

Editors' Notes

EDITORS' REPORT, SEPTEMBER 2006

Two thousand and six marks another of the periodic transitions at *The Journal of Economic History* with Knick Harley stepping down as co-editor and Phil Hoffman at CalTech stepping up to the plate as the co-editor dealing with non-North American topics, while I continue as the North American topics editor. We thank Knick for his service and welcome Phil to the task. We have been greatly assisted by Paul Hohenberg and Bill Collins, who have handled the book reviews for the non-American and American side respectively during this past year. Bill continues despite his service on the staff of the Council of Economic Advisers this year. Paul who so generously stepped up to fill in last year has been replaced by Alan Miller. At Vanderbilt, Linda Carter has been providing editorial assistance. Editorial assistance to Knick Harley was provided by Tommy Murphy and to Phil Hoffman by Sabrina Boschetti. The Board of Trustees has also appointed a committee chaired by Ken Sokoloff to search for my successor who will take over the North American topics when my term expires at the end of June 2008.

The JOURNAL remains active, viable, and of good repute. New submissions declined somewhat in 2005/06 from a peak of 135 the previous year and a record two-year average of 132 articles. Last year we received 125 new submissions but we remain significantly above trend. The international office continues to process a slightly larger share of submissions: 54 percent compared to the North American office's, 46 percent. This represents a continuation of historic patterns. Papers submitted continue

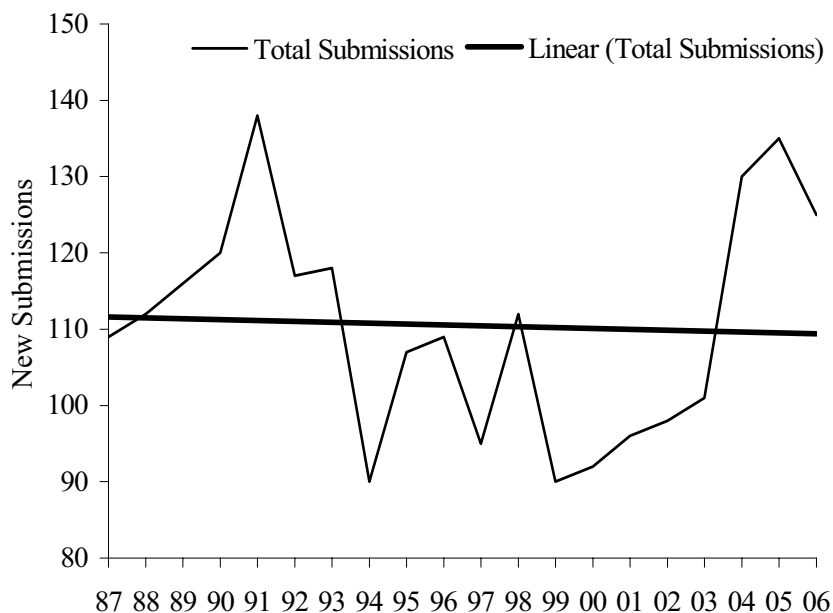


FIGURE 1
TREND IN NEW SUBMISSIONS, 1986/87–2005/06

Source: The yearly totals were taken from the published Editors' Notes.

TABLE 1
ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS BY WORLD AREA, BROKEN DOWN BY TOPIC,
JULY 2003–JUNE 2006

Topic	July 2003–June 2004		July 2004–June 2005		July 2005–June 2006	
	North America	All Other Regions	North America	All Other Regions	North America	All Other Regions
Agriculture	5	6	7	4	5	2
Demography	6	3	4	5	5	5
Growth	0	6	0	9	0	6
History of thought	1	1	0	0	1	1
Industry	5	10	5	6	1	11
International trade, finance	0	5	5	4	3	10
Labor	5	9	7	7	14	3
Money and macro	4	7	10	5	8	5
Political economy	15	5	1	15	7	5
Private finance, capital markets	9	8	8	11	6	9
Public finance	4	4	8	2	0	2
Technology	4	1	6	1	4	3
Urban and regional	0	1	1	1	0	4
Other	3	3	0	3	1	4
Total	61	69	62	73	55	70

