Committee on LSA’s 2nd Half Century

FINAL REPORT

October 8, 2014

A. The Mission

As part of the celebration of the 50th Anniversary, President Michael McCann and President Elect Carroll Seron created the Committee and gave it the mission of stimulating discussion about the future of the Association. We were charged with identifying important issues, preparing provocative discussion documents, organizing 50th Anniversary Roundtables to discuss ideas for future initiatives, and reporting on what was learned.

B. The Committee for the 2nd Half Century

David Trubek, Chair, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Members: Rick Abel, University of California, Los Angeles, Tatiana Alfonso-Sierra, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Jeannine Bell, Indiana University, Annie Bunting, York University, Eve Darian-Smith, University of California, Santa Barbara, Laura Gómez, UCLA, Liora Israel, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Heinz Klug, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Greg Shaffer, University of California, Irvine, Louise Trubek, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Ex: Officio: Michael McCann, University of Washington, Susan Olson, Law and Society Association, Rebecca Sandefur, University of Illinois, Carroll Seron, University of California, Irvine

C: Activities

1) Meetings and organization.

The Committee met in June 2013 at the LSA annual meeting and in October 2013 at the University of Wisconsin where we were hosted by the UW-Madison Institute for Legal Studies. We selected five topics for detailed attention: the global scene, race and diversity, policy and social change, relations with other disciplines, and socio-legal education. We also decided to reach out to junior scholars for ideas through an essay competition.

2) Website

A major initiative was the creation of a special webpage for the project. Thanks to the efforts of Megan Crowley at the Executive Office, we built an interactive LSA 2nd Half Century Website. This site was a central part of our initiative. It served as a way for us to communicate with each other and the LSA membership and demonstrated the value of web-based services. We posted provocative essays on key topics and invited comments from roundtable participants and the
membership in general. These are all available on the Website. We also posted the 13 best essays by junior scholars. Many useful ideas were developed using this tool and it serves as a repository for our efforts. *One of the committee’s conclusions is that LSA needs to expand web-based service: our webpage is a pilot effort in that direction.*

3) **Junior Scholars Competition**

The Committee felt it was important to amplify the voice of junior scholars who are not adequately represented in LSA’s governance structure. To stimulate interest, we organized a competition for new ideas and innovations. 51 scholars from 21 countries submitted ideas. Authors of the six best essays were invited to present their ideas on a special panel and were given travel grants. Seven other papers were awarded honorable mention and all 13 papers were posted on the [Junior Scholars Webpage](#). These essays—and others that were not selected—provided many, many excellent ideas for the future of the Association.

4) **Roundtables and Final Topic Reports**

At the Minnesota meeting, we held six roundtables: one for each of the key topics and one for junior scholars. Full descriptions can be found on the [LSA 2nd Half Century Website](#). All were well attended and the discussion was very intense. There was a lot of support for many of the new initiatives mooted by the Committee. Following the Annual Meeting, Committee members wrote up the results of each topic discussion including suggestions for action that could be taken by the Association. The full reports are attached in an Appendix. Below, we summarize each report and list a few key recommendations in each area.

**D: Recommendations**

1) **Help build an inclusive global socio-legal field**

Socio-legal studies have spread around the world and LSA has served as a major hub for socio-legal networks that draw people from many countries. But existing networks tend to favor themes and ideas that originate in the North and primarily benefit scholars from the North. LSA should work with other organizations around the world to make the field more inclusive. Two measures could be taken:

   a) Promote regional meetings and associations: LSA should help strengthen national and regional associations especially in the Global South and foster more North-South exchange by holding joint “mini-meetings” in such areas. The project should start with meetings in Africa, South America, and South Asia.
   
   b) Build a comprehensive website that provides information about developments in the field world-wide. This would include information about institutions, events, publications, and would pay special attention to underserved regions.

2) **Promote diversity and expand research on race**

LSA has supported research on race and sought to make the field and the Association more diverse. But measures to date fall short of what is needed to make the Association truly
supportive both of race scholarship and of minority scholars. To fill that gap, the Association could:

a) Hold a mini-workshop or a series of panels on empirical methods for the study of race-related issues.
b) Create a special mentorship program for people of color aimed at scholars who are untenured, within five years of tenure, or new to the Association.
c) Feature scholars of color and their research on the LSA website.

3) Do more to link scholarship to policy and social change

LSA emerged at a moment when scholars believed that socio-legal scholarship could improve social policy and facilitate advocacy. While early enthusiasm dampened and critique of activism and engagement emerged, LSA still announces that its mission is Analyzing legal practice, envisioning social justice. To fully realize that mission, the Association could:

a) Bring policy makers and representatives of professional associations like the ABA to the meetings and encourage CRNs to add a policy dimension.
b) Have panels where researchers engaged in policy or social change work describe their work and careers and counsel graduate students who might wish to enter this track.
c) Maintain a methods café that links law trained people interested in policy and social change issues with social scientists who can help them design research.
d) Encourage translation of research for use by policy audiences and activists and maintain lists of scholars with relevant expertise.

