

Cornell University
ILR School

ILR Memory Book Series

From time to time, on-line memory books are made available on the web site of Cornell University's ILR School as a way for past students, colleagues, and friends to post their recollections of faculty and distinguished staff members. The occasion for the memory book may be the person's passing, or it may mark their retirement from active service to the school.

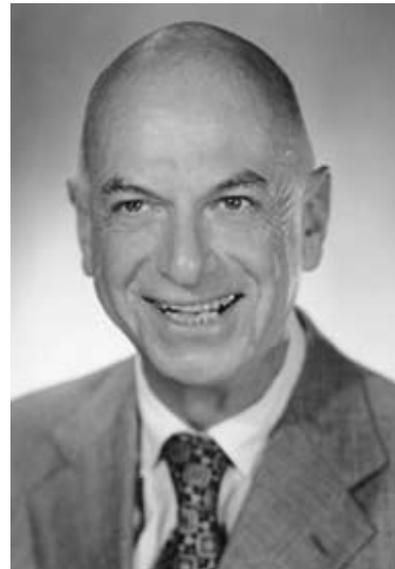
This series collects the comments left by visitors to these memory books.

Maurice F. Neufeld

October 27, 1910 - April 10, 2003

Maurice Neufeld was a respected scholar, beloved teacher, and one of the two founding faculty members of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University.

Maurice (he pronounced his name Morris) was born to immigrant parents in the District of Columbia on October 27, 1910. He was educated at the Webster School and Central High School in the District and subsequently enrolled at George Washington University and, a year later, in Alexander Meiklejohn's experimental college at the University of Wisconsin. He earned the B.A. and M.A. degrees in American History there by 1932 and was always grateful to the experimental college and Wisconsin for this defining experience in his intellectual life. The University of Wisconsin awarded Maurice the Ph.D. degree in 1935. While an undergraduate, he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.



Jean McKelvey and Maurice were appointed the first faculty members of Cornell's newly created ILR School in 1945 by its founding dean, Irving Ives. Mr. Ives left the university shortly thereafter for the United States Senate. Maurice served as secretary, then chair, of the committee that governed the school between Ives's resignation and the appointment of Martin P. Catherwood as Dean of the School in 1947. One of Maurice's most valuable contributions to the school was during this formative period in its history. By virtue of his dignity and erudition, as well as his considerable political skills, Maurice greatly facilitated the acceptance of the initially controversial multidisciplinary ILR School into the larger university community.

Maurice continued to serve a succession of deans and the university in a variety of administrative capacities until his election as Professor Emeritus in 1976. Nonetheless, his greatest legacy was as a scholar and, particularly, as teacher and mentor to four generations of Cornell students.

A gifted and inspiring professor, Maurice was urbane and dapper, demanding and thought provoking. He was possessed of a prodigious memory and a flair for the dramatic.

Maurice was devoted to his students and they to him. Invariably, when reminiscing about his classes, those who studied with him would recall Maurice's intellectual rigor and vast range of knowledge, his insistence on critical and analytical thinking in his students and on a clear and unaffected prose style in their written assignments. These were lessons, many of them would say, that would inform their lives. But they would also remember, as well, his sense of humor and his personal kindness.

For Maurice, teaching did not end at the classroom door. Countless ILR students in search of academic advice, or merely in need of a kind word, would turn instinctively to Maurice Neufeld, who was, until 1992, ably aided in a life of good works by an equally remarkable and dedicated partner, Hinda Cohen Neufeld. Hinda and Maurice's commitment to "their" students often led to a lifelong mutual regard and frequent exchange of letters and visits.

Replying to one such letter in March 1978, Maurice commented:

"You knew more teachers than you thought when you knew me as a teacher. They stretch back through the centuries through me to you ... the writers of the Bible; Plato and the Greek dramatists; Virgil and Catullus and Tacitus; Dante, Petrarch, Machiavelli, and Wolfram von Eschenbach; the nineteenth and twentieth century novelists and playwrights ... and the great poets ... You knew them unawares."

He went on to recount all of the teachers who had inspired him and why, from Miss Farnsworth and her colleagues at Webster School (whom he individually named and described in detail) through Alexander Meiklejohn and George Clark Sellery at Wisconsin. "Keep in touch," he concluded, "I expect you to carry that torch, which in the ancient games, was passed on from runner to runner."

Maurice did not limit his generosity to students. Throughout his career he was a mentor for his younger colleagues and a succession of deans as well, and his services to the larger university community were legion. Maurice's scholarship is enshrined in thirty-five articles, monographs, and books on a variety of subjects, not the least of which is a translation into English poetry of Sophocles' *Antigone*, first published by the University of Wisconsin during his sophomore year at college and which was available in print for decades thereafter.

