

Remembering Richard N. Gardner

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Other contributors to these remembrances in honor of the recently passed Professor Richard Gardner will attest to his influence as a professor, diplomat, or scholar. For me, he was all of these, but also an example—of how to combine the practice and theory of international law, while advising generations of students on how each of them could find their own combination of private practice, public engagement, teaching, and diplomacy. He was deeply and genuinely interested in his students. And we were aware of that interest every time we spoke with him.

I entered Columbia Law School in Fall of 1983, as a Midwesterner recently back from a Rotary Graduate year in Dakar, Senegal. One of the first students I met was Professor Gardner's daughter Nina, also an incoming 1L and herself just back from a Rotary Graduate year in Colombia. I of course knew her father's reputation (I was at CLS in large part because of its strength in international law), but Nina made him seem vastly more accessible. As a hard-working 1L, I treasured occasional soirées at the Gardner apartment on upper Fifth Avenue as an opportunity to leave Morningside Heights and access a broader world; the photos of diplomat Dick Gardner in the apartment signaled that this was indeed a much more wide-ranging world. As a 2L, I took Professor Gardner's introductory International Law course (shared with Lori Damrosch, then in her first teaching year at CLS). And as a 3L, while serving as Editor-in-Chief of the *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*, I had the good fortune to be in his legendary seminar on the Legal Aspects of U.S. Foreign Economic Policy. As many of you know, one of the singular aspects of that seminar was the first-class ritual of filling out a notecard—all kept by Professor Gardner for decades afterwards—with a description of what you hoped to do in your career. I recall writing something to the effect of being able to combine private practice and government work as Professor Gardner had done.

I have remained in private practice since graduating in 1986, focusing on international finance of various types, from sovereign

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debt restructuring as a young associate to infrastructure finance in Latin America now. Several times in the earlier years of my career I explored taking on government roles in incoming U.S. administrations. Each time, I leaned on Professor Gardner for advice and introductions. He always obliged, and was full of suggestions, reality-checks, and encouragement. Although a Democrat, he was an equal opportunity encourager and once contacted me about a potential role in a Republican administration. In each of those encounters, I was struck by the time and personal attention he gave to my interests and my ambitions (and often my confusion and uncertainty). After several of those meetings with Professor Gardner, I left his office with one of his books under my arm, newly inscribed.

My wife and I last saw Dick Gardner in September 2018 in Florence, with his daughter Nina and her husband Francesco. Despite some infirmities, Professor Gardner was in many ways the same man I had met in 1983. His first request was for me to sit next to him, and he then peppered me with questions. As always, his curiosity about his old students and their lives warmed the evening and served as an example of how we all can broaden—and better—our worlds.