Editor’s Message: 
*Hispania* Begins its Second Hundred Years

Sheri Spaine Long


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Second Hundred Years

Hispania’s one-hundredth anniversary issue (100.5) is now in print and available for
download gratis (see www.hispaniajournal.com). The centenary issue offers visionary
articles and response essays on the future of teaching Spanish and Portuguese. As
the journal begins a new century of its publication, we look forward to the work ahead and
acknowledge our past achievements and contributors.

The milestone of the centenary issue gives us the opportunity to reflect on our past and
contemplate our future. During 2017, sadly, we lost the tenth Editor of Hispania Dr. Estelle
Irizarry, Professor of Spanish Emerita of Georgetown University. Irizarry was Hispania’s first
female editor. She provided the journal with stellar leadership from 1993–2000. She was an
accomplished editor, professor, and scholar. Perhaps best known for her scholarship on the DNA
of Christopher Columbus, her publications and projects in languages and literature were many
and varied. During her tenure at the journal, Hispania garnered second place for the “Phoenix
Award for Significant Editorial Achievement” from the Council of Editors of Learned Journals
(CELJ) in 1995. Her editorship was also known for implementing new technology. She
produced a CD of all articles published in Hispania dating from its inception in 1917 through 1990. This
project paved the way for further digitization of the journal in more recent years. Irizarry also
improved efficiency and reduced decision time by introducing submissions via email. Close
colleague and luminary in her own right Dr. Barbara Mujica, Professor of Spanish Emerita, also
of Georgetown University, wrote a tribute to Irizarry that aptly captures her intellectual work,
generous spirit, and humanity that begins on the next page.

Looking forward, our profession has much work ahead to serve heritage learners (HL) more
comprehensively. I invited Hispania Associate Editor Dr. Maria Carreira, Professor of Spanish at Cali-
fornia State University, Long Beach and the Co-director of the National Heritage Language Resource
Center at UCLA, to pen a response to the recent publication by the Commission on Language Learn-
ing of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS) titled America’s Languages: Investing in
Language Education for the 21st Century (2017). Carreira makes the case for the oft-underutilized
assets of HLs in building language proficiency. There are implications for HL students of Spanish and
Portuguese. Carreira offers a concise summary of the development of research and the current state
of HL education and demonstrates the lack of systematic implementation of targeted HL education
in the United States at all levels. This reality contradicts one of the five priorities put forth in the
report by the AAAS: to advance language proficiency through the education of heritage learners.

Over the last few decades, as Carreira points out, the burden has fallen to instructors to
innovate HL instruction. There has been scant institutional support or acknowledgement of
such efforts. She calls for the hiring of administrators who are committed to this cause to be
able to institutionalize and regularize HL instruction within the curriculum. She offers data
and arguments for Spanish HLs. In particular, students of Spanish who are heritage speakers
are likely to be useful in the context of your institution as you advocate to serve HL learners of
Spanish and Portuguese. As Hispania moves forward, watch for more on this important topic.
I encourage you to read Carreira’s essay in the upcoming pages.

Sheri Spaine Long
Editor of Hispania