

## EDITORIAL NOTE

The editorial staff at *Left History* have compiled this twentieth anniversary edition as a way of celebrating and highlighting the themes echoed in this journal's previous issues. This milestone issue emphasises the broad analytical space that the journal's founding editors established, and their successors upheld. Marxist, postmodern/ poststructural, and feminist theories resonate throughout the pages of our issues. Colonial and postcolonial politics, race, labour, resistance, class, and gender have been a few of the frameworks highlighted in *Left History*. We are pleased to bring you a volume that continues and expands on the quality of our previous issues. The evolution of *Left History* has often paralleled the "institutional and discursive closure" of current events resonating within and without academia.<sup>1</sup> Not only does this special anniversary issue come at a time when academia and activism find themselves adjusting along leftist political discourse, but also during a time of transition set by the limitations academics face as they attempt to align their scholarship along social movements.

We celebrate this current piece by republishing *Left History's* original manifesto as a way to reflect on the evolution and direction of the journal. Such reflection allows us to acknowledge the generations of contributors who have responded to great and cumulative changes within the craft of history and other disciplines on the study of history; its concepts and methodologies. As academics continue to ponder the questions which fuelled the inception of this journal, *Left History's* Manifesto, "anything but an eternal truth': Representing Left Histories" has never been more relevant and immeasurable to the expansion of our knowledge of the past. How can academics maintain "their interconnection with emancipatory social movements" while resisting "the universalizing notion of the 'institutional and discursive closure' of the academy?"<sup>2</sup>

What has been done for the study of history by this journal since its pioneering days? Pamela Tudge's article looks at the last twenty years of *Left History*, engaging with our varied issues. She looks at how our numerous contributors elucidated on the discipline of history as it continues to involve itself in the public acting as the link between inquiries and current events. In our Fall/Winter 2004 issue our editors contemplated the burdens of writing, concluding the importance of "the erasure of the presence of the historian [in order to] provide the basis for professional community, and further, a professional discipline of history."<sup>3</sup> Our Spring/Summer 2008 issue emphasises the obligations our profession must uphold in order to align leftist politics with pressing issues, such as the environment. *Left History's* collaboration with the Network in Canadian History and Environments/ *Nouvelle initiative canadienne en histoire de l'en-*

vironment (NiCHE) emphasised the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in order to study nature and humans of our past.<sup>4</sup> The Spring/ Summer 2010 issue came at a time of the G8 and G20 summits when Toronto's city-centre transformed into a police zone. Our then editors reflected on the 21<sup>st</sup> century activism which hosted "...more than a hundred self-described anarchists" who ran in stark oppositions to Canada's self-proclaimed 'peace-keeping' status.<sup>5</sup>

While Tudge's article looks back, Roopika Risam's "Revising History and Re-Authorising the Left in Postcolonial Digital Archives" harbours the future of the abovementioned struggles our profession faces. Risam considers the complexities embedded within the archival sources and the politics that classify, and declassify particular colonial records, including digital history. Our contributor asserts that the classification of sensitive records reemphasise 21<sup>st</sup> century imperialism.

This is also noted by our first contributor's review essay "Métis Identity: Problems and Possibilities," as Jennifer Hayter contends that left-leaning historians have an obligation in analysing and assessing identity politics through race and colonial lenses. Her piece highlights notions of identity politics with Canada's Métis as she reviews the recent publications of Christopher Adams, et al., *Métis in Canada: History, Identity, Law & Politics* as well as Chris Andersen's "Métis": *Race, Recognition, and the Struggle for Indigenous Peoplehood*.

Joel T. Helfrich, reflects on the twentieth anniversary of David Rodiger's *The Wages of Whiteness* with a review essay of Hund, Krikler, and Roediger's compilation of essays titled *Wages of Whiteness & Racist Symbolic Capital*. Helfrich's piece analyses how politics and labour unions navigate their positions globally and introspectively within racial dichotomies. He highlights the approaches attempted in the edited volume - eventually showcasing a void left within the critical study of whiteness. This critical review of the institutionalisation of race within the labour sector ultimately concludes that *The Wages of Whiteness* is an effort to answer some of the complicated questions embedded in the globalisation of institutionalised racial politics.

Finally, a special thank you to this journal's past contributors for building *Left History* and maintaining its excellent standards for establishing a space where Marxist, postmodern/poststructuralist, feminist, and racial histories were assessed, and critiqued. *Left History* would like to thank Dr. Jennifer Stephen, for her work as an Editor for the past six years. Dr. Stephen's guidance and expertise, specifically in the field of Labour History in Canada have greatly benefited this journal. *Left History* would like to introduce and welcome Dr. Boyd D. Cothran as the journal's new Editor in Chief. Dr. Cothran's experiences and expertise in US Indigenous and cultural history has already proven invaluable to the journal's upcoming issues.

This special edition was compiled during the labour strike of York University's and University of Toronto's contract faculty and Teaching Assistants this past spring. Keeping in true *Left History* fashion, this journal stood in solidarity with the strike and delayed publication. Our profession continues to reflect on academia's position within and in relation to activism.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Michael Bliss, "Privatizing the Mind: The Sundering of Canadian History, the Sundering of Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 26 (Winter 1991-92): 9, 15, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Alison C. Forrest, A.M. Givertz and Marcus Klee, "Anything but an Eternal Truth?: Representing Left Histories," *Left History* 1 (Fall/ Winter 1993-94): 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Left History* 10.1 (Fall/Winter, 2004): 9.

*Left History* 13.1 (Spring/Summer, 2008).

*Left History* 14.2 (Spring/Summer, 2010).

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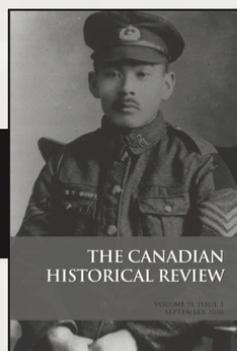
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