

## LASA SECTIONS

## Section Reports

**Brazil**

Hélio Guimarães and Susan Quinlan, Co-chairs

The Brazil Section held its business meeting on September 5<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was conducted by Co-Chairs Susan Quinlan and Hélio Guimarães. Three new members for the Brazil Section Council were elected for the period of 2007-2010: Eduardo Gomes (UFF), Elisabete Leal (UFRGS) and Ana Beatriz Gonçalves (Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora). Ana Paula Alves Ribeiro (UERJ), César Braga-Pinto (Rutgers University) and the Treasurer Sônia Roncador (University of Texas) are part of the Executive Council until 2009, when new elections will be held for three new members of the Executive Council and the two co-chairs.

The Section held a reception at LASA2007 and provided US\$500 for each of the two book prizes and US\$500 for each of the two essay prizes. The best book about Brazil, published in English, was *Needs of the Heart: A Social And Cultural History of Brazil's Clergy And Seminaries*, by Ken Serbin; the best book in Portuguese was *FHC, Forças Armadas e Polícia: Entre o Autoritarismo e a Democracia*, by Jorge Zaverucha. The prizes for best essays went to Bárbara Weinstein for "Inventing the 'mulher paulista'" and to Simone Osthoff for "Elsewhere in contemporary art: topologies of artists' works, writings, and archives."

During the meeting, Emanuelle Oliveira volunteered to help with the Brazil Section webpage.

**Colombia**

Patricia Tovar, Co-Chair

La reunión de trabajo de la Sección Colombia, se realizó el jueves 6 de Septiembre de 2007 con la presencia de más de cincuenta personas y con la bienvenida de la coordinadora saliente Mary Roldán.

Después de tratar el tema de las finanzas, el de la selección de paneles y el de la dificultad en obtener becas de viaje para los participantes latinoamericanos, muchos de los cuales al no obtenerlas cancelan sus presentaciones, se

realizaron elecciones. Para el cargo de representante de estudiantes, ocupado previamente por Lina del Castillo y Erica Márquez, se seleccionó Mercedes López, estudiante de doctorado en Georgetown University. En reemplazo de Luis Fernando Restrepo, quien estaba a cargo del Boletín Los Inmarcesibles, se eligió también por amplia mayoría a Juana Suárez, quien hacía parte del consejo y es ahora reemplazada por Yolanda Forero Villegas. Para el cargo de co-chair, en reemplazo de Mary Roldán, quien cerraba su ciclo de tres años en la coordinación se eligió a Virginia Bouvier. Leah Carroll continúa con las labores secretariales de la Sección.

Se informó sobre el establecimiento y la convocatoria para los premios en honor de Montserrat Ordóñez y el premio Michael Jiménez, a partir de la decisión tomada por la sección en la reunión de Puerto Rico. Para futuros premios se conformó un "Comité nominador de jurados". El fondo para el premio "Montserrat Ordóñez cuenta con US\$3723.65, gracias al aporte de Nina Scott, Dartmouth College y Kathryn J. McKnight. Resultaron ganadores de estos premios: Margaretta Russotto – homenaje a Montserrat Ordóñez, con el libro *La ansiedad autoral: Formación de la autoría femenina en América Latina: Los textos autobiográficos*, Universidad Central de Venezuela y Editorial Equinoccio, 2006; y Winifred Tate – categoría Michael Jiménez, con el libro *Counting the Dead: The Culture and Politics of Human Rights Activism in Colombia*, University of California Press, 2007

A solicitud de una de las integrantes de la Sección, Ana María Bidegain, los asistentes a la reunión acuerdan hacer un pronunciamiento formal sobre los recientes hallazgos de que varias personas habían salido con vida, del holocausto del Palacio de Justicia y su posterior desaparecimiento, entre ellas el jurista y académico, esposo de Ana María, Carlos Horacio Urán. Se propuso circular una carta y recoger firmas con el fin de reabrir la investigación y el esclarecimiento de la verdad, trabajando por intermedio de la página web "Los inmarcesibles". Esta propuesta fue aprobada unánimemente.

