

## **Remembering Lucie**

Min Zhou, Ph. D.

I knew Lucie back in the late 1970s, 1979 to be exact. I was a sophomore at Sun Yat-sen University, one of the very first universities in China to receive sociologists from the Western world. Lucie was among the first group of American sociologists who came to China to help rebuild sociology and other social science disciplines that were abolished for their anti-revolutionary or bourgeois tendencies. At that time, sociology was just as foreign as the Westerner's white skin, tall nose, and curly hair. I was one of the student volunteers as interpreters for the group. I still vividly remember that day when the American delegation arrived on campus. When Lucie got off the bus, at first sight of her, we girls literally dropped our draws, had our eyes wide open, and stared at her in complete silence. What a beauty? Here, among many strange looking faces in Western suits, Lucie stood out with everything from head to toe for which we girls secretly dreamed—her dress, her high heels, her jewelry, her made-up, hairdo, her talk, her walk, and her move...

Imagine this was still the time when military uniform, a symbol of revolution, was the most admired clothing, when army green and navy blue were the most popular colors, and when girls were forbidden to wear any makeup nor jewelry and were allowed to have only two hairstyles: short hair cut just below the ears or two short brushes.

Lucie instantly became an object of admiration for young college students, especially for young women. We were totally fascinated by her; we wanted to be her, a beautiful woman first and foremost. She was simultaneous inspirational—a sociologist from a world-class university in America—a Chinese, a woman! We wanted to be her, a scholar standing out amidst White people. She was the one who opened our mind to many unthinkable possibilities: In America, it was possible for college students to live off campus and to share the same apartments; it was possible for a Chinese immigrant woman to become a first-rate university professor.

Lucie, you will be in my heart forever.

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