Introduction

Under the authoritarian regimes that dominated the 1950s to the 1980s, during the regional wave of democratization, and as citizens of new democracies, women have been instrumental political actors in many facets of politics in the Latin American region. Due to the many ways women are involved in politics, academic studies of the role of gender in contentious politics are equally varied, encompassing disciplines such as political science, sociology, and anthropology. Women engage in politics both inside and outside the state in many different ways. In this bibliography, we are focused on women's political activism outside the state and women's engagement as citizens. Whereas the study of women's representation in government focuses on women as elites, this bibliography focuses on political activism from non-state actors, such as social movements, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), opinion leaders, and grassroots leaders, as well as political engagement in terms of citizens' participation. For more information on women in formal political roles, see the separate Oxford Bibliographies article Women's Representation in Governmental Office in Latin America.

Important Works

This section highlights some of the most influential research on women's political activism from non-state actors and women's political engagement as citizens. In particular, it draws the reader's attention to foundational research in the field, research that was the first of its kind in Latin America, or work that has inspired new lines of research. To begin with, the foundational work Molyneux 1985, draws on the case of Nicaragua to illustrate the critical opportunities that women's involvement in democratic transitions affords women to make progress toward gender equality. Waylen 1994 was instrumental in de-marginalizing the important role that women played in regional pro-democracy movements. This research has informed work on women in civil society, women's movements, and improved the study of democratization more generally by pointing out women's overlooked contributions. With respect to women's movements specifically, innovative research by Alvarez 1990 demonstrates the important role that women and women's movements played in bringing about democracy in Latin America. Leveraging case study evidence from Brazil, Alvarez elucidates the role of gender issues in motivating social movements in Latin America. Baldez 2002 developed a new theory to explain when women's movements will emerge. Alvarez's research on Brazil and subsequent work by Baldez on Chile has inspired countless studies on women's movements in Latin America and beyond. In the author's pioneering research on NGOs, Alvarez 1999 describes the 1990s "boom" in NGOs specializing in gender policy and elucidates the factors that challenge feminist NGOs’ capacity to promote policy changes. Alvarez’s work has been widely read and cited—forging the path for a large body of work on feminist NGOs in Latin America. Finally, Desposato and Norrander 2009 and Zetterberg 2009 broke new ground using cross-national survey data to systematically examine women's mass political behavior. Though these works were relatively recent, their empirical framework simultaneously using country level data as well as public opinion data was new to the study of gender in Latin America. These works have motivated a number of scholars (in Latin America and beyond) to investigate how women's numeric representation (Desposato and Norrander 2009) and the adoption of gender quotas (Zetterberg 2009) shape women's political engagement, public opinion, and gender attitudes.

In spite of a longer authoritarian streak than any other Latin American nation, Brazil also had the largest, most successful, and most diverse women's movement of any state in the region. Placing Brazil in a comparative frame, the author shows the importance of small political changes and shifts in women's gender consciousness in creating the conditions for the movement as a whole.


Drawing on fieldwork and over two hundred interviews conducted in Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Colombia during 1997 and 1998, Alvarez examines three factors claimed to undermine NGOs’ ability to promote feminist policies and inspire social change: (1) state and IGOs treating NGOs as gender experts rather than citizens’ groups; (2) the assumption that NGOs are a substitute for civil society; (3) increasing subcontracts between state and feminist NGOs on government women's programs.


Now considered a classic work on social movements, this book points to three aspects of social movements as important factors in their emergence: tipping, timing, and framing. Tipping refers to movement coalescence, the point when various groups can be said to have formed a movement. Timing and framing refer to the political context of a movement, and the intentional choices of a movement, which enable mobilization.


This article was one of the first to apply research on gender gaps in political participation from industrialized democracies to the developing world. In Latin America, the authors find little evidence that economic development helps close gender gaps. Rather, women's workforce participation helps close gender gaps in conventional forms of political participation. The authors find that regime type affects men's and women's political participation differently. In countries with fewer political freedoms, women protest more, whereas men participate in protest at higher levels in countries with more political freedoms.


Despite women playing an outsized role in Nicaragua’s transition to democracy, institutional inequality for women persisted under the new regime. However, the author challenges assertions that women are always worse off after transition, showing that some progress toward gender equality was made during transition that might otherwise have been impossible.


The existing literature on democratization tended to minimize or ignore women's contributions to pro-democracy movements. This article advances our understanding of democratization by showing that women usually play a critical part in pro-democracy movements and the subsequent transition to electoral politics.

Latin American countries have been at the forefront of gender quota legislation. Zetterberg explains that in addition to increasing the number of women in office, quotas are meant to generate women’s advancement in all spheres of society. In one of the first cross-national analyses of women’s political engagement at the citizen level, he uses Latinobarometer survey data to show that quota legislation on its own has no discernible effect on women’s political engagement in Latin America.