Note: The numbers include new submissions only. The totals equal the number of new submissions received because a paper is classified in only one topic category. In the latest year, the North American office had 61 total submissions, 55 new and 6 resubmitted. The International office had 89 total submissions, 70 new and 19 resubmitted.

to vary widely by region, topic, and era. Interests are different this year from last and vary between the North American and Rest of the World offices. Last year, industry and international finance and trade were popular with the Rest of the World office whereas for the North American office over one-quarter of submissions were on labor. On the other hand it has been a while since the JOURNAL received a paper on North American growth.

TABLE 2
REGULAR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS BY REGION, 1 JULY–30 JUNE

Region	Submissions			
	2002–2003	2003–2004	2004–2005	2005–2006
Africa	3	2	2	3
Asia	1	11	16	7
Australia and New Zealand	0	2	2	3
Eastern Europe/Russia	1	2	3	2
Great Britain	14	13	20	14
Latin America	8	5	5	7
Middle East	5	3	5	5
Non-Spanish speaking Caribbean	0	0	0	0
United States and Canada	45	60	65	57
Western Europe	17	28	37	38
Not applicable	6	7	6	5

Note: The numbers include new submissions only. Totals exceed new submissions because a paper can be classified as pertaining to more than one region.

TABLE 3
REGULAR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS BY PERIOD, 1 JULY–30 JUNE
2003–2004, 2004–2005, AND 2005–2006

Period	Submissions		
	2003–2004	2004–2005	2005–2006
Twentieth century	67	74	55
Nineteenth century	52	70	75
Seventeenth and eighteenth centuries	18	22	25
Pre-seventeenth century	17	12	14
Not applicable or unknown	0	4	0

Note: The numbers include new submissions only. Totals exceed submissions because a paper can be classified as pertaining to more than one period.

Submissions focused upon the United States and Canada predominate over those for Western Europe (including Great Britain) and the rest of the globe continues to be largely ignored. Acceptances are down quite sharply at the North American office for reasons unknown—other than the lack of papers that meet the standards of the referees and the editor.

Knick and I have worked hard to reduce decision times by following up more quickly with referees, while referees for their part have been conscientious and expedi-

TABLE 4
ACCEPTANCE AND TURNAROUND

	North American Office		International Office		Total	
	2004/05	2005/06	2004/05	2005/06	2004/05	2005/06
Accepted	15	10	16	19	31	29
Revise and resubmit	21	17	18	21	39	38
Rejected or withdrawn	42	34	54	49	96	83
Total	78	61	88	89	166	150

Year	Decision Lags (in days)			
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Median
All submissions				
2001/2002	1	339	86	85
2002/2003	1	322	92	85
2003/2004	1	303	110	100
2004/2005	1	366	112	104
2005/2006	1	338	97	92
New submissions only				
2001/2002	1	233	87	91
2002/2003	1	322	98	91
2003/2004	1	303	113	103
2004/2005	1	260	100	90
2005/2006	1	338	94	90

Note: The acceptance figures include new submissions and resubmissions.

tious in their duties. The results are apparent in the data. The median and mean turnaround times have been reduced by more than two weeks and are now around three months or less—which has been our goal. Whether further reductions are possible remains to be seen. These reductions also reflect the shift to electronic delivery and refereeing. The time between acceptance and publication has lengthened although there has not been much, or any, increase in the article backlog, which consistently runs to a couple of issues. Numbers, however, are small and it is not clear what conclusion or inferences should be drawn from these.

The outstanding quality and commitment of its referees, particularly those serving on the editorial board, is a constant of life at the JOURNAL, and the editors are indebted to all referees for their dedication to the peer review process that results in well-informed editorial decisions. In virtually every case the refereeing process results in published articles that are markedly improved in clarity, focus, and exposition from their original versions. The editors especially wish to thank outgoing board members Zorina Khan, Werner Troesken, and Nathan Sussman and welcome Howard Bodenhorn, Michael Haines, and Carolyn Moehling to the board. Referees for the year were:

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