Editorial note

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For the 50th anniversary issue of *Papers in Regional Science*, Gordon F. Mulligan, Professor Emeritus of Geography and Development at the University of Arizona, wrote a review of Beckmann's classic (1968) text, *Location Theory*. In that review, Mulligan explains that the book's achievement was twofold—it (1) addressed and anticipated problems and questions in location analysis that were relevant for decades to come and (2) introduced a generation of scholars to the subject matter. He closes by noting (2003, p. 82) that these are “two of the highest complements that an academic book can receive”. Mulligan's comments resonate, because a similar conclusion follows from an examination his own contributions to regional science: over the past 35 years, he has produced a steady stream of groundbreaking, relevant, and forward-looking research—often in conjunction with students and other junior scholars who have gone on to have productive careers in the field. In recognition of these and his other professional contributions, in 2011, Mulligan was elected to be an RSAI Fellow, one of the Regional Science Association International's highest distinctions.

The purpose of this special issue is to celebrate Mulligan's RSAI Fellowship by summarizing his achievements in this editorial note and, more important, delivering a series of 10 papers that were presented in his honor at the 2010 meetings of the Western Regional Science Association, in Sedona, Arizona.¹ These papers were prepared by

¹ For the full set of papers and participants in these sessions see the six “Mulligan sessions” in the 2010 WRSA program: https://057ebcd1-a-1163198b-s-sites.googlegroups.com/a/brown.edu/wrsa/annual-meeting/past-meetings/SedonaProg.pdf?attachauth=ANoY7cqnJDldBqBM_68UjSqDaRlr4DGpo1kUGQwbbnUlBxP_mYb5_SDQ4lbuhWeVY1ifpGDT3ZHq7wOBDBglq5MAtrSfrqG3iPEh4mFOvSwnERA0LFfA1YoYoch5mbTYsLp8tx5E57dQTErRwm8seQdoBLVwXjvB00O2MEqEUMdFp8OaopIljRQri_qgfcJsIEBiSjxWlwDq-4Riz_CF0PpW_TRFEJ_Z601JE2UIYawhd6c894IGk%3D&attredirects=0.

people who are, variously, former students, peers, colleagues, mentors, and friends of Mulligan—categories that lack distinction in the context of both his professional life and personal life. It is the job of scientists to confront the unknown and, as this special issue illustrates, regional science is an ideal venue for those seeking to pull back the veil on a wide array of socioeconomic phenomena. That Mulligan has played such an important part in making the field an enduring—and important—element of the constellation of social and behavioral sciences testifies to his work and his commitment; the array of papers presented here testifies to the breadth and depth of what Mulligan has helped forge over the course of his distinguished career.

Mulligan's scientific contributions began with a series of three papers—based on his M.A. thesis and Ph.D. dissertation in Geography at the University of British Columbia—published in the *Journal of Regional Science* and *Geographical Analysis* in 1975, 1976, and 1979. At the time, location theorists were working to develop models of classic central place systems that struck an appropriate balance between being both realistic and analytically tractable. Mulligan's initial contribution (with John Parr and Kenneth Denike) was to reconcile two alternative approaches to deriving the size of population centers while, at the same time, grounding the theory in economic base analysis. The subsequent contributions (1) identified specific conditions under which a general hierarchical model of city sizes conforms with an empirically verifiable rank-size distribution and (2) recast the Beckmann and McPherson (1970) and Parr et al. (1975) models as an input–output framework that relates city sizes to internal and external demand for goods produced.

