



In loving memory of

Norma Jean Fields

1932-1998

Lindenwood University Professor of English & Communications

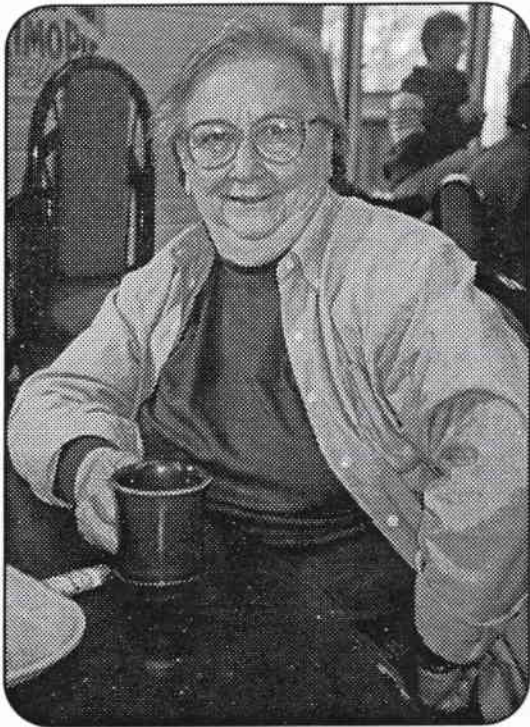
Flags flew at half staff on the campus of Lindenwood University in memory of beloved English and Communications Professor known by us all as Jean Fields, who died in her sleep early in the morning of April 2, 1998.

E-mail, letters and phone calls came pouring in from former students and colleagues all over the world who had learned of the death of Jean, an institution at Lindenwood for the past 34 years.

"Jean embodied the spirit of Lindenwood," said LU President Dennis Spellmann. "She was willing to do anything to help students succeed. We will miss her dearly."

Jean came to Lindenwood in 1965 from Ohio State University, where she taught for five years. She held a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Charleston and a master's degree from the Ohio State University. She also studied at the American Film Institute and the University of California Film School in Los Angeles. Jean received the Emerson Electric Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1995 and the Sears Award for Teaching. She was on the Board of Directors of the St. Charles County Historical Society and a member of the Modern Language Association.

After a funeral service for her at the Lindenwood University Cultural Center, Jean was interred in the Sibley Cemetery on the Lindenwood University campus.



Eulogy for Jean Fields

presented by Lindenwood University

President Dennis C. Spellmann

Monday, April 6, 1998

Lindenwood University Cultural Center

Some people might be saying today... oh, it is such a sad day for Lindenwood. Lindenwood will never be the same. Who will speak at the Butler Society? Who will speak at the convocations? Who will tell the tale of George and Mary Sibley at Parents' Day?

Even more than that, who will be able to move and motivate students the special way that our beloved Jean Fields did?

They are all legitimate concerns. But I think today that we should look at the "whole educational experience" at Lindenwood, and how it has been enriched by Jean's contributions. The Lindenwood experience is stronger today than ever before, thanks to her passion and dedication.

She was quite a woman...a Renaissance woman--unpretentious and unselfish, just like the women she studied and admired--Mary Sibley and Rebecca Boone. She was always available to help a student, colleague or a friend...day or night.

I have to smile when I think of how Jean would respond to a

litany of her accomplishments....I think she would rather we stand here today telling tales... like only the daughter of a West Virginia coal miner could tell them...She called them "Whoppers".

You know, she was excited about our endeavors at the Boone Home...and she was busy developing several courses...one of them was "Folklore on the Frontier"...she wrote:

"In this course students will study **tall tales**, folk heroes and heroines, folk songs and stories from the Mississippi Valley/ Missouri Valley to the West...The course will concentrate on Daniel and Rebecca Boone as role models for other folk heroes and heroines... in song, poetry and story, and their legacy as symbols of the river and frontier spirit."

John Feely tells the story of students going into Jean's office...stacked high with books, and not really being able to see her too well during their visit...she wasn't the tallest person in the world. But as John tells it, no one had any problem hearing her voice from behind the books...

The books...and reading in general, were extremely important to her. She read as widely as possible... not to unload all her books and journals on her students, but that simply in some intangible way...it would help her understand her students a little more clearly...and devise simpler and more effective ways of teaching.

Jean was always striving to improve herself..and make Lindenwood a better place. In the area of recruitment, she was successful at establishing a strong network of adults to identify people who would benefit from a degree. But rather than go through a recruiter, she had people to come and visit **her**..for a friendly chat and some coffee...to make them more comfortable and to break their fear of going to college.

Thousands of Lindenwood students have been blessed by Jean. She has touched the lives of so many over the years...and was a valued member of our faculty. She cannot be replaced...and **must** be remembered for the unique and giving teacher and friend of Lindenwood that she was...

For that reason, in consultation with the family, a decision has been made to bury Jean on the grounds of Lindenwood--in our historic cemetery--where she will rest among others who have made significant contributions to this institution.

