

Warren E. Miller, 74, Expert On American Voting Patterns

By ERIC PACE

Warren E. Miller, a political science professor who was one of the foremost authorities on Americans' voting behavior and their electoral politics, died on Saturday at Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn hospital in Scottsdale, Ariz. He was 74 and lived in Scottsdale.

The cause was complications from diabetes, said his son, Jeffrey Miller.

Professor Miller was a Regents' Professor at Arizona State University at his death and had taught there since 1982. He held various posts at the University of Michigan from 1951 into the 1990's, and was a professor there from 1956 to 1980.

A renowned scholar, he was one of the four co-authors of "The American Voter" (1960), a landmark work on voting behavior. The others were Drs. Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse and Donald E. Stokes.

The book drew on thousands of interviews with voters in the election years of 1948, 1952, 1954, 1956 and 1958. Among observations about voters at that time was that no matter how much candidates tried to discuss the issues, voters tended to evaluate the candidates more as personalities.

The authors also found that two-thirds to three-fourths of voters at that time made up their minds before the campaign, and that 1 of every 10 voters was undecided until the last two weeks of the campaign.

Professor Miller was also the co-author, with J. Merrill Shanks, of "The New American Voter" (1996, Harvard University Press). The work examines diminishing voter turnout, evolving party-identification patterns and voting behavior.

In the book, the co-authors say cynicism about government and politics may deter people from voting and other political activity. But they conclude, "Nothing we have learned suggests that the basic institutions in our system of choosing a President are in need of repair, other than that which can be provided by wise and effective leaders."

Professor Miller also helped develop the field of quantitative political science, the use of surveys and computers to analyze political behavior. He founded the Center for Political Studies, an institution at the University of Michigan that became the pre-eminent center for the study of the American voter. From 1970 to 1981, he was the center's director.

He was active for a long time in the American National Election Studies,



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a program that carries out vast surveys of voters before and after every national election. For more than 20 years, he was a principal investigator for the program, which is now supported by the National Science Foundation and has become almost an American institution. All scholars and students of American political behavior depend on the surveys.

In 1962, Professor Miller founded the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan, and became its first executive director. It is the largest scholarly archive for quantitative social-science data in the United States.

In 1979 and 1980, Professor Miller was president of the American Political Science Association. Last year he won the association's Frank J. Goodnow Award for Distinguished Service to the Profession of Political Science.

He was born in Hawarden, Iowa. After serving in the Army Air Forces from 1943 to 1946, he attended the University of Oregon, where he received a bachelor's degree in 1948 and a master's degree in 1950. He received a doctorate from Syracuse University in 1954.

His marriage to Mildred Kiplinger, in 1948, ended in divorce.

In addition to his son, Jeffrey R., of Indianapolis, he is survived by his wife, Dr. Ruth S. Jones, also a political scientist; a daughter, Jennifer R. Miller, who lives near San Diego, and a sister, Margaret Wickler of Rapid City, S.D.