

2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina  
1 April 1944

Mr. W.R. Wunsch, Rector  
Black Mountain College  
Black Mountain, N.C.

Dear Mr. Wunsch:

Thank you for your letter of 29 March. Mrs. Zabriskie and I will be able to visit the College next weekend (8 - 9 April) if you can accomodate us.

The following people have known me well enough and long enough to give you any information you may desire about me. I believe, however, that they will be quite objective in their evaluation of me.

DR. NEWMAN I. WHITE  
Dept. of English  
Duke University  
Durham, North Carolina

EDWARD J. STAINBROOK  
Duke Hospital  
School of Medicine  
Durham, North Carolina

DR. KATHERINE GILBERT  
Dept of Fine Arts and Aesthetics  
Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

FURMAN A. BRIDGERS  
Dept of Romance Languages  
Duke University  
Durham, North Carolina

MR. LEONARD BACON  
The Acorns  
Peace Dale  
Rhode Island

We shall look forward to seeing you next week.

Sincerely yours,

  
George Zabriskie

2005 yearby avenue  
durham, north carolina  
14 april 1944

Mr. W.R. Wunsch, Rector  
Black Mountain College  
Black Mountain, North Carolina

Bear Mr. Wunsch;

Mrs. Zabriskie and I wish to thank you, the faculty and students of Black Mountain for a very pleasant week end. We were both sorry that we had to leave so soon, and that our hasty departure left us no opportunity to thank personally many people (you especially) who had showed us kindness during our visit.

We came to Black Mountain with rather high expectations, and we were not disappointed. To be very honest, I was startled to see how well the physical plant was functioning despite financial and other handicaps.

I hope that you still think there may be a place for us at Black Mountain. In these times it seems one of the few places where the humanities are still given their rightful place.

Very sincerely yours,



George Zabriskie

BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

BLACK MOUNTAIN, N. C.

April 19, 1944

Mr. George Zabriskie  
2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Zabriskie:

We enjoyed your short stay with us very much and sincerely hope that it can be the first of a series of visits to us.

I am sorry that because of preoccupation with my dramatic production I was unable to hear your talk on "The Modern Poets." The students were excited about your remarks and so were most of the faculty members who heard you speak. Mr. Albers, in particular, was impressed by what you said.

I have sent for your references. As soon as they have arrived, the Board of Fellows will read them, as well as the references of other candidates for the vacancy in the English Department. You can be sure that I shall let you know, at the earliest possible moment, the decision of this body.

I keep busy these days with the official duties and with directing the original children's play which we will produce in Asheville next week-end. The College generally, is dividing its time between teaching and studying and making preparations for the very ambitious summer. All of us are enjoying the driblets of spring weather that are coming to North Fork Valley.

I send warmest regards to you and Mrs. Zabriskie and thank you personally for a very fine visit to us.

Sincerely,

W. R. Wunsch

WRW/d

Duke University  
Department of Fine Arts  
Durham, North Carolina

Mr. W. Robert Wunsch  
Rector of Black Mountain College  
Black Mountain, N.C.

Dear Mr. Wunsch:

I am happy to answer your inquiry of April 19 concerning the ability and personality of Mr. George Zabriskie.

I have known Mr. Zabriskie well for about two years, as a young friend in the home and this last semester as a student in my course in the History of Aesthetics. I shall try to emphasize such aspects of his personality as have struck me especially, as I assume you know of the publication of his volume of poems: The Mind's Geography and of the acceptance for publication of a second volume.

In all my relations with Mr. Zabriskie I have been struck with the independence and ranging tendency of his mind. He is not the type of pupil who "learns his lesson" or "gets up an assignment" in the conventional way. He is always ready to express his reaction to an idea or school of thought, or to add from his own wide reading some neglected factor in the situation. His mind is always active and critical in the good sense of the latter term. He is, as you may know, especially interested in the interrelations of poetry and psychology. He has read and discussed much in the field of modern psychology, normal and abnormal, and has often spoken to me of his wish to write a book on the mental processes concerned in poetical composition in collaboration with a medical-psychiatrist friend of his. It is typical of him to be interested in the borders of subjects and in their interplay with other fields. For instance, he paints and draws a little (his wife is quite a good young artist) and he thinks of the arts in their roots and communities rather than in their separateness.

