

**Working Paper No. 83, 2015**

**Securing Citizens and Entrenching Inequalities**  
The Gendered, Neoliberalized  
Latin American State

Verónica Schild



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Schild, Verónica 2015: "Securing Citizens and Entrenching Inequalities: The Gendered, Neoliberalized Latin American State", **desiguALdades.net Working Paper Series 83**, Berlin: **desiguALdades.net** International Research Network on Interdependent Inequalities in Latin America.

The paper was produced by Verónica Schild during her fellowships at **desiguALdades.net** from 04/10/2012 - 14/12/2012, 01/05/2013 - 30/06/2013 and 01/04/2014 - 30/04/2014.

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## Securing Citizens and Entrenching Inequalities The Gendered, Neoliberalized Latin American State

Verónica Schild

### Abstract

Managing social and political stability is a central preoccupation of neoliberalized Latin American states. Building critically on an emerging literature on the security state, I suggest that this preoccupation increasingly takes the form of a securitization of society through both punitive and preventive means, involving not only the police and penal institutions but also civil society in partnership with an enabling state. In this paper I suggest that we stand to gain analytically from rendering visible the gendered dimension of these management functions of the state. In a context of increasing precariousness of relations of production and reproduction, the contributions of feminists and activists to the shaping of securitization efforts is undeniable. Concretely, women's invisible and naturalized care work makes a fundamental contribution to the configuration of the Latin American neoliberalized state as a security state.

**Keywords:** neoliberalism | securitization | the State | gender

### Biographical Notes

Verónica Schild was born in Chile, obtained a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Toronto, and is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Western Ontario (Western University), Canada. She directed the Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism at Western University (2006-2011), and has held Visiting Fellowships in Europe and Chile, most recently the Dahlem International Network Professorship for Gender Studies at Freie Universität Berlin (2013-2014). She has been a Fellow in [desigualdades.net](http://desigualdades.net) from 04/10/2012 - 14/12/2012, 01/05/2013 - 30/06/2013 and 01/04/2014 - 30/04/2014. She has researched in Chile since 1986 and has published widely on issues of social movements, feminism, citizenship and neoliberalism. In recent years she has studied the convergence between feminisms and neoliberal state formation, the topic of a book-length manuscript for Duke University Press. Her recent publications include "Care and Punishment in Latin America: The Gendered Neoliberalization of the Chilean State" in Mark Goodale and Nancy Postero, eds., *Neoliberalism, Interrupted*, 195-224, Stanford: 2013; "Institutional Feminist Networks and their "Poor": Localizing Transnational Interventions", *Journal of Latin American Policy* 5, 2, (2014): 279-291, and "Die Spezifik lateinamerikanischer Feminismen in Kontext neoliberaler Regulierung. Beunruhigende Divergenzen-Produktive Ambivalenzen." *Das Argument* 308, 3 (2014): 356-368.

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## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

After a period of relative analytical neglect the state has been gaining currency once again in analyses of global trends in social, economic and institutional transformations and their effects. The case of Latin America is no exception. Sweeping changes associated with decades of structural adjustments and neoliberal reforms introduced first in Chile and Bolivia in the 1980s, and then throughout the region in the 1990s, spelled the end of the developmentalist state project of capitalist accumulation and its basic commitments during the second half of the twentieth century, both to state intervention in the economy and to a redistributive logic.<sup>2</sup> Structural adjustment and neoliberal reforms, including the systematic downsizing of the state, deregulation, and the privatization of formerly public areas, accompanied by drastic social spending cuts, led to a reduction of some of its former functions. Not only was the national state reduced through the privatization, decentralization, and offloading of some of its former functions through subcontracting, public-private partnerships, and the wholesale transfer of some functions to the so-called civil society sector (NGOs and charities), it was also dismantled metaphorically.

