

*Sigma Delta Pi:
Rediscovering a Century, 1919-2019*

Juan de la Cuesta Hispanic Monographs

FOUNDING EDITOR

Tom Lathrop
University of Delaware

EDITOR

Michael J. McGrath
Georgia Southern University

EDITORIAL BOARD

Vincent Barletta
Stanford University

Annette Grant Cash
Georgia State University

David Castillo
State University of New York-Buffalo

Gwen Kirkpatrick
Georgetown University

Mark P. Del Mastro
College of Charleston

Juan F. Egea
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Sara L. Lehman
Fordham University

Mariselle Meléndez
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Eyda Merediz
University of Maryland

Dayle Seidenspinner-Núñez
University of Notre Dame

Elzbieta Sklodowska
Washington University in St. Louis

Noël Valis
Yale University

Sigma Delta Pi:
Rediscovering a Century
1919-2019



by

MARK P. DEL MASTRO



Juan de la Cuesta
Newark, Delaware

All images contained herein are claimed as fair use under section 107 of the Copyright Act 1976 except as noted.

Cover design by Melinda S. Del Mastro. Image of Ruth Helen Barnesc (front), courtesy of Diane Lee Henderson. Sigma Delta Pi members (back), courtesy UC Berkeley's *Blue & Gold Yearbook* (1927).

Image of the Commodore Hotel, New York, N.Y., courtesy of The New York Public Library. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e3-e01d-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

Photos of 1629 Walnut Street and 2545 Dwight Way (w/ auto, circa 1939), courtesy of the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.

Photo of 2545 Dwight Way in background of Christian Science Church: Buildings of Berkeley, Calif., BANC PIC 1981.056--PIC. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Photo of Ruth Barnes' yearbook entry, Chapter III, courtesy of UC Berkeley's *Blue & Gold Yearbook*.

Portrait of F. Dewey Amner courtesy of the Denison University Archives & Special Collections.

Portraits of Ruth Barnes, group collage of Chapter I, first page of Chapter II, courtesy of UC Berkeley's *Blue & Gold Yearbook*.

Portraits of Ruth Barnes before "Contents," at beginning of Chapter I, and after the UC Berkeley portrait in Chapter II, courtesy of Diane Lee Henderson.

Portrait of David P. Barrows, Portraits of University of California individuals and groups, UARC PIC 13:3553. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Portrait of William Joseph Berrien, undated, courtesy of Harvard University Archives.

Portrait of James Castañeda. "Dr. James A. Castaneda, Spanish, Rice University." (1980) Courtesy of Rice University: <https://hdl.handle.net/1911/90886>.

Portraits of Ferdinand V. Custer, Saima Regina Koski, Eugene Lueders, Anna McCune and Herbert Sein and Lesley Byrd Simpson courtesy of UC Berkeley's *Blue & Gold Yearbook*.

Portrait of Mark P. Del Mastro courtesy of Daniel Delgado Photography.

Portrait of John Driscoll Fitz-Gerald courtesy of the Special Collections at the University of Arizona Libraries.

Portrait of Stuart M. Gross courtesy of the McKay Archives Center, Florida Southern College.

Portrait of Eunice Joiner courtesy of Andy Baker.

Portrait of Anna Krause, Biographical files (UCLA University Archives Reference Collection) (University Archives Record Series 745). Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

Portrait of S. Griswold Morley courtesy of *Hispanic Review*.

Portrait of Beatrice Quijada Cornish. Portraits of University of California individuals and groups, UARC PIC 13:1029. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Portrait of John T. Reid, News Service Biographical Files, Duke University Archives, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

Portrait of Rudolph Schevill, Photographs from the Rudolph Schevill papers, BANC PIC 1997.084--PIC. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Portrait of Carl A. Tyre courtesy of New Mexico State University Library, Archives and Special Collections.

Portrait of Leavitt O. Wright in Chapter III, courtesy of the Special Collections of the University of Oregon Libraries

Photo of unidentified Sigma Delta Pi members, 1927, courtesy of UC Berkeley's *Blue & Gold Yearbook*.

Copyright © 2020 LinguaText, LLC. All rights reserved.

Juan de la Cuesta Hispanic Monographs
An imprint of LinguaText, LLC
Newark, Delaware USA
(302) 453-8695

www.JuandelaCuesta.com

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ISBN: 978-1-58871-348-3



Ruth Helen Barnes, founder of Sigma Delta Pi.
Courtesy of Diane Lee Henderson.

