

## A Guided Tour of *Origins*

“For insight into the complicated and complicating events ... , one needs perspective, not attitudes; context, not anecdotes; analyses, not postures. For any kind of lasting illumination the focus must be on the history routinely ignored or played down or unknown.” [Toni Morrison, *Racing Justice, Engendering Power* (Pantheon, p xi)]

It is the mission of *Origins* to provide this context, perspective and history so frequently avoided by today's popular press. The world is a complicated place, yet the news tries so often to simplify it into ten or twenty second sound-bites or single-faceted opinions—almost to the point that the information has lost its value. To truly grasp contemporary events, a grounding in the history and the context is essential. *Origins'* historical analysis will embrace the complexity of an issue and work to balance the disparate viewpoints and beliefs so as to provide a more complete and non-partisan picture.

Here is a tour of what you will find in *Origins*.

*Origins'* main articles will focus on the long-term trends and patterns, search for the foundations of today's events, and explore the multi-faceted nature of a particular problem, thereby providing the reader with a base of knowledge from which to develop an informed opinion. These articles will complement the day-to-day news provided by the television and newspapers. Main articles, diverse in both subject and scope, will be divided topically between International (“**Around the World**”) and North American (“**Here At Home**”).

In addition to the principal articles, *Origins* will regularly run a series of other columns. “**Reviews and Commentary**” will include reviews of books and films that illuminate aspects of contemporary issues. Rather than regular reviews (“I liked this book because ...”), *Origins'* reviews will act as springboards for a discussion of the larger questions brought forward by the work in question. Through analysing the author's opinions and arguments and providing alternate perspectives, the reviews will give the reader an understanding of the many sides of a particular issue.

“**Questions and Comments**” will be the one column in which overt, direct opinions are voiced. It is also where letters to the editor (and responses thereto) will be printed.

“**On the Road**” will be an occasional column that will include stories and memoirs of people's travels. As the world becomes increasingly smaller, the understanding and insight that submersion in a country or a culture can provide is essential. “On the Road” articles will bring out an understanding of regions of the world that cannot always be found in textbook explanations.

*Origins* will regularly include a column called “**Milestones**.” “Milestones” will celebrate and explore the anniversaries of past events that have made an impact on the world of today. They will strive to “grasp the moment” both for the people involved and for the world around them.

Each issue of *Origins* will be rounded out by “**Continental Divide**.” On the lighter side, this column will look at quirky, off-the-beaten-track topics as well as natural and social oddities.

*Origins* is designed with the reader in mind. Each article will include photographs, drawings, maps, charts and graphs that will visually elucidate important concepts in the articles; will begin with an abstract of its subject matter as well as a table of contents of the various topics and sections into which the article is divided; and will include a section of further or suggested reading that will provide the reader with the opportunity to delve deeper into issues of particular interest.

Finally, *Origins* is interested in what you think about current events. Please send along comments you may have about *Origins* and its articles.

Nicholas Breyfogle  
Editor