**General Works**

This section draws readers’ attention to a number of resources that provide regional or temporal breadth on women’s political activism in Latin America. Scholarship in this section is particularly useful for gaining a broad exposure to a number of case studies across Latin America. Furthermore, the research in this section exposes readers to a range of disciplinary approaches while situating the discussion of women’s political activism in contemporary intellectual debates. To begin with, in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America* (Escobar and Alvarez 1992) the authors include multiple chapters addressing social movements from the perspective of feminism in Latin America, popular women’s organizations, and homosexual identities. Older research has focused largely on women’s involvement in left-wing movements across Latin America, so González-Rivera and Kampwirth 2001 moves our understanding of women’s movements in a new direction by incorporating a focus on women’s involvement in right-wing movements. Maier and Lebon 2010 assembles an interdisciplinary group of scholars to address women’s political activism in a range of countries—including Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela—over a period of four decades. Stephen 2010 provides rich ethnographic research, describing women’s grassroots activism in Mexico, El Salvador, Brazil, and Chile. Likewise, Radcliffe and Westwood 1993 explores women’s involvement in popular protest in eight different Latin American countries. Molyneux 2001 provides an interdisciplinary prospective on women’s political activism in the developing world, drawing extensively on case study evidence from Argentina, Nicaragua, and Cuba. The work in this section exposes readers to decades of women’s political activism, over a range of case studies, across a number of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.


A number of chapters in this volume focus on women’s movements in Latin America. Three themes emerge in these contributions: the role of movements in defining and reinforcing identity, the importance of movement strategy, and the alternative visions of democracy and development that some movements have adopted.


Past research on Latin American women’s movements has largely ignored right-wing women. This book contains a number of essays considering the role of both right- and left-wing women in movements in Latin America.


This interdisciplinary volume leverages feminist theory to address women’s political activism and women’s efforts to shape public policy at the local, regional, and global level over a period of four decades in Latin America. This collection of essays deepens our understanding of women’s political behavior as the authors explore the ways that different groups of women (e.g., mother, racial,
lesbian, and indigenous groups) establish agency in the political process.


Molyneux takes an interdisciplinary approach to investigating the role of gender and political power within liberal, authoritarian, and revolutionary states in Latin America. Drawing on evidence from Argentina, Nicaragua, and Cuba she discusses the role of women’s movements and citizenship in the developing world.


Radcliffe and Westwood theorize the need to move beyond the constructs of public/private and practical/strategic dichotomies to consider the ways that social movements politicize private issues and to consider how gender, race, and class intersect to influence women’s movements. This volume provides a useful overview for scholars interested in women’s protest and movements, ranging from the mothers and widows of the disappeared in El Salvador and housewives’ and mothers’ protest in Chile to ecology movements in Venezuela and peasant movements in Peru.


This extensive study of women’s grassroots activism draws on six case studies in Mexico, El Salvador, Brazil, and Chile. Stephen uses extensive original interviews with political activists and exhaustively documents the histories of organizations and movements in each of these cases to explore how issues such as rape, physical abuse, and reproductive rights are intricately connected to women’s demands for access to housing, food, land, and medical care.

**Women and Social Movements in Latin America**

Women’s involvement in social movements from the colonial period to the period of democratization in Latin America inspired many researchers to examine when and why women organize into large-scale movements. These seminal works have inspired scholars to examine both women’s movements and women’s contributions to social movements in general, which had historically been overlooked. Given the vast amount of research on the topic of women’s social movements, and the eclectic nature of theoretical perspectives authors have used to understand the topic, the research on social movements is divided into subsections based on the movement’s self-proclaimed goal, namely democratization, women’s political rights, economic equality, or total revolution.

**Women in Pro-Democracy Movements**

Throughout the various transitions from authoritarianism toward democratic governance in Latin America, especially those in the late 1980s and early 1990s, women were a particularly active and vocal group participating in pro-democracy movements. Scholars such as Alvarez 1990 and Waylen 1994 (both cited under Important Works) highlighted the lack of scholarly attention to gender by democratization scholars, and subsequent authors were inspired to study the subject in more detail. Many of these works, such as Noonan 1995, Navarro 1989, and Schirmer 1989, provide detailed sociohistorical accounts of so called “motherist” groups, like the Madres of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, that arose during repressive periods and helped accelerate Latin American transitions to democracy. Others, such as Huiskamp 2000 and Baldez 2003, provide more theoretical frameworks for understanding why women’s movements arise in the first place and how they frame their goals and actions to succeed.

Though women around the world have generally been critical participants in pro-democracy movements, sometimes they organize around their gender identity during transitional periods, while at other times they do not. The author argues that access to resources, the framing of issues, and women’s inclusion in agenda-setting within the opposition explains this strategic choice.