4) Expand relations with other disciplines and related “law and” groups

We need to do more to increase visibility of socio-legal scholarship in other disciplines. The work of individual socio-legal scholars has been recognized in other disciplines in the human and social sciences (e.g. sociology, anthropology, and political science) as these fields take more of an interest in law as a social phenomenon. But the general work of the field and the great body of socio-legal literature has not been sufficiently recognized within those disciplines. At the same time socio-legal studies as a field has grown significantly and there are numerous “law and…” associations in operation whose work is not always well-coordinated. LSA should work closely with other “law and…” groups to better integrate the field and expand knowledge of socio-legal studies in other disciplines. The Association could:

a) Develop new mechanisms for diffusion of law and society scholarship outside the socio-legal studies community.
b) Highlight important work in other disciplines by organizing author-meets-reader sessions and panels on key texts in fields like sociology, anthropology, political science, economies, and the humanities.
c) Map relations between LSA and other “law and…” associations and hold joint workshops on topics of mutual interest.
5) Work with university-based groups to improve socio-legal education

LSA has always provided space for discussion of law and society teaching at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional school levels and worked with specialized associations like the Consortium of Undergraduate Law and Justice Programs (CULJP). These helped the growth of the field and some programs are flourishing. Recent developments, however, call for assessment of the educational infrastructure at least in North America. A general period of austerity in many universities and serious budgetary problems in many US law schools create concerns about the long term viability of some programs. On the other hand, the internationalization of graduate training in law and some disciplines could be very beneficial for the field. There is a need to assess these developments in collaboration with other groups. The Association could:

a) Work with CULJP to ensure continued health of undergraduate programs.
b) Support the development of a Consortium of Graduate Programs in Law and Society
c) Examine the combined impact of internationalization and austerity on law school support for socio-legal studies

6) Promote interdisciplinarity, expand the voice of junior scholars in LSA, provide more services for them, and make greater use of technology— proposals from the 51 Junior Scholars

The junior scholars provided a wealth of ideas; the best are set out in short essays posted on the Website. There was a lot of concern with measures that could facilitate participation by junior scholars, especially ways for them to participate virtually since many, and especially those from the Global South, cannot afford to attend the annual meetings. We grouped their suggestions in several major areas:

a) Promote interdisciplinarity by bringing more scholars from other disciplines as well as policy makers and activists to LSA meetings.
b) Enhance the voice of junior scholars in the Association by putting them on the Board, the Program Committee, and other committees.
c) Provide more services directly aimed at junior scholars including mentorships, workshops on how to get published, on-line repositories of key texts, and on-line courses and forums.
d) Make the Association more of a web-based institution so junior people can participate without attending costly meetings—that could include blogs, discussion forums, and new on-line publishing opportunities.

APPENDIX—TOPIC REPORTS
1) **Help build a Global Socio-Legal Field**

Greg Shaffer (University of California Irvine)
Eve Darian-Smith (University of California Santa Barbara)

The topic team formed a working group charged with thinking about envisioning a global sociolegal field. Primarily we were interested in hearing from scholars around the world about the state of their sociolegal communities and home institutions, and how they may expand the dialogic reach of their current research programs. The questions that focused our outreach efforts were:

- What are the possibilities for building transnational networks, affiliations and collaborations?
- What would a global sociolegal community look like?
- What are the major challenges and hurdles to overcome?
- In what ways would global networks of scholars be relevant to and speak to unique local and domestic issues?
- To what degree could these imagined networks be truly interdisciplinary and integrate humanistic and social science perspectives, or would they only work between scholars situated in law schools?
- Can and should LSA play a role in helping to facilitate this process that involves bottom-up engagement from and with networks and institutions in various regions?

**Process in advance of LSA Minneapolis meeting**

We did a large amount of outreach to colleagues and networks in advance of planning the roundtable at the LSA Minneapolis meeting. In making contacts and soliciting comments, we paid particular attention to particular regional differences that may exist for sociolegal scholars working in various geopolitical regions. These regions loosely correlated with scholarly communities in (i) Europe, Canada, Australia, NZ, (ii) Asia, (iii) Latin America, and (iv) Africa.

A variety of challenges and concerns were raised by the scholars we talked to, and overall we found that any existing networks were only partially successful. First, relatively few scholars working in western countries appear interested in the intellectual work being produced in non-western settings. Second, from the perspective of scholars working in the global south, there was a general sentiment that exchange when it did happen was rather lop-sided in that the theoretical frameworks being discussed were primarily issuing out of the “north”. In short, there was not a balanced exchange of ideas. Not only did this often come across as disrespectful but it belies a central aspect of law and society theory building which demands the need for situated social theory.

Overall, the general view was that scholarly exchange so far had tended to benefit scholars from wealthy industrialized nations more than it did those from developing nations with less resources.
and institutional support. This was most evident in the fact that scholars from the global south could rarely participate in international meetings given that they are commonly held in western countries and the costs of traveling to these meetings is prohibitively high.

Despite these limited successes, in our outreach efforts we discovered that scholars in the global south working in and on Africa, Asia, and Latin America were overwhelmingly eager to enhance future networks on the basis of a genuine desire for two-way flow between north-south ideas, theories, and scholars.

**Event at the LSA Minneapolis meeting**

On the basis of the widespread enthusiasm we had encountered in our outreach efforts, we proceeded to put together a roundtable panel as part of the 50th Anniversary events organized for the LSA Minneapolis meeting. This roundtable deliberately included mid-career scholars from a range of institutions across the global south and global north. We strove hard to provide a flexible intellectual forum to encourage perspectives and productive thought on how best to proceed to help nurture and facilitate genuine intellectual exchange and scholarly productivity. Here is the roundtable description and participants:

**Roundtable: Envisioning a Global Socio-Legal Field: Networks, Institutions, Initiatives, Prospects**

This roundtable's focus is two-fold. First, it will discuss developments, successes, and challenges in developing a socio-legal field in various countries and regions. Second, it will discuss how LSA might be more useful in helping to catalyze and support regional socio-legal institutions and networks as part of a broader socio-legal field, whether through its website, the annual meeting, regional meetings, or otherwise.

