Lessons from a Professor

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Lessons from a professor

Over the course of two decades, Katherine Kernberger, professor of English, enlisted the help of 17 students to assist in the project to translate the diaries of Marie Bashkirtseff. Years later, the research experiences continue to influence their lives and careers.

Kathryn Tippetts ’95, French
Sherra (Inman) Welp ’95, ’96, philosophy
Tanya (Matthews) McDonald ’96, creative writing
Diana (Polhamus) Renz ’97, English
Karen (Churchill) Garcia ’99, physics
Sarah Breeze ’00, ’06, French
Carolyn Flannery ’01, sociology
Krista Olsen ’02, music performance
Alita Putnam ’03, creative writing and international business
Erin Annis ’04, English and French
Meredith (Blake) McCullough ’08, creative writing and English
Hannah Bressler ’08, religious studies
Stephanie Fry ’08, biology
Allison Smith ’08, French
Nichole Tyska ’09, English
Amber Ball ’11, English and mass communication
Kaitlin Seitz ’11, English and creative writing

Meredith (Blake) McCullough ’08 – English and drama teacher, published author
I was able to witness true scholarly passion at work. If you talk to Professor Kernberger about Marie, you see her light up; this excitement was electrifying and taught me that any teacher who is truly passionate about her (or his) subject will make a lifelong impact on any students fortunate enough to be in class. I try to pursue my teaching career with as much passion and joy as possible.

Erin Annis ’04 – English teacher
We did most of the translation work over the summer, and I presented a paper at the PAMLA fall conference in 2003. We’ve collaborated since I graduated as well. I did some editing of two of her papers presented in French in 2008 and in 2013. Much of what I gained was personal to me: knowledge of the Parisian art world at the end of the 19th century, an understanding of women’s roles during that time, as well as a greater facility with the French language. I also obtained better collaborative skills, and a more thorough understanding of the research process; these are skills I use daily.

Hannah Bressler ’08
I gained a better understanding of what goes into academic research and saw up close the life of a professor. Kathy was full of clever insights about feminism and humanity. She helped us see the differences in how women were portrayed in history and how they articulated themselves.

Carolyn Flannery ’01 – Road Scholar project assistant
I was struck by the fact that Marie thought she was interesting enough to write about. But as the semester progressed I realized she was just recording the events in her life. I was lucky enough to study abroad for a semester in England and a January Term in France and Italy, documenting each day in my own journal.

Karen (Churchill) Garcia ’99 – CEO, GTO Management
I travelled abroad on a January Trip to Paris and Nice, which was an experience I doubt I would have had otherwise. With her guidance, I learned better how to manage the information I gathered, and that skill has served me very well. Often, I had to remind myself that I was actually working as I found the entries and Marie’s inevitable opinions about everything completely absorbing.

Nichole Tyska ’09 – Word processor, Moss Adams LLP
Being able to bear witness to the completion of not just Kathy’s, but her mother’s work as well was a great academic experience. It was a dream literally unfolding and will always be special. Kathy was able to bring back a real voice from history.

Sarah Breeze ’00, ’06 – Speech-language pathologist
I gained a deeper appreciation for how research is conducted, how you have to be committed to the mundane in addition to the exciting. She was a strong female role model, and she inspired me to pursue my career goals.