

## In Memoriam – Victor Thiessen

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on behalf of

Dalhousie Notice <notice@DAL.CA>

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To: DAL-NOTICE@LISTS.DAL.CA <DAL-NOTICE@LISTS.DAL.CA>

### In Memoriam – Victor Thiessen

Suddenly and unexpectedly in the company of his partner and very close friends, Victor Thiessen passed away at the age of 74 on the evening of February 6th, 2016.

Victor was born in Western Ukraine in 1941 and as young child fled with his sister and mother, Meta, to Germany and later Manitoba. He pursued a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Manitoba ('63) and earned a Masters ('65) and Doctoral ('68) degree at the University of Wisconsin. Upon completing his studies he worked at Case Western Reserve University and University of Essex before joining the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University in 1972.

He was a consummate intellectual and academic and was a social scientist who sought to learn and observe the underlying patterns of how and why people act and behave as we do. His early work wrestled with issues of social psychology and during the course of his career he also researched and published on fishing communities, educational aspirations of children and youth, and how to analyse and evaluate survey data.

He truly loved to play with statistics and teach others how to do the same – something he continued to do as Professor Emeritus. At time of his death he was working with a good friend and colleague on a German version of his book *Arguing with Numbers*. In it he was updating his ideas and expanding them for an international audience.

During his career Victor took on a number of important roles at Dalhousie. He served as Chair of his department, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Academic Director of the Atlantic Research Data Centre. His insights and keen mind were highly valued and for those who worked and studied with him, he was a passionate colleague and mentor who left a lasting impression – even on those who only met him briefly.

Above all, he was a down to earth person who enjoyed exploring all aspects of life and loved creating and imagining projects and doing physical work. Be it building and renovating his home, constructing a brick oven, planting an ocean side garden, or cutting a road in a wood lot, he thoroughly enjoyed getting his hands dirty and working long and hard in doing so. He was also a bon vivant who enjoyed nothing more than baking bread, cooking gourmet meals, and sitting with family and friends, from here and all over the world, sharing good food and wine and celebrating their company. His strong tenor voice and warm hugs will be greatly missed.

He is survived by his partner Barbara, his sister Elfrieda (Ian), his daughters Katie (Tuma) and Tanya (Bill), and his grandchildren Thomas, Brianna, Zach, Zoey, Carly and Joey. In lieu of flowers or gifts, and in the spirit of Victor, please take a moment to be generous and compassionate to those you love and care for.

A celebration of his life will be held March 19 at 2-4 pm at the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre (2158 Gottingen Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia).