
Introduction: Society and Space

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Foundations

Our new journal appears at a time of increasing social and intellectual ferment. This is affecting all social sciences, including anthropology, economics, history, human geography, planning, political science, regional science, and sociology. These diverse disciplines are all attempting to fashion a response to two contradictory trends. The first is a strong convergence around the object of study in the social sciences; and the second is an equally prominent divergent trend toward protectionism and isolationism behind disciplinary barriers. Under the impetus of these developments, we are witnessing the beginning of a search for a new social theory which may act as a powerful force for advancement and integration in the social sciences. *Society and Space* has been created to harness the energy behind this search (Dear, 1983, 1).

These were the opening words of the editorial in the first issue, written by the journal's first editor Michael Dear. A number of things are immediately apparent. This was a journal of social theory, which situated itself within the social sciences as a whole. While Dear was a geographer, and most of the initial board were similarly located within that discipline, its impetus and aspirations were already interdisciplinary. Dear remarked that the social sciences were "drawn together by a common object of analysis", namely "analysis of the social structuring of human actions within the evolving frameworks of society", but that other factors conspired to keep the different disciplines apart. The reasons, nearly thirty years later, sound disturbingly familiar: crisis in higher education and budget cutbacks; philosophical and economic conservatism; protectionism and sectarianism in disciplines; alongside specialization within disciplines (see Short, 1983). Yet for Dear and his colleagues, this was precisely the reason why such a journal as *Society and Space* needed to be founded.

Despite its broad ranging focus, the journal also offered something deliberately particular. While general in its aspiration, it was necessarily specialized in the intellectual skills being brought to bear. Dear described it in the following way: "At the core of our concern is the structure and evolution of society over space and time". The aspiration was unequivocal: "*Society and Space* is open to all disciplines wishing to explore the mediation of social processes through space" (Dear, 1983, 1; see Thrift, 1983a). In one early issue, Allen Scott issued a call to move "towards a theoretical human geography" (Scott, 1984: 119), trading on Edward Soja's influential idea of the "sociospatial dialectic" (Soja, 1980), but

this, for him too, was not confined to Geography as a discipline. Rather “this anticipated human geography is currently in the early stages of formulation by a loose coalition of geographers, sociologists, political economists, planners, historians, and others, all of whom are beginning to discover the socio-spatial dialectic as a crucial moment of social enquiry” (1984: 119). By the time of the third volume, Dear was able, with good reason, to call for a “modest celebration”, suggesting that the journal had “successfully broken the traditional mold of academic journals. Many recent journals seem to have been constituted merely to ensure the publication without hindrance of the work of some special interest group. Most of these groups seem content to speak in an arcane code known only to their own members” (1985: 1). This journal has always claimed to be different. Indeed, in 1986, Derek Gregory was already admonishing a geographical narrowing of concerns, or an exclusively spatial focus to the questions being examined, “lest the analyses will be radically thinned and our theory irredeemably impoverished” (1986: 128).

Debates

In the first editorial, Michael Dear had made it clear that the journal would “actively encourage debate among competing perspectives”, and keep in mind the relation “between theoretical and empirical analysis” (Dear, 1983: 1). This was put in practice a number of times during the succeeding years. One relatively early example was the piece by Saunders and Williams (1986) on the use of theory in urban studies, which produced responses by David Harvey and a number of other scholars (Harvey, 1987; Smith et al., 1987). Key themes in that debate included the relation between Marxism and postmodernism, between theory and practice, realism and its standing in the academy. In an editorial introducing these responses, Dear showed how the journal, even though implicated in the original charge, was a forum where these debates took place, rather than simply representing one position in that debate (Dear, 1987). Part of Saunders and Williams’s opposition was to a single intellectual tradition claiming omniscience, and they aimed to highlight the problems of a strict orthodoxy. For them, both the Marxist work of Harvey and Andrew Sayer’s critical realism were deeply problematic. If much of the debate seems rather arcane to us today – all that discussion of the pernicious influence, or not, of Althusser in urban studies – the claims and counter-claims are all-too-familiar.

