



Elizabeth Fisher  
in 2009



Lucile Longview  
and Elizabeth  
Fisher at a Pacific  
Central District  
Women & Religion  
Retreat, 1985



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## Lucile Longview Remembered

By Elizabeth Fisher

Lucile Schuck Longview was a visionary leader, inspiration and friend to many. Her chosen surname of *Longview* aptly conveys her adopted mission. She was an important voice in the Unitarian Universalist Denomination, providing challenges to the status quo as well as pin-pointing opportunities for change. Her efforts, along with many other women, initiated an innovative women's movement which has expanded perspectives, worship practices and group processes.

She was the primary author of the *Women and Religion Resolution* passed unanimously in 1977 by the General Assembly. This resolution calls attention to underlying sexist assumptions in Judeo-Christian theology, family structures, and the practices of religious institutions.

Her own words, from an article she authored in the UU publication *KAIROS* in 1979, emphasize her key concerns: "Exploring to what extent religiously authenticated sexist attitudes influence the sex-role stereotypes within our families is no easy task. The undertaking will remain with us to the end of our lives and

the lives of our descendents as will the job of avoiding sexist language and assumptions."

Lucile reports in her monograph *The Women & Religion Resolution: Thoughts After a Decade – June 1987* that it was this resolution and its implementation that provided the original impetus for opening the Principles for analysis and revision. In 1979, at the first continental meeting sponsored by the UU Women and Religion Committee, she led a workshop entitled *The UUA Principles – do they affirm us as women?* The answer was a resounding *No*. Through discussion, these laywomen became aware of the ways in which the then existing UUA Principles reflected and sanctioned hierarchical concepts that demeaned and diminished women.

*Coming Home Like Rivers to the Sea*, a worship service created by Lucile and Carolyn McDade in 1980, which was reissued in 1997, features their creation *The Water Ceremony*, now so popular in UU congregations. Lucile's values included respect for lay shared spiritual leadership. This ritual celebrates the uniqueness of each participant as symbol-

ized by the water they offer and the importance of community, represented by the combining of these waters.

Representing the *International Association for Religion Freedom* at two United Nations women's conferences, the first ever held (Mexico City, 1975) and the second (Copenhagen, 1980), Lucile developed valuable insights about international feminism which she championed within UU organizations. At Copenhagen, she co-lead, with Rosemary Matson, a workshop entitled *Women as Influenced by Religion*, giving women an opportunity to share the wounds patriarchal religions inflict upon them.

These highlights from her many contributions to the UU Women's Movement are just a few examples of why we are fortunate to have had Lucile's participation. Let's continue to celebrate her commitment, her insistence on full personhood for women and her unique humor. A life well lived, Sister!

**Elizabeth Fisher, who was greatly inspired by Lucile Longview, is the author of "Rise Up & Call Her Name and Gender Justice: Women's Rights Are Human Rights."**