

**Louis Cantori**  
**1935-2008**

There I was, sitting with some trepidation in the first Middle East course of my life when a slightly gruff-looking professor with longish hair, wearing faded blue jeans and a button-down white short-sleeve shirt walked into the room. Little did I know that this was the moment when my life would change forever. But there are so many of us whose lives were altered in a positive way by Lou Cantori, who passed away on May 12 at the age of 73. Taking all of his courses at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County (UMBC), I always felt that Lou would have rather not had textbooks or exams in his classes. He just wanted to have liberating, vibrant discussions about the issues of the day in the Middle East, in Washington, and in the world at-large. He was more interested in us learning than receiving grades.

While consistently presenting all sides of an argument, Lou would never shy away from expressing his own opinion on controversial subjects. Because of this, he was, typically in our profession, branded pro-this or anti-that. But one of the many things I learned from Lou was how important it is to listen. I witnessed on numerous occasions Lou listening intently to counter-arguments—and respecting them. He never dismissed opposing viewpoints.

Lou was passionate about the Middle East; indeed, he was passionate about life. Lou's passion in the classroom was infectious. So taken was I by it that I embarked on a career in Middle Eastern studies. Lou's passion extended far beyond academic and scholarly matters to his family, rowing, German beers (that must be served at the correct temperature) and the Baltimore Orioles. Lou and I (along with our mutual friend and colleague, Robert O. Freedman, who also taught at UMBC), attended many Oriole baseball games together. On one occasion, I was able to secure a luxury box at Camden Yards Ballpark to watch a game, and I invited Lou to come. He was like a kid in a candy store, and as with most of the things he encountered in his life from the smallest to the largest, Lou experienced them with a zest and gusto that left no doubt that he was enjoying every moment.

I spent the summer in Egypt with Lou back in the early 1980s as part of a student group. As the faculty head of the group, Lou, having studied for several years in Egypt, presented us with a thorough introduction to the country before we departed. Regarding security in Egypt, Lou commented on how safe it was overall, but that we did have to be mindful of getting our pockets picked, especially in the *suaq*. Well, one day in Cairo, Lou came back to the hotel smiling from ear to ear with prideful joy, as if his son had hit his first home-run. He had just had his wallet pick-pocketed. While most of us would be paralyzed with horror, Lou laughingly marveled at the expertise of the lift and celebrated the stealth of the act. Life is to be experienced, and good or bad you embrace it and move on. Lou did exactly that.

Lou's scholarly achievements are well-known, but as with most of us in this profession, our lasting mark has been and will be made by our impact on our students. On my student

evaluations, what I consider to be most important are indications that I continue to have passion for the subject matter. This is absolutely still Lou standing in front of my first Middle East class generating new awareness and excitement, introducing me to an intellectual universe that was heretofore unknown to me. Lou will be sorely missed, but his spirit—his passion—still lives on through the many people he touched.

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### **Lucie Wood Saunders 1928-2008**

Lucie Wood Saunders, emeritus professor of anthropology at the Lehman College of the City University of New York, passed away on July 26, 2008, after a long struggle with cancer. Lucie's husband Jack Saunders, whom she had married in Cairo, passed away in 2001; they are buried together near her childhood home in Virginia. She had a lively mind and a good sense of humor until the end, and she is mourned by her many friends in the US, Egypt, and elsewhere. Her experience in the anthropology of the Middle East began in the 1950s, and she did field work in rural Egypt in the early 1960s and again in the late 1970s.

Lucie Wood was born in King William County, Virginia, and was raised on the family farm. She earned her BA in English from Sweet Briar College in Virginia, and then moved to New York where she eventually earned a PhD in anthropology from Columbia University with a theoretical thesis on parallel cousin marriage (1959). Her teachers and mentors included Conrad Arensberg, Eliot Chapple, and Vera Rubin. While preparing her thesis she worked at the Rockland State Hospital Research Facility, where she met her future husband, a medical doctor and researcher. In 1961 she was invited by Laila el Hamamsy of the Social Research Center of the American University in Cairo to conduct field research in Egypt, and eventually settled on a study of an Egyptian delta village, Tafahna el-Ashraf, which had been selected to provide immigrants to the newly reclaimed areas near Alexandria. This research was conducted with the assistance of Sohair Mehanna of the SRC, initiating a life-long partnership.

The results of this research were published in a series of articles over the years dealing with various aspects of family life and gender relations. The topics were manifold, ranging from the local practice of the *zar* cult to modern-day entrepreneurs in the poultry business. She had an unblinking appreciation for the ebb and flow of gender roles; her research on gender was pioneering and innovative. Over time the focus shifted from a psychological approach to one highlighting economic relations, but the style was the same, a fine-grained focus on individual strategies and predicaments. Because Cynthia Nelson had conducted research