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Trust research community misses an outstanding scholar and friend: Graham Dietz (1969-2014): Editorial

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Editorial

Trust research community misses an outstanding scholar and friend: Graham Dietz (1969–2014)

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As the world of academic research seems to be increasingly dominated by impact factors and performance indicators, it takes a personal tragedy to remind us of the human bonds we enjoy as part of our research and the outstanding people we have the privilege of meeting on our academic journeys. For the trust research community, Graham Dietz was unsurpassed in inspiring others with his extraordinary passion and insight. We are very sad to share the news that Graham passed away on Saturday, 20 December 2014, following the aftereffects of a heart attack a week earlier.

Graham was an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Trust Research (JTR)* and an invaluable supporter of the journal from the beginning. He was a Reader in Human Resource Management and Organizational Behaviour at Durham University where he had been working since 2005. Previously, he held a postdoctoral position at Erasmus University Rotterdam and earned his Ph.D. from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

At the last *JTR* Editorial Board Meeting, held in Coventry, UK, on 7 November 2014 during the 8th First International Network on Trust (FINT) Workshop on Trust Within and Between Organizations, we were very glad to report that the most downloaded paper of our journal is Graham's essay 'Going back to the source: Why do people trust each other?' (Dietz, 2011). Going back to the source: Why do people trust each other? *Journal of Trust Research*, *1*(2), 215–222.). The paper is a wonderful manifestation of Graham's sharp, clear and constructive thinking that we will be missing so much. He wrote the essay as a

comment on Bachmann (2011) and argued to conceptualise "trust as a 'universal variform' process …: the sequence and dynamic is universal, but people's idiosyncratic preferences and influences and localised external conditions shape the content and process at each stage" (Dietz, 2011, p. 219). The main implication of his view is to pay more attention to the rich varieties of sources of and contexts for trust. All of us who knew Graham personally can vividly imagine how he would have debated with Reinhard Bachmann, as he did with many of us, with an open mind but firm about his own well-founded beliefs.

Graham's ideas have had an outstanding impact on the field of trust research. He co-authored a foundational article on conceptualising and measuring trust (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006) and was a key author in the now well-established field of trust repair research through his pivotal article with Nicole Gillespie on trust repair after an organisational-level failure (Gillespie & Dietz, 2009). As co-editor and author of a renowned book, he also shaped a cultural perspective on organisational trust (Saunders, Skinner, Gillespie, Dietz, & Lewicki, 2010).

When we learned about Graham's death, though, everyone's first thoughts seemed not to be about his contributions to the field, but instead about the many personal encounters in which Graham had inspired and impressed us with his knowledge, curiosity, insights and integrity. The FINT pays tribute to Graham as a scholar and friend with a dedicated web page (http://fintweb.org/graham-dietz-tribute). The FINT LinkedIn group has a discussion in which numerous colleagues from around the world share how special Graham was to them and how much his ideas and spirit influenced their work. We are aware of several initiatives to dedicate workshops and publications to his memory.

As we read the articles published in this *JTR* issue and those before and after, let us not forget the personal involvement and connectedness that the creation and application of knowledge entails, but let us also stay focused and critically minded, passionate and compassionate, just as Graham Dietz was.

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