**Cuba**

Felix Masud Piloto, Co-Chair

After the LASA membership's historic vote to move the conference from Boston to Montreal, the Cuba Section leadership worked incessantly to find non-U.S. resources to help finance the participation of our Cuban colleagues. It was not easy, but we were able to support 135 Cuban scholars who participated in nearly 100 different panels. The largest Cuban delegation in LASA's history was headed by Dr. Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada, President of the Cuban National Assembly, whose participation in the Congress was capped by an intellectually stimulating and politically charged keynote address to a standing room only audience of more than 500 people.

The 2007 Section prize for academic excellence in Cuban studies was awarded to Roberto Fernández Retamar, President of Casa de las Américas and one of Cuba and Latin America's most important intellectuals. Mr. Retamar could not attend LASA2007, but the plaque awarded for the prize was presented to him in a ceremony at the University of Havana in December of 2007.

More than 300 members attended the business meeting and more than 150 voted in the elections. We are happy to report that our elections resulted in the reelection of Cristina Díaz López and Felix Masud-Piloto as Section Co-Chairs in Cuba and outside of Cuba, respectively, for 18 month terms. Milagros Martínez and Philip Brenner were elected to 3 year terms as Executive Committee members in Cuba and outside Cuba, respectively, and Irida López was elected as Secretary-Treasurer for a three year term. Lorena Barberia and Rafael Hernández remain in the Executive Committee until their three year terms expire in 2009.

Our Section is already working on LASA2009, looking for funding, and applying for a U.S. Treasury Department License that would allow LASA to provide travel funds to some of our Cuban colleagues. 2009 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cuban Revolution, so we expect a large and wide variety of Cuban-related panels at the Rio Congress.

## Culture, Power and Politics

Marc Zimmerman, Chair

During 2006-2007, CPP continued maintaining the essential linkages between politics, power and cultural studies, while we continued our efforts to connect with Latino, indigenous, gender, and other concerns. Section officers also agreed to hold a competition for four travel grants which helped members attend the congress. We announced a competition for the best papers, but had to postpone this for lack of sufficient submissions.

Given our concern with new left formations, we sought to develop sessions that generated discussions in this direction. For LASA2007, we organized a main session on the work of Jesus Martin Barbero, but were unable to secure travel funds. Nevertheless over 50 participants held a lively discussion of JMB's important contributions. A second main Section explored populism and post-Marxism as a means for conceptualizing recent Latin American developments. Two sessions of roundtables promoted discussions of CPP themes.

At the business meeting, we approved the new slate of officers, and a proposal for a modified council structure. Susana Kaiser is Chair, Sylvia Escárcega is Co-Chair, Juan Zevallos is Secretary, and Benjamin Ardití, Robin Delugan, and David Smile are our Council Members. We discussed ways to improve CPP participation and communication to explore developing publications, providing scholarship funds, and to seek connections between members and those working on similar themes in Brazil for LASA2009. Marc Zimmerman and Benjamin Ardití will serve as program coordinators for LASA2009 Track 8 (Culture, Power & Political Subjectivities). Once again the Section has sufficient members to merit four sessions for the next Congress.

## Decentralization and Sub-national Governance

Alfred Montero, Chair

Twelve members of the Section were present for the business meeting. After greetings, I reported on recent uses of Section funds, including monies to provide a paper award for the 2004 meeting (to Rodrigo Mardones) and to support the travel costs of an Argentine graduate student, Gabriel Vommaro. For LASA2006 and 2007 each paper award will receive \$150 from the Section account. We opened the floor for nominations. None were received, however the Section agreed to keep the nomination process open via email until the end of November. One nomination, the paper presented by Imke Harber (2007 meeting) was

nominated by Chris Mitchell (NYU). It is presently under the consideration of the Section Council.

Nominations were then solicited to fill two vacancies on the Section council (seats held by Mimi Keck and Emma Zevallos which expire in November 2007). After the meeting in Montréal, Julian Durazo Herrmann (McGill University) and Annabelle Conroy (University of Central Florida) agreed to serve on the Council. Alfred P. Montero (Carleton College) will continue as Chair and Maria Escobar-Lemmon (Texas A&M) as Treasurer/Secretary. Council members are Rodrigo Mardones, Tulia Falleti, Julian Durazo Herrmann and Annabelle Conroy.

