

Editorial Americas, Americans

The editors offer readers a warm welcome to the inaugural edition of EnterText. It includes some fine creative work as well as some stimulating research papers in a variety of fields. Our interdisciplinary approach is committed to combining cultural and historical studies with creative items, and we hope to receive a wide range of submissions, both conventional and experimental.

It is our intention that EnterText should establish a reputation for scholarly standards as stringent as those of any traditional journal, while at the same time making use of the enormous opportunities the internet offers with the caution that it is a tool, and like any other can be put to good or bad use. Now that the shakeout of web opportunists is getting under way, the internet's lasting value as a tool for intelligent communication transcending conventional barriers should become clearer.

We are committed to the idea of free access. The circumventing of markets, and particularly the straitjacket imposed on creative and scholarly publishing by commercial considerations, is a major boon. The internet revolutionises publishing because it cuts out the cost of material production. Substantial and complex documents can be posted on the web and accessed from anywhere in the world with the necessary technology, at minimal cost though it is perhaps appropriate here to remember that some sixty per cent of the world's population have never even made a phone-call (net users are, by definition, at this date a privileged minority, however international). Like most conventional academic journals we are not in a position to pay our contributors, but we hope that to be published in EnterText, and the free access to an international readership it will offer contributors, will provide real value.

Some users may choose to read online. Others who prefer to read from a paper copy can print out what they want, and read it where they want, filing it away for future reference. We have tried to prepare copy that will look good on screen or page, which is not always the case with internet text. Once published, our issues will remain available indefinitely on our website.

Central to the EnterText concept is the commitment to dialogue. Readers are invited to enter their own text to initiate the ongoing discussion forum, to which authors will be invited to respond. We hope also to receive submissions for the Listings board. We can post notices about anything from conferences to cultural events, books to bazaars. Email us with your information. In order to reach a widening international public, we request those who are already EnterText readers to pass on our web address to friends and colleagues.

We thank all those who submitted material, and look forward to publishing some of the submissions not accommodated in this issue in a subsequent one. Our deadlines for this edition have been very tight, and we offer particular thanks to those who have refereed the articles, often at very short notice, bringing their good judgement and scholarship to bear on the peer-review process. Our thanks go too to the distinguished scholars who have agreed to act as editorial advisors. We look forward to their continuing advice and guidance.

Finally, please remember that while this is a special occasion as we publish our inaugural edition, we also invite submissions for the forthcoming ones listed under "Issues." Our next deadline is 1 February 2001 for EnterText 1.2, titled "Text to Screen / Screen to Text." Every edition will carry creative work, on any topic and of any kind, and every third issue will be an open one. We hope to hear from you.

The Editors, December 2000