

31 The Sociology of Gender in Latin America From Social Mothers to Sexual Rights

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Abstract

In Latin America, gender inequalities as a field emerged in the 1970s, when scholars began to look at women's experiences in a wide array of areas then being studied by Latin American sociology, including urbanization, migration into cities, transformation of agrarian structures, and social movements. Since then, the field of sociology of gender has grown steadily across the continent. The first section of this chapter discusses three approaches to gendered analysis in Latin America: women's subordination, unequal power relationships between women and men in various spaces, and gender as a performative practice. It then charts the evolution of two significant subfields in Latin American sociology: gender, work, and social reproduction; and gender, collective action, and the state. It discusses trajectories and debates arising within these subfields, underlining the contributions gender analysis has made toward broadening the definition and scope of crucial social institutions in sociological analysis: the family, work, and the state. Finally, it introduces three specialists' sections that contribute to an understanding of the changing dynamics in Latin American societies: the study of gender violence across the continent; the particular focus on care in the study of social reproduction and public policies; and the evolution of the labor market with respect to gender.

Keywords: [women's subordination](#), [gender and social inequalities](#), [political participation](#), [social reproduction](#)

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IN Latin America, gender inequalities as a field emerged in the 1970s, when scholars began to look at women's experience in a wide array of areas then being studied by Latin American sociology. Under the influence of modernization theory and Structuralist and Marxist dependency theories, scholars examined the place of women in urbanization, internal migration, the transformation of the agrarian structure, and changes in the labor market. From these beginnings, the field of sociology of gender has grown steadily across Latin America. Currently, many social institutions, such as the family, the labor market, and the state, are being examined through the lens of gender. The field has also become increasingly specialized, giving rise to various subfields with their own internal trajectories and debates. This chapter focuses on two such subfields that have made relevant contributions both to Latin American sociology and to the sociology of gender. These subfields are *gender, work, and social reproduction* and *gender, collective action, and the state*.

C31.P1

Before addressing the main debates within each field, several questions regarding the category of gender must be addressed in order to build a shared understanding of what does and does not belong within the sociology of gender. First, although gender is by definition a social relation addressing inequalities and hierarchies between men and women, gender sociology in Latin America (and elsewhere) began as the study of *women's* subordination in different spaces. Concepts such as the sexual division of labor and the gendered character of the public and the private spheres dominated the conceptual landscape within which women's subordination was examined in the 1970s and 1980s. From the 1990s onward, gender came to be discussed as an analytical category, as evidenced by two distinctive issues. First, scholars contended that, rather than focusing solely on women's experience, they should view gender as a social relationship. Second, they increasingly stressed the importance of examining masculinities and other subjects who might experience subordination on the basis of sexual identity or desire. Thus, under the assumption that women's condition could not be understood in isolation, the focus turned to the unequal relationships between women and men in different spaces. In the words of Luz Gabriela Arango (2002), "gender makes us think in a relational way, and account for the

C31.P2

production, reproduction or transformation of gender relations.” Furthermore, gender makes men visible as men—as subjects conditioned by gender—and provides criteria for understanding not only the social and symbolic relations between the sexes but also between individual women and men. Arango (2002) deployed this new conception of gender to criticize perspectives emphasizing women’s social disadvantages and victimization; these victimization narratives were progressively replaced by more complex approaches to gender identity that account for ambivalence, power, resistance, or submission in different contexts.¹ The social construction of masculinities—of men as men—also became included in gender studies. Concepts such as hegemonic masculinity were coined to analyze men’s privilege and power, and these concepts paved the way for the study of sexualities. (Connell, 1995; Kaufman, 1987).

Under the influence of Judith Butler’s criticism of the binary conceptualization of gender as the social and cultural construction of sexual difference, some scholars have argued that there is no sex outside of or prior to gender construction: Bodies are made intelligible through gender lenses, and gender practices are continually performed (Butler, 1990). This new definition of gender informs much of the Latin American work on sexual politics and sexual identities. (Corrales & Pecheny, 2010). Increasingly over the last decade, studies on collective action have investigated the relationship between lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) movements and the state from the standpoint of this conception of gender.

C31.P3

In sum, this chapter understands the field of gender and sociology to include studies of women’s subordination in different spaces, gender analysis of identities and social institutions, and a gendered examination of sexual rights and politics.

