

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

In the Middle of a Whirlwind: 2008 Convention Protests, Movement and Movements

Coordinated by
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Journals of Aesthetics and Protest

This is the crime of which I accuse my country and my countrymen, and for which neither I nor time nor history will ever forgive them, that they have destroyed and are destroying hundreds of thousands of lives and do not know it and do not want to know it. One can be, indeed one must strive to become, tough and philosophical concerning destruction and death, for this is what most of mankind has been best at since we have heard of man. (But remember: most of mankind is not all of mankind.) But it is not permissible that the authors of devastation should also be innocent. It is the innocence which constitutes the crime.

- James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*

Background:

The “crime of which I accuse my country” that James Baldwin speaks of – of racism and prison, state violence and hunger – is still very much part of daily life in the United States, and since these words were first published in 1963 a fire has raged across the country and the planet. This fire *moved* throughout the south, finding its way north, and through the *movements* that marked the cycle of struggles that became just embers by the beginning of the 1980s.

Since then we find not a fire but a whirlwind. Small gusts have circulated across the United States, through cities, borders, fields, homes and workplaces throughout the past three decades. More recently, these whirlwinds sent off storms: in Seattle, in New Orleans (here the hurricane and the states winds are countered by the winds of activity after Katrina), in May 2006 with the Si Se Puede *movements* and in various other moments.

In the Middle of a Whirlwind: 2008 Convention Protests, Movement and Movements explores these whirlwinds as they cycle up to travel towards the 2008 convention protests; focusing not only on these actions themselves, but on the organizing activities and strategies that blow around and through our everyday lives.

Purpose:

In the Middle of a Whirlwind will be a one-off online publication -- published with Journal of Aesthetics and Protest Press -- that seeks to intervene in the organizing around and through the 2008 convention protests by providing strategic commentary and analysis of contemporary class composition and movement strength.

These protest actions provide opportunities for inquiry into the political composition of the working class and an analysis of the state of current *movements* in the context of the current technical composition of capital, the regime of biopower and the society of control. Through this analysis, we hope to identify sites for intervention and *movement* within *movements*.

Taking a cue from our European friends and comrades in *Turbulence: Ideas for Movement* – www.turbulence.uk.org – we are commissioning articles focusing on the United States and drawn from counter-globalization, counter-cultural, anti-authoritarian, anti-capitalist and community organizing *movements*.

The purpose of this publication is not only to intervene at the site of the convention protests, but in the organizing leading up to the actions, as well as in the everyday struggles taking place across the United States. Each essay will address the issues of *movement*, working class power and composition, and/or give strategic insight into strengths and weaknesses of current *movement/s* in the U.S.

Themes:

In the Middle of a Whirlwind will provide a set of engaging and thoughtful pieces within a partial narrative, rather than a snapshot or comprehensive analysis of the *movements* in the United States. Articles will be sought from a diverse set of movement participants including organizers, activists, theorists, artists, and those for whom these monikers do not apply. Rather than seeking academic articles, we are seeking strategic and political materials.

Possible themes include, and are not limited to:

- Self-Reproducing Movements, Everyday Life and the Commons.
- Workers Centers, Si Se Puede Movements, Housing Initiatives, Domestic and Service Worker Organizing, and Organizing Under Precarious Conditions.
- Environmental Justice Movements and the City, Rural Struggles, Suburban Struggles and Current Ecological Struggles.
- Local Mental Health, Healthcare, Anti-Violence, and Sexual Assault Projects.
- Creating Alternatives: Worker and Housing Cooperatives, Community Supported Agriculture, Bike and Social Spaces, Infoshops & Radical Bookstores, and other Institutions.
- Mobilizing Against Identity, Privilege and the Discipline of the State-Apparatus.
- Art, Mapping, Co-Research, and Cultural Initiatives.
- Inquiries into the Technical Composition of Capital, the Regime of Biopower, the State-Apparatus and Societies of Control.
- Movement Histories and Developments in the Contemporary Cycle of Struggle, Direct Action Organizing and Movement in the Current Period.

Questions:

Within the context of the above outlined themes *In the Middle of a Whirlwind* seeks to address three questions:

1. Currently, what are the points of political composition in the United States? What do you see as the terrain of struggle in the context of the current technical composition of capital, electoral processes, and the state of the institutional and grassroots left? From where are new subjectivities arising? Where do you see key struggles taking place? And more specifically, how are current movements composed? How do you see gender, race, and class functioning in regards to this current political composition?
2. What effects have decomposition and attacks on class victories had over the past thirty years? In asking this question, we acknowledge a process by which capital and the state-apparatus has dissolved institutions, altered policy, and launched initiatives seeking to undercut potential points of composition. What possibilities have been restricted and what new possibilities do you see opened up by these changes? What is the current technical composition of capital, how are power relationships constructed? How does movement cooptation function? How do we understand the development of the counter-globalization movement and the cooptation of its energies as it flowed into the anti-war movement?
3. What potential or existing strategies are being utilized or can be utilized for the development and deployment of power both against and outside of capital and bureaucracy? Where should movements put their energies in order to address the above two questions? How do we develop movement strategy from these analyses within participatory practices?

Publication, Distribution, Publicity:

Team Colors in coordinating *In the Middle of a Whirlwind* will publish the journal online -- as a series of interlinked PDF's and texts, with corresponding discussion boards -- through the Journal of Aesthetics and Protest Press; whose previous publications include the print interventions *Failure!: Experiments in Aesthetic and Social Production* and *An Atlas of Radical Cartography*, in addition to five issues of their successful journal of the same name.

To publicize the journal Team Colors will distribute posters and postcards to be displayed at infoshops, zine libraries, radical bookstores, community centers, workers centers, bike collective spaces, art galleries, d.i.y. concert venues, food / housing / and worker cooperatives, and universities across the United States, and through events to be held in New York, NY, Tucson, AZ, and Portland, OR with possible additional cities as well. These print materials will not simply 'advertize' the publication, but seek to elicit, engage in, intertwine with and further the dialog taking place online. Additionally Team Colors will seek to publicize the journal to and engage with a far larger audience through an online viral campaign.

Format, Deadlines, Language, Author Biography:*Format:*

Team Colors welcomes proposals for both essays and creative mediums, such as photo essays, audio and video presentations, maps, website and multimedia tie-ins and invites the combination of textual and graphic mediums.

Deadlines:

Proposal Requests Sent: February 29, 2008; by invitation only.

Proposals Received: March 15, 2008; place text into the body of the email.

Article Submissions Received: April 15, 2008; attached in Word or related program.

Publication: May 15, 2008.

Language:

The primary language for *In the Middle of a Whirlwind* will be English; but the editors welcome articles in Spanish as well, and will attempt to obtain translations of particular articles into Spanish and English (and additional languages) as resources allow.

Author Biography:

Authors and Organizations should include a short biography of related experience in addition to website, email and other contact information to be included with the article.

Please Direct Inquiries to the Editors:

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