



## IN MEMORIAM

William Madsen  
Professor of Anthropology  
Santa Barbara  
1920 — 2003

Professor William "Bill" Madsen was already a much-published and well-recognized specialist in Mexican society and religious practices when he joined the Department of Anthropology in 1966. His first book, *The Virgin's Children: Life in an Aztec Village Today* (1960), was based on two years of fieldwork in Mexico, the starting point of his lifetime interest in Mexican culture and religion. Professor Charles Erasmus was chair of the department at the time Bill was hired, and the year 1966 was the lead edge of a short, but very successful period of departmental expansion that led to the young department being judged one of the top departments in the United States by the 1980s.

Two years before joining the department, Bill had published his best-selling *Mexican-Americans of South Texas* (1964) in the influential Holt, Rinehart and Winston series, and in the process pioneered "border" studies, a research field of considerable interest today. A few years later he published *The American Alcoholic* (Charles C. Thomas, 1974).

Bill was always an immensely popular teacher, almost a cult figure among undergraduates. It was well known in the department that whatever class he taught would fill Campbell Hall. For many years he taught the department's introductory course to cultural anthropology, a class on the anthropology of religion, and then later a class on substance abuse, each greatly popular among students and closely tied to his own research interests. Less well known to his colleagues, Bill was in demand as a public speaker in the community as well.

Bill's own life had the aura of storybook. He was born in Shanghai and grew up in Manila, the Philippines. And during World War II he served with the American Field Service attached to Tahitian Free French Troops and the British Eighth Army in North Africa. He married Claudia, his wife of 56 years in Santa Barbara in 1946. He received his Ph.D. from UC Berkeley in 1955. He is survived by his wife and two children.

Donald Brown  
Thomas Harding  
Mattison Mines