at that private, inaugural welcome. It was rather two personal bonds that we shared: I had now joined him as (I erroneously thought) the only other political science department member who was Jewish. But much more salient was membership in a much more arcane club: alumni of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Minton did love to talk about his research and teaching about the Soviet Union. Only five years after he welcomed me to the department, however, the Berlin Wall fell; in short order, so did the Soviet Union. Like most non-specialists of the region, I embraced the presumed end of the Cold War and wondered

how Minton would retool his career, now that its main object was no more. But Minton was adamant that the erstwhile remnants of the Soviet Union were indeed critical to scholarship and US policy interests, and he never lost sight—as many of us woefully did—of the looming presence of the wounded Russian bear, lurking in the not-so-Post Cold War era.

With the war in Ukraine slogging on, and renewed fears of nuclear weaponry or accidents, the expertise of Minton Goldman will be sorely missed. Minton taught me all sorts of lessons, from the grand, Eurasian historical to the minuscule departmental administrative (document every service activity you perform). Most of all, he personified to me the teacher-scholar, for whom enlightening students about his chosen region of focus was more than a vocation: it was a mission, one which demanded at least as much of him as it did of them. That dedication, both to subject and to students, has made a life-long impression on he who still sees himself as Professor Goldman's junior colleague.

—William F.S. Miles, Northeastern University

## William D. (Woody) Kay

It is with sadness that we share news that William D. (Woody) Kay died on January 28, 2023 from cancer at the age of 68. At the time of his passing, Woody was an associate professor of political science at Northeastern University, where he taught since 1987.

Woody earned his PhD at Indiana University in 1987. While formally a scholar of organizations, it is safe to say that Woody was intrigued most by innovation and creativity. His two books on the US space program—*Can Democracies Fly in Space?* (1995) and *Defining NASA: The Historical Debate Over the Agency's Mission* (2005)—his stint as a Fulbright scholar in Iceland to study its energy sector, his deep dives into the files of the US Patent Office, and his myriad other intellectual pursuits all had in common a desire to understand how organizations think, innovate, and create. That at his death he was working on a book on the politics of *Star Trek* pretty much sums up his intellectual reach—seeking to boldly go where no political scientist had gone before.

Woody loved the classroom, and was readying lectures

for the Spring semester when he made what became his last trip to the hospital. His teaching interests reflected his intellectual range: organizational theory and bureaucracy, science and technology policy, politics and the arts, politics and film. In recent years he was especially fascinated by how Americans through history portrayed their presidents in both high and popular culture, with insightful comparisons to socialist realism. His courses were peppered with examples from Italian opera, obscure Russian films, Marvel Comics, and, of course, *Star Trek* (all versions), and never tired of spending office hours with any student who shared any of these interests. And he was a font of (frequently awful) puns, regularly tried out on his always-game colleagues.

Most of all, Woody loved his wife and soulmate Jennifer Davis-Kay, daughter Melanie, and son Will, a tight-knit and rollicking family unit if there ever was one. He gave much to his family, friends, community, and Northeastern University. Our hallways seem empty without his glee.

—Christopher Bosso, Northeastern University

## Robert Charles Smith

Robert Charles Smith, political science professor at San Francisco State University (SFSU), passed away on April 13, 2023. He is known for his scholarship on race and politics in the United States. Dr. Smith taught and wrote on race and American politics for more than thirty-five years, publishing a multitude of articles and books, including *Race, Class, and Cul-*

*ture: A Study in Afro-American Mass Opinion and Leadership; The Impact of Ronald W. Walters on African American Thought and Leadership; and Polarization and the Presidency: From FDR to Barack Obama.*

Dr. Smith completed his undergraduate work with honors at UC Berkeley, earning a master's degree from UCLA and a PhD from Howard University, which awarded him the Distinguished PhD Alumni Award in 1998. He was also an associate editor of the *National Political Science Review* and co-author of the