C31.P4

Gender studies is an interdisciplinary field combining several disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. For example, sociological approaches to gender, collective action, and the state are often built in dialogue with concepts such as democratization, which originated in political science. The same is true of debates on gender, work, and social reproduction, where we find a fruitful dialogue between sociology, feminist economics, development studies, and anthropology. In this chapter, the debates of interest include dialogues between sociology and political science and also between sociology, feminist economics, and anthropology.

C31.P5

Finally, and most importantly, the emergence and development of gender studies in Latin America is inextricable from the rise of the women’s movement in the 1970s and its subsequent trajectory. In the 1980s, the social movements of some regions such as the Southern Cone and Central America were inspired by

C31.P6

mothers who collectively emerged in the public sphere as an ethical voice against violence. Elsewhere, the fight for survival and against poverty mobilized mothers in their neighborhoods. When feminist agendas gained visibility in the 1990s and 2000s, studies emerged on the relationship between gender and the state, with some feminist scholars and activists criticizing what they saw as the institutionalization and de-politicization of the movement. Nowadays, scholars are examining the renewed rise of robust feminist and LGBT movements across the continent to address gender violence and abortion politics. In short, gender studies in Latin America has been inspired by and mirrored the evolution of the socio-political dynamics of different expressions of feminist movements across the continent. This link between scholarship and activism accounts for Latin American gender studies' richness.

The following paragraphs examine the evolution of two particularly significant subfields in Latin American gender sociology: *gender, work, and social reproduction* and *gender, collective action, and the state*. They trace the main trajectories and debates that arise within these subfields, underlining the contributions gender analysis has made toward broadening the definition and scope of crucial social institutions in sociological analysis: the family, work, and the state. Finally, the discussion introduces three specialists' sections contributing to an understanding of the changing dynamics in Latin American societies: the study of gender violence across the continent, the particular focus on care in the study of social reproduction and public policies, and the evolution of the labor market with respect to gender.

C31.P7

Gender, Work, and Social Reproduction

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In 1982, the Colombian sociologist Magdalena León published a three-volume collection titled *Debates on Woman in Latin America and the Caribbean: Discussions on Production and Social Reproduction*. This collection gathered research performed in the 1970s on the nature of woman's subordination in different contexts, including labor in urban and rural contexts and in countries with different development trajectories. Through a Marxist lens, it examined women's labor in order to understand the way in "which the capitalist mode of production worked in its dependentist form" (León, 1982, p. 3). As the book shows, women (and children) working in subsistence agriculture, small family businesses, and/or community labor were often not

C31.P8

compensated. The collection aimed primarily to develop a new conceptualization of labor and economic activity in order to make unpaid work visible and reveal how women's labor often went overlooked or unremarked in society.

Along the same lines, feminist economist Carmen Diana Deere argued that, in order to comprehend the full extent of women's economic participation, it is necessary to look at the connection between different forms of production within specific social formations. She showed that rural women participate in subsistence production, market production, and circulation and that family structure and the sexual division of labor were central to surplus value extraction in non-capitalist production modes (Deere, 1982).

C31.P9

Women's subordinate position in the economy and society was examined not only through women's unpaid labor but also through their participation in the labor market. Studies on female rural workers, migrant domestic workers, family businesses, and textile workers in factories shed light on the non-homogeneous character of the category of "woman" and on the need for including class analysis in discussions of women's experience and social inequality (Benería & Roldán, 1992; Jelin, 1976, 1979). For example, Chaney and Garcia's (1989) landmark volume compiled research on women domestic workers in different Latin American cities, demonstrating the colonial legacies of exploitation affecting these women and their forms of resistance and organization. In the years after its publication, the book proved highly influential to studies on women's various forms of labor and on the convergence of capitalist and colonial forms of exploitation.

C31.P10

In addition to class, ethnicity and race also began to factor into gender studies, especially owing to the rural origins of many domestic workers. The pioneering work of Arizpe (1975) on indigenous migrant women in Mexico City viewed ethnicity as a class marker tied up with women's oppression. Other works on rural indigenous women in the 1980s argued for the need to articulate different dimensions of social inequality. Francke (1990) coined the term *la trenza de la dominación* (braid of domination) when referring to how indigenous women in rural Peru were exploited threefold: through the intertwined oppressions of class, race, and gender. In her famous proposition of *Las mujeres son más indias* (women are more Indian), Marisol de la Cadena (1991) highlighted the racial and class dimensions of gender domination. Thus, women's subordination was not treated as a universal phenomenon but rather grounded in particular historical and cultural contexts. While the term "intersectionality" was not yet in use, some studies on the conditions of rural and poor urban

C31.P11

women did refer to interlocking forms of oppression (Hill Collins, 2016) when analyzing women's paid and unpaid labor.

