

## #WeAreTheOnesWeveBeenWaitingFor<sup>1</sup>: Radical Girl Groups for a Feminist Future

In December 2014, Anayette Martinez and Marilyn Hollinquest started a girls' group in Oakland, California called Radical Monarchs to, according to the group's Facebook page, "empower young girls of color... to make the world a more radical place." As women of color and activists, the co-founders of the Radical Monarchs recognized the rarity of dedicated space for girls of color, as well as the importance of teaching political consciousness. Thus, Martinez and Hollinquest designed Radical Monarchs as a social justice girl group, modeling it not only on Girl Scouts, but also on social justice movements. In its first three years, and particularly since the 2017 presidential election, the Radical Monarchs troop has... *[something about the curriculum and then also about participating in specific protests--#NoBanNoWall, the Woman's March, etc... Their curriculum involves participating in antiracist protests, like Black Lives Matter and Reclaiming King's Legacy demonstrations, and combatting sexism by learning about, for example, the dangerous perpetuation of white beauty norms]. Since its inception, the group has attracted both celebration and condemnation for its overt political messages... My project investigates RM as a case study to consider the transformative potential... ???... the powerful reactions to the Radical Monarchs troop, as well as its development/evolution from its first year to the recent presidential election, indicate not only the necessity of a group dedicated to girls of color, but **also the potential impact of ??? dedicated to children's activism.***

The response to Radical Monarchs indicates the desire for, and potential impact of, such an organization. Within weeks of being founded, the Radical Monarchs troop garnered international attention, with thousands of likes on their Facebook page, countless comments, and articles on both US and UK websites. Twelve girls in California are unlikely to topple the long-established, national Girl Scouts organization, and yet many articles about the Oakland group champion Radical Monarchs as the future of girl's groups. Much of this coverage implies that the Girl Scouts organization cannot, or at least does not, fill the needs met by Radical Monarchs. The excitement and admiration demonstrates how this group targets an underserved population and creates a necessary space for girls of color. The vicious comments posted on every article further indicate how desperately such groups are needed, as even in the twenty-first century, a young girl of color cannot be taught about her self-worth without attracting the vitriol of racists and sexists. These comments emphasize that it *is* radical to teach self-worth, sisterhood, and social justice to young girls of color. *people who claim too political for children ignoring that curriculum for children is inherently political. Thus I situate RM in two legacies: that of the Girl Scouts, an organization that similarly draws ire for its curricula decisions and yet considered not political (?) enough, and social justice movements...*

Documentary and social media to consider not only their curriculum, but also self-presentation as an organization and how they are perceived...

Radical Monarchs are similar to Girl Scouts at the local level, as it is a group of girls participating in communal activities... with a more explicit politicalized agenda. Like the Girl Scouts, Radical Monarchs earn badges, but these are "custom-made and reflect [their] social justice and culturally-inclusive values," such as "Radical Beauty," "Black Lives Matter," and "Pachamama Justice" badges (Radical Monarchs, "About").

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<sup>1</sup> February 26, 2015 Radical Monarchs Facebook post

the girls participate in protests often organized for the inclusion of children in social justice movements. — the Radical Monarchs troop demonstrates how political activism can—and perhaps *should*—be incorporated into children’s curricula.

Drawing on childhood studies, **history of education**, and feminist scholarship, my project examines Radical Monarchs as a case study of children’s activism **through education outside of schooling**. My investigation into its **“radical” curriculum** considers the challenges of representing complex histories not only to educate children, but also to radicalize them. Tracing the legacies from which Radical Monarchs emerged, I argue... **the contemporary moment’s response to this social justice troop indicates the necessity of such groups**. I interrogate — how we represent and instrumentalize the past for children. Radical Monarchs’ curriculum draws attention to the implicit politics of other organizations for children while illuminating the inherent politicization of *all* curricula dedicated to the transmission of a complex, often contested American past. Ultimately, what does it say if a group dedicated to teaching self-worth to young girls of color is “radical”? And are the Radical Monarchs radical *enough*?