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Richard Gardner: Scholar, Statesman, Columbian

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Richard Gardner: Scholar, Statesman, Columbian

GILLIAN LESTER*

I am honored to pay tribute to Richard Gardner, who was truly one of Columbia Law School's greatest global citizens. He demonstrated so many of the qualities that make Columbia Law School unique, especially the influence that Columbia Law School has on the world. He was a brilliant statesman, international lawyer, and beloved professor. Over seven decades, he was a mentor to generations of students who are now leaders in law, foreign policy, and international affairs. Upon his retirement in 2012, the Law School hosted a two-day conference in his honor. Entitled "The Challenges We Face," the conference featured panels on pressing issues for the international community, including trade, finance, human rights, and challenges to the transatlantic alliance. Dick was honored by addresses from Zbigniew Brzezinski, the National Security Adviser to President Jimmy Carter, and Paul Volker, former Federal Reserve Chairman. More than 100 notable alumni came to Morningside Heights to salute him.

Dick embodied one of the values that I consider essential for all Columbians—a commitment to public service as he moved back and forth between academia and government. Dick took several leaves of absences over the years to serve his country. He was the ambassador to Italy for President Jimmy Carter, which was the subject of his wonderful and enlightening 2005 memoir, *Mission Italy: On the Front Lines of the Cold War*, which the President called "a dramatic, accurate account of one of the most difficult and successful diplomatic missions in the history of the Cold War." He also was the ambassador to Spain for President Bill Clinton (the fifth Columbian to serve in that post after John Jay, Washington Irving, Carlton J.H. Hayes, and Richard C. Capen).

Dick began his tenure at the Law School as a part-time lecturer in 1954, and introduced his influential seminar, Legal Aspects of U.S. Foreign Economic Policy in 1955. It was wildly popular with students at the Law School and Columbia's School of

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International and Public Affairs.

The course continued until he retired, making it the longest-running course of its kind at the Law School. One interesting fact is that he would invite admitted students to submit notecards with their personal information and career aspirations. In subsequent years, he would use those notecards to recommend those same students for influential posts, creating what *The Chronicle of Higher Education* called “a global network of lawyers, diplomats, business leaders and policy makers.”

One of his lasting legacies is the Law School’s Center on Global Governance, which he co-directed with Professor Michael Doyle (a fellow former diplomat who served as assistant secretary and special adviser to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan from 2001 to 2003). The Center continues to host conferences addressing issues that the *Journal of Transnational Law* has covered for more than fifty years, including transnational justice in the wake of mass atrocity, international crime and terrorism, the regulation of the multinational enterprise, and transnational capital, immigration, and human rights.

Dick was a forward-looking thinker, and he sounded a prescient warning on climate change in 1970 in an opinion piece published in *The New York Times*. “We are finally beginning to recognize that how a nation deals with its national environment is no longer its own and nobody else’s business,” he wrote. “We are beginning to comprehend the unity of the world’s ecological system, which means that all nations may be affected by how any one of them treats its air, water, and land.”

He was a hero to his children, who are graduates of the Law School: daughter Nina Luzzatto Gardner ‘86, director of Strategy International, a consulting firm she founded specializing in corporate social responsibility, sustainability, and climate change; son Anthony “Tony” Luzzatto Gardner ‘90, senior counsel at Sidley & Austin in London and former U.S. Ambassador to the European Union. They are shining examples of his legacy who honor him with their commitment to the betterment of society and the international community.