Prior to coming to Cornell, Maurice enjoyed a distinguished career as a labor official, state official, and officer in the United States Army.

Between the years 1935-39, Maurice was employed as an organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in Philadelphia and, subsequently, was the education director of a large local of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in Trenton, New Jersey. He then took a position as

Secretary and Chief Assistant in Research and Economics for the New Jersey State Planning Board. In September of 1939, Maurice was appointed the Director of the New York Division of State Planning, and, in May of 1941, was appointed as the state's Deputy Commissioner of Commerce.

Early in World War II, Maurice was appointed Director of the New York State Bureau of Rationing, and Chairman, Planning Committee, Federal Advisory Council of Defense, Health, and Welfare Services. Having entered the United States Army in 1942, Maurice spent most of his military career in Italy. During the last two years of the war, he was executive officer (Captain), Regional Headquarters, Allied Military Government for the Sicily, Naples, Rome, and Milan Region.

In addition to his professorial duties while at Cornell, Maurice also found time to serve as a scholarly editor, as labor relations consultant for the Xerox Corporation for 31 years, and on arbitration and mediation panels for three states and the federal government.

Maurice's papers relating to his government career are at the Library of Congress. The balance of his records are housed at the Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives in the school's Catherwood Library.

— *Michael Gold, James Gross, Richard Strassberg*

Visitors to the memory book for Maurice Neufeld made the following comments between June 2, 2003 and August 29, 2003.

A great gentleman and good friend. He always took time to listen and to talk. Every visit over the years brought back fond memories. And I always was careful to be neat, and not to be chewing gum, when I knew I would see him!

- *Arnold Hammer ILR '64, Rockville, MD Jun 2 2003*

Prof. Neufeld is fondly remembered as a great teacher, a an outstanding scholar and a wonderful role model.

- *Bernie Miller MS'70, Halifax, Nova Scotia Jun 2 2003*

Although so much time has passed since I graduated from Cornell (ILR '69), I continue to regularly remember Professor Neufeld as a wonderful teacher and a kind and elegant man. His is a great loss to his and the Cornell family. As an aside, the wedding band that I selected over 33 years ago when I got married, was influenced by the wide flat simple gold band that he wore!

- *Craig Singer ILR '69, Bedford Corners, NY Jun 2 2003*

I remember Prof. Neufeld as an outstanding teacher and friend. Whatever subject he was teaching came alive with his enthusiasm.

- *Mary Dawson Lutticken, Longboat Key, FL Jun 2 2003*

I have only the fondest memories of Prof. Neufeld as the quintessential scholar/teacher warmly imparting his knowledge in a manner that proved that his method was the message.

- *Elliott Meisel '68, New York City Jun 2 2003*

I remember Professor Neufeld as a confident, learned and demanding scholar who had a deep commitment to public service. Through our occasional meetings during my visits to Cornell over the years, I also found him a cordial, wise and considerate man whose thirst for knowledge and interest in public policy kept him young. I'll miss him.

- *C. Robert Zelnick '61, Boston Jun 2 2003*

It was over fifty years ago that I took courses from Professor Neufeld, but I don't think anyone who has ever taken any of his courses could forget what an outstanding man he was. It was a privilege to have been a student of his.

- *Claire Essig Sauer ILR'51, Lyme, CT Jun 2 2003*

Although I graduated from ILR as far back as 1954, I still remember Professor Neufeld as one of the outstanding educators I encountered during my undergraduate days at Cornell. Harry R. Kirsch, ILR '54, MBA '56 Auburndale, Massachusetts

- *Harry R. Kirsch, Auburndale, Massachusetts Jun 2 2003*

Prof Neufeld was a great teacher - thoughtful, demanding and encouraging. I remember taking a graduate course with him where we were required to read a book each week and write an intellectual journal about that week's reading. Professor Neufeld cared primarily about whether we were rigorous in our thought process and understanding of the issues raised. He encouraged debate and constantly challenged assumptions. His class was by far one of the most rewarding experiences I had in a classroom.

- *Ezra Singer, ILR 75, New York, NY Jun 2 2003*

Professor Neufeld was, without a doubt, the best and most influential mentor I ever had. From him I learnt not only how to think and analyse critically but also humility and the beginning of the understanding of justice. He was a true teacher. Alfredo Daniels

- Alfredo D Daniels, ILR '63, Musbury, Devon, England Jun 2 2003

Even though it has been about 48 years since I took Labor Union History with Professor Neufeld, I have carried his teachings throughout my career with fond memories. Don Goldman ILR '56

- Donald S. Goldman, Marina del Rey, California Jun 2 2003

Professor Neufeld was the teacher who most changed my life. I will never forget him or what I learned in his classroom.