A rather different debate, which focused not so much of *which* theory, but *why* theory, occurred in the early 1990s. Derek Gregory hinted at this in an editorial, suggesting that

Although – perhaps even because – *Society and Space* has done so much to widen the conversation about the salience of concepts of place, space, and landscape across the whole field of the humanities and the social sciences,

there are signs and stirrings of a countermovement. It may not have made it to the conference circuit yet; or, at any rate, it is not very visible *inside* the seminar rooms or the covers of the leading journals. But one can already hear its chatter *outside* them. The claim is, quite simply, that the moment of social theory has passed. The gossips are saying that social theory was only a transient preoccupation, a paradigm shift that passed in the night. At best, it provided a series of new (and some not so new) ideas; at worst, it failed to interest the buyers in the marketplace (and it is not coincidental that the language of the commodity and the cash register should spiral through so many of these objections) (Gregory, 1991: 1).

Gregory was quick to concede that there were very many valid criticisms of social theory. While progress had been made in countering its sexism, its ethnocentrism and the challenges of postcolonialism, environmentalism and ecology were still to be faced. But the charge, he suggested, was wider: it was against “the very *idea* of social theory”. Gregory’s diagnosis was broad. While part a product of a “creeping anti-intellectualism”, and tied it to the instrumentalism of the New Right, he also considered the charge that current preoccupations with the “*post modern*” had damaged theory, as if social theory could only be understood as a product of the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment notions of critique. Gregory rightly rejected this idea. ‘Postmodern social theory’ was not a contradiction, he argued, and it was impossible to see how “post-modernism could ever be seen as a-theoretical” (1991: 2; see Gregory, 1987). While rightly questioning the label of ‘social theory’, Gregory was clear this did not confine us “to the wastelands of empiricism” (1991: 2). Drawing on Eagleton (1986), he recognized that “opposition to theory usually means an opposition to other people’s theories and a blindness to one’s own” (1991: 2). Indeed, his overall diagnosis was that opposition to theory was often political, in that theory diagnosed the relation between knowledge and power. That was not confined to any particular theoretical position, but it demonstrated the practical relevance of theoretical models. “The moment of social theory has not passed; it has hardly begun” (1991: 3).

In the early 1990s, in response to Deutsche (1991 and this volume) and Massey (1991) and their critiques of his *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1989), David Harvey wrote an angry retort that he chose to publish in *Antipode*, rather than *Society and Space* (1992). In that piece, he drew the journal as a whole into his quite specific and particular argument: “The standard of debate set in *Society and Space* (a journal launched with good intentions) has evidently slipped into intellectualized postmodernist romanticism with not a little quackery thrown in” (Harvey, 1992: 323). At least one of the editors indicated that the journal would have been open to publishing the response itself, suggesting that the nature of the complaint “perhaps this justifies Harvey’s decision to publish his response to two recent *Society and Space* articles in another journal. Perhaps”. (Jackson, 1993: 124). The journal’s second editor, Geraldine (Gerry) Pratt took up the broader issue of modes of engagement in a later editorial:

My aims in raising this issue are modest. They are to restate the long-standing position of the editors of *Society and Space*. The journal is not a club. We relish differences of opinion, theory, and interpretation, as well as open and constructive debate . . . As editor of *Society and Space*, I strive to make the journal a place where serious committed debate across differing perspectives is expected and welcomed. I also recognise that the journal as an institution lends credibility to the criticism that is published within it (Pratt, 1996: 254–5).

The journal has also sought to expose the dangers of reading, writing and working solely within texts written in English, with important discussions of works written in other languages, and carrying an obituary for French cultural geographer Joël Bonnemaïson that was framed as “a wake-up call for a more multilingually engaged *Society and Space*” (Pénot and Agnew, 1998: 253).

