

Wynona Smutz Garretson Hartley

1927-2018

Wynona Smutz Garretson Hartley, a member of the “Iowa School” of symbolic interaction in the late 1950s and early 1960s, passed away on February 6, 2018 in Kansas City, Missouri at the age of 90. There were few positive role models, mentors or sponsors for women PhDs entering academia in the 1950s; yet Wynona confidently charted her own course to build a successful career as a professor and researcher, working at the interface of sociology and medicine. Born in 1927 in Iowa City, Wynona received an AA degree in 1946 from Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, followed by a BA (1948), MA (1951) and PhD (1961), all in Sociology from the University of Iowa. As a graduate student, she worked with Manford Kuhn and Thomas McPartland who were operationalizing and creating testable measures for symbolic interactionist concepts. Their most notable contribution was the Twenty Statements Test (TST) for self-concept, which she (as Wynona Garretson) helped develop in her PhD dissertation. This work was published as “The Consensual Definition of Social Objects” in the *Sociological Quarterly* (1962) and later reprinted in the well-known Manis and Meltzer symbolic interaction reader of that era. Another of her papers, “Self-Concept and Ward Behavior in Two Psychiatric Hospitals” appeared in *Sociometry* (1961). Through much of her scholarly life, Wynona continued to promote and serve as an expert interpreter of the TST. Also during her early years in Iowa, Wynona also served on the Sociology faculty of Iowa Wesleyan College, Mt. Pleasant, first as Instructor (1952-1955), then Assistant Professor (1955-1958), and finally as Associate Professor and Department Head (1955-1961). Indicative of how atypical academic career trajectories were for women in those years, Wynona initially was asked to (and did) combine her teaching position with the role of secretary to the college president.

After receiving her PhD, Wynona left Iowa Wesleyan and held a research position at the University of Iowa. By that time, she had met Richard Hartley, her second husband and the love of her life. Dick took a job in a small Nebraska town where she spent the next several years until they relocated to Kansas City in 1967. There, Wynona took a job as Senior Research Associate with the NIMH Epidemiology Field Station affiliated with the Greater Kansas City Mental Health Foundation, and held an appointment as Associate Professor in Psychiatry at the University of Missouri School of Medicine. In 1970, she was asked to join the new Department of Human Ecology and Community Health (now the Department of Preventive Medicine) at the University of Kansas School of Medicine, just a few miles across the state line in Kansas City, Kansas. She remained there as a tenured Assistant Professor, sadly without opportunity for promotion, from 1970 until her retirement in 1995. During that period she developed and published a TST codebook, served as PI for an NIMH funded study, “Preventive Outcomes of Small Group Education with School Children: the Kansas City School Behavior Project,” and as co-PI for an NIH funded study of high blood pressure among employed women. She published the results of the latter study in the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* (1982). The achievement she was proudest of was the annual conference and seed grant program for small community-based health promotion projects, titled “The Roots of Responsibility,” which she originated and directed from 1971-1976. This was a direct expression of her sociological perspective that the health of individuals is tied to the social arrangements of their families and communities.

Wynona lived a full and active life with her husband, who died in 1996, their champion boxers and her bonsai creations. She loved the Rocky Mountains and especially summer vacations in Vail,

Colorado. While she had no children of her own, she adored her nephew and step-grandson. In one of life's strange twists, I had read and used Wynona's 1962 TST article in my undergraduate thesis at the University of Michigan. Nine years later, I was at the University of Kansas searching for a social scientist in the medical school who could be my postdoctoral fellowship mentor. I happened to be introduced to Wynona. When she told me about her background and TST work, I made the connection. Amazed and gratified that I knew her work, she became a wise and inspiring mentor and remained a dear and loyal friend for the next 42 years.

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