Today... we will walk away and carry on the business of Lindenwood...but it will not be without Jean Fields. We must go forth today in such a way that everyone will be hear her voice from behind the books...for many years to come. *



Eulogy for Jean Fields

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Professor Emeritus Jim Feely

Monday, April 6, 1998

Lindenwood University Cultural Center



Yes, this is a textbook. I can't describe my feelings for Jean Fields without closing my remarks with a text. John Donne is here. He writes about being involved in mankind. If there were ever a phrase to describe Jean that would be it.

She was the most diverse person I have ever known. She knew and taught from pop culture to exacting historical scholarship; from books to movies to TV, including the commercial. This allowed her to be a good personal friend to everyone that knew her, from struggling freshmen to graduating English majors to future communications executives.

She would never say "no," not to an 8:00 class in the morning--or the evening, nor to an LCIE class with the autoworkers in Wentzville, nor to a non-credit class of senior citizens, nor to an advisee or anyone coming to her for help or advice.

I have never seen Jean angry. She could argue a point well, but I have never heard her even raise her voice. She never seemed jealous or gossipy. I can recall numerous occasions over the years when a group of people would end up running someone or something down, and in the middle of all the discussion we'd look over and ask Jean what she thought--and find she wasn't there. She had just quietly gotten up and gone off to other things.

Her love for American Literature included a real love for America itself, not just as history but in terms of practice. I'll bet many of you here have been to her famous 4th of July parties. My wife and I will never forget a Thanksgiving dinner she had for Grazina Amonas and her brother. Grazina was our professor of dance back in the 1960's and 70's. She and her brother were refugees from Russian dominated Lithuania. The bounty of Jean's frontier feast, including three different desserts, was truly American.



Jean was different. She would appear early in the morning on the way to class in sub-freezing weather with only a sweater on. She would sometimes be standing, reading, in the halls between classes and forget to go to class. She was not absent-minded, in fact just the opposite: she was always focused on, and appreciating, the moment. Sometimes she'd be late for, or miss, an appointment; but we'd never think she didn't care. She was just focused on something else. She might forget what she did with your paper, but she could usually remember what you wrote and how you could improve it. I remember her old green Dodge, full of books and papers. In fact, I've lost a book or two in that moving mine of thought and feeling. Perhaps some of you had papers in there. Some of you, I know, got papers back with tire treads or coffee spills on them.

I remember, mostly though, here desks over the years--from Roemer to Butler to another office in Butler to the Gables and back again to Butler. Always, on the desk there were books lying open, some face down to mark them, others lying open face to face. It's here that the text comes in--

I'm reading from John Donne's "Meditation 17":

"All mankind is of one author and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better

language; and every chapter must be so translated. God employs several translators; some pieces are translate by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again for that library where every book shall lie open to one another."

Because of her researching and teaching and befriending, Jean grows on in spirit. So, also, more than before, do Rebecca Boone and Mary Easton Sibley. So do we. *

Remembering Jean...

"I always loved hearing the Jean Fields stories from my Lindenwood students. Kris came home one day and told me she was wearing a brown shoe and a blue shoe and when someone pointed it out she didn't miss a beat, bless her soul. She said they both felt the same, so who cares. To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die!"

--Anne Pals, Class of 1965 and member, Lindenwood University Board of Directors

"I will always be grateful for how nice she was about talking to my Religion in America classes about the Sibleys and the evangelical influence on higher education in 19th century America, and about other topics. I had the feeling my class was in good hands when Jean was there. Once I was called upon to lead the worship service at the Lewis and Clark Rendezvous, and had very little idea what to say; someone said, "Call Jean Fields!" I did, and my problem was solved. (How many people can say that they're related to members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition?) She was more knowledgeable about, and interested in, the history of the St.

Charles area than anyone else I ever knew. It is wonderfully appropriate that she will be buried on the Lindenwood campus; she is more identified with Lindenwood and its surroundings than almost anyone else in history. How will we ever get along without her?" --Alan Meyers, Ph.D., assistant professor of religion



"When I first came to Lindenwood in 1995, it was Jean who made me feel truly a part of this community. Within a week, we had a little ritual; I would shout "Good Morning," she would say "Shut up, kid," and then she would toss a doughnut on my desk—without a napkin, of course. A little later, she would yell "Hey Weirdo, get me some coffee!" and off I would go. Then I'd sit in her office, and we'd discuss Lindenwood, autobiography, students—and frequently, off-color subjects.

I never saw Jean angry, and I never heard her, even once, say she wasn't in the mood for teaching, or that she had gotten tired of poor papers. Jean Fields will be remembered for many, many things—for her dedication, her kindness, her bluntness, her integrity—but one thing about her I will treasure is her incredible ability to accept, coupled with her insatiable need to grow and to help others grow."

-- Ana Schnellmann, Ph.D., assistant professor of English.

"As everyone knows, (Jean's) reading interests were extremely wide-ranging. Almost every time I ran into her, she would ask me about something in my field (anthropology) that she had read about...before I knew about it. It was downright embarrassing. She will truly be with us in spirit.

-- Ray Scupin, Ph.D., professor of anthropology

Memorial donations may be sent to the Jean Fields Memorial Fund at Lindenwood University, 209 South Kingshighway, St. Charles, Mo. 63301. For more information, call the Development Office at (314) 949-4903.

A special thank you to Deborah Thomas, (Class of 1977) who sent the photo of Jean with her trusty coffee mug. (see page 2).