



John David Mitchell

January 22, 1924 - March 20, 2008

John David Mitchell, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications professor emeritus, died March 20, in Syracuse, New York, at age 84.

Mitchell was born January 22, 1924, in Chicago, Illinois, the son of Maxine Mitchell. He served in the US Navy as a submariner on the USS Pilot Fish from 1944-1946 and was an Atomic veteran one of hundreds of US military personnel who witnessed post-World War II atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific.

Mitchell married artist Mila Johnston following his discharge from the Navy. The couple, who later divorced both graduated from Oberlin College. Following Oberlin, Mitchell worked as a newspaper reporter and radio newscaster in Illinois and Ohio before earning a masters degree in journalism from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas.

Mitchell was recruited as a faculty member for the newly formed School of Journalism at the University of Colorado (CU) in Boulder, Colorado, where he taught from 1958-1973. He also taught at Thammasat University in Bangkok, Thailand, from 1962-1963, where he had a Fulbright Scholarship to study Asian mass communications.

While teaching at CU, Mitchell kept his hand in the working side of journalism

by moonlighting on the copy desks of the Denver Post and Rocky Mountain News.

In 1973, he became chairman of the newspaper department of the Newhouse School of Public Communications, at Syracuse University, where he taught news reporting and law and ethics. He retired in 1994.

Mitchell enjoyed reading, crossword puzzles, and music, ranging from Billie Holiday and 1940s big bands to Bob Wills, Willie Nelson, Bob Dylan and the Beatles. He also followed SU sports, was a season ticket holder for the Syracuse Chiefs, a hopeless Chicago Cubs fan as well as a Denver Broncos supporter. He was a founding patron of the Rosamond Gifford Lecture Series, a season ticket holder to Syracuse Stage and SU Drama and a volunteer for WCNY radios Read Out program.

Known for his insistence that students achieve high journalistic standards in their writing assignments, Mitchell influenced and inspired hundreds of students who have gone on to work at news organizations throughout the United States and Asia, including USA Today, Associated Press, United Press International, Voice of America, China Daily, the New York Times, the Denver Post, the Rocky Mountain News and the Syracuse Post-Standard.

He is survived by his son, Justin Mitchell of Beijing, China, and Boulder, Colorado; daughter, Alexandra Eyle of Syracuse, New York; grandsons, Julian Mitchell of Boulder, Colorado and Maximilian Boaz Eyle, of Syracuse, New York.

No calling hours or funeral will be held, per Mitchells request. However, friends and students are encouraged to send memories of Mitchell to Alexandra Eyle, at aeyle@twcny.rr.com., or 205 Onondaga Ave. Syracuse, NY 13207.

Tribute Wall



“ *Ballweg & Lunsford Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of John David Mitchell*



Ballweg & Lunsford Funeral Home - March 20, 2008 at 12:00 AM