

Bodies, Emotions and Society: Fears, Health and Culture in Contemporary Society

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The Latin American Journal of Studies on Bodies, Emotions, and Society concretizes a cycle of growth and consolidation with the publication of its number 43. During the last 15 years, it has maintained an uninterrupted quarterly frequency, presenting more than 380 articles from various regions and epistemic perspectives. Recognized in prominent international indices, RELACES consolidates its position as a space dedicated to reflection, analysis, and study of topics related to Bodies and Emotions in Latin America and the Global South.

The last 15 years have been possible thanks to the effort and commitment of those people who have been a fundamental part of the prestigious Editorial Board and Editorial Team of the Magazine. We greatly appreciate every role played at RELACES, where they have maintained the highest academic, methodological, and epistemic standards.

Since its first issue, the Latin American Journal of Studies on Bodies, Emotions, and Society (RELACES) has maintained a transversal focus on the exploration of bodies and emotions, a search that has remained constant throughout its 15 years of existence. This perspective has been considered fundamental, with bodies/emotions even understood as the "key to the vault of the capitalist edifice", as Scribano and Vergara (2009) pointed out. This implies that bodies and emotions are seen as central elements of the capitalist accumulation regime. From a sociological perspective, social norms, traditions, beliefs, customs, and institutions are understood to play a crucial role in promoting and restricting certain emotions. Authors such as Heller ([1982] 2004) and Luna Zamora (2000) have contributed to this understanding, arguing that these social and cultural structures influence the way emotions are experienced, expressed, and regulated in a given society.

Thus, RELACES has explored how these norms and social structures shape how individuals feel and express their emotions, highlighting the influence of

cultural and institutional factors in the configuration of bodies and emotions in the context of the capitalist system. The approach presented here, as indicated by Scribano (2012) and Luna-Zamora (2000), conceives emotions as cognitive-affective practices that emerge from complex processes of structuring and organizing life. These emotions are intrinsically connected to the environment and context in which people live.

Although they are often perceived as intimate and individual experiences, emotions are shaped and configured by the social, cultural, and structural context in which they develop. They are the result of schemes apprehended, reinterpreted, and negotiated through interaction with the environment, norms, values, and social experiences.

The interconnection between bodies and emotions is evidenced by the fact that these are not isolated entities, but are inherently linked to the broader social context. Despite their apparent individual character, they have deep roots in social structures and dynamics, meaning that their expression and experience are influenced and shaped by the context in which they develop.

In the sociological analysis of bodies and emotions, the significant influence of Modern States, social structuring processes, stratification, and institutions, as well as their norms, is recognized. This sociological perspective offers a contrast with biological or naturalistic approaches, considering that bodies and emotions are not simply determined by biological or natural factors, but are the product of complex social processes.

Emotions are understood as a fundamental object of study in sociology due to their central role in social relationships. They are subject to dynamics of social definition, that is, they are influenced, molded and even co-opted by the norms, values and structures of the society in which they manifest themselves. Therefore, their expression, meaning and regulation are closely linked to the social and cultural

contexts in which they arise.

This sociological perspective seeks to understand how emotions not only reflect individual interactions, but are also products and agents of broader social dynamics. Thus, it focuses on analyzing how power structures, institutions and social hierarchies influence the construction, expression and regulation of emotions, recognizing their crucial role in the formation and maintenance of social relationships and collective identities.

From sociology, emotions are structured by somatic, behavioral and sentimental components. Thus, the emotion that runs through this issue – fear – supposes and commits the body/emotion: “The body is prepared for rapid and strong movements, for the two great alternatives necessary to face dangers [...] fight or flee, There is a somatic component: digestion slows and the heart beats faster. There is a motor component: more blood is pushed to the skeletal muscles making the arms and legs ready to fight or flee. And there is a component of feelings usually described as fear or anger” (Elías, 1998: 317). This understanding highlights the interconnection between the body/emotion, as proposed by Scribano (2012). The body and emotion are indivisibly intertwined, being elements that influence each other and are closely linked in the human experience. In summary, fear, like other emotions, involves a complex interaction between somatic, behavioral and emotional aspects, demonstrating the close relationship between the body and emotional experience within the framework of social relations and the sociology of emotions.

