

Editorial

Dear Readers,

I am sorry to report that *Mathematical Spectrum* has recently been discontinued. It is an excellent journal whose aims and audience are similar to those of *Parabola incorporating Function*. Back issues are available [online](#) and are well worth reading.

We are experiencing the most glorious Golden Age of mathematics ever in history. New and ground breaking maths is created every day, and centuries old maths problems are solved every other week. We have seen the emergence of new and exciting ways to enjoy and conduct mathematics. With online publications and forums, research is now quick and publicly accessible, researchers collaborate in real-time with others from continents away, and collaboration is sometimes with thousands of others, as with Terry Tao's [Polymath Projects](#). Teaching and learning has taken new forms too, most dramatically with YouTube and massive online courses now providing maths education to millions of people who previously had no hope of education. Maths has also become more fun, with platforms like [Minecraft](#), [Project Euler](#), [CodeCombat](#) and [Scratch](#) turning maths and programming challenges into communal gaming. Mathematics is even assuming a visible position at the centre of world politics, with world leaders deferring and referring to the advice of climate modelling mathematicians, including those in the Climate Change Research Centre here at UNSW Australia.

Paradoxically, mathematics is not only in surging ascent; it is also in sad decline. Most people are completely unaware of this Golden Age of maths. Respect for mathematical logic and statistical evidence is low and funding for mathematical learning and research is lower. I can't but help see the discontinuing of *Mathematical Spectrum*, and of the similar journal *Function* a few years ago, as related to these trends. Here in Australia, the school maths curriculums and teaching have been degraded during the last decade and a half, and funding for mathematical research continues to be cut. According to the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute (AMSI), [54%](#) of Australian adults have only basic numeracy skills. I have even heard some proudly proclaim their lack of maths skills. How many would proudly declare themselves to be illiterate?

Luckily, maths has its defenders, such as AMSI and the Australian Mathematical Society ([AustMS](#)) and similar organisations around the world. These promote mathematical disciplines in numerous ways, including to urge governments into action. I trust that *Parabola* is also helping in some small way to promote the beauty and utility of mathematics, and to let more people catch an occasional glimpse of its Golden Age. If you would like to help too, then please feel free to submit an article to *Parabola* about any aspect of mathematics that excites or intrigues you.

Thomas Britz
Editor