Open letter to the AAG President

Gary A Klee, San Jose State University
Many of you have been dreading this moment but the time has finally come for me to put at least a partial climatological stamp on my Presidential term. Please judge my climatological bias with some leniency, however—perhaps recalling the lyric “there but for fortune go you or I.”

At the Great Plains-Rocky Mountains Division meeting last fall, I had a wonderful field trip to Fort Laramie. My seat companion on the bus was Pam Showalter, a PhD student at Colorado, Boulder. She was giving a paper at the meeting on “The Browning Earthquake Forecast—Some Findings Regarding Public Response Prior to, and Following December 3, 1990.” (It won the prize as the best student paper at the meeting.) As most climatologists know only too well, Mr. Browning billed himself as a climatologist even though such a claim did not seem to be supported by much of his earlier work. In a questionnaire circulated to inhabitants of four communities in the predicted earthquake area around New Madrid, Pam asked among other things, “Do you know what a climatologist is?” She provided a number of possible responses—some right and some wrong—as well as one response that conveyed complete ignorance about climatologists. Results from her survey showed that 48 percent of those responding “did not know” about climatologists and could not even hazard a guess from the several possible answers given, while 7 percent gave a wrong answer suggesting that they did not know either. Only 45 percent gave a correct or partially correct answer. This might bring little comfort to my climatological colleagues. Some may have started to believe that our contributions are so vital and so visible that the world knew about us and could not do without us. Of course, when I mentioned these figures to one colleague, he was quite pleased that nearly one out of every two people in those rural communities knew what climatologists did. Maybe that is the better way to view the numbers—the glass is half full.

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**NSF News - The Formation of a New Directorate**

On 11 October, National Science Foundation Director Walter Massey announced the formation of a separate directorate for the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences that has been designated SBES. The social sciences (including the Geography and Regional Science Program) have heretofore been part of the Behavioral, Biological, and Social Sciences (BBS) Directorate. The new directorate will give the behavioral and social sciences more effective representation within NSF and the Congress and should lead to increased funding for the components of the new directorate.

The structure of the new SBES directorate is now taking shape. There will likely be four substantive (research funding) divisions within the directorate, with the following components and budgets:

- **Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate**
  - Division of Anthropological and Geographical Sciences ($1.3 million)
  - Anthropology Program
  - Geography Program
  - Division of Cognitive and Behavioral Science ($12 million)
  - Language, Cognitive, and Social Behavior Program (with several program elements)
  - Division of Economics and Management Science ($22 million)
  - Decision, Risk, and Management Science Program
  - Economics Program
  - Division of Social Sciences ($16 million)
  - Law and Society Program

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**San Diego 1992: Special Air Fares**

Special Air Fares from Delta Air Lines & United Airlines:

Conventions in America, the official travel company for the AAG, is offering substantial savings on airfares with Delta and United: 45 percent off coach class fares (40 percent off Canadian fares on Delta). 5 percent off the lowest applicable fares, First Class to SuperSaver! Seven day advance purchase and other restrictions apply. Travel between 15-25 April 1992.

Call Conventions in America at 1-800-535-1492, ask for Group #552. They will guarantee the lowest fares on any airline and you will receive free travel extras. Or call the airlines directly: United: 1-800-521-4041, refer to Tour Code #513VN; Delta: 1-800-241-6760, refer to File #N0577.
not half empty.

Let me not be too tough on climatologists and at the same time, extend these musings to all of geography. Consider what might have happened if Pam had asked “Do you know what a geographer is or does?” My guess is that she would have discovered about the same level of understanding. It seems that the public still has great difficulty in identifying what the profession of geography is all about. We need to enhance our image or at least let people know that we are geographers when, for instance, we make public presentations, statements to the press, or engage in discussions with colleagues within or outside academic. In other words, we need to make the public, state and federal officials, the media, as well as our own University colleagues, aware of what we are doing, how we analyze a body of data, how our approach aids in the understanding of particular problems and in achieving solutions, and what is distinctive about our approach. We probably have not done the most effective job in selling our geographical approach to our colleagues, universities, and those in the public with whom we deal. While we are attempting to rectify the “geographic illiteracy” of our students, we must also be certain that the public is “literate” about the fundamental contributions that geography and geographers make to our understanding of the human, cultural, economic and physical processes that mold the world in which we live.

Russ Matter

Journal Back Issues Sought

The Phoenix International Development Foundation, through the United Nations, seeks donations of the Geographical Magazine, for use by developing Asian countries. Sixteen sets of issues from 1985 to present are desired, partial sets accepted. The Foundation is also looking for multiple sets of Scientific American and National Geographic for the same period. If you can offer a donation, please call Judy at 301/654-0850.