Mr. Zabriskie's knowledge and imagination are supplemented by a handiness with tools and machines. He knows a vast amount about the history of railroads and he likes to tinker and construct with his hands. Socially he is simple and straightforward. He likes people, but on the whole people with whom he can discuss rather than people that one meets for conventional reasons.

Duke University  
Department of Fine Arts  
Durham, North Carolina

I cannot speak of his teaching ability, as I believe he has never taught. But I should think he might be quite stimulating to young people with some poetical gift. It would seem to me that he would fit in particularly well at Black Mountain College.

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May I add a word about my own interest in the college? I have for some time thought that I should like to visit Black Mountain College and see first-hand what is going on there. I have been chairman of the work in arts at Duke University now for two years and I like to see what the people who are creating in the arts and are creating in education in the arts are doing. May I ask you quite informally if it would in anyway be disagreeable to the college authorities if I came to the place for two or three weeks in July as a sympathetic and interested observer? If this is possible, can you tell me what type of living arrangements I might be able to make? Are there rooms within walking distance of the college proper? One of your guests in the dance, Agnes deMille, is a friend of mine and I have discussed with Yella Pessl her interest in coming to you this summer.

Yours sincerely,  
*Katherine Gilber*

Chairman of the Department  
of Aesthetics, Art and Music

April 21, 1944

516 Carolina Circle

Durham, N.C.

Duke University  
DURHAM  
NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

April 22, 1944

Professor W. R. Wunsch, Rector  
Black Mountain College  
Black Mountain, N. C.

Dear Professor Wunsch:

I am very glad to tell you what I can about George Zabriskie. I have known George unusually well during his career here as a student. He has been in my verse-writing class and has been my N. Y. A. assistant for one year, during which he helped me with some details of my biography of Shelley. I have also talked with him a good bit about his various plans and projects.

George is a young man who is not to be judged by any ordinary standards. He is one of the most widely read men of his age I have ever met. His reading covers an unusual variety of fields from science to literature and aesthetics. He has an unusually good classical background and finds his way around readily enough in French and German.

He would probably not be an acceptable candidate for a position in the English department of an ordinary college because he lacks all degrees beyond the A.B., which he expects to receive this May, and because he has not had some of the courses in English literature which are usually required. For a college like Black Mountain, however, which I believe sets little store by purely formal and conventional requirements, I do not regard this as a serious handicap. He is, after all is said and done, a much better educated man than a great many men I know who have met all these formal requirements. Also I understand that he does not aspire to teach all branches of literature, but that he wishes to specialize in creative writing. For this I consider him unusually well fitted. I think he could probably take over my class in verse-writing and do a better job of it than I am doing. In fact, he did, of his own volition, attend this class regularly for two years after he had already taken the course, and he contributed materially to the teaching. You have probably seen his first volume of verse which won him a Guggenheim award, and you will make your own judgment of his quality as a poet. In my opinion he is one of the most promising young poets in America today. I can scarcely give an instance of a better first-volume of poetry than his. He has another volume accepted for publication and is working on still another. My own

Professor Wunsch  
Page 2

tastes in poetry are somewhat more conventional than his, and I find his more recent poetry a little more abstruse and difficult than I think it need be, but there is no doubting its artistic and literary quality.

George is a real enthusiast for poetry. I am sure that he would labor long and earnestly and fruitfully with young verse writers who contained any promise whatever. In fact, I have seen him do just that here on the campus. Incidentally he is also the master of a good, clear prose style.

Oddly enough he possesses an excellent knowledge, both practical and theoretical, of most things mechanical and electrical. He should be of considerable value in that capacity to an institution such as I judge Black Mountain College to be.

