

## JEANNE M. SEPT

When Jeanne Sept came to Indiana University in 1987 to give her job talk for the Department of Anthropology, I had heard many in this genre. I was already impressed by her CV, which included teaching as a lecturer at Harvard and Boston Universities and her research on plant foods and early hominids in East Africa. We also shared UC Berkeley doctorates. But then, after an introduction, she moved away from the lectern in the Glen Black classroom, holding a sheaf of note cards held together by a small chain, and just talked to us. It was hands down the best job talk I have ever heard. It also provided a glimpse of what was to come—a career of someone who cared deeply about her research; who cared about sharing her research, the thrill of it, with her colleagues and our students; and who created spaces and programs for faculty and students to thrive.

Jeanne's research at Berkeley, Harvard, and ultimately at Indiana University included paleoanthropology, African prehistory, human origins and evolution, paleoecology, early hominin diet and subsistence strategies, primate ecology and behavior, and ultimately GIS (Geographic Information System) and agent-based modeling of foraging behavior. All of these specialized research interests into proto-human subsistence ecology, as Jeanne has said, led her out of the archaeological trenches and into the African savannas.

I remember the excitement when Jeanne first presented her CD-ROM on the Olduvai Gorge in 1997, using it to investigate human origins as a way of giving students the experience of what she called "digital digging." It was a stunning way of letting students, and some of us who secretly envied our archaeology colleagues, experience what it was like to be in an archaeological field site. One student echoed what we all were thinking: "I really enjoyed my first venture into the world of CD-ROM archaeology. Jeanne Sept teaches a great course." And speaking of that CD-ROM, *Investigating Olduvai*:

*Archaeology of Human Origins*, the reviewer for *Choice* had this to say: "This is a superb teaching tool for an exciting subject. This resource is authoritative enough to serve undergraduates in human evolution and early human ecology, as well as high school students and general users."

As with so many things, Jeanne was ahead of her time. She continued bringing together her scholarship with her passion for making it a basis and a model for teaching. In 2004, she published "The Stone Age in the Information Age: Helping undergraduates think like archaeologists," an article that opened up a new world for them. At the same time, she was opening up new worlds for her professional associations, for example, her 2003 "African Archaeology Database & TimeWeb: A digital learning environment for multi-scale archaeological interpretations," an invited paper for the World Archaeology Congress Archaeology in the Digital Age: Envisioning and embodying the past, hypermedia explorations of archaeology. Many of our students, following her model, have become the go-to experts on 3D mapping, exciting their students, professions, communities, and tourists in similar digital first-hand experiences.

When Jeanne became the 13th dean of the faculties and vice provost for academic affairs in 2004, she joined a fellowship that began in 1940 when Herman B Wells, feeling the press of increasing demands on the president's office, created the position to share with him the "general responsibility for the academic administration of the university." I was delighted when Jeanne was appointed dean of the faculties. She maintained the office as one that, at its best, represented and supported faculty in all their capacities. She provided critical support for the academic mission and for excellence in research and teaching. The faculty are the heart of that academic mission, and as dean of the faculties, she held them to the highest standards while at

the same time she supported, advocated for, and defended them in their pursuit of excellence.

Jeanne was a strong national and international voice for the innovative ways in which scholarship and teaching can mutually support each other. She built on the foundation of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning program, increasing its scope and generating new grant money to support faculty initiatives. This was especially important in initiatives that cut across disciplines and schools, where a strong campuswide voice is essential. Her innovations in the scholarship of teaching and learning won a national award. She also expanded faculty development and mentoring programs, creating collaborations across disciplines and ranks.

Like a good archaeologist who works with the minutiae of ancient lives and environments with the goal of making the big picture a truthful and meaningful one, she maintained the balance between meeting the demands of administrative record-keeping and facilitating those farsighted programs that enhance our lives as scholars, teachers, and students.

In anthropology, we were fortunate to have Jeanne as a colleague in our work as scholars and teachers, and also as chair, once in 2003–04 and again when she left the dean's office. She steered us through the always-changing policies and personnel of the university with grace, good humor, smart strategies, and wisdom. She continued to teach and mentor students who one day will know how lucky they were. And for everyone, she modeled the beauty of work based on craft and imagination, the gift of community, and the fundamental human need for laughter and beauty.

*Anya Peterson Royce*