

Editor's Note

Past Imperfect has passed another milestone in its development. The articles in this issue have been selected from papers presented at the history graduate students' conference, "Innovations in Interdisciplinarity," which was hosted by the journal. The conference, held 15-16 August 1997 at the University of Alberta, was a great success. The idea for a graduate student conference came to mind in 1996. I was extremely fortunate to share the work of organizing the conference with two enthusiastic, tireless, and good-natured graduate students, Heather Rollason and Sheila Donnelly. Together we set the theme of the conference as interdisciplinary method in history.

Although the use of interdisciplinary methodology has been important for each of us personally, the death of Professor John E. Foster in the fall of 1996 determined the theme of the conference. Professor Foster had a profound impact on graduate student life in the Department of History and Classics at the University of Alberta. Not only was he a great teacher, he was a great mentor. Even those students who did not have him as their supervisor could count on his willingness to provide advice on the "how-tos" of being a graduate student. Our decision to dedicate the conference and this issue of the journal to his memory made the choice of interdisciplinarity a natural one as Dr. Foster often encouraged students to expand their methodological repertoire.

The papers included here have all incorporated interdisciplinary method in some way. In doing so they remind us that the lines that separate the disciplines can be fuzzy. Discipline-specific methodologies of history, political science, anthropology, classics and sociology have been innovatively utilised throughout these papers

throughout the conference in the paper presentations and round table sessions.

The conference and this issue of the journal would not have been possible without the generous support of a University of Alberta Conference Grant. The Department of History and Classics and the History and Classics Graduate Student Association also provided financial support. The Department of History and Classics was not only supportive of the conference throughout the planning process but provided extra funding for another editor for this issue. Thanks also go to the editorial board of *Past Imperfect*: Professors John-Paul Himka, David Hall, David Mills, David Moss and Doug Owram. We would like to acknowledge the support staff in the department office; Louise Jenkins, Louise Kraus, Linda Bridges, and Lydia Dugbazah have patiently and graciously answered many questions and provided directions when needed. Thank you to the anonymous referees, who often worked under extreme time limitations, and to the contributors who carefully revised and refined their work. Finally, a very special thanks must go to Professor Skip Ray of University of British Columbia who arranged his return from Paris in order to be keynote speaker at the conference.

The publication of this issue officially marks the “end” of the conference. On behalf of my co-workers I can say it has been a great pleasure to work with so many supportive faculty and talented graduate students. Dr. Foster, I think, would have been pleased.

Robynne Rogers Healey