As to character, George is strictly honest and honorable. I must add, however, to be perfectly fair, that his punctuality leaves a good deal to be desired. He simply seems to have little sense of the pressure of time. So far as I know this has not prevented him from carrying out successfully most of the things he has undertaken. I mention it only in order to give you an honest account.

Over all, from what I know of Black Mountain and of George, I should say that he is a man well adapted to fit into your idea of education, and unusually well qualified to teach creative writing.

Sincerely yours,

*Newman I. White*

NIW/h

Newman I. White

P.S. Thank you for the catalogue and bulletins. I read them with interest. It seems to me that your idea of education at Black Mountain is well calculated to rid the American college of some of its chief incubi!

2005 yearby avenue  
durham, north carolina  
23 april 1944

Mr. W.R. Wunsch  
Black Mountain College  
Black Mountain, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Wunsch,

Thank you for your very kind letter of 19 april.  
As you know, I found Black Mountain so congenial that I must confess to being very eager to know the decision of the Board of Fellows.

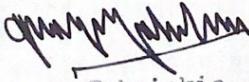
I have discussed the matter of employment as a teacher with the head of my draft board. He believes, that barring unforeseen action by Selective Service, men in the 4F classification will be permitted to teach, although such activity is not likely to be regarded as essential. He added that if I were contemplating such employment, it would be wise for me to take up my duties at the earliest possible opportunity. I daresay that this latter statement will apply to any candidate you may consider, unless you have one who is over 65, and exempt from all selective service!

I might add that the general attitude of my board has been a rather liberal one. Mrs. Katherine Gilbert, who is head of the Department of Fine Arts and Esthetics here recently received from a musician whom she has been considering to fill a vacancy on her staff, a communication in which his draft board reminded him rather pointedly that "we do not consider the teaching of music an essential occupation." This man is now 4F, and his board hinted rather broadly that he would be reclassified as IA unless he found "essential" employment. There you have another side to the picture.

Unfortunately, one can not make any definite statement about the employment status of men who are 4F at the present time. The information which has reached draft boards, I have learned, is much less copious (although doubtless more accurate) than the stories in the newspapers. At present, the intention of Selective Service is to keep skilled (mechanical or agricultural) help at steady work.

Thank you for sending the Art Institute Bulletin, which carries a very vital statement of its intentions. Mrs. Zabriskie suggests that you send a few copies to Bennington College, if you have not already done so.

Very sincerely yours,

  
George Zabriskie

P.S. I shall be free any time after 24 May.

Duke University  
DURHAM  
NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES

25 April, 1944

Mr. W. R. Wunsch, Rector  
Black Mountain College  
Black Mountain, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Wunsch:

I am very glad to write you about Mr. George Zabriskie, who is applying for a position at Black Mountain, since I have known him for several years, first as a student and later as a personal friend.

My interest in Mr. Zabriskie began with his more than usual interest in French literature; his decidedly original point of view, his knowledge of literary techniques, his evidence of broad and thoughtful reading in many fields, together with his psychological maturity, attracted me to him and led to my becoming acquainted with him as a person outside the classroom. It was then that I found out that Mr. Zabriskie was interested in writing and that I had the opportunity of reading much of the material that went into The Mind's Geography. I have naturally followed with great interest Mr. Zabriskie's development as a writer.

My impression is that Mr. Zabriskie is a person of rich and complex personality, a sensitive artist who at the same time has an understanding of such practical things as trains, lighting, plumbing, and any number of handicrafts, in short, a poet who sees in the materials of modern civilization the symbols of an emotional and spiritual life.

Mr. Zabriskie's training has been the work he has had at Duke, but greatly expanded and enriched by his own intense effort in the fields that interest him most. He certainly has an understanding of many aspects of French literature, but he does not pronounce French with correctness and I am sure that he could not teach French; but he has got from French literature a source of inspiration for some of his literary ideas and techniques. He has a gift for penetrating into the essence of things and extracting what he needs.

