

Editor's Note

By Laurence Brown

School of History, Philosophy, Religion, and Classics

University of Queensland

It has taken a perilously long time to prepare this issue of *Access: History*. For those of you who have been disappointed at the delay, let me apologise at the outset. When a project such as this is largely a labour of love for those involved, certain things find themselves sacrificed along the way. Nevertheless, we as a board are pleased with the quality and breadth of articles we are able to bring you in this issue. Ranging from post-dark-age exorcism to *West Side Story*, we had a great deal of pleasure reading them and we trust you will also.

This issue marks a mild change in our approach to the overall shape of *Access: History* and its target readership. Previously, the journal was attempting to fulfil a number of disparate but related functions: inform former members and students of the University of Queensland History Department about the goings on and scholarship that was being produced by the Department at the present time; provide an outlet for high-quality scholarship that was being largely ignored; deliver it on-line in a nearly zero-cost manner; and to provide demonstrations, or 'templates' if you will, for budding historians to use and be inspired by in their attempts at writing history.

Now *Access: History* will be more sharply focusing on the last of these functions. Over the coming issues we plan to bring you specialty pieces on the art of history research and writing and on the nature of the discipline itself. In this issue, Phillip Webb has produced an article entitled "Why are You Studying History" in which he explores his own reasons for making the transition from the humanities from the sciences. We would ask you to consider your own answer to this question either as a first step, or a clarification as to why you have chosen to pursue this discipline.

We will also be focusing our efforts on producing and printing a larger number of book reviews and review articles that might be of value to students looking for an assessment of the material they have at their disposal. In this way we on the editorial board hope to make *Access: History* a premier resource for undergraduate history students around the world.

In July 2000 *Access: History* was recognised by the *Academic Resources Channel* as a web site of high scholastic quality and featured on its Academic Top100 page. Further, it has also come to our attention that the journal scores highly on a number of search engines and historical resource lists on the World Wide Web. Doubtless this favourable listing is due in no small measure to the number of sites which list pages alphabetically. Despite this mild embarrassment, the editorial board

is grateful for the support we have received both inside the University of Queensland and from outside parties as well—although particularly to you our readers.

As we look forward to the further development of history as a discipline being delivered through virtual means, we are also expanding our base and will be calling for submissions of both review articles and specialty pieces on the discipline of history research and writing. Look for this announcement in the near future on the web site. In the mean time, any submissions may be sent as a MSWord attachment to editor.hga@mailbox.uq.edu.au. Any other comments or suggestions may be sent to the same address and will be gratefully received.