

At a Meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences on October 17, 2006, the following Minute was placed upon the records.

PHILIP JAMES STONE III

Born: October 6, 1936

Died: January 31, 2006

Philip James Stone III was born in Chicago on October 6, 1936, to Philip James Stone II and Alice Christine Peterson. At the age of fifteen, he went from Golf School in Morton Grove, Illinois to the University of Chicago, where he participated in their great books program. After receiving his B.A. in 1956, he came to Harvard for graduate work in the Department of Social Relations. He received his Ph.D. in Social Psychology in 1960.

Even as a graduate student, Philip Stone was decades ahead of his time in the use of computers for social science research. In recognition of the cutting edge contributions he had already made in this field and in anticipation of the increasing role of computers in the social sciences over the coming years, Stone was appointed to the Social Relations faculty as soon as he completed his Ph.D. in 1960. He was tenured eight years later, at the age of 31, as Professor of Social Relations. For a number of years after the split of the Department of Social Relations in 1970, Professor Stone held joint appointments in the Department of Psychology and Social Relations and the Department of Sociology and actively taught in both. In 1986, when the Department of Psychology and Social Relations was renamed the Department of Psychology, he took the title of Professor of Psychology and concentrated his teaching in the Psychology Department.

Stone was not one to limit himself to a single province, nor was he ever satisfied with a superficial understanding of a domain he was studying. In Isaiah Berlin's best known essay, he distinguishes between two archetypes: the hedgehog and the fox. "The fox knows many things; the hedgehog knows but one." The fox is the generalist, who moves from domain to domain with ease and agility, examining large surface areas, covering wide spaces; the hedgehog is the specialist, who slowly and meticulously delves deeply into the nature of a single domain, uncovering secrets that lie beneath. Philip Stone, as he did so often, broke the mold. He was the fox and the hedgehog in one.

The areas he covered and uncovered included, among others, interpersonal and group dynamics, positive psychology, time budget research, environmental research, and artificial intelligence. Perhaps most important, Stone played a key role in creating the General Inquirer and was the driving force behind its dissemination. The General Inquirer was one of the earliest and most sophisticated computer based systems for quantitative analysis of qualitative material. A leader in the area of content analysis, he developed methods that went beyond trying to fit people into pre-existing categories, as close-ended questionnaires typically do.

In the domain of environmental psychology, some of Stone's work focused on the structure of the work environment and the utilization of space, with an eye to enhancing the prospects for collaboration and networking in organizations. With Robert Luchetti of the Department of Visual and Environmental Studies, he submitted a winning entry to a French competition on "The Office of the Future." One of their articles on office design was cited as perhaps, "the single most influential document of its kind". His innovative approach to office design was the physical manifestation of the shift from scientific management to the human-relations approach to management. He wanted people to feel validated at work, to be able to express their unique selves in the place where they spend most of their waking hours.

Stone's interest in collaboration in organization was also reflected in research on computer conferencing, to which he was a leading contributor.

Much of Stone's research was both interdisciplinary and international. He participated in various collaborative cross-national projects for many years. A major example is a large comparative study of time budgeting, carried out by a U.S. team in collaboration with colleagues from other countries, including several socialist countries. Some of this research utilized computer based analysis of diaries. Much of his international research was carried out in conjunction with the Gallup Organization.

He regarded Gallup as his second home outside of Harvard, and identified with Gallup's mission "to help people be heard." Alongside Don Clifton, the late president of the Gallup Organization, he spearheaded the "strengths-based revolution," helping people identify their unique themes, their strengths, the areas in their lives in which they thrived. Philip Stone sought to uncover those places, sometimes hidden, where a person felt, in the words of William James, "most deeply and intensely active and alive."

Stone's concern with allowing people to express themselves fully, listening to their voices, and finding out what was unique to them was also manifested in his relationship to his students. Perhaps this is why he was such a popular teacher. He was never too busy to spend time with students. Abundantly caring, he would always find ways to help students find their own voices.

Apart from his advisory role, Stone contributed in many ways as a classroom teacher. For many years, he taught one of the two methods courses required for all graduate students in Social Psychology - a course focusing on methods of observation, survey research, and content analysis. At the undergraduate level, he taught a popular course on Applied Social Psychology and was the first member of the department to introduce Positive Psychology into the curriculum. Within the Sociology Department, he taught courses dealing with coordination, collaboration, teamwork, networking, and decision making in organizations. He participated in creating the joint doctoral program in organizational behavior with the Business School and continued to play an active role in it. He was also a reliable department citizen, contributing actively on the many committees on which he was asked to serve.

Philip Stone was kind and attentive in his relations with students, colleagues, and old mentors. He listened and remembered what he heard. He had a passion for people and thus, not surprisingly, he will be missed by many. He passed away at the age of sixty-nine on January 31, 2006, in his home in Cambridge. He is survived by his brother Stephen Stone and his first cousin Nancy Davis.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbert Kelman
Ken Nakayama
Tal Ben-Shahar
Ellen Langer, Chair