NGOs provide a crucial base of support for women’s movements, but they are not without their limitations. The author examines NGOs in Nicaragua working on women’s health issues to show that NGO-based organizing can be effective at influencing policy outcomes.


Previous works on democratic transitions were incomplete as they focused too heavily on elite level negotiations. This work moves forward our understanding of democratic transitions by focusing on how the psychological changes in citizens’ attitudes can affect their potential to mobilize and their strategies for reforming.


Navarro’s now classic account of the Madres of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina was one of the first works to illustrate women’s critical roles in democratization movements and in human rights protests. Though gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles often hurt women politically, she shows that women can also manipulate these aspects of gender to effectively mobilize and frame their protests.


During the military regime, many activists were forced to leave Brazil to avoid persecution. However, women in exile were largely ignored in scholarly treatments of this time. The authors fill this gap in understanding by analyzing primary sources and interviewing many women who fled Brazil, showing that the experience of exile motivated and shaped their expatriate activism.


Using Chile as a case study, the author explores how gender ideology influences social movements in authoritarian regimes. Women’s movements have additional space to frame their protests under certain conditions, and employ cultural narratives effectively under authoritarian regimes.

Women, particularly “motherist” groups like the Madres of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, were particularly active in resisting authoritarian abuses in the Latin American region. This article traces the evolution of several of these groups, showing that the authoritarian regimes’ use of family and motherhood frames to legitimize their rule ironically left them open to protests by women.


Women’s movements are typically thought to mobilize as either feminine or feminist in character. The author challenges this dichotomy, looking at the Mothers of the Disappeared in El Salvador to show that women there have incorporated state repression, domestic inequality, and sexuality in their discourses all at the same time.


Though women’s role in democratization has occupied much scholarly attention, little thought had been given to explaining the variation of outcomes that transitions show. The author argues that the type of transition to democracy, legacies of women’s previous movements, transitional ideology, and international factors all help to explain the gendered outcomes of transition movements.

Women’s Rights Movements

Perhaps unsurprisingly, women in Latin America also frequently organize into movements specifically to secure rights that women historically lacked, such as suffrage or reproductive rights as they have also done in the rest of the world. Older works in this genre provide historical accounts of the various women’s movements, such as Morton 1962, an account of the women’s suffrage movement in Mexico. More recently, women have achieved legal equality but still lag in political power, as Franceschet 2004 shows in her analyses of strategic framing in mobilization of women’s movements, and Kampwirth 1998 demonstrates in her analyses of the roles gender images and organized feminism play in electoral campaigns.


Marxism and Feminism in the United States remained largely separate movements during the 1980s, but converged in Latin America. The author argues this is due to second-wave feminist movements, women’s role in social movements, and a tradition of internal critique in Latin American Marxist movements.


Much research finds that women’s movements have “demobilized” after the transition to democracy in many Latin American countries. Looking to Chile as a case study, the author finds that women’s movements have actually shifted to more institutional forms of mobilization.


Women’s movements adopt frames to make mobilization easier and to legitimize their movements. The author argues that when...
women are excluded from politics, they often adopt an apolitical frame for their movements, but when women are making headway in the political sphere, they adopt more explicitly political frames.


While women’s movements have made great strides in the transitional periods of many Latin American countries, anti-feminist forces have sought to reject changes to women’s status. While these forces were, at least temporarily, successful in Nicaragua, they failed in El Salvador due to women’s effective organization.


This work represents the earliest scholarly treatment of the women’s suffrage movement in Mexico. It provides a valuable sociohistorical account of the events of the suffrage movement leading up to women’s enfranchisement.


Women’s rights movements in Latin America frequently clash with religious fundamentalism also found in the region, particularly on the issue of abortion rights. The author uses Mexico, Colombia, and Brazil as case studies to illustrate how feminist movements try to maneuver around religious issues. In particular, abortion rights movements have developed new ethical frameworks and gradualist strategies of litigation to advance women’s rights in spite of religious backlash.

Women in Economic Movements

A smaller but important set of works also look to women’s roles in movements for economic equality and fairness. Safa 1990 shows that poor women have often participated in economic movements, and that in doing so, they have shifted slightly away from more traditional views of gender, and Craske 1999 emphasizes the critical importance of economic marginalization for women’s political equality.


While this book touches on all aspects of gender politics in the Latin American region, the author dedicates a significant portion of her book to social movements in particular. In spite of the critical role of women in anti-authoritarian movements, the author argues that economic marginalization still holds women back from full political equality compared to men.


Poor women in particular have not always been the subject of study for those looking at social movements. However, in Latin America, poor women participated heavily in human rights and economic protests. Though these movements are often framed as “traditional,” and the participation of poor women has led to greater awareness of gender inequality in the region.

