Conservation analysis, as a young science in Australia, is given more than a little elan by the articles in this issue. Despite the diversity of their origin and the polarity of their viewpoint, most authors highlight the need for constant reappraisal among conservation practitioners who, apart from gaining intellectual ground, are then more able to communicate conservation issues lucidly to an eager populus.

Bruce Pennay unfolds the familiar themes of political implementation of conservation policies, the needs and roles of state and municipal government and the consequent shift from the objective standpoint of a consultant's report to one which serves the political gains desired by both levels of politics. His Goulburn case study also reveals the ever-present conflict of conservation criteria, individually important versus historically representative sites, local versus state importance and (with Peter Donovan) the grand architectural presence versus modest evidence for historical interpretation.

Don Ellsmore and Joan Domicelj concentrate on therapy for the future, fearing a loss of the impetus of early conservation conquests. Diversification of the current (sometimes complacent) academic view of conservation to include development of traditional trades and crafts, training of conservators, a larger community presence, a constant re-examination of existing concepts, and furthering the existing meagre academic training grounds are seen as necessary initiatives. Don Ellsmore also echoes the general cynicism, held among conservationists, for the bicentenary as so much lost potential and yet another political opportunity.

Peter Donovan and Dr Miles Lewis' articles, however, provide the real meat in this issue, highlighting the evidently national professional polarity among conservationists, architects versus the others. Donovan reminds historians and architects alike of their respective disciplines and the purgatory of trespass. He expresses a widely felt need for more historical context in conservation judgements, a field long dominated by architects but, with relief, we note that he does not urge that one discipline supplants the other. He concurs with a point recently made by Professor Graeme Davison (Victorian Historical Journal V 58,1) that historians have long viewed man-made sites as dynamic and hence declined to hinder this process by urging the introduction of conservation controls. Despite this view, there remains an increasing body of historians who wish to do just that, espousing intervention.

Dr. Lewis agrees with Donovan, acknowledging that there is room for both historians and architects, all historians are not bad. However he parallels these historian interventionists with the old school of Georgianist cum Modernist architects who classified buildings in the 1950s, at the dawn of the National Trust (Victoria). These architects practised a form of connoisseurship. In the thirty years since, architectural historians have striven to cull the connoisseurs among their fold and to establish a logical framework for significance judgements, shaking off the taint of subjectively surrounding the former committees of taste. A profession has grown which daily defines both the static and dynamic attributes of a site (to use Donovan's terminology), what parts of a site are significant and what are not. Dr Lewis does not see a similar logical scaffold being erected by his historian colleagues but, instead, a reversion to historical trends in the mode of the Georgianist connoisseur.

Evidently there is need for wider debate on this subject. This issue of Historic Environment serves as a beginning.