

## Fletcher is Gone

Chiara Montalto (June 30, 2008)



A Memory of Rudy Vecoli



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I remember being a little girl, sitting on the floor my my father's office in our tiny Bay Ridge apartment. His office was really a closet, or a nursery or some other very tiny little room in that apartment. The sound of the typewriter as he wrote seemed to me to be the sound of an orchestra of ideas flowing from him to the page. That sound soothed me, and I'd sit there watching and listening to him type for hours. My father was writing his doctoral dicertation " A History of the Intercultural Educational Movement, 1924-1941." My father's mentor during those years was the professor Rudy Vecoli. I remember that Professor Vecoli would always show up at our apartment with a box of Baci, to this day, still my favorite. My brother Franco and I, unable to say - or really even understand who or what a Professor was, called him Fletcher instead of Professor. I'd always get so excited when I knew that Fletcher Vecoli was coming, I'd get to spend time with that gentle and wonderful man, who seemed so different from everyone else in my world. And he always brought Baci. It was years before I understood that Fletcher was our name for him, because he always happily responded whenever we'd call him that. Not once did he correct us to say "Professor," he just smiled and accepted that to my brother and I, he was Fletcher.

It had been years, far too many years, since I have seen or spoken to Dr. Vecoli, though, throughout the years, my father had kept in touch. Nonetheless, tears came to my eyes when I checked my email last week, and a simple message came through from my father.

Franco/ Chiara:  
Fletcher is Gone.  
Love, Dad.

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