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## Reflections: MPR and the World: Connections, Conversations, and Outreach

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## REFLECTIONS

## MPR and the World: Connections, Conversations, and Outreach

by Linda Silka

We are pleased to bring you another information-filled issue of *Maine Policy Review*. The articles cover a broad range of policy topics: Maine's public estate and conservation lands, measuring well-being in Maine, cafeteria waste-reduction programs, and population health assessments, as well as a commentary on universal basic income. We are excited to have this issue's Margaret Chase Smith Essay feature an excerpt of a recent speech by Retired Vice Admiral Nora Tyson: "Margaret and Me: The Importance of Leadership." In addition, this issue includes an interview with Rob Shetterly, who creates the cover art for every *MPR* issue. We often hear from readers about how engaging they find the covers. The interview explains the creative process Shetterly uses to capture visually the themes covered in an issue. This issue also contains the first-place essay from the Margaret Chase Smith Library's high school essay contest—this year's theme was the importance of a free press.

Perhaps you were not aware that all past *MPR* issues are available online, as well as in paper copy (available at every library in the state). After you read the latest paper copy, you might enjoy going to *Maine Policy Review's* Digital Commons site (<https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mpr/>). On the site, you will find interesting information about where *MPR* readers are coming from and which articles are drawing significant attention. At the bottom of the homepage, there is a map of the world. The map is constantly updated with notifications of which articles are being downloaded in real time and from

what countries. When I looked one day recently, articles were being downloaded by readers from the United States, of course, but also Australia, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Vietnam. Wouldn't it be great to be able to get into conversations with people about what they hope to learn from the articles they are downloading?

At *MPR*, we are now doing other things that blend various forms of information dissemination. We have recently established ourselves on Twitter (@MainePolicyRev) and invite you to follow us if you are a Twitter user. We use Twitter to highlight the newest issue, along with articles, commentaries, and essays that seem timely based on the news of the day. *MPR* is now also available in a flipbook format that makes it easy to read on a tablet or cellphone. Check out this past spring's special issue on leadership in this new format ([https://issuu.com/umaine/docs/mpr\\_v27n1\\_issue/](https://issuu.com/umaine/docs/mpr_v27n1_issue/)).

In other outreach, we have begun encouraging university and high school teachers to use *Maine Policy Review* articles in their classrooms because the journal provides such a great opportunity for learning. Wouldn't it be great if there were some way to capture when this usage is happening? I encourage you to write to us if you are using *MPR* in your classroom and have thoughts on how we can make the process more useful for you.

One of the pleasures of being the executive editor of *MPR* is having an

opportunity to work with students who are considering submitting manuscripts to *MPR* for possible publication. Recently, I sat in on a meeting with a group of undergraduates from multiple disciplines (anthropology, economics, engineering, food security, and nursing) who have been investigating an issue for which we need more interdisciplinary research to ensure effective policy. It was instructive and exciting to see the ways that these future leaders are working together to share research and identify policy implications of this research.

As I talk with other authors who have published in *MPR*, they tell me that they often hear from readers with questions, interest, concerns, and agreements and disagreements. The authors report that they feel like they are being heard and that they are adding to important policy conversations in the state. We hope to continue to have *Maine Policy Review* play this important role well into the future, and if you, too, would like *MPR* to continue playing this role, please consider showing your support through a donation. We've made it easy for you; just visit our website (<https://mcspolicycenter.umaine.edu/mpr/donate-maine-policy-review/>). 🐟



**Linda Silka** is the executive editor of *Maine Policy Review*. A social and community psychologist by training, Silka was formerly director of the

University of Maine's Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center. In addition to her role with *MPR*, she is a senior fellow at UMaine's Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions.