

CAG Award for Scholarly Distinction in Geography Dr Terry McGee

Terry McGee is a man of great personal and scholarly integrity whose work has been an inspiration to three generations of students and scholars from several disciplines, in Canada and abroad.

Terry McGee's seminal work has had four main foci: the social and economic geography of the Southeast Asian city; the nature of the informal economy in the developing world; the food distribution systems that are essential to the survival of the proletariat of burgeoning third-world cities; and the development of extended metropolitan regions. There have also been important contributions on rural-urban migration and to the understanding of Southeast Asia as a region. This is a large, distinctive, and enormously influential corpus of work, marked by its consistent incorporation (and development) of theory with empirical evidence (garnered from field investigations in Malaysia, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Indonesia and the New Hebrides [Vanuatu] among other places).

Professor McGee's studies on the nature and structure of the Third World city are given concrete representation by several articles in refereed journals, reports to organizations, chapters in edited collections, and in his books, *The Southeast Asian City*, *The Urbanization Process in the Third World*, and *Theatres of Accumulation*. Of special note is his explanation that such urban places are not simply "early" variants or prototypes of those found in now-industrialized parts of the world; they are locations of radical social and economic change, and are worthy of study in their own terms. This is highlighted by the second focus of Terry McGee's work upon the operation of the alternative, underground, or informal economy, both as a survival strategy in the Developing World and as an area of entrepreneurial activity; this work is exemplified by an early paper published in *Progress in Human Geography*, "The Persistence of the Proto-Proletariat", a book chapter on "The Poverty Syndrome", his book (with Yue-man Yeung) on *Hawkers in Southeast Asian Cities*, and an arrestingly titled article on "Hookers and Hawkets - Making Out in the Third World City". The third issue of *Food Distribution* is of practical importance throughout the Third World because urban places are food deficit areas and the movement of food to them is of vital importance; this is well demonstrated by research empirically grounded in the New Hebrides and Hong Kong. Finally Terry McGee's contribution to understanding the development of extended metropolitan regions is reflected in the 1991 book of that title and several pivotal articles.

A leading figure in the field of development studies for some thirty years, Terry has not "rested on his laurels or sought to bestow pearls of wisdom from a fine leather chair"; instead he has demonstrated enormous commitment and expended prodigious energy in continuing his empirical research. Reflecting his capacity to ask creative questions in new and provocative ways, McGee's scholarship has helped to burnish Geography's reputation, and give it a much more respectable and confident image within development studies.

Professor McGee's has also provided important administrative leadership. At the University of British Columbia he was for many years Director of the Institute of Asian Research. He also served as Vice-President, President, and Past-President of The Canadian Association of Geographers. Typically, his Presidential Address on "Eurocentrism in Geography: The Case of Asian Urbanization" was a profound and thoughtful piece, based upon years of research and understanding. In short, Professor Terry McGee exhibits a rare combination of exceptional academic ability, wonderful research acumen, dedication to his department, university, and discipline, and a thoroughly pleasant, modest personality. He is unquestionably deserving of recognition for his distinguished scholarly contributions to Geography.