The members also discussed ways of distributing papers, links, and datasets. The idea of starting a wiki or blog was mentioned. The topic of setting up a website was also discussed.

The next agenda item concerned ideas for raising the profile of the Section. Among the topics under discussion was a special issue of the *LASA Forum*, forming contacts with IPSA (International Political Science Association), and starting a newsletter.

## Defense, Democracy and Civil-Military Relations

Kristina Mani, Co-chair

At the Section business meeting in Montreal the topic that engaged members for most of the session was the expansion of the Section's agenda, to include the area of public security alongside the existing attention to national defense and civil-military relations. The idea arose because many members are involved in the study and policy making of public security issues, which concern the use of force in ways that are distinct from the use of force for national defense. Advocates of the expansion felt that it would enable the Section to further the study of this important area of public policy, and to advance the clearer comparative study of the differences and similarities between police and military functions. The decision to expand the Section's agenda was approved by the Section members after the Montreal meeting, through an electronic vote in which 41% of the members participated, with 90% in favor of the change (27 in favor, 3 against). The change also brings a new title for the Section: *Defense, Public Security and Democracy*, or *Defensa, Seguridad Pública y Democracia*. For the 2009 Congress, we envision sponsoring events that will examine both national defense and public security topics.

Finally, we elected new officers. David Pion-Berlin and Paz Tibiletti were elected unanimously as Co-chairs, replacing outgoing Co-chairs Kristina Mani and Francisco Rojas. Elected to the Section's

Program Committee were Mani and Héctor Saint-Pierre, who will serve in addition to continuing Committee members Tom Bruneau and Marcela Donadio.

Special thanks go to Tom Bruneau and Felipe Agüero for organizing this year's Section sessions. The first event, "U.S. Security and Defense Policy Towards Latin America," ably took up the challenge of analyzing the current trajectory of U.S. policy, despite the last-minute cancellation by the U.S. government officials who were slated to participate. The second event, "Military Reforms and Democracy – Assessing Setbacks, Accomplishments and Trajectories," focused attention on the continued need to pursue the study of civil-military relations with consideration for the range of political, social and economic trends that have emerged within the subregions of Latin America.

## Economics and Politics

Leslie Elliott Armijo and Andrew Schrank, Co-Chairs

The Section is dedicated to the promotion of policy relevant dialogue as well as pure scholarship at the intersection of economics and politics. We therefore organized two roundtables for the 2007 LASA Congress. The first roundtable focused on the "Economics and Politics of Natural Resource Management on the Left." Panelists with experience in the natural resource sector or expertise on natural resource exporting countries discussed the management of natural resources by left-leaning governments in contemporary Latin America before a standing room only audience of academics and policymakers. The second roundtable asked what would—or perhaps should—come "after the Washington Consensus." Panelists with experience in the donor community addressed the current crisis in development thinking and entertained an array of questions and comments from an enthusiastic audience. We plan to post summaries of the statements prepared for both roundtables to the Section website—which will soon be transferred to a more permanent home at the University of New Mexico.

Our Section business meeting was attended by approximately two dozen Section members. We discussed the Section's history and goals, the year's activities and achievements, the possible uses of Section resources (including the subsidization of future roundtables and panels and the possibility of awarding an article or book prize), and Section governance. Andrew Schrank (University of New Mexico) and Diego Sánchez-Ancochea (University of London) were elected Co-chairs of the Section for the coming term.

SECTION NEWS continued...

**Ecuadorian Studies**  
Will Waters, Chair

At the business meeting in Montreal, the secretary-treasurer reported on the status of the Section. The Section has members in Latin America, Europe, Japan, and North America. Recent expenditures were for publication of the collected papers from the *3er Encuentro*, \$500 each for the travel expenses of two scholars, and our share of the reception held with the Peru Section.

President Will Waters reported on and invited discussion on the following topics: 1. The developing relation between the Canadian Association of Latin American Studies and LASA as a result of the meeting in Montreal; 2. The issue of providing travel funds for people who come to the summer Quito conference from other parts of the country, who organize a session, or who are invited for a special reason (Liisa North raised this issue); 3. The upcoming *4to Encuentro de los Ecuatorianistas*, (Quito, summer 2008; the issues are timing and appreciation for assistance from FLACSO Sede Quito; 4. The imminent publication of the collected papers from the *3er Encuentro*; and 5. Publication of Marc Becker and Kim Clark's book on the state and highland Indians (University of Pittsburgh Press).