The decade-long process of restructuring during the 1990s resulted in disappointing economic performance and persistently high levels of poverty, unemployment, and inequality in Latin America. In April of 1998, Latin American leaders meeting in Santiago, Chile, endorsed a new round of reforms, or institutional restructuring, characterized as second generation reforms.<sup>3</sup> These proposed continued integration into global markets and a simultaneous commitment to greater equity. The state was to play a more activist or enabling role in promoting labor flexibility, and labor market and societal transformations, with the goal of building “systemic competitiveness” and overcoming poverty and inequality. Moreover, “institutions, politics, and culture were seen as playing an indispensable supportive role of the state” (Leiva 2006: 337). Moreover, a survey of two decades of institutional reforms in Latin American countries conducted in 2007 by the Inter-American Development Bank concluded that the region had undergone

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1 I am indebted to [desiguALdades.net](http://desiguALdades.net), the Research Network on Interdependent Inequalities in Latin America of the Freie Universität Berlin and Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, for providing the support and setting on two separate occasions (Fall 2012 and Spring/Summer 2013) for researching the topic for this paper. I thank the participants of the [desiguALdades.net](http://desiguALdades.net) Colloquium for their feedback on a preliminary presentation of the ideas found in this text, in particular Lena Lavinás, and for helpful comments on the paper by Juan Pablo Pérez Sáinz and Markus-Michael Müller. I am grateful for research support from Claudia Maldonado and Andrés de Castro. I am indebted to Malcolm Blincow for his sustained support and his sharp analytical/editorial eye.

2 These features were shared for most of the twentieth century by the so-called First, Second, and Third Worlds (Robinson 2008: 14).

3 The Declaration of Santiago (TSJ 2014 [1998]) is the agreement emanating from the second Summit of the Americas.

substantial transformations in statecraft which it characterized as “a silent revolution in which many dimensions of the state have been gradually transformed” (Fraile 2009: 217-218; Lora 2007: 5). Thus, it is more accurate to view the nation states of the second half of the twentieth century, either in their Keynesian welfare form, or in their Latin American welfare variants—that is, the social form of the developmentalist state—as being qualitatively transformed rather than simply dismantled (see Panitch and Gindin 2012; Brenner 2004). These institutional reforms endorsed by the Declaration of Santiago ushered in an era of greater social investment and explicit state intervention, leading in many places to welfare restructuring grounded on the ideal of a social liberal, rather than a neoliberal or minimal, state.<sup>4</sup> For optimists, these institutional transformations have, in some cases—for example, Chile, Brazil or Costa Rica—been linked to nothing short of emerging new social democratic regimes that face significant challenges but that have, nevertheless, managed to make social progress possible. According to this view, emerging social democratic regimes in the region have “accommodated, but avoided capitulating to, global neoliberalism (construed as pressures to liberalize markets, reform states, and open economies to cross-border flows of goods, services, and capital)” (Sandbrook et al. 2007: 3-4).

This article challenges such claims and argues, instead, that what is at stake is institutional transformation as neoliberal statecraft. That is, the so-called capable and enabling states that have replaced ostensibly minimal states are neoliberalized states. The article begins from the assumption that understanding neoliberal statecraft requires that we consider institutional transformations in relation to the specific contexts of structural changes associated with capitalism in its present, globalized form. States have always been central for the operation of capitalism, playing a key role in “maintaining property rights, overseeing contracts, stabilizing currencies, reproducing class relations, and containing crises” (Panitch and Gindin 2012: 1). Furthermore, far from key capitalist economic actors, such as multinational corporations (MNCs), finding it convenient to have a world “populated by dwarf states or by no states at all”, Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin remind us that they depend on many states to see to it that these things are done (Panitch and Gindin 2012: 1). Modern states, moreover, are not only central for “promoting and orchestrating capitalist accumulation”, but also for managing social and political stability in light of the effects of ongoing crises and contradictions of capitalism (Panitch and Gindin 2012: 1). A crucial factor in the state’s management of stability has been the gender configuration through which relations of production and reproduction are regulated. Moreover, this article claims that we stand to gain analytically from rendering visible the gendered dimension of these

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4 Lora observes that “just as the neoliberal state never completely materialized, neither does this socially liberal ideal correspond exactly with any Latin American state” (Lora 2007: 4-5).

transformations and their effects. Gender is understood here as an “active process structuring multiple domains of social life” (Hawkesworth 2006: 166).<sup>5</sup> In the context of capitalism in its present form, this gendered managing role extends to encompass the challenges and costs of neoliberalization itself.<sup>6</sup> Thus, it is more accurate to view the nation states of the second half of the twentieth century, either in their Keynesian welfare form, or in their Latin American welfare variants—that is, the social form of the developmentalist state—as being qualitatively transformed rather than simply dismantled (see Panitch and Gindin 2012; Brenner 2004). The focus of my argument below is that the neoliberalized social managing function of the state, understood in its dimension of social regulation, is gendered both in its configuration and its effects.

