



## IN MEMORIAM

C. Wayne Gordon  
Professor of Education, Emeritus  
Los Angeles  
1915 — 1998

C. (Calvin) Wayne Gordon, "Wayne" to everyone, was born in Centralia, Kansas, November 14, 1915 to Carrie Isabelle and Calvin Wesley Gordon, a farm couple. He died on February 24, 1998 in Los Angeles after a lengthy illness. Before his retirement in 1986, Wayne served for 28 years as professor of education and in various administrative capacities in the School of Education, the last as dean from 1983 to 1986.

Wayne grew up in small- town America during the depression. His life is a classic mobility story. Wayne was educated in town public schools, then, in 1941, earned a Bachelor of Science degree and a teaching certificate from Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas. He worked his way through college as a grade school teacher and principal in a rural elementary school in Covert, Kansas. In 1941, degree from Kansas State T.C. in hand, Wayne secured a position as teacher and director of Guidance at Ferguson High School, Ferguson, Missouri. He remained at Ferguson until 1952. In the meantime, on May 22, 1942, Wayne married Althea Kathryn Copen, a librarian from Kansas City, Missouri.

During summers, Wayne pursued graduate studies in sociology at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri and at the University of Chicago. In 1945 he earned an M.A. in sociology, and then in 1952 a Ph.D. in sociology- anthropology from Washington University. That same year, 1952, Wayne was invited to join the faculty of the Department of Sociology of Rochester University as an instructor. In 1957, when the application of sociology to educational research was still new, Wayne published his path- breaking study, *The Social System of the High School* (Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois). Talcott Parsons and Edward A. Shils' structural - functional view of social action was a major influence on this study and the major influence on Wayne's scholarly research. In 1958, Wayne was brought to UCLA as associate professor of sociology and education, with a mandate to develop sociology of education as a key research discipline in the School of Education, to make sociology relevant to the problems of education in the city and state, and to bring national visibility to the school as a center for the theoretical and applied study of educational sociology.

Wayne did not disappoint. Wayne gathered around himself a stellar group of doctoral candidates who were to make a solid contribution to the remarkable expansion of the field of sociology of education in the 1960s and 1970s. He was publishing in *Journal of Educational Sociology*, *Sociology of Education*, *Review of Sociology*, and *American Sociological Review*. He took a prominent role in the creation of the Sociology of Education section in the American Sociological Association, and in the adoption of *Sociology of Education* as an official journal of the Association. Wayne was also active in the creation of Division G - the "Social Context of Education" division of the American Educational Research Association.

Wayne led a very productive scholarly life throughout the 1960s. He was a consultant on studies of the integration of the Los Angeles public school system and the integration of the U.S. Army. He was prominently engaged in pioneer studies of the educational achievement of Mexican- American youth in the Los Angeles School District, and the effects of teacher leadership styles on student achievement, classroom behavior and morale. Wayne was chosen by the National Society for the Study of Education to become editor of its 73rd yearbook, *Uses of the Sociology of Education* (1974), a major contribution to the sociology of education. This was to be Wayne's last scholarly endeavor as such. By 1974 Wayne had assumed, and this

was to remain the case until his retirement in 1986, full- time responsibilities as an administrator at the School of Education: chairman, associate dean, acting dean, interim dean, and finally dean. After 1974, Wayne would no longer be able to balance administration, scholarly research, and teaching. It was rare for Wayne to be absent from campus and he was very much available to his faculty. The nature of Wayne's commitment of time and energy as an administrator, as his dean of fifteen years, John I. Goodlad, pointed out, "must never be underestimated."

Still, Wayne remained devoted to scholarship. He always had four or five projects in mind: a study of the American school as a social system; a study of the effects of teacher leadership styles in a classroom social system; the establishment of sociology of education as a legitimate field of scholarship at UCLA; the publication of the aforementioned NSSE Yearbook, *Uses of the Sociology of Education*; and overseeing the emergence of the School of Education as a nationally acknowledged, top research institution. He saw the last three projects accomplished.

As an administrator, Wayne took a hands- off approach. Faculty judged him courteous but aloof, fatherly, always calm, under control; a man of wisdom and integrity; there was an air of de Gaulle about him. Wayne seemed to be a step ahead of the faculty, always aware of systemic- structural relations: there are consequences to all actions, intended and unintended, what the consequences were likely to be, and what might be done to assure the best outcome. Despite his small town, country origins, and perhaps because of his training as a sociologist, Wayne was the most cosmopolitan of people where human nature was concerned. He was a supreme realist, sizing up faculty quickly and surely; he seemed never to be surprised by faculty after the fact. Wayne saw himself as he saw other people- as he was, warts and all.

Until the early 1970s Wayne taught the seminar in Sociology of Education, and carried a heavy load of doctoral advisees. He was not a great lecturer but, in small seminars, a delightful teacher: "humaneness with intellectual toughness," as one of his students put it, sounds about right. Wayne liked to make his classes laugh. One of his favorite jokes was about the Federal income tax form. He said it should have only two lines.

you earn last year?"

First line: "How much did

Second line: "Send it in!"

Wayne was a bit of a ditherer where deadlines were concerned. And his memory was often at sea. A colleague once offered Wayne a cigarette and he started smoking it until he remembered he didn't smoke. Wayne possessed a sharp intellect and a wit as sharp as his intellect. To junior faculty, his advice was, "Don't find any meaning in your life until after tenure."

During the turbulent 1960s, Wayne was sympathetic toward those faculty and students who were proactive about effecting changes within the school and the university that were more student- centered, as well as toward those calling for social and cultural change in the larger society. But Wayne also had sympathy for the Old Guard who were troubled by student and faculty activism. His approach was always to go around those with whom he disagreed, never through them, and always with humor. To a group of students camped in his office and insisting that the Vietnam War be ended, Wayne said: "OK. I agree the war should be ended. Where do I sign?" Wayne was always a great fan of his daughter Kim, performance artist, bass player, vocalist and co- founder of the avant- garde rock group, Sonic Youth.

Wayne was an accomplished fisherman. He loved to travel to his cottage on the Klamath River in northern California, for steelhead and salmon fishing. Afterward, he enjoyed entertaining small parties of faculty at his home in West Los Angeles. Wayne cooked (or grilled) the fish "Tex- Mex style", seasoned with condiments from his very own herb garden in back of the house.

Wayne is survived by his wife, Althea; son, Keller; daughter, Kim; and grandchild, Coco.

Wayne will be missed. He is missed.

Sol Cohen