- Ed Draves ILR 78, Voorheesville NY Jun 2 2003

I remember Professor Neufeld as a wonderful teacher and scholar. His advice on the first paper I wrote for his class was, "Don't write as you speak." It is one of the most valuable advice I ever received. I am ashamed that it took me until graduate school to learn that lesson, but grateful that he made the point to teach it to me.

- Charlie Bernhardt, Laurel, MD Jun 2 2003

The shaping of my life in the field of labor relations was established at the ILR school as personified by Professor Neufeld. If, after nearly twenty five years service on the boards of directors of two large entertainment unions, and as a member of their major contract negotiating committees, I have aided the collective memberships, Cornell and, particularly Professor Neufeld, justly share in having provided that service.

- Paul Napier BSS '54, Sherman Oaks, CA. Jun 2 2003

He awarded me a -40 (that's a minus 40!) on my first written submission and instantly changed my life for the better. He was the personification of everything I hold important.....brilliant, disciplined,imperial yet filled with compassion and love of life.....and what a dresser!! He was my teacher and I'm honored to have been his student.

- Ernest L. Berger ILR 65, Fairhope, Alabama Jun 2 2003

I have the fondest memories of Professor Neufeld. He made labor history come alive. He showed me that it is possible to be scholarly and entertaining at the same time.

- Laurie Kaufman Amber, ILR 74, Miami, Florida Jun 2 2003

Professor Neufeld became my advisor in a most unique manner. After being warned once, the process began when he asked me to leave class right then and there because, as he said, I was continually doing other work and the sound of my papers moving distracted him and disturbed the class. I left class but was waiting for him at his office when he returned from class. He asked me what I was doing in his office. I said that a Professor who was as concerned about his teaching (he was terrific) and his classroom students as he was, is a person who I would like to be my advisor. He thought about my request, smiled, and said he would. Then he instructed me, as only he could (the Neufeld way), that he now expected me to concentrate on his work when I was with him. He was a terrific teacher and a wonderful advisor. I treasure his advice and counsel to this day.

- Edward A. Pereles, '61, Philadelphia, PA Jun 2 2003

One of the highlights of my term at ILR was the course taken with Prof. Newfeld and the after class discussions. He was a shining star on the faculty roster.

- Alfred Gelberg, MSILR'50, Teaneck, NJ Jun 2 2003

The Professor talked of his many organizing experiences. After graduation I worked in the labor field and encountered many similiar to that described by the Professor. His knowledge and insight help everyone of us who took his courses.

- Harold J. Ammond, Cherry Hill, N.J. 08034 Jun 2 2003

Coming to the United states for the first time in 1949, and sliding over from being a graduate student to being on the ILR faculty, Maurice Neufeld combined being an academic with an almost intuitive knowledge of New York State and national politics from which I learned a great deal. Never one to hesitate to voice his opinions, he let it be known - when I seemed to him to be taking too many courses over in sociology and psychology - that "You're in the field of Industrial and Labor Relations, and you're going to study industrial and labor relations. But we got on famously! Unforgettable, too, was Hinda, his loving, intelligent wife.

- Henry A. Landsberger, Chapel Hill N.C. Jun 2 2003

To me, Maurice Neufeld represented the ILR School. Labor History was central to my understanding of the world. I had no idea he was in this country only 8 years when I met him. He had style! He was a sophisticated man who cared about working people. I'll never forget the way he moved his hands. He had a inborn sense of chic. He had a blessed life and blessed others with it - he, certainly blessed me.

- *Bobbie Horowitz, Manhattan Jun 2 2003*

Professor Neufeld was probably the ONLY professor/teacher after the 3rd or 4th grade who actually taught me how to write and do real original research. I have always been thankful for that.

- *Arlene Kowee Singer, San Francisco, CA Jun 2 2003*

Prof. Neufeld was a big influence in my life and to my continued love of learning. He was a credit to the ILR school and to Cornell.

