

CfP: BLAR Special issue on COVID in Latin America and the Caribbean

The Bulletin of Latin American Research (BLAR) publishes original research of current interest on Latin America and the Caribbean as well as the Latin American Diaspora from all academic disciplines within the Social Sciences and Humanities. Given the significant impact of the COVID 19 pandemic in the region we are inviting contributions for a virtual Special Issue.

As of 3 May, the Pan American Health Organisation and World Health Organisation reported 248,653 COVID cases and 13,436 COVID-related deaths across Latin America and the Caribbean¹ but countries have differed in their levels of preparedness and ability to respond to the virus. Attention has been given to the nature of Latin American health systems and their ability to respond to the health challenges associated with the virus. Much of the region is characterized by segmented and fragmented health systems that leave vulnerable populations without adequate health care. The impact of COVID raises significant questions about Latin American social policy which had made important strides in reducing poverty and inequality in recent decades – how sustainable are these gains now? What does COVID mean for exposed and marginalized populations across the region? The social cost of the pandemic has also generated considerable concern, particularly the inevitable rise of domestic violence as many households remain in lockdown. Moreover, what does lockdown mean for those who lack access to secure housing and basic infrastructure and how can marginalized households maintain safe levels of hygiene.

At the same time the long-term political implications of the pandemic remain unclear. In Brazil Bolsonaro's handling of the COVID situation has led to political crisis and public protest, in Chile the outbreak of COVID brought social unrest to a rapid halt while Nicaragua has attracted global criticism for President Ortega's on-going denial of the significance of the pandemic. The different types of government interventions have brought back the state presence in terms of security, enforcing states of exception but also in terms of social assistance and welfare. We welcome reflections that engage with the short and long-term local, national and regional political implications of the state of flux of state-society relations in the light of the pandemic. Likewise, we encourage articles that interrogate the implications upon the political context from a social movement perspective, looking particularly

¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/latin-america-caribbean-weekly-situation-update-27-april-3-may-2020-04-may-2020>

at the discursive and organisational reactions of social, ethnic, feminist and environmentalist actors to the new context.

Globally, the pandemic is being largely rationalized through biomedical expertise and narratives as well as war imageries. However, we cannot assume these to take the same form everywhere or to go unchallenged. We therefore also welcome contributions that consider the cultural narratives, meanings and representations of COVID being put forth across Latin America as well as the social and political issues and themes to which they are related. Relevant questions in this regard are what forms these are taking; where they are enunciated and by whom; how they are racialized, gendered or class-based; and how they are related to historical and lived experiences.

We also welcome contributions that specifically locate the Covid-19 outbreak in historical perspective, particularly the different government responses that we have seen. Many researchers have started to do this, investigating the (local, national and international) measures taken to combat past pandemics, such as smallpox, when there was no remedy or vaccine available, and probing past debates – from the colonial period through to the modern era – about accountability and responsibility. Interesting comparisons can also be drawn between past and the present civilian reactions to government policies, especially the evasion of government instructions, and the punishments that came as a result.

Submission Details

There is a strict word limit of **1500** words and all papers will be subject to review. Papers can be submitted in Spanish, Portuguese or English and we anticipate that some resources will be available to translate papers into English.

We anticipate an online special issue will appear in mid-October

Deadline for submissions: 15th June 2020.

Please see our journal webpage for information to authors on style guide and the submission link:

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/14709856>

Any queries contact Co-ordinating Editor: Jasmine Gideon – j.gideon@bbk.ac.uk