

## Editorial Statement

We are delighted to present our first issue as editors of *49th Parallel*, a journal which has pushed academic, intellectual and disciplinary boundaries for over a decade. We hope to continue that tradition and would especially like to thank our predecessors, Chris Emery and Euan Gallivan, for their hard work and guidance. Following their lead, *49th Parallel* has become a formal collaboration between the University of Birmingham and the University of Nottingham, an expansion we hope will facilitate quarterly publishing and enable the journal to grow in new and exciting ways.

We believe that American and Canadian Studies in the twenty-first century must encompass a wide range of disciplines and practices, in order to reflect the diversity of experiences both within and beyond the North American continent. As such, we seek to continue the journal's ongoing commitment to exploring the political, critical and global dimensions of American and Canada, modern and historic. We also strive to examine the cultural contours, philosophical underpinnings, social makeup and national imaginaries of North America, with keen interest in how physical and conceptual borders are buttressed or crossed.

The topics covered in this issue illustrate *49th Parallel's* concern with questioning how “America” is constructed and encountered through interdisciplinary and international lenses. Robert T. Tally Jr. looks beyond the “American Century’s” nationalistic narratives in order to call for a “post-American literature” that can more accurately reflect contemporary global concerns; Robbie Graham and Mathew Alford discuss US governmental censorship and manipulation of UFO perceptions in film and television; and Richard Martin examines spatial connections between Los Angeles and the Polish city of Łódź in David Lynch’s *Inland Empire* to show how the director breaks down traditional perceptions of both cinema and architecture. In the roundtable, Dick Ellis, Scott Lucas and Maria Ryan explore conceptions of American identity against the backdrop of the Obama presidency, global recession and geopolitical realignment.

*49th Parallel* is continuing to foster and bolster ties with a number of leading academic and online networks. Our editorial board contains two [\*Journal of American\*](#)

[Studies](#) editors who offer invaluable support and follow our latest publications with interest. Our continual concern with Canadian issues was expressed through our [panel](#) at the 2011 British Association of Canadian Studies Conference. We intend to continue *49th Parallel's* work supporting and encouraging postgraduates working in North American Studies. In June, we will be at the postgraduate symposium “[Twenty-First Century American and Canadian Voices](#)”, with the intention of publishing a special issue of papers from it. We are also excited to be establishing links with the cutting-edge blog site [EA Worldview](#), which will shortly be providing a platform for the discussion of selected articles. We encourage readers to visit *EA Worldview* for a daily engagement with national and global events.

Our relationship with *EA Worldview* speaks to our recognition that *49th Parallel* has been a pioneering electronic journal since its inception. We intend to continue the journal's online expansion through integrating with new social media networks. *49th Parallel* encourages readers to follow us on Twitter ([@49th\\_\\_Parallel](#)) and [Facebook](#) as we venture forth into this new terrain. In this issue, alongside the articles and reviews, we are also publishing a video recording of the roundtable held as part of our [relaunch](#), a medium we hope to engage with more in the future.

*49th Parallel* has received much help and support over the past months. We would like to particularly thank Helen Laville for her editorial guidance. We would also like to thank Helen, along with Celeste-Marie Bernier, Dick Ellis, Scott Lucas, Maria Ryan and Bevan Sewell, for making our relaunch event such a success. Our thanks also go to Michael Collins, Chris Emery, Danielle Fuller, Euan Gallivan, Steve Hewitt, alongside all the staff in the departments of American and Canadian Studies at the University of Birmingham and the University of Nottingham.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to invite both postgraduates and academics working within the field of North American Studies to submit articles and review suggestions. Please see our [website](#) for details on our editorial remit and submission guidelines. For more information, contact us at [49thParallel@bham.ac.uk](mailto:49thParallel@bham.ac.uk).

Thanks for reading - we hope you enjoy the issue!

Hannah Durkin, John Horne, Ben Offiler, Ceren Sengezer