- *Alfred A. Apfel, Cincinnati, Ohio Jun 3 2003*

I am saddened by the death of Professor Neufeld. He was a wonderful teacher and a special person who I remember well. While I will be unable to attend the memorial service, I wish to express my condolences to his family and to the Cornell family. Craig Singer ILR

- *Craig Singer ILR, Bedford Corners, NY Jun 3 2003*

I had the opportunity, beginning in Sept., 1969, to serve a four year work-study scholarship with Professor Neufeld. He always treated me especially well, and he and his wife would welcome me and other students into their home for their annual winter holiday celebration. I learned much from him, and he helped impart a wonderful work ethic and compassion unto a young student who was eager to learn. Years later, and after I had been a NYS Family Court Judge for ten years or more, I had occasion to correspond with him and wish him well on the occasion of his birthday--not necessarily expecting a reply, nevertheless he wrote back a colorful letter, and I was delighted to have heard from him. I will always remember him as a very special gentleman, and I cherish fond memories of time in his office with him and the likes of staff members Joyce Wright and Elsie Cole, as well as Professor McKelvey and others in Ives Hall.

- *David J. Roman, B.S., 1973, Oswego, NY Jun 3 2003*

I have always thought of Professor Newfeld with feelings of deep respect. He was a great inspiration to me both in my college studies and in my life in the years following Cornell. He was a true teacher, inspiring all around him through his knowledge and generosity.

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- Louise Passerman Rosenfeld, Chappaqua, Ny Jun 3 2003

Professor Neufeld was a compassionate man and a teacher of profound wisdom. I am saddened by his death and wish sincerest condolences to his family. I remember Professor Neufeld and his inspirational teachings, philosophical thoughts, and good deeds during my years at Cornell and thereafter. He was instrumental in teaching me how to write, which is the cornerstone of my livelihood as a labor lawyer.

- Clifford Scharman, Kensington Md Jun 3 2003

Maurice Neufeld was an inspirational teacher and a great friend to those of us who received the IBEW, Local Three scholarship. I inherited that scholarship under the most difficult circumstances. Invited to Cornell the second semester of freshman year, I arrived to learn that the original recipient had committed suicide by leaping from Triphammer Bridge. Maurice kindly took me under his wing then and kept me there until graduation. I sympathize with his family during this sad time and hope they will be comforted to know how fondly we remember him.

- Barbara Loreto Peltz '55, New York Ciity Jun 3 2003

Maurice Neufeld put intellect and experience into his teaching at a time when Cornell and the country needed that input. He will always be remembered and respected as one of the leaders that put ILR on the map. Bill Phillips - ILR '51

- William E. Phillips, 200 North Cove Road, Old Saybrook, CT 06475 Jun 4 2003

Professor Neufeld led a seminar in which I participated. It was one of the best experiences I had at Cornell. The course name? I no longer remember. The cour topic or aim, however, was learning to think critically -- a priceless gift he gave his students. I am sorry he is no longer with us. My condolences to his family, friends and colleagues.

- Eleanor L. tum Suden - ILR '58, La Jolla, California Jun 4 2003

Maurice Neufeld was a superb teacher. His course in Labor Union History in 1948 had a final exam I still remember, even at 80. One sentence, four lines from Vernon Louis Parrington's Main Currents Of American Thought, with Dr. Neufeld's kicker "Please Comment". You really had to organize your thoughts and present them clearly. Three blue books and two hours later I finished an exam I'll never forget. I reminded him of it 40 years later at reunion and he recalled it with a smile. A great Professor-an educator in the truest sense of the word.

- Robin H. Wendell- ILR '50, Chapel Hill, NC Jun 5 2003

Although I was not a student of Maurice Neufeld, I've known him for most of my life, as my parents became friends of Maurice and Hinda soon after we moved to Ithaca in the late '50's. I have a childhood memory of spending a lovely summer afternoon at their home, along with my parents. My father enjoyed a lifelong collegial friendship with Maurice. In more recent years, my wife and I had the pleasure of several visits with him. He was a sharp and witty observer of world affairs, and he had a great sense of humor. Maurice and Hinda were warm, generous, vibrant people. Even after Hinda became terminally ill, they invited me and my wife to their home. I remember that Maurice took the lead in serving dinner that evening. The love and closeness of their relationship was evident.

- Joel B. Rabinowitz '71 AB, Groton, NY Jun 6 2003

I met Prof. Neufeld across the reference desk in Olin Library, where I worked as a librarian for many years. His very first question was something seemingly complicated, and together we searched high and low for the answer. Finally, he said, skeptically, "Why don't we check the World Almanac?" Sure enough, a simple source provided the obscure answer. And so for many years, each time we met across that desk, I'd greet him with, "Would you like the Almanac?" All reference librarians hold some of their faculty-patrons in high regard. For Prof. Neufeld, I also hold a place in my heart as one of the kindest people I knew at Cornell.

- Suzy Szasz Palmer, Louisville, KY Jun 6 2003

With stinging comments flowing from his red pen like: "Stop throwing commas around like confetti," Maurice Neufeld taught me how to write with brevity and simple elegance. He was a very approachable giant of a man who made my Cornell experience memorable.