Women’s economic activism does not always receive the scholarly attention it deserves. This piece considers women’s mobilization during the economic crisis in Argentina in 2002. In particular, this piece shows that women’s bodies were intentionally politicized during the crisis as symbols of both suffering and resistance.

**Women in Revolutionary Movements**

Latin America is unique both because women are active participants in the many revolutionary groups of the region (such as Sendero Luminoso in Peru or the FARC in Colombia) but also because scholars have long acknowledged women’s importance for such groups (in contrast to other regions, like Africa, where women’s participation in violent conflict was often ignored). Jaquette 1973, a formative piece on women’s role in revolutionary movements, sparked a vibrant research program showing that revolutionary struggle and feminism are intertwined (Kampwirth 2014), and that some guerilla movements are more open for women’s involvement than others (Gonzalez-Perez 2006).


Women participate in guerilla movements in Latin America, but not all of them are created equal. The author distinguishes between “international” movements opposed to the United States, capitalism, or Western culture, and “domestic” movements acting against oppression in their own nation. International groups tend to limit gender roles for their female participants, while domestic movements allow women into all aspects of the organization.


Women participate in guerilla movements in Latin America at a very high rate, even in combat roles. The symbol of the revolutionary woman has spread across the world, but scholarly attention prior to this work was lacking. The author fills this gap by providing detailed accounts of how women participated in many revolutionary movements in Latin America.


In Latin America, armed struggle and feminism have been linked in interesting ways. Women have often mobilized to promote revolutionary agendas with little connection to gender equality. This, in turn, created a Latin American feminism that merged revolutionary goals (economic equality, social justice) and feminist aims of gender equality, nonviolence, and reproductive rights. Using interviews with participants in revolutionary movements in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Mexico’s Chiapas region, this book traces the process of guerilla struggle transitioning to feminist struggle.


This book focuses specifically on the women of the Sendero Luminoso in Peru. Like many other works on the region, the author found that women were much more willing to participate in revolutionary struggles of their own accord and served in far more active roles than might be expected.

The stereotypical perspective of women's involvement in revolutionary movements saw them as participants incorporated by male family members and largely filling support roles. In spite of revolutionary aims, guerrilla movements often reinforced existing gender roles rather than seeking to overthrow them. This work challenges that perspective by examining women in primary combat roles across multiple revolutionary movements.


Women have contributed to many guerrilla movements, but their role has not always been well understood. This article examines patterns of women’s participation in several Latin American revolutionary movements by looking at overall rates of participation between women and men, and what sectors of the women’s population are more likely to participate. They also highlight the types of roles women tend to perform in guerrilla organizations.


Women provide a crucial base of support for revolutionary movements. Armed and unarmed women were able to increase connections between guerrillas and disenfranchised Salvadorian citizens, expanding and reinforcing the revolutionary movement, in spite of being consistently devalued.

Activism in Civil Society

The research described in this bibliography to this point has emphasized women’s political engagement in a variety of social movements, including those centered around women’s rights and economic equality as well as pro-democracy movements and those social movements utilizing violence. However, women’s participation is not always through informal channels like social movements. Women’s activism also extends to traditional civil society, as women participate in institutionalized groups that advocate for social change through more formal and legal channels. The research highlighted in this section emphasizes three areas that operate within and in conjunction with women’s activist groups. The first subsection discusses the varying influences of nongovernmental organizations on the efforts of women activists. The second subsection highlights how women’s activism interacts with transnational networks and vice versa. The final subsection highlights the intersection between gender and other marginalized groups such as indigenous and LGBTQ+ populations.

Nongovernmental Organizations

This section emphasizes research investigating the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in women’s activism throughout Latin America. In the author’s seminal article on NGOs and feminist activists in Latin America, Alvarez 1999 (see Important Works) analyzes three critical factors that have undermined NGOs’ efforts in promoting feminist policies in Latin America. After Alvarez, many scholars have examined the role of NGOs and the factors that both contribute to and inhibit these groups from advocating on behalf of women’s rights and inspiring social change. NGOs are identified as providing women with a discourse to mobilize around (Franceschet 2003), as well as cultivating a feminist consciousness that inspires activism beyond bureaucratic channels (Chen 2014). Thayer 2010 traces and compares the evolution of NGOs and grassroots organizations amid globalization. Conflicts between NGOs, interest groups, and international organizations serve as obstacles for NGOs promoting women’s equality (Reyes 2014; Elgar 2014; Ibarra 2014). Beck 2014 examines how the interactions between NGOs and other organizations at the local and international level as well as the evolution of NGOs themselves solidifies NGO diversity across Latin America.

