



THE GEOGRAPHICAL BULLETIN

May 2018

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Gamma Theta Upsilon and *The Geographical Bulletin*

Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU) was established in 1928 as a professional geography honor society. The organization was founded by faculty members and students at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois to recognize and promote scholarship in geography. Since its inception, over 300 chapters have been added, mostly in the United States. Currently, the society has over 70,000 members worldwide.

The purpose of the society remains embodied in the symbolism found in the key insignia printed on the back cover of the *Geographical Bulletin*. The body of the key is seven-sided and represents the seven continents of the Earth. The Greek letters ΓΘΥ represent the three great environmental domains of our planet: Ge (Earth), Thalassia (sea), and Hypaithrois (atmosphere). The waves in the center of the key signify the major oceans of the world and the star is symbolic of Polaris, which guided travelers over the lands and oceans of the northern hemisphere for centuries.

With the rise of globalization, the need to have an understanding of the complex array of forces that shape our world is more critical than ever before. Gamma Theta Upsilon is committed to fostering geographic knowledge and education among the public. Currently, the society awards five scholarships to undergraduates, graduating seniors, and to a graduate student in the field of geography that hold membership in the society. In cooperation with the Association of American Geographers, the society also funds the “Visiting Scientist Program,” which sponsors prominent geographers to work with university and college Geography Departments.

Gamma Theta Upsilon also publishes *The Geographical Bulletin*, a peer-reviewed journal that publishes articles and reviews of interest to geographers and laypersons alike. While *The Geographical Bulletin* began publication as an outlet for student research in 1970, it welcomes submissions from established geographers, researchers, and other scholars, and publication occurs biannually (usually in May and November). Many students who have gone on to graduate school in geography and related fields have seen their first professional publication appear in *The Bulletin*. To encourage student publication, Gamma Theta Upsilon awards a “Best Student Paper Award” and a two hundred dollar prize annually. Published articles are available free of charge in PDF form on the GTU website, as well as being indexed through EBSCO’s databases and selectively abstracted in *Current Geographical Publications of the American Geographical Society*, *Geo-Abstracts*, and *Sociological Abstracts*.

www.gammathetaupsilon.org

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

The Geographical Bulletin is published semi-annually (May and November) by the Geography honor society, Gamma Theta Upsilon. In keeping with its goals of promoting geography awareness, GTU offers *The Geographical Bulletin* as an open-access, online journal that does not charge authors for either submission or subsequent publication.

The Geographical Bulletin began publication in 1970. A complete 25-year cumulative bibliographic index, by author, is printed in Volume 38, Number 1 (May 1996), and available on the website. While supplies remain, back issues from 1970 through the present are available for \$5.00 per issue.

For questions about *The Geographical Bulletin*, including potential article submission, please visit the website (<http://gammathetaupsilon.org/geographical-bulletin.html>) or contact:

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A Note from the Editor

Since 1970, *The Geographical Bulletin* has showcased a broad range of research (usually conducted/driven by students. Sometimes authors are GTU members, other times not. Today *The Bulletin's* aims remain the same as they were in the beginning, "...to supply an outlet for undergraduate and graduate students who normally do not have publication avenues easily accessible...they deserve space, and...they have things to offer which will be of value to the profession of geography" (Gallagher 1970:1). As Editor, I strive to follow this admonition, and this issue (our 59th!) contains all student and student-led research. I hope this continues.

Like our Historian cousins, as Geographers we often look at past events to inform the present and look forward to the future. When I began my tenure as Editor, I looked back at *Bulletin* archives, reading many of the articles, looking for common threads to its continued success. Reflecting on *The Geographical Bulletin's* inaugural 1970 issue, I am amazed at how much the sentiments of then reflect the times now. And not just with the seemingly-recent push for more undergraduate research experiences in our institutions, but with the changes occurring in geographic thought, relevancy, and technology. Indeed, Gallagher (1970:3) ends his inaugural *Editor's Note* with a poignant plea for Geographers to think about how we can influence upcoming generations:

The old hackneyed phrases, the dog-eared lecture notes, and the general systems we have been using for years may no longer be appropriate. What is it that we shall do to make geography alive, vibrant, meaningful, and responsive to the students of the 70's? More importantly, what is it that we can do for a restive generation through our profession which will give them guidance and leadership, direction and understanding, for the world in which they live?

Pondering these words over the last several months, what comes to my mind is the vast array of technology we currently have at our fingertips, and how we can best harness it to help geography come alive while simultaneously enhancing its understanding powerful research cache. Keeping with this thought, it was decided many years ago that all *Bulletin* issues would be put online for free a year after they were published, helping make the research more open to the masses. But, can we now do more? I believe so.

