

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

Maryellen Bieder
(1942 - 2018)

Professor emerita Maryellen Bieder was an established and prolific scholar of international stature in the field of Spanish literature and culture of the nineteenth century. Her more recent research also explored the works of twentieth-century and contemporary peninsular writers. An indefatigable scholar known for her keen intelligence and clear writing, Maryellen was recognized on both sides of the Atlantic as a pioneer in feminist approaches to canonical writer Emilia Pardo Bazán, and she single-handedly resurrected critical knowledge of Carmen de Burgos. She also brought other women writers—such as Concepción Gimeno de Flaquer, Carme Riera, Mercè Rodoreda and Marina Mayoral—to international attention.

Maryellen devoted 38 years of her professional life to the department, and lived more than four decades in Bloomington with her husband, Robert Bieder, Ph.D., an expert on native American cultural history. However, her connection to Indiana University did not begin with her accepting a position as assistant professor in 1976. After Maryellen was awarded her A.B. degree from Lawrence University, she and Robert each received their M.A.s from IU Bloomington before ultimately earning Ph.D.s in their respective fields at the University of Minnesota. Before joining our department, Maryellen held assistant professorship positions at Syracuse University (1973-1974) and at the State University of New York at Albany (1974-1976).

If some of the best indications of professional activities in the humanities are students and publications, Maryellen's career was a remarkable one. Eighteen students earned their doctoral degrees writing dissertations under her careful attention, and she served on the doctoral committees of eighteen more. She also enjoyed working with undergraduate students and one of her most gratifying experiences was to serve as resident director of the Madrid Program (2004-2005). She authored *Narrative Perspective in the Post-Civil War Novels of Francisco Ayala* (1979), and edited volumes such as *La novela en español, hoy* (*Revista Iberoamericana*, 1981) and *Writing Against the Current* (*Indiana Journal of Hispanic Literatures*, 1993). More recently, she collaborated with Roberta Johnson to co-edit *Spanish Women Writers and Spain's Civil War* (2017). Maryellen published nearly 60 book chapters and journal articles and remained an active scholar up until the end her life. She was working on a book-length manuscript entitled "Women in the Public Eye: Images of Spanish Women Authors in the Periodical Press, 1880-1920", and had innumerable projects on the back burner. In true Maryellen fashion, she submitted her last article from the hospital on the day before she passed.

Numerous awards and accolades recognized Maryellen's achievements as a scholar and teacher. She was the recipient of a Fulbright grant, received funds from the Program for Cultural Cooperation between Spain and the US and from the Mellon Foundation, as well as countless travel and research grants. She won the Francis M. Kercheville Prize from the journal *Anales Galdosianos* in 1997, an IU Trustees Teaching Award (2004) and, in 2011, an award from the University of Minnesota's College of Liberal Arts as an "Alumna of Notable Achievement."

Professor Joseph Snow knew her since the 1970s, when she was his student working on her doctorate at the University of Minnesota. He remembers that “as time went on and through many conferences we became great friends, coinciding dozens of times in Madrid where she had many friends (and former students, too).” He describes her as “an outstanding scholar in her field.” Maryellen was held in high esteem amongst colleagues and was a much-loved teacher and mentor. “Her sudden and unexpected death has meant a huge personal loss for me and a significant loss for the profession of Hispanism,” said Roberta Johnson, professor emerita at the University of Kansas and a leading scholar in twentieth-century Peninsular Spanish literature and culture. “Maryellen was a generous colleague, never reluctant to share her finds and materials with me and others. She introduced me to Carmen de Burgos, whose hard-to-find novelettes (her works were banned during the Franco regime) Maryellen had unearthed in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid; she photocopied and sent me a number of these. Working with Maryellen in that capacity was a very great pleasure. I miss her terribly, and her death leaves a large hole in US Hispanism, especially in feminist studies.” Michael Schnepf and Jennifer Smith, Spanish literature professors at University of Alabama and Southern Illinois University, respectively, and former doctoral students of Maryellen, expressed the gratitude and admiration they felt for her. Schnepf remarked that Maryellen was not only “a giving and talented professor of Spanish literature, she was a great friend who went out of her way to help and guide students and colleagues whenever she could.” Smith adds that, “as my professor and mentor, she had a profound impact on my life and career. Her genuine interest in my ideas and work gave me confidence in myself and an enthusiasm for my work that is still with me today.”

Those who knew her agree in pointing out that one of Maryellen’s greatest loves was Spain, and that passion could be noticed even in the smallest details. In this regard, Antonio Parrilla-Recuero recalls when he first met her in the fall semester of 2009. It was his first year at IU, and he was enrolled in her 19th Century Spanish Literature seminar. Maryellen had to cancel the first week of classes because she had broken her hip a few weeks before the semester began. On the second week, she showed up to class in a wheelchair pushed by her husband. She refused to teach from the wheelchair; she slowly stood up and—to his amazement—pulled out a cushion from a bag from *El Corte Inglés* and placed it on the desk chair. And Ballantine Hall felt like home to him.

We request that this memorial tribute to Maryellen Bieder be presented to the members of the Bloomington Faculty Council, that it be preserved in its minutes and archive, and that after its presentation copies be sent to members of her family.

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