This article argues that diversity in NGOs will persist in Latin America. The author explores the evolution of NGOs, specifically in Guatemala from the 1960s to the early 2000s, and finds that NGOs respond in a variety of ways to external pressures. Comparing the experiences of two microcredit NGOs, they find intraorganizational diversity is partially a result of strategic decision-making, layering old and new NGO models within themselves.


Leveraging data from Mexico City, this article focuses on the development of feminist identity and political participation in younger individuals. The author reveals how established feminist institutions in universities and in civil societies via NGOs are important for cultivating feminist consciousness and that the bureaucratic nature of feminist institutions encourage feminists to create their own action beyond institutional boundaries.


Drawing on evidence from Chile, Ecuador, and Peru, Elgar examines the roles of religious NGOs and interest groups, as well as feminist interest groups in advocating or blocking reproductive policies. The key argument is that feminist interest groups have not been able to prevail over more established religious interests and other countervailing groups resulting in a varied success rate for all women’s groups involved in reproductive rights.


Franceschet’s work evaluates how Chile’s Servicio Nacional de la Mujer (SERNAM) has altered the institutional context in which women’s movements act. Using a historical institutionalist approach, the author shows that SERNAM has affected both the shape of the movement and the strategies that different segments employ. Instead of weakening the women’s movement, SERNAM provides a discourse of women’s equality and a set of objectives around which to mobilize.


Scholars of women’s social movements in Latin America have neglected religious movements. In particular, women in the region are a driving agent for the growing numbers of Pentecostal Christians. Women’s participation in this spiritual version of Protestantism have learned valuable civic skills and are more apt to participate in politics.


Ibarra examines how effective constitutional law has been in developing a gender agenda in Colombia after the constitutional change of 1991. The author analyzes women’s participation in the National Constituent Assembly, the contributions of the court, and the scope of NGO activism as the newest actors in the development of the gender agenda in Bogotá. The author provides a critique of the “NGOization” of the gender agenda and the extent to which NGOs have been successful in developing the gender
This article highlights the experiences of two NGOs, the Women’s Committee within the Hemispheric Social Alliance and the Mesoamerican Women in Resistance, in their attempts to integrate a gender perspective into the anti–free trade movement. The author identifies rejection from other anti–free trade organizations, as well as the difficulties of engaging other women’s and feminist movements and grassroots women, as obstacles for these organizations.


The book presents a conceptualization of global processes that include social relations across states as well as within their borders. This book charts how two women’s organizations with varying global ties (an NGO and a grassroots organization) in northeastern Brazil emerged, developed, and evolved in the context of globalization. The paths of both ideas and resources are traced through these complex networks and their subsequent effects on society are discussed.

Transnational Networks

This section is dedicated to research examining transnational networks and their effects on women’s activism in Latin America. Marchand 2014 provides a comprehensive discussion of the evolution of women’s activism in Latin America in response to globalization and the development of transnational networks. In a more foundational piece on transnational networks and women’s activism, Alvarez 2000 provides a examination of why women activists enter transnational networks. Her work argues that local women activists choose to engage in transnational networks as a means of cultivating solidarity as well as generating political capital to leverage public policy changes in their favor. Following Alvarez, Martin, et al. 2008 and Walsh 2016 further argue that the role transnational networks play in developing solidarity is an important factor for the success of women’s activist groups. Research has also discussed the limitations transnational networks have on women activists’ efforts to enact social and political change as a result of existing institutional and cultural structures (Fernandes 2005; Friedman 2009; Lopreite 2012). Finally, research in this subject area also examines the role of transnational networks when gender and other minorities identities intersect such as the poor (Schild 2014) and indigenous populations (Radcliffe, et al. 2004).


This work examines the activities of Latin American feminists from the 1980s through the 1990s. Drawing on fieldwork, observations, and interviews with over two hundred feminist activists and public officials, the author describes local feminist discourse and practices as beginning at the local level, filtering up to national and global levels through transborder networks, and movements across and within civil societies. This work compares the logic to that of other intraregional and international feminist advocacy efforts in Latin America.


The article investigates how autonomous feminist groups failed in Cuba by examining the Cuban feminist network, Magín, during the mid-1990s. The author argues that the nature of transnational networks, combined with the political hegemony of the Cuban
government, inhibited the scope of Magín as an autonomous organization. Transnational advocacy created new spaces for
discussion in Cuba but also encouraged specialization that limited the possibility of women building a broad-based autonomous
movement.

This article demonstrates how region can influence respect for women’s rights. The key argument is that regional governance can
promote women’s social rights but there is no automatic institutionalization of these norms. Using case studies in Chile and Brazil,
two inter-American women’s rights organizations are argued to be active forces in the establishment of regional norms and
promoting their adoption and implementation at the national level.

