

## Karen D. Vitelli

The most ambitious, and the most idealistic, people who go into the academy envision a career that closely resembles the achievements of Karen Vitelli. Her scholarship, her academic productivity and creativity, and her commitment to the highest standards of research and methodology, alongside her ability to attract and nurture talented students, place her at the top of any list of role models. But her academic commitment has always been seamlessly connected to her loyalty and friendship for her colleagues and students. This essential humanity infuses her work with tangible value that keeps her always in our thoughts and makes her contribution to her discipline so profound.

Karen Donne Vitelli is known to her friends as Kaddee, or more simply K.D. For years she was listed incorrectly in IU's records as Karen *Donna* Vitelli. She owes her real middle name to her father, a professor of English literature who was studying John Donne's poetry when she was born.

K.D. joined the IU program in classical archaeology in 1978 after a brief stint at the University of Maryland. She became acting chair in 1985 and chair in 1987. Over the next several years her leadership of this program brought it national recognition as a unique resource for both students and professionals. Her Ph.D. in classical archaeology from the University of Pennsylvania, which she completed in 1974, laid the foundation for much of her later work on the ceramic assemblages from excavations at Franchthi Cave and Lerna, in Greece. K.D.'s first task was to create a typology of these materials so that analysis and scholarly conversation about them would be possible. In this vein, years of painstaking documentation and categorization ensued. This type of work is the backbone of archaeology, but few people have the courage to undertake it, especially with huge collections like those K.D. mastered. Even fewer have the stamina to produce the required detail of recording and categorization as well as the reflexive analysis and interpretation that must interweave with identification. K.D. more than achieved her goal, as evidenced by a spate of glowing reviews of her work. Her ceramic fascicle for the Franchthi series immediately became a standard scholarly reference at the same time that it *set* a standard for scholarly reference works. Her publication of the Lerna materials is now in press, much to the delight of her colleagues.

At the same time that she tackled her professional responsibility to normal science, K.D. developed a unique program of experimental archaeology that has had pathbreaking consequences. The variety of ideas and lines of evidence opened up by her experimental pottery production is much too long to detail. Nevertheless, we cannot resist mentioning a facet of her work that has had particular import for our own, and for the much wider field of research into human behavior. Through her immaculate investigations into ceramic technology, she showed that the earliest pottery in Greece was not intended—or used—for cooking. The import of this simple discovery is tremendous for our understanding of the human past and how it gave rise to the present. In short, K.D.'s discovery calls into question assumptions about the division of labor in early societies, since early pottery has always been attributed to the cooking needs of women and assumed to be a household task rather than a craft specialty. Rethinking these standard frames of reference places the origins of economic specialization, the rise of exchange networks, and the role of women in the development of urban societies in a new light and opens the door to some new and possibly very different interpretations of human history.

Despite the significance of these contributions, many archaeologists and policy makers would argue that K.D.'s greatest legacy is in the field of archaeological ethics, which she pioneered when she served as the editor of a column on "The Antiquities Market" from 1976 to 1983 for the *Journal of Field Archaeology*. In this role she took on the task of documenting the looting and irresponsible collecting practices that are destroying the world's archaeological heritage and abusing the rights of some of the most economically disadvantaged groups on earth. She rapidly became one of the world's leading authorities on these issues and has been called repeatedly into international service to advise the global organizations that are trying to cope with this loss of heritage.

K.D.'s interest in ethics has brought her increasingly into the realm of public archaeology. Realizing that developing the good will of the public toward archaeology is

the only way to ensure that preservation will ever succeed, she reached out to the public through lectures and various educational programs at home and support of the economic development of communities of stakeholders abroad. Even more important, she began to teach her students why they must incorporate this responsibility into their professional lives and how to do so.

K.D. is sorely missed at IU; her warm personality infused the space she inhabited here in a way that made each of us feel a little more lighthearted in our daily efforts to participate in an intellectual community. All her colleagues depended on her wisdom and patience; she was the ethical keystone of our department as well as the wider field of archaeology. But if we put aside our selfish sadness at our immediate loss, we have cause to celebrate her retirement, since it has allowed her to concentrate on her publications and her public contacts. A steady stream of important contributions has flowed from her since she moved full-time to her home in Maine, a place she loves. The wider world of archaeology has benefited from the strengthening of her voice, unencumbered by the daily demands of the academy.

One final anecdote, for which we beg K.D.'s forgiveness. As an undergraduate she spent her junior year on the College Year in Athens program. The next year, when graduation loomed, her overriding goal in life was to get back to Greece. She saw two ways to do that—as an archaeologist or an airline stewardess. She had already been accepted for stewardess training when the University of Pennsylvania offered her admission. In a decision she describes as hurried, she opted for graduate school. On behalf of IU and the profession of archaeology, we thank our beloved friend and colleague for that choice. It has enriched the life of everyone who knows her.

K. Anne Pyburn  
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