Another central theme addressed by the literature on the subordination of women was how ideologies of public and private spheres affected women's identities as workers (Arango, 2002). For instance, Guzmán, Portocarrero, and Pinzás (1993) showed that women's work in Chilean factories was made invisible by male workers. They further showed that women responded with different strategies for affirming their individuality and the value of their work to collectively demonstrate the value or quality of their work. Other studies focusing on middle class jobs, such as Hola and Todaro's (1992) on Chile's financial sector, found that, despite the modernizing discourse on gender equality, many mechanisms continued to reproduce gender discrimination. Arango's (1998) longitudinal study on a Colombian textile factory over three generations illustrated the ability of women workers to transform aspects of labor culture throughout the history of the company, rebelling against paternalistic domination and their secondary place in union organization. Arango records that "women would manifest simultaneously a lower commitment to work, perceived as complementary or temporary, and a high ethic against work well done, meaning that women work with greater dedication and care but would not be so attached to their employment and trade" (Arango, 2002). Another longitudinal study on female labor trajectories was performed by Guzmán, Mauro and Araujo (1999). Again, this research argued that, for women, the meaning of work cannot be separated from their presence in the family. This double pull is identified by women of all cohorts as the most important reason for workplace discrimination and family postponement. The 1975 UN World Conference on Women that took place in Mexico inspired a series of studies on women's lack of integration in the development process across the so-called Third World. León (1982) argued that Latin American women were integrated but in a subordinate manner due to sex (not yet gender) and class issues. She called for a Latin American research project on the wide variety of expressions of women's subordination. The findings could then be used to influence public policies in favor of women. The tension between production and reproduction challenged the idea of equality policies in the public sphere; to combat inequality, policies would have to take into account the sexual division of labor and power relations within the household.

C31.P12

C31.P13

Under the influence of feminist economists, studies on gender and development frequently employ the concept of social reproduction, which refers "not only to biological reproduction or the reproduction of labor but to the perpetuating of social systems" (Beneria & Sen, 1981, p. 290). They sought to highlight how reproduction was

C31.P14

articulated within the capitalist mode of production but also to show how societies developed different kinds of control of sexuality, domestic work, and other female activities. This concept was crucial to discuss women's subordination and the sexual division of labor inside and outside of the household (León, 1982). This focus turned a spotlight on one of the most unquestioned social institutions in Latin America: the family. Indeed, during the 1970s and the 1980s, the concept of household strategies of survival and social reproduction was hegemonic in sociological studies. This concept was very valuable because it challenged individual-oriented interpretations of actions and demonstrated the importance of kin strategies. Latin American sociologists were critical of macro-structural social theories of development, which neglected the dynamics of smaller social institutions like the family. Households were examined as units of economic and social reproduction that could explain the logic of many different processes, including migration to the cities and abroad, the distinctions between different modes of production, and poverty, among others. In contrast, feminist critiques of women's role in social reproduction questioned the status of the family as a harmonic social unit fighting poverty and showed that most of the burden ended up on the shoulders of women. For example, scholars studying the impact of the 1980 economic crisis on the poor pointed to the lowering of male incomes and the intensification of women's domestic work (Arriagada, 1994; Benería, 1992; González de la Rocha, 1994). Moreover, many scholars argued that one of the main consequences of neoliberal policies was the transfer of the labor force's costs of reproduction from the state to women in households. (Bose & Acosta, 1995; Chant, 1997). As Bose and Acosta (1995) put it: "Looking at households brings to light the power relationships within families of kin networks and how they serve to segregate men and women's occupations along gender lines."

The economic context of 1990s spurred scholars to interrogate further a number of assumptions about the social and sexual division of labor. Latin America, once the source of raw materials, was becoming a site of manufacturing and export processing zones. Globalization brought with it outsourcing policies, and several regions of the continent in Mexico, Central America, Peru, or Bolivia became territories for subcontracting and home outwork (Beneria & Roldan, 1992). Studies on such *maquila* work showed that changing gender dynamics permeated the reorganization of production (Fernandez-Kelly, Sassen, & Sassen, 1995). "Work" was now being classified along a continuum: formal paid work, informal paid work, and household work (Bose & Acosta, 1995).

