

Resolution on the Retirement of Daniel M. Mulholland

On behalf of the Department of History and of the University as a whole, I am honored to enter a resolution on the retirement of Daniel Mulholland. Daniel has been an exemplary teacher, scholar, and colleague at Tufts for forty-six years. The legacy he has left here is hard to measure because it lies below the surface. Generations of students are richer in knowledge and love of history and colleagues have profited from his guidance and his erudition. To all he has presented an example of what the liberal arts college should represent: the pursuit of learning and the nurture of independent thought. For many years as you entered East Hall from the quad, the first thing you saw was the open door of his office lined floor-to-ceiling with books and at a shabby table in the middle, Dan, reading.

Dan was born in Chicago in 1935. At that period, the University of Chicago accepted students after two years of high school and Dan thus entered the freshman class in 1950, at the age of fifteen. After graduating from the University of Chicago in 1954, he spent two years in the army, largely in Germany. It is characteristic of Dan that he lists his military service under “education” in his CV. Deciding that he did not wish to return to the United States, Dan moved on to Britain, and completed a B.A. in Russian Language and Literature in the St. Catharine’s Society, Oxford, finishing in 1959. From here he went to Harvard for his Ph.D. in Russian History, with one year at Moscow State University. His core research interest is in Soviet history, particularly the formative years up to the collectivization drive of 1932-4. His trenchant reviews range more widely.

Well before receiving his doctorate in 1969, Dan had begun teaching – one year at Wellesley, and three at the University of California at Davis, where he experienced the events of 1968. From Davis he came to Tufts, and here he has remained, fortunately for us. Arriving as a young faculty member, Dan became an active participant in the campus political movements of that heated period. As a result, he was chosen as faculty speaker at the alternative commencement of 1970. Part of his speech was recorded in the *Tufts Criterion*, and while some of what he said he might not now repeat, some quotes foreshadow the Dan we know today. “Our parents are here today to celebrate, with a great deal of relief, no doubt, the culmination of a \$20,000 investment. Bless you,” he said. At least briefly however, he struck another note: “On the other hand, the university does also nurture certain old-fashioned virtues in which I believe there is promise. That is to say, ideas of truth and beauty have their home precisely in the university.” Dan has lost none of the dry humor behind his first statement, and has devoted much of his life to developing the promise he mentions in the second.

The backbone of Dan’s teaching has been his three-part survey of Russian history, but his courses have ranged well beyond that – to his second field, the history of modern Germany, the biographies of Hitler, and to global histories of the years 1968 and 1989. His course on Marxism brought him a coterie of like-minded admirers a few of whom have remained in touch over decades. Some of his courses on Russian culture were taught in collaboration with the faculty members in German, Russian and Asian Languages and Literatures. Dan’s teaching has won him a devoted following of students, and even more importantly, it has educated those students both in the subject matter and in habits of thought. For those who venture more deeply into Russian

history, he is a fount of encyclopedic knowledge, generously shared. A former student, now retired, recently wrote to Dan that he still feels the benefits from the historiography course he took from him in the early 1970s, and that the love of deeper understanding shown by Dan has remained a constant influence.

Dan has served the university unstintingly on innumerable committees, most especially the ones that matter, including the LA&J Committee on Curricula Committee and the Educational Policy Committee. Over many years he has been a reasoned and sometimes contrarian voice on campus, and a staunch defender of faculty and department governance. His contribution goes beyond committees, indeed beyond time and service. Dan is someone whom we can count on to think and to speak straight. His uncompromising intellectual and personal honesty makes him someone we have turned to for judgment of a manuscript, and equally of a problem in university politics. Dan's years as chair of the history department in the 1980s are fondly remembered. He was careful to maintain civility and collegiality within the department, willing to take a junior colleague aside to remind him of the importance of these core values. On the other hand, he has never been hesitant to challenge higher authorities in defense of the department, a colleague or a principle. Dan's Christmas parties were a department fixture, marked by his gift of a book from his collection to every member of the department.

This brings us to Dan's library. He is deeply and broadly well-read, more up-to-date in many of our fields than we are ourselves. For many of us, he has been a resource for reading. Many of us have books he gave us on our shelves. He has told us of books we should read, saved us from those not quite worth the time, and discussed those we both knew. Over forty-six years he amassed an impressive library in several languages, particularly, of course, in Russian. The best of this has been donated to the Tisch library. As a result, Tufts now has a collection of books published in Russia and the Soviet Union on history, politics, literature and intellectual life. This library spans the whole of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first. It is an important resource for scholars and students present and future, which Tufts could not have hoped for without Dan's generosity.

We will miss Dan greatly but wish him the best in his retirement, and we know that he will be reading not far off. On behalf of the Department of History, I ask that this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the faculty and that a copy be given to Professor Daniel Mulholland.

Respectfully submitted,

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