Lopreite, Debora. “Travelling Ideas and Domestic Policy Change: The Transnational Politics of Reproductive
109–128.
This work examines the transnational flow of social policy ideas and how they advance gender equality policies in countries with a
history of neglecting reproductive rights. Using the case of Argentina, Lopreite demonstrates how although internationally
sanctioned ideas contributed to the adoption of new policies, important elements of previous political legacies remain. This piece
illustrates the balance between transnational policy ideas and national politics and legacies.

Marchand, Marianne H. “Engendering Transnational Movements/Transnationalizing Women’s and Feminist Movements
This article explores the contexts under which women’s and feminist movements have emerged in the Americas, how these
movements have organized in response to global and regional challenges, and how these movements have responded to the
challenges associated with transnationalization. It also serves as an introductory piece to a special issue of *Latin American Policy*
that summarizes the major arguments and findings of each article and discusses how they relate to the evolution of women’s and
feminist movements in the Americas.

Martín, Alberto, Ana Fernández, and Karla Villarreal. “Activismo transnacional y calidad de la democracia en México:
This article analyzes the impact of transnational activism on femicide trends in the city of Juárez, Mexico. The solidarity between
local, national, and international organizations are argued to be instrumental in pressuring the Mexican government to address
these crimes as well as violence against women broadly. However, weaknesses are identified at the local level with local
organizations’ internal problems as well as issues of rule of law and the ability of local governments to implement effective
accountability measures more generally.

This work draws on feminist theory to develop a transnational perspective that integrates gender and ethnicity into globalization
theories. The authors examine how existing policies that address women’s interests interact with new policies of pro-indigenous
organizations in Ecuador and Bolivia focusing on the Andean Indians.

This essay investigates the effects of professional and academic feminist networks on antipoverty policy. The central argument is that how “the poor” are defined has been dramatically altered through feminist innovations. Transnational institutionalized feminist politics are shown to contribute to adapting segments of the population to the market. The author develops this argument through an analysis of conditional cash transfer programs in Latin America, with Chile as a case study.


This work articulates the dilemmas associated with decision-making processes occurring through transnational networks at the international level for local problems, which are examined in the context of international donors and efforts to address violence against women. The author provides a meaningful discussion on how international feminist human rights norms can be better translated into a transnational sense of solidarity and sustainable advances for women. Examples are drawn from Central America.

**Intersectional Activism**

This section highlights research examining the relationship between gender and other minority identities in terms of intersectional activism. Much of this research has examined the intersection of indigenous and women's social identities. Van Cott 2005 traces the evolution, successes, and failures of indigenous organizations and parties across Latin America. Recent work contributes to the broader understanding of indigenous women’s activism, summarizing the evolution of the women’s indigenous movement in Latin America and discussing the role of globalization (Castillo 2010; Rousseau and Hudon 2016). The combination of indigenous and feminist identity has created a new and broader-reaching feminism in many cases (Castillo 2001; Stephen 2001; Duarte and Ixkic 2012). However, disjuncture between gender and indigenous identity have, in some cases, lead to inequalities in the political and social progress made for either group resulting in tensions between indigenous and women’s activist groups (Stephen 2010; Picq 2008, Picq 2014). Additional work has recently examined the relationship between LGBT+ and women’s activism to understand why the rights of the former have yet to fully develop in some countries (Wilets 2010).


This article analyzes feminist identity among Mexican indigenous people. The struggles and discourse of indigenous women foster the creation of an indigenous feminism, separate from the feminist identity of non-indigenous individuals. This indigenous feminism is argued to serve as the foundation for multicultural feminism that recognizes the different ways in which Mexican women perceive their gender identities within differing cultural realities.


This work provides a summary of the fundamental processes that led to the indigenous women’s movement in Latin America and describes the varied political legacies that influence culturally situated feminist agendas. The piece also discusses the process of globalization from below that emerged as a result of indigenous women’s organization throughout the Americas.

This article reconstructs the political genealogies of indigenous and lesbian feminism in the context of their discourse, disagreements, and alliances with liberal feminism. The contributions that indigenous and lesbian feminists have made toward a broader and more complex feminism in Latin America are analyzed with specific references to Guatemala, Mexico, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Nicaragua.


This article analyzes disjuncture between indigenous and women’s rights in Ecuador. The author argues that the indigenous movement has been a democratizing force in domestic politics but has not been entirely democratic itself. Ethnopolitical groups instrumentalized international norms to gain leverage in domestic politics but refused to be held accountable to those same norms.


This article in a special issue uses an intersectional approach to explore the diminishing presence of women in indigenous movements in Latin America. Focusing on Ecuador, the author demonstrates how gender inequalities reveal the lasting legacies of discriminatory practices within ethno-politics.


