

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION  
JUDITH SEREBNICK  
(1929 – November 30, 2009)**

Judith Serebnick, professor emerita of the Indiana University School of Library and Information Science, died November 30, 2009, in Bloomington. The intellectual energy and compassion for students, colleagues, and staff she committed to the school have had a lasting impact on its program, faculty, and alumni.

Judy received her PhD degree in library and information science from Rutgers University in 1978. Her previous education included a B. A. in English literature from City College of New York and an M. A. in English literature and theater from Pennsylvania State University. She joined the Indiana University Graduate Library School (now School of Library and Information Science) faculty in 1977, bringing substantial professional experience in libraries and publishing, including reference information work at the Brooklyn Public Library and the University of California at Los Angeles, experience at Northwestern University and Princeton University, and service as book editor and assistant editor with the *Library Journal*.

Judy was the architect who redesigned the school's collection development course. Under her influence it became more than the technical acquisitions course that had been the standard in education for librarianship since the late nineteenth century. Her commitment to intellectual freedom was the core of her academic interest. She was devoted to understanding how librarians develop and maintain collections that present a range of perspectives on controversial issues. She pioneered the popular intellectual freedom seminar, which greatly extended the treatment of censorship prevalent in the 1960s and 70s. In her hands the seminar became a strong, research-oriented examination of the literature on censorship in libraries and beyond. As a student remarked in the course evaluation, "I only wish that all students could experience the stimulating discussions and the wisdom provided by Dr. Serebnick."

She was a productive researcher, but Judy felt that her primary task was teaching well. Her former students, in both the Master of Library Science and doctoral programs, remember with pleasure her conscientious and insightful teaching and her infectious enthusiasm. She was a ready and careful advisor to master's students and especially to doctoral students on whose committees she served. She shared her enthusiasm with students. Alumni Louise Schlesinger and Ralph Gaebler remembered "Judy's classroom as a place where you wanted to come prepared... so that you could contribute to the critical examination of the issues... Judy uniquely combines a zest for teaching with a seriousness of purpose." Another former student, JoAnn Balinglit, wrote, "Her uniqueness as an educator begins with her warm, outgoing personality and the constant concern she shows for her students' progress, interests and needs. The sheer joy with which she welcomes the demands of teaching ... impresses me. I have never met a teacher so devoted to her students and so willing to shower every last drop of energy upon them. Her effervescence is continual, contagious and downright magical."

In 1991 she was awarded an Indiana University President's Award for distinguished teaching. In his nomination Dean Herbert S. White wrote, "The devotion of her students, both master's and doctoral students, is well documented in the materials that follow. What cannot be documented is the affection with which former students greet her at conferences and at alumni reunions. Of course they respect her for her knowledge, and for her effectiveness as a teacher. However, the operative word here is love."

Judy Serebnick's research interests related to her teaching: intellectual freedom, information policy in public libraries, collection development in libraries, and ethics in scholarly journal editing. Her concern with the effects of censorship on access to information was demonstrated in her dissertation on the "Relationship between Book Reviews and the Inclusion of Potentially Controversial Books in Public Libraries." She also published on the theory and practice of library collection building and ethical practices in journal publishing. In 1994 she and former doctoral student Frank Quinn received the American Library Association's Jesse H. Shera Award for Research in Library and Information Science for their article "Measuring Diversity of Opinion in Public Library Collections," which was soon published in *The Library Quarterly*.

Judy's professional service included extensive activity in the American Library Association and in the Association for Library and Information Science Education. Through all of this activity she gave liberally of herself. She retired from Indiana University in 1994.

A native New Yorker, Judy adjusted to life in the Midwest and relearned to drive at age fifty-eight, after a lapse of ten years. In retirement she had more time to regale her friends with stories of her adventures, enjoy her flowers, and explore southern Indiana -- from local restaurants and the Bloomington Farmers Market to small towns where she could find just the right piece of pottery. Judy loved life and enriched the lives of friends and colleagues. She will be remembered fondly for her devotion to friends, her bubbly laughter that was so hard to resist, and her enthusiasm for about just about everything (especially gardening, IU basketball, baking, cats, and ANYTHING her friends were involved in doing).

Debora Shaw  
Professor, School of Library and Information Science

Professor Emerita Judith Serebnick's family members

(Sister) Naomi Winter  
281 S. Madison Ave., Apt. 302  
Pasadena, CA 91101

(Niece) Amy Winter  
38-48 30th Street, Apt. 3R  
Long Island City, NY 11106

(Cousin) Paula Hood  
8750 Mellmanor Drive, Apt. 115  
La Mesa, CA 91942

(Cousin) Joseph Horne  
69-59 198th Street  
Fresh Meadows, NY 11365