

Editorial

Tom Mandeville died on Tuesday 7 June 2022. Tom was one of the trio who founded *Prometheus* in 1983. Tom it was who christened the journal, odd as he was a Canadian and never a classics scholar. And it was Tom who steered *Prometheus* through its early years in the choppy waters of the University of Queensland. Those were difficult times: not everyone saw a need for a new journal (in the Queensland of Jo Bjeke Petersen, perhaps any journal at all) and the trio had to take on not only all the work of an academic publisher, but also personal responsibility for the journal's finances. Of the trio's contributions to the venture, Don Lamberton brought gravitas, I brought a rudimentary command of the English language and Tom brought boundless enthusiasm, a *joie de vivre* that was to remain with him throughout his life. Of all the resources required to keep *Prometheus* afloat, this was to prove the most important by far.

Ebullient and small of stature, Tom Mandeville was the elemental cheeky chappie. But there was very much more to Tom. He knew his subject – basically the economics of innovation – well. He liked teaching and even liked students. Not even the dismal science could quench Tom's perpetual – and sometimes annoying – happiness. He wrote a paper some 15 years ago entitled 'The joy of work? Jobs, happiness, and you'. The only occasions on which this happiness was ever threatened were when Tom miscalculated his futures. Tom was a gambler and especially attracted to futures trading. As the day of contract settlement grew ever nearer and the prospect of tons of maize or coffee beans being dumped in his front garden ever more real, even Tom became just a little disconcerted. The irony is that the very same Mandeville T. is the author of a book – a slim and now rare volume – on futures trading.

Tom had no lofty ambitions. Sometime in the 1970s, he had left Canada behind to see the world and had somehow fetched up in Brisbane. Years later, he rented a unit at Sunshine Beach on the Queensland coast to fulfil his longstanding, and perhaps only, aim in life – to be a beach bum. The plan was frustrated; in the days before Skype and Zoom, the University of Queensland looked forward to personal attendance and Tom spent many hours commuting, a challenge to even his ebullience. Positive as ever, Tom figured that he need never commute again if he cashed in his superannuation. This he did and bought both house and land at Sunrise Hills, inland from Noosa. But cashing in superannuation is rarely a good idea and Tom soon found himself marking student scripts for the University of Queensland in order to make ends meet.

News of Tom's death came as a shock to all his friends and colleagues. He had not told them he was ill, preferring to wait until he was better before announcing the happy news. The last years of Tom's life were spent assessing student assignments (the lot of too many casual academics in Australia) and commuting from Noosa to Brisbane. Just after his belated retirement party he wrote:

Retirement is a learning experience, and now into my third year, its gradually coming together. Have a fair bit of casual work marking post grad assignments at UQ. That's the cake; the icing is I have a little bit of work at QUT as a casual research associate. I like having the flexibility to parachute in and do a job, and then lift out, totally free, when its done.

Now that his job is done, may he be just that – totally free.

The first of our research papers in this issue is by Thanos Fragkandreas from both Birkbeck and the University of Westminster in the UK. Fragkandreas takes data from three decades of papers on innovation and inequality. That's 166 studies in 114 journals, which immediately suggests that no single journal specializes in the topic, fundamental though it is. To be sure, there is a relationship between innovation and inequality, but it is much more complicated than might have been expected.

The core question identified by Fragkandreas – how, and under what conditions, do publicly funded innovation policies reduce (or increase) inequality? – remains unanswered.

William Johnson, from Pennsylvania State University, looks at the link between national innovation and national culture. This is our second research paper. A major supposition is that these cultural variables are important for innovation. His evidence is taken from Hofstede, of course, and from the global innovation index scores of 71 countries. Individualism, long-term orientation and indulgence positively relate to innovation outcomes for all years tested and would seem to be important for the progress of innovation (at least more important than gender, power distance and uncertainty avoidance). The paper concludes that a country wanting to increase its innovative efforts might be well advised to encourage any individualistic, future-oriented and egalitarian tendencies.

Paul Trott, David Baxter, Paul Ellwood and Patrick van der Duin do not think much of the stage-gate approach to innovation management. Given the roasting they give stage-gate, it is a wonder that anyone has time for it. But that is a major point of their paper: stage-gate has been valuable in its time, but wide recognition that its time is up has stimulated innovation in stage-gate itself. Thus, the model struggles on until criticism mounts again and new band-aids are applied as an alternative to seeking a radical solution. The authors conclude that stage-gate is not well suited to modern innovation processes and provide a typology to show precisely where stage-gate is most wanting.

This June issue concludes with eight book reviews, many of them reviewing books on artificial intelligence. There is also a review essay from Bill Kingston in which he returns to the review he wrote for *Prometheus* in 2017 of a report on getting energy from the ocean. Kingston is now much more optimistic about the prospects: in 2017, evidence of failed innovation was all that struck him. A lesson for us all.

Stuart Macdonald
General editor