

## EDITORIAL

### **The tenth volume of *Island Studies Journal*; and a tribute to one who helped make it happen.**

*Godfrey Baldacchino and collaborators*  
*University of Malta, Malta*  
[godfrey.baldacchino@um.edu.mt](mailto:godfrey.baldacchino@um.edu.mt)

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## **Introduction**

I last penned an editorial to *Island Studies Journal (ISJ)* when the Journal turned five years old, in May 2010. Five more years have gone by, and *ISJ* keeps going. We will be receiving our 300<sup>th</sup> manuscript submission very soon now. The Journal is the official journal of ISISA (International Small Islands Studies Association) and RETI (the Network of Island Universities). Hay (2006) remains *ISJ*'s most cited paper, according to Google Scholar (84 citations to date). The Journal is proudly indexed and abstracted by Thomson Reuters (in the *Social Sciences Citation Index*, *Journal Citation Reports* and *Current Contents Connect*).

In response to consultations held last year, and starting from this issue, the journal cover will feature a photo or image based on a theme or paper discussed in the same issue. This means that the parchment and inkwell that graced previous covers are now removed.

Has *Island Studies Journal* made a difference, or left an impact? Writing in 1918, almost 100 years ago, Lucien Febvre made some quite categorical pronouncements about the geographical significance of isolation,

What value, then, have these [naturally bounded regions, including islands] which we have been successively reviewing? They are a means, not an end ... Their value for us is only of a practical kind. They are convenient for study. That is the only way in which they interest us and in which they can help us to discover a series of less superficial and better established relations between the possibilities of an environment and the societies exploiting them (Febvre, 1932, p. 235).

Fast forward to 1988, and authors of an anthropological study of Eastern Fiji reach a similar conclusion, accepting that they have not advanced “a single step” from Febvre’s observation,

Herein lies the value of islands for geography. It is not the unique characteristics of their ecosystems, nor the special adjustments to resource limitations that their inhabitants are supposed to have made, nor their particular vulnerability to external impacts. They are not essentially different, but merely more extreme, and conveniently replicated versions, of what is found in the more familiar continental world of conventional geographical study (Bayliss-Smith, Bedford, Brookfield & Latham, 1988, p. 284).

Perhaps 1988 was the watershed. That year marked the launch of *The Contemporary Pacific*, the first of what is now a clutch of island studies scholarly journals. In that year, UNCTAD was on track towards the recognition of a wide array of disadvantages facing what are now called ‘small island developing states’ (SIDS). In that year, a concerted effort by a group of small island states put climate change on the UN agenda, when Malta pushed for the General Assembly to recognize the potential for ‘severe economic and social consequences’ from climate change: the group eventually coalesced as the Alliance Of Small and Island States (AOSIS). Also in 1988, a group of scholars met to discuss islands on Vancouver Island, Canada. The initiative paved the way to the launch of the International Small Islands Studies Association (ISISA) in 1994.

One is now much less likely to find scholars or policy makers who declare so brazenly (at least in public) that islands are just a means, not an end; and have no particular interest to them. For those coming from the world’s sovereign island states or various subnational island jurisdictions, islands and their residents are their natural constituencies. Statements like those by Fevre and Bayliss-Smith et al. still appear; but they are more likely to surprise us today, when more of us are aware that islands are homes to no less than one tenth of the world’s populace, and when 2014 was declared IYSIDS (the International Year of Small Island Developing States) by the United Nations.

*ISJ* is hopefully doing its own small part to mainstream, share knowledge and encourage scholarship in island studies. If it is anything to go by, we have graduated beyond feeling obliged to explain (and defend) why ‘island studies’ is a legitimate field in academe.

### **Expressions of interest**

I hope that *ISJ*’s good work will continue as we move closer to December 2016 and the end of the current four-year term of the International Editorial Board. At that point, this Editor will be hanging up his boots and officially handing over to a suitable successor. Formal expressions of interest in the position of *ISJ* Editor (and possibly other positions that may open up on the Editorial Team) will be circulated in September 2015.

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### **Saluting an exceptional colleague**

A journal is only the sum total of the work of so many: the hopeful contributors who want to get published, the peer reviewers who assess their work, and those who oil the cogs and gears behind the wings – book reviewers, proofs readers, book publishers, a dedicated editorial team. In these endeavours, we cross paths with some truly exceptional people.

Here, I want to single out Professor Jerome McElroy: Jerry to his friends. A steady contributor to *ISJ* (his last contribution appeared in the November 2014 issue), a member of our international editorial board, a loyal manuscript reviewer (he never turned an opportunity away), and a scholar who was exceptionally capable of co-authoring quality papers with his students at Saint Mary’s College, Indiana, USA, where he taught for 32 years. We lost Jerry on December 17, 2014. He was 77. He is thus pithily described by his wife Birdie,

a man, a professor, a collaborator, an economist and poet. ... truly a Renaissance Man.



With the kind assistance of Jerry's colleague at Saint Mary's, Dr Richard Measell, and the enthusiastic responses of his former pupils, we have here collated some lovely and poignant, and at times humorous, tributes to our Jerry from eight of the students who experienced being co-authors with him. (No less than 17 students co-authored papers with 'McElroy').

