

**Richard Floyd Gundy**

**1933 - 2023**

Dick Gundy was born in 1933 to Floyd Gundy and Mary Burrows.  His mother died during childbirth, and Dick spent his first two years in the care of his father in Chicago, Illinois.  Floyd later married Elizabeth Nothstein, and the family grew to include two siblings:  A brother, Jim, and a sister, Elaine.

Although he would go on to a distinguished career in academia, Dick confessed to being relatively uninspired in school in his early years.  It was not until high school that a Spanish teacher managed to light a spark and instilled in Dick a love of foreign languages, literature, and the notion of a world outside of Chicago. He attended Illinois College and later earned a Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology at Indiana University.  He became especially fascinated with the statistics he learned during his study of psychology.  While pursuing a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Chicago, he decided to abandon Experimental Psychology altogether and turned his energy to mathematics, earning a Ph.D. in Statistics.

He joined the faculty of Rutgers University in 1965 in the Statistics Department, and for the next 52 years he taught all manner of math and statistics courses, both at the undergraduate and graduate level.  He is most recognized for his contributions in the field of probability theory, particularly the theory of martingales.  The Burkholder-Davis-Gundy Inequality, an important result in martingale theory, is co-named after him.  (While obscure to most of us, the BDG Inequality gets 40,000 hits on Google.)  He authored and co-authored 45 important papers in his field, was a distinguished lecturer and exchange professor at universities in a dozen countries, served as an associate editor of several academic journals, and is a Fellow of both the Institute of Mathematical Statistics and the American Mathematical Society.

Dick enjoyed staying physically fit, a passion he developed in his early 20s.  This is especially remarkable in that he nearly failed to graduate college because in four years he neglected to accumulate even a single credit in Physical Education (evidently a required course at the time).  Nevertheless, he was an avid squash player and runner.  He frequently ran from his home to his office and to his classes, and he competed in marathons and other road races in the U.S. and abroad.  Undaunted by a knee injury that sidelined his ability to run, he became a swimmer and a cyclist.  He also rowed, did yoga and lifted weights – he did all of these things well into his 80s, often in twice-a-day workouts.

Another of his passions, dating back to his childhood, was a love of magic.  An accomplished magician even in his teens, he often performed at local birthday parties.  As an adult, he remained enamored with close-up magic, a special discipline performed with coins and cards and that requires a mastery misdirection.  He took joy in creating his own tricks and demonstrating them to his family and friends.

Dick had a gift for languages, starting certainly with Spanish.  He was self-taught in French and Hebrew and led classroom lectures in these two languages.  He served as a translator for technical Russian at one point, another language he had taught himself.  He held diverse interests and enjoyed living well by accessing the arts, music, food, and culture of large cities.  From these experiences came many stories that he loved to share as if to take you on the journey with him.

He is remembered by his family for his many quirks and antics:  A garlic pizza; the pursuit of the highest-quality sound a speaker can deliver; his own handmade exercise equipment; four custom-made shirts, all the same color and pattern because he looked and felt great in them; the belief that one bicycle is simply not enough for one person; the need to have a vacuum cleaner close at hand no matter where he was in his home; making the finest cup of espresso; having a great chair to relax in; and that a magician can never have enough card decks.

Dick is survived by his wife, Doris Serheev, with whom he found a new lease on life in his second chapter; his brother, Jim, to whom he was devoted and who was his closest friend; daughters Maria Gundy and Anastasia Serheev Dominguez; sons Peter Gundy, Gregory Serheev and Timothy Serheev; nieces Sandy Cerdan and Tracey Fox; and grandchildren Carmen Gundy and Christian Dominguez.