

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

The State of *LARR*

Following the precedent set by previous editors of *Latin American Research Review*, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you a bit of information regarding the kinds of submissions we receive and how they are dealt with through the review process. To begin, on a twelve-month basis, May 1, 2008–April 30, 2009,¹ *LARR* received a record 120 manuscripts. This compares with previous twelve-month periods that never exceeded 110 manuscripts and continues the gradual increase in submissions that began during the editorship of my immediate predecessor, Peter Ward at the University of Texas at Austin. At the same time, we have maintained our high rate of rejection on internal review (57 percent, see table 1). Moreover, of the manuscripts sent out for external review, the majority of decisions received to date were “revise and resubmit,” with only three manuscripts actually being accepted without even minor revisions (see table 2).

To better understand what this all means in more concrete terms, particularly in comparison with other academic journals, table 3 presents statistics on acceptance and rejection rates following the format that most major academic journals use. Among other things, this approach provides statistics based on manuscripts for which final editorial decisions have actually been taken, excluding manuscripts still under either internal review or external review. On that basis, *LARR*'s overall acceptance rate is just 3 percent, or 11 percent if manuscripts accepted with only minor revisions are included.² This underscores how *LARR* remains the preeminent journal in the field, and these are the statistics that we will provide authors when requested for tenure files, impact reports, and so on.

During the same twelve-month period, we received manuscripts from seventeen countries (table 4). The proportion of manuscripts from the United States has continued to show a gradual decline over recent years, with 49 percent coming from the United States during the twelve-month period ending April 30, 2009, compared to 59 percent in 2007. Brazil is again the second-largest source of manuscripts (12.50 percent, up slightly from 11.24 percent received in a similar period in 2008). Argentina, Chile,

1. One thing about publishing a journal like *LARR* is that there is a long production lead time. These were the most up-to-date statistics we had available as of the time of this writing.

2. For comparison, the *American Sociological Review* statistics are 9.9 percent and 17 percent, respectively.

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Table 1 Submissions May 1, 2008, to April 30 2009: 120

	Number of submissions	Percentage
Rejection first stage	68	56.67
Sent to external review	41	34.17
Pending	11	9.17

Table 2 Sent to External Review: 41

	Number of submissions	Percentage
Reject after external review	7	17.07
Full acceptance	3	7.32
Accept with minor revisions	8	19.51
Revise and resubmit	11	26.83
Pending	12	29.27
Total	41	

Table 3 Manuscripts Considered (May 1, 2008–April 30, 2009)

	Number	Percentage
Accepted	3	0.031
Accept with minor revisions	8	0.082
Rejected on internal review	68	0.701
Rejected on external review	7	0.072
Revise and resubmit	11	0.113
Total for which editorial decisions have been made	97	100
Pending	23	

and Mexico continue to be the principal sources of submissions after the United States and Brazil.

It is also interesting to get a sense of the various disciplines represented in manuscript submissions (see table 5). Because we do not ask authors to identify their discipline for logistical reasons (not to mention the fact that self-identifications of this nature are themselves notoriously subjective), identifying an author's discipline is not as straightforward a task as one might presume. In the end, we decided to identify the authors' disciplines according to the department or academic unit with which they are affiliated. While not perfect, this does allow us to identify some clear trends that are worth highlighting. First, political science continues to be the dominant discipline in terms of submissions to *LARR*, accounting for slightly more than one-third of the submissions in recent years. Literature is now the third principal source of submissions at 14.17 percent, just behind sociology at 15 percent but ahead of economics (11.67 percent). This

Table 4 Author's Country of Origin

Country (incl. Puerto Rico)	Number of authors	Percentage of total
Argentina	8	6.67
Brazil	15	12.50
Canada	3	2.50
Chile	7	5.83
Germany	1	0.83
Israel	1	0.83
Italy	1	0.83
Mexico	6	5.00
Netherlands	1	0.83
Norway	2	1.67
Peru	1	0.83
Puerto Rico	1	0.83
Serbia	1	0.83
Spain	4	3.33
United Kingdom	3	2.50
United States	59	49.17
Uruguay	1	0.83
Unknown	5	4.17
Total	120	

Table 5 Author's Discipline

Discipline	Number of authors	Percentage of total
Cultural studies	3	2.50
Anthropology	6	5.00
Economics	14	11.67
Environmental studies	2	1.67
Gender or women's studies	1	0.83
Geography	1	0.83
History	7	5.83
Latin American and Caribbean studies	0	0.00
Literature	17	14.17
Political science	45	37.50
Portuguese language	0	0.00
Sociology	18	15.00
Spanish language	1	0.83
Other	5	4.17
Total	120	

suggests that *LARR* continues to reflect a good balance between the social sciences and humanities. For example, when literature is combined with submissions from cultural studies (2.5 percent), anthropology (5 percent), history (5.83 percent), and Spanish language (0.87 percent), the total submissions from the humanities total 28.33 percent, which does not seem to be excessively out of sync with what we know about the Latin American Studies Association's membership base.

Finally, it is worth noting that *LARR*'s presence in the Rio Congress continued the tradition established by the previous editor, Peter Ward. As was the case in the Montreal Congress, *LARR* again sponsored five panels. Given the impressive attendance at a similar panel in Montreal, we repeated the panel "Publishing Your Research in Academic Journals," with the participation of ten journal editors. This was also LASA's first congress in Latin America since the 1997 Guadalajara Congress, so we thought it would be appropriate to critically challenge our own publishing criteria through a cross-cultural discussion of the concept of good research in the featured session "What Constitutes 'Good Research'? Perspectives on Research Practice, Research Ethics, and Research Standards of 'Truth' from the North and South." In preparation for the forthcoming special issue of *LARR*, "Contemporary Debates on Ecology, Culture, and Society," José R. Jouve-Martin from the McGill *LARR* Editorial Committee and Marianne Schmink from the University of Florida organized three panels: "Global to Local Environmental Politics in Latin America," "Environmental Discourses and Cultural Practices in Latin America," and "Environmental Dimensions of Urban Space in Latin America." And the reception, co-sponsored by the various journals participating with *LARR* in the panel on journal publications, was a definite success!