It is difficult to put into a few words what Dr. McElroy meant to me, but I hope the following can help in placing a tribute to his memory: Studying under, and then publishing with, Dr. McElroy gave me the opportunity to have a true mentor. He was a knowledgeable teacher, a modest expert, a caring coach, a supportive counselor, an encouraging tutor, a faithful guide, a compassionate role model, a humble inspiration ... a true blessing. - *Patricia Olazarri*

I am a former student of Dr. McElroy and worked with him on a paper on island economics. Dr. McElroy's enthusiasm in teaching economics made me fall in love with the subject. He was so knowledgeable yet so humble, always caring and loving. In the process of working on a research paper, Dr. McElroy provided the perfect amount of guidance and freedom to help me maximize my learning and discover my voice. He had the magic power to make me feel always motivated yet never stressed. We are extremely sad to lose him. He has truly impacted my life. - *Jingqiu Guan*

I am a former student of Prof. McElroy; here is a quick tribute about my experience working with him.

I was a double major in math and economics. After graduation in 2009, I participated in a master's program at Notre Dame. I now work with Deloitte as a Senior Consultant in our Risk Analytics practice. I first met Prof. McElroy during my freshman year at Saint Mary's College: he taught my first business course, Principles of Macroeconomics. He was a great storyteller in the classroom; he made the material come to life for his students. He had a passion for taking complex concepts and breaking them down into simpler ideas that were easier to fathom. His lectures gave often abstract economics theory meaningful application in the 'real world'. Several years after graduation, I had the honour of teaching this class on his behalf while he was on sabbatical.

While I was a student (and even after I graduated) I frequently helped Prof. McElroy with data analysis, research, and independent review of several publications. We worked well as a pair: he would identify a hypothesis (often in an area of island research, his specialty) and I would run the data to prove / disprove it. I would identify the needed datasets, clean the data, run the models. Together we published an article, based on my senior thesis. I also helped him with another article after I graduated.

Prof. McElroy was a wonderful person: a beloved teacher and mentor. I became very close with the McElroy family over the years: their family was so loving and open to Saint Mary's students. In many ways, they *were* Saint Mary's: kind, generous in spirit, faithful, supportive - *Courtney E. Parry*

Thank you for paying tribute to Dr. McElroy in this way. I am sorry this took so long to get to you: it was hard to memorialize a dynamic person that had such a special place in my life into three sentences.

I always left Dr. Mac's class with a smile on my face; his energy, love for life, and passion for the subject matter made the day much brighter. To have studied and worked together, to have learned from the best, is a treasured memory. Dr. Mac was the epitome of all things good - *Kara Pearce Schroer*

## *G. Baldacchino and collaborators*

Dr. McElroy was giddy with passion for small island economics, people, and environments. One could not help but thoroughly enjoy working with him. He was focused, always encouraging, and frankly, funny. I remember him rhyming to catch my attention once. It was never guns and roses with Doc Mac, but real people and real voices. I felt his love for every voice in the classroom and for every unique, beautiful voice of each small island he studied.

Dr. McElroy wore cowboy boots to class, dark jeans, and a dress sweater. I still picture him bouncing on his heels with his arms stretched wide and a smile the size of Texas as he finished the punch line of one of his examples. He inspired me to care about small island economies and people, and I will carry his love and passion with me for the rest of my days - *Ashley (Oberst) Dingler*

Mac and I were amongst the first successful applicants for the Lilith Award Endowment for collaboration and research between students and professors. Our collaboration gave me a strong insight: how humility can lead to invaluable understanding and strength. Doc Mac was one of my earliest and most influential mentors. His clear but gentle guidance, and the credit he shared with students, left a lasting impression.

For the last 15 years, I have been working in humanitarian response, mostly in Africa. What I learned plays a critical role every day: through sharing, you can achieve so much more. I learned you can be strong and gentle. While it took me more years to get better at that learning, the seed and importance were planted early on, and I will never forget Mac. He will forever be with me - *Lika Dioguardi*

I am honoured to have been contacted for this memorial. First, I am embarrassed to admit it has been many years since I thought of island economies (yikes... I feel myself getting to be less of an intellectual with every year I am in the corporate world!). Second, my pithy comment has very little to do with 'Economics', but always with what I recall when I think of him.

Hanging out with Dr. Mac for 4 years, one would think he would learn my name: Megan Mahoney. Nice Irish, Catholic name for a Saint Mary's girl. Day after day, he continued to refer to me/introduce me as 'Meg', the one nickname that I CANNOT stand. It makes my skin crawl; but, with his easy nature, I never had the heart to correct him. He remains the one person who got away using the detested moniker. May this note bring a smile to your face as you think of him - *Megan L. Mahoney*

I was inspired by Dr. McElroy as a student and in my professional life. I have spoken to my own students many times about Dr. Mac and have strived to create the unique setting he could in the classroom. He could pass on his passion for research to his students and now, more than 10 years after being a student of his, some of my research still focuses on ideas that link to the work I did with him - *Leslie Dunn, Ph.D.*

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Further commentary is superfluous. Spare a thought: might we scholars and lecturers be so privileged to have so many of our former students thinking so fondly of us when we are gone?

To me at least, it makes sense to celebrate *ISJ* while, and by, celebrating Jerry. He does not only represent those who make outcomes like *ISJ* happen; he stands for what we scholars stand for, and why we do what we do. In celebrating Jerry, we also celebrate and thank the many who continue to support this Journal, and to whom I convey my sincere thanks and appreciation.

## **References**

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