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**Stanley Hoffmann, Harvard scholar of international relations
and French politics, dies at 86.**

September 13, 2015 (Cambridge, MA) - Stanley Hoffmann, the Paul and Catherine Buittenwieser University Professor *emeritus* at Harvard University, has died at the age of 86 after a long illness in Cambridge, Mass. on September 13, 2015.

The author of 19 books and countless articles for scholarly journals as well as leading newspapers and publications such as *The New York Review of Books*, Hoffmann has been a leading public intellectual on both sides of the Atlantic for more than fifty years. As a scholar of international relations and American foreign policy, as well as French and European politics, he has left a deep mark on contemporary understandings of some of the most perplexing issues of our time. At Harvard, he was a brilliant lecturer and beloved teacher of a dazzling array of courses, including legendary ones on ‘War’ and ‘Political Doctrines and Society: Modern France’, which he taught for more than thirty years.

Stanley Hoffmann was born in Vienna on November 27, 1928 of a distant American father and Austrian mother, with whom he moved to France in the early 1930s, where he grew up, attending schools in Nice and then Paris. Although baptized at birth as a Protestant, his mother’s family were classified as Jews by the Nazis, and the two of them were forced to flee Paris in 1940, barely days before the German troops arrived, initially for a small village in the Languedoc and then to Nice where they spent the war hiding from the Gestapo. In a memoir recalling those days, Hoffmann wrote “It wasn’t I who chose to study world politics. World politics forced themselves on me at a very early age.”

After graduating at the top of his class from the Institut d’Études Politiques (Sciences Po) in 1948, Hoffmann enrolled in a doctoral program in law there but came to Harvard in 1951 to pursue an A.M. in Government. He returned to France to complete his degree and military

service but came back to Harvard in 1955 as an Instructor in the Department of Government, where he received tenure in 1959. Prior to becoming a University Professor, he was the C. Douglas Dillion Professor of the Civilization of France. At the time of his retirement in 2013, Stanley Hoffmann had served on the Harvard faculty for 58 years, and his contributions to the University were prodigious. He was one of a small group of faculty members who founded the elite Social Studies concentration in 1960 and, for twenty-five years from 1969, he was the founding Chairman of what became the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies.

In essays and a series of striking books, including *The State of War* (dedicated in 1965 to his mentor Raymond Aron) and *Gulliver's Troubles* (1968), Hoffmann made major contributions to the modern study of international relations. Although attentive to the theories of that field, he resolutely avoided embracing any one of them, in favor of exploring the paradoxes posed by a world that would not readily fit into a single theoretical box. In much the same vein, Hoffmann was a sharp critic of American foreign policy, notably during the War in Vietnam, drawing attention to the limits and obligations associated with American power. His 1981 book, *Duties Beyond Borders*, was instrumental to reviving the study of ethics in international relations.

Throughout these years, Stanley Hoffmann was also a well-known intellectual figure across the Atlantic. *In Search of France*, based on a collective project he led and published in 1963, established his reputation as the most knowledgeable scholar of French politics outside the hexagon; and a series of essays published in *The European Sisyphus: Essays on Europe 1964-1994* displayed his gifts as a discerning analyst of the emerging European Union. A master of English as well as French prose, Hoffmann had deep insight into politics, literature and political philosophy and a remarkable capacity for expressing all the subtlety of those insights with absolute clarity.

These capabilities served him well in the classroom, where he taught widely across the curriculum, drawing thousands of students to his celebrated courses, even though their reading lists were formidable. When a few students complained that he had assigned all of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* instead of an excerpt as only one of the readings for one week of his course on War, Hoffmann is said to have replied 'which part of *War and Peace* summarizes the themes?' As a teacher, he demanded the best from his students but he was utterly devoted to them, spending countless hours patiently guiding undergraduates and graduates alike through the complexities of the political world, alive to the practical and moral dilemmas within it. His hundreds of doctoral students include many of the leading scholars in their fields today.

Hoffmann is survived by his wife Inge Schneier Hoffmann of Cambridge, Mass. whom he met when he was a teaching fellow for McGeorge Bundy's course on American Foreign Policy in 1951-52 and whom he married in 1963.