Table of Contents

Introduction	9
I. The Birth of an Honor Society, 1919-1920	11
II. Ruth Helen Barnes: The Life of ΣΔΠ's Founder	17
III. Presidents	24
The Berkeley Years: A Shaky Beginning, 1920-1930	24
Leavitt Olds Wright: A Reluctant National President, 1931-1937	31
John T. Reid: Founder of <i>Entre Nosotros</i> , 1938-1941	36
Floyd Dewey Amner: Joint Meetings and the <i>Beca nacional</i> , 1942-1948.....	41
Carly A. Tyre: Chapter Collaboration, 1949-1959	44
T. Earle Hamilton: Initiative and Fiscal Responsibility, 1960-1968; 1972-1977	47
Anita Dolores Brown: First Female National President, 1969-1971	52
Richard E. Chandler: Reinstating the National Scholarship Program, 1978-1992	52
John H. LaPrade: A Gentle Visionary, 1992-1998	57
Mark P. Del Mastro: An Acting President, 1998-1999.....	61
Germán D. Carrillo: A Progressive and a Diplomat, 1999-2013	62
Lucy F. Lee: A Selfless Presidency, 2013-	65
IV. Secretary-Treasurers	68
V. Honorary Presidents.....	82
VI. Vice-Presidents.....	97
VII. National Constitution/By-Laws	103

VIII. The State-Director System.....	112
IX. Coat of Arms, Certificates, the Charter and the National Artist.....	115
X. The Ritual and the Motto.....	119
XI. The Triennial Convention	129
XII. <i>Entre Nosotros</i>	165
XIII. The National Scholarship and Grant Programs.....	176
XIV. Awards and Recognitions: Members, Advisers and Chapters	182
XV. The Orders	188
XVI. <i>El repostero</i>	197
XVII. The Chapter Manual/Handbook.....	199
XVIII. National Website and Social Media	202
XIX. Alumnus Chapters.....	204
XX. Photo and Video Competitions	208
XXI. Board of Student Advisers	212
XXII. Association of College Honor Societies (ACHS).....	214
XXIII. Partnerships	216
XXIV. Sigma Delta Mu and the <i>Sociedad Honoraria de la Lengua Española</i>	223
Reflections.....	231
Bibliography.....	233

Introduction

IN THE FEBRUARY 1947 issue of *Hispania*, Stuart Murray Gross of Florida Southern College and past executive secretary-treasurer of Sigma Delta Pi, contributed a five-page article entitled “La Sociedad Nacional Hispánica, Sigma Delta Pi” for the section “Shop-Talk” (66-70). Gross clarified that his note served “a dibujar los acontecimientos de su historia y los valores espirituales que caracterizan su obra” (66), but such a short narrative could not adequately address the nearly 28-year history of the Society at the time, and there are notable omissions to include Sigma Delta Pi’s founder, Ruth Helen Barnes. Instead, Gross’ article is more of a publicity piece with an overview of the organization, its importance and mission, some salient accomplishments, and an attempt to connect with the readers of *Hispania*.

Inspired by Gross’ brief essay, T. Earle Hamilton, Sigma Delta Pi’s late president from Texas Tech University, decided that a more comprehensive, book-length manuscript devoted to the Society’s history would be a worthwhile resource for members and friends of the National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society. Subsequently in 1973, Hamilton contacted Dr. James O. Swain, Sigma Delta Pi’s past executive secretary-treasurer from 1947-63, to determine his interest in writing such a history. As Hamilton noted, Swain happily accepted the invitation despite suffering from glaucoma for 30 years. Yet, after Hamilton received Swain’s completed work, “mostly handwritten,” in 1977, a fire destroyed Hamilton’s residence and the only existing copy of Swain’s manuscript (*A Brief History* vii). Those were different times, of course, and without the contemporary luxury of cloud storage.

Hamilton then decided to write the history himself. He first contacted Dr. Charles B. Faulhaber, past department chair of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of California, Berkeley, to acquire copies of the meeting minutes from the Alpha Chapter during the first 10 years of the Society (1919-1929). Hamilton also obtained a picture of Ruth H. Barnes, Sigma Delta Pi’s founder, from William M. Roberts, University Archivist at UC Berkeley at the time; and Dr. Anthony J. Cascardi, Alpha’s chapter adviser, provided Hamilton with information on Juan C. Cebrián and William J. Berrien along with a history of UC Berkeley’s Department of Spanish and Portuguese. From Dr. Carl A. Tyre, past president of Sigma Delta Pi, Hamilton received “a two-drawer oak filing cabinet containing the folders on the installation of all chapters from Alpha to Gamma Pi” (viii-ix). In addition to these chapter files, the cabinet contained the correspondence of past presidents Leavitt O. Wright and John T. Reid. With these various materials and information from available issues of *Entre Nosotros*, a biography of Dr. Tomás Navarro Tomás from his daughter Joaquina, interviews with former First Vice-President William Moellering and other Sigma Delta Pi leaders of the time, Hamilton managed to publish his book *Sigma Delta Pi: A Brief History, 1919-1994* to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of Sigma Delta Pi.

