



**Donald H. Riddle**  
**8<sup>th</sup> ACJS President**  
**1970-1971**

Donald H. Riddle was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1921. Twenty years old at the beginning of World War II, Riddle enlisted in the U.S. Army, and was quickly commissioned a Second Lieutenant in 1942. He served in the U.S. Army Air Force from 1942 to 1946, rising to the rank of First Lieutenant. After his military service, he attended Princeton University on the G.I. Bill, graduating Phi Beta Kappa with his Baccalaureate degree in Political Science. He remained at Princeton University to earn his Ph.D. in Political Science. During this time period he worked as a staffer for Senator Paul Douglas (D – IL), and obtained a position as an Assistant Professor at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, from 1952 to 1958. In 1958, he took over as Director of Research and Associate Professor in the Eagleton Institute of Politics. While there he published two significant books *The Truman Committee: A Study in Congressional Responsibility* (Rutgers University Press, 1964) and *The Problems and Promise of American Democracy* (McGraw Hill, 1964). It was not until 1965 that Riddle the Political Scientist crossed over to Criminal Justice when he became the first Dean of Faculty at John Jay College in New York City. Three years later, in 1968, Riddle was named President of John Jay.

As a result of his crossover to criminal justice, Riddle became active in the IAPP in 1965 and began contributing right away – at his first conference he argued against plans to make membership exclusionary to four year colleges and he won the day. In 1970, Riddle became President of the IAPP and was also successful in changing the organization’s name to the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. Even after his term as President, Riddle remained highly active and was instrumental in changing the shape of ACJS throughout the 1970s.

It was the same year as his ACJS Presidency that Riddle gained national attention for standing up to the Director of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover. Fifteen FBI agents, on leave to take classes at John Jay College, suddenly resigned. Riddle discovered that Hoover had ordered the agents to leave John Jay because of his dislike for Professor Blumberg who had been critical of the FBI, and specifically Hoover. Pressured into firing Blumberg, Riddle later related, “I told them the professor was staying.” Few people were ever willing to stand up to Hoover.

After his ACJS Presidency, Riddle remained at John Jay College as President until 1976. He then accepted the position as Chancellor of the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). While serving as Chancellor, the UIC campus increased educational standards and research capabilities, thereby moving toward recognition as a Research I institution and entering the ranks of Division I athletics. In 1982, he took part in the successful consolidation of the Chicago Circle campus and the Medical Center campus of the University of Illinois. In 1984, he retired from UIC, with recognition as a tenured professor in the Department of Criminal Justice and Department of Political Science, and he was honored with the title of Chancellor Emeritus.

A former student and past president of ACJS, Dr. Richard H. Ward, described his close personal friend and colleague, in both New York and Chicago: “Don Riddle’s many contributions to higher education are eclipsed only by his commitment to high ethical standards and an abiding interest in helping the underprivileged.” Dr. Gerald Lynch, President of John Jay College, said, “It was his vision to join the liberal arts with the theory and practice of criminal justice that launched John Jay College of Criminal Justice in its unique mission. He was a patient and constant mentor to all of us.”

Toward the end of his life, Riddle became ill and entered an assisted-care center in Newtown, Pennsylvania. He died there on October 11, 1999, at the age of 78.