

The Caribbean Studies Association

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<http://www.caribbean-studies.org/en/index.html>

The Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) is an independent, professional organization devoted to the promotion of Caribbean studies from a multidisciplinary, multicultural point of view. The CSA is the primary association for scholars and practitioners working on the Caribbean Region, which includes Central America, the Caribbean Coast of Mexico, as well as Venezuela, Colombia, Northeast Brazil, and the three Guianas. As the major organization focusing on the Caribbean, the CSA, through its conferences, provides forums and serves as a springboard for theoretical, analytical, practical, professional, and performative engagements with the region.

CSA's current president is Dr. Anton Allahar, Professor of Sociology at The University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario. CSA's membership includes, and has included, outstanding political leaders of the region as well as world-renown intellectual pioneers in the field of Caribbean Studies. Whether in public service or in academia, members of CSA have also played leading roles in the Caribbean and its expanding diaspora, most notably in a number of multilateral and bilateral regional organizations, e.g., CARICOM, ACS, and the OAS.

History and Organization

Founded in 1974 by 300 Caribbeanists, the CSA now has over 1,000 members, almost half of whom are located in the United States, almost exclusively at U.S. universities. CSA's members also live and work in the Caribbean region, Canada, South and Central America, and Europe. At our 2007 conference, held in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, over 200 institutions from 30 countries were represented by attending delegates. The Association is potentially one of the most important vehicles for

researching, analyzing, and documenting the growing significant presence of populations of Caribbean descent in the United States, Canada, and Europe. Our annual conference (May 26-30, 2008) was just held in San Andres Isla, Colombia, and its theme reflected the lived mission of the Association, "The Caribbean: Embracing the Diasporas Within and Without."

Given the diffusion of its membership throughout many of the world's regions, the CSA is well placed to participate in the development and support of policies aimed at facilitating interchanges related to the linking of the Caribbean with its overseas populations in the United States, Canada, Europe, and other areas of the world. The Association is particularly concerned with issues of regional, national, and community development. We see the need to engage in efforts to secure the participation of the skilled and qualified (scholars, professionals, entrepreneurs) directly in activities in their home countries and to recruit persons not of Caribbean descent into these efforts.

The CSA is also actively engaged in efforts aimed at expanding its capacity to conduct and administer research that deals with critical problems facing the region. These include the HIV/AIDS pandemic, crime and drug interdiction, violence (particularly as it pertains to women and domestic violence), governance and democracy, ethnic and racial peace in culturally plural societies, environmental sustainability, reproductive health, and gender and sexuality. We have also recently signed partnership agreements with the Council of Latin American Social Sciences (CLACSO), the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), and the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA).

We are especially interested in the incorporation of young scholars and the integration of scholarship on matters related to gender equity at all levels of Caribbean societies. We see the need to support these scholars and to recruit them into playing central roles both in the region and in the Association. We plan seriously to expand our role by training future scholars and professionals working on and in the Caribbean with a particular emphasis on the training of women to acquire jobs as faculty members and administrators at the university level. That work ought to be in areas directly related to Caribbean development, work in the Caribbean, and their becoming leaders in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Secretariat

The CSA Caribbean Secretariat is hosted by the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. The UWI provides funding assistance that allows the Association to undertake its agenda. Given the distribution of our membership and the growing focus on the Caribbean diaspora, the Association is also in the process of establishing a National Secretariat in the United States and exploring possibilities for establishing a permanent North American Secretariat independent of the host institution (UWI, Trinidad).

Development of Policy Formulation, Advisory Capabilities, and Mechanisms for Practical Support

Together with its Advisory Board and the support of a Ford Foundation grant, the Executive Council of the CSA is now in the process of developing capabilities and implementing mechanisms that would allow

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the Association to provide the region, its countries, its diasporas, and their various sectors with advice, assistance, practical support, and the ability to develop policy proposals in areas that are critical at all these levels. We are also developing capabilities for supporting and conducting research on the region and its diaspora. We intend to draw upon scholars and practitioners (both members and nonmembers of CSA) and to develop a consortium of universities with significant Caribbean Studies components (programs, departments, institutes) with these proposed interventions in mind. We are developing a Caribbean Policy Institute to undertake research and policy oriented activities.

The Caribbean Studies Newsletter

The Caribbean Studies Newsletter is the official publication of the Caribbean Studies Association. It is published twice a year and is distributed to all Association members as well as to newsletter subscribers. Members have online access to the newsletter and those without such access can request a paper copy of the newsletter to be sent by mail. ■

The UK Society for Latin American Studies (SLAS) was founded in 1964 and is one of the leading Latin American studies organizations in Europe. It aims to promote interest in Latin American Studies and to deepen knowledge and understanding of issues pertinent to the region, primarily through the promotion, discussion, and diffusion of research.

SLAS embraces multidisciplinary work, and our publications, lectures, and conferences feature work from across the social sciences and arts disciplines. This promotes the cross-fertilization of ideas, approaches, and methodologies leading to innovative and perceptive interdisciplinary research. Our members' work continues to have a significant influence, breaking new intellectual ground and earning an international reputation for Latin American studies in the UK.

SLAS also seeks to provide a community for students, academics, and others with a research interest in the area to share knowledge and practice. SLAS links all those who work on Latin America in different fields, disciplines, and universities within a very special community which is distinguished by its friendliness and support, in terms of looking past academic hierarchies to engage with the thoughts of fellow scholars, be they research students or professors. An electronic monthly newsletter disseminates up-to-date information about events and new publications to the entire membership. We currently have over five hundred members, including academics, Ph.D. students, and journalists mainly from the UK, but also Latin America, mainland Europe, and the United States. We are also closely linked to the Postgraduate Institute for Latin American Studies which runs research workshops, seminar series, and an annual conference for postgraduate students.

The central meeting place of SLAS members is its Annual Conference, which is held in different locations around the UK, and occasionally mainland Europe, attracting around 180 participants each year. In line with the Society's encouragement of interdisciplinarity, the academic panels vary widely in terms of discipline, ranging from economics to music via anthropology, politics, history, literature, geography, and film. The Conference provides an invaluable forum for the sharing of research and a platform for joint research projects and publications.

We also hold an annual lecture with the aim of reaching out beyond the academic community by promoting interest in Latin America amongst a wider public. These lectures are usually given by non-academic experts and focus on issues of current popular interest, with an emphasis on accessibility and participation.

One of the central aims of SLAS is to offer support to academics through grants and scholarships. These include support for local conferences and seminars, postgraduate travel and fieldwork grants, and visits from Latin American scholars, as well as various essay prizes. Last year SLAS awarded nearly £18,000 (\$36,000) under such practices, making a significant contribution to the research of many scholars. We look to increase the amount available in the coming years.

Key to SLAS's success has been its journal, the *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, which is published four times a year and has gained international recognition for publishing original research of current interest on Latin America and the Caribbean from all academic disciplines within the social sciences, history, and cultural studies. The *Bulletin* also publishes a substantial section of book reviews, covering