

*Editorial***George Kent's legacy**Ted Greiner^{1,*} ¹Editor-in-Chief, World Nutrition, World Public Health Nutrition Association**Keywords:** breastfeeding; gardening; community-based interventions; human rights<https://doi.org/10.26596/wn.20251645-6>* **Correspondence:** editor@worldnutritionjournal.org, tedgreiner@yahoo.com

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We are sad to have to report that our Deputy Editor, George Kent, has died. It was a pleasure having George as a friend for so many years. He was not only wise but also willing to serve selflessly in so many important causes for humankind. We knew him for decades in the context of breastfeeding. He was responsible for introducing the concepts of human rights to the global breastfeeding community. He was also passionate about promoting gardening and other community-based work in food security and nutrition.

He was my Deputy Editor at World Nutrition since the beginning of my tenure as Editor in 2017. He has submitted 42 articles, editorials, and letters to the journal since its publication began in 2010, no doubt a record. I was amazed at how fertile his mind was; as Deputy Editor, he published an article in every issue of the journal until Alzheimer's Disease made this impossible two years ago.

George was always striving to receive reader comments. He was one of the few people I have ever met who never minded criticism but eagerly responded respectfully to encourage deeper thinking and debate.

George once taught a class in my graduate course, The Politics of Global Poverty and Hunger, at Hanyang University in Seoul. He brought such a fresh new perspective to the topic, focusing on the concept of care. Where people care about their neighbors, hunger will never affect just a few. It proved to be the most popular lecture among students that year.



Prof. Ted Greiner (Left) and Late Prof. George Kent (Right)
Photo by: Denis Greiner

In the photo accompanying this article, taken by my wife Denise the last time I met George, we were on the roof of the FAO building in Rome. It was in December 2009, and important battles were raging (and were eventually lost) to avoid losing Civil Society/NGO/Bilateral donor agency involvement in the UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition.

COMMENTS ABOUT GEORGE FROM OTHERS

Below (and in a separate article by Jody Harris) are comments about George from others:

"We honour the life and legacy of Prof. George Kent, a remarkable scholar, human rights advocate, and visionary thinker whose work continues to shape global discourse on nutrition, food policy, and breastfeeding advocacy.

For decades, Prof. Kent stood out as a leading voice in the global breastfeeding movement. He was among the first to introduce a human rights framework to the field—emphasizing that breastfeeding and food security are not merely biological issues, but fundamental human rights. This perspective forever transformed how the world views maternal and child health.

Beyond his academic brilliance, George championed community-driven solutions—from local gardening initiatives to food and nutrition programs that empower families to cultivate and sustain their own nourishment. His unwavering belief in justice, equity, and dignity within food systems continues to inspire generations. His work went beyond the dryness of academia, focusing on the proven power of simply caring for others in our community to prevent malnutrition.

What made George truly special was not only his intellect but also his humility and openness. He welcomed critique, read every reader's comment with care, and responded thoughtfully and respectfully. For him, scholarship did not end with publication—it began with conversation.

According to Google Scholar, his works have been cited over 3,265 times, with an h-index of 29 and an i10-index of 62, reflecting his immense contribution to the global nutrition community".

>Stanley I.R. Okoduwa, PhD (now Deputy Editor at World Nutrition)

"My deepest condolences to the Family of Dr George Kent on his passing away. He was a Scholar Extraordinaire in human rights related to health, nutrition, and breastfeeding".

>Anwar Fazal

Chairperson Emeritus

World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA)

"A great loss for our community. May his legacy continue to inspire those working for a fairer and healthier world".

>Maria Alvim

"My deepest condolences to all of us in the global public health community".

>Vandana Prasad

"It has been so great also to spend a little time with you over the years. I remember you on my verandah in Harare, going through my Breastfeeding Review article word for word and giving me a good critique after it was published. And you've been to see us here in England, and finally I met Joan when you came to Brighton. A long friendship that I've highly valued over so many years.

I also appreciate your kindness to me over the years. And your kindness in writing what you had in your many articles. You had a good heart.

Your ideas and arguments have challenged, frustrated and delighted me. And others all over the world, I'm sure. You're cited everywhere. You've written so many good words to protect breastfeeding and in defence of the Code. With an interesting way of mining information by debating with others. I remember especially in Harare, receiving emails from you (often about whether babies had the right to be breastfed, and whether their mothers had the duty to fulfil that right) and having to go and walk up and down outside in my garden before I could reconcile what you were saying with my own view of the controversy. And then you'd come out with a brilliant article. You have taught me so much. You forced me to examine exactly what it was about your arguments that challenged what I thought was right about the rights of each party. We never did agree. But we debated respectfully and with humour and affection. I will miss your words so much".

>Edited from a letter to George by Pamela Morrison

"A really big loss for our community. George and I have been working together for many years in a really close collaboration. His books were beacons of wisdom and sound advice. He was a true academic activist. I emailed George Kent to ask why he had been silent for quite some time, and he told me his thinking was unclear and was deteriorating. Thus, I was perhaps one of the first ones to know that this terrible condition was affecting him. George and I have been collaborating on right-to-food issues for many years. He gave me constructive critiques on my HR Readers and I did same on his writings. In the last 4-5 years, he grew disappointed about the lack of progress on right to food issues and veered towards a more bottom-up communal

paradigm--more on the ethical side. I could not go along with it, and we went back and forth emailing about it. It was a really enjoyable intellectual exchange. I only saw him face-to-face a couple of times many years ago. I miss his wisdom".

>Claudio Schuftan

"Sad news indeed. As Ted has described, George was a generous, humble and inspirational contributor to World Nutrition until the tragedy of Alzheimer's disease onset two years ago. My condolences to his family, friends and colleagues at World Nutrition on behalf of WPHNA".

>Margaret Miller

"I am in shock. He was very encouraging, knowledgeable and committed to make the world a better place. He was my main supporter for the food as a commons idea. It was thanks to him that I could publish several pieces in World Nutrition. Very good thinker, editor and mentor. It was very rewarding to exchange with him as one of the co-authors of the Handbook of Food as a commons that we produced in 2018. He wrote a chapter on "Community-based commons and rights systems". Quite glad to have known him. The type of people we need in these uncertain times. Rest in Peace".

>Jose Luis Vivero Pol

"I am very saddened to hear of the passing of George Kent. I will never forget his detailed and critical reviews as Associate Editor of PHN. In my role as Deputy Editor, I had the privilege of working closely with him, and his dedication left a lasting impression. My deepest condolences and strength to his family during this difficult time".

>Kaleab Baye

"Sad news many of us in the nutrition world in the 90s benefited hugely from George's thinking and action on human rights. He was warm, generous and extremely supportive throughout. RIP George".

>Stuart Gillespie

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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