

Jay Katz was a man of great wisdom and compassion.

Alexander M. Bickel Professor of Law Robert Burt '64



Jay Katz 1922–2008

PROFESSOR EMERITUS, ETHICS EXPERT

YALE LAW SCHOOL Professor Jay Katz died November 17, 2008, in New Haven at age 86. Katz was the Elizabeth K. Dollard Professor Emeritus of Law, Medicine, and Psychiatry and Harvey L. Karp Professorial Lecturer in Law and Psychoanalysis at Yale Law School.

Professor Katz made profound contributions in the area of law, medicine, and ethics. He was a leader in the area of reproductive technology law and ethics. His scholarship focused on psychoanalysis and law, family law, and law and medicine.

“As a doctor steeped in the law, Jay Katz illuminated better than anyone has before or since the complex of medical, legal, and ethical choices that haunt the silent world of doctor and patient,” said Dean Harold Hongju Koh.

Katz was born in Zwickau, Germany, in 1922. He graduated from the University of Vermont in 1944 and earned an M.D. from Harvard Medical School in 1949. After completing his internship and residency in New York, Katz served as 1st Lieutenant and Captain at the USAF Hospital at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama. He came to Yale in 1953 and was soon named Chief Resident of the outpatient clinic at the School of Medicine. Katz began teaching psychiatry at Yale in 1955 and psychiatry and law in 1958, when he was named Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Law at Yale University.

Katz was a member of a committee that prepared the Connecticut law governing the privilege between patient and psychotherapist, enacted in 1961, which served as a model for the Federal Rules of Evidence for all 50 states. Working with Joseph Goldstein in the mid-1960s, he did groundbreaking work in the areas of both family law and psychiatry and law.

Katz also served on the national panel that studied and exposed the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment, which began in 1932 and was not uncovered until the 1970s. Katz was a passionate proponent of the concept of truly informed consent and wrote extensively on the subject. He was an outspoken opponent of the use of data obtained from Nazi experimentation and was the first to call for a national board to oversee human experi-



mentation. He was appointed by President Bill Clinton '73 as a member of the Presidential Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments.

He was a leader in the area of reproductive technology law and ethics and was an outspoken opponent of the criminal prosecution of pregnant women, citing privacy and equal protection concerns.

“Jay Katz was a man of great wisdom and compassion,” said Alexander M. Bickel Professor of Law Robert Burt '64. “He had a profound influence on biomedical ethics, on his students during his long tenure at Yale Law School, and on his friends. Jay’s passionate respect for the autonomy of individuals coupled with his deeply empathic understanding of individuals’ psychological

vulnerabilities was the foundation stone for this influence in every case.”

Katz received honorary Doctor of Science degrees from both Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine and the University of Vermont. He received many professional awards, including the American Psychiatric Association’s Distinguished Service Award for 1998 and its Isaac Ray Award; the American College of Physicians’ William C. Menniger Memorial Award; the Hastings Center’s Henry Knowles Beecher Award; and the American Society of Law and Medicine Second President’s Award. In 1981, Katz received a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship.

Katz’s books include *The Silent World of Doctor and Patient* (1984); *Catastrophic Diseases—Who Decides What?* (with Alexander M. Capron, 1975); and *Experimentation with Human Beings* (1972).

Katz’s first wife, Esta Mae, and his brother Joseph predeceased him. He is survived by his second wife, Marilyn; a son, Daniel; two daughters, Sally '82 and Amy; two stepdaughters, Mary and Emily; a brother, Norman; and four grandchildren.

Donations in Professor Katz’s name may be made to the Faculty Memorial Fund at Yale Law School. For more information, please contact the YLS Development Office at 203 432-1664. ∞