

OBITUARY

WANDA JAMROZIK
(born 11 September 1960, Adelaide;
died 13 January 1996, Sydney)

My first memory of Wanda Jamrozik is as follows: I am writing at a desk enrolling students in a Labour Market Economics course. I am writing down a student's name onto a tutorial list and a shadow hovers over the desk blocking out the light. I look up and see a tall young woman. I am struck by the cheekiness of the grin on her lips and the questioning, quizzical look in her eyes. She seemed to be trying to ascertain whether or not there was anything I could really teach her, with a preparedness to give me the benefit of the doubt until evidence convinced her otherwise. Wanda was someone who was educated despite her teachers.

Whatever, I remember her attending most of my classes and having the uncanny knack of asking questions which found the weaknesses in the various theories and writers which comprised the course. The quality of her intellect was obvious to one and all. The course included a topic on the economics of professional team sports and concomitant problems experienced by players. I cannot remember if at the time she paid it much attention.

After Wanda escaped from the prison which is the University of New South Wales I watched her career progress from afar. She moved to Newcastle to pursue a career as a journalist. She eventually came back to Sydney and worked for the *Sydney Morning Herald*. I remember reading her first ever article in the *Herald*, which happened to be on industrial relations. I dropped her a congratulatory letter. She also wrote for the *Independent* and then became a sporting journalist with the *Australian*. We met occasionally and used to talk over the phone about various developments in the world of sport. She joined ASSH.

A number of things dominate my memory of Wanda. Firstly, her love of life and sense of fun. She had a wicked sense of humour. Secondly, the range of her interests from films and books, through politics, world affairs, sport and to the history of ideas and philosophy. Thirdly, her intelligence and lack of respect for cant and hypocrisy. To

my mind Wanda is best remembered as an intellectual larrikin. Fourthly, and most importantly, her sense of humanity and friendly disposition.

If an anthology of Wanda's writings were to be published readers would be struck by two things. The first would be the breadth of her interests. She wrote about anything and everything. The second would be the quality and breadth of her analysis. She was an intellectual in residence at a newspaper. At the Sporting Traditions X Conference held at the University of Queensland, in July 1995, a group of self-appointed experts voted her the best sporting journalist in the land.

My last memory of Wanda is at the launch of Colin Tatz's *Obstacle Race: Aborigines in Sport*. Pen and notebook in hand, and on the run to interview another sporting great, she turned to me and said 'This is a sports nut's wet dream'. We will never see her like again.

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