According to Labrecque and Castillo Ramos (2010), studies on women and global restructuring fall into two categories: those that focus on the structural aspects and links between gender and the new international division of labor and those that look at women's labor in particular (Fernández-Kelly, 2000; Nash & Fernández-Kelly, 1983; Safa, 1981). *Maquilas*, for example, were seen either as sites for women's empowerment or, conversely, as places of marginalization and exploitation (Fernández-Kelly, 1994). Other studies of women's labor trajectories and lives in the *maquila* industry went beyond structural analysis to show a more complex picture of the relationship between private life, family, and work (de la O Martínez, 1997). The *maquilas* (and employment at flower plantations in the case of Ecuador and Colombia or agroindustries in Chile) provide access to formal employment, social security, and a stable income compared with other activities in the informal sector. However, some authors argue that such work does not allow for the possibility of acquiring new qualifications, positions, or knowledge (Goldín, 2009; Pineda, 2000).

C31.P16

The new roles of women in productive restructuring, as well as their central place in survival strategies resulting from economic downturns in the 1980s, resulted in two interlocked concepts within gender studies: the *feminization of labor* and *feminization of poverty*. The terms indicate both the growing number of women in the work force and the deterioration of labor conditions at a global level (Chant, 1997).

C31.P17

To begin with an example of the feminization of labor, Benería and Roldán (1992) demonstrated in their study of the homemade garment industry how the periodic crises of capitalist production are mitigated by the fact that production can move from factories to subcontracting workshops and households. Within households, individuals are affected differently according to gender and age (Benería, 1992). On the other hand, unlike the *maquiladora*, the household as described by these authors is the site not only of economic production but of reproduction as well.

C31.P18

During the past two decades, the blurred frontiers between formal and informal, productive and reproductive and the intersection of gender with different dimensions of inequalities surge as race and ethnicity is now widely explored by many studies on domestic work, home work, street work, and other forms of feminized work in the region. An example of the vast amount of studies is Durin, De la O Martinez, and Bastos's (2014) book on domestic work in Mexico and other countries of Latin America. The book examines the current conditions of domestic service by looking at the labor market dynamics of domestic work, the ambiguous

C31.P19

relations between employers and domestic workers, the cultures of servitude, the reversal of gender roles with the participation of men in domestic service, and the dimensions of ethnicity and racism within domestic work. More recent studies on globalization and social reproduction have focused on the particular experiences of migrant women (Herrera, 2008). The main issue at stake has been the recognition of transnational forms of social reproduction activated through women's migrant work and transnational families (Herrera, 2013). Research on recent migrant flows from the Andean region to Europe has made significant contributions, pointing out that—beyond production restructuring and outsourcing—globalization also leads to labor force mobility and that, in the case of women, care work, domestic work, and remittances were channels for the transnationalization of social reproduction.² This literature makes use of a number of concepts developed in other geographical contexts, such as global care chains, and tests their applicability to the Latin American experience, creating a series of new approaches that challenge a linear conception of care chains. These works show that the concept of a “care deficit” ignores the labor of women and the complex webs of kin organization and social institutions that came to play different roles in social reproduction in the communities of origin (Herrera, 2016; Skornia & Cienfuegos, 2016).

C31.P20

As mentioned earlier, gender studies had been taking into account masculinities from the 1990s onward, with a number of noteworthy contributions within the field of work and social reproduction. For instance, Gutmann's study (2000) on working-class men in Mexico examined the dynamics of the social division of labor and found that—contrary to the more traditional social division of labor—men, and particularly young men, participated actively in care activities. Gutmann showed that important changes are going on among working-class families. Although care work is still mainly a woman's responsibility, men are not solely providers, sometimes participating by necessity in care activities. Gutmann examined the way social relations of domination and negotiation took place within these working-class households around gender issues, occasionally reversing social expectations.

C31.P21

In another study among urban poor families in Cali, Colombia, Pineda (2000) found that male unemployment affected men's identities as providers and changed the dynamics of the sexual division of labor within households. Unemployed men participated in care activities and reinterpreted their activities as a kind of symbolic fight to preserve their masculinity.