Nominations were solicited for Section offices and elections conducted. The results of the elections are as follows: Will Waters, reelected as Chair; Scott McKinney, reelected as Secretary-Treasurer; Michael Handelsman, Luciano Martinez, and Ximena Sosa-Buchholz, reelected as Section council members; and Carmen Martinez replaced Jorge Leon as Section council member.

Finally, several other topics were discussed. The question of reactivating the archive of Aurelio Espinosa Polit was raised and a brief discussion was held on how to help scholars get to the LASA Congress in Rio for 2009. LASA support is decided late and only 17% of the applicants are supported. Will Waters encouraged members to place more publications on the Section's website. Liisa North announced her recent article with Luciano Martinez.

**Educación y Políticas Educativas en América Latina**  
Eulalio Velázquez Licea, Co-chair

En el Hotel Fairmont Queen Elizabeth, el día jueves 6 de septiembre se realizó el Business Meeting de la Sección, organizado por el Co-Chair Dr. Eulalio Velázquez Licea, de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional (México) con el apoyo y colaboración de la Dra. María Isabel da Cunha (UNISINOS, Brasil), también Co-Chair de la Sección, contando con 31 asistentes.

El salón fue insuficiente para el público asistente, por lo que la sesión se realizó en el pasillo contiguo a dicho salón, ofreciéndose un informe general de la actividad de la Sección en el periodo abril 2006 a septiembre 2007, en el cual la actividad principal se limitó a fortalecer la Sección e incrementar su membresía. La lista oficial de miembros en ese momento es 40 menos de los miembros que habían estado inscritos al recibir los co-chairs la responsabilidad de la Sección. También se mencionó que por alguna razón ajena a los organizadores faltaban de incluir en la lista al menos a otros diez miembros. Se lamentó, también, que prácticamente no hubiésemos contado con Travel Grants, lo que hizo que algunos paneles no se presentaran. Se planteó la necesidad de modificar el formato de la Sección, al ya no elegir dos co-chairs, sino elegir un comité representativo que permita desarrollar un trabajo efectivo en todo el continente, por lo que se propuso se organizara, siempre siguiendo la normativa de LASA, con un Chair, un Secretario-Tesorero y dos Consejeros.

Una vez realizada la elección, el Comité quedó constituido de la siguiente manera: Dr. Rodolfo Rincones Delgado (UTEP, USA) Chair de la Sección; Dra. Cleoni María Barbosa Fernandes (UNISINOS, Brasil) Secretaria Tesorera; Profra. Martha Esther Nepomneschi (UBA, Argentina) Consejera; Dr. Daniel Schugurensky (U. de Toronto, Canadá) Consejero.

Una vez nombrada la directiva se retomaron las ideas que inicialmente externara el Dr. Velázquez de fortalecer la Sección a través del trabajo de sus miembros y de sus productos de investigación, relacionándolos más con los aspectos de tipo social, político y económico que actualmente se viven en Latinoamérica, para ello se propuso como actividades prioritarias del Comité: Promover la afiliación a LASA y a la Sección de Educación; diseñar una página de la Sección, donde se pueda interactuar más con sus integrantes y se llegue fortalecidos a LASA2009 en Río de Janeiro, Brasil; se diera más importancia a los temas que se relacionen con la realidad socio-política-económica de la educación en América Latina. También se promovieran más paneles para el próximo Congreso.

**Environment**  
John Soluri, Chair

John Soluri opened the business meeting by presenting an update on Section membership and budget, and solicited items for the agenda. He raised questions about membership and reported on the Section Chairs Meeting. The most significant issue for the Environment Section is that LASA is receiving a growing number of requests for travel scholarships. Only 17% of applicants received support to travel to Montreal. Charlie Hale expressed frustration that the total dollar amount awarded is rising but the need is rising even faster.

New Section officers through 2009 include: Sherrie Bayer, Co-Chair; Kate McCaffrey, Co-Chair; Jim Bass, Listserv Manager; and David Barkin, Timmons Roberts, Regina Root and John Soluri, Council Members. Note: The Section chose to eliminate positions beyond co-chairs, since the Secretariat provides all meaningful data on membership and budget and also handles disbursements of Section funds. Elected officers represent a wide range of disciplines including anthropology, economics, history, literature, political science, and sociology.

