

Gerald Franklin Hyman Obituary



Gerald F. "Jerry" Hyman died on December 24, 2025. Born in Chicago, Illinois on September 8, 1942, to Doris and Erich Hyman, Jerry is survived by his cousins Susan and Steven Hess.

A long-time resident of Arlington, Virginia, Jerry had a distinguished career in international development and democracy promotion. He played a central role in establishing the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) first democracy-building programs in Eastern Europe following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. A man of keen intellect and unwavering integrity, he served as a political appointee at USAID under both Republican and Democratic administrations from 1990 to 2007.

In addition to his pioneering democracy-building work in Eastern Europe, Jerry helped establish USAID's inaugural Democracy and Governance Center, serving first as its Deputy Director and later as Director. After leaving USAID, he became a senior associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, where he managed the Hills Program and supported a network of partner centers in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. He also served on advisory councils to the National Endowment for Democracy. Prior to his government service, he practiced law in Washington, DC, with Covington & Burling.

From 1970 to 1982, Jerry taught numerous, diverse courses in the Departments of Sociology and Anthropology at Smith College. He earned a B.A. in philosophy and a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Chicago, as well as a J.D. from the University of Virginia. Throughout his notable career he authored numerous articles and commentaries.

Jerry will be deeply missed by so many colleagues around the world whose lives he touched with his willingness to help anyone in need, by his contributions to the practice and study of democracy, and by his selflessness and service to others. Private services.

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