Following in the footsteps of many journals in recent years, the GTU Executive Committee and *The Geographical Bulletin's* Editorial Board have decided that, beginning with this issue (Volume 59, issue 1), *The Bulletin* will be a *free-of-charge*, online, open access publication. This was not an easy decision by any means, and GTU leadership debated its merits for several years. In the end however, to help support the spirit of GTU's mission, and considering the sage words of Gallagher nearly 50 years ago, we are excited for this grand leap to an all-digital peer-reviewed publication.

Before I discuss the advantages of moving to an online open access format, let me briefly address a couple of topics generated by feedback from the original proposal. First, it has been tradition that one of the benefits of becoming a new member of GTU was a year-long subscription to *The Geographical Bulletin*. Becoming a member of GTU is *for life*, however, and that in itself is an amazing benefit that few other professional organizations or honor societies offer at such a low cost. GTU also works hard for the student: it provides scholarships, service opportunities, and a peer-reviewed publication outlet where students receive priority over established researchers. With increases in overhead, keeping GTU's lifetime membership dues low remains a top priority. Removing printing (and mailing) costs from the equation

can help with that. Second, I remember receiving my author copy of my first peer-reviewed article. Holding an in-print version in my hand was a neat experience. But nowadays, hard copies of journals are becoming rarer and rarer, and most everyone – and especially the upcoming generations – use print media less and less. In some ways, print media is almost nostalgic. So, how do we make geography more “...alive, vibrant, meaningful, and responsive to students...” as Gallagher suggested? We go digital. We include/incorporate multimedia and web-driven applications. We make everything available at our fingertips 24/7/365. In short, we bring *The Geographical Bulletin* into the 21st century.

Now, many benefits come with an online, open access publication that will fulfill GTU’s overarching mission to disseminate geographical knowledge by making its research immediately available to the masses. Some of these include:

- Providing an ease of access that will increase the journal’s accessibility and readership
- Allowing immediate access for new member and continuing subscribers/members (no more waiting until the next issue comes out – everyone will now have instant and free access)
- Being able to use color images, graphics, and maps that will enhance articles and potentially draw-in a wider readership
- Utilizing the ability to integrate multi-media/hyperlinked material directly into articles
- Having the ability to produce supplementary/special issues without interrupting the “regular”, bi-annual volume.

Going fully online also means page and word counts become less relevant. Clear, concise writing remains important, of course, but I say “less relevant” because not necessarily having to worry about page count for a journal issue will allow for reviving old traditions, such as, for example, the “Reminiscences” present in early issues. As Editor, I would like to see these shorter pieces become a regular feature in each issue, perhaps highlighting a famous geographer, past or present (maybe your advisor?!) We can also begin new traditions, such as including an annual book review section in an issue or, if it is warranted at times, a full issue of book reviews that could introduce readers to new and upcoming geographic literature. As Editor, I am open to these types of options. Frankly, the possibilities remain endless for a free, online, open access journal. If you have an idea, propose it. We will listen. And, as always, there is no charge for authors to submit a manuscript (unlike some open access journals). GTU believes that open access should be just that: open. And did I mention access is free-of-charge?

Rest assured that although we are going fully online and open access, *The Geographical Bulletin* will still retain its rigorous double-blind peer-reviewing process, ensuring publication of high-quality articles (thank you to those reviewers past for your assistance). Likewise, the submission process will remain the same, with all submissions (and queries) being sent directly to the Editor. This feature represents one of my favorite aspects of being Editor, and I know from experience the difference a personal interaction with an Editor can make, especially for a student and burgeoning researcher. I will always respond to your queries personally, not with an automated message.

I hope you enjoy our inaugural online, open access issue. The articles span the gamut of geographical research, just as the journal’s founders hoped all those decades ago: from popular media and sense of place to climate and policymaking. If you are a student who has conducted a research project but not yet published your findings, I invite you to send it my way – after having your advisor and/or professor review it, of course. And for a quicker review, be sure to follow the submission guidelines on the website (<http://gammathetaupsilon>).

org/geographical-bulletin.html). If you are finishing-up a project, or unsure if your findings might be exciting, new, and/or relevant, consider sending me a short abstract outlining your project and (preliminary) findings. I am always happy to take a look and offer suggestions.

Casey D. Allen
Editor
The Geographical Bulletin

Reference:

Gallagher, J.W. 1970. Editor's Comments. *The Geographical Bulletin* 1(1):1-3.

