
EDITOR'S FOREWORD

In July 1962, the Social Science Research Council received a grant of one million dollars from the Ford Foundation for the purpose of strengthening Latin American studies in the United States through a faculty-exchange program involving U.S. and Latin American scholars. In furtherance of this program, thirty-six scholars were invited to a meeting in Cuernavaca, Mexico, in December 1964 to discuss issues confronting Latin American studies in the United States. A major topic of discussion that emerged at the Cuernavaca meeting was the need to establish an interdisciplinary journal on Latin American research.

Several of those present at Cuernavaca spoke against founding such a journal, arguing that not enough good scholarly work was available to fill its pages. More daring spirits nonetheless carried the day. In the following months, twenty-eight universities and the Hispanic Foundation of the Library of Congress each pledged annual grants of one thousand dollars for two years towards the founding of the journal. On June 14, 1965, representatives of these institutions met in Austin to organize the new journal and set its policies. After considerable discussion, they selected a name—*Latin American Research Review*—and designated a Board. With additional support from the Ford Foundation, the first issue was published in the fall of 1965.

A further consequence of the founding of *LARR* was the creation of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA). The first attempt at founding a national organization of this type, the Association for Latin American Studies (ALAS), failed shortly after its establishment in 1959. Nevertheless, during the course of a joint meeting of the *LARR* Board and Latin American center directors at Cornell in October 1965, a committee was appointed to plan a new national association. The committee convened a meeting in Washington in May 1966, and there LASA was inaugurated. Shortly thereafter, *LARR* and LASA merged, and the journal became the official publication of the new association.

Fears of the insufficiency of good material fortunately were unfounded. *LARR* is now commencing its eighteenth volume. Over the

years, it has developed a solid reputation while maintaining both its readability and interdisciplinary character. As a result, its circulation now stands at an all-time high of nearly four thousand paid subscriptions. Latin American studies have become the most productive of all developing area fields, reflecting the extraordinary vitality of Latin American cultures and the diversity of social change in the hemisphere. Issues debated on the pages of *LARR* have had a direct impact on academic disciplines in the United States and have contributed to the growth of comparative perspectives, particularly in the social sciences. *LARR* also has been a major forum for intellectual dialogue between the Americas, an exchange that is perhaps the most positive element in the generally discouraging state of inter-American relations.

The success of *LARR* has been due not only to its authors and hard-working, unpaid reviewers, but to the dedication of previous editorial teams, led at Texas first by Dick Schaedel and then by Tom McGann, and at North Carolina by John Martz, followed by Joseph Tulchin. After working closely with Joe and former Managing Editor Leah Florence during the past year of transition, the New Mexico editors are deeply impressed by the professionalism and efficiency of the North Carolina operation. We are also grateful for the legacy of manuscripts accepted or in process, which will be reflected in this and the remaining issues of volume 18.

In future issues we shall revive John Martz's practice of using the editor's foreword to inform our readers about the patterns of manuscript submission, reviewing practices, and other matters related to the conduct of journal affairs. The New Mexico editors will also do our best to maintain the tradition of quality that we have inherited. Toward that end, we hope that our readers will continue to submit to *LARR* work that they feel to be of importance, in particular the essays reviewing current research trends and the original research contributions of general or interdisciplinary interest that have been the foundation of *LARR*'s reputation and its usefulness.

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