



The (New) *Houston Review*: Editor's Introduction

Welcome to *The (new) Houston Review*. In the journal format published by the Houston Library Board from 1978 through the late 1990s, the original *Houston Review* presented articles about the city's history.¹ Much of the detail we know about the evolution of Houston first came to light in these articles. When tighter budgets forced the library to suspend publication of the journal in the late 1990s, the Center for Public History at the University of Houston stepped in, giving this important outlet for Houston's history a new home.

The original *Houston Review* died a slow death, with the lack of resources causing delays in its publication. Its revival has also been slow. Before renewing publication, we had to solve a variety of organizational and financial problems and replenish the flow of articles. To avoid the uncertainties of delays in the appearance of issues, we decided to wait until we had three issues completed before resuming publication.

We decided early on to continue the pattern of topical issues established in the last years of the original *Houston Review*. Each issue will be an anthology of sorts, presenting a group of essays on a general topic. This first issue focuses on women throughout Houston's history. The next two will discuss civic leadership in Houston and the history of the Texas Medical Center. We encourage our readers to suggest good topics for future issues and to participate in bringing these issues to publication.

Our general approach is simple: we will publish writings on "the history and culture" of Houston—broadly defined. The new format can accommodate selections of varying lengths, including academic articles, photographic essays, interviews, and profiles. We decided to remove "the Gulf Coast" from the previous subtitle of *The Houston Review* because we see "Houston" as a much larger area connected to the city by historical, economic, social, cultural, and personal ties. We chose to change from an academic journal format to a magazine format in an effort to appeal to a broader readership. The larger pages of the new format lend themselves to the inclusion of photographs and illustrations. We will strive to publish professionally researched materials presented in a lively, illustrated style that attracts readers from beyond both the universities and the historical societies.

To succeed in our new venture, we will need the help of our readers. We will need support of all kinds, from ideas for new issues, to financial support, marketing, and recruitment of new subscribers. The Center for Public History at the University of Houston, which for more than twenty years has served as a focal point for the study of Houston's history, will provide administrative support for the magazine. Critical financial support for launching *The Houston Review of History and Culture* in its new format comes from a generous grant from Ben Love, a long-time civic leader and a lover of history. Long-term funding will come from the Cullen/NEH Chair in History and Business, whose endowment includes contributions from the Cullen Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities. I will serve as editor of the journal, and students in our public history program will participate in its production.

We invite you to join us in building both a successful magazine and a broader community of people interested in the history of our region. In the editor's corner of each issue, we will include a bulletin board for history-related activities in our region. (Send entries to me at joepratt@uh.edu or by mail.) The articles published will seek to educate and entertain while exploring important aspects of Houston's history and culture. Other cities value their pasts, using history as context for understanding the present, as a magnet for tourism, and as a guide to historical preservation; it is time for Houston to do the same. Our goal for *The Houston Review of History and Culture* is to make our region more aware of its history and more respectful of its past; we hope to contribute to the development of a stronger historical consciousness in Houston.

Joseph Pratt

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Editor, *The Houston Review of History and Culture*

¹ We plan to list the articles published by *The Houston Review* on our web site so that readers can see what has been written in the past. These back issues and articles are available for purchase.