

## Judith Martin Memorial 12 Oct 2011

### 445 Blegen Hall

Two years ago this fall—in this room—we recognized Judith Martin for her exceptional contributions to our department, college, University and the wider Twin Cities community.

I was one of the speakers on that September day so this morning I retrieved the text of what I said about Judith. Some of you were here then, but the newcomers should hear some of Judith's inspiring story.

There were many parts to Judith's life, but I'll share only a few of them. Others can fill out the rest of the picture.

One of the things I admired most about Judith was how she saw it as her responsibility to carry out, in her work, **all** of the elements of the Mission of our University of Minnesota—teaching and advising; scholarship and publication; exceptional service to the department, college and University; and vigorous outreach and service to the community.

She did it all and did it with energy and unique flair.

>>> When I was a youngster, people working in the human services professions occupied a distinct status in our country.

Members of these professions committed their talents and energies fully to the service of the community.

Their jobs were understood as more than jobs or careers—they were seen as **vocations**—doctors, nurses, school teachers, members of the clergy, cops, fire fighters, judges, postal workers, lawyers, college professors, and so forth.

Their work was undertaken—and compensated—outside of normal markets.

The value of their work for the community couldn't be priced in a market.

So instead, the community offered them ***honoraria***, or only modest salaries—but the service providers enjoyed ***secure jobs***, and from the community they enjoyed the highest esteem from the community.

>>> When I was in college in the late 1950s, and grad school in this department in the early 1960s, I was surrounded by faculty members who came into higher education with this outlook—they were fully committed to the mission of our University, and committed to helping us grad students to become the best we could be.

They were here on campus every day. John Borchert, Fred Lukermann, Phil Porter, John Webb, Joe Schwartzberg, Jan Broek, Ward Barrett, and the others—and their office doors were open.

Those days are long gone--

But some of those values and attitudes and behaviors persist—and Judith assumed them all and put them into practice in stellar fashion.

She told me many times that several of her teachers here in Geography and in the History Department were her role models—so she was always generous with her time and energies, always serving the community without much concern about what she would get in return other than the satisfaction of doing the best she could.

>>> When our University honored Judith many times over the years, we were saying that her record of service on many fronts was a splendid example of the kind of dedication to the community that was in the best traditions of service in a public land grant research university.

Fred Lukermann used to say, “If our faculty and grad students are among the best in our country, then we’re among the best in the world.”

But he also said that “getting there is one thing; staying there is another. ... A reputation is not something to enjoy or to take for granted, but to build upon.”

And that’s what Judith tried to do ever since she received her degrees here, and came to work with us—to enhance that legacy.

She helped in so many ways to carry forward the best traditions of our Geography Department.

I met Judith in the early 1970s, a short time after I joined the Minnesota faculty from Penn State. She sat in on several of my classes in urban geography and methods of metropolitan analysis, and also participated in John Borchert’s American Cities courses.

John was the director of CURA at the time, and served on Judith’s Ph.D. committee.

In those days, following the urban challenges and disruptions of the 1960s—riots, inner-city clearance and redevelopment, neighborhood disruptions from the Interstate highway programs, the Civil Rights movement, and public housing problems—the study of American cities was the most popular concentration in graduate study in geography, and our course offerings attracted her interest and complemented her background in American history.

Judith grew up on Chicago’s West Side, and graduated as a top student from Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois, which is a second-tier suburb on the West Side, next to Oak Park.

She came to Minnesota to study History and American Studies, working at first with John Modell, who was one of the most creative of the New Urban Historians of that time.

—and American Cities became the focus of her studies.

After completing a Ph.D. dissertation focused on the history, geography, economics, and politics of the Cedar-Riverside Project, she went to work as a research associate, working with John Borchert in the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, and succeeded me as director of the Urban Studies program in CLA.

Judith was recognized many times for her unusual commitment to the University mission:

Just a sample:

- in ***teaching***—for which she received the all-University Morse-Alumni Award for Contributions to Undergraduate Education; the College of Continuing Education Teaching Award; and election to membership in the University's Academy of Distinguished Teachers,
- in ***advising***—Judith advised more undergraduates and supervised more senior projects than any other faculty member in our department;
- in **research and scholarship**—she won the Jerome Foundation Book Arts Award (with Rob Silverman) in 1993;
- in ***community outreach and engagement***—for which she received the University's Community Service Award in 1989);
- and all this while directing the Urban Studies Program since the 1970s.

Her **University Service** included serving on and chairing some of the most important Senate committees: like the Faculty Consultative Committee; the Senate Committee in Finance & Planning; the Senate Committee on Educational Policy; the steering committee of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers; along with major search committees.

And for all of that—and more—she received “*The University President’s Award for Outstanding Service*”—two years ago.

Judith was well known and held in the highest regard by our University presidents and senior officers, as well as by members of our Board of Regents who sought her advice, and trusted her judgment.

And that’s only a partial list.

>>> the **bottom line** is that Judith was exceptional in the ways that she met—and integrated—all these different areas of professional responsibility .

She taught at University College London, University of Amsterdam, University of Munich, as well as in our History Department, the Humphrey Institute, and the American Studies Program, in addition to the Urban Studies Program and our geography department.

Aside from the on-campus activity, Judith has been our most visible colleague in professional service to our city and our wider metropolitan community.

Just a few examples from the dozens of entries on her vita:

- she served on the **Minneapolis Planning Commission** for 15 years, and was president of the commission for seven years.
- she was a board member of the **Hennepin County Historical Society**;

- she was a member of the **Economic Development Study Task Force** for the City of St. Paul
- and a member of the **Metropolitan Council's Task Force on Neighborhood Vitality**.

And for three years she and I co-directed the University Metropolitan Consortium; one of our projects working with Twin Cities Public Television was to produce a series of documentary films about our region that are regularly broadcast here in the Twin Cities and around the state—one of urban transportation; one on the impact of land development on water and other natural resources, and one on state and local fiscal structures and problems.

In recent months were planning a film on the challenges facing higher education in Minnesota.

But all this professional stuff is only part of the story of Judith's life within the community, other parts of which will be described and discussed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October.

### **Notes from others**

Theano Terkenli, one of our alumni, wrote from Greece where she teaches, and expressed sentiments that are shared by many others: QUOTE—

“Just a word to her memory, if I am still on time for today's remembrance event: A deep, heartfelt farewell to my beloved professor and friend, Judith, the great lady of Twin Cities urban geography and of American studies--to me a cherished mentor of enormous generosity, collegiality, courage, gentleness, integrity and strength.”

Some friends and graduates who contacted me didn't know that Judith had been sick for over six years. She had decided to share the news of her illness with only a few—preferring to avoid an identity as a sick person.

So we remember her for who she was—and appreciate the life that she shared so generously with us.

At the end of August she and I had lunch at Kramachuk's, and she told me how the cancer had taken a turn for the worse.

As we said good-bye, I gave her a hug and told her to take care of herself.

She did the best she could.

We'll miss her.

John S. Adams