

## Warwick Armstrong



Like many McGill geographers, Warwick Armstrong was a New Zealander, trained at Victoria University in Wellington. He nailed his colours to the mast with a 1978 paper entitled "New Zealand: imperialism, class and uneven development" and further developed a comparative analysis of 'Dominion capitalism'.

Warwick came to McGill as an Associate Professor in 1975 and was promoted to Full Professor in 1985. His work covered a range of development issues in rural and urban settings in many countries. An engaging and vibrant undergraduate teacher, he supervised 21 MA and 4 PhD students whom he inspired by his passionate advocacy of the entitlement of the hungry and his sensitivity to the poets of liberation.

Of his publications, the sustained impact is registered by his joint work with Terry McGee: their 1985 book has been re-published in twenty editions and several languages: *Theatres of Accumulation: Studies in Asian and Latin American Urbanization*. The title - a stroke of genius - identifies a new phase in the history of capital. Taking us into the markets and margins of Cuenca, Warwick's exposition of the 'theatre' in Ecuador still resonates with processes ongoing in other parts of the world.

Several subsequent papers addressed hunger in Buenos Aires. As a member of the Centre of Developing Area Studies, Warwick piloted a vigorous new "Food Systems" approach that he sought to apply in an five-year collaboration between McGill University and the University of the Visayas (in the Philippines), funded by the Canadian International Development Agency. Several of his working papers review their debates, disappointments and resurgent energies as academics sought to listen to communities, and to manoeuvre collaboration between academic and official bureaucracies, between 'technical' and 'social science' practitioners. Food Systems remains a commitment and a challenge to scholars and students in nearly every Faculty of this University.

Upon his retirement as Emeritus Professor in 2000, he and partner Jane moved to Oxford in England, where he was appointed a Distinguished Research Associate at the Oxford University Centre for the Environment and a tutor at Wadham College. Collaborations with colleagues in Slovenia and Ireland led him to edit, jointly with James Anderson, the 2007 volume *Geopolitics of European Union Enlargement: The Fortress Empire*. That analysis of border challenges remains startlingly pertinent a decade later as the dramas unfold of 'Brexit', Catalonia, migrant pathways through Central Europe and the 'water border' with Morocco.

The Faculty of Science extends its condolences to Warwick's five children who grew up in our midst, and to his partners and colleagues who shared his impatient struggle to interpret a world of inequalities and envision something new.