**Chair**
*Gregory Shaffer*, University of Minnesota Law School

**Discussant**
*Eve Darian-Smith*, University of California Santa Barbara

**Participant(s)**
*Karina Ansolebehere*, FLACSO México
*Lynette Chua*, National University of Singapore
*James Gathii*, Loyola University Chicago School of Law
*Cesar Rodriguez-Garavito*, Universidad de los los Andes
*Anthoine Vauchez*, Université Paris I
*Dee Smythe*, University of Capetown Centre for Law and Society
*Sida Liu*, University of Wisconsin

*Pratiksha Baxi* (Center for the Study of Law and Governance, India); *Weidong Ji* (Shanghai Jiao Tong University); and *Veronica Taylor* (Australia National University) had initially accepted and wish to be connected with any resulting network, but could not attend.

**Summary of the roundtable**
The roundtable was held on Friday Morning (10:15 am - 12:00 pm) on May 30, 2014. It was very well attended, with approximately 80-100 members in the audience. A good many of those attending were international scholars and American scholars whose work is already identified with issues pertaining to international, transnational, global north-south relations.

The panelists each spoke for approximately 5 minutes in their capacities as representatives of regional scholarship in two rounds, first on developments in their region, and second on the idea of expanding global socio-legal networks and how LSA might be useful in such process. Each outlined current developments in their regions, as well as existing networks and their relative successes and limitations. Each panelist also narrated what they thought were the central challenges in advancing further collaboration and exchange of ideas, be this within regions such as Africa, or between regions such as Africa and Latin America.

After all panelists had been given the opportunity to speak we opened up discussion to the floor. What ensued was an extremely lively and passionate conversation among audience members about how to move forward in building global scholarly networks. There was much conversation about the financial inability of scholars from the global south to participate in meetings overseas, reinforcing again what we had discovered in our initial outreach efforts. There was also some ambivalence about the role of the LSA in helping these efforts. However, after general reflection it was conceded by many that if the LSA did not play a role there would be limited capacities to further develop global scholarly networks.

We circulated a sign-up sheet for audience members to add their names if interested in continuing our conversations. Everyone seemed to sign up. All in all it was a very exciting event and at its conclusion many people continued their conversations in the corridor outside. We met with many of the committee after lunch to discuss potential next steps. Throughout the rest of the Minneapolis meeting, people came up to us and expressed how pleased they were that LSA was making a real effort to build a more inclusive intellectual environment.

**Moving forward**

We believe that LSA could play a greater role in helping to facilitate the building of inclusive, non-hierarchic, socio-legal networks across regions that involves bottom-up engagement from and with networks and institutions in the regions. We think that LSA could play two particular roles that can complement each other: through helping with specialized socio-legal meetings coordinated with a local institution outside of the US that could take place periodically every couple of years, and through an enhanced website presence.

First, LSA could play a role in helping with regional meetings, perhaps on a biennial basis, that are hosted and developed by and with national and regional law and society institutions and networks. We identified three key regions where this could start: Africa, South America, and South Asia.

We discussed with Dee Smythe, Director of the Centre for Law and Society at the University of Cape Town, the possibility of the Centre hosting and helping to organize the first event, perhaps
in late 2015 or early 2016. She responded that she would like the Centre to work with LSA in the development of this first conference which the Centre could host. We have followed up and hope to have a proposal for consideration by the Association ready this fall. We imagine that a joint committee composed of LSA and Centre/regional representatives would be formed to coordinate the conference.

After this conference, LSA could evaluate its success and decide whether a second regional conference could be organized with LSA’s support in another region, say two years later. Our hope would be that the first meeting would not be a one-off event, but could be institutionalized as something that occurs every couple of years or so. We believe this could be institutionalized within LSA provided that key people are placed in the appropriate committee, whether part of the International Activities Committee or otherwise.

We do not think that funding would be a major issue for the periodic events in the regions since we believe that external funding could be raised for each of them, possibly building from some LSA seed money which would provide leverage for fund raising and grant writing. A proposed seed fund of $20,000 from LSA would go a long way to launch this endeavor and could stimulate gifts by LSA members who support global networks and outreach to the Global South.

Second, we wonder if LSA could have a place on its website that would note institutions, events, and developments taking place in the socio-legal field globally, including calls for papers, such as for this first event. Over time, the website could become a more dynamic presence, perhaps containing substantive content regarding what took place at the regional meeting, for example. The key question of course is resources. LSA would have to address whether it has the capacity to develop the website further, although we hope that simply listing events should not be a major burden.

In terms of the benefit for LSA of a small investment in these two initiatives, we think that they could help LSA in the development of its membership, since an increase in international membership could arguably be key for LSA’s future. Perhaps just as importantly, such an effort would also underscore LSA’s ethical commitment to nurturing sociolegal scholarship around the world in places and institutions that do not have the same resources as those in North America.

2) Promote diversity and expand research on race

Jeannine Bell and Dave Trubek

LSA has held itself out as having expertise on race issue: but how deep and effective is this research? In 2003, the Law and Society Association signed on to the American Sociological Association’s brief in Grutter v. Bollinger, the Michigan affirmative action case. In the brief, LSA claimed “expertise” in research and discussing race.” (Obasagie, 2007) Yet some scholars have questioned the extent to which LSA scholarship on race has been sufficient. (Gomez, 2012; Obasagie, 2007).

