

## **Dot Braden: True Commitment**

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“When you’re surrounded by people who share a passionate commitment around a common purpose, anything is possible.” - Howard Schultz.

In the book *Code Girls* by Liza Mundy, Dot Braden’s unwavering commitment to code-breaking in World War II was instrumental to helping the Americans win the war. This steadfast commitment reminded me of my experience playing classical guitar. There are many definitions of commitment, and Dot highlighted three specific examples throughout the book. First, Dot worked well with different types of people who had very different personalities. This is very important if you want to be strongly committed to an activity or job. In my classical guitar ensemble group, there’s often someone who is unprepared for class, or someone who doesn’t think the same way as I do, and I still have to work with them. Second, Dot represented her country, the US, as well as representing her code-breaking organization and team. When I practice and perform my instrument, I’m representing the organization that I’m a part of; Greenwich Suzuki Academy. Third, Dot truly loved what she was doing and always went above and beyond. I adore playing the classical guitar, and my love for the instrument and music is a big part of what has allowed me to thrive and learn more complex techniques and musical styles.

Dot Braden’s ability to communicate and work with different kinds of people was helpful to her throughout her code breaking experience. Arlington Hall served as the place where all these women were hired to take part in unraveling mysterious codes. There, depending on your exact responsibility, you would be given some information to complete your piece of the assignment, and pass it down to the next person. These bits and pieces were part of a large, inter-connected chain. Once Dot had done her part, the page would be given to a woman named Miriam. Dot saw Miriam as disrespectful and judgemental. On page 216, Miriam says, “I have never yet met a southerner who can speak proper English.” This quote proves that Miriam had little regard for her colleagues. The fact that Dot didn’t say anything in return demonstrates her maturity and professionalism. No matter the circumstance, Dot would still have to work with Miriam. In my guitar ensemble one can imagine that my fellow musicians participate with different levels of commitment. Typically, a musical piece has 3 parts - melody, harmony and

bass. Each part must work with the other to make the piece sound complete. I make sure to practice thoroughly so that I am not the weak link in the chain. Though Dot's strong work ethic did not align with all her colleagues, she was committed to successfully working with different minds, just as I strive to successfully work with my ensemble peers

Another way Dot showed commitment, was by representing the US by working for Arlington Hall. Dot was working at Arlington Hall to help crack codes originating in Japan and Germany, but she was also, without realizing it, representing America. Dot and her friends often explained how American men's lives depended on their work. Dot wanted to keep the American men alive, she wanted the Americans to win the war and she wanted to be a patriot. Dot was fighting against the Germans, but in her own way. This level of commitment to an organization relates to my guitar experience. I know that when I practice and perform the classical guitar, I'm upholding the principles of Greenwich Suzuki Academy. The organization believes that as much as one practices for one's own pleasure, playing for the broader community is equally as important. I represent Greenwich Suzuki Academy at local area concerts that help raise money for charitable causes. I show my commitment to the Academy by preparing and playing several times a year. Dot's version of patriotism relates to the way I represent my music association in my community.

One of the most important reasons Dot was so committed to cracking codes was her deep connection to the tasks. On page 150, it says, "... but Dot faced the numbers in front of her with a reasonable amount of confidence." This quote shows how eager Dot was to do her best and how giving up was never an option. It is also revealed that Dot didn't find the work easy, but she pushed through it anyway. Before she realizes, Dot is promoted to the next level of code-breaking. Dot may have struggled with her task at times, but she was determined and committed to solving problems. When I take on a new guitar piece it's always hard at first. The music sounds choppy and disconnected. Patience, perseverance and the will power to push through help me "decode" the piece. When you love what you're doing, it is easier to overcome obstacles. Dot's love for what she was doing really helped her commit to cracking miscellaneous codes from various countries.

Throughout the book *Code Girls* by Liza Mundy, Dot Braden showed full commitment to her job in many different ways. Dot worked well with different types of people, she represented the United States by working to crack codes, and most of all, Dot loved what she was doing. All these aspects of Dot's commitment mirror by experience with classical guitar. I'm able to play with different types of guitarists with different styles of playing, I maintain the principles of the

musical organization that I'm a part of, and I absolutely love playing the classical guitar anywhere and anytime.

Howard Schultz once said, "When you're surrounded by people who share a passionate commitment around a common purpose, anything is possible." This quote makes it clear how Dot Braden's commitment, dedication, and passion at Arlington Hall made it easy for others to be able to work with her. It also shows that when someone is passionate, anything is possible. Dot Braden's relentless commitment to code-breaking in World War II was essential to helping the Americans win the war.