I don't know what to say about Mr. Zabriskie's teaching ability because much would depend on the type of environment in which he would find himself in making his first try at teaching; I believe that in an informal atmosphere of close collaboration between student and teacher he would be at his best and would be untiring in his effort to help those who were really interested.

Duke University  
DURHAM  
NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES

In regard to character, I do not know of anything to be said against the character of Mr. Zabriskie and much to be said for it. He is a man of convictions, usually with sound reasons for holding those convictions.

I have been very much interested in reading the bulletins of Black Mountain College which you sent me, because from time to time I have seen references to your particular educational experiment and have heard it discussed. You seem to have a real educational theory and ideal in a time when American colleges and universities have lost sight of the meaning of education, blinded as they are by the materialism of the American environment. In fact, many aspects of your curriculum remind me of the ideals of the Renaissance (for instance, the training of Gargantua as Rabelais presents it in Chapter XXIII of Gargantua) and of Rousseau. I believe therefore that Mr. Zabriskie would find the atmosphere of Black Mountain College extremely congenial and conducive to his doing his best work and I believe that you would find in him a sympathetic and cooperative member of your community.

Let me close by saying that I hope that Mr. Zabriskie may have the privilege of being able to work with you at Black Mountain; I feel that he is qualified for the position.

Very truly yours

*Furman A. Bridgers*

TAVERN CLUB,  
4 BOYLSTON PLACE.

April 26<sup>th</sup>  
1944

my dear Doctor Wunsch:

Some  
private anxieties have delayed  
my letter.

George Zabuskie is one of the  
most remarkable young men  
I know. I have the very highest  
hopes for him. I have done, and  
will do, everything in my power  
to make those hopes realities.  
I further believe that if you  
appoint him you will not  
be sorry.

Some of his opinions I do  
not share, but he is willing  
to suffer for them and has  
suffered. This commands my

respect.

His abilities are to me very striking. They are also varied. It is odd to find a poet of distinction who is also clever with his hands. And I am impressed by his knowledge of new developments in the science of psychology and the independence of his judgment in that connection.

I haven't any reserve whatever in giving him the fullest endorsement in my power. I was on the faculty of the University of California (English) for thirteen years and accordingly have some experience in such matters. If I were a department head, I should jump at the chance of getting

a man of such originality, capacity, and general promise.

I am obliged to you for the opportunity of speaking in his favor.

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respect.

His abilities are to me very striking. They are also varied. It is odd to find a host of distinction who is also clever with his hands. And I am impressed by his knowledge of new developments in the science of physiology and the independence of his judgment in that connection. I haven't any reserve whatever in giving him the fullest endorsement in my power. I was on the faculty of the University of California (English) for thirteen years and accordingly have some experience in such matters. If I were on such a head, I should jump at the chance of getting

a man of such originality, capacity, and general promise.

I am obliged to you for the opportunity of speaking in his favor.

Very truly yours  
Leonard Bacon

May 3, 1944

Mr. George Zabriskie  
2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Zabriskie:

Your letter of April 23, did not arrive until two days ago. The envelope was postmarked April 28.

Since you have not sent us a copy of your poetry, "The Mind's Geography", I have wired your publishers to send us a copy. As soon as we have read this book, the Board of Fellows will be in a position to come to a definite decision about you in relationship to Black Mountain College.

I must state frankly that we don't see much of a prospect of having you here this summer because of the lack of housing space. We are favorably inclined, however, toward offering you a position for the Fall Quarter, but want to wait until after having read the book before making any commitments.

I think that I should tell you that there is a possibility of our having on the staff next year, Alfred Kazin, who, if he comes, will teach American Literature, Literary Criticism, and perhaps, Essay Writing. We have been trying to get Mr. Kazin here for over a year now, but his commitment to the Government has prevented him from coming to us. I believe that you would find Mr. Kazin a very fine colleague.

I am enclosing a check for \$20.00 to pay for the travelling expenses of you and Mrs. Zabriskie on your recent visit to Lake Eden.

