

A Changing of the Guard

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TOPLAS Editors-in-Chief

Since 1979, the ACM Transactions on Programming Languages and Systems (TOPLAS) has been the premier journal for the publication of research papers in the area of programming languages and systems to assist the task of programming.

There are many reasons for the success of TOPLAS. One of them is Ron Cytron. For the past six years, Ron has served as Editor-in-chief of this journal, and his high standards and selfless devotion to his editorial duties have ensured that TOPLAS has remained one of the bright stars in the galaxy of ACM journals.

More than 2,500 years ago, Heraclitus of Ephesus observed that nothing is permanent in the universe except change, and now change has come to TOPLAS. Ron has stepped down as Editor-in-chief to devote himself full time to research and teaching, and it is our pleasure as the new Editors-in-chief of TOPLAS to thank him for his yeoman's service to the SIGPLAN community all these years.

Assisting Ron were the TOPLAS associate editors and reviewers who did an enormous amount of work, carefully considering each submission. We thank the 2006 reviewers for their outstanding service, and list them below. We also thank the retiring associate editors who devoted themselves to TOPLAS: Vikram Adve, Brent Hailpern, Mary Jean Harrold, Benjamin Pierce, Barbara Ryder, Olin Shivers, and Benjamin Zorn.

A changing of the guard is an opportunity to thank the previous guard, but it is also an opportunity to examine and change TOPLAS to meet the evolving needs of the SIGPLAN community. In this spirit, we are working on a number of new initiatives that we believe will strengthen TOPLAS.

Reflecting the breadth and diversity of the programming languages community, SIGPLAN sponsors a large number of first-rate conferences including Programming Language Design and Implementation (PLDI), Principles of Programming Languages (POPL), International Conference on Functional Programming (ICFP), Object-oriented Programming Systems, Languages and Applications (OOPSLA), and Architecture Support for Programming Languages and Operating Systems (ASPLOS). Few people have the time or the energy to follow all these conferences closely, so we believe there is a need for a forum that publishes extended versions of the best papers published each year in our field.

TOPLAS aims to be that forum. We believe this initiative will not only recognize outstanding research each year, but it will also bring our community closer since each of us will be better informed about the best research results in those SIGPLAN conferences that we do not follow closely. Details will be available shortly on the TOPLAS website: <http://www.cs.utexas.edu/toplas>.

A second initiative is to expand the scope of papers that appear in TOPLAS to include experimental and survey papers. As in other scientific disciplines, there are competing approaches to solving most problems in programming languages. For example, compilers can perform dataflow analysis directly on the control-flow graph, as is done in traditional “bit-vector” methods, or on sparse graphs, such as SSA and related graphs. Memory hierarchies can be managed with cache-conscious techniques like loop tiling or by using cache-oblivious approaches. Unfortunately, careful experimental studies of competing approaches are rare. One reason is that the primary criterion for conference publications is novelty - committees are likely to reject a careful experimental study exploring relative strengths and weaknesses of existing techniques for the same problem on the grounds that there is nothing new in the paper.

We encourage the SIGPLAN community to perform such studies and to send TOPLAS papers documenting these studies and their conclusions. Figuring out what works and does not work in practice is essential for scientific progress, so we believe that this new direction for TOPLAS will help strengthen the scientific foundations of the field of programming languages.

We also believe that there is a need for more papers that survey the state of the art in important areas of our field. It is, of course, important to study primary sources, but a good survey paper is invaluable for introducing students to our field or for getting oriented in a new research area. For example, hundreds of papers have explored alias analysis, but even the handful of most cited papers use different notations and terminology, making it more difficult than it should be to understand the work in this important area. Therefore, we encourage the SIGPLAN community to send us illuminating surveys of important research areas within the field of programming languages.

To help us implement these and other ideas, we have reconstituted the TOPLAS editorial board. We welcome Emery Berger, Michael Burke, Wei Li, David Padua, Simon Peyton Jones, Andreas Podelski, Martin Rinard, and David Walker as new associate editors, who join continuing associate editors Martín Abadi, Joxan Jaffar, Hanne Riis Nielson, Jens Palsberg, François Pottier, and Aaron Stump.

This editorial is intended to start an extended discussion with the programming languages community on charting new directions for TOPLAS. To this end, we will add a wiki to the TOPLAS website: <http://www.cs.utexas.edu/toplas>. The Chinese have a saying: “They must often change who would be constant in happiness or wisdom.” The SIGPLAN community has a lot of collective wisdom, and as we bring change to TOPLAS, we invite you to share your wisdom with us for the collective well-being of the SIGPLAN community.

Best regards,
Kathryn S. McKinley & Keshav Pingali
TOPLAS Editors-in-Chief

TOPLAS 2006 Reviewers

The TOPLAS board is extremely grateful to its expert reviewers who spend countless hours reviewing submissions and providing valuable comments to authors. As a small token of our gratitude, we list the reviewers for 2006 below:

Umut Acar	John Gallagher	Jacques Garrigue
Glenn Ammons	Sukumar Ghosh	Roberto Giacobazzi
Torben Amtoft	Stephen Gilmore	Ken Goldman
Matthew Arnold	Mohamed Gouda	Dan Grossman
David August	David P. Grove	Samuel Guyer
Jonathan Bachrach	Sebastian Hack	Hwansoo Han
Gabriela Barrantes	Chris Hankin	James Harland
Nick Benton	Mark Harman	Bill Harrison
Aart Bik	Alan Hartman	Michael Hicks
Richard Bord	Nigel Horspool	David Kaeli
Steve Blackburn	Christoph Kessler	Siau-Cheng Khoo
Matthias Blume	Andreas Krall	Arvind Krishnaswamy
Chandrasekhar Boyapati	Christopher Kruegel	Venkata S. K. Kurapati
Forrest Brewer	Jim Larus	Donglin Liang
Jong-Deok Choi	Benjamin Livshits	Igor Markov
Cristina Cfuentes	Thomas Marlowe	Seda Memik
Norman Cohen	Ana Milanova	Todd Millstein
Charles Consel	Eliot Moss	Gopalan Nadathur
William Cook	Mayur Naik	Aleksandar Nanevski
Antonio Cunei	David Naumann	Michael Norrish
Olivier Danvy	Stott Parker	Fernando Pereira
Joseph Darcy	Bill Pugh	Mukund Raghavachari
Saumya Debray	J. Ramanujam	Anne Rogers
Beniamini Di Martino	Radu Rugina	Andrey Rybalchenko
Amer Diwan	Amr Sabry	Jesus Sanchez
Julian Dolby	Vijay Saraswat	Ali Sazegari
Gabriel Dor Reis	David Schmidt	Alan Schmitt
Derek Dreyer	David Sehr	Peter Sestoft
Evelyn Duesterwald	Vc Sreedhar	Mark Stephenson
Dominic Duggan	Scott Stoller	Peter Stuckey
Christopher Dutchyn	Martin Sulzmann	Gang Tan
Alexandre Eichenberger	Peter Thiemann	Mithuna Thottethodi
Susan Eisenbach	Sid-Ahmed-Ali Touati	Robert Van Engelen
Manuel Fahndrich	Eelco Visser	Razvan Voicu
Jerome Feret	Christoph Von Praun	Chenxi Wang
John Field	Martin Ward	Heike Wehrheim
Samuel Figuera	Westley Weimer	Josef Widder
Cormac Flanagan	Clay Williams	Gregory Wilson
Basilio Fraguela	Peng Wu	Dachuan Yu
Stephen Freund	Karen Zee	Min Zhao
Etienne Gagnon	Tian Zhao	Jianwen Zhu