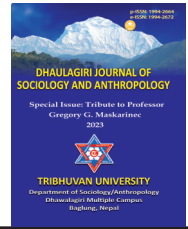


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## Dr. Gregory G. Maskarinec: A Distinguished Scholar and Humanitarian

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Dr. Gregory G. Maskarinec was a distinguished scholar and humanitarian, who passed away on June 16, 2022. Gregory and I met during the first years of undergraduate studies at Reed College in Portland, Oregon (USA). His major field of study was mathematics, and he took time to study calligraphy and lettering in Portland, Oregon, and Dublin Ireland. After college, as a Peace Corps volunteer, he began teaching mathematics to high school students in Jajarkot, western Nepal. He became very attached to Nepali friends and culture and so after the initial two-year posting and then an extension, he moved to the university in Kathmandu for what would become seven years in Nepal. His focus shifted to the Nepali language and he formed the first department of linguistics.

This was the period when Gregory would make 3-4 walking excursions into the very remote areas in northwest Nepal, with his camera and notebooks. During the first visits to these remote villages, his letters described the mutual shock and surprise when he realized these people had never seen a white person before him. He began his detailed recorded and written documentation of the shaman practices and rituals that would take place over many visits. The original work is now stored in Paris and at Cern to preserve the photographic quality of the recordings.

Gregory became a professor of medicine in the Department of Family Medicine and director of Global Health and International Medicine at the John A. Burns Medical School at the University of Hawaii. His anthropological books were published by the University of Wisconsin Press (1995), Harvard University Press (1999), and Harvard University Press (2009).

He lectured globally on sustainable and ethical standards of medical education. He co-authored a book with Dr. Paul Farmer (of Haiti and Rwanda), who had cofounded Partners in Public Health. His strong philosophical conviction that “healthcare is a right and not a privilege” informed the basis for much of his work at the university.

As is evident from his life, Gregory had no limits to his curiosity and scholarship. His love of the natural world and the study of cultures inspired continual travels with his wife Gertraud and daughters Malika and Maya. He had a special fondness for classical music from both Asia and the West and would incorporate travel for his work to allow attendance at concerts anywhere in the world.

Gregory and I spent hours and days hiking on the



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US west coast and in the Rocky Mountains. He was an experienced mycologist and it was not unusual to have the evening's meal set aside after a hike in the forest. The hiking experience saved his life at the beginning of his Peace Corps posting. He was dropped off about three days walking distance from Jajarkot. And on the second day, he was viciously attacked by a rabid dog which meant he had to hike back to receive the ARV (Anti Rabies Vaccine). A few day's walk to the airfield and then a flight to Kathmandu and transfer to Bangkok left him with barely hours time for the precious anti-viral shot 7-day window. In three more weeks, he returned to Nepal and began his posting to Jajarkot, never to trust random dogs again during his stay there.

Gregory had an immense wit and a dry sense of humor. That carried him and those around him through the turbulence we all share in life. His deep and spiritual devotion to acknowledging humanity's predicament gave so many a heightened and calm sense of good. He will be deeply missed.

Having shared many meals over the years with him, he took great pleasure in experimenting with his (curry)recipes and trying to duplicate what he had tasted around the world. The phrase "too spicy" was not a part of his culinary vocabulary and I believe he thoroughly enjoyed testing the limits of others' tolerance. "Too spicy" was not part of his vocabulary in life and basic human rights became the lens which framed his work. He was one of the most courageous people I have ever known.

Goodbye, Gregory !!!

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