Many of the same kinds of virtues have continued in the journal. It has used the benefit of position to bring into circulation work by social theorists and commission translations of writings by those who do not write in English. Prominent thinkers such as Manuel Castells (1983, also in the Foundations volume; 1985); J.K Gibson-Graham (1995) and John Urry (1987; 2004; Watts and Urry, 2008) have published in the journal, and in recent years, it has published work by the likes of Kostas Axelos (2006), Etienne Balibar (2009), Judith Butler (2007), Edward S. Casey (2011); Pierre Macherey (2011), and Peter Sloterdijk (2009a, 2009b, 2009c). Pieces by Balibar, Quentin Meillassoux and Michel Serres are forthcoming. While indicating the range of social theory that has appeared in the journal, this listing also demonstrates the journal’s intention that “spatial appropriations of theorists should be at the forefront of their reception, rather than follow in the wake of other disciplines” (Cowen et al., 2011: 192). Over the years, the journal has also run a number of interviews with theorists and philosophers including Anthony Giddens, Raymond Williams, Henri Lefebvre, Rey Chow, Graciela Uribe Ortega, Edward Said, Alain Badiou, Michael Goodchild, John Urry, and Sandro Mezzandra.² There have also been dialogs between David Harvey and Donna Haraway (1995), and Naomi Klein and Neil Smith (2008).

Yet, this was never theory purely for its own sake. Early discussions in the journal had discussed the way to use a contextualized theory (Thrift, 1983b; Gregory, 1985), and there was always a caution about spatial terms without practical groundings. Pratt, for instance, noted the potential of “being seduced by geographical and spatial metaphors that are ultimately aspatial and insensitive to place” (Pratt, 1992: 244). Her purpose was a call to think about the positions from which authors and editors spoke. In a later editorial, she outlined the continuation of long-standing aspirations:

First, we continue to invite a wide range of discussions around the theme of society and space, discussions that move across disciplines, perspectives,

times, and places, *Society and Space* is a forum for social, economic, political, and cultural analyses, based in the understanding that economic theory and practice, for example, are also metaphorical and cultural performances, just as cultural practices are inseparable from economic ones. Second, we retain the ideal of opening the journal to argument and debate from diverse intellectual communities (Pratt, 1994: 1).

But she also underscored something that was perhaps in danger of being lost in theoretical debates, and noted that form as well as content was open to challenge. Pratt called for social theory with practical relevance, noting Derek Gregory's call for 'bloody theory' (1993), and broadly asking for work that took in "social analysis, and commentary that engage[s] both empirical research and the immediacy of embodied everyday life" (Pratt, 1994: 1).³ Under Pratt's editorship, the journal did indeed move in these directions, with more and more work on the social, the cultural, identity politics and the body.

One of the ways that the journal has continued to have a practical, political edge to its work has been in editorials or commentaries on a range of contemporary events. To pick simply those from the 2000s, there have been discussions of anti-globalization protests in Seattle (Smith, 2000; Wainwright et al., 2000); September 11, 2001 and the 'war on terror' (Smith, 2001; Kirsch, 2003; Gregory, 2004; Graham, 2005; Amoore and de Goede, 2011); the future of revolution (Smith, 2007); on Hurricane Katrina (Bakker, 2005; Braun and McCarthy, 2005); the Asian tsunami of 2004 (Olds et al., 2005); and the global financial crisis (Sidaway, 2008; Minca, 2009). But such concerns have not simply been found in the commentaries, and a strong interventionist streak runs through the journal. The journal can, rightly, take some credit for its role in generating such debates. While never a journal of Political Geography, it has always been a home for politicized geography, engaged social and spatial theory.

