Editorial

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As we move into the second full academic year of a COVID world, we would like to take a moment to acknowledge the people whose love, labor, and efforts go into making Water History and other academic journals work. This has been a trying time for academics, as our regular work worlds were upended, our classrooms transformed and transferred. Our priorities were forced to change as we became, to various degrees: caregivers and patients; providers of emotional, financial, and logistical support to family, friends, colleagues, and students; adopters of new technologies and pedagogies; housebound, quarantined; unemployed, struggling, overworked. Many of us lost colleagues, and then many had to add their work to their own impossible loads. Many more of us lost or feared losing loved ones.

There were unprecedented logistical challenges to research as well; archives around the world closed, travel stopped, interviews with stakeholders became impossible, libraries closed, grants were paused. Quarantines and lockdowns were not, it turned out, miniature writing retreats, as the cumulative stress of COVID and of the transformation of daily demands took hold. Many professors found themselves also teaching their own children at home, juggling home and work and homework. It is therefore, with all of this context in mind, that we want to say how much we value the work and effort of the scholars whose work appears in this volume, and crucially, those whose invisible work does NOT appear, but which allowed this research to be published.

Our authors in this issue wrote, submitted, re-wrote, and often radically reframed and re-thought the articles that you will encounter in this issue. This is, of course, always a great effort. These essays, which range from a microstudy of a Canadian dowser to a sweeping survey of the complex international relations that built up around the Nile river, contribute to the field, and help make water history, environmental history, and the history of technology stronger.

But these articles would not have been published without the labor, time, energy and efforts of others. Journal publishing drives our field forward, but it is propelled by peer review. Peer review is always an essential part of the system. This is too seldom noted in print, and I want to take the time to acknowledge the vital work that our reviewers did during a time in which they were already stressed and stretched beyond capacity. Volunteering

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to help someone else make their work more effective is selfless and generous, and we are so very grateful to all of you. Are readers do this as part of a blind review process, for which they will not be publicly or privately thanked by the article author. So we are doing that here. Thank you. Thank you for agreeing to review, and to giving other scholars space and help and advice. Thank you also to those who were honest with us and yourselves about not being able to review and who suggested others.

Finally, this journal, though in an online format, requires a large staff at Springer to bring it to fruition each time. Our job as editors is to work with the recruitment, review, revision, and selection of articles. We have a whole team who helps behind the scenes to make the software process for all of this possible, and is constantly fielding questions from us and authors and fixing the many ways we break the system. We literally could not do the data management of this journal without them. Once we accept a piece, it then needs to go through a full process at the press of type-setting, image control and clearance, layout and design, copyediting, pagination, and the whole creation of the DOI numbers and data pathways needed to make the article discoverable to libraries and researchers. We want to publicly acknowledge all of the people who make this process run, but particularly Senthil Kumar, our production editor, and Kanishkaa Sridhar, our journal editorial assistant, without whose help we could not present these issues.

Finally, much of the Springer staff who help us put this journal together are based in India. We want to acknowledge the severity with which COVID hit their communities. We cannot express enough our gratitude to them for continuing to work on this during such a crisis and our hopes that the coming months bring respite and healing for them and for us all.

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