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Editorial

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Editorial

As the new millennium begins, CRIME, HISTORY & SOCIETIES is entering its fourth year. The first issue of CHS was published in spring 1997 by the International Association for the History of Crime and Criminal Justice. Since then, with the help of the Fondation de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and the Librairie Droz, CRIME, HISTORY & SOCIETIES has consolidated its position among professional academic journals.

We have come a long way since the beginnings of «modern» crime and criminal justice history: in the late 1960s and in the 1970s, a small number of social historians began to engage with topics which had until then been very much the preserve of popular historians, journalists, serving or retired policeman and lawyers, but very few academics. What looked, in the 1960s and the 1970s, like a narrow and overspecialized approach has developed into a rich field of historical research with interdisciplinary significance. Crime and criminal justice history has carved out an important position at the crossroads of a number of disciplines such as social history, criminology, other social sciences such as sociology and political science, anthropology, and last, but by no means least, legal history. CRIME, HISTORY & SOCIETIES reflects this position: it is international and comparative, and, above all, interdisciplinary.

A number of indicators point to the growing importance of this interdisciplinary field. Issues and topics relating to the history of crime and criminal justice now appear regularly in the programmes of major learned societies the world over; a growing number of titles dealing with these themes can be found in the catalogues of academic publishers in many countries; crime and criminal justice history is an increasingly popular subject in university curricula, reflecting a growing interest among students as well as their teachers. The large proportion of articles by young researchers published by CHS reflects this trend, which we hope will be encouraged by the Herman Diederiks prize.

Although CHS is by definition a specialist journal, it is nevertheless intended to cover all areas of its domain, thereby reflecting the many periods, themes and geographical regions addressed by the research today. We are therefore making a concerted effort to open our pages to hitherto neglected geographical areas such as Latin America and increasingly, we hope, central and eastern Europe, Africa and Asia. In the same spirit, we would like, in spite of our still limited number of pages, to develop the book-review section.

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CHS makes room for debates and discussions, and it informs its readers about ongoing research activities. The journal is divided into three sections:

- The first and main section is devoted to substantial articles, presenting the results of hitherto unpublished research.
- Under the heading FORUM, the second section focuses on current debates and discussions in crime and criminal justice history. Book reviews and review essays are a regular feature of these pages.
- The third section announces activities in crime and criminal justice history, such as conferences and colloquia. It also contains the annual call for submissions for the Herman Diederiks Prize and information on IAHCCJ activities.

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When we launched this journal, we were aware of the difficulty involved. Today we can say that CRIME, HISTORY & SOCIETIES is an accepted forum for the results of research in Europe, in the Americas and in other parts of the world, as can be seen by the number and diversity of the articles submitted for publication. However this is no reason to relax our efforts: and in the tasks we have set ourselves, the help of our readers and authors remains indispensable.