

Arthur Getis: *Fellow, WRSA* Memorial Notes



JULY 6, 1934 – MAY 13, 2022

Arthur Getis passed away in May of this year; he was a few months shy of his 88th birthday. His career, ambitions and successes are well documented in a delightful piece he wrote for the RSAI Newsletter (<https://www.regionalscience.org/index.php/component/k2/item/2241-arthur-getis.html>) which he titled “Place and Time: The Right Place at the Right Time.” He was part of a significant cadre of doctoral students at the University of Washington that included WRSA Fellows Waldo Tobler and Richard Morrill, who brought a new, innovative and analytical approach to economic geography. Art’s own stature gained prominence with his work in point pattern analysis and his book, with Barry Boots, *Models of Spatial Processes* (1978). Spatial structure, spatial processes and their representation visually and formally were paramount concerns throughout his career. Manfred Fischer has written an extensive review of Art’s accomplishments for the RSAI website; this can be found here:

(<https://www.regionalscience.org/index.php/news/obituaries/item/3035-in-memorial-professor-arthur-getis-july-6,-1934---may-13,-2022.html>)

After spending the period 1963-1977 at Rutgers University, Art was recruited to Illinois where he remained until 1990. Like many of us, Art wanted to experience the challenge of leadership at the department level and his arrival in Illinois coincided with growth in numbers of regional science colleagues in Urban Planning, Economics and Civil Engineering. I think he enjoyed the stimulation of a diverse set of colleagues, very bright graduate students, the various seminars and a stream of visiting scholars. However, I do not think he enjoyed the attendant personnel issues that come with being a department head; thankfully, for regional science, he resisted moving up in the administration hierarchy and returned to his main interests in science and teaching (he was an outstanding teacher). An emerging doctoral program at San Diego State University and the opportunity to build something in collaboration with University of California Santa Barbara proved irresistible. He remained at SDSU until his retirement.

For WRSA, we were fortunate that his scientific collaboration with Keith Ord stretched beyond significant papers on the relationship between spatial association and distance to the establishment of the Getis-Ord Lecture that has become a prominent feature of the annual meetings. In the true spirit of WRSA, Art proposed that there should be a reception after the lecture; I recall observing the delight he took in having so many folks gathered in one place obviously enjoying both the lecture and the libations that followed. From his time in Washington as a graduate student, through his period in Illinois, this merging of academic and personal interactions resonated with him. We were fortunate that his wife, Judy, and occasionally his daughters would also participate. Whenever the meetings were in San Diego, Art would often host a party at his house for those “Saturday-night captives” who remained in town to secure cheaper airfares. In essence, Art embraced the WRSA motto: *the way academic life should be*. While Art and Judy will no longer be with us in person, we are fortunate that we will be able to celebrate his insights and generosity each year that we attend the Getis-Ord lecture.

Geoffrey Hewings, May 2022