

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear readers,

A hot sun and crackling blue sky herald the arrival of summer in Rio de Janeiro, spurring the exhausted workers at our journal to hedonistic thoughts of vacation, the beach, gorgeous sunsets, hammocks swinging in the warm shade and the breeze... But before we can indulge ourselves in this well-deserved rest, the world just might come to an end, if we are to judge by the frenzied buzz on the internet. Many people believe December 21, 2012 will be doomsday, as supposedly predicted by the Mayan calendar. To be on the safe side – given that emotions are running high in the Mideast and that Antarctica and Greenland are thawing faster than we'd imagined – we hurried up to close this year's special supplement, about health and slavery, and brought the journal's editors together for an evaluation and outlook session.

Suggestions were raised for various topics that might be addressed in dossiers or supplements in the near future (if there is one): the history of sports – leveraging the major events set to take place in Brazil starting in 2013 (the FIFA Confederations Cup, the World Cup, the Olympics, and so on); the 25th anniversary of Brazil's Unified Health System; the centennial of the death of Alfred Russel Wallace; the history of informatics; and the history of military medicine, already a fertile branch of historiography in other countries and gaining ground here as well. We talked about the journal joining social networks, an exciting topic that I'll leave for another editor's note. The terms of office for the current members of our editorial board are coming to an end, and the new board will be shaped to provide us support in the various fields of knowledge with which we interact and to strengthen the journal both regionally and internationally. We will persist in our goals of encouraging more submissions from all corners of Brazil and of increasing the journal's presence abroad in terms of citations, consequently enhancing its performance on international indexes. With this in mind, we believe we will see promising rewards from our heavy investment in the English translation of articles for our online edition at Portal SciELO - Scientific Electronic Library Online (www.scielo.br/hcsm). From 2006 through Volume 19, Number 3 (Jul.-Sep. 2012), 108 articles were translated from Portuguese or Spanish into the language of Shakespeare – or, more in keeping with our vocation, of Ross and Manson. We decided to look for ways to share a fraction of the financial burden of translation with our authors, starting in 2013, and to cut back on the printing of hard copies. We also discussed the efforts we've been making to shorten the overly long time our contributors generally wait to see their articles published as well as about our steadily growing number of submissions, which forces us to increase our rejection rate. Our more personal exchanges with authors and peer reviewers, which have set the tone here at our journal, will suffer changes in the near future, as our inevitable adoption of an online submission system will redound in automation and impersonalness.

Will we have to change the wide-angle lens that has distinguished our journal from its dawning day, in order to make it sustainable? In all the documents we have ever produced,

the journal's scope has been defined by the triad of its title. According to our editorial project, as stated on our site: "'History' denotes a way of observing, interpreting, and taking action that is unique to one professional specialty but shared by other academic areas. 'Health' denotes a universe of possible objects and defines our place as subjects of knowledge and as social actors. The life sciences predominate among journal topics. 'Sciences' comes in the plural because of the diversity both of subjects as well as of objects of knowledge, because multiplicity is one of the traits of the institution to which we belong, and, finally, because we consider transdisciplinarity indispensable to the advance of both the biological and social sciences".

História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos has done an exemplary job of accomplishing its program to date. It is included in two collections on the SciELO web portal: human sciences and health sciences. The diversity of its classifications in the Qualis-Capes system, which evaluates graduate courses and scientific journals, is a fine reflection of the journal's breadth. It remains firmly anchored in the field of history, where it first received its top classification: A1. While it went on to reach this same ranking in education, sociology, and interdisciplinarity as well, history remains its core, the basis of its identity in the midst of so many intersections. In other categories we are ranked A2 (applied social sciences, letters/linguistics, social services) or B1 (anthropology/archeology, architecture and urbanism, arts/music, physical education, teaching, geography, urban and regional planning, psychology, collective health). I would also like to highlight something I feel is quite unique to our journal, which is that it draws the eye of so many of the Qualis-Capes committees: biodiversity, law, engineering I and II, geosciences, philosophy/theology, dentistry, agrarian sciences I, medicine I and II, biological sciences II, veterinary medicine, biological sciences I and II, and chemistry.

Are we going against the tide in the world of international scientific journals, which are becoming ever more specialized? Does this characteristic reflect the complex demands of scale inherent to delving into ever more circumscribed realms of knowledge? Is it a product of the polysemic bias of the health field per se? Do the interrelations of *História, Ciências, Saúde - Manguinhos* mirror the interrelations of the institutes to which it is tied, that is, the Fundação Oswaldo Cruz and the Casa de Oswaldo Cruz? Do these represent an asset we should value or a distortion that needs correcting, something that was only justified in the early days of the history of the life and health sciences, an area we helped to consolidate in Brazil?

I will leave you with these questions, dear reader, to keep simmering on your intellectual back burner during the coming year-end festivities. Think about them between your holiday dinner and sips of champagne on New Year's Eve, which, I sincerely hope, will be a glorious time for you.

Arrivederci.

Jaime L. Benchimol
Science editor