

## REMEMBERING LUCIE

Tritia Toyota, Ph. D.

Lucie and I met through mutual friends while I was still a working journalist. Lucie demanded that I give her tips on make-up. What endured after I did that was a friendship that lasted for nearly 30 years – her passing will not change that.

When I decided to finish my graduate work, Lucie said, “do it!” We had a lot of conversations over the years about social science, about Asian American Studies and the ways she wanted to enlarge the framework about how people inside & outside the academy saw Asian America. In this she was not always supported. But Lucie always went her own way.

In retrospect I can see that she always realized the importance of racial history – as a young immigrant living in Hawaii, she told me how she experienced first hand what this meant to Asian Americans.

In the 70s & 80s Asian America was being transformed by new immigration, Lucie saw & wrote about this, especially globalizing labor. But she also contextualized the newer labor within its historical community roots. For her prescience I will always be grateful. She helped me make sense out of my own academic pursuits.

True to her desire to promote both a transnational and transpacific outlook, Lucie invited me to teach anthropology & Asian American Studies at the university her father founded in Taipei. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to teach and to meet Lucie’s family and many friends. We also began collaborating on one of our mutual interests – comparative work on US & Taiwanese journalism. In 2006, Lucie dedicated her father’s School of Journalism and the museum honoring his work – an emotional & touching ceremony that culminated many months of incredibly hard work by Lucie who was ill even then.

Her father’s practice of journalism was the subject of the last paper she delivered in the U.S. at a conference at Berkeley last spring – a careful repositioning of his activism as a highly independent public intellectual in Taiwan. While she was here in LA before leaving for Berkeley, we spent time trying for a more accurate description of Cheng She-wo & his life work. Much has been written about this giant in print journalism in Asia – Lucie’s aim was a more careful and nuanced rendering of his deep desire for mass information available to everyone in the community. Community was always an important concept for Lucie, wherever she found it. She would say that her father very seldom indicated approval, but I think he would have been pleased by his youngest daughter’s interpretations.

Lucie was demanding of her scholarship and others’, and demanding of her friends. But I think that’s how people are, who are so passionate in what they care about & believe. Beneath that passion was also fierce loyalty, a wonderful willingness to laugh about herself and that other side not many people saw – what I often called her – a ditz.

She would be embarrassed about this tribute but secretly really pleased. I miss her in so many ways but I am heartened that what Lucie so strongly believed in will endure.

**Tritia Toyota, Ph.D.**

Adjunct Assistant Professor

Departments of Anthropology & Asian American Studies, UCLA