



Emil Hudson Jost, PhD

May 31, 1912 – July 21, 1963

This biographical sketch by Roger K. Thomas (2016) was updated in 2020 to include his photograph and new biographical facts provided by his daughters, Carol Jost Fanconi and Pamela Jost Birrell.

Emil Hudson Jost served as Department Head from 1952-1959. In 1959 he relocated to be Department Head of Psychology at Arizona State University.

Jost was born in Atchison, Kansas. Nothing has been found about his undergraduate education or whether he earned a master's degree, but he earned the PhD degree at the University of Chicago in 1940. When he applied to be Head of the UGA Department of Psychology, he was married and had three children.

Prior to coming to UGA, Jost held positions as a Research Associate at the University of Chicago (1940-42 and 1944-45), and he was an Assistant Professor at Gary (Indiana) Junior College. His application for the headship at UGA showed that he had been affiliated with the Department of Neurology and Psychiatry at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine (1945-1952) and that he was an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Tennessee, Memphis Division (1947-1952). He had

been Director of Clinical Psychology at Gailor Psychiatric Hospital in Memphis, a teaching unit of the Tennessee College of Medicine, and he had supervised M.A. theses and PhD dissertations.

Circa 1953, Jost reported that his “research has been based on the use of physiological measurements for the growth and differentiation of the individual and his behavior under stress” and that his “immediate interests for possible future research involve, among others, the concept of total energy systems in personality and that he now has several papers in publication on various facets of the problem.” Based on the titles on his publications, it is clear that he used electroencephalography as early as 1942 and as recently as 1953. His articles also indicated use of the polygraph in his clinical psychology research, and one paper published in the *Tennessee Law Review* was titled “Present status of the polygraph and lie detection.”

Although the record is sketchy, Jost appears to have been investigated by the UGA’s upper administration for possible membership in or association with the Communist Party. What is available is a 10-item questionnaire he completed, some details of which were discussed in a 4-page letter that Jost wrote UGA President O. C. Aderhold dated November 2, 1952; apparently the letter was a follow-up to a meeting between Aderhold and Jost. The questionnaire and the letter reveal the baseless accusations against Jost as well as that an administrative hearing was held, *apparently at Jost’s request*, with the “Branch 5 Loyalty Board” in Atlanta in September 1948. Apparently the Board was under the Veterans Administration, because a VA Deputy Administrator wrote to Jost (letter undated) that the Loyalty Board met September 16, 1948 and “. . . recommended a finding clearly favorable to you regarding your loyalty to the Government of the United States.” It seems clear that Aderhold pursued the matter by seeking the opinion of the Executive Secretary for Land Grant Colleges and Universities, but details specific to Jost are not available. All this occurred at UGA when McCarthyism was in full swing, and Jost, like so many, was asked about possible Communist affiliations on very flimsy evidence that usually could be reduced to “guilt by association.”