In the issue titled "Bodies, Emotions and Society: Fears, Health and Culture in Contemporary Society" of RELACES, fear is addressed as an emotion that poses challenges in various social phenomena. Along with distrust and uncertainty, these emotions are considered in the context of emotional worlds (Heller, 1982) or as components of emotional ecologies (Scribano, 2020), offering tools to understand contemporary phenomena of the 21st century. In this sense, fear is closely linked to uncertainty and the unknown, to that which is difficult to manage or that is beyond our control. This uncontrollable dimension of fear is what links it to uncertainty, instability and distrust.

Fear, like other emotions, directs behavior, shapes preferences, and guides social practices. According to Lechner (1985), fears, even more than personal desires, shape preferences and ways of existing, interacting, and perceiving the environment. These fears, represented in their plural expression,

can be analytically classified into three fundamental aspects: a physical one, encompassing both bodily elements and properties; another linked to the capacity to generate and maintain social life, which includes everything from the work environment to survival policies; and a third associated with the individual identity of people, as proposed by Baumann (2008).

In these conceptualization proposals made by the authors, fear is thus linked to the processes of social structuring. If we return to systemic fears in terms of Olvera-Serrano and Sabido (2007) or those linked to the means of life and survival (Baumann, 2008), this emotion emerges directly anchored to the processes of social structuring.

The articles that make up this edition of RELACES are aimed at understanding the complexity of fear in its entirety. Thus, the first article in this edition is titled **“We panicked!” Health and emotions of health workers in the face of armed violence** and is proposed by **Jéssyca Felix Sampaio da Silva** and **Cristiane Batista Andrade (Brazil)**. This article addresses the emotions and health of health professionals who have experienced or still face situations of gun violence in their work environments. Through a qualitative field study, the article examines the stories of workers, who describe feelings of fear, distrust, despair and helplessness in the face of armed violence. These feelings are intertwined with the impact on the health/illness processes of those who work in this field, resulting in the need to resort to medications, treatments for anxiety and insomnia, symptoms of "nervousness", episodes of panic, crying, tremors, increased blood pressure, feeling of death, trauma, among other effects. In conclusion, it is highlighted that armed violence in vulnerable environments constitutes a type of violence that has significant implications on the life, subjectivity, health and emotions of health sector workers.

The second article of this edition, titled **“Fears: Diversities, intensities, times, measures and directions in the pandemic”**, is presented by **Anna María Fernández Poncela (Mexico)**. This work is developed in the context of the pandemic and delves into the analysis of fear, particularly the fear experienced during this period, and how the population manifests it, diversifies, intensifies, transforms and adapts it to its environment. Beyond the different theorizations about fear, the article delves into the narratives and explanations that people offer in relation to this feeling. The paper concludes by identifying a wide diversity of fears, examining the intensity of fear during the pandemic

and its persistence over time, in relation to fear of others, all of them related to the survival of the group, the system and of the social structure.

Jacqueline Torres Ruiz (Colombia) is the one who proposes the third article titled **“Interaffective networks in Bogotá (Colombia): homeless, objects or subjects of fear?”** The writing critically addresses the social perception of fear in Bogotá, Colombia, questioning the dominant narrative that stigmatizes homeless people as the main danger in the city. Rather than accepting this representation, the writing seeks to challenge it by considering these people as subjects of fear rather than simply objects of fear. The proposal focuses on the idea that homeless people are victims rather than perpetrators, and seeks to demystify the notion that they represent a threat to urban safety. It is argued that the fear towards this social group does not originate intrinsically in them, but is fed and amplified by various actors, thus justifying actions of control and security over their bodies and spaces.

