

# Announcing the Guillermo O'Donnell Democracy Award

by GABRIELA IPPOLITO-O'DONNELL | University of Notre Dame | gabriela.ippolito.2@alumni.nd.edu  
and KEVIN J. MIDDLEBROOK | University College London | kevinmiddlebrook@aol.com

LASA's Executive Council has unanimously approved the creation of an award and lectureship honoring the distinguished academic career and pioneering intellectual leadership of the late Guillermo O'Donnell.

The Guillermo O'Donnell Democracy Award will be an annual, Association-wide award and lectureship that recognizes either outstanding scholarship in the field of democracy studies or particularly meritorious public service that promotes democracy and democratic values in Latin America and the Caribbean. Each recipient will be invited to give a keynote lecture at the LASA Congress at which the award is made.

## Rationale for the Award

Guillermo O'Donnell (1936–2011) was for nearly four decades one of the most influential social scientists studying contemporary Latin America. At the time of his death in his native Buenos Aires, he was Emeritus Professor of Political Science and Senior Fellow at the Kellogg Institute for International Affairs at the University of Notre Dame. He had previously served as the Helen Kellogg Professor of Government and International Studies (1982–2005) and founding Academic Director of the Kellogg Institute (1982–1997) at the University of Notre Dame, and Director of the Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad (1976–1979) in Argentina. He received his LL.B. from the Universidad Nacional de Buenos Aires in 1958 and his M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees in political science from Yale University in 1971 and 1988, respectively. Among many distinguished positions, Guillermo served as president (1988–1991) and vice president (1982–1985, 1985–1988) of the International Political Science Association and vice president of the American Political

Science Association (1999–2000). He was visiting fellow or visiting professor at (in chronological order) Princeton University, the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor, the University of California–Berkeley, the Instituto Juan March (Madrid), Stanford University, the University of Cambridge, and the University of Oxford, and he held *doctor honoris causa* degrees from universities in Argentina (two), Chile, Germany, and Peru. He was named a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1995. In 2003 LASA awarded him its highest honor, the Kalman Silvert Award for lifetime achievement.

Guillermo O'Donnell was a highly original scholar whose deep insights into Latin American politics and social change set the agenda for research on authoritarianism and democracy in the region over the course of several decades. For example, his *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism* (1972) examined the origins of the harsh military dictatorships that ruled several Latin American countries from the mid-1960s through the 1980s. He was also among the first to identify pressures for political change within these regimes, concerns that gave rise to the pathbreaking *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* (co-edited, 1986, 4 volumes) and the study of democratic regime transitions that was to reshape the broader field of comparative politics. In subsequent years, Guillermo wrote with passion and commitment about key issues in democratic theory and the dilemmas of democratic consolidation in contemporary Latin America, focusing especially on citizenship, inequality, and the rule of law.

## Funding the O'Donnell Award Endowment

Over the next year we hope to raise at least US\$100,000 to endow this award. An

endowment fund of this size will be necessary to support both a modest cash prize for the award recipient and the travel and accommodation expenses associated with bringing the recipient to the LASA Congress at which he or she receives the award and delivers a keynote lecture.

We hope that all LASA members who knew Guillermo personally or who have been influenced by his pioneering work in the field of democracy studies will consider contributing to the endowment fund. We certainly recognize that our financial circumstances vary considerably, but we hope that senior colleagues (those who received their PhD ten or more years ago, or who have equivalent professional seniority) will consider making a donation of at least US\$1,000.

Because LASA is a nonprofit organization, a contribution to the O'Donnell endowment will qualify as a charitable donation for anyone who files a U.S. tax return. Donors may make their contributions by check, bank transfer, or credit card. The names of all donors to the endowment will be published (ordered by the amount of their donations) in a future issue of *LASA Forum*.

If you have any questions concerning the O'Donnell Award or how to make your contribution to the endowment fund, please contact either of us at gabriela.ippolito.2@alumni.nd.edu or kevinmiddlebrook@aol.com.

We look forward to working with you to make the O'Donnell Award an integral part of LASA's professional activities. ■