

EDITORS' NOTE

On June 22-24, the journal team – with the support of the Casa de Oswaldo Cruz and of Fiocruz's Office of the Vice-President of Teaching, Information, and Communication – hosted an important international workshop: “Challenges Facing Interdisciplinary Journals: Experiences from the United Kingdom, Brazil, and Latin America in History, the Social Sciences, and the Humanities.” The event was part of a collaborative project that enjoys the support of the British Academy and is being conducted by *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos* and the British periodical *Journal of Latin American Studies*. The workshop was also one in a series of our journal initiatives that will take us down the road to 2019, when our journal will turn 25.

The event was attended by editors and members of editorial boards and staffs from journals in the fields of the human sciences, social sciences, and public health from Argentina, the United Kingdom, Colombia, Mexico, Chile, Peru, and Brazil. Likewise present were representatives of the SciELO network and the Fiocruz Editors Forum, which encompasses the seven scientific journals put out by Fiocruz. Participants generously shared their knowledge of internationalization, open access, indexing, and the use of social networks to publicize journals and communicate science – knowledge that has essentially been acquired hands-on. SciELO founder Abel Packer delivered a brilliant opening address on the challenges of professionalization, internationalization, and financial sustainability, particularly as they impact history journals. He pressed home the need for journals to forge ahead in these three areas and engage proactively in the scientific and political communities where these processes unfold. Alan Knight, eminent professor of Latin American history at Oxford University and member of the editorial board of the well-respected journal *Past and Present*, spoke about the value of publishing seminal articles in history journals because these papers have the power to awaken a feeling of vocation in young researchers. Knight's colleagues from the United Kingdom and Latin America also discussed the characteristics of publishing, the lessons that have been learned, and the impasses that have been encountered. Their insightful observations made it evident that Brazil displays both similarities and contrasts with the other countries represented at the workshop. For example, the Brazilian context has long been one of receiving, and expecting, government support for journals, a situation that many would now like to cast as an unsustainable utopia.

Financial sustainability was of course a topic of central concern. Brazilian and other Latin American journals face many hardships, including cutbacks in already inadequate federal

and state funds, at a moment when the world's large commercial publishers are enforcing strict business models. The overriding philosophy in Brazil is that knowledge is public and everyone should have access to it. This stems from a longstanding tradition of democratizing knowledge, strengthened over the last 20 years by the SciELO project. Difficulties aside, Brazil is inarguably the region's leader in open access to scientific articles, a modality that is welcomed by international agencies, foreign governments, and scientific communities abroad. Until a short while ago, commercial publishers showed little interest in open access or in Brazilian science. More recently, many of them began moving into Brazil, seeking to occupy the space of open-access journals and kindling doubts about the sustainability of the current system. There is no question that the dangers come not only from outside. After the recent attack on democracy in Brazil, there is a danger that public investments in science journals will be slashed. Speaking at the workshop, Ildeu Moreira, *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos* assistant editor and vice-president of the Brazilian Society for the Advancement of Science (Sociedade Brasileira para o Progresso da Ciência, SBPC), emphasized that while the quality of Brazil's scientific periodicals has greatly improved in the past few years, government agencies have allocated them sparse resources, which were even further reduced this past year. According to Moreira, financial cutbacks are threatening the survival of many journals and will certainly have a negative impact on Brazil's entire graduate system. Jaime Benchimol – science editor of this journal until a short while ago – expanded on this idea in his lecture, urging editors and other actors who have a stake in scientific publications to demand that universities, funding agencies, and government departments make journal costs a priority in their budgets. We agree wholeheartedly with these thoughts.

In the coming months, *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos* will make available a number of texts, transcriptions, audio recordings, innovative tools, and ideas from the workshop, material meant to encourage a broader conversation. It is our hope that this dialogue will enhance efforts to valorize our journals, ensure academic quality and democratic accessibility, and win economic sustainability – topics of utmost importance in the development of science, universities, and culture in the Americas and elsewhere around the world.

The diverse, thought-provoking articles featured in this issue of *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos* constitute a contribution in this direction.

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