Hamilton’s indispensable contribution is the foundation of this latest history that commemorates Sigma Delta Pi’s 100th birthday. His 1995 book together with the supplemental chapters published in 2005 by myself and the late John H. LaPrade, the national archives, a wealth of correspondence among Executive Committee members and between the national office and chapters, past issues of *Entre Nosotros* since the first edition in

1939, the Executive Committee Meeting minutes since 2000, and the special collections of various libraries across the U.S., all contributed to this publication of *Sigma Delta Pi: Rediscovering a Century, 1919-2019*.

Although a good account of much of Sigma Delta Pi's first 75 years is found in Hamilton's work, this latest, completely rewritten version updates, supplements and reorganizes much of that information by devoting chapters not only to the organization's past presidents, but also to other leadership positions, key initiatives, programs, awards and notable projects of the Society. Whereas Hamilton's book presented a total of 14 chapters to include the "Preface," three appendices (A, B and C), but no bibliography, this history presents 26 chapters plus a complete bibliography. Also, and likely for reasons of cost, which would conform to his nobly conservative fiscal ideology, Hamilton included in his publication only two pictures, both black and white: a UC Berkeley yearbook photo of Ruth Helen Barnes, Sigma Delta Pi's founder, and one of himself. This latest history, however, presents the first-ever, consolidated pictorial record of many of the key figures whose contributions helped advance the Society, although some photos remained elusive. Furthermore, numerous inadvertent oversights have been corrected for this book that, in contrast to Hamilton's work, enjoyed the vast reach of the Internet, which bolstered the accuracy of its contents and facilitated the acquisition of rare photos.

Fifty years ago, when Sigma Delta Pi commemorated its *cincuentenario* in 1969, several of the national officers contributed short reflections in that year's November issue of *Entre Nosotros*: Ignacio Galbis, the journal's editor; Tomás Navarro Tomás, honorary president; Dolores Brown, national president, Carly A. Tyre, former national president, and George E. McSpadden, vice-president of the Southeast. Unfortunately, and like Gross in his 1947 *Hispania* article, each overlooked one of the most important details of our Society's history: the indispensable role of Ruth Helen Barnes, the undergraduate student at the University of California, Berkeley who started Sigma Delta Pi. However, thanks in part to the generosity of both Daniella Thompson, editor of the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, and Diane Lee Henderson, one of Ruth Barnes' granddaughters, this book includes a chapter exclusively devoted to Sigma Delta Pi's founder to honor her vision and initiative in creating this Society that thrives today.

This history project also enjoyed the generous support of the College of Charleston, the guidance of the staff of UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library, the unprecedented loan of previously lost issues of *Entre Nosotros* from the Special Collections Department of the Fogler Library thanks to the University of Maine's Desiree Butterfield-Nagy and Matthew Revitt, and the contributions of historical artifacts from several Sigma Delta Pi chapters. I am also indebted to the kindness of Diane Lee Henderson and her husband Sydney C. Stokes who welcomed me into their home in Kelseyville, CA on Thursday, March 23, 2018 to share a remarkable view of Ruth Barnes' inspiring life. Several rare photos of Ruth Barnes and her family reprinted in this book were donated by Diane Lee Henderson during that unforgettable visit to Kelseyville.

Finally, in wishing our beloved organization a Happy 100th Birthday, I also express my sincere gratitude to the other members of Sigma Delta Pi's Executive Committee: Dr. Lucy F. Lee, president, and Germán D. Carrillo, past president and president emeritus, for their enthusiastic support of this latest history of the National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society. I also thank the Society's executive administrative assistant, Melinda S. Del Mastro, for her critical editorial guidance with finalizing this book.

Here's to the next 100 years! "*Spanías Didagéi Proágomen*."

Mark P. Del Mastro
Executive Director, Sigma Delta Pi, National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society
College of Charleston, Charleston, S.C.
December 31, 2019

I

The Birth of an Honor Society, 1919-1920



Ruth Helen Barnes
Courtesy of Diane Lee Henderson.