The other members of the Board of Fellows join me in sending warmest regards to you and Mrs. Zabriskie.

Sincerely,

W. R. Wunsch

WRW/d

2005 yearby avenue  
durham, north carolina  
5 may 1944

Mr. W. R. Wunsch  
2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Wunsch;

Thank you for your letter of 3 may, and for the enclosed check, which represents a rather large sum to us at present.

I'm sorry that my letter of 23 april took so long to reach you. I believe that I mailed it on the 24th, so I can explain neither the postmark, nor why it should have taken a week-end to reach its destination.

I'm delighted that you are reading my work itself, whether or not you like it. It is an excellent polity to judge an artist on his own achievement when you are hiring him to teach.

I did not bring a copy of "THE MIND'S GEOGRAPHY" with me to Black Mountain because the only copy between us is Mrs. Zabriskie's, and also because I am naturally more interested in the two books on which I am working at present. I had the manuscripts with me when we visited you.

Although I have no intention of disclaiming the "Geography" I would like to remind you that the poems it contains were written some years ago, and even before it was published, I had started the work which Coward-McCann will publish next year. While my more recent work contains many of the technical devices used in the "Geography" (indeterminate endings, etc) its conceptual apparatus is of a greatly enlarged nature. If you wish, I can send you the manuscript of "Like the Root" which was written during the four years ending in 1943. It certainly is much closer to my present interests than my earlier volume.

If you decide that you will want us for the fall quarter, we shall be delighted. Both Mrs. Zabriskie and I understand the nature of your housing problem. I think that the manpower pressure seems to be easing a bit, anyway, and it is quite possible that there will be no more pressure on 4Fs and others until after the election. Of course it will be always possible to appoint whomever you wish as of the beginning of the summer quarter, and then give him a leave of absence without pay until such time as you can use his services. I shall discuss this matter again with the chairman of my draft board, because, as I remarked in my previous letter, it will affect any applicant for any position, and not merely my individual case.

Although I have never met Mr. Kazin, I respect his work, and I sincerely hope that you can get him.

Both Mrs. Katherine Gilbert and Claire Leighton, the artist, are interested in visiting Black Mountain College during the summer, and I believe that you will hear from them shortly. I hope that you can find room for them for a few days, at least, because they are rather stimulating and interesting people. Both were impressed by the bulletins of your summer program, and they would like to see it in action.

Mrs. Zabriskie and I send our best to you and all the students and faculty whom we met during our pleasant visit to Black Mountain.

Sincerely yours,



George Zabriskie

P.S. Some of the poems which Jane Stone Robinson showed me impressed me very favorably. I think that she has a great deal of ability, and I hope that she will have a chance to continue developing it in the future. The other students with whom I met seemed most of all to need increased confidence in their own work and much more experience (I use the word in the broadest possible sense) if they are ever to attain her level. All this, of course, is "off the record", but I know that you will retain the confidence. However, I do think that if you can remind Jane for me that JOB'S GODCHILDREN is an interesting piece of work she might feel some small encouragement.

Duke University  
DURHAM  
NORTH CAROLINA

School of Medicine  
Department of Neuropsychiatry  
Reply to Undersigned

May  
eighth  
1944

no need, therefore, to make by aggressive boldness  
a poetic virtue out of a hostile intolerance for  
the process of insightful suffering resulting from  
the mastery and intimate understanding of the  
thinking-processes of creative expression.

By lecturing to students  
of English literature since his graduation

My dear Doctor Wunsch,

The almost compulsive stereotypy of a letter of recommendation always has made me very reluctant to write an evaluation of a candidate for a position. Nevertheless, I find that I am most eager to urge your favorable consideration of Mr. George Zabriskie, who is applying for a place in your department of English, particularly to teach creative writing.