This article draws on social movement theory and intersectionality to analyze indigenous women’s organization. The authors present a typology of the organizational forms adopted by indigenous women in Peru, Bolivia, and Mexico over a two-decade time period. A key finding is that indigenous women have become social movement actors through different organizational forms that in part determine the degree of autonomy they can exercise as political subjects.


This article examines the notions of motherhood and indigenous identity in the context of contemporary El Salvador and Mexico. The case of El Salvador is used to argue that outsiders from similar movements promulgated a traditional understanding of motherhood. In contrast, the case of Mexico illustrates how women contributed to transforming notions of indigenous identity.


This book explores six cases of women’s grassroots activism in Mexico, El Salvador, Brazil, and Chile. Each case begins with a description of the political and economic conditions that contextualize the development of organizations. Several key concerns run clear in each case: disagreements over feminism and abortion; the influence of nongovernmental organizations; the dilemma women face juggling their many social and political lives; the development of political participatory styles; and organizational autonomy.

This book compares indigenous movements and parties across six countries in Latin America and examines why indigenous movements found success in the least likely places and little success in countries where success is most likely. This book also reviews the impact of the rise of indigenous movements, parties, and politics on the future of democracy in Latin America.


This chapter examines why English-speaking Caribbean countries are far behind Latin American countries on the implementation of LGBTI rights. The author points to six key reasons: (1) religion; (2) the role of women with regard to the two regions’ respective religions; (3) colonialism; (4) slavery; (5) domestic incorporation of human rights norms; and (6) geopolitics, specifically the effects of US hegemony.

**Political Participation and Public Opinion**

Thus far, the research described in this bibliography has highlighted women’s political activism in social movements and civil society, but conventional politics is an important arena for women’s political activism as well. Much of the literature on women’s political engagement has focused on “politics as a profession” or women’s role in governmental office, but that is not the focus of this section. Rather, the works highlighted here spotlight women’s engagement as citizens. The first subsection on political participation and engagement examines the gender gap in conventional forms of political engagement, such as voting, campaigning, and expressing political interest and knowledge. The second subsection on public opinion examines how both individual-level factors, as well as the political context in a country, influence gender stereotypes about female leadership and gender gaps in citizens’ attitudes about politics.

**Political Participation and Engagement**

This section highlights research examining how men and women, acting as citizens, engage in conventional forms of political participation. In their article on the gender gap in political participation in Latin America, Desposato and Norrander 2009 (cited under Important Works) explain why this is such an important topic of investigation: “Gender differentials in political participation translate directly into political power, resource access and policy outputs” (p. 159). Since Desposato and Norrander’s landmark work was published, a number of other scholars have built upon their research, for instance by examining whether electoral rules such as quotas (Zetterberg 2009, cited under Important Works) or compulsory voting (Córdova and Rangel 2017) affect the gender gap in political engagement and participation. Beyond voting (Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita 2014), scholars have begun to examine gendered differences in participation within parties and campaigns (Pachón, et al. 2012) and civil society (Espinal and Zhao 2015). Research in this area has also investigated gender gaps in other forms of political engagement, such as political knowledge and trust, as well as interest in politics (Barnes and Jones 2018; Fraile and Gomez 2017; Hinojosa, et al. 2017). Finally, this research has demonstrated the need to study gender gaps in political engagement from an intersectional perspective, by accounting for other identities such as indigenousness as well (Rousseau 2011).


Leveraging subnational variation in women’s political representation across the Argentine provinces, Barnes and Jones show that
increases in women’s legislative representation is associated with higher levels of trust in government among both women and men, whereas higher levels of women’s representation in the executive cabinet are associated with women (but not men) being more likely to contact local government to solve a problem.


Whereas prior research on electoral participation in Latin America focuses on institutional factors, this article examines a series of individual-level determinants. In Latin America, the authors find evidence of a gender gap in voting, but unlike with other forms of political participation, women vote at higher rates than men. Ultimately, however, the authors find that age and education are the best individual-level predictors of electoral participation.


By global standards, Latin America is a region with a high concentration of countries using compulsory voting laws. Córdova and Rangel use data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)—which includes a number of Latin American countries—to examine how compulsory voting affects the gender gap in political engagement. The authors find that compulsory voting with strict enforcement mechanisms is associated with a smaller gender gap not only in voting, but in a variety of other forms of political engagement as well.


The authors use AmericasBarometer survey data to examine gender differentials in civic and political participation in Latin America. Unlike most form of political participation, where men participate more than women, the gender gaps in civic engagement are horizontally segmented. That is, men and women each take part in different types of associations at higher rates. This article highlights the need for scholars to pay greater attention to the type and intensity of civic engagement in Latin America.