FOR OVER 25 YEARS and at least since the publication of T. Earle Hamilton's book in 1995, it was widely and erroneously believed that Sigma Delta Pi's founder was a graduate student of Spanish at the University of California, Berkeley. However, Ruth Helen Barnes was a junior when she started the Society, and her numerous extra-curricular activities during her academic career clearly point to a very dynamic and multi-talented, undergraduate student leader. In only her second year at UC Berkeley, for example, and in addition to her roles as a violinist in the Women's Orchestra, a contralto for the Treble Clef, and treasurer of the Spanish Club, she was also class secretary and the only woman among the six sophomore class officers. Such an inclination to lead and her love for the Spanish language positioned Barnes well for starting what would eventually become the largest collegiate foreign language honor society in the U.S.

Barnes' inspiration for Sigma Delta Pi came from other honor societies such as Pi Delta Phi (French) and Tau Beta Pi (Engineering) on her campus, and she decided that a similar model was needed for Spanish. With support from the Spanish faculty for her plan, on the night of Friday, No-

vember 14, 1919 at the residence she shared with her widowed mother on 2545 Dwight Way, she invited the following six students for a meeting: Miriam Casad Burt (junior), Ferdinand Varela Custer (sophomore), Anna G. Krause (M.A. student), Margaret Anne Priddle (junior), Ruth Lillian Rhodes (junior), and Vera Stump (junior).



Ruth H. Barnes



Miriam Casad Burt



Ferdinand V. Custer



Anna G. Krause



Margaret Anne Priddle



Ruth L. Rhodes



Vera Stump

*Pictures of Barnes, Burt, Custer, Priddle, Rhodes and Stump courtesy of UC Berkeley's Blue & Gold Yearbook.
Undated photo of Krause taken during her faculty appointment at the University of California, Los Angeles from 1920-1958,
courtesy of the UCLA University Archives Reference Collection.*

At what is considered the birthplace of Sigma Delta Pi, Barnes explained to her six guests that with other honor societies already on their campus, it was time to provide a similar opportunity to recognize outstanding students of Spanish.

Her friends were easily convinced, and together they selected Greek letters for their new venture, following the practice established by Phi Beta Kappa in 1776. However, unlike other honor societies' customs to use the Greek letters of their name for a motto in Greek, Barnes and her colleagues used ΣΔΠ for a slogan in Spanish: "La Sociedad del Prado."



*Sigma Delta Pi's birthplace at 2545 Dwight Way, circa 1939.
Photo courtesy of the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.*



*In background of Christian Science Church: the corner of
Dwight Way and Bowditch Street, Sigma Delta Pi's birthplace.
Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.*

As Hamilton emphasized in his book, that $\Sigma\Delta\Pi$ was initially “conceived, planned, founded, and then directed entirely by students” during its first 12 years was quite a contrast to the more common trend of faculty or administrators founding and directing honor societies (2), and it is testimony to the influence of determined students, and what they can achieve collectively. Ruth Barnes was the driven visionary who along with her classmates carried out a bold plan while undertaking the necessary, inaugural leadership roles to direct the nascent honor society’s course: at this first meeting, Ruth Barnes was elected president, and Ferdinand V. Custer as secretary and treasurer.

One month later on Monday, December 15, 1919 in Room 101 of the university’s Wheeler Hall, President Barnes presided over the new society’s second meeting with an agenda that produced a logo that also served as the model for the inaugural membership pin: Spain’s coat of arms from the Golden Age with the Greek letters $\Sigma\Delta\Pi$ positioned in the center, and the colors red and yellow gold from the Spanish flag.



The original logo.



Wheeler Hall, UC Berkeley.

Those in attendance agreed that President Barnes should proceed with coordinating the design for the membership pin, and before the Society’s third meeting on Tuesday, March 23, 1920, all seven founding members had already received their new pins, which suggests that they simply assumed their membership

status without the formality of an induction ceremony. In other words, by founding Sigma Delta Pi on November 14, 1919, these seven students considered themselves members from the start.

