

Editors' Notes

EDITORS' REPORT, SEPTEMBER 1996

This year marked a number of important changes in the *Journal of Economic History*. Gary Libecap and his crew at Arizona have taken over the North American office and next year they will be taking over as the senior office. Joel Mokyr's will come to an end at the end of June 1998, and the Rest of World office will move to Berkeley. Jan de Vries will become co-editor in charge of the non-North American office in the summer of 1998.

Apart from these normal transitions, there have been a few significant structural changes in the *Journal*. First, 1997 was the first year in which there was no *Task* issue. The June issue included the presidential address, abstracts of the papers, and the dissertation session, but apart from that, it contained the normal load of refereed papers and book reviews. There have been few complaints and so far this, apparently, has not led to a decline in the number of paper proposals submitted to the program organizers.

Second, after somewhat lengthy negotiations, the Association has renewed its contract with Cambridge University Press for another five years. The main change relevant to readers of the *Journal of Economic History* is that we were able to increase the size of the *Journal*, which from 1998 on will have an upper bound of 1,200 instead of 1,000 pages per year.

Third, there was a major change in the technical production process of the *Journal* this year. From March 1997, the *Journal* is being typeset in the editorial office, from diskettes or e-mailed files sent by the authors. The transition has been remarkably smooth. Indeed, it appears to us that few of the readers of the March 1997 issue of the *Journal of Economic History* actually noticed the changeover at all, which in some way attests to our success

TABLE I
REGULAR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS BY WORLD AREA, BROKEN DOWN
BY TOPIC, JULY 1994–JUNE 1997 (totals)

Topic	July 1994–June 1995		July 1995–June 1996		July 1996–June 1997	
	North America	Rest of the World	North America	Rest of the World	North America	Rest of the World
Agriculture	5	6	2	3	0	4
Demography	3	3	10	3	4	3
Growth	1	6	1	12	2	5
Industry	8	5	3	9	4	4
Technology	2	3	1	2	1	3
Labor	12	11	4	2	6	6
Money and macro	2	2	1	6	4	3
Public finance	1	0	1	1	4	1
History of thought	3	4	1	1	0	0
International trade, finance	0	6	2	6	1	2
Urban and regional	4	1	7	3	3	0
Political economy	10	3	11	5	10	8
Private finance, capital markets	4	2	6	6	7	10
Total	55	52	50	59	46	49

Notes: North America includes articles normally handled by the North American Office: the United States, Canada, and the non-Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries. Rest of the World includes articles normally handled by the International Office: all other countries and areas of the world. Totals exclude resubmissions and the June TASKS issue.

TABLE 2
REGULAR-ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS BY REGION, 1 JULY–30 JUNE
1993–1994, 1994–1995, 1995–1996, AND 1996–1997
(totals)

Region	Submissions			
	1993–1994	1994–1995	1995–1996	1996–1997
Australia	0	2	1	4
United States and Canada	52	60	57	52
Non-Spanish-speaking Caribbean	0	2	0	1
Great Britain	23	31	21	19
Western Europe	20	12	18	20
Asia	6	6	14	9
Latin America	5	4	3	9
Eastern Europe/Russia	4	1	4	1
Africa	2	1	3	3
Middle East	1	1	2	2
Not applicable or unknown	11	4	2	2

since it was our declared intention to keep the current “look” of the *Journal*. The entire Association owes a debt to Steve Reich, whose tireless work, ingenuity, and dedication have made this transition possible.

It might be added that for the first time in the Association’s history, as far as we could tell, the September issue actually came out and was on your desks in the last week of August, a direct result of the far more efficient production process. Of course, since most of *you* were not at your desks at that time, you may not have noticed.

Table 1 records the standard statistics of submission and publication. These figures suggest a bit of a decline in new submissions compared to last year, but there seems nothing there to reject the hypothesis of a stationary process around about 100 submissions a year, divided more or less equally between the two offices, which seems a rather comfortable steady state. Some of this may be attributable to the first appearance of the *Review of European Economic History*, (which directly competes with the “rest of the world” office of the *Journal of Economic History*). However, we are not too concerned since much of the decline is the result of a decline in the submission of papers that are of low quality or are not really in economic history, and this just points to a more efficient process of learning among potential contributors for example, the disappearance of submissions in the history of thought which we practically never publish). Overall, the number of *publishable* manuscripts—as viewed from our office—has increased, and by and large the quality threshold for acceptance has not declined. As far as topics are concerned,

