



IN MEMORIAM

Louise L. Tyler
Professor of Education, Emerita
Los Angeles
1918–2004

For almost 30 years, Louise L. Tyler was an institution at the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. Professor Tyler arrived at UCLA in 1959. Her doctoral studies were conducted at the University of Chicago, where early curriculum theory giants Benjamin Bloom and Ralph Tyler were her professors. In turn, by the mid-1970s, she and others in the Department of Education had raised UCLA's status in curriculum studies to national prominence. Along with Louise Tyler, this important cluster of scholars included John Goodlad, John McNeil, Eva Baker, and Jim Popham.

John McNeil credits her for jarring him and John Goodlad to consider the learner's perspective as a valid way to formulate curriculum – at the same level of importance as the perspectives of society, subject specialists, and other recognized authorities. Early in her academic career, Louise became interested in the interplay of psychoanalytic theory and curriculum development and it is in this work that her academic legacy can be found. Through her wide-ranging love of, and scholarly commitment to, analytical psychology and her depth and breadth of educational theory, Louise's work led the revealing of important insights into the pathway through which curriculum enhances teaching and the learning process of students. Her active participation and leadership in the South California Psychoanalytic Society contributed to making Louise a leader in the creation of an intellectual field that combined education knowledge with the field of psychoanalytic theory. Extending her work into commercial film analysis, Louise Tyler pioneered what is now a prominent academic area of study – how films depict teaching and schooling, and how these cultural forms shape teaching and student identities and roles

Professor Tyler's efforts in putting her research and theory development into practice were not always directly valued. In fact, a number of students called her pedagogy "painful." However, several now-prominent graduates of the GSE&IS claim invaluable benefit from the challenges of her teaching style. "Louise had a tremendously analytical mind. She demanded intellectual rigor from her students. She frightened or angered many first-year doctoral students, but her style forced you to grow intellectually and to read deeply," says Diane Propster of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Alan Crawford, Professor at California State University, Los Angeles, remarks, "I never worked harder for any professor, but I never learned as much from anyone else, either." Olvido Rodríguez Hartl, Professor in Japan, writes, "I came from a culture where you don't argue with a professor but Dr. Tyler demanded that we argue with her. Nothing in her class was ever easy, but her strong hand taught me how to defend my position in discussions." Colleague McNeil offers, "Louise's analytical psychology enabled her to "uncover" students rather than merely "cover" the material. Her goal was learning – opening new perspectives and understanding. Students who arrived with expectations of recitation, with a focus on a grade, might have been the ones with greatest difficulty appreciating her efforts."

Despite the harshness that some students– and some scared (then) assistant professors– recall, Louise had a warm and gentle side. She had a deep sense of empathy for foreign women who met adversity at UCLA. For example, in the late 1970s, she became the life-jacket for a South American student who developed breast

cancer during her second year in the doctoral program. Louise put her considerable energy to work and obtained the best possible care for this student, earning the eternal gratitude of six other Brazilians colleagues who were studying together.

In the Department of Education at UCLA, for several periods, Louise Tyler was head of her home division, then called "Curriculum and the Study of Schooling." In the education profession at large, Louise was elected to high leadership positions in the Curriculum Division of AERA (American Educational Research Association) and in the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

Complementing her academic life, Louise held season tickets to the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, attending many performances with her dear friend and colleague Romeria Tidwell. She was also an avid member of the Los Angeles Museum of Art and she went to the theater regularly. Upon retirement in 1988, she volunteered as a counselor at a battered- women's shelter. Using her strengths in psychoanalytical theory and a caring touch, Louise helped many troubled women and this work brought her immense personal satisfaction. Her retirement years also afforded her opportunity to spend many hours on her ever- growing love of movies.

John McNeil reminds us that in her teaching Louise frequently used the Japanese film "Roshomon." This film deals with accounts of several different characters about a very significant event that involved each of them. The viewer will be troubled to determine which character's version or interpretation is the truth. Louise valued multiple interpretations in search for better understanding. In a very similar way, he suggests, each of us who knew her has many different reflections on our remembrances of life with Louise. Buzz Wilms, who became a dear friend of hers, recalls Louise's ire at discovering that he was living in Berkeley when already on the faculty at UCLA.

Louise Mabel Lingenfelder Tyler was born in Chicago, Illinois on June 11, 1918, the youngest of nine children. She was married for a time to Professor Ralph Tyler. Her love of art began in her childhood when she relished visiting the Chicago Art Museum with an older sister. Louise's house in the Rancho Park area of Los Angeles had many beautiful paintings and sculptures, a testimony to her avocation. Professor Louise Tyler leaves indelible memories among her graduate students, some with great gratitude and fondness. Many of her colleagues developed warm friendships with her that continued past her retirement and they hold good memories of this beautiful lady, her unique personality, and her rich life. Louise Tyler died on July 29, 2004, of undisclosed illness, at the Pilgrim Place Health Services Center, Claremont, California.

Concepción M. Valadez
John D. McNeil
Romeria Tidwell
Wellford W. (Buzz) Wilms