



IN MEMORIAM

## In memoriam: Joseph Losco

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Our APLS community recently lost one of its most loyal and long-contributing pioneers. Joseph Losco, professor emeritus of political science at Ball State University, passed away on November 14, 2022.

Born in Yeadon, Pennsylvania, on September 13, 1949, Joe was the youngest of two children of Italian immigrant parents. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Pennsylvania State University and then master's and doctoral degrees in political science from Temple University.

Joe began his teaching career at Widener University in Chester, Pennsylvania, where he served as adjunct assistant professor of political science from 1981 to 1983. He moved to Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, 1983. He remained at Ball State until 2016, when he became professor emeritus. In addition to his teaching and research at Ball State, Joe served as chair of the Department of Political Science from 2000 to 2014. Following his retirement from full-time teaching and administration, he served as adjunct professor of political science at Loyola University Chicago.

Joe's fields of teaching specialization were political theory, American government, and public policy. He taught undergraduate and graduate courses in those fields, and he was also active as a scholar and leader in those fields.

In the field of American government, Joe was coauthor of seven annual editions of *AM GOV* (2008–2014), a popular introductory textbook. He was also a pioneer in the use of multimedia in teaching American government, having developed and produced 21 college-level educational videos (some of which also had high-school-level versions). These videos were produced for a variety of publishers, including McGraw-Hill, Houghton Mifflin, D.C. Heath, St. Martin's Press, and Harcourt Brace. Four of these videos won awards.

In the field of political theory, Joe was coeditor of *Political Theory: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (two volumes) and *Political Theory: Classic Writings, Contemporary Views*. In addition to these edited texts, he authored numerous book chapters, journal articles, and reviews in political theory.

In the field of public policy, Joe was not only an author of scholarly articles in the field; he was also a visionary leader. With a million-dollar grant from the Lilly Endowment, he and two colleagues cofounded the Bowen Center for Public Affairs at Ball State. The mission of the Bowen Center and its three component institutes is to advance civic literacy, promote community involvement, enhance public service, and stimulate nonpartisan government research. Joe eventually became the center's director. In that capacity, he oversaw its numerous programs, including the Hoosier Survey on public policy. The results of this statewide survey are presented annually to the Indiana General Assembly for use in state policymaking.

In addition to his campus and public policy leadership, Joe was a leader in several state and national organizations. He served as a member of the national council of the American Association of University Professors, as president of the Indiana Conference of the American Association of University Professors, and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Indiana Civil Liberties Union.

Joe's interest in biology and politics began in graduate school at Temple, where he was a student of Elliott White, one of our field's early contributing scholars (e.g., White, 1972, 1981, 1992). His doctoral dissertation reflected his early interest in the relationship between biology and political theory: "Understanding Altruism: An Inquiry into Various Perspectives on Altruism, Concentrating on the



Contributions of Sociobiology.” Albert Somit, one of our field’s most important founding figures, served as an off-campus advisor for Joe’s dissertation.

Joe’s burgeoning interest in the relationship between biology and politics led to a postdoctoral fellowship at the Center for Biopolitical Research at Northern Illinois University in 1980. This fellowship brought him under the tutelage of Tom Wiegeler, the center’s founding director, the APLS’s founding executive director, this journal’s founding editor, and another of our entire field’s most important founding figures (Johnson et al., 1992). It also put him in contact with other important founders of the field of politics and the life sciences, including Peter Corning, Roger Masters, and Robert Blank.

The year of Joe’s fellowship was also the year that the APLS was founded. Joe was at that 1980 American Political Science Association meeting in Washington, DC, and he coauthored a report in *PS: Political Science & Politics* about the founding of the association (Corning, Losco, & Wiegeler, 1981). He then contributed a commentary to the first issue of *Politics and the Life Sciences*, published in 1982. Joe was present at the founding of both the association and the journal, and he remained deeply involved with both throughout his career.

Joe’s scholarly contributions in biopolitics included books, articles, and a variety of other publications. He was coeditor of three books in biopolitics:

- *Biology and Bureaucracy: Public Administration and Public Policy from the Perspective of Evolutionary, Genetic and Neurobiological Theory* (1986), with Elliott White
- *Human Nature and Politics* (1995), with Albert Somit
- *Politics and the Life Sciences: The State of the Discipline* (2014), with Robert Blank, Samuel Hines, Odelia Funke, and Patrick Stewart

He was also author of 15 articles and book chapters, three commentaries, and nine book reviews in the field. These numerous contributions were concentrated in four areas:

- Biology and political theory (e.g., Losco, 1995, 2001, 2014)
- Sociobiology and political science (e.g., Losco, 2011a, 2011b)

- Biology and public administration (e.g., Losco, 1994, 2017)
- Biology, ethics, and public policy (e.g., Losco, 2003; Losco & Shublak, 1994)

These publications were invariably carefully researched, well written, creative, and thoughtful. They were important contributions to our field.

Joe's contributions, however, were not limited to his efforts as editor and author. He also served our enterprise in other important ways. He twice served as conference program chair or co-chair, and numerous times as a panel organizer, panel chair, or panel discussant. He was elected to the APLS's Executive Council in 1987 and served continuously for 22 years (until 2009), with terms as both secretary and chair.

I first met Joe in 1985 in Paris, when we were presenting papers on the same panel at the meeting of the International Political Science Association. Over the next several years, we often presented papers together at conferences, and we also often served together on the same panels as chair or discussant. In addition, we frequently ended up in the same breakfast, lunch, or dinner group at conferences, at which times we discussed our shared interests and association business. He was always interesting, thoughtful, kind, soft-spoken, and witty.

I got to know Joe even better between 1991 and 2001. I served as editor of this journal over those 10 years, and then as executive director of the APLS over the last five of those years. Joe served on the Executive Council during that entire period. We worked together on a wide variety of issues, especially in planning the independent association conferences that we began holding in 1998. In addition, when I needed advice about some controversy or sensitive issue during those years, Joe was among those I trusted most for advice.

In addition to those many contacts, Joe also served over that decade as book review coeditor for the journal. I had invited him to assume that role because of the great respect I had for him, and I was delighted when he accepted. He served as book review editor for biobehavioral books (as opposed to policy books). As expected, he did an outstanding job. During that 10-year period (20 issues of the journal), we published 287 book reviews, an average of over 14 reviews per issue. Joe arranged for roughly half those reviews (Johnson, 2001).

Those of us who worked closely with Joe respected his work, his character, and his judgment. It was a privilege to have him as a colleague and friend.

Joe is survived by his wife Marcia, his son Michael, and his sister Antoinette. Donations in his memory may be made to Doctors Without Borders or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Our colleague had a distinguished career in teaching, scholarship, leadership, and service. We are grateful for his many professional contributions to our field, and we are also grateful for his friendship. Addio buon amico.

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