



Neoliberalism and subjectivity in Latin America

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Julian Medina Zarate and Flavia Uchoa's introduction to the special issue offers us an important perspective on subjectivity and neoliberalism in Latin America. Pointing out the complex history of the arrival and take-up of neoliberalism across the continent, the deep-seated role of colonial and post-colonial violence, thus the specificity of modes of governance in the complex relationship between the North and the South. Moreover, as they point out, at the moment of writing this editorial, popular uprisings against neoliberalism are taking place in many countries.

The papers that make up this issue cover a range of topics, from work to childcare to violence to university education. All of them work with the complexity of the relation of the South to the North, not least in terms of theoretical tools, ways of approaching problems, the use of Northern policies by Southern governments, the complex acts of translation to the new context, the problems of using Northern theories and approaches that assume a different historical (and colonial) history. And more than this, Anglophone readers do not get to read much of the work of Latin American academics, published as it is, in Spanish and Portuguese. The immense problems of translation from their native languages, different styles of academic writing—all of these issues should be borne in mind, that do operate to keep Southern academics understood as the poor cousins of their Northern peers. And to add even more, the vast library resources academics are used to in the North are not available in most of the Latin American Universities, not least access to this very journal.

If academic work is to be genuinely international, then these issues have to be urgently addressed—for example, journals will not pay for translation and yet all the authors presented here required paid help to get their papers into publishable English. This is then an even greater burden on Latin American academics, not shared at all by their Anglophone peers. However, we also need to understand how much Anglophone readers miss out by not being able to learn about other approaches that might indeed challenge our very Anglocentric and Northern academic worldview. That seek to demonstrate that there are indeed other ways of understanding and engaging with the world, its geopolitics and its academic fashions and sensibilities. We hope therefore that this

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issue will be the first of many in which new work can develop and challenge our own thinking and expand our modes of understanding and engagement.

This special issue came about because my northern university offered money to allow me to undertake an extraordinary journey across the continent, meeting academics in Mexico, Colombia, Brazil and Chile. Together, we began a research network on the theme of subjectivity and neoliberalism and those connections that facilitated this special issue.

The theme of necropolitics is central to the paper by Antar Martinez Guzman, who considers the role of neoliberalism in the huge rise in male violence across the country, exploring hyper-violent masculinities in the context of social precarity. This involves work on men convicted of gender-based violence and media discourses on femicide and hate crimes against LGBT people. Bringing together necropolitics, masculinity, violence and neoliberalism is particularly significant given the place of necropolitics across the continent, as Medina Zarate and Uchoa argue.

Antonio Stecher and Alvaro Soto Roy discuss the transformations in work identities and thus the consequences for subjectivity for workers in three kinds of employment in neoliberal Chile. Noting the shifts to more individualised narratives of work, the uneasy relationship and co-existence between old narratives of work and new ones suggest a far from straightforward take-up of neoliberal modes of being. The significance of this in relation to current protests across the country should be noted.

Work is also the topic of Fabio d'Oliviera's paper. In this case, the workers are psychologists operating in an increasingly precarised service sector in public assistance programmes in Brazil. As professionals, they increasingly feel that they cannot do their jobs properly and experience great difficulty with what they experience as an attack upon themselves, but also find ways around the red tape in order to do their jobs in the way that they feel is better, understanding this as a form of resistance.

Hernan Pulido Martinez explores the role of artefacts in the introduction of discourses and practices related to quality within a university in Colombia. Acknowledging the complex relation between, for example, a grading scheme that has its origins north of the border but is adapted for use in Colombia, he explores the central importance of such artefacts in neoliberal technologies of university governance that produce the possibility of what is understood as an internationally transferable quality. In that sense, he understands the flow of such artefacts in the practices of 'internationalisation' as an analysis of the 'how of power'.

Ana Vergara discusses parent-child relations in the context of neoliberal Chile. She exemplifies the intensification of demands on both parent and child, which results in what she calls the over-demanding work of constantly trying to negotiate subject positions, something which the participants describe as claustrophobic, draining and over-attentive, thus placing an excessive burden upon both parents and children.

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