C31.P22

Negotiations over the sexual division of labor are also taking place among younger generations. Olavarría (2004) investigated this generation and contrasted traditional constructions of masculinities with social dynamics of negotiation, in which losing privilege and power can be compensated by accepting a less rigid provider role. Similarly, Fuller (1997) contrasted social values and representations of masculinities, such as the discourse on familiar responsibility, with labor trajectories of unemployment among working-class families in Lima. In the context of these two forces, work, which is at the center of masculine identity, was identified with pain and insecurity. Masculinity and certain types of work have also been examined. Dos Santos's (2004) study on truck drivers showed that this profession is associated with virility, resistance, and emotional control, all masculine-coded attributes. Despite many differences and hierarchies within the job, all truck drivers shared a masculine assessment of their identities and profession. Finally, tensions and crisis around masculine identities in the context of globalization and changing labor relations have been analyzed. One example are works around masculinities and migration. From the case study of a family of seamstress migrants, Magliano reflects on the work experiences of Peruvian male migrants in Argentina with regards to the practices and senses of male identity and the resistance that men display in the face of feminizing their activity (Magliano, 2016). In the same vein, Rosas looks at how migration of *Veracruzanos* to Chicago can both reaffirm their masculinity as providers but also creates tensions to their sense of virility and control of their wives' sexuality (Rosas, 2008).

C31.P23

Gender, Collective Action, and the State

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The 1980s were a very prolific period for studies on the women's movements emerging in different parts of Latin America under the influence of debates over democratization and the role of new social movements in changing the meaning of politics (Jelin, 1987). These studies examined how women's organizations contested notions of citizenship, political participation, and social rights. In capturing the diversity of women's collective action, researchers combined sociological approaches to collective action with gender perspectives on the artificial division between private and public spaces. Studies on the social and political participation of peasant, indigenous, Afro, middle-class, LGBT, and community-based organizations of women have shed light on

C31.P24

issues related to the social construction of public and private spheres in understanding politics and power relations.

During the 1980s, scholars focused on the role of women and feminism in the transition to democracy (Jaquette, 1989). The regional focus was primarily on the Southern Cone, with several publications on the cases of Argentina (Feijoó, 1989; Jelin, 1979), Brazil (Álvarez, 1989), Chile (Jaquette, 1989), and Uruguay. This research examined the role of women's movements in bringing about a return to democratic rule. According to Jaquette's (1989) and León's (1994) summaries, this literature argued that women's collective actions reshaped Latin American politics but also raised criticisms about a particular kind of feminism that "tend[s] to view women in the Third world as victims of oppression rather creator of feminism or as agents of change" (Jaquette, 1989, p. 1).

C31.P25

Some of the most interesting contributions to the analysis of collective action, change, and political subjectivities related to discussions over women politicizing their private identities as mothers in defense of human rights. For example, the *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*—Argentine mothers protesting their disappeared children—"came to symbolize a moral outrage against the State" (Jaquette, 1989). Political violence provided a unique standpoint for interrogating the boundaries between public and private and new notions of how to make politics.

C31.P26

Other movements were analyzed in the context of the 1980s economic crisis and the subsequent neoliberal reforms that took place across Latin America. The examination of poor urban women's mobilization around collective strategies such as communal kitchens and mothers' neighborhood committees coalesced around two conceptual discussions: development studies and the emergence of poor women as active participants in urban movements such the *movimiento de pobladores*. (This latter topic was explored by Latin American sociologists, particularly in Chile in the 1970s.) In the first case, collective strategies deployed by poor women to cope with the crisis showed that the domain of social reproduction was filling in for the absence of the state in many ways. In the second case, women's agency and capacity to negotiate with different layers of the state had been ignored by previous research on urban collective action. Molyneux's concept of practical and strategic interests (1985, 2001) was crucial in launching a debate on the character of these movements and their relationship with the state. Practical interests were defined as needs deriving from women's domestic position (e.g., as caregivers), whereas strategic interests were claims oriented toward addressing gender inequalities. Studies on

C31.P27

poor women's mobilization in Peru (Barrig, 1989; Blondet, 2004), Ecuador (Lind, 1994), and Chile (Molyneux, 2001) produced a rich discussion on collective action, identities, citizenship, and social transformation. Molyneux (2001) pointed to the risks of how these movements could be instrumentalized by neoliberal states, which could place the responsibility for coping with social reproduction on women's shoulders. She also questioned the transformative power of practical interests to strengthen women's social citizenship. Other work, such as Lind's (1994), preferred to highlight women's collective experience and agency as a source of transformation, regardless of the kinds of interests involved in their mobilization. In the case of Ecuador, Lind showed that urban poor organizations created a social and political identity for women that allowed them to see beyond their fight for survival (1994).

