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Editors' Introduction

Several would-be contributors have politely asked us what it takes to get published in *Landscape Journal* these days. Our replies have surprised even us sometimes, and have caused us to review our policies on scholarship, on quality, on our responsibility for mentoring our peers, and on the mission of the *Journal*. This is less a shift in editorial position than a reflection of broader changes in the production and consumption of scholarship in landscape architecture. In fact, our position on scholarship is probably remarkably similar to our forbears. With that said, we take this opportunity to clarify a few points.

We co-edit *Landscape Journal* because we believe that scholarship, theory, and practice mutually reinforce each other. In this sense, we want the *Journal* to play a stronger role in nurturing the partnership between scholarly practitioners and educators in landscape architecture. Who are the scholarly practitioners in our audience? Some are practicing professionals engaged in the design, planning, and management of landscapes; some are teaching and mentoring other, younger professionals; and/or some are conducting scholarly inquiries in support of both activities. While this is an unusually diverse group with porous edges, it does have its boundaries. We usually discover them after we have strayed a bit too far.

Basic Submission Types

At its core, scholarship is a rigorous way of engaging the world in order to claim knowledge. Ideally, this open-ended endeavor is central to the practices of all our readers. When the editors consider the merit of a manuscript for publication in *Landscape Journal*, we first try to envision whether it would be valuable and interesting to a scholarly audience. The only papers not traditionally peer-reviewed are featured papers commissioned or invited by the editors. Otherwise, we find there are five distinct types of submissions to *Landscape Journal:* deductive empirical investigations, inductive empirical investigations, critical evaluations, primary demonstrations of emerging methods, and reflective pieces. Our policy is that all of these submissions should be peer-reviewed.

- Traditionally, much research in landscape architecture comprises investigations that collect and analyze empirical data. These investigations may include descriptive case studies, but they can usually be substantially strengthened by comparative thinking. The best examples of this type of investigation are rigorous and deductive. They begin with an understanding of relevant principles or theory and are structured in a way that enables testing and/or verification.
- The second type of investigation reviews existing, or generates new empirical data with the objective of identifying or clarifying general principles or theory. While there is a rich and important tradition of inductive research, interpretation, and constructivism in landscape architecture, it is not always consistent or conclusive. Close attention must be paid to the limitations of this kind of research—in its strategies, as well as its claims.
- Critical evaluations include analyses and reviews of built work, research methods and technical applications, or commentary and rebuttal on previously published research. At its highest level, the discourse thus engendered can be conducive to a healthy spirit of debate, testing, and advancement in the field. Evaluations of this type usually require clear objectives and focused analysis in order to be most successful.
- The fourth category is a type of submission we at the *Journal* would like to see more often. Primary demonstrations may involve creative work, such as mapping, drawing, speculative interventions or design representations. Demonstrations of teaching techniques are especially appropriate when outcomes can be considered and analyzed. Alternatively, technical demonstrations might show how new technologies or models might be applied toward problems—either investigative or interpretative.
- Reflective papers, sometimes referred to as "white papers" or opinion pieces, are best when they reflect mature insights on problems that are widely shared. Profundity is in the eye of the beholder, to be sure, but we think there is room for much deeper reflection in our field. To be publishable, papers like this should offer our audience new clarity, purpose, synthesis, and orientation(s), rather than merely elegant exhortation.

Peer Review Process

Eighteen months of editing *Landscape Journal* has provided us with new perspective and respect for the role of our peer review process in facilitating and developing new scholarship. As authors, we are accustomed to receiving peer reviews and scrambling to respond to their challenges and "misunderstandings." We also serve as reviewers, and hope that our critical comments will be understood in a constructive and collegial spirit. As co-editors, however, we are in a special position to review the reviewers. To that end, we are working hard to monitor and expand the peer review process, and to summarize results in a timely way. We are indeed fortunate for the generosity and insight of a host of excellent peer reviewers. Most are CELA members, but a great number of them are not. No matter what their affiliation,

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we need to help all our peer reviewers do a better job. Our next undertaking will be to revise the evaluation criteria for manuscripts in a way that more accurately reflects, and responds to, new scholarship in the field.

For those of you curious about our process and criteria for evaluation, we present the following observations. First, the key to successful review in all cases involves the presence—in some form or fashion—of an important question that interests the scholarly practitioner. Other attributes of scholarship that our referees value include:

Clear Relevance. An article must address a topic, issue, or question of interest to a scholarly landscape practitioner. Reviewers are usually looking for a convincing response to the question "so what?—what does this mean to me?" The bottom line: would a graduate seminar in landscape architecture benefit from discussion of the article? OK. Is it controversial? Good. Does it push an argument forward and secure new ground? Much better. Investigations that have clear potential to inform better place-making are particularly welcome.

