and flew combat missions in Europe during World War II. Following college and graduate school, he became chair of the history and social sciences department at Spelman College, in Atlanta, where he was active in the civil rights movement and encouraged African-American students to fight racial discrimination. Soon students were challenging the restrictions they faced, and the administration viewed Zinn as “an instigator rather than supporter,” he wrote in his 1994 autobiography. In 1963 the college fired him for insubordination.

He joined BU’s political science department in 1964, at the beginning of the anti-Vietnam War movement. He had been opposed to war since hanging up his flight jacket. “War is not complicated,” Zinn told *Bostonia* in 2005. “War is simple. It’s like a drug. It’s like crack. You get a high from victory in war . . . My conclusions about war led me to become an activist against the war in Vietnam and to write about the nature of war.”

At BU Zinn taught in front of crowded lecture halls, clashed with the administration, and joined teach-ins, debates, and rallies. He testified for the defense at the 1973 Pentagon Papers trial of his friend Daniel Ellsberg. He retired from BU in 1988.

“His entreaty to his students was to participate in the great moral issues of one’s time,” MacDonald says. “From his first college post at Spelman College in segregated Atlanta starting in 1957, Howard Zinn was the embodiment of how to live an engaged and principled life. And he led by his example.”

The Feld family: Kenneth (SMG’70) with (from left), Nicole, Bonnie (CAS’73), Alana (COM’02), and Juliette. Learn more about how the contributions of donors and volunteers strengthen Boston University at bu.edu/recognizes.