In late July, the Section announced a \$500.00 travel grant for LASA Montreal. We received only one applicant whose paper was not clearly linked to the major themes typically explored by Environment Section panels. Therefore, no grants were awarded. However, attendees supported the idea and urged that announcements for LASA2009 be made earlier. The Section also needs to consider increasing the amount of the award so that it can cover a higher percentage of expenses likely incurred by international travel. We are encouraging U.S.-based, non-student, Section members to donate an additional \$5.00/year to ensure that we can sustain travel grants over the long haul.

One member raised the possibility of selling/serving fair trade coffee/sustainably produced food items. The fact that LASA2009 will not be held in a conference hotel expands options for "alternative" food/drink. The group also discussed organizing a field trip in conjunction with the conference. The Section also could sponsor a film/documentary screening (possibly in conjunction with the LASA Film Festival). Finally members discussed the possibility of making travel grants open to filmmakers and other Latin American "cultural workers" whose works are inspired by environmental themes.

### **Ethnicity, Race and Indigenous Peoples**

Mario Blaser, 2006-2007 Chair, and Jerome Branche, 2008-2009 Chair

The Ethnicity, Race and Indigenous Peoples' business meeting was conducted on Thursday the 6th. The agenda included the introduction of recently elected new council members. We had issued a call for nominations on July 5th. Douglas Carranza was self-nominated to be Secretary Treasurer and Jerome Branche was the only nominee for Chair. Three other candidates ran for council seats. The results of the elections were as follows: Elena Cirkovic, Victor Montejo, and Jan Rus. As it turned out, when Jerome became president, we had an additional seat on the council, so all three candidates were named to the council, which is currently constituted as follows: Jerome Branche, Chair; Douglas Carranza Mena, Secy Treasurer; Marc Becker, Sylvia Escarcega, Victor Montejo, Elena Cirkovic, and Jan Rus, Council Members.

The following point in the agenda was a discussion of plans for the ERIP-LACES conference: members were encouraged to propose panels. To date the plans for the first ERIP conference are proceeding well. The response to the Call For Papers has exceeded our expectations and we anticipate a very successful event. This term we also need to execute our plan for fundraising so as to bring our other projects to fruition.

A report on activities performed during the past term was presented: highlights were the creation of the Indigenous and Afro-descendant Travel Fund, the permission obtained from the LASA Executive to fundraise, and ongoing plans for web development.

### **Film Studies**

Gilberto M. Blasini, Chair

Twenty-four members (16% of the Section) attended the Film Studies business meeting in Montreal, Canada. The increase in membership entitles the Section to have three sessions during the 2009 Brazil Congress. The Section provided grants to two Latin American scholars who participated in the Film Studies Section's special sessions, Roberto Parejar from Bolivia, and Fernando Martín-Peña from Argentina.

Film Studies organized two special sessions for the Congress: "Reassessing Contemporary Latin American Cinema" (with Kathleen Newman, Laura Podalsky, Jorge Ruffinelli, Roberto Pareja, and Isabel Arredondo) and "Interdisciplinary Dialogues between Film Studies and Latin American Studies" (Patrice Petro, Randal

Johnson, Cristina Venegas, Fernando Martín-Peña, Gilberto Blasini). In addition, the business meeting included a very useful presentation by Jesús Alonso-Regalado, from the Section on Scholarly Research and Resources (SRR). He provided information about online scholarly resources related to Latin American media. Finally, we discussed possible topics for the Rio Congress. The list of topics includes: Latin American film industries and their changes due to digital technologies; Cinephila and reception/audience studies; Role of and/or history of film schools in Latin America; Alternative cinematic formats/Latin American shorts; Documentaries and social movements, indigenous videomaking; Focus on film directors/relationship to theater.

The Section conducted elections via email after the Congress. The names of the newly-elected officers are: Rafael Hernandez Rodriguez, Co-chair; Emperatriz Arreaza-Camero, Co-chair; Carolina Rocha, Secretary/Treasurer; and Isabel Arredondo and Beatriz Urraca, EC Members.

