



## **PRESS AND MEDICAL PRACTICE IN COLOMBIAN NEWSPAPER “LA LANCETA” (1852)**

**Maria José Montoya \***

\* *Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá-Colombia*  
*Department of History*  
[mj.montoya34@uniandes.edu.co](mailto:mj.montoya34@uniandes.edu.co)

### **Abstract**

*La Lanceta (The Lancet)*, an ephemeral scientific publication appeared in Bogotá, Colombia in 1852. This was, as the editors declared, the first Colombian magazine specialized in medicine themes, and it was deeply concerned with the matter of the medical practice in the country. Being born at the middle of the nineteenth century, the publication emerged in one of the most liberal periods of the Colombian government, during a time of civil war and radical political reforms (the abolition of slavery, the liberation of the press and the reorganization of various professions, including the medical practice, amongst others). In this context, *La Lanceta* offers an interesting case of study to observe the different roles that the press and the public opinion played in the definition of both, the medical sphere (as a scientific and social activity) and in the delimitation of the values that surrounded some ideas defining the quality of the medical practice itself. As a space of discussion and judgment, the magazine worked as a public medical laboratory that linked the private practice of doctors with the more public construction of consensus about the effectiveness of science. The discussion of these subjects in the public opinion sphere involved deep tensions, medical uncertainties and political interests surrounding the new “modern” scientific bases of medicine and of the social role of doctors.