

## ► Board Profiles

LIKE INDUSTRY BOOKENDS, EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS DENIS PROTTI AND CATHERINE CLAITER share a fascination for health informatics, separated only by some 30 years of regular paycheques. With Denis in the industry since 1967 and Catherine joining in 1999, they represent the brains, enthusiasm and dedication also evident in their peers. But off work, they do anything but stay on the shelf. Both are avid travellers; Denis fitting in a round or three of golf with every breath he takes, and Catherine breathing the heady air of her beloved forests and mountains.

Throughout his career, Denis has been keenly interested in the career development of health informatics professionals and his work is reflected in his success in guiding the careers of many graduate students, such as Catherine.

“I enjoy their willingness and desire to learn as much as they can, to question and to assess,” he said. “I get a great deal of satisfaction watching them later succeed in their chosen careers.”

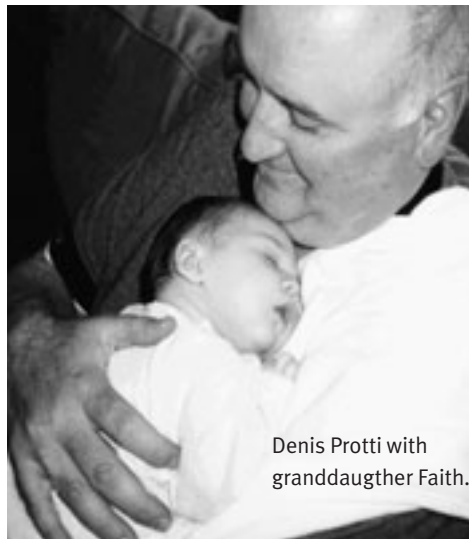
Catherine – also known to take a jet to the Bahamas at the last minute – never wears a watch and regularly emails and leaves messages all hours of the night, but doesn’t miss a meeting. Succeeding in her career includes being a hard-working team player. Having held some senior portfolios over the past few years attests to her commitment and focus.

### Denis Protti

With almost 35 years in the field, Editorial Advisory Board member Denis Protti can be called a granddaddy of health informatics, one who remains fascinated with rapid changes in the industry.

“What keeps me interested is the ever-changing scene in healthcare policy and practice, let alone the technology. I’m interested in it all: information, communications and the clinical,” he says. “I got into the field not knowing what I was getting into. In April 1967, I was asked to set up a remote job entry (RJE) terminal to be connected to the University of Manitoba computer at the downtown medical school. I’ve been at it ever since.”

He joined the Faculty of Medicine there to assist in the planning for the selection of a



Denis Protti with granddaughter Faith.

computer system, formulate policy, and oversee a staff of 20 with computer assisted medical research and clinical service applications.

“The RJE we installed was an IBM 1401 with 8K of memory. It required an expensive air conditioning system and we were the envy of everyone as our room was the only cool one in summertime. Everything was on punched cards - keypunch machines were critical to our staying up and running.”

Now, as Professor, School of Health Information Science, University of Victoria (where he can golf year round) he regularly advises healthcare organizations and government agencies in Canada and abroad. Denis was the founding Director, School of Health Information Science in 1981, and prior to that, Director, Management Information Services, Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria and Director, Computing Services at St. Boniface General Hospital in Winnipeg.

In 1998, he was commissioned by the United Kingdom Treasury to review the proposed National Health Service (NHS) Information Strategy prior to its release and developed the evaluation methodology used to monitor local implementation. For the past three years the NHS Executive has invited him to conduct on-site progress reviews, a role he greatly enjoys.

“It’s very humbling to influence national policy and direction, to have people actually do

what you suggest they do, and to be at the forefront of world thinking on the EHR journey,” he says. “Being out in front with the early scouts is very stimulating.”

For the past 17 years he’s organized the elite Partnership in Productivity “secret” club, where healthcare information issues of the day are discussed. Since it’s held at the Dunsmuir Lodge, golf is heavily rumoured to be involved. Included in the 40 invitees are provider representatives, NGOs, government and healthcare leaders.

Denis has published more than 100 articles in refereed and non-refereed journals, books, chapters and proceedings. Professional teaching activities have spanned more than two decades, he’s served on dozens of university and faculty committees, and has received more than \$200,000 in funded grants and contracts. With a MSc Computing Science (University of Manitoba, 1971) and a BSc Mathematics (University of Alberta, 1965), his major interests remain in information management and technology strategic planning, electronic records and evaluation.

