

## **A Personal Eulogy of Eldridge Moores**

In 1974, I accepted a PhD opportunity at the University of California because – Eldridge Moores was its sponsor.

I had read his work, which was cutting-edge for those times, and wanted to concentrate on the mechanisms of lithologic formation at spreading centers. But before arriving at Davis, I had never actually met him.

What caused me to accept was his reputation as a scientist who encouraged women to enter the field of geology at a time when we were not allowed in mines nor on oil platforms. Those were the decades when the only “acceptable” work for women in geosciences was within micropaleontology. There were no female university professors in geology at Davis or elsewhere.

While in the office of the graduate student advisor my first day there, a rapidly moving, energetic buzzing personality entered the room and announced that “the grant for the cumulate study has been approved!”

I popped up, giving no notice to interrupting, and announced “Cumulates? I’ll do it!” And for the first time, Eldridge looked at me with that tilted head questioning look: “Would you go to Greece?” Then he introduced himself. Then we discussed the option of actually sending a woman to study in the backwaters of Greece.

Eldridge was one of the “gentleman” of the scientific community: he had no ax to grind, he never placed his importance above that of a student. A student, to him, was a colleague who simply hadn’t the same number of years of experience yet. But would!

- Never did he laugh or mock any suggestion made by student or colleague in putting forth new thoughts on “consensus” subjects.
- Never was a research idea or suggestion rejected out-of-hand. But one did have to document the evidence for it.
- To advance science, collaboration was considered a greater contribution than competition.
- Never did any of us encounter an “ego” that demanded that the professor was right, and everyone else must agree. In fact, it’s still a running joke that you could not get an advanced degree from Eldridge unless you could prove that something he did was wrong.

As a graduate student, I also got to know his family – his brilliant wife Judy, their three little kids Kat, Geneva and Brian. Judy became a role model, an example of balancing family with community. When later struggling to raise my son in Greece and continue working as a scientist, Judy and her family, by example, help set priorities.

Eldridge’s CV is easy to access on-line, and I’ve included some of its key attributes below. But what makes a man a great scientist is more than a well-filled CV. Because of his personality, because of his scientific philosophy and support of his students, he has produced some of today’s leading scientists. I may not be one of those, but because of four decades of support and personal encouragement to continue work in Greece, to publish in academia even when “not required” in my job, recognizing what we have accomplished here in Greece, has kept me going when the world became difficult.

Today, a third of the faculty of Geology at Davis are female. I do presume that Eldridge through the years encouraged this.

As for geology, his favorite quotation was this by Will Durant: **“Civilization exists by geologic consent, subject to change without notice.”** This quotation alone sends us to new interpretations in the field of Geoheritage that may initiate even another scientific revolution.

The lessons learned from Eldridge were not merely scientific; they were methods of questioning, of learning, or passing on what you’ve learned and living a dedicated and moralistic life.