Women's collective actions were analyzed as part of civil society's transformation across the continent and the changing meaning of politics. In 1994, Magdalena León edited a volume with seven case studies on women's movements. The volume discussed women's seemingly paradoxical political engagement—their robust social participation in grassroots organizations and simultaneous absence from formal politics—and analyzed how women's exclusion from formal power and the public sphere led them to seek alternative forms of participation and empowerment (León, 1994). León also reflected on what she called the state's dual relationship with women as both an institution controlling women's bodies and one guaranteeing them some rights. According to León (1994), the state can be neutral with regard to gender in certain areas, such as macro-economic policy, and thus might consequently reproduce inequalities. At the same time, it might be gender-sensitive in other areas and work to transform gender relations. In fact, León's work tracked how women's movements in the 1990s transitioned from confronting the state to negotiating with it. From then on, researchers increasingly focused on the institutionalization of collective action in relation to the state.

The ways in which neoliberal states across Latin America incorporated gender issues into public policy in the 1990s and early 2000s were critically examined by several studies, providing new keys for understanding the character of the state in a period of disenchantment and contradictions. Indeed, while several gender equity issues were successfully introduced in policy agendas, their implementation was much more difficult to achieve, and institutionalization seems to have alienated feminist movements from the state. Research on the implementation of a feminist agenda in judiciary, executive, and legislative contexts highlighted the advances or pitfalls in democratic practices. Some issues, such as gender quotas or legislative progress on gender

C31.P28

C31.P29

equality, received more academic attention than others, and the analytical frame usually combined concepts from political sociology and political science. Overall, feminist advocacy and interaction between feminist movements and the state offered “an important indicator of how well democratic institutions are working and where they are falling short” (Jaquette, 2009, p. 17).

Women’s political participation and the effect of gender quotas on political elections was one prominent topic of analysis during this period. Marx, Borner, and Camminotti (2009), showed that, after fifteen years of quotas in Argentinean elections, women were still excluded from the process of candidate selection and that, despite quota implementation, women did not participate in leadership roles or important legislative committees (Jaquette, 2009). Women’s active participation to enforce the application of the law through feminist litigation illustrated important changes and a shift toward different forms of advocacy and interactions between feminists and the state (Kohen, 2009; Piovesan, 2009). Scholarship has closely followed women’s political participation in judicial, executive, and legislative contexts and has interrogated the capacity of the state to transform women’s lives. While female political participation increased in every studied country, increased approval ratings for women’s rights legislation and the effective implementation of gender equality policies did not inevitably follow. Moreover, as Friedman and Tabbush (2019, p. 12) put it: “To claim modern values in the face of real economic hardship, some states offered a trade-off of state recognition of certain gender- and sexuality-based demands for economic benefits.”

Comparative country studies have explored both how feminist movements can influence the public agenda and their relationship with the state, as well as how variations in their relationship with the state affect their capacity to influence the public agenda (Rein, 2011). One recent study on an urban poor women’s movement in Peru (*Comedores populares y Vaso de Leche*) gives a historical account of the emblematic movement and interrogates its political identity; it examines its politics and actions inside and outside the movement, looking at power relations, types of leadership, and negotiations with the state. Despite the multiple faces of the movement—from its participatory politics to its client-based, paternalistic, and technocratic relations to its political fragmentation—the authors argue that such organizations have a fundamental role in the lives of the people and have managed over more than fifteen years to influence and negotiate vital benefits with politicians and the state (Bebbington, Scurrah, & Bielich, 2011).

C31.P30

C31.P31

Recent studies have also analyzed the emergence of women's indigenous organizations in Mexico, Guatemala, Bolivia, and Peru in the context of intersectionality and gender. Most of this research examines the organizations' political roots and their relationship with other indigenous and peasant movements, as well as with the feminist movement. These studies find many political tensions and identity conflicts but also locate the rise of a new political subject—one who fights for gender equity and against class exploitation and racial discrimination. Understanding indigenous women's motivations to mobilize, the ideas they dispute in the public sphere, and the way they confront and negotiate with the state helps us to redefine our comprehension of politics, just as the mothers of the human rights and peace movements in the 1980s expanded our definition of the feminist subject and citizenship (Espinosa, 2010; Galeano & Werner, 2014; Pequeño, 2009). Other works have looked at the relationship of these indigenous organizations with the global women's movement (Juanena, 2016). In the case of Colombia, a country affected by social and political violence for more than seventy years now, the participation of women in peace movements and the gendered effects of violence have been most intensely studied. These works focus on interrogating vulnerability and victimhood as key concepts that contribute to erasing women's agency and collective actions (Rodríguez & Vidal Charris, 2017).

