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Introduction

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Introduction

This issue, at the end of our second year, prompts us to reflect for a moment more broadly on the kinds of articles that we've received over the past several years. When we began the journal, we made clear that our primary focus would be on radicalism, not on reformist individuals or movements. This distinction has become more important rather than less, as we sorted through the numerous articles and reviews that have come our way so far. We frequently receive proposed articles about some group or individual whose work is in fact not radical at all, but only at most seeks some more or less incremental change in political, social, or economic spheres. For the most part, we have maintained an emphasis on genuinely radical groups and individuals, and in particular, on those who seek a dramatic transformation of society—although on occasion we've included articles that discuss how radicalism can move outward into society, affecting those who themselves are not necessarily radical, but who act as a kind of medium.

Following the radical-reform distinction too strictly might very well exclude some groups or individuals who are widely regarded as radical. But in what sense should we consider them radical? This is a significant question. Was Martin Luther King Jr. a radical or a reformer, for instance? Are they all radicals who criticize multinational corporations and the export of production to the cheapest possible venue? Or do some seek socioeconomic reform without critiquing the larger system? To what extent does historical context and change determine what is called radical? Obviously, there is a spectrum here, at one end those who seek violent sudden socioeconomic transformation or breakdown, and at the other those who envision a better world to be achieved gradually. We want the journal to be a forum for discussion and analysis more of the former than of the latter, though we eschew dogmatism in this as in any area. And we continue to insist that the journal should discuss radicalisms of the "right" as well as of the "left," whatever those terms might be taken to mean.

This issue begins with two radical groups that have become legendary for their appropriation and reinvention of agrarian land use. British historian Ariel Hessayon surveys the Diggers and the use and abuse of their radical legacy as agrarian communists. We have come to see that those who study the phenomena of radicalism must pay greater attention to the early modern period, not least because it was then that the dynamics of many later forms of radicalism were established. Too often the study of radicalism focuses on the contemporary politicoeconomic scene without considering how contemporary movements or individuals may well be rooted in or echo the history or dynamics of much earlier movements. Hessayon's article is followed by Alex Khasnabish's article on the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, which struggled to gain control over local land resources and became a popular international movement. Two articles on the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) follow. Keith Woodhouse discusses the little-explored ideological relationship between the SDS and environmental organizations in the 1960s, an article we pair with John McMillian's on the SDS's print culture. This issue concludes with Jean-Marc Flükiger's discussion of the Animal Liberation Movement, discussed not only historically but also futurologically and in relation to the concept of "leaderless resistance."

This is the second of two issues to discuss primarily ecological radicalisms, because in ecology one sees—as Mick Smith made clear in his article "Suspended Animation" in *JSR* 2.1—the most sweeping philosophical challenges to the modern industrialist socioeconomic and political systems. Ecological critiques of modernity, it is clear, are radical indeed: a direct challenge to the entire technological-industrial system is quite visible in the previous issue's interview with John Zerzan. In this issue, 2.2, we include a substantial interview with Kirkpatrick Sale, the well-known author of books on topics ranging from SDS to bioregionalism, who here discusses in detail his own intellectual history, as well as how he came to be a major figure in the growing secessionist movement in the United States. Here too, it is clear that his views are radical in the strictest senses of the word—that is, he is a self-described "catastrophist," who is certain that the current technological-industrial-financial edifice is going to collapse, and who anticipates a much more decentralized and less destructive future social structure.

What distinguishes this issue, and *JSR's* approach more generally, is its analytical approach to radical groups and individuals. *JSR* is unique for its eschewing of advocacy or embrace of particular agendas. Rather, what we see in the first two years of articles is careful analysis of particular historical moments or social movements and a range of perspectives that nonetheless maintains a

critically important effort at academic neutrality. Other journals seek to spark a renewal of the Left, or encourage historical analysis informed by a particular political agenda, but our aim is to provide a venue for the discussion and analysis of radicalism as an area of academic study. In that, we believe, we have been successful. We hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to future issues devoted to such themes as historical memory, Christian radicalism, and international dimensions of radicalism, as the journal continues to develop.

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