The fourth article in this edition is titled **“The corporeality of childhoods in pandemic: audiovisual proposals and parental mediation”**. Written by **Cintia Weckesser , Verónica Fabiana Avila , María Eugenia Recalde, Juliana Zamboni and Siomara Marlene Abba Fernández (Argentina)**, it aims to analyze the bodily experiences of boys and girls during the pandemic, focusing on the audiovisual proposals presented by families. This analysis is based on contributions from Sociology, Semiotics and Psychomotor skills. The article is based on interviews and focus groups carried out with adults in various environments in the province of Córdoba during the years 2020 and 2021. It identifies that the way in which families embody their parental role was influenced by the audiovisual proposals that generated concerns in relationship with the content consumed by boys and girls.

Paula Garneró and Romina Cecilia Elisondo (Argentina) are the authors of the fifth article entitled **“Approaches to creativity from daily actions: first-person records”**. The main objective of this study is to understand, from the perspective of the participants, the particularities of creative actions and to analyze the emotions that arise in this context. The results obtained reveal a diversity of actions and environments in which people perceive manifestations of creativity. Most of these creative activities were associated with pleasurable emotions, such as happiness, satisfaction, and self-actualization. The article contributes to the understanding of the specific processes of creativity in daily life, recognizing the importance of the underlying emotions in these processes.

“Analysis of ex/refugee women's bodies and Mayan indigenous clothing: the case of Los Laureles , Campeche, Mexico” is the sixth article in this edition of RELACES, proposed by **Okura , Yuko (Mexico)**. This study is introduced into a case analysis that explores the relationship between the body of indigenous Guatemalan Mayan women and traditional indigenous attire as opposed to Western clothing. Through the perspective of anthropology and the sociology of the senses and emotions, the article examines the situation of former Guatemalan Mayan indigenous refugees who have settled in Los Laureles, Campeche, Campeche. The focus is on understanding how these women perceive and experience the cultural need to wear traditional clothing as opposed to Western clothing, offering a detailed analysis of this dynamic in a specific context.

Brunn , Stanley (United States) is the one who wrote the seventh article entitled **“Geo-emotions: Research, Challenges, and Mapping”**. The article identifies that The study of human emotions is attracting increasing interest both transdisciplinary and internationally. One of the emerging areas at this intersection is the introduction of the concept of "geo-emotions." This approach interconnects diverse disciplines such as geography, sociology, anthropology, disaster impacts, conservation and environmental sciences, as well as professionals such as cartographers and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) specialists. The paper identifies that the study of geo-emotions faces significant research challenges, including the importance of mapping and understanding emotions at different scales, from the local and community to the national and global.

Two reviews close this edition, the first of them proposed by **Nadia Carolina Ksybala (Argentina)** entitled **“The anamorphic operation as a forced gaze: (re)knowing the ableist ideology”** on the book by Ferreira, Miguel AV (Ed.) (2023). The ableist ideology. Anamorphosis of social exclusion, Sociological Studies Editora. The second of them is titled **“Pandemic, emotions and goodbyes. “Letters as a method for the social production of memory”** by **Ana Lucía Cervio (Argentina)** is based on the work of Camarena Luhrs , M. (2023). For someone very dear. Memories of the pandemic. Mexico City: IIS-UNAM.

Finally, we thank the authors and those who have sent us their manuscripts. We remind you that the call for papers is permanently open.

We must reiterate that since issue 15 of RELACES we have begun to publish up to two articles

in English per issue. As we have been reiterating for some time now: at RELACES, its Editorial Team and the Editorial Board as a whole, we believe it is necessary to retake each article of our journal as a node that allows us to continue the path of dialogue and scientific/academic exchange as a social and political task to achieve a freer and more autonomous society. It is in the above context that we would like to thank all those who trust us as a vehicle to instantiate such dialogue.

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