



Editorial: Encountering history within and beyond borders

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Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Historical Encounters: A journal of historical consciousness, historical cultures, and history education*, or just ‘Historical Encounters’ or HEJ (Historical Encounters Journal) for short. The title of the journal intends to suggest Gadamer’s (1992) notion of ‘the fusion of horizons’, as we explore the ways in which members of our communities experience, interpret, learn, study, and respond to the historical worlds they encounter. The journal aims to publish research and scholarship – both empirical and theoretical – from within and across the fields of history curriculum, pedagogy, and didactics, historical culture, historical consciousness, history teacher education, curriculum history, history of education, history of ideas (in education), collective memory, history textbook and media studies, historical theory, narrative theory, public history, and any of the other areas where history education and the broader field of historical studies intersect, or the core themes are debated.

As a history educator and curriculum historian myself, I hope you will permit in this introduction a little bit of history about how the journal came about. I had become interested in open access journals ever since a colleague from the United States first introduced me to Open Journal Systems (developed at the University of British Columbia). I liked the ethics behind that journal system, and while on sabbatical (late 2012 and early 2013), became increasingly concerned at the way academic authors often signed away the copyright to their work once it went into publication; subsequently received little or no remuneration for their writing (unless one counts its use in job and promotion applications, resumes, and the like); and worked in universities that were then charged for access to that same work. It was thus a considered decision to adopt Open Journal Systems to manage the journal, and a philosophy that leaves copyright in the hands of the author, allowing them to republish their work, so long as a notice remains on the work that it was first published in *Historical Encounters*.

Just before the start of my sabbatical, I was invited by Professor James Albright, Chair of the Education Research Institute Newcastle (ERIN), to be a guest editor of a special issue of *Education Sciences*, a new journal (published by MDPI) with a broad scope and mission. The special issue was titled ‘History curriculum, geschichtsdidaktik, and the problem of the nation’ (Parkes & Vinterek, 2012), and invited colleagues from around the world to engage in a dialogue between various regional and national traditions of history education. The goal was to provide a collection of articles that explored history education within and beyond national borders. I completed that assignment with Professor Monika Vinterek (Dalarna University, Sweden), and we published 8 papers (including our editorial) in that special issue, including

articles by well-known and emerging scholars in the field. Its publication marked a personal milestone in a developing association with history educators beyond my own nation's borders.

During the second-half of my sabbatical in 2013 I took up residence as a Visiting Research Fellow in the Department of Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies at Umeå University, Sweden, where I worked with the Educational History and History Didactics group led by Professor Daniel Lindmark; and attended a wonderful conference in Linköping that demonstrated the vibrancy of the *historiedidaktik* and *historia utbildning* research field in Sweden. Among these Nordic colleagues I encountered the concept of 'historical culture', which was not being used much in Australia, and a great interest in 'historical consciousness' that was aware of both the older Continental (originally Germanic) and younger North American (predominantly Canadian) scholarship (Ahonen, 2005). The significance of that experience is registered in the thematic focus of this journal, and in the interest colleagues from the Nordic region have shown in the journal (with half the articles in this inaugural issue coming from scholars located in Nordic nations).

When I returned to Australia mid-2013, I proposed to my colleagues in the HERMES (Historical Experience, Representation, Media, and Education Studies) Research Network concentrated within The University of Newcastle, that we should publish an open access journal. I am pleased to say that we shared a great enthusiasm for the project. The publication of our inaugural issue would not have been possible if it were not for the behind-the-scenes efforts of the Editorial Team – particularly Dr Heather Sharp and Dr Debra Donnelly, whose advice I regularly sought – and the many members of our outstanding Editorial Board who reviewed papers for the inaugural issue. I would also like to thank each of the authors who submitted papers. In a neoliberal world where every move an academic makes is quantified and evaluated, the courage involved in submitting your work to a fledgling journal not yet present in institutional or regional ranking systems, cannot be underestimated.

The papers in this inaugural issue reflect the wide range of scholarship currently occurring that treats historical consciousness, historical culture, and history education as its objects of analysis. With contributions from Australia, Canada, Finland, Sweden, and the Netherlands, they represent an exciting diversity of works located within a variety of intersecting research fields including: history teacher education (McLean & colleagues), historical theory (Thorp), museum studies and public pedagogy (Smith), curriculum history and history textbook studies (Elmersjö), public history (Clark), and history education (Ahonen; and Ammert). We also have our first 'provocations' piece, arguing for the use of 'counterfactuals' in history education (Huijen & Holthuis); and we are pleased to be able to share an extended abstract of a recently completed doctoral dissertation (Salter), in a section we hope will be successful in showcasing the work of new scholars in the field. The editorial team is thrilled that we have such a diverse range of contributions to offer for our inaugural issue.

I'd like to finish this introduction to the inaugural issue by encouraging you to spread the word about *Historical Encounters*, and invite scholars with expertise in areas that define the scope of the journal to submit their work for review, or to sign up as reviewers. It is safe to say that the journal will only be as good as the researchers and scholars who participate in it.

References

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About the Editor

Robert J. Parkes, PhD, is a History Teacher Educator, and convenes the HERMES History Education Research Network, concentrated at The University of Newcastle. He is founding editor of *Historical Encounters*; a member of the Editorial Board of *Agora / Sungråpho*; a core author for *Public History Weekly*; founding co-convenor of the History and Education Special Interest Group within the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE); a member of the Academic Advisory Board of the International Society for History Didactics (ISHD); and the author of *Interrupting history: Rethinking history curriculum after 'the end of history'* (published by Peter Lang). His research interests include: historical theory and history education; historiography, hermeneutics and historical consciousness; historical cultures; history teacher education; curriculum history, theory and politics.

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