



Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Before anything else, we would like to send the sponsors and presenters of such a relevant project a heartfelt salutation from Cuba. For those of us in our country who in some way have been able to have contact with the laudable endeavor you are undertaking, and with the results you have thus far realized, it has been truly stimulating and encouraging to know that the historical and current problems, struggles, worries, needs, desires, frustrations and hopes of such an important segment of Cuban society are being tackled in so rigorous and sensitive a way.

ISLAS is a space bent upon opening channels of unprejudiced, transparent and serious analyses and debates on this subject, whose vision and expectations are of supreme importance to the present and immediate future of our nation.

Cubans of African descent, who for decades were deprived of a voice and rights, have had to watch as marginalization and inequality take hold and deepen with every twist in the designs and interests of those currently in power, while cultural, academic and mediating spaces do little to adequately and consequently address the moral and spiritual causes, effects and consequences of this state of affairs. This is made worse yet by the fact the authorities have refused to recognize the existence of a serious racial problem in Cuba.

The existence of this journal, with its intellectual merit and recognized aesthetic quality, constitutes an incalculable contribution. Cubans learning more about *ISLAS* and connecting with it, and Island scholars and specialists increasingly collaborating with it, may contribute in a decisive manner to its strengthening as a very useful and necessary instrument in the face of the enormous challenges we will no doubt encounter in a not too distant future.

For our part, we reiterate our acknowledgement and gratitude for your efforts and dedication. With all our support, we exhort you to continue to achieve the quality you have thus far.

Fraternally yours,

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Dear Editor

Islas represents a valid, necessary and urgent effort for building bridges of solidarity and understanding from a shared Afro-Cuban heritage. Wishing to overcome racial hate and suspicion surrounding blacks, Martí stated in “Our America” that there are not races. Although well intentioned, it was a costly mistake for which the Afro-Cuban population have paid dearly as a result of our refusal to acknowledge “el problema negro.” *Islas* brings it to light and becomes a legitimate space for reclaiming memory, revisioning of History and advancing a more egalitarian society. *Islas* is a valuable and a very much needed step in that direction.

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