These papers positioned Mulligan as a leading location theorist and set the course for much of his research—which he consistently published in top regional science oriented journals—through the early 1980s and beyond. In 1984, Mulligan published an often-cited survey of central place theory in the *International Regional Science Review* that, to this day, remains one of the most comprehensive and detailed overviews of the work that he and others have done in that area. From these beginnings, Mulligan branched out and developed a remarkably diverse set of contributions in the areas of economic geography, regional development, and demography. In economic geography, his work has focused on spatial pricing and competition, facility location, and spatial decision-making and behavior; in regional development, his work has focused on community and regional impact models, shift-share analysis, and amenities and quality of life; and, in demography, his work has focused on migration and regional population and employment adjustment models. In all, Mulligan has authored or co-authored—often with students, including undergraduates—numerous peer-reviewed papers in an array of internationally recognized journals that includes: the *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*; the *Annals of Regional Science*; *Environment and Planning A*; *Environment and Planning B*; *Geographical Analysis*; *Growth and Change*; the *Journal of Economic Geography*; the *Journal of Regional Science*; *Papers in Regional Science*; the *Professional Geographer*; *Studies in Regional Science*; *Urban Geography*; and many others. Both the quality and diversity of these publications reflect Mulligan's commitment to—and success in—advancing knowledge in his areas of interest.

Beyond his impressive record of published research, Mulligan is one of the regional science's foremost intellectual leaders. From 1994 to 2002, he co-edited (with

David Plane, Professor of Geography and Regional Development at the University of Arizona, also an RSAI Fellow) the *Journal of Regional Science*, the field's original journal, and he remains a member of the Senior Advisory Board—until the Mulligan-Plane era, the editors had been none other than Walter Isard and Ronald Miller. In addition, Mulligan serves, or has served on, the editorial boards of some of the field's most important other journals—including: the *Annals of Regional Science*; *Papers in Regional Science*; *Growth and Change*; and *Geographical Analysis*—and has refereed papers for many journals and funding organizations. He has also actively participated in the governance of RSAI and the North American Regional Science Council. These and many other activities illustrate the importance of Mulligan's leadership in the field and its organizations.

Moreover—and here I write from personal experience and with deep, deep gratitude—Mulligan is an extraordinary mentor. He began working and publishing with me when I was an Assistant Professor of Planning at the University of Arizona, where he went out of his way to ensure that I became integrated into the university and, also, that I developed a research program commensurate with expectations. Through our many discussions—in his office, over lunch, and elsewhere—Mulligan taught me to have the confidence I needed for an academic career. He taught me the following: how to overcome the adversity of the peer review process; how to improve my analytical skills on an ongoing basis; how to take intellectual risks; how to develop and maintain a sustained research program; and much more. Above all, and I believe this is a key marker of his character, Mulligan taught me to have a keen appreciation for other people's contributions, no matter how large or small, and how to leverage that appreciation—a detailed inventory of what has gone on, is going on, and is com-

Fig. 1 A typical central place system, with some of Mulligan's original equations inset. *Source* (image created by Eyerus)

ing, in the field of regional science and beyond—to excite the imagination needed to develop new and innovative research. (In his office back at Arizona, Mulligan used to sift through [seemingly endless!] piles of journal articles in order to direct me to fresh ideas and, to this, day, more than 10 years later, he sends me a steady stream of thoughts on what I ought to be looking at.) Beyond all of this, Mulligan has helped be secure job opportunities and has guided me through the process of establishing an intellectual identity—in short, I credit Mulligan as nothing less than one of the main forces behind my success as a professional scholar and, also, as a main reason I consider regional science my home field. Though I write from my own experience, I know that there are many others who would say the same (Fig. 1).

Finally, having outlined, all too briefly, Mulligan's achievements and contributions to the field of regional science, I close by inviting—no: encouraging—readers to enjoy each of the papers presented here. I believe that both the variety of questions they address and the array of scientific methods they deploy toward those questions reflect to the richness and vigor of regional science—and, as well, the mark of talent and determination that it takes to be a true leader in the field. Mulligan has left an indelible mark: he is admired, revered, and treasured by a worldwide network of scholars. Like Beckman before him, he is worthy of (to paraphrase his own words) the “the highest complements that an academic ... can receive”. It is my distinct honor to dedicate this special issue to Gordon F. Mulligan—my friend and mentor!

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