

Welcome to the second issue of *Portal Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies*.

Since the highly successful inauguration of *Portal* in January 2004, we have received many kind expressions of support from international studies practitioners in a range of fields, and from such places as Canada, Italy, Mexico, Nigeria, New Zealand, Spain, Trinidad, the U.K., and the U.S.A. Particularly gratifying have been the endorsements of *Portal* and its publishing aims by people involved in their own electronic publishing enterprises. For their generous responses to *Portal*, the Editorial Committee would like to express its collective appreciation to the following people: Professor Jean-Marie Volet, of the University of Western Australia, and the guiding editor of the ground-breaking e-journal *Mots Pluriels* (www.arts.uwa.edu.au/MotsPluriels); and Francis Leo Collins, member of the Editorial Committee for the *Graduate Journal of Asia Pacific Studies (GJAPS)*, based in Auckland, New Zealand. *Portal's* readers may be interested in the current call for papers from *GJAPS* (www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/gjaps), for a special issue on "Imagining the Asia-Pacific" (deadline October 31, 2004).

This issue of *Portal* contains essays that cover wide terrain: the Chilean diasporic community in Australia; the world of German intellectuals; contemporary Mexican socio-political movements; rural-urban migration in China; and transnational advocacy networks and election monitoring in the Philippines, Chile, Nicaragua and Mexico. In the cultural section of this issue, we are delighted to present a short story from the noted German Studies scholar Anthony Stephens, and the first half of a beautiful, deeply poetic and haunting novel entitled *Son*, from the London-based writer and art-critic Jennifer Higgin. The novel's second and final part will appear in *Portal* vol. 2, no. 1, in January 2005.

On a different note, *Portal* would like to express our support for the inaugural *Ubud Writers and Readers Festival*, to be held in Ubud, Bali, from October 11 to 17, 2004. The Festival, which is attracting interest from writers across the world, maintains a website at: <http://www.ubudwritersfestival.com/>

Finally, I would like to remind readers that the next issue of *Portal* (vol. 2, no. 1, January 2005) will be a special issue devoted to "Exile and Social Transformation." I would also like to encourage international studies practitioners and cultural producers working anywhere in the world to submit material for future issues.

Paul Allatson
Chair of Editorial Committee