Editorial

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Welcome to the first issue of the ninth year of *BioSocieties*! We are delighted that our initial belief that there was a place for an interdisciplinary journal for social studies of the life sciences has been more than vindicated. In our first editorial we said:

It is the goal of *BioSocieties* to give researchers an opportunity to present their work in a forum that will be read, not only by their disciplinary peers, but by also by fellow social scientists working in fields that normally do not cross-fertilize – but perhaps should. If we do our job right, moreover, we will also emerge as the journal of choice for those life scientists who are interested in gaining insights into the spectrum of social science scholarship concerned with their field – and also interested in engaging constructively with that scholarship.

I hope our readers will agree that we have done our job, as has the community of social science researchers, which is now more dynamic, healthy and empirically engaged than ever.

Our vision for the journal also included an intention that authors hoping to publish in *BioSocieties* would eschew unnecessary disciplinary jargon, make clear the meaning of any necessary uses of disciplinary-specific terms and concepts, and go beyond internal disciplinary quarrels to spell out the larger relevance or implications of their work for others outside the field. Our view was (and is) that this kind of writing supported the sort of cross-disciplinary dialogue and debate that we hoped to provoke and promote across the social and the life sciences. We felt that the life sciences were in transition, developing less ‘reductionist’ modes of explanation, recognising the constitutive openness of organisms to their milieu at all levels, from that of the neurone or the genetic sequence to that of the organ and the organism. This transition offers a crucial opportunity for new forms of collaboration across the damaging divide of the two – or three – cultures. We feel that is even more the case today, and re-emphasise our commitment to opening up those transactions wherever possible.

With this, our ninth volume, we will cease our regular editorials, although we will produce them occasionally, when the time or the contents seem to demand them. But we must also mention some important developments in the journal itself. First, working with Palgrave, we now use an online submission system. You will find details through this link: biosoc.msubmit.net/cgi-bin/main.plex. We hope authors and reviewers will find this ‘user friendly’ – please let us know if you do not! Second, our inspirational fellow editor Adele Clarke is stepping down, as she had always intended, after 4 years of commitment to *BioSocieties*. It has been wonderful working with Adele; she is an exceptionally wise and generous scholar and colleague, with a wide and deep knowledge of the social sciences. Adele will certainly stay involved with our work in some capacity, but we also know that she has a very active ‘retirement’ planned!

In light of Adele's departure, we are delighted to announce that Professor Catherine Waldby, of the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney, has joined us as an editor. Cathy has made a series of groundbreaking contributions to the social studies of bioscience and biotechnology, from her classic study of *The Visible Human* to her more recent work on tissue economies, and she will be a terrific addition to the editorial team. We have also appointed a number of new members to our Editorial Advisory Board. They will bring fresh energy and enthusiasm to the journal, and will be contacting potential authors and working to generate submissions of the highest quality.

Please continue to contact the editors with suggestions, comments, criticisms or any other issues that you think might help improve *BioSocieties*. We look forward to hearing from you and to reading your work.

Nikolas Rose
Irina Singh
Catherine Waldby