People

In a retrospective of the journal's first ten years, Dear and Thrift discussed the journal's foundation and its initial aims (1992). Recognizing that a decade was a short time period compared to other journals, they nonetheless stressed that "critical self-reflection" was something that the journal placed a premium on. They recount that the idea for the journal was born in Berrima, New South Wales in 1981, coincidentally just up the road from where I am writing these lines. Gordon Clark, Michael Dear, Dean Forbes, Nigel Thrift, and Peter Williams were at the meeting – with Forbes, Thrift and Williams all visiting the Australian National University, as I am currently, Dear in Sydney, and Clark visiting his native land. The initial moment was, not, they said, propitious. Social theory was having a hostile reception in geography, in part because of its association

with Marxism. But this presented another problem: *Antipode* was perceived as the left journal in Geography, and this new venture was seen as being “likely to ‘split the left’ in human geography by distracting attention from *Antipode*” (Dear and Thrift, 1992: 715). In addition, they note, the financial situation of the early 1980s with cuts to library budgets meant that the journal might not be made available.

Pion founder and journal publisher, John Ashby picks up the story of the journal’s foundation (1992). A fourth *Environment and Planning* journal had been initially proposed by Nigel Thrift immediately after the creation of *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*. Thrift’s initial suggestion had been for a group to run the journal, with a rotating editor, but Ashby had insisted on a single editor “to make things work” (Ashby, 1992). That person was Michael Dear. As Michael recounts: “From that day forward, John and I participated in an enduring conspiracy: that *Society and Space* would never be boring or predictable, our readers would always be kept on edge, and every issue would be a surprise. It seemed to me then, as now, an admirable publishing philosophy” (1999: 508). As Dear recalls, while Ashby could be conservative on design, he was an intellectual risk-taker, and readers of the journal probably do not recognize the debt owed for his labors.⁴ While Michael was indeed the editor for the journal’s first decade, as he stressed in his retirement editorial, the journal had been “a *collective* effort in every sense of the word” (Dear, 1992: 607). Michael’s co-editors had been Nigel Thrift throughout; Derek Gregory, Allen Scott, John Short, and Gerry Pratt.⁵



Society and Space editors and Pion staff 1985.
Left to Right: Derek Gregory, John Ashby, Michael Dear, Jan Schubert (now Pion Editorial Director), Nigel Thrift (taken from Dear 1999).

When Michael was replaced as editor by Gerry, she brought new co-editors on board in Peter Jackson and Neil Smith, with Nigel Thrift and Derek Gregory continuing (see Pratt, 1993; 2004). The journal moved from identifying authors only by their surname and initials to the use of first names at this time. Gerry called this “a gesture towards embodying the intellect” (Pratt, 1994). This team saw the journal through the 1990s and the first half of the 2000s, before Gerry decided to hand over the reins. Michael had been editor for 10 years; Gerry for 14.

As I said in my own opening editorial, although I had a strong team around me – Gerry and Nigel continued as co-editors for two years and I was joined by Eduardo Mendieta and Emily Brady – I took over “with some inevitable apprehension”:

There are many things I would like to do with the journal during my time as editor, but I am conscious that my enthusiasm should not get in the way of what the journal does so well – publish challenging, well-written, and theoretical innovative contributions to ongoing debates, as well as sparking fresh ideas and mapping new directions. In that respect, as in others, Gerry’s time as editor is a hard act to follow (Elden, 2007a: 2).

That opening editorial coincided with the sad death of long-term journal friend, Allan Pred. I closed by quoting the words that he had placed on his department website: “I am totally unconcerned with the disciplinary limits of geography, but fully concerned with geography as an ontological condition, as an inescapable existential reality” (Elden, 2007a: 4).

The last few years, during my time as editor, have seen further changes to the team putting the journal together. While in earlier years, the review side had been handled by one of the main editors – initially Nigel Thrift and then Derek Gregory – under Gerry’s tenure the role had been taken on by others including Katharyne Mitchell, Donald Moore, Bruce Braun and Carolyn Cartier. Mary Thomas and Christian Abrahamsson became review editors in 2008 (Thomas and Abrahamsson, 2008). While the review side of the journal is not represented in the articles that follow, single book reviews and review essays, review symposia and other pieces such as discussions of films such as *Fahrenheit 9/11* and *Shooting Dogs* (Acland et al., 2004; Abrahamsson (ed.), 2008) have been integral to the journal since its inception. In the first ten years, each volume ended with synoptic reviews of the year’s work in the field (Forbes et al., 1983; 1984; 1985; Dear et al., 1986; 1987; 1988; Barnes et al., 1989; 1990); culminating in “an eclectic listing” of books of the decade (Thrift et al., 1992). While part of the academic journal industry, the journal has always recognized the crucial role books play in shaping debates within and beyond any single discipline. Co-editors have also changed: Gerry and Nigel moved to a new position as ‘honorary editors’ in 2009, joining founding editor Michael Dear in an advisory role, and Deborah Cowen and Natalie Oswin joined the team (Brady et al., 2009). Eduardo Mendieta and Emily Brady moved

