

## EDITORIAL TRANSITIONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF *THE INDUSTRIAL GEOGRAPHER*

Since the establishment of *The Industrial Geographer* in 2003, the journal has existed to provide a quality outlet for theoretically-informed, empirically-based research in economic geography. This general mission has not changed, and will not change in the foreseeable future. However, the specifics of how we achieve our goals as a journal are always up for debate, revision, and retargeting.

This is as it should be. As a reflection of ongoing research in our field, *The Industrial Geographer* needs to be aware of, and responsive to, change in economic geography. However, change for the sake of change is not helpful. The change we seek to guide as editors of the journal is driven by two questions we ask ourselves, and through this editorial, our readership and the broad economic geography community:

1. What can *The Industrial Geographer* do to be an attractive venue for publication of research that truly contributes to the advancement of economic geography?
2. What can *The Industrial Geographer* do to encourage the development of dialogue in the field, including but also going beyond the traditional article focus of academic journals?

Space and time prohibit an exhaustive discussion of the background behind these questions, but we would like to pass along a few thoughts related to each.

First, related to attracting quality, field-advancing research, we believe one key element is continuing to increase the exposure of geographers to *The Industrial Geographer* as an important publication venue. To this end, we will extend the Association of American Geographers annual meeting special session series sponsored by the journal, begun at the 2008 Boston annual meetings, to the 2009 Las Vegas meeting and beyond. The goal of these sessions is to bring together some of the leading researchers in economic geography to present on some of the most important current topics of investigation in the field. The sessions are a first step in building a connection between the kinds of in-depth discussions emerging at AAG meetings and the research you are seeing published in this journal. We are pleased to acknowledge editorial board member Jim Wheeler's central role in our session preparations for 2009. Jim has already confirmed some truly excellent presenters, with more to come. Please look for at least one session sponsored by the *The Industrial Geographer* in the upcoming AAG meeting schedule.

Second, related to encouraging the development of dialogue in the field, we believe one key area of need in economic

geography focuses on the promotion of what might be called an increased “intergenerational exchange” of ideas and research priorities in economic geography. Not to label particular ages or years, but we think that the field would benefit greatly if, to avoid a more specific term, “established” economic geographers had a greater opportunity to share research ideas, insights, and recommendations gained over the decades with economic geographers who are still early in their careers. To balance and round out this dialogue, we also think it would be helpful if “early-career” economic geographers were to have a focused venue for discussion of the emerging research problems, ideas, and opportunities they see as most important. We think *The Industrial Geographer* is well-positioned to promote this kind of dialogue.

What does this mean in terms of specifics? We would like to intentionally leave much of this undefined for the present, in the hope of spurring on discussion with you, our readers. However, a couple of thoughts related to any initiative by *The Industrial Geographer* in this area include:

- Traditional forms of journal presentation (i.e. an article format) can, and probably should, be an important part of this dialogue.
- At the same time, as an online and open-access journal, *The Industrial Geographer* has some particular advantages in developing *richer* and *more immediate* interactions through the journal’s web presence.

The editors of *The Industrial Geographer* will continue to advance plans related to intergenerational exchanges of ideas, but we invite you to be part of the process. We know that challenges continue to exist for the journal, not the least of which is the many high-quality publication venues that continue to flourish in economic geography. We firmly believe that competition is a good thing, that *The Industrial Geographer* can continue to grow by providing a unique contribution to the field, and that one of the best ways for us to make this contribution is to build our connection to the economic geography community. As a reader and member of this community, feel free to give input related to any of the ideas the above, or anything else connected to the journal, to either of the co-editors. Please let us know what you think. Our e-mail addresses are listed below.

Lastly, this issue marks the beginning of the work of Murray Rice as co-editor of the journal along with Ron Kalafsky, who is continuing in his co-editor role. *The Industrial Geographer* thanks Bill Graves for his service to the journal over the past couple of years as co-editor. We’re grateful that Bill will continue to contribute his expertise by staying on as a member of the editorial board.

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