What about the issue of discussions of race within LSA itself? There is some anecdotal evidence that some individuals involved in the organization discussed racial diversity. For the past 30
years, LSA has used formal and informal mechanisms in an attempt to increase the diversity of its membership. Such mechanisms include: multi-year attempt to increase the representation of people of color throughout the Association’s committee structure; multi-year attempts to increase the representation of people of color in the organization’s governing structures, as officers and trustees; attempts to count the number of people of color who are members; the creation of a diversity committee; and the publication of an issue on race by the Law and Society featuring the scholarship of several scholars of color.

Despite these efforts, scholars of color have not achieved full integration throughout Association activities and scholarship on race issues has not achieved the prominence it deserves. To compare increasing racial diversity to another area in which concerted efforts for change has been sought—internationalization—efforts at increasing U.S. based racial diversity have not been especially successful. One conference every five years is generally held outside the United States; currently approximately twenty-five percent of the LSA members come from outside the U.S. While the precise number of members of the association who are persons of color is not known, it is clear that the highest ranks of the Association remain largely white. In the Association’s history, just one person of color has served as Association President. Fewer than five scholars of color have served as officers. Few scholars of color have chaired the Association’s most prestigious committees and won its most valuable prizes.

Over the years, several LSA members who care about increasing the number of non-whites in the Associations have mourned those individuals of color who have come, spent a little time in the association and moved on. The root causes of this have not been examined, and it is not clear whether scholars of color experience with LSA differs from that in other disciplinary associations. In some ways, the paucity of integration is unsurprising. For in LSA, with respect to the coin of the realm, research and the accolades associated with research, the contributions of people of color have not been overlooked. The Association does not expend enough effort to encourage this type of work. For instance, there is little LSA sponsored collaboration across racial lines. For instance, there is just one, fairly recently created Collaborative Research Network CRN devoted to race [CRN 12 Critical Research on Race and the Law]. Finally, interaction at the Annual Meeting functions largely like the rest of American society, less integration of panels, discussions, and social events than one might wish for given 30 years of attempts to bring people of color closer to the center of the organization.

Challenges

The measures taken by the Association over the past 30 years suggest that members of the Association have a commitment to full integration of people of color and to promote more attention to research on racial issues. So what is to be done? LSA has spent the last 30 years picking the low hanging fruit with respect to diversification. There are several challenges that require courage and thinking outside of the box.

1. **Increasing the numbers.** The paucity of scholars of color who come into the association, become members and stay increases the difficulty of moving beyond the most basic steps to achieve fuller integration of scholars of color.
2. **Resisting our Inclination toward business as usual.** American society in general is racially segregated. As a result, in American academic settings inclusion is rarely second nature. We tend to choose people with whom we might normally associate for research collaborators, panel chairs, committees, etc.

**The Roundtable:**

*Chair* Jeannine Bell, Indiana University Maurer School of Law — Bloomington; *Discussant* David Trubek, University of Wisconsin, Madison

**Participants:** Kaaryn Gustafson, UConn School of Law, Osagie Obasogie, University of California Hastings, John Park, UC Santa Barbara, David Wilkins, Harvard Law School, Program on the Legal Profession, Nicole Martorano Van Cleve, Temple University

**Looking ahead: Concrete Proposals**

Can we better integrate scholars of color in all Association activities and increase the visibility of sociolegal scholarship on race? Here are some ideas:

One overriding suggestion made in the panel was that LSA support scholars of color who are currently part of the organization in a variety of ways that recognizes who they are as scholars and supports what they are doing.

Here are three categories in which this might be done.

1. **Mini workshop on empirical methods.** One concrete way of doing this would be by creating a workshop focused on how to study race using empirical methods. Several scholars of color involved in the association have joined the eCRT (empirical methods and Critical Race Theory) movement. In fact, this is the subject of LSA’s only CRN on race. Often these are law professors (and not joint JD PhDs) who lack knowledge of basic social science methods. Law and Society could support this particular group of scholars by having a mini workshop on empirical methods before or after the meeting. There are easier ways to do this than a full-fledged workshop -- a series of panels targeted at scholars who do work on race or other types of introductions to social science methodology might also fit the bill.

2. **Mentorship.** It was noted that scholars of color, particularly if they are legal scholars may not have the same opportunities for mentorship as scholars who come from PhD programs. It was suggested that institutionalizing mentorship beyond that for the most junior scholars might be helpful. One speaker emphasized that scholars of color made need mentorship in the association even if they have tenure. It was also suggested that law and society encourage cross racial collaboration. It might be particularly useful for the Association to sponsor special mentorship program aimed at scholars of color who are 1) untenured; 2) within 5 years of tenure; 3) new the
Association and still relatively junior. Mentors could be recruited from past (or present) Trustee rolls. To get mentees, the program should be advertised, and the LSA Diversity committee should do matching.

3. Website and other links. Law and Society's web presence does not currently suggest a presence by law and society scholars of color. The web presence of the scholars in the Association can and should be increased with photos, interviews, links to scholars of colors articles, etc.

To increase the representations of scholars of color, we suggest the following: 1) the Association should make a general effort to pay more attention to scholars of color regardless of the topic they work on. This effort should continue for several years; and 2) there should be a targeted effort on the website to highlight research on race relevant to the law and society audience. While all research on race relevant to law and society scholars should be mentioned, special care should be taken not to avoid the research on race done by scholars of color. This could be accomplished with special report approximately every three years.