on in 2011, with Peter Gratton, Maia Green, and Jane Jacobs their replacements (Cowen et al., 2011).

This may appear to indicate a speeding up of the editorial turnover, but the journal is a very different entity to how it was back in 1983. Then the journal published only four issues a year, around 500 pages in total. Each issue had four to six articles, with editorials and reviews making up the balance. With volume 10, 1992, the journal expanded to six issues a year, but kept the number of pages per issue the same. Until volume 21 in 2003, the total number of pages per volume was around 780. The number of pages per issue rose for volumes 22–24, and again in 2007. It now has six issues of 190 pages; 1140 per volume.

We now work on the basis of around ten full articles an issue, with commentaries, review essays and reviews alongside them. Submission numbers have grown too. Figures for years during my tenure as editor are the following: in 2007, there were 132 submissions; in 2008, 157; in 2009, 176; in 2010, 243. To date (June 10th) in 2011, there have been 121, so if previous trends continue we are expecting over 300 articles this year. Very roughly we work on 600–650 words to a page, so for text-only articles that is roughly 120,000 words per issue: basically a fairly substantial edited book every two months. We now publish around 55 articles a year – quite a contrast to the twenty or so in the first few years. In total, this means the journal has published something approaching 1,000 articles in its nearly thirty years of existence.

Editors have at times felt moved to challenge or reflect upon various aspects of the journal's own production, role in the academy and the publishing industry, examining the use of author: date style references rather than encouraging footnotes (Gregory, 1990); particular modes of engagement (Pratt, 1996); and the way peer review works as an informal exchange economy (Elden, 2008).

Selection

Going through all the back issues in working on this volume was very interesting. Although I knew these pretty well, there were still a number of surprises. It was fascinating to trace the ebb and flow of intellectual debates within geography and related fields through the pieces that appeared in the journal. Topics of concern and types of approach come and go over time. Someone writing an intellectual history of debates in geography and beyond would find lots of interest in its pages. These would include urban focused themes such as gentrification (Smith, 1986; articles in Vol. 12 No. 1); theories of Los Angeles (Soja and Scott, 1986; and the whole of Vol. 4 No. 3; as well as Soja's article in the Foundations volume); and edge cities (Dear and Keil (eds), 1994). It would cover theoretical reflections on the scale debate (Brenner, 1998; Collinge, 1999; Jessop et al., 2008; also in the Foundations volume; Jonas, 1994; Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2008; Swyngedouw, 2000); actor-network

theory (Hetherington and Law (eds), 2000; Murdoch, 1997; November et al., 2010); performativity (Rose and Thrift (eds), 2000); landscape (Rose and Wylie (eds), 2006) or critical geopolitics (Ó Tuathail and Dalby (eds), 1994; plus articles in section five). This is take just a few themes, and only a few examples within each.