Our reviewers seem to share a low regard for narrow presentations lacking a broader historical or theoretical context, or an enframing principle. Reviewers are equally impatient with procedural descriptions limited to how something may be accomplished, without any clear articulation of its importance, or contribution, to a better understanding of scholarship and landscape practices.

Disciplined Argument. An inquiry must be purposeful, considered, and structured in a way that supports the mission of a scholarly peer-reviewed journal. It is expected that any inquiry is well-grounded in (perhaps in reaction to) previous accepted knowledge. It needs to have objectives that are clearly articulated and worthy of inquiry, but are not overstated. The reviewer expects to find these objectives addressed in a manuscript or, short of that, an explanation given of necessary next steps for investigation.

Methodical Investigation. The method of investigation must be appropriate, transparent, and complete. Reviewers insist on understanding how design of the research matches the stated problem/objectives, how an investigation is carried out, and what potential there is for new applications or replication of the study. Interesting, innovative, *and* methodical submissions appear to be highly valued, while thin reports on preliminary investigations, proposals for research, and circumstantial findings have not fared well.

Intellectual Integrity. Increasingly, our reviewers demand the very highest scholarly integrity, and give no quarter to the ignorant, the biased, the unsupported claim, or the reinvented wheel. Submissions are expected to provide honest and accessible findings on behalf of scholarly practitioners in landscape architecture and related fields. Reviewers look for acknowledgement of alternate interpretations of the question at hand; if previous work is unacknowledged or invisible, reviewers want to know why.

Controlled Passion. Certainly, many scholars approach their professional activity with passion and actively, even enthusiastically, seek potential opportunities for critical inquiry. However, they must be familiar with contemporary frameworks of understanding built upon past precedents and cognate knowledge. They are open to new approaches and seek to transfer ideas from one area to another, but they do so critically, not for the sake of novelty or maximum output. Much valuable work probably begins as a vague exploration or an unfocused intuition, but it becomes more disciplined as it progresses towards a substantiated conclusion. The peer review process, painful as it may sometimes seem, can be extraordinarily helpful in this process.

Respect and Courage. For their part, authors show respect for the process of scholarship by channeling their passion and participating with an open mind: carefully posing an interesting question, developing the context of what is known about a problem, reaching appropriate conclusions, and initiating the opportunity for a stimulating discussion. It takes courage and hard work, and we thank everyone who has engaged this process with us. Our goal is to help make it easier for busy people to succeed in producing and consuming the highest level of scholarship in landscape architecture.

About This Issue

This issue is comprised of four traditional refereed articles on a range of topics. While three of our four authors are not CELA members, certainly all are scholarly practitioners. Anna Tamura, author of the lead article, "Gardens Below the Watchtower," is a landscape architect and practitioner with the National Park Service in Seattle. Her interests in cultural landscape preservation and interpretation are combined here with deep respect for the lived social realities of historic sites. Her penetrating research on the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II is a compelling reminder of the distortions and the blinkered perspective of a country at war.

The second article shows how innovative teaching can result in opening the hearts and minds of future landscape architects. Beth Diamond (Landscape Architecture, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo) demonstrates the impact of action research in this vibrant study, where her teaching methods transform the hidden biases of a relatively complacent campus community into a subject for public analysis and debate. There are no risks avoided, no statues left unwrapped in her article "Awakening the Public Realm: Instigating Democratic Space."

In an interdisciplinary paper on urban forests and behavior research,

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Kathleen Wolf (Forest Resources, University of Washington) offers evidence that advances an argument that landscape architects would like to make but typically do not know how to substantiate. In "Nature in the Retail Environment: Comparing Consumer and Business Response to Urban Forest Conditions," Wolf evaluates trees in the retail environments of the urban core from the point of view of both business people and shoppers. The results are somewhat surprising.

John Hasse (Geography, Rowan University) has prepared a useful model for assessing the characteristics of sprawl in developing areas across the North American landscape. Despite claims to the contrary, beguiling "Smart Growth" projects (so-called) may exhibit many of the tell-tale characteristics of sprawl. To help local planners and leaders more accurately evaluate the outcomes of development proposals, Hasse has drawn up a set of measures that quantify the real impacts of new development. We think that all four of these articles fit the criteria we have outlined above, and we are pleased to present them to you now.

MED & JFP

Errata

The editors would like to correct a reference contained in the article "Assessing the Impact of Computer Use on Landscape Architecture Professional Practice: Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Design Creativity," written by Lolly Tai (vol. 22 no. 2, 2003). The article cited, "Thirty Years of Computer Graphics in Landscape Architecture" (*Landscape Architecture* vol. 89, no. 11, pp. 54–55), was coauthored by Stephen Ervin and Hope Hasbrouck.

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