### **Haiti/Dominican Republic**

Henry (Chip) Carey, Chair

The Haiti and Dominican Republic Section had a successful Section panel and business meeting. We are hoping that Section members can come to Brazil in 2009, where the connections between the African diaspora on Hispanola and in Brazil will make for important scholarly contributions. We also hope to link up with the many Brazilian scholars of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, who have never been able to travel to a LASA conference. Finally, we are planning to have a best paper award at next year's conference on Haiti and/or the Dominican Republic by a graduate student and a best book award on the field. The newsletter will provide further details on these subjects. Chip Carey and Emelio Betances were elected co-chairs of the Section. We are seeking new leadership following the next Congress, as we have served longer than is desirable.

### **Health, Science and Society**

Ann Blum, Co-chair

For LASA 2007 the Section on Health, Science and Society organized a panel entitled "Nature, Science, and the State in Latin America: Reflections on the Work of Nancy Stepan." Panelists Anne-Emanuelle Birn, Julia Rodríguez, Alexandra Stern, Steven Palmer, and Gilberto Hochman examined insights they had gained from Stepan's work on Latin American eugenics, scientific inquiry, and public health and discussed

Stepan's influence on their own research and on others working on social and political aspects of science and medicine. Nancy Stepan herself commented on the papers. She discussed her new work on the scientific and social dimensions of eradication campaigns, in particular the eradication of malaria, and suggested new directions for research.

The Section also held its first competition for Best Article or Book Chapter. The board reviewed submissions and awarded the prize to Gabriela Soto Laveaga for her article, "Uncommon Trajectories: Steroid Hormones, Mexican Peasants, and the Search for a Wild Yam," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 36:4 (December 2005): 743-760.

The prize was announced at the Section business meeting, with a quorum in attendance. Co-Chairs Ann Blum and Ann Zulawski reported on Section activities and issues discussed in the Section Chairs meeting. Attending members then discussed preparation for LASA 2009.

The Section's new officers are: Co-Chairs, Ana María Kapelus-Poppi, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, and Adam Warren, University of Washington, Seattle; Secretary-Treasurer, Florencia Peña, National School of Anthropology and History, Mexico City; Board Members, Claudia Agostoni, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City, Gilberto Hochman, Casa de Oswaldo Cruz/Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz), Heather McCrea, Kansas State University, and Julia Rodríguez, University of New Hampshire.

### **Labor Studies**

Cirila Quintero, Chair

Section elections were conducted and the new offices are the following: Kirsten Sehnbruch, Chair (Center for Latin American Studies, UC Berkeley); Maggie Gray, Secretary-Treasurer (Adelphi University, New York); and Carolina Bank Munoz and Andrew Schrank, Councilors.

The Section business meeting was celebrated on September 6 and was chaired by Cirila Quintero, Section President. The issues treated were: membership and finances, nominations to the new Committee to serve until LASA2009, sponsorship of the Session and showing of Film "Maquilapolis," the prize for the best article of labor studies "Changes in relations between the state and independent unions: Mexico under Fox's Presidency" by Jean Francois Mayer, invitations to submit themes for the next LASA



SECTION NEWS continued...

Congress, and challenges for the next Committee.

The Section's Congress sessions were joined with Social Movement and Class Struggles; in total the track had 29 panels. The Section also sponsored two panels: "The Spread of 'Wal-Martization' in the Americas: Comparative Labor and Developmental Impacts of Globalized Retail and Sourcing Networks" and "Labor & Economic Rights Advocacy in the Americas: Mechanisms Central to Coalition-building, Protest and Political Mobilization." The Section also sponsored the showing of "Maquilapolis" in the LASA Film Festival with the film winning recognition from the Association.

**Law and Society in Latin America (Lasla)**  
Renzo Honores and Mark Ungar, Co-chairs

At the Lasla business meeting in Montreal, members and friends discussed activities of the past year and plans for upcoming years on three main areas of Lasla's work. The first was the Maggi Popkin Award, which the Section gives to an outstanding Congress paper on the law and society. The winner of the LASA2007 Popkin Award was Máximo Langer for his paper, "Revolution in Latin American Criminal Procedure: Diffusion of Legal Ideas from the Periphery."

