

# President's Report

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For many LASA members, the Association's Congresses represent a unique opportunity for professional interaction with colleagues from around the globe. Reflective of the richness and dynamism of Latin American Studies is the success of quite a few other scholarly organizations that serve some of the same purposes as LASA. Some of these organizations are national in origin—based in Brazil, Canada, or the U.K., for example—or are regional in focus. Still others are organized by discipline or theme. Many LASA members take part in the activities of one or more of these networks, and we encourage our readers to learn more about their activities.

The *On the Profession* section of the *Forum's* summer issue presents information about some of the most prominent of these organizations: the Caribbean Studies Association (CSA), the UK Society for Latin American Studies (SLAS), the Canadian Association of Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CALACS), and Brazil's Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação e Pesquisa em Ciências Sociais (ANPOCS). Another key Association, the Buenos Aires-based Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO), brings together roughly two hundred research centers throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, and performs several roles that are similar to those of LASA. This list is not exhaustive, omitting several groups that might have been included. Within the United States, for example, important regionally-based Latin American Studies networks, such as the Northeast Council for Latin American Studies, hold conferences that resemble "mini-LASAs." There are also discipline-based organizations, such as the Latin American and Caribbean Economics Association and the Asociación Latinoamericana de Sociología, information about which will be included in future issues of the *Forum*. Interestingly, as best we

could determine there is no association encompassing the various currents of work that fall under the rubric of Latino Studies, though of course scholars in this field have an important presence at LASA as well as within organizations such as the American Studies Association.

Some of these organizations sponsor publications of their own, just as LASA does with *LARR* and the *LASA Forum*. This is the case with the *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* and the *Bulletin of Latin American Studies*, as well as with the publications mentioned in the description of ANPOCS. CLACSO, which is a more complex and multi-faceted institution than the others considered in this issue of the *Forum*, sponsors a wide range of publications along with an array of other research, training, and outreach programs.

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This issue of the *Forum* also includes a brief report from LASA2009 Program Co-chairs Evelyne Huber and Cynthia Steele. We will continue to provide regular updates in advance of the Rio de Janeiro Congress. During June, I traveled to Rio with Executive Director Milagros Pereyra Rojas and others on the LASA staff to grapple with some of the logistical challenges that lie ahead of us. I am increasingly confident that the meeting, our first ever in South America and our first ever held in a university rather than a conference hotel, will be a memorable success.

However, some aspects will be more complicated than usual. For example, we are currently working to provide regular bus transportation from the major hotels to the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC) where conference sessions will be held. Also, we are determining whether to hold the welcoming reception at the PUC



or in another venue. In making these and other decisions, we are benefiting from the rich knowledge and experience of our colleagues at the PUC, particularly Karl Erik Schollhammer and Rosa Marina de Brito Meyer as well as leading Rio-based scholars who will constitute a local outreach committee for the Congress. Their expertise has already proven to be of enormous value and we look forward to continuing to work with them during the months ahead to ensure an intellectually stimulating and logistically smooth Congress. ■