



Be It Resolved:

The faculty of Skidmore College expresses its profound appreciation and admiration for the following members of the Skidmore faculty who have this year expressed their determination to retire. The faculty further resolves that the following biographical highlights be included in the minutes of the faculty meeting of December 6, 2013 in recognition and celebration of their distinguished service and achievement.



carrying Dicaeopolis across the river — but often just the opposite.”

Perhaps most remarkable is the unflagging encouragement and inspiration David offers his students. One of his favorite exhortations is, “If you can understand the Greek verb, you can understand anything,” a truth to which generations of Classics majors have attested. David oversaw two senior theses during his Distinguished Professorship — those of Nick Pierce (2010, on Greek tragedy and opera) and Shannon DuBois (2013, on Achilles in the *Iliad*) — and both students are effusive in their gratitude for his mentoring. Shannon writes, “He was the kind of thesis adviser I had always envisioned having. He devoted all of his energy and time to making my thesis the best that it could be. If I needed help, he was available, by phone or email or appointment. When it came down to the wire, he met with me almost every day, reading Every. Single. Draft. No matter if I had only revised a page. No matter if it was forty pages. If I had all my life to do so I could never find enough words to thank David for all his moral and emotional support.”

Michael Arnush, Associate Professor of Classics, is grateful for David’s long affiliation with Skidmore: “David has been a consummate scholar, teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend. The Classics Department owes its very existence to him and his partner in crime and punishment, the late and great Phyllis Roth, and we all have benefitted from the elevated academic tone and national profile that emerged under his leadership as president. David, we have been graced, and honored, with your wisdom, your awful sense of humor, your guidance and your collegiality. Our students are fortunate to have learned at your feet, as have we, the faculty, and for that we are forever indebted.” He also writes, “They say that puns are the lowest form of humor, so it’s appropriate that we celebrate our most esteemed colleague with the lowest form of honor: a retirement farewell, a shove towards the door, which will no doubt leave David the linguist with post-grammatic stress disorder.”

Leslie Mechem, Lecturer in Classics, pays tribute to David by recalling a passage from Cicero’s *De senectute (Concerning Old Age)*, in which Cato the Elder describes his own zeal, and that of figures like Socrates and Solon, for life-long learning: “But you see how old age, so far from being feeble and inactive, is even busy and is always doing and effecting something.” As Leslie rightly points out, David

embodies Cato’s ideal: “David teaches on his toes, bouncing with excitement. He learned Greek years ago but continues to teach and learn from that language, which in his hands is certainly not dead! David also works hard at literature and forces us to do the same. Furthermore, like Socrates, he plays an instrument, which he learned long ago but continues to play, and he has impressed us on stage at Zankel and in Filene. As Cato says, some people never stop learning. That is true of David. We appreciate his efforts to make us life-long learners and will miss his presence in the classroom and in the department.”

Let David himself have the last word. As he notes in his *Classical World* retrospective, his refusal to settle into a single discipline has been rewarded many times over: “As both classicist and musician I have indeed never fully ‘grown up,’ never mastered the repertoire of materials and skills in either field as completely as I might have done had I stuck to just one... That said, conversations generated by multiplicity have enriched my work and life in ways I could never have imagined. And those conversations continue.” Though his career has been long, David’s interdisciplinarity has been a fountain of youth. He elaborates on this paradox in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (June 30, 2000) by way of a quotation from Thomas Mann’s *Doctor Faustus*: “To be young means to be original, to have remained nearer to the sources of life; it means to be able to stand up and shake off the fetters of an outlived civilization, to dare — where others lack the courage — to plunge again into the elemental.”

David, for all that you have been and are, for all that you have done and have yet to do, we once again wish you well as you take the next plunge. *Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale!* Brother, hail and farewell!

ary Constance Lynn is a Skidmore College treasure. She has had a singular and important career and made this a better institution in countless ways, for more than forty years. Generations of Skidmore colleagues and students have been enriched by her intelligence, knowledge, wisdom, generosity, and decency. Her retirement is well earned and a significant loss to the Department of American Studies and the Skidmore community.

Mary began working at Skidmore in 1969, her PhD in History from the University of Rochester not yet in hand; she earned it in 1975, after completing a dissertation about American women in the 1920s. She was initially hired as a one-year sabbatical replacement for Allen Kifer of the History Department. As only a handful of her current colleagues know firsthand, Skidmore and Saratoga Springs were much different places in 1969 than they are now. Skidmore was a small, struggling women’s college, located in less-than-vibrant downtown Saratoga Springs, on the cusp of significant changes, chief among them: completing the College’s relocation to this campus, and the decision to embrace co-education, the latter occurring in 1971.

Over her lengthy career, Mary was an inspired and widely beloved teacher who always had the respect of her students, most of whom appreciated her enthusiasm and rigor. She was dedicated to the classroom, committed to the subject matter, and innovative in her pedagogical approaches. She also never stopped growing as a teacher, consistently honing previously taught courses and developing new ones, which included classes on seventeenth-century New England, religion and American culture, the 1920s, the 1950s, childbirth in the United States, and American foodways, among others.

As a teacher, Mary was also extremely helpful in enabling American Studies to connect with other academic constituencies across campus. Her courses contributed to programs such as Liberal Studies, Gender Studies, Environmental Studies, and the Honors Forum. These offerings not only helped promote interdisciplinarity, they also suggested the wide-ranging nature of her pedagogy.

Student responses to Mary’s teaching over the years are impressive. The anecdotal evidence alone is overwhelming. “That class was so cool,” a student

once told our colleague Greg Pfitzer after Mary had led a successful trek through the North Woods in pursuit of Henry David Thoreau’s ghost. “A lot of teachers let us go outside to have class,” the student continued, but most don’t “use the outdoors” to teach. Scores of students have gushed about Mary as a teacher; a few basically “majored” in Mary Lynn.

Mary’s teaching evaluations provide more evidence of her teaching excellence. Her Dean’s cards numbers were consistently high. Her departmental long-form evaluations were also superb, with students frequently declaring that she is a professor with a “captivating style” who seemingly “knows everything.” Last semester, in Mary’s Women in American Culture course, one student declared: “I love Professor Lynn. I think she is wonderful, so well prepared in what to discuss and very knowledgeable.” Another student in the same class said, “Always a great learning experience taking a class with MCL.”

Mary did much to assure that generations of Skidmore students received a first-rate education, and her students have been and remain grateful to her for doing L.” dlTJ1.0002 Tc5hey als1 4 all e

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David Porter asked her to suggest an author for the College's official history she "had no doubt that Mary C. Lynn was the right person. No one was better equipped to conduct the type of research necessary, to know which voices needed to speak, and to give shape and significance to past events in such a way as to address our diverse community in chords that would ring true to all. I also knew that Mary above all would relish the task with the gusto and fervor of the trained and committed historian that she is." Phyllis Roth was a smart woman.

Deeply researched and "lovingly written," *Make No Small Plans* tells us a great deal about this school, how it began, what it was—warts and all—and what it should aspire to be. It is a "usable" history of tremendous value, richly illustrated with images and anecdotes, and a guide to the