**Citation for the 2015 Hayward R. Alker Student Paper Award**

presented to David L. Jones, SUNY, Albany Ph.D. student

for his paper “Culture in the Court: Explaining Bowers vs. Hardwick through Frame Analysis,” presented at the 2014 Law and Society Conference; self-nominated.

On behalf of the 2015 Hayward R. Alker Student Paper Award Committee, it is my pleasure and honor to announce that the recipient is **David L. Jones**, a doctoral student at SUNY, Albany.

The selection committee had a difficult time reaching a decision because all five of the nominated papers were gracefully written and theoretically bold, and addressed important political phenomena. The future of interpretive research looks bright indeed.

Still the members of the committee agreed that among the very strong submissions, Jones’ paper, “Culture in the Courts,” stood out in terms of its theoretical acuity and methodological sophistication.

Stitching together diverse theories of culture (ranging from the more instrumentalist and positivist ideas of “framing” by Snow and his colleagues, to the very different epistemological and ontological notions of Foucault), Jones analyzes the clashing interpretations of politics and society that were expressed before and during recent court decisions regarding homosexuality. He clearly and convincingly shows how American politics are permeated with interpretive moves and counter moves, and documents the practical importance of institutionalizing some interpretive frames over others.

Especially impressive is the careful construction and systematic presentation of the argument. Jones repeatedly translates complex analytic ideas (such as “legal archaeology”) into accessible prose. He creatively draws on a wide variety of cultural outlets, from court opinions, to editorials and news stories in mass-circulation magazines, to speeches and pamphlets by social-movement activists attacking and defending homosexuality. The result is a detailed, colorful portrait of clashing beliefs in America today.

The members of the selection committee invite the audience to join us in celebrating David Jones’ insightful study.

Committee members:

Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh, University of Connecticut, Chair

Jillian Schwedler, Hunter College

Nicholas Smith, City College of New York