TABLE 3
REGULAR-ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS BY PERIOD, 1 JULY–30 JUNE
1994–1995, 1995–1996, AND 1996–1997
(totals)

Period	Submissions		
	1994–1995	1995–1996	1996–1997
Twentieth century	54	65	54
Nineteenth century	52	55	42
Seventeenth and eighteenth century	14	15	17
Pre-seventeenth century	10	8	12
Not applicable or unknown	2	3	0

TABLE 4
ACCEPTANCE AND TURNAROUND

Decision	North American Office		International Office		Total	
	1995/96	1996/97	1995/96	1996/97	1995/96	1996/97
Accepted	17	16	14	11	31	25
Revise and resubmit	23	17	26	27	49	38
Rejected or withdrawn	28	30	33	34	61	58
Total	68	63	73	72	141	135

Decision Lags (in days)

Year	minimum	maximum	mean	median
1994/95	7	360	104	109
1995/96	6	286	96	85
1996/97	1	281	85	77

there is probably a fair amount of noise in the system and the samples are too small to draw any inference, although the interest in political economy and capital market continues. We also notice the absence of any submissions on agriculture in the North American office and presume this is a blip.

An examination of Table 2 shows a more or less constant flow of papers on Western Europe and Britain but a leveling off in Asia and Eastern Europe. A sharp increase in Latin America is also notable, but again it is hard to know if these things represent trends or not.

Finally, turning to the publication lag, which reflects most on the way a journal is run, the news continues to be good. Overall, the turnover time has been declining, although this is probably as low as we'll get it (see Table 4).

We would like to conclude our report by welcoming to the editorial board six new members: Colleen Callahan, William A. Sundstrom, Jane Humphries, Gregory Clark, Kevin O'Rourke, and Joseph P. Ferrie. We also thank outgoing members Christina Romer, Kenneth Snowden, Lee Alston, Leslie Hannah, Lynn Hollen Lees, and Stephen Haber. for their years hard work, service, and dedication to the *Journal*. We would also like to express our appreciation to all members of the profession who served as referees for article submissions and who wrote book reviews. In addition to the members of the editorial board, our referees for the past year were

Barbara Alexander, *Wellesley College*
Douglas W. Allen, *Simon Fraser University*

Lee J. Alston, *University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign*

Jeremy Atask, *Vanderbilt University*

Daniel Barbezat, *Amherst College*

Yoram Barzel, *University of Washington*

Dwayne Benjamin, *University of Toronto*

Ben S. Bernanke, *Princeton University*

Michael Bernstein, *University of California, San Diego*

Tuvia Blumenthal, *Ben Gurion University*

Michael D. Bordo, *Rutgers University*

Maristella Botticini, *Boston University*

George Boyer, *Cornell University*

Loren Brandt, *University of Toronto*

Richard Britnell, *University of Durham*

Stephen Broadberry, *University of Warwick*

John Brown, *Clark University*

Joyce Burnette, *Wabash College*

Erik Buyst, *Catholic University of Leuven*

Colleen Callahan, *LeHigh University*

Charles W. Calomiris, *Columbia University*

R. H. Campbell, *Kirkcudbright, Scotland*

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 Dora L. Costa, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*
 Lee Craig, *North Carolina State University*
 Javier Cuenca Esteban, *University of Waterloo*
 Lance Davis, *California Institute of Technology*
 Jan de Vries, *University of California, Berkeley*
 Brad De Long, *University of California, Berkeley*
 J. W. Drukker, *University of Groningen*
 Ruth Dupre, *Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales*
 Barry Eichengreen, *University of California, Berkeley*
 Bernard Elbaum, *University of California, Santa Cruz*
 Stanley L. Engerman, *University of Rochester*
 Cees Fasseur, *Leiden University*
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 Sara Horrell, *Cambridge University*
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 William K. Hutchinson, *Miami University*
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 Douglas Irwin, *University of Chicago*
 Jonathon Israel, *University College, London*
 John A. James, *University of Virginia*
 Paul Johnson, *University of Melbourne*
 Ronald N. Johnson, *Montana State University*
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 Shawn E. Kantor, *University of Arizona*
 Zorina Khan, *Bowdoin College*
 Sukkkoo Kim, *Washington University*
 Stephan Klasen, *King's College, Cambridge*
 P. W. Klein, *University of Leiden*
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