Fall 1991 AAG Regional Division Meetings

Great Plains - Rocky Mountain

The 1991 Great Plains - Rocky Mountain Division Meeting was held 5-7 September in Laramie, Wyoming with record attendance of 270. The social event, a cookout, included a 45-minute trip on the Wyoming-Colorado Railroad out to a working ranch, the Vee Bar, for a BBQ and entertainment by a storyteller. Wild horses and pronghorn were viewed from the train. Roughly 81 high quality papers were presented. The 1992 chair of the GPRM Division is Charles Busing from Kansas State; the 1992 meeting will be in Manhattan, KS. The 1992 Vice-Chair to become the 1993 chair is Gary Guile from Colorado; the 1993 meeting will be in Boulder, CO. Bimal Paul from Kansas State will remain as Secretary-Treasurer for the next two years to fulfill his term.

New England - St. Lawrence Valley

The New England - St. Lawrence Valley Geographical Society held its annual meeting at Concordia University in Montreal, 4-5 October 1991. The conference theme was “Toward the Millennium.” The following persons were elected to the Society’s executive committee: Leon Yacher, Southern Connecticut State University, President; Mark Okrani, Plymouth State College, Vice-President; John Harmon, Central Connecticut State University, Secretary-Treasurer; and Mildred Sherman, Salem State College, Regional Councillor.

West Lakes

The Geography Department of the University of Minnesota, Duluth hosted the 42nd Annual Meeting of the West Lakes Division on 10-12 October 1991. Fifty-four presentations arranged into 14 different sessions provided the major academic emphasis for the conference. A two hour harbor tour of the Ports of Duluth-Superior with a luncheon served on board the tour boat was the highlight of the social portion of the meeting. A slide presentation on Svalbard by Professor Matti Kaups of UMD was featured during the evening banquet. Department Head Graham Tobin welcomed the group and introduced the speakers at the opening sessions. The energy of the business meeting focused on a report from AAG Executive Director Ron Abler and the resultant very spirited discussion of the switch in printer publisher for AAG publications. At the business meeting Gordon L. Levine, University of Minnesota, Duluth, was elected Chair of the Division; Joseph J. Hobbs of the University of Missouri was elected Secretary and Mehmet T. Arilan of University of Wisconsin-La Crosse continues in his position as Treasurer. Next year’s meeting will be held on 10-12 October 1992 at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Tim La Fik Releases New Recording

Tim Fik, Assistant Professor of Geography at the University of Florida has just released his new album. Tim “La Fik” performed at the 1991 AAG Annual Meeting in Miami during the Fiesta del Caribe. Local Florida stores carry the recording and cassettes are available by mail for $6.95 (including shipping and handling). Send orders to: Al-Omega Productions, c/o Tim La Fik, 7412 N.W. 21st Court, Gainesville, FL 32606.
It always happens to baseball managers in the coaching profession, and, as the old saying goes, 'a man who is good at one thing is good at everything.'

In the 1870's and 1880's, American professional baseball was at a crossroads. The game was changing, and new managers were needed to shepherd the transition. The challenge for these new managers was to blend the old with the new, to bridge the gap between the past and the future.

One of the most notable of these new managers was Jack McKeon. McKeon was a product of the old school, having played for the Chicago White Stockings and the Boston Beaneaters. He understood the game, knew the players, and had a feel for the pace of the game. But he also knew that the game was changing, that new tactics and strategies were needed to compete in the modern era.

McKeon's first task was to create a new team, to blend the old and the new. He did this by selecting a group of players who were skilled in both the old and the new. He looked for players who could hit, but who also had the ability to run the bases. He sought out players who could field, but who were also adept at pitching. He created a team that was a true reflection of the modern game.

McKeon's second task was to create a new strategy. He knew that the old strategies were no longer effective, that a new approach was needed. He began by studying the game, by analyzing the trends and by looking for patterns. He then began to develop new strategies, strategies that were based on data, on information. He used his understanding of the game to create a new approach, an approach that was based on the modern game.

McKeon's third task was to create a new culture. He knew that the old culture was no longer appropriate, that a new culture was needed to reflect the new game. He began by creating a new atmosphere, an atmosphere that was based on trust, on respect. He encouraged his players to learn from each other, to share their knowledge. He created a culture that was based on the modern game.

As the years went by, McKeon's efforts paid off. The new team became one of the most successful in the league, the team that was able to bridge the gap between the past and the future. McKeon's approach became the norm, and his legacy lived on in the great managers that followed him.

In the end, the story of McKeon's tenure as manager is a story of innovation, of change, of progress. It is a story of how one man was able to blend the old with the new, to create a new team, a new strategy, a new culture. It is a story of how one man was able to create a new game, a game that was based on data, on information, on trust, on respect. And it is a story of how one man was able to create a legacy, a legacy that would live on for years to come.