The second focus of the meeting was the Lasla website, which was established in 2007 as a source of news, publications, links, and other information on Latin American law. To expand the website, members suggested adding links to other law associations, creating listservs to facilitate communications, and asking members to send in bibliographies. Several members also volunteered to create a monthly bulletin for the Section, which will be sent to all members and then posted on the website.

The third main issue was on panels for LASA2009, which the co-chairs will initiate with a call for proposals. The final order of business was the election of a new Section co-chair. The Section's co-chairs are elected for three year terms. In Montreal, the term of Renzo Honores ended, and Kif Augustine-Adams (Professor of Law, J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University) was elected as co-chair to replace him. The term of Co-Chair Mark Ungar will end at LASA2009, when an election will be held to replace him.

**Peru**  
Paulo Drinot, Co-chair

The Section's business meeting was attended by 39 members. The secretary-treasurer, Christina Ewig, gave her report on the Section's finances and on the successful travel grant campaign which raised \$1,708.04. Travel grants were awarded to five members based in Peru. Unfortunately only two, Ponciano del Pino Huaman and Ralph Willem Hoetmer, were able to attend LASA. Co-chair Paulo Drinot, then gave a report on (i) the three panels organized by the Section, one of which was unfortunately cancelled, (ii) the new book and article prizes, which were awarded, respectively to William P. Mitchell, Professor of Anthropology and Freed Professor in the Social Sciences at Monmouth University in New Jersey and Lisa J. Laplante, of the Praxis Institute for Social Justice, and (iii) the election of the new executive, which is now composed of Elena Alvarez and Carlos Ivan Degregori as Co-chairs, Joanna Drzewieniecki as Treasurer-Secretary, and Rocío Quispe-Agnoli and Iñigo García-Bryce as Council Members. Mary Beth Tierney Tello, Laura Balbuena, and Mark Cox continue as executive members until Rio. The new initiatives agreed to by the membership included (i) following up on the visa denial to a Section member, (ii) a restructuring of the Section's travel grants, (iii) the organization of a Peru Section-sponsored conference in Peru, and (iv) a statement on the Pisco earthquake, which is now on the Section website.

**Political Institutions**  
Joy Langston, Chair

A paper award for the best paper delivered by a Section member at LASA2006 was given to Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro (Columbia University) for her paper, "The Local Connection: Local Government Performance and Satisfaction with Democracy in Argentina." The Chair thanked the paper award committee members Maria Escobar-Lemmon, Bonnie Fields, and Steve Wuhs for all their hard work.

A new chair was elected, Aníbal Pérez-Liñan (Department of Political Science, University of Pittsburgh). Joy Langston was elected the new secretary. The Councilors for the Section are Miguel Centellas (Dickenson College), Kirk Hawkins (Brigham Young University), Peter Siveles (Wake Forest University), and Steve Wuhs (Redlands College).

Several issues were discussed by the assembled members, including the idea of placing a blog on the Section website as a space for interesting links, new paper abstracts, and other news.

Miguel Centellas volunteered to be in charge of the blog. The need to update the website more frequently was also noted.

The Chair discussed several points of interest that had been communicated by Charles Hale, Milagros Pereyra-Rojas, and Sandra Klinzing in the Section Chair Meeting, including the *LASA Forum* article submission policy, the session tracks at LASA Congresses, and the scheduling of panel sessions.

**Sexualities Studies**

Raul Rubio and Jossiana Arroyo, Co-chairs

The Section election results are the following: Ruben Ríos (University of Puerto Rico) and Horacio Sívori (CLAM, Rio de Janeiro), Co-chairs; Guillermo de los Reyes (University of Houston), Secretary.

At the Section business meeting the co-chairs discussed the *LASA Forum* issue. Members agreed that publications give visibility to the Section and that they should be promoted, if not in the *Forum* than by other academic venues. One suggestion was that of publishing a special issue on Queer Sexualities by the *Latin American Perspectives Journal*.

A new web site for the Section had been proposed by past Section members. Some members suggested the creation of a "My Space" web page, which will be created by Rolando Longoria (UC Santa Barbara) and Carlos Manuel Chavarría.

