

Editorial Statement

We are pleased to welcome you to the fourth Issue of the journal. This issue has two main essays, two comment pieces and an extended review.

The first essay is *Consuming Slavery, Performing Cuba: Ethnography, the Carnavalesque and the Politics of Black Public Culture* by Lisa M. Knauer, of the University of Massachusetts. The author explores 'the presences and absences of the history of slavery and its legacy in the heritage landscape of Cuba'; and argues that 'the way slavery is, and, more tellingly, is not represented in and around heritage sites, historical narratives and cultural performances provides a lens for examining a larger ambivalence concerning race in the Cuban national imaginary.'

Professor Knauer identifies and analyses the interplay between two modes of cultural presentation that she calls the ethnographic and the carnivalesque which the State institutions in Cuba deploy in their treatment of Black culture. After a critical analysis, she concludes that 'the scholarly text, the ethnographic display and the blatantly touristic commodity do not occupy completely separate realms but are closely interrelated registers through which slavery and its legacy are simultaneously silenced and consumed.'

This essay has resonances for analyses of the ways in which the history of slavery and racial inequality and oppression are treated by public culture in other societies, including modern advanced capitalist liberal democracies.

Dr. Anandi Ramamurthy's essay, *South Asian Mobilisation in Two Northern Cities: A Comparison of Manchester and Bradford Asian Youth Movements*, is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the history of resistance against racism by young members of Asian settler communities. The author analyses the development of the Asian Youth Movement in two cities, with very different demographic and political characteristics, in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Dr. Ramamurthy analyses their political practice and ideas by reference to the towns and neighbourhoods in which they operated.

She situates their development within the wider political context of institutional racism and the characteristics and structures of the wider anti-racist movement. She has had access to participants in both cities and has conducted in-depth interviews, which she contextualises and incorporates into a coherent, historically - and institutionally - anchored analysis. This is an important contribution to the literature and we are pleased to be publishing this essay.

David Bositis has contributed a Comment Piece, *Blacks and the 2010 Midterms: A Preliminary Analysis*. Mr Bositis is a Senior Political Analyst for the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies in Washington, DC. He contributed a Comment in the first issue of this journal, *Blacks and the 2008 Elections: A Preliminary Analysis*. He focuses on the behaviour and significance of African-American voters in the 2010 Midterms, and argues that, although their vote was crucial in the outcome of some closely contested elections, they were not in many more. He analyses the changing numbers and profile of Black candidates for both federal and statewide office, as well as their performance in the polls. As he has shown over the many years he has been on the staff of the Joint Center, and in his analyses which were published by this journal and its predecessor, *Sage Race Relations Abstracts*, Bositis shows a command of the data and provides a clear and comprehensive analysis.

Marika Sherwood provides a biographical profile of William G. Allen and the time he spent with his family in Britain in the ante-bellum and post-Civil War years. This is a well-researched and

documented Comment, in which she makes excellent use of primary sources. It is, also, a deeply moving account of the experiences of the highly educated free African-American in a Britain, which, although containing committed abolitionist supporters, had a dominant racist consciousness and a racially-justified imperial system. This racism framed and limited his opportunities in Britain, and as the century advanced the situation for Blacks deteriorated and she concludes that his experiences were symptomatic of “the superficiality of English politeness to people with a darker skin.”

We also have an Extended Review of Kate Flint’s book, *The Transatlantic Indian, 1776 - 1930*. This well-written and comprehensive review highlights Kate Flint’s analysis of how the image of the Indian became integral to the development of the United States as a new nation in the 19th century and was also central to British conceptualizations of the American continent and informed the definitions and ideological expressions of British national identity. These included definitions of masculinity and the disempowerment of women. Crucially, she also analyses the role of Native Americans as part of a transnational movement of culture, myth, image and folklore, as ‘material beings rather than simply as symbols.’