

# The Peter Lyman Endowment at James Madison College for the Application and Study of Technology

During two decades here (1967-1987) Professor G. Peter Lyman left an indelible mark on the students, his colleagues, and James Madison College. He was a Founding Faculty member of Madison, part of a triumvirate with Jack Paynter and Dick Zinman, who taught political philosophy and critical thinking to generations of Madison students. Together, they crafted the field of Justice, Morality and Constitutional Democracy (JMCD) which became Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy (PTCD) in 1993. A brilliant teacher, committed ethnographer and creative scholar, Peter left a powerful legacy in the curriculum of the college, in his influential research and in the lives of numerous students. Peter's family, friends, colleagues and students are creating this endowed fund as an enduring testament to his legacy and service to James Madison College.

Peter Lyman was deeply dedicated to connecting big ideas in philosophy and the social sciences to enduring political issues and contemporary social problems. He taught about revolution and radical alternatives to liberal democracy; and was especially interested in the role of technology in public life. In his courses and in his teaching, Peter raised questions that were meaningful in students' daily lives and invited them to explore their responses with imagination and integrity as well as with intellectual rigor. The College has heard from many of Peter Lyman's former students who remember him for his brilliant teaching and radical analyses, for his simultaneously intense and gentle demeanor, and for his compassion and wisdom. Above all, they remember that Peter rejected easy answers or pedestrian summaries of what others thought. As one former student wrote: "He taught me the importance of 'thinking outside of the box' long before that phrase became commonplace."

An early adapter to computers, Peter Lyman was deeply committed to understanding the use of technology in daily life and the social, political and ethical dimensions of the digital age. When he left JMC and MSU in 1987 for a position at the University of Southern California, Peter founded the Center for Scholarly Technology there. In 1994, he returned to the University of California at Berkeley to become its seventh university librarian. Peter's leadership on these faculties was key to guiding these libraries into the digital information realm. His rich scholarly life reflected this dedication to understanding and democratizing information technologies and to making them accessible across the boundaries of class, gender and race. This was especially evident in his final research initiative, the Digital Youth Project, funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. This ethnographic project sought to understand kids' everyday use of digital media and to suggest how such understanding could be applied in families and schools to extend their learning experiences. When the College held its 2008 Founders' Circle day to honor Peter Lyman following his untimely death the previous year, his collaborator Mizuko "Mimi" Ito captured his spirit of inquiry: "In our work together, Peter always insisted on looking at questions that were meaningful and significant in the real world, to start with the phenomenon and the stories people told about their lives."

In accord with Peter Lyman's lifelong passion for understanding technology and with his unstinting promotion of equality in the digital age, this endowment in his name will support the application and study of technology and public affairs. The funds may be used to support activities like faculty or student research on technology, its uses and effects in society and public affairs; to purchase software or equipment for the classroom; the development of courses about technology; to bring speakers or technology experts to campus like Professor Ito, especially in the Science, Technology, the Environment and Public Policy specialization and other related activities in the spirit of the application and study of technology. Please make your most generous gift to the Peter Lyman Endowment at James Madison College and consider making a 5-year pledge commitment to help the college build the endowment for generations to come.

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