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# Introduction: A History

*The Rostrum* was founded in the fall of 1992, producing its first issue in the spring of 1993. The founding members were students Ryan Bingham and Lucy Judge (both junior philosophy majors), with faculty advisor Dr. Peter Casarella from the Theology Department. The request to officially recognize the journal met with considerable antipathy from several different sources, including some at the newspaper who thought that the journal was intended to be an underground right-wing alternative newspaper. Other people just thought that it was intended to be a neo-Thomistic theological report (and if you know Ryan, you can understand why they thought this...) (We love you, Ryan. And Thomas too.) After working mightily to clear up these misconceptions, the small staff produced the first issue of *The Rostrum*, choosing the name because it represented both a public speaking platform and the prow of a ship (see Ryan's first editorial, in the Appendix). The first Symposium topic (although not called that) was the new Catechism of the Catholic Church.

At that time, the journal was produced using *Express Publisher*, an IBM program designed for newsletter production. If you have never heard of it...you are not alone. If you have never used it...consider yourself lucky. EP was unceremoniously and unpredictably disposed of when the computer lab updated their DOS system in the winter of 1995 and erased all renegade programs, including EP, which had been carefully hidden in the memory by Ryan when he worked at the computer lab. This occurrence, known as the Great Computer Fiasco of 1995, proved providential when the new editors received a copy of Aldus Pagemaker 4.2 (from Brian Borque in Development, may he ever be blessed), a Mac program that is better suited to churning out 40-page journals than was poor EP. May it rest in peace.

As of May of 1995, *The Rostrum* has in two short years reached that pinnacle of respectability and security, namely, permanent funding. In the past, the Editors-in-Chief functioned more as beggars-in-chief, going from department to department in search of a few hundred bucks to put together the journal. In the past, Mrs. Novinski, Dean Miller and Dr. Thurow have all proved to be good friends. In the future, it seems as if money will be given by the Provost's Office and Student Life. The next frontier is to procure stipends for the over-worked editors, and then maybe even our own computer, and, finally, around the year 2027, our own room.

This history is entirely inadequate and ought to be filled out by someone who knows it better than I. Some highlights of the journal's history has been being put on Rene Girard's Christmas card list, initiating the McDermott lecturer interviews, and realizing how badly many professors write. The future will hopefully bring more workers and an expansion in the variety and readability of the articles, including more fiction, poetry and reviews. The journal will hopefully continue to be a U.D. fixture.