3) Link Scholarship to Policy and Social Change

Louise Trubek and Richard Abel

1) Background

History and Critique Law and society research emerged at a moment when social activism and post-war prosperity coincided to foster hope for progressive social change. The founders of the Law and Society Association believed that socio-legal scholarship could improve social policy and facilitate advocacy. They hoped to build linkages between scholars, policy makers and advocates. Since then skepticism about the efficacy of law (especially judicial decisions), criticism of “regnant” lawyering, and disillusion with liberal legalism combined to dampen the earlier optimism. Instead of seeking how to make law more effective, researchers exposed law’s perverse consequences (e.g., racial disparities in criminal justice, harsh punishment, no-fault divorce, homophobia, immigration control, criminalizing drugs, limiting abortion, “ending” welfare, deregulation). Critics warned of the dangers of policy-relevant research. Abel argued that “gap” studies privileged law’s normative choices over others and took for granted that law could, and should, produce clearly defined behavioral consequences. Sarat and Silbey in an often quoted article cautioned against allowing the “policy audience” to prescribe the research agenda for law and society. And some progressives questioned the value of research altogether because it could delegitimize efforts to reduce inequality.

Challenges Yet the commitment to making research relevant to social change appears on the LSA website today, which describes the mission as Analyzing legal practice, envisioning social justice. So what is to be done? There are seven challenges:
1. **State dominance**: Because policy-relevant research tends to privilege state actors, post-modernists may avoid it. But the revival of interest in civil society has shown that non-state actors are often more important to the advancement of policy goals. Rather than jettisoning policy studies, socio-legal scholars should examine the role of non-state actors in shaping and pursuing policy goals.

2. **Tunnel vision**: An uncritical concern for policy relevance can narrow our focus to the achievement or frustration of the goals of state actors. But law can have much broader ramifications: shaping consciousness, empowering or disempowering individuals and groups, legitimating or delegitimizing.

3. **Politics as well as policy**: We need to understand the politics of why policies succeed or fail.

4. **False neutrality**: Avowals of policy relevance can let researchers to hide behind the normative preferences of state actors, presenting a façade of value neutrality. Researchers should have the courage of their convictions. Unlike lawyers, they cannot claim to be hired guns. Researchers’ explicit acknowledgement of their own moral positions allows others to challenge their premises and conclusions.

5. **Parochialism**: Policy studies often focus too narrowly on actions in one polity. But other nations embrace different goals and use different means to pursue them. In order to avoid parochialism, policy-relevant research should be more comparative.

6. **Narrowed perspective**: Researchers may eschew policy studies as overly cautious, meliorist, short-term. But there is a role in policy studies for utopianism, the articulation of hopes not immediately realizable. Policy relevant research should imagine alternative futures and how they might be prefigured. It should explore contradictions within dominant structures, which offer opportunities for counter-hegemonic action. Campaigns for social change should plan for decades (cf. NAACP).

7. **The pull of quantitative methods**: Because policy makers tend to have fixed, narrowly conceived agendas, they prefer positivist methodologies, which purport to provide unambiguous advice about how to advance the state’s objectives. But there are many ways to do research, ranging from big data to interpretation and community-based studies. Interpretive methods can offer a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of social action.

**Looking ahead: Concrete Proposals**

At the LSA meeting we convened a panel to discuss how LSA might facilitate linking scholarship to policy and social change. Louise Trubek chaired and Rick Abel was the discussant. The panelists were Fabio de Sa e Silva, Steve Meili, Rebecca Sandefur, Thomas Hilbink and Shauhin Talesh. Forty people attended the panel, which produced a lively discussion with the audience and among the panelists. Immediately following the panel, the organizers wrote up a preliminary set of recommendations based on the panel presentations and audience participation. These recommendations were sent to the program committee for their use in developing the 2015 meeting initiatives. We have further refined these proposals.

1. Bring policy makers into the Law and Society process. This could include participating on panels at the annual meeting and serving on CRNs. Another approach would encourage scholars to use the technology platforms such as blogs sponsored by policy organizations.
2. Be more involved with other professional associations by including them in LSA meetings. Examples would be the American Bar Association, the American Medical Association, and policy studies associations.

3. Set up programs at LSA where people with sociolegal backgrounds who now do policy or social change work talk about those careers as potential jobs for current graduate students. These programs would encourage students to understand the important options outside the academy.

4. Strengthen the CRNs as vehicles for policy interactions in a variety of ways. They also can be a basis for technology expansion.

5. Keep some form of the methods cafe at the LSA meeting. The café is a way to link law trained people with the more traditional social science scholars. The clinical law teachers have the Bellows program, where they learn empirical methods in the clinical meeting. Perhaps LSA can link with that program. This raises questions about relations between LSA and Empirical Legal Studies.

6. Continue to provide programming to translate scholarship to different audiences. Life of the law is one good example from this year's program.

7. LSA should maintain a list of members with expertise relevant to media, NGOs etc. The LSA could publicize the availability of the list on the website and other social media.

4) Expand relations with other disciplines and related “law and” groups

Liora Israël and Heinz Klug

We were both happy and honored to have participated in the 50th Anniversary committee and look forward to the results of this process. Concerning our own subcommittee, we would like to report on three aspects of the sub-committee’s work: our objectives; what we learned during the panel and related discussions; and, what objectives we suggest may be pursued in the future.

What were our objectives?

The core of our reflections concerned the relations between law and society -- as an institution and a body of scholarship -- with related disciplines in the human and social sciences. In exploring the subject, in order to write our provocation for the Annual Meeting Panel, we were surprised by the relative isolation of the LSA in terms of the visibility of its research contributions, despite the individual success of its members (as evidenced by their publications in the major journals of various disciplines – sociology, anthropology, law). Indeed, our reflections led us to put forward three provocations: the need to construct a clear disciplinary map of the LSA movement; the need to measure the impact of our scholarship within and in relation to other disciplines; and also, the need to more closely reflect on what it means, or does
not mean, to study law in particular (law being at the same time a knowledge, a discipline, and a practice).

