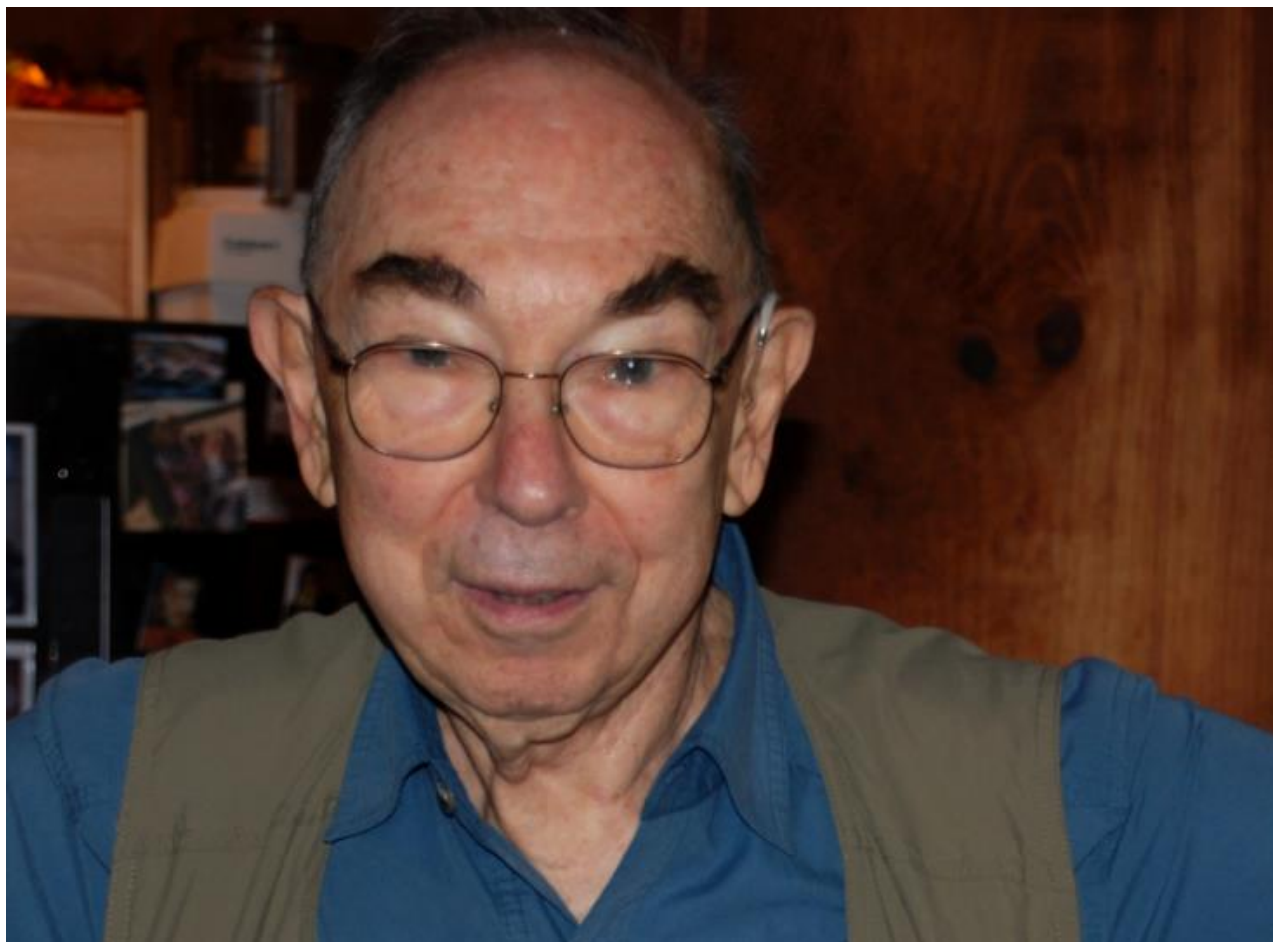


RADICAL TEACHER

A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

In Memoriam
Louis Kampf (1929 – 2020)



LOIUS KAMPF (1929 – 2020)

We are deeply saddened by the loss of Louis Kampf, our dear friend and *Radical Teacher* founding member. Louis died on May 30, 2020 in hospice care of non-COVID related illness.

A holocaust survivor, who managed several close escapes from the Nazis before immigrating with his parents to America, Louis became an extraordinarily gifted radical teacher—teaching literature and courses addressing social and political problems at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1961 to 1995. In 1970 he became Professor of Literature there, later adding Women's and Gender Studies to his title and helping to establish MIT's Women's Studies Program, which became official in 1984. In 1995 the Louis Kampf Writing Prize, sponsored by The Program in Women's and Gender Studies, was established in his honor.

During a now somewhat infamous uprising of anti-Vietnam War activists and feminists at the 1968 convention of the staid Modern Language Association (MLA)—a professional organization for scholars of literature--Louis was arrested for putting up political posters, then later nominated during the organization's business meeting as second vice-president. He would rise in two years to the MLA's presidency, and spearhead a revolution in radical curriculum and institutional change that reverberated throughout the profession.

Along the way Louis was a founder of the MLA's Radical Caucus and our journal, *Radical Teacher*. In 1967 he published *On Modernism: The Prospects for Literature and Freedom*, which received rave reviews and won a Modern Language Association prize. In 1972 he co-edited, with Paul Lauter, *The Politics of Literature*. He also published many essays and reviews on literature, education, feminism, the proper role of the academy, and national and international politics. And he served on the Reprints Committee of The Feminist Press and the editorial board of *Signs, A Journal of Women and Culture*.

Throughout his entire life Louis was active in Left politics and played a key role in the development of "movement" organizations, among them RESIST, The Center for Critical Education (publisher of *Radical Teacher*), and the New University Conference. Louis' encyclopedic mind astounded those of us who had the opportunity to witness the breadth of knowledge stored therein, not only of linguistics, literature, history and philosophy, but in music (especially classical and jazz) and sports (especially baseball, with a special animus toward the Red Sox and the Yankees).

It is hard to imagine a *Radical Teacher* gathering without Louis there. We will miss—so, so much--his institutional memory, dialectical wit, political integrity, and big heart.



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