C31.P32

Finally, the most recent literature on collective action homes in Latin America's church-led revival of conservative movements against gender demands, particularly concerning sexual rights and abortion. This scholarship opens up a much-needed sociological debate on the relationship between gender and religion. From the standpoint of the collective action debate, studies are investigating feminists' confrontations with this conservative trend in different public arenas. Examples of such confrontations are disputes over legislation and public policies on reproductive rights in the education and health sectors (Amuchástegui, Cruz, Aldaz, & Mejía, 2012; Morán, 2013; Tarducci, 2017; Vaggione & Jones, 2014).

C31.P33

Relatedly, new subjectivities around sexuality and the body as the center of politics are being explored, not only in relation to LGBT rights but also to sex workers' collective actions. The "crossed legs" or sex strike movement in Colombia is an interesting example of new exclusions and resistance (Jiménez, 2015).

C31.P34

With regard to formal politics, a number of studies are analyzing the relationship between politics and social inequalities by assessing the impact of gender quotas on the electoral system and on political representation. Several of these studies have used comparative analysis to test the efficacy of quotas on improving gender representation through what Phillips (1999) has called the politics of presence; that is, the importance of

C31.P35

having women and ethnic minorities represented through affirmative action or other ways in our democracies. A combination of political culture, the characteristics of the electoral system, and the formulation of new quota rules affects the results in different ways. In these studies, national comparisons help us understand why a factor that produces favorable results in one national context does the opposite in another. (Archenti & Tula, 2008; Fernández, 2011; Martínez & Garrido, 2013; Medero, 2010).

Other studies focus on the conditions of female political participation, particularly working-class, indigenous, and Afro women. While economic and cultural contexts account for many specific differences, in general, education, kinship experience with politics, and economic resources seem to be crucial for fostering women's leadership (Mosquera, 2018; Pachón, Peña, & Wills, 2012).

Two more issues are worth mentioning for their contribution to the analysis of gender inequalities and resistance or agency. The first is the increasing number of studies examining how sexuality is politicized, and the second is the rise of Afro and indigenous women's movements across Latin America. Comparing and contrasting these movements with previous ones showed that feminist repertoires of collective action have expanded beyond gender issues alone to include sexual, ethnic, and racial dimensions. These issues have intersected with gender to create new forms and meanings for political action. Also, these intersectional movements interact with states in the context of a renewed conservative and religious discourse and political action against gender. This context must be taken into account for the questions it raises on secularity and the role of religion in public life, as well as religion's effect on the sexual and reproductive rights of women and LGBT populations.

Sexual rights are currently receiving a great deal of attention in Latin American sociology. The plethora of studies on the politicization of sexuality and LGBT demands recalls 1980s-era discussions on democratization (Corrales, 2015). The relationship with the state has been a prominent topic within these discussions. According to Corrales (2015), this recent literature has highlighted three principal features. First, countries with legislation favorable to LGBT and similar groups, as well as societies with more tolerant attitudes generally, are those with higher population incomes. There thus seems to be a positive relationship between democratic openness toward LGBT populations and economic development. Second, LGBT movements do not act in isolation: Their demands are articulated within political parties and/or progressive judicial systems. In other words, democratic institutions are crucial to the advancement of sexual rights. And third, by promoting

C31.P36

C31.P37

C31.P38

conservative agendas, religious institutions are becoming key political actors in opposing sexual rights across the continent. Several scholars therefore think that the field of religion needs to be studied in detail in this context. Conservative groups' responses to sexual and reproductive rights and the role of religious institutions and religious groups in women's and LGBT lives need to be fully assessed (Corrales, 2015). Vaggione and Jones (2014) take this approach in their study of Argentina's legislative debate over gay marriage. By examining the relationship between religion and politics, the authors demonstrated that one factor enabling the legalization of LGBT marriage was an alliance and rapprochement between LGBT groups and progressive branches of evangelical and Catholic churches. Furthermore, intersections between sexual diversity and ethnicity are starting to be addressed as part of this literature. For example, Bautista (2018) looks at LGBT groups among indigenous communities in Mexico.

The state's treatment of LGBT populations in their public policies has also been examined. In Chile, Echeverría and Maturana (2015) studied four public policy initiatives focused on LGBT population and found that, despite a discourse on rights, the initiatives were still embedded in a hetero-normative framework controlling sexuality and bodies. Consequently, the exercise of citizenship by the LGBT population was compromised.

