IN MEMORIAM

W. T. TUCKER

W. T. Tucker, Professor Emeritus of Marketing Administration, was born January 26, 1919, in Rushville, Indiana. He died suddenly on December 19, 1990, at his home in Wimberley, Texas.

Tom Tucker was a man of many talents: philosopher, teacher, researcher, counselor, writer, poet, and artist. He was, by education, experience, and proclivity -- and in his own way -- an approach to "Renaissance Man", a label which he would reject out-of-hand, and a theme which he explored, questioned, and spoofed in panting and in poetry.

He came to The University of Texas at Austin in September of 1959 as Associate Professor of Marketing Administration and was promoted to Professor in 1961. He served the department, the College and Graduate School of Business, and the wider University community for twenty years, retiring in 1979, at which time he was named Professor Emeritus. Before coming to Texas, he taught at Georgia State College in Atlanta, 1954-1959, and at the University of Illinois, 1948-1954. He took leave to teach as a visiting professor at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst for the academic year 1973-1974.

Tom Tucker was graduated from Scarsdale High School in New York state in 1937. He returned that year to his native state of Indiana to study English composition, art, and psychology at DePauw University in Greencastle, where he won awards for both his writing and his scholastic achievement, receiving the A. B. degree in June of 1941. Ever the eclectic, he would combine his undergraduate interests in his later graduate studies and in his life's work.
Fresh out of college, he joined the U.S. Marines, serving as an officer from 1941 to 1945. In 1944, he was wounded during the invasion of Guam. Sensory nerves were damaged in both legs, but that apparently did not slow him down or spoil his golf game in later years.

On June 6, 1942, he married Marjorie Driscoll, his sweetheart, fellow resident of Scarsdale, and fellow student at DePauw, whose attention he first attracted (according to a family account) by "showing off" on a train ride which both were taking from home town back to college. It was a long and productive marriage -- in both the social and biological senses -- lasting till his death in 1990. Before, during, and after Tom's graduate school years, the Tuckers produced seven children, one boy and six girls: Jeffrey (1946), Nancy (1947), Kathleen (1950), Margaret (1952), Mary (1954), Sarah (1956), and Leah (1959).

From 1948 to 1954, Tom attended graduate school at the University of Illinois, majoring in mass communications, American literature, and psychology. During those years he also taught business letter and report writing and direct mail advertising. He received the M. S. degree in 1950 and the Ph.D. degree in 1955. He went on to teach marketing, advertising, marketing research, and statistics at Georgia State College.

At the University of Texas, Tom developed courses focusing on the social and psychological aspects of personality, identity, class, group, status, culture, and choice. His seminars, his published writings, and the doctoral students he nurtured and inspired helped to lay the foundations for what is now known in marketing circles as the field of "consumer behavior". In spoken and written word, he was forever reminding us that human beings (and animals, too, for the experimental psychologist) respond to stimuli in their own marvelous ways, unknown and often unknowable to the observer, and subject to misinterpretation by him because of his own intent or preconception. No mechanistic theory of behavior will do at all, and any theory will do very little.

Tom's respect for good writing led him to eschew much of the jargon of social science professionals, though he did contribute to their technical journals. His effort was always bent in the direction of making things readable, as well as intellectually defensible.
In his broader service to University and community, Tom played many roles. He was an experienced consultant to business enterprises large and small; among the latter were restaurants started by two of his daughters and their husbands. He served on the editorial boards of The University of Houston Business Review and the Social Science Quarterly. He served a term as Chairman of the Department of Marketing Administration. He was a member of the American Marketing Association and of its Doctoral Consortium, of the Southern Economic Association, the Southwestern Social Science Association, and The American Association of University Professors. He was a supervisor of doctoral dissertations and defender of his students' right to research and write on controversial topics. He served on the University-wide Committee on General Studies and the Educational Policy Committee, conducted a seminar on "personal identity" for Plan II liberal arts students, lectured to U.T. freshmen in orientation, and served on the committee which recommended the University's telephone counseling service for students.

In both formal session and informal conversation, he was a constant stimulus to his colleagues, full of ideas and inspiration, seeing potential for research and analysis in almost every social setting.

Tom was recognized for the quality of his work. His book on the social context of economic behavior was translated into Japanese. He was listed in Who's Who and in American Men of Science. In 1963, the undergraduate CBA Council gave him their teaching excellence award. He received the Henry Maynard Award for the best article on marketing theory during 1974. And in 1980, the Board of Regents approved in his honor the establishment of the W.T. (Tommy) Tucker Excellence Fund in Marketing Administration, to provide grants for doctoral students.

In all of his endeavors, Tom Tucker was aided and abetted by his loving and energetic wife, Marge, whose personality was a fine counterpoint to his own. He in turn supported her many activities, whether that was running a milk-goat farm in Georgia, trying to get into medical school in Texas, or, being denied admission because of her age, settling for training in medical technology and working in Austin hospitals -- a job which she continues to perform to this day.
Their large and active family, with all the joys and anxieties which seven children imply, provided Tom with his own social science practicum, as it were. One of his favorite stories was that of four or five Tucker children lined up stair-step across the room, pouting and lamenting, "We don't have anybody to play with!" He used all of his skills as daddy, artist, psychologist, and friend to help them through their moments of crisis.

When he was nominated for the rank of Professor Emeritus, his chairman observed that whoever conceived that rank must surely have had in mind as a role model someone like Tom Tucker. One could easily argue the same point about whoever conceived the notions of intellectual, scholar, gentleman, gadfly, colleague, and friend.

Tom himself would surely chuckle and scoff at such sentiments.

Robert M. Berdahl, President
The University of Texas at Austin

H. Paul Kelley, Secretary
The General Faculty

This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Pat Blair (Chair), Mark Alpert, and Eli Cox.
Major Published and Creative Works of W.T. Tucker

BOOKS AND MONOGRAPHS


ARTICLES AND CHAPTERS


POEMS, PLAY, AND PAINTINGS


Studio 1473, a play in three acts (Austin: 1970. Published locally).

Sarah, a portrait, Acrylic, 20"x 30". Texas Fine Arts Association Exhibition, Austin, 1970.

Southeast from Ivy Street, oil painting, 32" x 24", Texas Fine Arts Association Jury Exhibition (1961).

Last of the Renaissance Men, oil painting, 48" x 20", Texas Fine Arts Association Fall Membership Exhibition (1961).