

EDITOR'S NOTE

Here I find myself, anxious to live up to the standards set by my predecessors. Sergio Goes de Paula brought this creature into the world, molded it into shape, made it well proportioned. Under Paulo Gadelha it acquired its first titles and gained further 'respectability'. I now leave the rank-and-file of assistant editors, tutors of this child's multiple aptitudes, to join with its most stalwart pillars, Ruth B. Martins and Isnar F. de Paula. And I turn to the anthropomorphic images my predecessors used in their own letters to express that sentiment felt whenever they put their hands on this solid, scented, exciting thing that is a magazine fresh off the press.

I do believe all editors have something of a fetish when it comes to their objects of interest. They seem to hold their own magic virtue, their own 'soul', which is perhaps the sum of the countless works embodied therein — by people who put many hours of research, reading, and concentration into an article; who put years of their experiences into a commentary; an entire life story into their testimony. People who interact during the course of the chaotic duties that constitute the routine of an editorial board.

For those of us toiling away in the kitchen, and for the associate editors who periodically join us in tasting these concoctions of the spirit, each issue is a bundling of numerous actions: works already completed, many ideas to be made reality and, above all, many more threads to be pulled into the extensive network this journal is drawing together — or which draws the journal together — linking readers, writers, and institutes from various geographical and cognitive areas.

Herein lies *Manguinhos'* most important commitment: to involve a growing number of people in the web now weaving itself in Brazil around the social history of sciences — and in particular, but not exclusively, of the life sciences, by definition multidisciplinary, pluralistic, versatile. As the new editor of a publication that already has firm foundations, I can tackle with greater tenacity tasks which the previous editors had already made priorities: broadening our reading public; introducing the journal into fields and research communities where it has yet to become well known; lending greater breadth to the network that is its driving force, joining with other institutes and periodicals that make up other relevant links in this network.

At the top of our agenda is the question of adding new subscribers — which will also add new kindling to the spontaneous flow of articles and collaborative efforts. We know full well that Brazil's editorial market does not favor scientific periodicals, that these are rarely sold in book stores, and that people working in the human sciences in Brazil do not have the habit of subscribing to specialized magazines. While we devise our own mechanisms for dealing with these problems, we would like to recruit all of *Manguinhos'* readers and collaborators to help in whatever way they can to publicize our journal among an ever wider audience — either by taking out a subscription, or by encouraging co-workers or students to do so, by writing articles, summarizing new theses or dissertations, reporting on ongoing research, informing us about relevant historical sources, and so on.

The quantity and constancy of such efforts will define how well we can perform our role: to submit this intellectual production to demanding referees, thereby endowing it with a seal of quality and allowing it to reach many others, some in quite distant places — breaking down barriers and expanding the exchange and input of information essential to those engaged in producing new knowledge.

Jaime Benchimol