The journal has often been important in the introduction of new thinkers, or aspects of their work, to geographical and spatial debates, including Badiou (Constantinou (ed.), 2009), Baudrillard (Smith, 1997; Smith with Doel, 2001), Butler (Gregson and Rose, 2000 and this volume; Butler, 2007), Deleuze (Doel, 1996; Jacobs, 1996; Massumi, 1996), Foucault (Driver, 1985 and this volume; Philo, 1992; Elden, 2007b), and Sloterdijk (Elden et al., 2009). Discussions of various theoretical movements or approaches, such as hermeneutics (Pile, 1990), poststructuralism (Bonnert, 1989), postmodernism (Doel and Matless (eds), 1992) and non-representational theory have often been found within its pages. The journal was at the forefront of early work on cities and warfare (Thrift and Forbes, 1985; Hewitt, 1987); on the spatial politics of the Israel/Palestine conflict (Yiftachel, 1991); and the new geographies of the European Union (Anderson, 1996). Much work within animal geography was published in the journal (Anderson, 2000; Brown and Rasmussen, 2010; Philo, 1995 and this volume; Wolch and Emel (eds), 1995). The journal has long been an outlet for political economy, for critical race work, for feminist engagements; and for studies of sexuality (Puar et al. (eds), 2003) and intimacy (Oswin and Olund (eds), 2010)

Choosing a mere 19 articles from that list is, of course, an impossible task. What I have aimed to do with this selection – on which I am pleased to acknowledge the advice of Michael, Nigel and Gerry – is to give something of a sampling of the rich resources to be found in back issues. Right from the start I decided that we would not reprint articles that were already widely available in book form – which disqualified such classics as Thrift (1983a), Philo (1992), Harvey (1998), and Whatmore (1997). Five themes were taken to exemplify the work of the journal: corporeal cartographies; gender and performativity; human and non-human landscapes; political economies; and geopolitics.

Corporeal Cartographies includes four articles that show the breadth of engagement with the body and its geographies in the journal. It begins with Felix Driver's early engagement with Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*; and moves to Felicity Callard's theoretical reflections which range from postmodern notions of the cyborg to Marx's account of corporeality in *Capital*. Key themes are illustrated through Ruth Butler and Sophia Bowlby's examination of disabled people's experience of public space and Gill Valentine's study of food consumption.

Related themes are picked up in the second section, on **Gender and Performativity**. Gerry Pratt and Susan Hanson examine the interrelation of gender, class and space, especially in terms of the gender division of labor in

urban settings. Rosalyn Deutsche provides a critical reading of David Harvey's *The Condition of Postmodernity* from a feminist perspective. Finally in this section, Nicky Gregson and Gillian Rose show how Judith Butler's work can be developed in productive ways in dialog with debates in geography.

Human and Non-Human Landscapes takes four articles that illustrate how geographies of the environment and nature should never be reduced to a passive world changed by human action. Jim and Nancy Duncan use literary theory to show how landscapes can be read, but stress the importance of sociohistorical and political processes in their production and comprehension. Chris Philo suggests that animals need to be taken much more carefully into account in *human* geography, especially in urban settings; while Adrian Franklin demonstrates how nature does things, rather than simply has things done to it through an examination of gum trees in Australia. Shiloh R. Krupar rounds off the section with an analysis of how a natural reserve is being constructed in a former weapons testing area, and looks at nature's resilience.

The final two sections further stress the political aspects of the journal's work. First, under the heading of **Political Economies**, Trevor J. Barnes and Michael R. Curry show how postmodernism has impacted on economic geography, through an interrogation of the use of metaphors. Elaine Hartwick returns to the earlier theme of consumption, but examines it through a commodity-chain approach to gold, from advertisements, to factories, to gold mines, apartheid and the 'gold widows' left behind by workers from Lesotho going to work in South Africa. Jim Glassman uses Gramscian ideas of hegemony to examine US labor foreign policy, in particular, in relation to the 'global south'; and Marieke de Goede examines the way Islamic monetary exchange mechanisms were targeted as part of the 'war on terror'.

These themes are developed in the final section on **Geopolitics**. Gearóid Ó Tuathail offers one of the key accounts establishing a 'critical geopolitics', using Derrida to discuss maps, geography and global politics. William Walters analyses the Schengenland system within Europe with its aim of making the spaces of the European Union a borderless territory, and yet opens up a number of different borders: geopolitical, national and biopolitical. Jeremy Forman and Alexandre Kedar discuss the legal and political geographies of Palestinian dispossession in Israel. And finally Melissa W. Wright provides a Derridean and feminist inspired reading of the killing of women and girls in northern Mexico.