Denis is a member of many professional societies including being elected a fellow of the American College of Medical Informatics, past chair for the International Medical Informatics Association, and founding member of the American Medical Informatics Association. His work in the Canadian Organization for Advancement of Computers in Health (COACH) started as a Founding Member through to board work and president, with a Citation and Life-time Membership Award. He has given more than 200 presentations, including many keynote addresses, and dozens of public presentations. Current editorial appointments include *Methods of Information in Medicine*, *Healthcare Management Forum*, and Associate Editor, of *Computers in Biology and Medicine*.

Married with three children and a granddaughter born in April, Denis doesn’t go anywhere without his wife and they anticipate traveling to the European destinations that have eluded them so far.



### Catherine Claiter

Although a British Columbian at heart and taking regular trips back home for a fix of the mountain views, Catherine Claiter is learning to live without the Rockies and truly enjoy life in Ontario. With a better selection in Toronto shops of her ubiquitous black sweaters, she well represents the young, savvy intellectuals designing and running information management systems.

As Manager of Strategic Initiatives for HealthLink, she works with clients and colleagues to develop strategies incorporating connectivity, systems integration, and process reengineering solutions for patient care and operational benefits. As a self-described facilitator and translator, Catherine helps to bridge a client’s information management needs with the HealthLink team, to deliver solutions to improve the quality and efficiency of health-care delivery.

“My primary motivation for working in health informatics is the opportunity to work with such a talented and diverse group of professionals,” said Catherine. “I like the combination of working on challenging, high-impact problems in a very flexible and collaborative team environment.”

Like all who work in health informatics, Catherine feels making an important contribution to the development of the field and the delivery of healthcare is of paramount importance to her. However, she also emphasizes that in addition to the intrigue of the technological aspects, “Where else could I work each day with colleagues trained in medicine, health informatics, systems engineering, law and finance?”

As associate editor for *ElectronicHealthcare*, Catherine works with editorial advisory board members and contributing authors from around the globe, “and of course, a great publisher and editorial staff!” Her general work traits of being sensitive, thoughtful and personable, translate into a great read.

Working on the journal also allows her a way of staying in touch with former classmates and professors – such as fellow Board member Denis Protti – and the general health informatics community.

While at the University of Victoria’s School of Health Information Science, she completed three co-op work terms; two in Ontario cancer centres and one at the British Columbia Ministry of Health. After graduating in 1999, she worked as a Business Analyst, Project Manager and Manager of Program Planning at the University Health Network in Toronto, prior to joining HealthLink Clinical Data Network in January, 2001.

Catherine greatly enjoys traveling and doesn’t rule out a mobile career that allows her to combine her professional life and personal travel interests, such as she did in Paris, France, working and taking language courses for a year before returning to Canada to obtain her degree.

“I’m fortunate to have a great surrogate family of friends and colleagues with whom I can usually be found exploring Toronto,” said Catherine. “Whenever possible, I enjoy traveling to new destinations and learning about different people and cultures.”

## ► Books at a glance

### **CLAUSEWITZ ON STRATEGY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT FROM A MASTER STRATEGIST**

Edited by Tiha von Ghyczy, Bolko von Oetinger, and Christopher Bassford

What can a nineteenth-century Prussian general teach a twenty-first century executive or entrepreneur about business strategy? A great deal, in fact, given the similarity in the strategic challenges they face: alliances are made, broken, and reconstituted at dizzying speed; when unprecedented events occur, experience does not indicate a course of action; and rules, principles, and how-to prescriptions no longer apply. These, says Carl von Clausewitz, are the times in which the true strategist thrives.

Clausewitz’s ideas are timeless because they address universal conditions: uncertainty, rule-breaking, strategic endgames, and competition. His theories are not based on current economic conditions; rather they lead to strategy based on powers of observation, a broad exploration of the opportunity, a willingness to be flexible, and an instinctive sense of judgment.

#### **Carl Von Clausewitz**

Carl von Clausewitz as a man is as worthy of consideration as the work itself. His values and intrinsic beliefs, more than his specific ideas, have given his work an inner coherence and an enduring power of persuasion. It is his refusal, above all else, to let his mind be restricted to a narrow point of view that strikes the modern professional as exemplary.

Clausewitz was a complicated man of both action and thought, and he left a complicated legacy. The meaning and practical impact of his theories are subjects of hot debate, and the lessons taken from his works vary widely, depending on the times, the circumstances, and the interpreter.

To assess the value of his ideas, therefore, it is important to understand Clausewitz as a living personality. He was much more than a military academic. He was a practical soldier of wide experience, a historian and a historical philosopher, and a political theorist. Personally sensitive, shy, and bookish, he could also be passionate in his politics, in his longing for military glory, and in his love affair with his wife-with whom he built an intellectual partnership that draws modern attention for reasons having little to do with his military reputation.

