

## Editor's Note: Which Way is West?

Rachel L. Stein

**W**hen I was a child, summer was a time of conquest – a symbolic period of expansion. In between the completion of one school year and the trepidation of the coming fall, were two glorious months where my only task was the suppression of all prudent instincts. Summer was a time of excess: too much sun, too much risk, and too much consumption.

Each August, as the weather started to turn cold, my family would head west to visit my grandparents in Los Angeles. At the foot of the hill on which my grandparents live was a local supermarket called *Westward HO!*. The sign was shaped like a covered wagon and it lit up like a beacon to the westward traveller. “Come here” it said. “This is the land of opportunity.” As time went on, bulbs burned out, the sign cracked, and all the big chains moved onto nearby Ventura Boulevard. But *Westward HO!* remained steadfast; a lasting symbol of the spirit of more.

In the extended summer of American economic and physical expansion, opportunity successfully subjugated prudence. Now there is no more – at least not as we once knew it. Summer is made special by the fact that it is bounded; it's high time to formally welcome the autumn of the new and different world in which we are already living.

From the ashes of over consumption a new question has risen: "which way is *westward*?" The answer is unfamiliar, but the territory is just as vast. The new collective west points inward. It is the rebuilding of the cities that already exist; the rethinking of the way we presently consume; the engagement of real policy discussions about the information age that surrounds us.

Hidden in the chaos of this explosion lies a tremendous opportunity for creativity. While there are no "best practices" or "benchmarks" for redefining citizenship, public administration as a discipline is perfectly suited to this dialogue.

As a student of public administration, I am encouraged by a discipline in which the "defining literature" is the literature of free inquiry. In keeping with this tradition, the original student scholarship in this volume explores the issues, sub-texts, and policies relevant to managing in an ever-changing world. Ken Kero examines the politics of trade in the context of globalization and the New Economy. Mike Velasquez and Dina Dariotis propose an original policy for universal access to information

technology services. Danielle Bartoni argues that traditional transportation policies are no longer effective and makes a compelling case for congestion pricing on America's highways during peak periods of travel. Alena Svab outlines a policy for establishing federal child care standards, and Blythe Eaman, Suzanne Sack, and Heather Higginbottom look at the processes and players involved in one community's struggle to rebuild. In the annual Supreme Court Review, Van Lawrence reviews cases of compelling interest to public administration, including *Clinton v. Jones* and *Printz v. United States*.

I am deeply grateful for the support of numerous people whose talent and spirit fill these pages. My first and most profound thanks are to Jill Kasle, who served with distinction as a mentor, an editor, a source of good humor, and a friend. Professor Kasle encouraged our creativity and initiative but also provided assistance and wisdom we gladly accepted. Managing Editor Lynn Bagorazzi was a paragon of fiscal sense, organization, and support throughout the year, but I am most indebted to Lynn for her perfectly timed and brilliantly wry sense of humor. Thanks also go to Amy Downey, who goes above and beyond in every endeavor. Her infallible assistance at the end is truly appreciated.

As a student-produced academic journal, the collaborative efforts of the editorial board are the heart and soul of this publication. I would like to thank the article editors — Lisa

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