The roundtable

Chair: Liora Israël, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris; Discussant Heinz Klug, University of Wisconsin Law

Participants Mauricio Garcia Villegas, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Sora Han, UC Irvine, Hendrik Hartog, Princeton University Ajay Mehrotra, Indiana University Maurer School of Law, Susan Silbey, MIT -

What did we learn during the panel and related discussions?

We were pleasantly surprised first by the interest manifested by the colleagues we contacted, and then by the content of their remarks and interventions (most of them are on the website). While they were the first ones to post messages, which led to an interesting engagement between most of those recruited to service on the panel at the Annual Meeting, the depth and engagement of their interventions may have intimidated other potential respondents. Sora Han was the sole participant who did not post on the website.

Sora Han, who began the panel, noted that nearly all disciplines are now turning to law and legal artifacts, and while law is only one form of social production this turn may be explained by the fact that law is always striated by power relations and so it becomes nearly impossible to explore the world without referencing the law. Mauricio Garcia Villegas, who unfortunately could not make it to the meeting because of his involvement in the peace process in Columbia, called for a new field named socio-political legal studies that he felt would be able to bring the success of LSA into a broader engagement with the social sciences – in a Durkheimian way. He was particularly concerned that the LSA is theoretically parochial and felt that it would benefit from being engaged in more global discussion. He pointed to the fact that the current debate about cosmopolitanism has very little echo in socio-legal scholarship in the United States.

In his contribution Dirk Hartog noted as an historian how much things have changed, from a time when the law schools were hostile to any challenges to the technical competence of law and when the social sciences were equally hostile to law which was seen as being merely technical and part of what was termed the superstructure and not the structure of society and therefore not worthy of study. He went on to contrast a time when there was a series of argument about whether law is important to today when there is no need to justify the study of law. Ajay Mehrotra noted in response how the study of law has infiltrated a whole bunch of disciplines and how the lens has been inverted, most dramatically in the field of law and economics where neoclassical economics has had a profound and enduring impact on law making and practice. He proceeded by asking if law is distinctive how can we highlight socio-legal studies rather than have law and society scholarship serve merely as a foil to an economic analysis of law. Finally, Susan Silbey raised the question whether the legal field is somehow different from other fields, even other professional fields such as medicine in that with the legal field lawyers both practice and study the law and lawyering while in the medical field the practitioners are rarely students of
the field, instead they focus on the practice of medicine and leave it to others in the social sciences to study the field. Law she argued is also different in that it has a close association with the state and the state itself has an agency in law. In this sense the juridical field is distinct.

Despite this rather theoretical focus, the panel was very successful and was well received by a fairly large audience. The interventions of the participants were rich and diverse. A common trend among the presentations was to stress the growing importance of law as a subject in the human and social sciences (including history cf. Dirk Hartog). Nevertheless, it was also acknowledged that this does not mean that the scholarship of the Law and Society movement is widely known. This point had been made earlier by Susan Silbey in a paper (“What makes a social science of law? Doubling the social in socio-legal studies”) that was very important to our own reflections on the issues. In addition several propositions were put forward to define or redefine relations between the disciplines within the law and society movement. Sora Han insisted on a greater focus and deployment of the humanities, notably to pay attention to the poetics of law. Mauricio Garcia Villegas called for a new field name socio-political legal studies that he felt would be able to encapsulate the success of LSA into a broader perspective of social sciences. Finally, Ajay Mehrotra suggested that the critical tension with Law and Economics may have led members of LSA to underestimate the economic dimension within our field. All of the participants, however, acknowledge the importance on the idea of trying to work toward a better diffusion of LSA scholarship and achievements.

**What objectives might we pursue going forward?**

As was already mentioned at the end of our provocation, more has to be done to strengthen the links and to develop discussions with other non-LSA researchers within the humanities and social science disciplines. To do so, we suggest a few ideas:

-- to organize a few author meets readers sessions at the Annual Meeting devoted to books from non-LSA scholars in the disciplines, providing the opportunity to open a discussion with sociologists, anthropologists, historians, economists whose work appears of interest to LSA scholars but who do not see themselves as part of LSA;

-- develop joint workshops with other networks (professional associations or networks of professional associations, eventually through the sociology of law network of ASA and ISA, or the Law and Courts network of APSA or ECPR in those conferences etc…)

-- develop a greater sense and knowledge within LSA of what has been done and what is being done in the different fields, in terms of epistemologies and scholarly product.

In addition, the five propositions we originally have made in our provocation remain relevant:

- Launch a CRN to address the epistemological questions raised by Law and Society scholarship;
- Call for a mapping of the relations between LSA and other professional organizations in law and social science, including: law, sociology, anthropology, political science etc. The current reflection might be too much oriented toward the audience of law schools, leading to neglect to maintain a high level of discussions and exchanges with human and social sciences discipline. LSA should not turn into empirical legal studies solely.
• Call for the funding and creation of an archive related to the history of LSA, including a linkage to the data bases of annual meetings;
• Call for the development of a network with other “law and . . .” organizations to reflect on their relation to law and to each other;
• Call for the establishment of new mechanisms to support the diffusion and discussion of law and society scholarship outside the socio-legal community. The blog “Life of the Law” might be an interesting instrument to do so, but the socio-political sphere should also be approached (and maybe not only at the national level, but through NGOs and/or transnational organizations).

