



**Professor Milton Sobel, Ph.D.**  
**August 30, 1919 - December 31, 2002**

**M**ilton Sobel, Professor Emeritus of Statistics at the University of California, Santa Barbara, died at home in Santa Barbara on 31 December 2002 at the age of 83. He was a well-respected author and teacher in many areas of statistics and probability. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Florence Sobel; three children: Professors Marc Sobel of Temple University, Judy Sobel of Portland State University, and Eric Sobel of UCLA; and four grandchildren.

**D**uring his esteemed career, Sobel mentored scores of students at UCSB, the University of Minnesota and elsewhere, many of whom currently teach and conduct research across the country. He was a prolific author, publishing well over 100 articles in statistical journals, and four books that are widely cited. His pioneering work in Ranking and Selection received many honors and accolades from his colleagues.

**S**obel was born in 1919 to Hungarian immigrants in New York City, and grew-up living in four of the five boroughs. He received a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from City College of New York in 1940. From 1941 to 1945, he served in the Army, as a translator in the European Theater under General Patton, among other postings. After completing his tour of duty, he worked with Abraham Wald and Jacob Wolfowitz at Columbia University, becoming one of the country's first PhD's in Mathematical Statistics in 1951.

**T**he Santa Barbara Chess Club knew Sobel well. He was an avid chess enthusiast, finding friends through games and tournaments wherever his work took him. Sobel traveled the globe, speaking French, German, Russian and Yiddish, and enjoyed extended visiting positions at universities across Europe, Russia and Israel. He lived his life unafraid to take personal and professional risks, befriending all and seeking challenges, both intellectual and physical.

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