

Kalman Silvert and LASA's 50th Anniversary

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examine the concept of Latin American studies in the context of the (slow) decline of the Cold War, particularly its current relevance in Latin America itself.

In my own work, I have managed to maintain strong ties in Peru, Spain, Mexico, and elsewhere. I have published widely in Peru and I collaborate with students, scholars, journals, and NGOs throughout Latin America. I can't imagine working in any other way.

This is my vision for LASA—a multidisciplinary, transnational focus that brings together not only different disciplines and perspectives but also serves as a forum for scholars, activists, and professionals interested in Latin America. I have wholly supported the efforts to incorporate more participants from Latin America and the Caribbean and to hold conferences outside of the United States (Rio 2009 was a delight). I also support efforts to include Cuba. I was in Havana in February 2013, rebuilding UC Davis's exchange program with Casa de las Américas and la Universidad de La Habana. I believe that LASA is moving in the right direction and I hope to have the opportunity to deepen my collaboration. ■

The 50th anniversary of LASA is an appropriate time to recall Kalman Silvert's extraordinary life and contributions to Latin American studies. Silvert served as LASA's first president; was the program advisor for the social sciences in Latin America at the Ford Foundation from 1967 until his untimely death in 1976; and was teacher, mentor, and institution builder at universities in the United States and Latin America. During the darkest days in Latin America in the late 1960s and early 1970s, accompanied by the tumult and constitutional crisis in the United States, he turned his energy, intellect, and his institutional position to saving lives and institutions in Latin America, and defending democracy and strengthening democratic theory and practice throughout the Americas.

Abe Lowenthal and I have been coordinating a project on Kal's many roles and contributions. We invite you to read the following essays by Julio Cotler and Tommie Sue Montgomery concerning Kalman Silvert and the influence he had on them both personally and professionally. If the spirit moves you, send some thoughts or reminiscences of your own to the email above. All of the material will be published on the LASA website in the 50th year. ■