5) Improve socio-legal education

Annie Bunting and Laura Gómez

Background

Since its inception, the Law & Society Association has provided a space for exchange of ideas about law and society teaching. The LSA has attracted scholars from a wide variety of disciplines but also from a wide variety of institutions and programs. Some law and society faculty teach in elite law schools, others in small liberal arts colleges (without either a law school or a socio-legal degree program) and others in departments with justice studies or law and society programs. Graduate students are also trained in a wide variety of programs but few doctoral students are trained explicitly in law and society.

Recently, in North America, the terrain of university funding and enrolments has been shifting: we are in an era of contracting resources in higher education generally, and a multi-year running drop in applicants to U.S. law schools, in particular. There are widespread calls to shift the metrics of productivity and success in the educational context more broadly. While there is much talk of interdisciplinarity and internationalization at universities, the resources are not necessarily matching the rhetoric. What does this mean for law and society programs and courses? And how should the Association respond to the changes in higher education and challenges for law and society teaching?

Challenges:

(i) Institutional health of law and society programs and teaching: There is a sense of concern amongst LSA members about the health and sustainability of undergraduate legal studies programs. The Consortium of Undergraduate Law and Justice Programs (CULJP) was formed in 2003 and is separate from but related to LSA – a “sister organization” which normally meets the day before LSA’s annual conferences. CULJP serves as a clearinghouse for program development, job opportunities, and curricular innovations for their members (44 programs) and the general public. CULJP has been discussing the issue of institutional health amongst their members. CULJP also recently strengthened its ties with LSA under the presidency of Michael McCann. The LSA Undergraduate Program subcommittee surveyed the CULJP members and found that “steady state to growth rather than retrenchment best describes undergraduate programs in socio-legal studies”; this contradicts to some extent the anxieties produced by the
UC Santa Barbara and NYU program closures and pressures on other programs across North America. There is certainly growth in criminal justice programs and growth north of the border with new PhD programs and law and society programs.

But what are we to make of coincidental program closures and lack of institutional support for law and society programs and teaching? What are the opportunities for collaborative teaching and curriculum developments? What are the innovations in pedagogy in our field? How are these ideas transferred and shared amongst law and society faculty? What role could the Association play in supporting program and curricular development?

(ii) Internationalization: There has always been a healthy number of international graduate students doing law and society research in North American programs. There has been an expansion of graduate programs in law schools over the past 15 years, as well as a growth in the number of international law students in LL.M. programs. Further, there is now increasing competition between schools for those international students. What is the impact of the participation of international students on both legal education and American law students? What impact, if any, is the migration of lawyers from non-Anglo-American traditions having on the curriculum and experience in law schools? Is there any evidence of diversification and internationalization? Does the expansion of LL.M. programs have any implications for resources for interdisciplinary approaches to law and society teaching within the same universities?

When you then consider PhD programs in the field, the picture becomes more complex, with diverse programs in and outside law schools. (See the LSA Subcommittee on Graduate Programs report). We do not have statistics on the proportion of PhD class made up of foreign students but anecdotally there is a small proportion of international PhD students in North America. This number is likely growing, though not at the pace of foreign trained LL.Ms.

(iii) Graduate Education: The LSA Graduate Programs Subcommittee found that the joint JD/PhD programs are the most prevalent and oldest graduate programs producing law and society faculty in the United States. It is not clear, however, the authors state, that law and society scholarship is being taught, fostered and produced in the joint programs. There is a persistent risk of silos between law and other disciplines in joint degrees. The quality of law and society training seems to come down to individual supervisors and other intellectual communities available to socio-legal graduate students. When coupled with the recommendation from the subcommittee that graduate education needs to diversify, the question of program development, mentorship and the role of the LSA is crucial. How do we support and train the next generation of scholars? Where can interested graduate students look for law and society programs and opportunities?

Suggestions

In 2011-12, the then President of the Association, Michael McCann, struck two committees to examine challenges in education in law and society including program development and sustainability, curriculum development, and graduate training. The first was the “Undergraduate Program Committee” (chaired by Marjorie S. Zatz) and the second was the “Subcommittee on Graduate Programs” (chaired by Calvin Morrill); both committees reported to the LSA Executive
in April 2012 and organized panels at the 2012 and 2013 LSA annual meetings. The LSA ought to continue to work closely with CULJP and ought to support a consortium of graduate programs in law and society. Further, the LSA should try to provide more opportunities for exchange of ideas about curriculum and innovative teaching in our field.

The roundtable

Chair: annie bunting, York University

Participants Scott Barclay, UCLA School of Law Jon Gould, American University, Carole Silver, Northwestern University Law School, Margot Young, University of British Columbia - Marjorie Zatz, Arizona State University, Laura Gomez, UCLA - Contact M

6) Promote interdisciplinarity, expand, services for junior scholars, make greater use of technology: proposals by Junior Scholars:

Tatiana Alfonso-Sierra

This report summarizes the process and conclusions of the junior scholar’s roundtable at the Law and Society Association Annual Meeting in 2014. The first section presents a brief of the initiative, and the basic developments of it during the roundtable. The second part presents the consolidated list of initiatives that junior scholars think the LSA should pursue in its 2nd Half Century.

1. The Junior Scholars Roundtable

The Law and Society 2nd Half Century Project agreed to do a competition for junior scholars, including assistant professors, post-docs, and graduate students. The competition would serve both as an incentive for the involvement of junior scholars in the debates about the future of the Law and Society Association, and as a source of proposals of innovations that the LSA should consider in the future.