Political knowledge is an important individual-level predictor of other forms of political engagement. But what explains the gender gap in political knowledge to begin with? Using AmericasBarometer survey data, the authors show that the gender gap is smaller among educated citizens and larger in urban areas. Moreover, the gender gap in knowledge is larger in countries where women’s role in the political arena is marginalized.


Using a unique two-wave panel survey the authors examine how the adoption of a gender quota in Uruguay is associated with gender gaps in political engagement. The authors find that quota adoption was associated with women being more likely than men to trust political institutions. Other persistent gender gaps closed completely—with women being just as likely as men to express political interests, to trust elections, and to understand political issues as men in the post-quota period.

The authors examine gender differences in four dimensions of political participation in Latin America: voting in presidential elections, working on campaigns, participating in demonstrations, and belonging to a political party. Whereas occupation, income, and marital status are important predictors of women's political engagement, men are more likely to participate when they believe that men make better political leaders.


This article adopts an intersectional approach to studying women's political participation by examining indigenous women's involvement in the 2006–2007 Bolivian Constituent Assembly. By including indigenous perspectives in the feminist movement, both groups were successful in influencing the new constitution. Moreover, this process led to an increase in indigenous women's political autonomy outside the constituent assembly.

Public Opinion and Political Attitudes

In addition to persistent gender gaps in different forms of political participation and engagement, research has also found gendered differences in attitudes about political institutions like the judiciary (Walker 2008), as well as citizens' attitudes about women's role in the political sphere. Importantly, this literature has demonstrated that both individual-level and contextual factors shape differences in men's and women's attitudes about female leadership. At the individual level, motherhood is shown to perpetuate traditional gender gaps in ideology, with women being more conservative than men (Morgan 2015). The political and economic context also plays an important role in shaping men's and women's attitudes about politics. Women's participation in the labor force (Smith, et al. 2017), as well as the presence of female mayors (Kerevel and Atkeson 2015) are shown to affect gender stereotypes about women and politics. Moreover, elite cues (Morgan and Buice 2013) and good governance (Barnes and Córdova 2016) are especially effective at transmitting gender-egalitarian messages to men. Finally, this literature has examined how women's presence in government shapes citizens' perceptions of corruption (Barnes, et al. 2018; Schwindt-Bayer 2010).


Recent research shows that women are associated with lower levels of corruption in government, but do citizens perceive women as less corrupt than men? Using a survey experiment based on a real-world reform in Mexico City, the authors demonstrate that, on average, people believe that hiring more female police officers will effectively combat corruption, and that gender stereotypes about women's political outsider status and risk aversion drive these beliefs. Women were also more likely than men to say the policy would be effective due to stereotypes about women being more ethical and honest.


Gender quotas are designed to increase women's presence in government. Here, the authors investigate the factors associated with increased support for gender quota laws. Of particular import, good governance increases support for quotas. Moreover, good governance increases quota support more among men than women, thus narrowing the gender gap in citizen support for quota legislation.

The authors leverage subnational data from Mexico to evaluate whether women in political leadership reduce gender stereotypes among citizens. They find that the presence of a female mayor reduces stereotypes among men, but a history of exposure to female mayors has little effect on gender stereotypes once women leave office. The authors thus conclude that there need to be higher numbers of women present in office to produce long-term changes in gender attitudes.


In this book chapter, Morgan investigates how individual-level factors and context drive gender differences in left-right ideological identification. In the few countries where ideological differences are present, there are often traditional gender gaps with women identifying as more conservative than men. Motherhood is especially associated with more conservative attitudes among women, suggesting that women’s workforce participation is key to closing the gender gap in political attitudes.


The authors evaluate support for three different theories about how citizens form their attitudes on women in politics: socialization, status disconnect, and elite cues. Women’s economic advancement can create a backlash among men in attitudes toward women in politics. The authors also find strong support for theories about elite cues, with men being especially susceptible to elite cues about gender equality.


This book develops an integrated framework for women’s representation in Latin America wherein formal electoral rules and women’s numeric representation shape policy outcomes and attitudes about the political system. Of particular relevance here, chapter 7 of Schwindt-Bayer’s book examines how women’s formal, numeric, and substantive or policy representation affect both men’s and women’s attitudes about corruption, democracy, and trust in political institutions.


The authors use public opinion data from the AmericasBarometer to investigate the individual-level and contextual sources of gender stereotypes about women’s role in politics. In countries with higher levels of women’s workforce participation, citizens espouse more pro-female than pro-male stereotypes. At the individual level, those rejecting gender stereotypes tend to me more leftist and less authoritarian.


Walker uses survey data from Central America to investigate gender differences in attitudes toward justice system equality. Although women and men are just as likely to believe the justice system provides equal punishment, women are significantly
more likely to say that the justice system provides unequal treatment before the law.

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