



Suzette Ann Henke Rooney

May 13, 1945 - March 23, 2026

Dr. Suzette Ann Henke Rooney, Emeritus Professor of English University of Louisville, of Louisville, Kentucky, passed away peacefully on March 23, 2026, leaving behind a legacy of intellect, creativity, and devotion to learning. She was born on May 13, 1945, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to the late Elizabeth and James Henke.

Dr. Henke lived a life marked by curiosity and passion. A gifted writer, she authored numerous books that reflected her insight and love of language. Suzette Henke who received her Doctorate from Stanford University was a lifelong scholar of women's studies and James Joyce, often lecturing for Bloomsday events. Her dedication to education shaped the lives of many, as she served with distinction as a university professor, inspiring generations of students with her knowledge and encouragement. Beyond her professional accomplishments, Suzette found great joy in traveling, embracing new cultures and experiences with an open heart and inquisitive spirit.

Suzette shared a deep and enduring love with her husband, James Rooney, who preceded her in death. Together, they built a life grounded in mutual respect and companionship.

Suzette was also preceded in death by her beloved parents. She leaves behind a host of cousins, extended family members, colleagues and friends who will cherish her memory and carry forward the impact of her remarkable life.

In lieu of flowers or gifts, donations may be made to the charity of your choice.

Tribute Wall

CS

“ I had the good fortune of taking Dr. Henke's class on Modernism at the University of Louisville in the Fall of 2003. It was both the hardest and most rewarding class I took as an undergraduate and, largely because of her, I went on to get a PhD and become a professor of English. I think about her often; she was a generous mentor and she will be missed.

Christian Smith - May 09 at 09:11 AM

LR

“ Suzette was my colleague in the English Dept at Binghamton University for many years-- I have never stopped missing her company, conversation and deep intelligence. She was what I would call an old-school scholar, by which I mean she worked because of her love for both her subject and her students.

Her enthusiasm was contagious. I remember many students she set on a course of reading and exploring for life. Some of them became professional academics. Others did not. But she left a lasting impression.

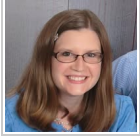
Besides all this, she was kindness and gentleness itself. I am sorry for this heavy loss. May her name bwe always for a blessing.

Liz Rosenberg - May 01 at 03:22 PM

JM

“ I just learned of Suzette’s death. I took courses from Suzette in the 1970s when she was at University of Virginia. Women in Literature, Virginia Woolf, whatever I could. She was a magnificent teacher. All of a sudden she was gone from. Va. (I learned the details of that story later) and it was literally decades before I could track her down and later still when I encountered her in Knoxville at the NEXUS Conference in 2010 “Trauma and Testimony.” I was able see her many, many times after that, luckily. She contributed a chapter to my edited collection *_Focus on Janet Frame_*, originally from her book *_Shattered Subjects_*. The courses I took from her in the ‘70s were crucial to my becoming an academic myself. She was an exceptional person.

Josie McQuail - April 30 at 12:16 AM



“ Suzette had been a mentor of mine since 2000. At that time, I was a freshman who had not declared a major. Suzette encouraged me to pursue a degree in English, and since then she had always endeavored to assist me in the advancement of my academic and professional career.

I worked as Suzette's research assistant for a number of years, during which time I gained invaluable experience. Suzette encouraged my own interest and experience in archival research by obtaining permission for me to examine the holograph manuscript of Virginia Woolf's "Prime Minister" in the Berg Collection of the New York Public Library. I used this experience to assist her in transcribing the manuscript for Bonnie Kime Scott's Gender in Modernism. The experience informed both my senior honors thesis and my dissertation.

I applied for the Humanities doctoral program at the University of Louisville based on Suzette's recommendation. I believe it was due to her influence that I was granted a fellowship, which allowed me to devote my time to my studies and finish the program ahead of schedule. Suzette was the chair of my dissertation committee, and two of the chapters from my dissertation (which was later published as a book) were based on work that I did in her classes.

Suzette was always very supportive of me, both personally and academically. Furthermore, as I took four classes with her over the years, I can attest to how nurturing she was generally with her students. Suzette had a long career of mentoring students, many of whom went on to become published authors and scholars.

Suzette also set up a study abroad program because she recognized how enriching international study is for students. She led several courses overseas, including two that I participated in—one as a freshman and one as a graduate student. I can attest to how such travel not only deepened my understanding of the course material, but expanded my mind by exposing me to different

cultures. By setting up a study abroad program, Suzette hoped to impact students for years to come.

Suzette was a wonder teacher, mentor, scholar, and friend. Many of the formative experiences of my life were due to her, and I will be forever grateful to her.



Leslie Harper - April 02 at 09:37 PM

KA

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Karen Alexander - March 30 at 12:14 PM

KA

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Karen Alexander - March 30 at 12:10 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Suzette Ann Henke Rooney.

March 28 at 11:45 PM



“ Pink and Cream Roses and Baby's Breath (Silk Cemetery Flowers) was purchased for the family of Suzette Ann Henke Rooney.



March 28 at 11:45 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Owen Funeral Homes - March 27 at 01:28 PM