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In the fall of 1967, I left Sheridan, Wyoming, for a campus I had never visited. Transplanted from the foothills of the Big Horns in northern Wyoming to Northfield, my first days of new student orientation were memorable: meeting students from different backgrounds and places, exploring the beauty of the campus, and feeling terrified by the academic and social challenges facing me.

With my small-town background, St. Olaf introduced me to diversity (even back in the 1960's): international students, students from other parts of the country, students who had been abroad in a variety of majors and who brought those experiences back to the campus, and a faculty diverse in methods and training.

The faculty introduced ideas or concepts and challenged me to think in new ways. In an atmosphere of respect and caring, students felt comfortable asking questions and clarifying issues in class; eventually, with the gentle prodding of faculty, I learned to join those discussions. The library provided a place to research, organize, and internalize what I was learning; my library work-study job offered me new friendships with staff and introduced me to the fellow student worker who would later become my husband. The music which surrounded my days was glorious: as I walked across campus, the open windows of Christensen's practice rooms spread a cacophony of sounds; chapel and worship services introduced me to music I had previously heard only in recordings.

My first class day of my first year, Dr. Gerald Thorson's English class introduced me to "archetypes." After that discussion, I retreated to the library to study Northrop Frye's book Anatomy of Criticism. Dr. Kenneth Bjork's world history class focused my attention on military tactics and political motives; my previous exposure to history had been a potpourri of events and timelines with cultural history thrown in to provide the "big picture" without the data behind the "whys." Again, I retreated to the library to dig deeper. Dr. Oliver Olson challenged my "storybook" faith and gave me basic tools of inquiry which continue to guide my spiritual growth.

From being an apprehensive first-year student bombarded with challenging concepts in a new environment to my late fifties in a new career, I learned then and continue to learn now where to find resources to help me face new challenges, to welcome new experiences, and to grow new skills. Amid St. Olaf's buildings and long sidewalks which led me from music to science to athletics, through the support and caring of faculty and staff and other students, I grew a quiet feeling of competence in my life-long quest for learning and growing.

I could not have asked for more from my college education.