The Junior Scholars Competition was launched on December 2013 through the website of the LSA. The announcement of the competition was sent to the mailing lists of the association and advertised through other mailing lists of academic and professional associations. There were 51 eligible submissions from 21 countries including the U.S.; of the 51 essays, 19 were from U.S. citizens and 32 from citizens of other countries. The majority of the authors were PhD students and a small number of LLM and JSD students from US law schools.
26 out of the 51 essays were preselected for a second reading, and 13 essays were selected as finalists. The selection process was based on i) depth of knowledge of LSA and its history; ii) originality of the ideas presented; and iii) quality of the essay. The authors of the six selected essays were invited to participate in a roundtable at the annual meeting; other seven essays were selected for honorable mention. The essays were posted on the website of the 2nd Half Century Project in February 2014. Participants in the Roundtable included Louise Trubek, University of Wisconsin (Chair), Angela Duger, FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard School of Public Health, Ayako Hirata, the University of Tokyo, Karen Levy, Princeton University, Mark Fathi Massoud, University of California, Santa Cruz, Udi Sommer, Tel Aviv University, Tara Weinberg, Centre for Law & Society, University of Cape Town.

The ideas and proposals in the 51 papers submitted to the competition were summarized in a report of initiatives and it was sent to all the participants of the roundtable. In the roundtable, participants presented their ideas about possible and necessary innovations that the LSA could pursue.

The roundtable was very well attended and the presentations triggered several debates and questions in the audience. In addition to the proposals that were already in the essays, there were three main discussions that ended in specific new proposals and initiatives.

The first of those discussions addressed the issue of law and society as an interdisciplinary field and the advantages and challenges that such character poses. The main concern raised in this discussion was that given the broad scope of the law and society field, there is a multiplicity of theoretical approaches and methodologies that may result in parallel academic conversations or lack of rigor. As a form to face those challenges, the audience and presenters discussed the importance and desirability of creating filters in the acceptance process for the annual meeting, i.e. selection based on papers and not on abstracts. The conclusion of the discussion was that those filters are not desirable for an interdisciplinary field and for an association that offers a non-disciplinary space, which is particularly important for junior scholars developing their own research agendas.

The second topic of discussion during the roundtable was the role that LSA may play for developing the academic and professional career of junior scholars. There was a particular emphasis on the necessity to promote forms of collaboration between junior scholars and well-established academics in the field. There were two specific proposals in this regard: 1) strengthening CRNs; and 2) promoting mentoring programs such as the graduate student workshop.

The third topic of discussion was the use of technology. There was a general consensus about the role of technology at strengthening the role of the association in promoting academic exchange and the construction of academic communities. There was a special emphasis on how technology is useful to connect people in different parts of the world and therefore it is a key tool for the internationalization and globalization of the association. Technology was also regarded as an essential factor for continuing conversations among scholars that meet at annual meetings. Moreover, there was a strong support for using technology to promote new formats to communicate research, i.e. visual formats, online publishing venues, online forums, and some
other formats that allow junior scholars to divulge their work and advance their research agendas.

2. Final List of Initiatives

This is the consolidated list of initiatives that were presented and discussed. It emphasized the three aspects that proved to be common concerns among junior scholars about the role of the LSA in their academic careers: 1) Interdisciplinarity, academic identity and professional development; 2) Junior scholars and LSA services; 3) The use of technology.

This list includes proposals and ideas in the 51 essays submitted to the competition as well as the ideas that emerged during the roundtable.

1) **Interdisciplinarity, academic identity and professional development**

   a) Keep the application and acceptance of papers as an unfiltered process
   
   b) Foster cross-disciplinary encounters: require panels to have more than one discipline; facilitate comments on papers from other disciplines
   
   c) Invite scholars from other disciplines (whose history has been a part of the L&S movement) to special roundtables and panels at the Annual Meeting
   
   d) Offer workshops, roundtables at the Annual Meeting, and debates to gather policy makers, civil society groups, practitioners and academics

2) **Junior Scholars and LSA services**

   a) Facilitate participation of graduate students and young scholars on the board and the committees including the annual Program Committee
   
   b) Establish a Senior-Junior on-line mentorship program in a special platform on the website
   
   c) Develop a program of incentives for young scholars: essay contest for junior scholars; travel grants to attend meetings and workshops
   
   d) Organize workshops on how to get published
   
   e) Send follow-up messages to first-time attendees of the Annual Meeting
   
   f) Create a database of seminal texts of socio-legal studies
   
   g) Establish a repository of syllabi and workshops on how to teach socio-legal studies
   
   h) Offer on-line courses in socio-legal studies for U.S.-based and international audiences (i.e. senior scholars may offer courses for the world in their area of expertise using on-line platforms)
   
   i) Create on-line forums, discussion boards, and forums in specific socio-legal topics through CRNs
   
   j) Create additional journals using open access systems
   
   k) Offer periodic workshops on methodology, trending topics, and areas of research underrepresented in socio-legal studies

3) **Technology**
a) Create new venues for publishing and divulging research: visual formats, online publishing venues, online forums, blogs on policy issues, open source site with commentaries on impact of laws, cause-lawyering and cause-research, defense of rights
b) Develop more internet-based services: blogs, discussion forums, on-line networks, database of seminal texts
c) Facilitate more rapid communication among members
d) Create networks and spaces of communication between scholars, practitioners and civil society using web-based services
e) Stronger social media presence: Facebook, twitter, Pinterest