

# Editors' Note

In this first issue of 2014 we are pleased to feature Anders Stephanson's essay based on his plenary lecture at the 2013 BAAS conference, as well as essays around the themes of "Activism and Political Culture" and "Rewriting America."

In his examination of John F. Kennedy as US Senator, Stephanson uses Kennedy's stance on anticolonialism and the collapse of the French Empire as a lens for challenging the idea that JFK was a wholehearted believer in the Cold War.

Stephanson's work is followed by seven essays focussing on the rewriting of America, including the interaction between Civil War monuments and the work of Henry James and Walt Whitman, the projection of temperance in US culture, the notions of modernity and imperialism from Mark Twain to Daniel Burnham, and landscapes of America in the fiction of Paul Auster and Toni Morrison.

These are followed by five essays touching on activism and political culture from American feminism and central America in the 1980s, to the relationship between the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the media in the 1960s, to debates among American leftists in the 1940s.

In both our print and electronic editions, there are book reviews, roundtables, and state-of-the-field sections introducing readers to an array of cutting-edge issues in existing and emerging interdisciplinary scholarship. Abigail Ward, Henrice Altink, and Sarah Senk debate international and comparative modes of analysis, considering histories of Jamaican guestworkers and US global labour, in their roundtable on Cindy Hahamovitch's groundbreaking monograph *No Man's Land: Jamaican Guestworkers in America and the Global History of Deportable Labor*. In an extended review, Nuala Finnegan evaluates the ongoing intellectual, political, and cultural implications of Gloria Anzaldúa's pioneering term "spiritual *mestizaje*" as addressed in Theresa Delgadillo's book.

Leading the way on the electronic side, Cara Rodway, Maura D'Amore, Jason Narlock, and Elizabeth Rawitsch debate the United States built environment in political, economic, historical, and cultural perspective. Considering major themes related to composers and audiences, Rob Kroes's stimulating essay "Musical America: Staging the USA to the Sounds of Music," appears in conjunction with an in-depth response by Denis Ertan examining "musical pathways."