Zabriskie is my very good friend of long standing, so there may be overmuch of personal bias in my words. So, too, both in the formality of the class and in personal conversations Zabriskie and I have agreed largely upon the acceptable psychological fictions for the description of behavior and for the semantic portrayal of the personality. There is thus involved some of the satisfaction of the indoctrinating mentor.

Zabriskie will be an excellent and scholarly addition to your distinguished and exciting faculty. He is at ease with the classic languages, and he has a quite thorough knowledge of the contemporary French and German literature. He understands and is very familiar with the avant-garde of the current American, English, and particularly Spanish artists, but happily he has not found himself so guilt-laden about his creativity that he has had to propagandize his private ideologies by making an over-zealous identification with "schools" or "movements" and so abort his development as an individual artist. Neither does he lack intellectual discipline. He has

Doctor Wunsch

no need, therefore, to make by aggressive boldness a poetic virtue out of a hostile intolerance for the process of insightful suffering requisite for the mastery and intimate understanding of the thinking-forms of creative expression.

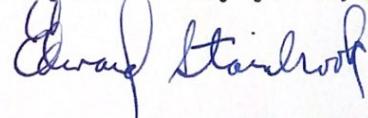
By lecturing to various audiences, particularly since his designation as a Fellow of the Guggenheim Foundation two years ago, Zabriskie has gotten a familiarity with the demands of the class-situation, but he is at his best in an informal setting of give-and-take conversation such as I imagine may exist in Black Mountain classrooms.

What can you say about another's character without writing a biography? Zabriskie has no psychopathy; his aggression is directed against the constricting cultural ideologies and not against his fellow-man, but, again, he is not the protagonist of any specific economic or social movement. And just as Zabriskie has a consciously-willed discipline of the intellect, he has also been able to will the pristine wanting of life into a sustaining and urging motivation for creative living. He is completely moral, therefore, not because of fear but because the immoral experience is meaningless.

All in all, he'll bring a freshness of vision and a sound Weltanschauung and a vital talent. Your students will like him; he'll be happy with you; he's going to continue to grow in cultural significance; he will not excite personality friction with any of his colleagues; and since he has always undervalued economic security, he will be more concerned about the experience of Black Mountain than about his importance in the budget. I'd certainly hire him!

With every good wish,  
I am,

Very cordially yours,



Edward Stainbrook

May 9, 1944

Mr. George Zabriskie  
2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Zabriskie:

We shall greatly appreciate your sending us your manuscript,  
"Like the Root", at your convenience. I promise to return  
it to you just <sup>as</sup> soon as all of the members of the Board  
of Fellows have <sup>had</sup> a chance to look it over.

Though I wired to your publishers in New York for a copy  
of "The Mind's Geography", they have not yet sent it.

I hope that we shall be able to come to a decision regarding  
your teaching at Black Mountain College, soon.

I send warmest personal regards to you and Mrs. Zabriskie.

Sincerely yours,

W. R. Wunsch

WRW/d

2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina  
13 May 1944

Mr. WR Wunsch  
Black Mountain College  
Black Mountain, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Wunsch;

Thank you for your letter of 9 May.

I'm terribly sorry that Knopf hasn't sent you a copy of "The Mind's Geography" yet. I've become rather accustomed to waiting a month or more for the books I have ordered from them, but I'm rather surprised that you seem to be receiving the same treatment. Although I have always found Mr. and Mrs. Knopf to be very pleasant and generous people, I regret to say that the business staff of the firm is often incomprehensible to me.

It is very generous of you and the Board of Fellows to offer to read "Like the Root" in manuscript. Even though the copy I am sending you is a fairly decent carbon (Coward Mc Cann has the original) I am aware that the undertaking will be a bit more difficult than reading a book in print.

I am sending you the carbon under separate cover. Unless some completely unforeseen need for it occurs, (which is most unlikely), you may keep it as long as you wish. It is certainly not an easy poem to read, and I feel that it may take you more time than you think. So please feel that the only time limitation involved is your own convenience.