Although precise details are unavailable, evidence suggests that between December 1919 and April 1920, a ritual was likely drafted along with the first constitution, and the production of the gold membership pins probably was negotiated between late December 1919 and February 1920 with the Gualterio Shaw Company of San Francisco (*A Brief History* 3).¹



*Ruth Barnes' original membership pin,
and of the first issued to the founding Sigma Delta Pi members.
Donated to Sigma Delta Pi's national archives by Diane Lee Henderson,
Ruth Barnes' granddaughter.*

During the third meeting on March 23, 1920 at Ruth Barnes' residence at 2545 Dwight Way, meeting minutes reveal that the main agenda item was the confirmation of future members for induction, which included a list of eight "miembros activos"—Mary Harroun, Mary Miller, Hazel Power, Wilma Williams, Josephine Cuneo, Richard Ehlers, Herbert M. Sein and Lesley Byrd Simpson (sophomore)—and six professors as "miembros honorarios"—Carlos Bransby, Rudolph Schevill, Sylvanus Griswold Morley, Malborne W. Graham, Elizabeth McGuire and Beatrice Cornish. Custer, the Society's secretary and treasurer, was in charge of issuing the respective invitations.

Finally, and after extensive preparations, the first-ever initiation ceremony took place on Saturday, May 1, 1920 at Miriam Burt's home on 1629 Walnut Street, where Miriam, the eldest of six siblings, lived with her parents Edwin and Alice and four brothers and one sister (1920 US Census). At this event, all eight invited students were inducted as active members, but only Professors Sylvanus Griswold Morley and Carlos Bransby of the original eight accepted their invitations to become inaugural honorary members for a total of 10 new members officially initiated in Sigma Delta Pi's founding ceremony.

¹ On 3/19/2018 Dr. Charles B. Faulhaber, former department chair of the Department Spanish and Portuguese at the University of California, Berkeley and former director of Bancroft Library, informed Del Mastro that these and other Sigma Delta Pi archives—correspondence, meeting minutes, member registry, etc.—that had been housed in said department, were "lost." A copy of the consolidated minutes from the first four meetings is stored in Sigma Delta Pi's national archives, but no other supporting documentation is currently available.



*1629 Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA. Built in 1900,
the place of Sigma Delta Pi's inaugural induction ceremony on May 1, 1920.
Courtesy of the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.*

Reflecting upon Sigma Delta Pi's birth year (1919-1920) and the role of the Society's first president, Hamilton observes "Out of Ruth Barnes's deep love of Spanish culture arose a dream, and she spent a year bringing it to reality and establishing it firmly so that future leaders would have a foundation on which to build" (4). Although the first meeting that Ruth Barnes organized on November 14, 1919 is indeed the birthday of Sigma Delta Pi, of equal importance is the culmination of President Barnes' and her peers' sustained efforts with the formal initiation ceremony of new members on May 1, 1920. New chapters of Sigma Delta Pi are traditionally "founded" with the induction of new members during the installation ceremony, therefore both November 14, 1919 and May 1, 1920 are key dates and bookends for the academic year when Sigma Delta Pi was born.

II

Ruth Helen Barnes: The Life of ΣΔΠ's Founder



Junior class picture, Blue & Gold Yearbook (1921), UC Berkeley.

PRIOR TO THIS BOOK, Sigma Delta Pi's archives contained scant information about its founder beyond the few observations Hamilton provided in his 1995 book. Even as national president, Hamilton had overlooked Ruth Helen Barnes' role founding Sigma Delta Pi as he writes in his February 1963 article "El futuro de Sigma Delta Pi": "Cuando don Leavitt O. Wright fundó esta sociedad en 1925, ..." (3).² Furthermore, and even after Hamilton's book restored Barnes' place in history, it was still long believed that she was a graduate student when she founded the Society, until further research in January 2018 confirmed that she was actually an undergraduate junior when she started the organization. Yet her impressive initiative and leadership were not limited to Sigma Delta Pi as the annual publications of UC Berkeley's *Blue & Gold Yearbook* reveal. But before highlighting aspects of her dynamic life as a university student from 1917-1921, and what we know of her journey after graduation in 1921, an overview of her family history helps give meaning to her years as an undergraduate in Berkeley as well as to the myriad of her accomplishments as a university student.

Ruth Barnes' paternal great grandfather was Hawkins Barnes, a farmer born in Kentucky around 1806, and married to Patsy Barnes, Ruth's paternal grandmother who was born in Missouri around 1817 (1850 US Census). By 1850, Hawkins and Patsy were living in Pettis, Missouri and rearing their five children, all born in Missouri and ranging from 1-12 years of age to include 10-year-old Leonidas, Ruth's paternal grandfather, who was the second-oldest child, born in July 1840.

² Leavitt O. Wright is recognized as the first president of Sigma Delta Pi as a national organization, which explains in part Hamilton's reference to Wright's role as the Society's founder: Hamilton was emphasizing Wright's leadership with nationalizing the organization.