Futures

Society and Space was founded with an aspiration to be the social theory journal in geography. It has always had the simultaneous purpose of interrogating the spatial aspects of political action. As successive editors have stressed, and submissions to the journal have long demonstrated, these were dual purposes that

could not be confined to a single discipline or a narrow range of debates. The range of articles that have appeared in its pages, and the diverse theories used to analyze the complex spaces of our world, show its continuing importance. In my first editorial for the journal, I set out an agenda which harked back to the founding aspirations of the journal:

Society and Space therefore continues to provide a forum for discussing the relation between the spatial and the social. Indeed, we would suggest that this is a mutually constitutive relation, in which to discuss either without regard to the other would be to make a false separation. The journal has a number of key aims in thinking this through. It seeks to be philosophically sophisticated, drawing on a range of contemporary and historical theories and theorists, both in terms of utilising their insights, exposing their blindspots, and advancing their ideas. It seeks to be practically relevant, demonstrating the crucial importance of spatial relations and the insights that can be produced from this perspective. In following these aims the journal's vision is a call to concretely theorise, and to undertake this through a range of contemporary, historical, political, and cultural contexts. . .

The journal editors are equally committed to the spatial aspects of political action and the abstractions of social theory. We believe that this commitment is best achieved by keeping a balance between, and placing into creative tension, economic, political, and cultural analyses, informed by theoretical innovation and underpinned by a range of empirical research. We hope that debates within social/spatial theory will take place within the journal rather than this journal being seen as a home for one side of such discussions. As such we encourage pieces that challenge, critique, develop, and break with traditions, orthodoxies, and perspectives – old or new – including those that some may feel are associated with this journal and those involved with it (Elden, 2007a: 3).

The current editorial team believes in this vision for the journal as strongly as our colleagues before us. Now, as ever, our aim is to publish contextually sensitive social theorizing that is critically and politically inspired. In the future, the journal wishes to receive submissions that continue to analyze, contest and provoke. The journal wants to continue the conversation, to develop, and to enter its fourth decade continually searching for innovative and useful means of understanding the world. We are keen that Geography, and geography, does not simply follow other disciplines or schools of thought, but anticipates and leads debates, breaks new ground, and critically reflects on its present and past. We remain open to work from across the breadth of Geography as a discipline, but equally from any other discipline that can contribute to the discussions. We remain as keen as ever to have work from outside Europe and North America. We look to publish work that develops or tests theories, introduces ideas or thinkers that have been less well explored in spatial debates, or challenges in other ways. We do not showcase research that merely offers an application of existing theory. As you read the articles

in this collection, and may be inspired to look further into the rich resources of the archive, we hope that you too are inspired to write work that may appear in its pages.

Notes

1. I am grateful to editors and co-editors, past and present, for their work on the journal. Michael Dear, Eduardo Mendieta and Nigel Thrift generously commented on a draft. I ask forbearance for when my reconfiguration of the story does not match their recollections.
2. Gregory, 1984; Cooke, 1984; Burgel and Dezes, 1987; Discipline and Place Collective, 1997; Smith and Desbiens, 2000; Katz and Smith, 2003; Constantinou and Madarasz, 2009; Schuurman, 1999 and 2009; Adey and Bissell, 2010; Cobarrubias et al., 2011.
3. In that piece Gregory offers some reflections, twenty years on, on David Harvey's *Social Justice and the City* (1973). Gregory notes that "one of the reasons that book attracted so much attention at the time – and continues to haunt me – was, I think, the connective imperative it sought to establish between knowledge and power, theory and practice, intellectual inquiry and political culture" (1993: 253). This exuberance, in Gregory's terms, was in danger of being lost in theory for the sake of theory, what he called a "theoretical work-out", while losing "a more passionate sense of politics" (1993: 253).
4. Michael Dear, personal correspondence, 30th May 2011.
5. When the journal began, the effective coeditors were labelled as the 'editorial board'; with what is now the editorial board an editorial advisory board.

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