

PREFACE

BY ROBERT G. SEWELL, EDITOR

I am delighted with this first issue of the *Journal* under my editorship. It is an example of one of the types of publications I plan to produce as editor: special issues focusing on a theme in some detail so that they may be regarded as discrete scholarly monographs, with contributions that reflect contemporary scholarship and its use of primary resources. Other issues will be miscellany with a variety of subject matter and approaches that consider the record of human knowledge, especially, but not exclusively, in the areas of New Jersey history, New Jerseyana, libraries, books, printing, and other information resources.

The focus of this issue was suggested by the guest editor, James P. Quigel, who identified the authors, wrote the introduction and one of the major articles, and did considerable preliminary editing of the manuscripts. The final product was the result of close collaboration between Dr. Quigel and me.

The material that comprises this special issue, *Consumerism, Labor Unions, and the Pursuit of the American Dream*, analyzes and describes important movements that helped shape twentieth century American society. Now, at the end of the century with downsizing and economic insecurity hovering as a spectre over American workers, this issue offers perspectives on how and why consumers and laborers organized to share in the American dream. Each article illustrates how Rutgers resources have contributed and will continue to contribute to education and scholarship related to consumerism and labor unions. The transcribed interview with the labor historian, Lizabeth Cohen, exemplifies the creative process of the scholar as she grapples with complex themes of her work and the primary resources on which her work is based. Other articles describe and place in historical context archival collections that will stand as monumental resources for teaching and research related to the two main themes of this issue. These articles also demonstrate the importance of New Jersey resources in documenting major national trends in American history.

Finally, a word about the publication schedule of the *Journal*. This issue represents a combined issue: Volume LVII, Nos. 1 and 2. Volume LVI, No. 2 was never published.