Discussion then turned to organization for the LASA2009 Congress. Section members decided on a pre-conference event. An organizing committee will work not only with panels for the pre-conference (associated with Human Rights, Reproductive Rights, and coordinated by CLAM), but also with performance and entertainment. Horacio Sívori and Claudio Medeiros discussed their respective plans and were selected as the Organizing Committee LASA2009 in Rio de Janeiro.

Members then discussed future prizes for the Section, a Junior-Professor Essay Prize and a Senior Scholar Prize. Prize names suggested included the "Silvia Molloy Prize" and the "Carlos Monsiváis Prize." It was not decided what monetary value would be offered.

Section members then turned to the selection criteria and the responsibilities of next year's co-chairs, in preparing the themes for the panels (for LASA2009) and organizing a pre-conference in Rio de Janeiro. Members decided that the

Section needed someone who had contact with local organizations and Rubén Ríos and Horacio Sívori were elected unanimously. Sívori will serve as the main contact person for LASA2009.

#### **Southern Cone Studies**

Laura Demaría, Chair

The Southern Cone Studies Section held elections during the summer. Laura Demaría (University of Maryland) is the new Chair, Eva-Lynn Jagoe (University of Toronto) is the Secretary, and Angel Tuninetti (University of West Virginia) continues as Treasurer. The Section also now has three official liaisons: Soledad Falabella (Universidad Diego Portales) in Chile, Teresa Porzecanski (Universidad de la República) in Uruguay, and Álvaro Fernández Bravo (Universidad de San Andrés) in Argentina.

During the business meeting in Montreal, Section members decided to start working on the following issues: 1) To increase the number of members in the Section to have more panels in the official program; (we have already accomplished something on this issue; for LASA Rio 2009 the Section will have four panels instead of the traditional three; 2) to create a Travel Fund supported by members' donations which would allow the Section to help our colleagues with no institutional support; 3) to have a Pre-LASA in Rio or at least a "mesa de trabajo" (either before or after) in order to expand communication among scholars who share an interest in the Southern Cone; and 4) to intensify an interdisciplinary approach in our Section's Panels or "mesas redondas."

#### **Venezuelan Studies**

Cathy Rakowski, Secretary/Treasurer, Elizabeth Nichols and Kim Morse

The meeting began with a welcome by outgoing President Dan Hellinger, followed by his report on activities of the council during the prior 18 months. These included a report on how the three Section-sponsored panels for LASA2007 were selected, an update on the status of the webpage, and results of the writing competition. This was followed by outgoing Secretary-Treasurer Cathy Rakowski's report on membership, the financial situation, and her report on the elections that were conducted in May by e-mail. A brief discussion ensued regarding outgoing Council's recommendation on a close vote and members present voted to ratify the results of the elections (per LASA rules for Sections) and council's recommendation.

The new officers and council members are: Dan Levine, President, Kim Morse and Elizabeth Nichols, Co-Secretary-Treasurer, Luís Gómez Calcaño (CENDES UCV), Patricia Márquez (IESA) and Verónica Zubillaga (USB), new council members resident in Venezuela, and Jennifer McCoy (University of Georgia), Charles Briggs (UC Berkeley), and Francisco Rodriguez (Wesleyan University), new council members resident outside Venezuela. Cathy Rakowski will take over management of the Section website, which has not been updated for quite a while; we have been looking for a new web manager for several years. The web page will be hosted by Ohio State University. The new website should be up in January 2008.

The Section sponsored three panels at LASA2007. A call was circulated several times prior to the LASA deadline for panel submissions. There were 3 panel proposals submitted; all were deemed excellent by the council. Winners of the paper competition will receive a one-year membership to LASA and the Section plus payment of registration for LASA2009. In the Student Category, Manuel A. Gómez (Stanford University) won for "All in the Family" with Honorable Mention going to Paula Vásquez (Escuela de Altos Estudios de París and EHESS-IRIS, France) for "Rituales de Dignificación." The winner for Professional paper, published, was Sujatha Fernandes (Queens College, CUNY) for "Barrio Women in Chávez's Venezuela." The awardee for Professional paper, unpublished was María Pilar García-Guadilla (Universidad Simón Bolívar) for "The Bolivarian Comités de Tierra Urbana: Between Autonomy and Political Cooptation" (presented at LASA2006). ■