

Bernard Mahler Timberg 'Buddy'

Mr. Timberg, 64, a professor of media and popular culture and a social activist died July 23, 2010 of respiratory failure following an operation in Charlotte, North Carolina. Dr. Timberg wrote two books, 'Television Talk: A History of the Television Talk Show' and 'Fair Use and Free-Inquiry: Copyright Law and the New Media' (Co-edited with John Lawrence), and filmed dozens of films - including oral histories and documentaries about small towns. His most recent film was "From the Old World to the New: The Jewish American Experience in Hollywood Film.' His films were shown at Film Festivals including the Full Frame Documentary Festival in 2009 and the ECU Humor Festival and Conference in 2008. At the time of his death, he was working on 'The Comedy of Provocation', a book on Jewish comedy in America. During his academic career, he lived all over the country - he taught at Eastern Carolina University, the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, Johnson C. Smith University, Radford University, Rutgers University (Newark), Queens College (NY), and the University of Nebraska at Omaha. In each location, he promoted new approaches to teaching - including using websites to publish student writing, and bringing outside professionals into the classroom.

Dr. Timberg was born in 1945 in New York City and grew up in the close-knit community in Cleveland Park in Washington, DC. The neighborhood kids published newspapers (Timberg's newspaper was called 'Literary Scraps'), put on Gilbert & Sullivan plays, and played in father-son neighborhood baseball games. He attended DC Public Schools K-12 and during high school took an active part in the civil rights movement including demonstrations to integrate all-white lunch counters and amusement parks in Washington, DC and Baltimore in the late 1950s. He graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a BA in Comparative Literature in 1971, where he participated actively in the Free Speech Movement, and in recent years worked to document and analyze its impact. He also organized tenants in the San Francisco area. He went on to complete a masters in journalism and mass communication from the University of Iowa at Ames. He later earned a Ph.D. in English/Radio-Television-Film at the University of Texas in Austin. Dr. Timberg was very active in the Jewish community wherever he lived. He grew up in the Adas Israel Congregation in Washington DC and was Bar Mitzvahed there, and worked for 'The Jewish Radical' magazine in the late 1960's. As a merchant seaman, he worked his passage to Israel in 1967, where he worked on a kibbutz and began evolving a vision for Israeli-Palestinian peace. In recent years, he spoke at conferences to promote Jewish-Palestinian dialogue. One of his films, 'Aba', is a portrait of the grandfather of the Persian Jewish family he lived with who sold flowers in the market and his life in Jerusalem in 1967. Much of his work is archived at the National Center for Jewish Film at Brandeis University. He was also interested in the history of individuals and families, including his own, and produced numerous video products and articles on these subjects. One of these was a television series about his son, Eli as a pre-teen, another documentary a co-authored father-son article on their relationship as he battled with depression. Family was one of his major values - his children report that he would rise at 5 a.m. to clear all his work so he would be free to be with them after the 5 p.m. dinner hour.

Dr. Timberg is survived by his best friend and wife of three and one-half years, Judy Tooley of Charlotte, North Carolina, his children Eli Sevcik-Timberg of Washington, DC and Katie Pawelczak of Indianapolis, IN, his step daughters Carla Rokes Robertson of Wilmington, NC and Sonya Rokes of New York City and their spouses Todd Robertson and Craig Carlisle, and a granddaughter, Raya Robertson of Wilmington, NC, three siblings Rosamund Timberg of Rockville MD, Thomas Timberg of Bethesda, MD and Richard Timberg of Washington, DC, and Duma, his beloved Weimaraner. His niece Ann Schiff and his niece Rachel Schiff, her spouse Alex Klibaner and their daughters Eleanor and Jessica Klibaner-Schiff also survive. He was previously married to Judy Levin of Eugene, Oregon and Sally Sevcik of Montclair, New Jersey. A Memorial Service will be held on September 12, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte, 234 Sharon Amity Road, Charlotte, NC 28211.

Donations can be sent to The Humane Society of Charlotte, 2700 Toomey Ave., Charlotte, NC 28203, Tarheel Weimeramer Refuge, www.tarheelweimrescue.org/donate.asp, or WNCW-FM at P.O.Box 809, Spindale, NC 28160.

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