- Thomas LoFaro, Wilmington, Delaware Jun 8 2003

A thoughtful, caring, witty and scholarly man. My principal recollection of some 40+ years ago was the term paper I submitted, with a half-in-jest comment "to the reader" embedded in an "end note" tucked at the back of the paper, in which I indicated that I would have more to say about a certain aspect of that paper in "future writings" to which the reader was invited. I never expected to even see that paper again, let alone find that Professor Neufeld would have taken the time to have plowed through all those notes. But return the paper he did, with thoughtful, provocative comments strewn throughout the paper. And, of course, he found my statement about future writings, and said he would look forward to that. Though I never did return to that subject (if I had, I am certain he would have found and read and commented critically on that paper!), the fact that he cared enough to even read all those notes at the back of a long paper at the end of the semester left an indelible impression on my mind. It influenced the kind of at-

tention I gave to students and their papers in a 30+ year academic career of my own. Professor Neufeld truly was a mentor to many of us, and one of the “top guns” of ILR in its infancy. He truly was a legend for many of us, and will be missed!

- *Mike Jedel, B.S. '64, Chicago Jun 10 2003*

Maurice and Hinda were foremost among the early ILR faculty in making a newly appointed assistant professor feel welcome when my wife, Judy, and I arrived in the Fall of 1950. Although several years older than myself, Maurice and I had passed through much of the same experiences, especially the 30's Depression and WorldWar II, albeit in different roles and circumstances. For many years we were often lunch companions. Maurice had a wonderful somewhat wry sense of humor. I remember once asking him if he would be attending the School' annual picnic. His reply: It took man thousands of years to come out of the woods. I have no intention of going back in.

- *Robert L. Aronson, Ithaca, NY Jun 11 2003*

I was fortunate to be in the last graduate labor history course that Professor Neufeld taught prior to his retirement in 1976-77. I had always had an interest in labor history but had never had a professor with much background in the subject--until I walked into Professor Neufeld's seminar. One of the fundamental things I learned from Professor Neufeld is that one really cannot understand any aspect of our modern industrial relations system without understanding how that system evolved over time. As an IR professor I continue to begin each course I teach--whether it be a course on labor law, collective bargaining, or the contemporary labor movement--with a section on the historical development of that issue or subject. Professor Neufeld also helped me grow as a writer and my writing today still reflects much of what he taught me. On a personal level, Maurice Neufeld was a kind, gracious, and dignified man. My wife and I still remember how excited we were to be invited to the Neufeld's home at the end of the fall semester. Like all great teachers, he touched many students' lives in a very positive way.

- *Paul Clark, State College, PA Jun 13 2003*

Unforgettable with and a positive impact to the world...as my dad would say.

- *AURORA, Dayton, Ohio Jul 8 2003*

Professor Neufeld's course on labor history during the Depression was one of the outstanding courses of my academic career (which went on for several years after graduating ILR). He passed on his love of history from that course, so that it has remained one of the great loves of my life. I have always and will always feel indebted to him for that.

- *Seth H. Agata, ILR '79, Kinderhook, New York Jul 21 2003*

I took Professor Neufeld's course in labor history in the 1960s. He was a man thoroughly in command of his subject and probably the most intellectual of all my professors. It was a pleasure and a challenge to take his class for he always made us think and demanded that we do so. While the memory of many of my courses has long since faded, Maurice Neufeld's influence remains with me to this day. A great teacher is someone whose work is remembered and lives on after him. Professor Neufeld's influence has been enduring. Henry S. Kramer, ILR '63 Ithaca, New York 4 August 2003

- Henry S. Kramer, Ithaca Aug 4 2003

Thanks to Professor Neufeld I got to know Madame Perkins and I later spent a career at the Labor Department. Through him I also had an interview with Mrs. Sidney Hillman and on a bet I asked her if she knew Lepke Buchalter. She just stared. Neufeld took to calling me Pal Joey. He had some tolerance for students who weren't terribly serious. A real boulevardier too.

- Bill Delaney ILR '60, Bethesda MD Aug 25 2003

I first met Maurice and Hinda when I was a little girl during WWII. I remember he showed up at our house in his uniform. When my father tried to get him to come to Cornell, my mother worried that the country might be too much for these sophisticated New Yorkers. She told Hinda that she would be horrified for the first year but would learn to love Ithaca, and that is exactly what happened. They were both terrific people.

- Mary Catherwood, Arts & Sciences '54, Lyme CT Aug 29 2003