

Jean Dumas (1931 -2006)

Dear CPS Colleagues,

We received the news only two weeks ago from ADQ regarding the death of Jean Dumas on April 1. For your information, the news from ADQ is attached below. We do not know any other details. Some of you may know Jean Dumas personally. If you know more, please feel free to share the news with others. Thanks to Anatole Romaniuc who obliged my request to recount to us some of his experiences with Jean at Statistics Canada. Our heartfelt condolences to Jean's family.

Rajulton Fernando

C'est avec regret et un peu de retard que nous vous faisons part du décès d'un démographe bien connu de plusieurs d'entre nous.

Jean DUMAS (anciennement de Statistique Canada) est décédé accidentellement le 1^{er} avril 2006 à l'âge de 74 ans. Il laisse dans le deuil outre son épouse Cécile Dumas (née Frenette, également une ancienne employée de Statistique Canada), ses filles Frédérique (Kevin Kerr) et Véronique (Steven Fahey) et deux petits-fils, Grégory et Xavier. Jean Dumas a travaillé à titre de coordonnateur de la recherche à la Division de la démographie de 1981 à 2000, année où il a pris sa retraite. Il a contribué à la rédaction de nombreux rapports, publications hors série et collections dont la principale fut certes celle intitulée *Rapport sur l'état de la population du Canada* parue pour la première fois en octobre 1984 et mise à jour régulièrement par la suite. Avant d'arriver à Statistique Canada, M. Dumas a travaillé à l'Université de Moncton où il a fondé et dirigé le Département d'histoire et de géographie et a collaboré avec le ministère de l'Éducation à l'élaboration des programmes de géographie des écoles de la province. Par le biais de l'Éducation permanente, il a formé des enseignants et enseignantes d'alors à l'enseignement de cette matière. Ses étudiants et étudiantes se rappelleront les nombreuses excursions qu'il aimait organiser, dont un voyage/cours d'un peu plus d'un mois dans l'Ouest canadien à l'été de 1971. À l'automne de 1971, M. Dumas est allé faire une maîtrise en démographie à l'Université de Montréal. Dès son retour à Moncton, il a enseigné cette discipline jusqu'en 1981, année où il a accepté un poste à Statistique Canada. Source: @StatCan, le 26 avril 2006.

Rajulton Fernando, the president of Canadian Population Society, requested me to write a few words about the personality and the legacy of our colleague Jean Dumas, who passed away on April 1st, 2006 at age 74. As colleagues for several years in the Demography Division, Statistics Canada, we were both friends and colleagues. In fact, as director of the Demography Division at that time, I was instrumental in bringing Jean from the University of Moncton where he was teaching, to head the newly created analytical section in the Division. The analytical program, dubbed the *Current Demographic Analysis (La Conjoncture démographique)*, included an annual analytical report on the demographic situation in Canada and analytical studies on various topics in Canadian demography. We were looking for someone who combined solid technical skill in demography with the broader knowledge of an erudite. Somebody capable of producing himself and inspiring others to produce analytical studies that met the requirement of scholarship and were appealing in style and presentation to a broader readership. Jean perfectly fit that description.

Jean Dumas joined the Demography Division in 1981. The first annual report was published in 1984, and since then Statistics Canada has issued regularly annual reports on the demographic situation in Canada. At the same time, many

other analytical studies on special topics in Canadian demography, written by Jean or by other demographers, have been published. I am pleased to mention that under his editorship in 2004 appeared my study, *Fertility in Canada, from Baby-boom to Baby-bust*, which, I recall, stirred quite a “remue-ménage” in political circles. According to Alain Bélanger, who succeeded Jean Dumas in the Division, he left upon his retirement in 2000 a rich crop of major reports and thematic studies. Statistics Canada flagship, these publications were among the best sellers. The quality and the impact of the annual reports and the thematic analytical studies are widely acknowledged by our colleagues and by public officials. The coverage they usually received in the news media attests to their wide audience. It is a great achievement, a landmark legacy of the man who in his almost twenty-year tenure at Statistics Canada fully, sometimes single mindedly, devoted himself to a task that outlasted his maker and stands to go on well into the future.

Born and educated in France, Jean Dumas remained very much “French”, at least as I saw it, in his manners, culture and his intellectual mindset. But he easily adapted to Canadian milieus both Francophone and Anglophone. I enjoyed his company. He was an interesting, articulate story teller, speaking equally at ease on population as on culture, history or politics. A very much independent in spirit, Jean found himself sometimes at odds with the corporate exigencies, even in a such, intellectually speaking, liberal institution as Statistics Canada. He and his wife Cécile, also an employee of Statistics Canada, had their home some 60 kilometers away from Ottawa, and had to travel that long distance by car to their work place. I had the pleasure of visiting the place, a country home, a beautiful natural habitat, right in the forest, far from the brouhaha of the city. That too tallied well with Jean’s personality. I recall, as a hobby, he bread German Shephard dogs, as well as horses, which his daughters Frédérique and Véronique rode. He loved nature, animals and a good book in his leisurely time.

One of the memorable moments, I recall, was the visit of Alfred Sauvy, the *doyen* of French demography, the founder and long-time director of the *Institut National d’Études Démographiques* (INED). The Demography Division had close rapports with INED. Several of its distinguished members have visited the division. But we hadn’t had the privilege of having Alfred Sauvy visit us --but Jean managed to facilitate it. By that time professor Sauvy was already a very old man, but fully alert, as he always was. The official visit by Alfred Sauvy was followed by a reception at Jean and Cécile’s residence, in its beautiful natural surroundings. The reception, as I recall, was also attended by such prominent colleagues as Jacques Légaré, Yves Péron and, if I am not mistaken, Jacques Henripin and Réjean Lachapelle, later to become director of Demography Division. It was a great occasion to informally talk and know more intimately the human side of the great man, whom we admired for his contribution to French as well to the world demography. Jean Dumas, for his achievements as researcher and editor of the *Current Demographic Analysis*, and in ways a colorful personality will be warmly remembered by his colleagues and the people who knew him.

Anatole Romaniuc

Former Director of the Demography Division

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Reception in honor of Alfred Sauvy, at Jean and Cecile residence, in 1987. Prof. Sauvy at centre, left to him, Cecile. Jean, as some other guests, are not on this photo.

Demography Division Staff. Jean Dumas, first row right, standing, in black jacket, mustache and barb. Photo taken in 1988.



Reception in honor of Alfred Sauvy, at Jean and Cécile Dumas residence, in 1987. Professor Sauvy at center, left to him Cécile. Jean, as some other guests, are not on this photo.



Demography Division staff. Jean Dumas, first row right standing, in black jacket, mustache and barb. Photo taken in 1988