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In Memoriam: Frank J. Cannavale 1942-1974

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CRIMINOLOGY

IN MEMORIAM

FRANK J. CANNAVALE
1942-1974

When Frank J. Cannavale died of cancer on October 3, 1974, at the age of 32, the disciplines of criminology and sociology lost one of their brightest and ablest young scholars. He was a dedicated student, teacher and researcher and the contributions that he surely would have made in the social sciences will be sorely missed by future generations.

Frank received his bachelor's degree in sociology in 1964 from Rutgers University and then attended the University of Pennsylvania where he received his master's degree in criminology in 1967 and his doctorate in sociology in 1971. At both universities he performed distinguished academic work in criminology and received the Jay Rumney Memorial Award at Rutgers and the Francis Finnegan Memorial Award at Pennsylvania.

After his graduate studies, Frank served as an Assistant Professor of Sociology for two years at George Mason University in Virginia. From then until his death, he was a senior research associate in criminology at the Institute for Law and Social Research in the nation's capital.

His interests and areas of competence within the social sciences were many and varied. He taught courses in criminology, statistics, social problems and general sociology. He published papers on criminal statistics, the social psychology of group behavior, mathematical models of the American court system and the behavior of witnesses in criminal proceedings.

Yet, even with these publications, which were really precursors to works which will not follow, only those who worked with him can fully appreciate the depth of his theoretical wisdom and the sophistication of his methodological strategies. He was one of those rare individuals who could discuss, with insight and precision, Durkheim and Freud in the morning and path analysis in the afternoon. But more importantly, he was among the very few who understood the interrelations and tensions between these keystones of social science and who could incorporate that knowledge in his own work.

Those of us who knew Frank well know that none of his accomplishments came easily. Almost from the day that we first met as young graduate students until the day of his death, Frank was suffering from some chronic, debilitating disease. The suffering, the medication, the periods of hospitalization and the operations became more and more frequent and serious as the years passed. Yet through it all he never complained, never became embittered. He was loved and comforted by his wife, Pat, who always provided the support that allowed Frank to continue. With her help, he maintained a cheerfulness, a liveliness and a dedication to his work that was at times almost unbelievable. In many ways, this is the greatest lesson that he taught his friends and colleagues.

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