Since the last issue of *Arts* the rate of change within the Faculty has increased sharply. The message from Canberra, that big is beautiful and economical, has been delivered, ribbony with promises of academic freedom and academic funding. It reads awkwardly beside the University's message to itself, that small is beautiful and economical. Unification with other tertiary institutions goes along with devolution (devaluation, some say) of Faculties. The brave new world comes in to the gloomy accompaniment of yet more cuts in staffing, in research funding, in academic confidence. All of this is by now as familiar to members of the Faculty as to most of its graduates. They will recall Dickens's reflection on the year 1775, at the beginning of *A Tale of Two Cities:*

> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period ...

('Can't you make up your mind, Mr Dickens?' his exasperated editor is said to have asked.) In such times, it is a gleam of light that the circulation of *Arts* is rising. It seemed that *Arts* might be one more casualty of change, until the previous Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Ward, made this present issue possible. It is larger than either of its immediate predecessors, and covers a still wider range of topics. These include the prize-winning Wentworth Medal essay on vocational training and the university, a large concern in Canberra's strategies. And it is timely to have Professor Carsaniga's reflections upon our present culture, with a response from Dr Paul Crittenden, the new Dean of Arts. We invite contributions on their debate, or on any other subjects relevant to *Arts*.

G.L.L.