

Decolonising the Research Agenda on the Continuum of Violence against Women in Latin America: Network of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies

Call for papers

**British Academy Writing Workshop
15 – 16 March 2022
Bogota Colombia**

Organisers:

Dr Sanne Weber, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom (S.Weber@bham.ac.uk)

Dr Tatiana Sanchez Parra, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia

(tatiana.sanchez@javeriana.edu.co)

Background

Latin America is a region marked by conflict and violence. Historically it has been the scene of military dictatorships, revolutions, and armed conflicts. Although most armed conflicts have now formally been resolved, violence continues to be widespread. In Guatemala, political violence turned into criminal violence, characterised by the rise of new armed actors, while drug trafficking, paramilitary and guerrilla groups continue to cause insecurity in Colombia. Authoritarian regimes have destabilised countries like Brazil, while large numbers of migrants try to escape extreme poverty and criminal violence, especially in Central America and the Caribbean. Large-scale agro-industrial projects have caused environmental devastation and social conflicts throughout the continent. All these forms of violence affect the development and security of entire communities. However, they have a differentiated impact on women because they are expected to assume the care work and are often in more subordinated positions, which are exacerbated by political and armed violence. In addition, there are forms of violence that have targeted women more than other groups of people. Sexual violence, for instance, has systematically been used against women in the armed conflicts of Guatemala and Colombia, while the present-day phenomenon of femicide in countries like Mexico is also often accompanied by sexual violence. This evidences a continuum of violence against women, referring to how violence flows across public and private spaces, from peace to conflict, and through social, economic and political arenas (Cockburn 2004).

At the same time, there is a tendency to portray women mainly as victims of such violence, reinforcing representations of women as a passive group in need of protection, and neglecting their stories of resistance and agency. Although it is increasingly recognised that women are important actors in peacebuilding, for example through the United Nations Women, Peace and Security Agenda, such arguments are often based on essentialisms about women's inherent peacefulness, associated with their role as mothers with natural caring and nurturing capacities. This prevents a more nuanced analysis of women's roles as socio-economic and political actors, recognising their strategies of survival and resistance as well as their capacity of choice, dissent and disruption before, during, and after political and armed violence.

The contribution of Latin American academics working on these crucial issues is restricted by their marginalised position within colonised academic agendas and their limited access to international scholarly networks, which is reinforced by the historical focus on the African continent in UK academia. This is evidenced in the under-representation of South-based

feminist scholars in international journals on women, gender and politics (Medie and Kang 2018).

Workshop objectives

This workshop will foster a collaborative network to position perspectives from Latin America more strongly in international research publications and allow early career researchers (ECRs) from Latin America to influence and decolonise research agendas on gender, peacebuilding and security. It will enable ECRs to build international academic networks with scholars based in the UK, Colombia and the USA, and support them to publish in high impact journals in the humanities and social sciences, enhancing their career development. During a two-day workshop, Latin American ECRs will be supported to publish their research in high impact journals through mentoring and training on publication skills by experienced Colombian, UK and US-based academics and journal editors. This will result in a special issue in an international peer-reviewed journal in English. Throughout the workshop, collaboration will be fostered with and among Latin American ECRs towards decolonising international scholarly debates on the conceptualisation of and responses to the continuum of violence against women in Latin America. This will result in an academic network of Latin American ECRs and mid-career and senior academics based in Colombia, the UK and USA with experience in international publishing and editing, whose work addresses the various ways in which intertwined forms of violence in the region impact women, and how women have endured, resisted, and transformed those experiences.

Workshop practicalities and eligibility criteria

The workshop will be held on the 15-16th March 2022 in Bogota, Colombia, as long as the global health context allows for the organisation of an in-person workshop. This however means that all participants must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19, and must have an adequate health insurance which covers for any unforeseen circumstances. Global health guidelines will be adhered to in order to guarantee a safe environment for the workshop. If global health conditions do not allow for travelling to Colombia, the workshop will be held in a virtual format.

In addition, participants must meet the following criteria:

- The workshop is directed to ECRs, understood as researchers who are within eight years of the award of their PhD. Applications from people in the last stages of their PhD will be considered.
- The workshop will be held in English to facilitate the participation of international journal editors as mentors and the submission of the special issue proposal to a high impact journal. Participants must therefore be able to write and speak in English.
- The workshop will focus particularly on the experiences of women in Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia and Brazil. ECRs working in institutions in these countries are invited to apply, as well as ECRs with no institutional affiliation or with part-time contracts working in these countries. Applications from ECRs from Latin America who are conducting research on Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia and Brazil, but who are not based on these countries, will also be considered.
- The workshop objective is the publication of a special issue and participants will receive mentoring and support to publish an article. The data for the publication must already have been collected and rough draft of the article in English must be shared in advance of the workshop.

Application process

If you are interested in participating in this workshop, please submit a 250 word abstract of your proposed article, a 250 word biography, and a 250 word statement addressing how participating in the workshop could contribute to your career development to the organisers before the 13th of December 2021 by midnight GMT.

Organisers:

Dr Sanne Weber, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom (S.Weber@bham.ac.uk)

Dr Tatiana Sanchez Parra, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia

(tatiana.sanchez@javeriana.edu.co)

This Writing Workshop has been funded by the British Academy and is co-organised by the University of Birmingham (UK) and Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Colombia).

References

- Cockburn, C. (2004) 'The Continuum of Violence: A Gender Perspective on War and Peace'. in *Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones*. ed. by Giles, W. and Hyndman, J. Berkeley: University of California Press, 24–44.
- Medie, P. A. and Kang, A. J. (2018) 'Power, knowledge and the politics of gender in the Global South'. *European Journal of Politics and Gender* 1(1-2): 37-54.