C31.P39

Finally, an increasing number of recent studies are interested in how leftist Latin American states have dealt with gender and sexual rights since the millennium. A recent volume by Friedman and Tabbush (2019) collects studies on Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, and Venezuela, illustrating complex mixtures of pro- and anti-feminist and LGBT discourses and practices across, between, and within states. They also highlight persistent paradoxes, such as important advances in LGBT rights and policies occurring alongside limitations of indigenous and women's rights. In general, Friedman and Tabbush (2019) conclude that political and economic projects of the Pink Tide leftist movement were informed by traditional understandings of gender and sexuality and that, although there were important advances in social and political rights, there was no transformation of more deeply rooted gender norms and values. Indeed, the gender assumptions behind policy formulation still rest on a firm neoliberal foundation. Welfare policies rely strongly on unpaid work, extractive economies, poverty alleviation, and traditional notions of the family, and they do not address the structure of gender and class inequalities (Friedman & Tabbush, 2019). Thus, everyday women's lives did not fundamentally change. In addition, the authors found that states dealt with social welfare, political representation, and occasionally policies against gender violence, but that there was a tradeoff between

C31.P40

women's bodily autonomy (abortion) and LGBT recognition and identity. Different authors have argued that states are treating LGBT-friendly policies as signs of modernity while reducing their support for reproductive rights such as abortion in a process termed "pink washing." To summarize this complicated state of affairs, nationalist and anti-neoliberal struggles tend to erase feminist demands.

New/Old Themes in the Sociology of Gender: Violence, Care, and Work

C31.S3

The following chapters in this volume present contributions from the sociology of gender examining three currently productive research areas: gender violence, care, and the transformation of women's labor.

C31.P41

The chapter on gender violence by Costa Rican sociologist Montserrat Sagot discusses the most important Latin American theoretical contributions on violence against women. It also presents different proposals the feminist movement has put forward addressing gender violence, as well as the controversies surrounding those proposals. The first section reviews studies examining different forms of violence experienced by women during armed conflicts and dictatorships. The second section deals with the ways in which the transition to democracy gave feminists opportunities for getting the problem of gender violence on the public agenda but also led to the institutionalization of feminist demands. The escalation of lethal violence against women in the region and the new concepts developed to explain those conditions are discussed in the third section. The final section deals with the most recent strategies feminists in the region have developed for ending violence against women.

C31.P42

The second chapter in this section, by Uruguayan sociologist Kattya Batthyany, provides an account of the rise of care as a subject of sociological analysis in Latin America. The author shows how the social organization of care evolved in the framework of the "care crisis," characterized by increased female participation in the labor market, a more diverse organization of households and families, and the scarce participation of men in care and domestic chores. Shifts in women's professional lives, along with scant investment in public services and social benefits, have given rise to a crisis of care. Batthyany discusses three approaches to the issue of care within Latin American sociology that stem from the discussion of social reproduction described earlier: first, care as a right and its implications for discussions of citizenship; second, the social organization of care and

C31.P43

shifting roles between men and women; and third, the relationship between care and social policies. The author concludes by listing the main challenges for future investigations of care.

The last chapter, by Erynn Masi de Casanova, focuses on gender inequalities in the current Latin American labor market. Drawing on evidence from recent research, that chapter addresses the following two questions: What are the most important patterns and trends in gender and work in Latin America? How does gender affect people's experiences of work? Women's employment has increased substantially since the middle of the twentieth century, yet women workers confront several sources of inequality that limit the benefits of paid employment. Gender inequality in the labor force is maintained through occupational segregation, funneling men and women into different jobs; through the greater likelihood of women's informal rather than formal employment; and through the unequal distribution of unpaid work in the home. Tracing macro-level (regional and national) trends while also attending to workers' experiences, the chapter surveys the major issues in the study of gender and work in Latin America today.

C31.P44

Notes

C31.S5

1. The works of Marta Lamas (1999) and Teresita de Barbieri (1993) were influential across Latin America in this transition from a women's subordination framework to a gender framework. Both scholars were inspired by the works of Anglo-Saxon feminists such as Gayle Rubin and Joan Scott in their defense of gender as a system (De Barbieri, 1993) or as an analytical category in dialogue with the French category of sexual difference (Lamas, 1999).
2. For a review of this literature, see Herrera (2013, 2016).

C31.P45

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C31.S4

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