

From the Editor

Publication of *Historia*, 1, 65, 2020 was unavoidably delayed due to the wide-ranging and unfolding effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. South Africa was placed under a State of Disaster in March, and remains, as I write in late October, under Lockdown Level One.

Authors and reviewers have been coping in multiple ways with intense demands on their time, energies, attention and skills. Many have only very recently been able to return – and only occasionally, with safeguards and controlled access – to archives, libraries, to their offices and their stored books, records and hard drives. The short to medium term future is uncertain as many countries around the globe close down again in the face of resurgences in the rates of infection, and worrying rises in Southern Africa too.

Across the world, publishing schedules have been disrupted in various ways. While some journals are finding that articles are flooding in, others are experiencing the opposite. The reasons for these are complex and as yet in South Africa we are unable to identify how Covid-19 will affect academic publishing, including the profile of contributors, funding models, the focus of research, and the interests of readers.

Will the current flurry of interest in the histories of epidemics and infectious disease be sustained? In the future will the now evident significance of these be routinely factored in analyses of past times and events? Will the great number of projects which have been recording ‘My Life During the Pandemic’ (whether in text, images or other media) be carefully archived and might there be greater future support for museums and memorials of medicine and science (both orthodox and not) and health-care workers (both orthodox and not)? Or, like the Great ‘Flu of 1918-19, will Covid-19 become one of the most important events to affect societies, but, in the words of eminent historian Howard Phillips, it be treated in our histories “in inverse proportion to the anxious attention which [it] attracted while [it] raged.” This issue of *Historia* reproduces an extended interview I conducted with Professor Phillips in May this year, which was circulated as a newsletter for HASA subscribers.

Historia, its Future and its Archive

The postponement of HASA’s bi-annual conference to 2021, meant that many participants who had been aiming to present their work at the conference before polishing it up for submission for peer review and (hopefully) publication in *Historia*, have paused in their writing. Nonetheless, we urge those of you ready to have your work reviewed (by two peer reviewers, one of whom is likely to be international expert) to submit articles to historia.submissions@gmail.com

There are many advantages to publishing in *Historia*, and our expanding international reach means that authors are strongly encouraged to balance their in-depth research with an awareness of the bigger picture, broader historiography and the wider significance of their articles.

We are regaining our momentum, and significant progress has been made towards issue 2 of volume 65 (2020). There are also many plans for the future with an expanded editorial team, a more stream-lined referencing system, and a new look.

Historia has an important niche in the South African academic publishing landscape. It is a fully accredited journal. Our turn-around time from submission to review, and then feedback to authors, is as short as is possible while being commensurate with professional requirements. Quickly available in print to HASA members and subscribers and then soon online via the SciELO platform, articles are free to download and accessible around the world. Publication page fees are low and can be recouped by authors affiliated to South African tertiary institutions. There is also, via the HASA website <https://hgsa.co.za/historia-archive/> full access to the archive of *Historia* articles, from volume 1 in 1956 to volume 61 in 2016. The volumes 53 (2008) to 64 (2019) can be found via SciELO. <http://www.scielo.org.za>

Julie Parle

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