



Introduction: Fifty Years of *Interdisciplinary History*,

1970–2020 With this volume, the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* concludes its fiftieth year of publication. In order to celebrate and demonstrate how interdisciplinary scholarship has flourished and evolved over five decades, we commissioned essays by members of our board of editors and long-time collaborators on their special fields of expertise. Michael McCormick’s “Climates of History, Histories of Climate: From History to Archaeoscience” and Peter Temin’s “Words and Numbers: A New Approach to Writing Ancient History” appeared in the inaugural issue. The second installment had Anne Hardy’s “The Under-Appreciated Rat and Other Under-Appreciated Rodents: Harbingers of Plague from the Black Death to Twenty-First-Century America”; Steven A. Epstein’s “Environmental History in the *JIH*, 1970–2020”; and Peter A. Coclanis’ “Field Notes: Agricultural History’s New Plot.” The third issue of the fiftieth volume included George C. Alter’s “The Evolution of Models in Historical Demography” and Steven Ruggles and Diana L. Magnuson’s “The History of Quantification in History: The *JIH* as a Case Study.”

The series concludes in this issue with E. Anthony Wrigley’s “The Interplay of Demographic, Economic, and Social History”; Myron P. Gutmann’s “Quantifying Interdisciplinary History—The Record of (Nearly) Fifty Years of the *JIH*”; Anne E. C. McCants’ “Economic History and the Historians”; and Peter Burke’s “Art and History, 1969–2019.” Sir Anthony has been an active contributor to the *JIH* since its first volumes; his pioneering work greatly influenced our founding and our immediate attention then and continuing throughout to population reconstitution and demographic methods more broadly. Burke’s essay affirms co-founding editor Theodore K. Rabb’s concern to bring interdisciplinary humanities disciplines into the *JIH*’s orbit together with those of a more scientific, medical, and social-scientific bent.

McCants, an economic historian of early modern times, is our incoming editor. Gutmann has been active for several decades as an associate editor of, and contributor to, the *JIH*; like the article by Ruggles and Magnuson in the third issue of this volume, he examines the *JIH*'s fifty-year record of publishing articles and research notes to advance the use of quantification methods to learn about the past.

These 50th Anniversary essays both exemplify the special fields of interdisciplinary history as it has evolved over fifty years and point the way toward future research on these and related topics. The *JIH* prides itself on its receptivity to new areas and foci of research into past times; on its ability to publish innovative, even speculative, scholarly research findings; and on its openness to broad, and deep, connections between historicism and advances in cognate sciences and humanities.

We trust that our readers welcome and applaud this collection of special essays on important, pathbreaking, subjects along with our continued publication of the best interdisciplinary historical research from scholars in several disciplines and many universities and research institutes in North and South America, Europe, Asia, and beyond. Fifty years of journal publication represents only an anniversary along a much more enduring journey. We offer these new special articles as a marker preparing the profession, and our readers, for the untold years of new discoveries and new scholarship that lie ahead.