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FROM THE EDITORS

With the publication of this issue, *PoLAR* leaves the capable hands of past editors Bill Maurer and Sally Merry and comes to us at Wesleyan University and California State University, Los Angeles. Bill and Sally did a remarkable job as editors, turning *PoLAR* into a sophisticated journal publishing top-notch, innovative work in legal and political anthropology. Substantively, they developed themed issues on cutting edge topics, created new sections, and, generally, expanded on the admirable efforts of Rebecca French who, as the first editor, established *PoLAR* as the premier journal of our subfield. Not the least of Bill and Sally's accomplishments was *PoLAR*'s visual transformation (we love the bright green cover!). In assuming the editorship, we intend to build on their superb efforts.

This issue of *PoLAR* reflects the transition in editorship. In addition to newly-acquired work, we are publishing some pieces that were submitted to or solicited by the previous editors. One of our innovations to *PoLAR* is a move from themed issues to a more wide-ranging publication that includes a symposium on a specific theme along with several other articles. In this issue the symposium, called "Citizenship and its Alterities," engages critical questions of national policies, immigration processes, and political struggles around identity. Publishing symposia (drawn from conference presentations and/or submissions) along with related pieces (e.g., commentaries, transcribed interviews, syllabi) will allow *PoLAR* to present significant statements about current theoretical and topical concerns. Each issue of *PoLAR* will also include scholarly contributions reflecting the broad interests of our subfield. For example, in this issue we include the 1998 APLA Distinguished Lecture, articles by several scholars, a methodological discussion, grant proposals, a syllabus, book reviews, and, for the first time, a prize-winning dissertation abstract.

When juxtaposed to the standard academic article, *PoLAR*'s grant proposals, course syllabi, and transcriptions of interviews, lectures, and conference comments, among other discursive forms, reflect the linguistic range of anthropologists' academic productions. As another of our editorial innovations, we intend to feature at least one transcription of spoken words in every issue. In so doing we mean not only to present a wider cross-section of the diverse contributions that we all make to the general project of political and legal anthropology, but also to foster recognition for language not normally "heard" as publishable academic contributions. This language might include transcriptions of interviews, conversations, classroom lectures, or question and answer periods. By publishing transcribed versions of speech, as well as reflections on the process of transcription, we direct attention to the ways that anthropologists produce, interpret, and value the language in which we communicate our ideas. By questioning divisions between oral and written in academic work, we encourage a broader view of what counts as productive exchanges among ourselves, as scholars, and with others outside of the academy.

Since its inception, *PoLAR* has been growing—in length, in number of submissions, and in the recognition it receives from readers. This growth is a positive sign for political and legal anthropology, and for APLA. Yet, by growing, *PoLAR* risks moving away from one of its original goals of publishing works in progress "quickly so that authors may float untested ideas and receive feedback from colleagues" ("From the Editors," *PoLAR* 20(1):v). Given the increase in submissions, the review process is now longer and perhaps more competitive. Yet, as editors, we remain committed to publish exciting new scholarship in a timely manner. We

particularly encourage submissions from junior scholars and graduate students.

Please send articles, syllabi, announcements, methodological essays, successful grant proposals and any other submissions to Susan F. Hirsch; Department of Anthropology; Wesleyan University; Middletown, CT 06459. We both welcome your questions, comments, and ideas at the above address or directed to Susan Coutin; Department of Criminal Justice; California State University, Los Angeles; Los Angeles, CA 90032-8163. We can also be reached through email at shirsch@wesleyan.edu and scoutin2@calstatela.edu. Your contributions are key to enhancing *PoLAR*'s role as a scholarly forum for political and legal anthropology. We are grateful to Bill Maurer, Sally Merry, the *PoLAR* Editorial Board, anonymous reviewers, and Sepideh Bajracharya, our Editorial Assistant at Wesleyan, for their invaluable assistance to us on this issue.

Susan Hirsch and Susan Coutin