



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

“There’s no putting that genie back in the bottle.” From recent news articles, it would seem that we have an infestation of decarcerated genies that puts teeming bedbugs to shame. I have seen genie bylines on stories as varied as healthcare reform, nuclear power, the “Arab Spring” and Tahrir Square, medical marijuana (wouldn’t a bong analogy be more appropriate?), and video-on-demand.

As the new Editor of *Cartographic Perspectives*, why am I so anxious to move to an open access format, which could be likened to releasing freely our latest peer-reviewed content to all corners of the world? The truth is that the genie is already out of the bottle when it comes to academic research and publishing, and the most exciting new opportunities in publishing will be in directing and guiding the resulting flow of information.

At the great risk of mixing bottle metaphors, it is tempting but inaccurate to believe an editor akin to a sommelier, selecting fine wine for appreciative patrons in an exquisite restaurant. I can search for, but have limited power over securing, the best peer-reviewed content. It’s the producers of content who will choose their outlet, direct the flow of their articles, and ultimately define the bounds of their readership. In uncorking the genie’s bottle, we not only expand our audience of map tipplers and tasters alike, but also attract the best quality content.

What will remain constant with *CP* in spite of this change is the rigorous peer-review of content to ensure the academic quality of submitted publications. Without this essential element the genie is vigorless; the wine is vinegar. My commitment to rigorous academic review is reflected in the gravitas of my Editorial Board, with whom I am honored to work.

I recognize, however, a changing expectation among readers and authors regarding the immediacy with which information is shared. As such, I am committed to providing authors with decisions regarding acceptance in as timely a manner as possible. Additionally, we with NACIS are currently working to move *CP* to Open Journal Systems (OJS), publication software used by some 10,000 journals worldwide. This change will, among other advantages, offer rapid distribution of peer-reviewed content upon final acceptance.

We have contracted with the Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing (CCSP) Press to design, host, and maintain our manuscript management system. CCSP Press is affiliated with the Public Knowledge Project (PKP), which is housed at the Simon Fraser University (SFU) library. SFU library hosts approximately 200 journals, with CCSP Press providing publishing services to a number of these journals that have chosen an open access format. They successfully assisted other journals in the transition from a print to an open access, digital format, and I am confident that they will be able to deliver similar services that meet the specific needs of our organization and journal.

In the interim, I am pleased to introduce the first 2011 issue of *CP* while our OJS is under construction. It is in the format of previous Special Digital Issues (*CP* 64, 66, and 67), and would not have been possible without the hard work of my two Assistant Editors, Robert Roth, a newly minted Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and Laura McCormick of XNR Productions.

This issue contains two peer-reviewed articles on very different topics. The first, Mark Denil's "A Search for a Radical Cartography," takes on the important task of pinning down what radical cartography is. The second, Robert Roth, Cindy Brewer, and Michael Stryker's "A Typology of Operators for Maintaining Legible Map Designs at Multiple Scales," takes on the task of defining the important considerations in multiscale map design. Both have important implications for cartographic theory, practice, and education.

The Collections section article for this issue was written by MaryJo Price, Special Maps Librarian of the Lewis J. Ort Library at Frostburg State University. It discusses a number of maps from the collection of historical interest. I also would like to take this opportunity to thank outgoing Collections Section Editor Angie Cope for all of her hard work, and welcome Terri Robar as the new section editor. Terri is a Librarian Associate Professor at the University of Miami Libraries, a member of NACIS and frequent attendee of our annual conference, and a welcome addition to *CP*.

The Collections piece is followed by a special “Travel Log” contributed by Michael Peterson. Michael hit the road last summer with an iPad, and made extensive use of the “Maps” app. He documents the pros and cons of this application, with insights into Maps as a navigation device and a “general travel companion.”

I am also excited to announce that Andy Woodruff of Axis Maps will be the first Section Editor of a new section entitled “On the Horizon.” This section was developing organically in previous Special Digital Issues of *CP*, with authors anxious to provide detailed tutorials on how to finesse the cartographic elements of new technologies. Andy lays out his vision for this section in this issue’s article, and invites contributions from our readership.

Mark Denil remains as Review Section Editor, and reviews for this issue provide an overview and critique of four varied and interesting works. The section “In the Marginalia,” which rotates from issue to issue annually, recognizes winners of the Student Poster and Dynamic Map Competitions announced at the NACIS conference in October of 2010. It also serves as a reminder for students to participate in these events this fall, and possibly have your map featured in this section next year.

Last but not least, Visual Fields offers new Section Editor Daniel Huffman, of the University of Wisconsin Cartography Lab, the opportunity to seek out visually striking work that is, in his words, “inspirational, beautiful, and intriguing.” This installment features examples of Tim Wallace’s “Bogus Art Maps,” sure to inspire other cartographers who can’t remember the last time they actually made a map.

As we move from this to future issues, I take the liberty of making three wishes on behalf of *CP*. The first is that readership will expand, introducing more mapmakers to the NACIS community with all of its benefits of cartographic insight, guidance, and community. The second is that *CP* will be known for its effective and efficient dissemination of the current state of cartographic information. The third is that *CP* will become the first choice of more and more cartographic researchers when deciding where to submit their peer-reviewed content. These may seem like the dewy musings of a fledgling editor, but do not underestimate the power of a grateful genie unleashed!

-Patrick Kennelly