A few days ago we saw Claire Leighton, who told us that she had written to Mr. Albers about visiting Black Mountain this summer. Her enthusiasm is very deep and genuine, both for the College and for Mr. Alber's work.

You may be interested to know that my own brief visit to Black Mountain served as a kind of catalyst for one of the two books of poetry on which I am now working. In the past few days I have been able to make some syntheses which were very necessary to a section of the poem.

We send our best to you and your colleagues.

Sincerely yours,



George Zabriskie

May 20, 1944

Mr. George Zabriskie  
2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Zabriskie:

I am very happy to inform you that at a meeting, just concluded, the Board of Fellows appointed you Instructor in Writing for the 1944-45 college session, beginning in September and ending the following June. The compensation for this position will be \$700.00 in cash plus board and room for yourself and your wife. There is the bare possibility of work here next summer for room and board, but you should not count on that.

We are looking forward with real pleasure to your being with us and hope that everything will combine to make it a successful year for us and for you.

I send warmest regards to you and Mrs. Zabriskie.

Sincerely,

W. R. Wunsch

WRW/d

2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina  
22 May 1944

Mr. W.R. Wunsch  
Black Mountain College  
Black Mountain, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Wunsch;

Your letter of 20 May, announcing my appointment, has just arrived. We wish to thank you and the Board of Fellows, for the appointment and the generous terms which accompanied it. I can think of no place where I would rather teach.

Your letter happened to arrive on our third wedding anniversary, and made the very best "present". Although I had other possible openings, most of which were likely to have been more profitable financially, Black Mountain from the very first seemed the place where I would be of most use to the students, and where the atmosphere would be more congenial to both of us. And I think that such considerations outweigh nearly all others.

Although, as I told you, much of my teaching will be determined by the needs of the students, I do expect to require some outside reading. I know of no anthology suited to my purpose, and it seems to me to be too great a burden on the students to require them to buy even a small collection of books. If you approve of my plan, I should like to have a small fee attached to the course to buy books for the college library. Such a plan would expand your collection, and at the same time I believe that it would save the students money, since the retail price of four or five ordinary anthologies is large enough to buy a serviceable small collection at library discount. More students, of course, will mean an even larger collection. I do think that the most important consideration involved in this plan is the reaction of the students. I remember my own student days too well not to realize that even a seemingly small fee can at times work a great hardship on a student who is financially pressed. I expect, of course, to use my own collection, but I do not think it large enough to carry the load by itself. If you find my suggestion unsuitable, please let me know, and I'll try to devise another plan.

We expect to spend the summer here. I have two books on which I am working, and besides I hope to get something done on an article concerning the psychodynamics of creativity. My collaborator and I have been talking it for four years, but despite our interest, we have both been busy with other things: he with scientific articles and I with poetry.

Mrs. Zabriskie and I send you our very best.

Sincerely yours,



george zabriskie

May 23, 1944

Mr. George Zabriskie  
2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Zabriskie:

We are very glad that you have accepted the appointment to the faculty; and by we, I mean not only the Board of Fellows but all the teachers and students. We are looking forward to your being with us and contributing to the academic and the creative and the social life of the college, and also sharing in the community life that you find here.

You can expect every student who registers for your course or courses to buy two or three basic volumes. You can expect the Library too, to get additional anthologies. I suggest that you send me, at your convenience, a list of books that you would find useful in your work, placing the books in the order of their importance to you. The Library Committee will give full consideration to this list. I shall write you a report on their action. For your information I should state that each college year, each department can reasonably expect an expenditure of \$30.00 for books for its department. We often give an additional allotment to a new department or sub-department such as Writing will be.

It just occurred to me to suggest to you that the students in your writing course establish a classroom library; that is, each student buy two or three anthologies of modern poetry for a common shelf for use in the class.

You should feel free to write me at any time about any matter in connection with the College that interests you.

I send warmest regards to you and Mrs. Zabriskie.

Sincerely,

W. R. Wunsch

WRW/d

May 23, 1944

Mr. George Zabriskie  
2005 Yearby Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina

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