

Editors' Note

Hilary Francis, Nicholas Grant and William Booth

After a long journey, we are delighted to welcome you to the *Radical Americas Journal*. Here, you will find work which explores the historical, political and social contexts that have underpinned radicalism in the Americas, engaging fully with the cross-currents of activism which connect North, Central and South America along with the Caribbean. The interconnected histories of power and protest are rarely contained within national boundaries. A full understanding of radicalism in the Americas, therefore, requires that we make the widespread rhetoric about the need for hemispheric scholarly approaches a reality. While we also offer articles, reviews and other content which focus on national or sub-national case studies, this work is presented as part of a transnational framework.

Our definition of radicalism is broad. Taking inspiration from the words of José Martí, we understand radicalism to include any action or interpretation which 'goes to the roots', and we welcome all scholarship which takes a radical approach, even if it is not concerned with the study of radical activism per se. Any work which provides a truly systemic critique of existing structures of power, or challenges conventional interpretations of the past, will find a home at the *Radical Americas Journal*.

Despite disciplinary divides, scholarship on all regions of the Americas has recently been characterized by a preoccupation with culture and cultural analysis. This dominant approach has come at the expense of interpretations that favour economic or social factors, though there are some signs that the impact of the global financial crisis has begun to reverse that trend. Our position is that the kind of holistic critique we hope to promote can never be achieved by isolating a single

variable. For that reason we are particularly interested in work that attempts to integrate different facets of human experience, including economic, social, political and cultural factors.

Radical Americas is an open and evolving collective which unites an international community of researchers from a range of disciplines. Our conferences – four so far, annually since 2013 – bring together many different disciplinary and geographical perspectives on radicalism in the Americas. The *Radical Americas Journal* is a natural outgrowth of this activity. The first issues will provide a showcase for some of the best scholarship to emerge out of Radical Americas events in the last few years, but we now encourage new submissions from early-career and established scholars worldwide. We will consider work in a number of different formats: in addition to peer-reviewed articles, the journal is able to accommodate a variety of features, including opinion pieces, photo essays, reviews and archival notes.

In issue one, Michael Collins explores the transnational collaborative space occupied by a Cuban nationalist and a New York newspaper magnate; Denise Lynn details the advancement of women's rights and the politics of maternalism in and around the CPUSA in the 1930s; Matthew Rothwell uncovers informal Maoist diplomacy in Chile; F.D. Fuentes Rettig tells of *La Spirale*, the extraordinary (and for many years little-known) film deconstructing the coup against Allende; and George Kafka turns his camera to street art in cities across South America.

Finally, we must thank our founding advisor, Maxine Molyneux; all at UCL Institute of the Americas who continue to provide our virtual network with a physical home when we need it; and UCL Press, without whom this publication might never have come to pass.