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Scholarship, Self-Interest, and Politics

For Concerned Citizens, Students, Parents, Alumni, Officials, Educational Administrators, Academicians

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unpaid lecturer. Cockroaches were cheap and small. They lent themselves efficiently to Berth’s research on brain chemistry. She started a colony and has maintained it for 55 years.

In 1955 Albert Einstein College of Medicine, which stressed educating women physicians, offered her a professorial position. She has been there ever since, more recently as professor emeritus, but always active in her laboratory. She has received many honors and is revered by former students. In 1995, at age 88, Berta Sharer decided to close her laboratory. She has given her roach colony to a colleague. She will spend more time on writing. The dean at Einstein College, Diminici Purpina said, “She has elevated the cockroach to a position of honor.”

Murray Straus

Murray Straus was born in 1926. He attended high school in Jamaica, New York, where he graduated with honors in 1943. He served as a tank driver in Europe during World War II. He received a bachelor’s degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1948. By the time he received the doctorate in sociology from that university in 1956 he had published 10 scholarly articles, served three years as an assistant professor at the university of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and three years as an assistant professor at Washington State University. Five years after receiving the doctorate Straus was named professor of sociology at the University of Minnesota where he remained until 1968. He then moved to the University of New Hampshire where he founded the Family Violence Research Program, now world renowned as the Family Research Laboratory. He has been at the University of New Hampshire ever since.

Straus is an intense man, quick to laugh, quick to become deadly serious about scholarship. He sits at his desk in the Family Research Laboratory looking for all the world like the commander of a military aircraft. Machines and files surround him. He loves gadgets. He has files that tell him which files to search. A dozen sociologists work with him, many as post-doctoral students. He has scores of graduate and undergraduate students working with him. Not only is he a researcher of the first rank, he is a master teacher. He co-founded a journal on teaching and in 1979 was the recipient of the American Sociological Society’s award for contributions to undergraduate teaching.
Murray Straus’s research on family violence has changed the world. He was a leader in the investigation of family violence and has had a great effect on the social response to violence, on the recognition of it, and the development of mechanisms for aiding victims of violence. He has excelled for many years in teaching, in research, especially on violence in the family, and on translating research results into practical social action. He was hospitalized for cancer once, hospitalized four times for heart problems including heart-bypass surgery. He takes his computer with him to the hospital, works away there, and is soon back at work in the cockpit (his office).

Straus has been mentor to hundreds of students, many of whom have gone on to outstanding careers in sociology or allied fields. He will help anyone who has a research or a teaching problem. He is heavily involved in advising on national programs and is himself the recipient of millions of dollars in research support, mostly from the federal government. He has served as president of the National Council on Family Relations, the Society for the Study of Social Problems, and the Eastern Sociological Society. Author of 17 books and well over 200 articles, Murray Straus at age 70 says his work is “going better than ever.” Why? Curiosity. Determination. Humor. Commitment to scholarship. He epitomizes the all-around academician who strives to create new knowledge, to help others to do that, to translate knowledge into social good. It is because of the leadership of the Strauses in this world that the universities have a bright future despite present gloom.

_Alien Researcher²_

Dr. John Mack, a psychiatrist, recently wrote a book entitled _Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens_. The book is an account of Mack’s interviews with 13 individuals who said they had been abducted by alien space creatures, small grey beings with large eyes. Most encounters involved the aliens taking sperm or eggs from the interviewees. One subject told of a female placing a tube over his penis and removing sperm in order to “create special babies.” The book was a best-seller, Mack appeared on “Larry King Live,” “The Oprah Winfrey Show” and numerous other television and radio shows.