Rather than mere accommodation to global neoliberalism, this essay proposes that the genuine institutional innovations of the past decade and a half in Latin America statecraft are linked with the reconfiguration of the rationale and goals of government itself, or the so-called neoliberalization of state functions. Neoliberalization, in other words, is a political program, not merely an ideology or set of economic ideas imposed from the outside (Bourdieu 1998; Peck 2010). Moreover, Latin American neoliberalism as a political program is not one but many, and the outcome of ongoing contestation, embedded in specific economic, institutional and socio-cultural contexts. As projects of ongoing modernization they are, furthermore, programs that are at once locally articulated and thoroughly transnationalized; they depend on the flow of resources—both discursive and financial—from regulatory agencies like the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank for their implementation (Wood 2009). Thus, Latin American neoliberalisms in their multiple, regional expressions are never far from the reach of international regulatory institutions.

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5 Gender and even the concept of gender as an analytic category have been the subject of intense and fruitful debate for some time, a debate that intensified since Judith Butler’s *Gender Trouble* was published in 1990. This essay insists on the centrality of gender and conceives of sexual difference, however mediated by race, class, ethnicity and other vectors of power, as inevitable and fundamental for the structuring of societies. This is a point made by feminist anthropologists for some time. Furthermore, insisting on the inevitability of gender as a structuring process of culture, materially understood, does not mean that its patriarchal form is inevitable. As Braidotti reminds us, though sexual difference may be inevitable, its patriarchal form is subject to change (Butler 2004:211). Moreover, in this essay I insist on focusing on practice rather than free-floating discourse. My own interest is in understanding how gender shapes the symbolic order in which we live and is entwined with capitalism as a structure that functions to order relations of production and reproduction. As R.W. Connell aptly put it, “Practice can be turned against what constrains it... Structure can deliberately be the object of practice. But practice cannot escape structure, it cannot float free of its circumstances” (quoted in Hawkesworth 2006: 164).

6 As Panitch and Gindin remind us, in addition to these promoting and orchestrating capacities, capitalist states anticipate future problems and contain them when they arise (Panitch and Gindin 2012: 4).

Although once associated with the so-called Washington Consensus, the market-friendly agenda of state restructuring is now entrenched in the Post-Washington Consensus. This agenda of institutional reforms for Latin America has called for increased social spending – but of a “sensible” or “judicious” form – while also renewing the national and transnational commitment to growth that preserves the neoliberal macroeconomic essentials. What we have witnessed over the past decade and a half is in fact a move from dogmatic deregulation to market-friendly reregulation and from structural adjustment to “good” governance endorsed by the World Bank’s agenda of building “effective states” (World Bank 1997; Burki and Perry 1998).<sup>7</sup> This institutional transformation amounts, to borrow geographer Jamie Peck’s terms, to a move from a “roll-back” to a “roll-out” neoliberalism (Peck 2010: 106). As mentioned above, in Latin America roll-out neoliberalism is informed by an export-led development model intent on reforming societies, politics and cultures in the name of “systemic competitiveness.” And, as a Latin American and worldwide trend, “the variegated face of ‘roll-out’ neoliberalism represents, at the same time, a deeply consolidated *and* a crisis-driven form of market rule” (Peck 2010: 106).

The new lending policies, requiring institutional reforms aimed at good governance, promoted partnerships with society (including profit and non-profit sectors) – or the so-called public-private partnerships – in the delivery of social goods, ostensibly to maximize benefits to society. The relations and practices in social spending between local, national, and international sectors came to be regulated by the principle of conditionality. A 2007 survey of two decades of institutional reforms in Latin American countries by the International Development Bank reveals that the region has indeed experienced considerable institutional reform in practice, and has characterized this as “a silent revolution in which many dimensions of the state have been gradually transformed” (Fraile 2009: 217-218; Lora 2007: 5). Clearly, the era of the Post-Washington Consensus is characterized by more, not less, influence of the state, and is resulting in its very reconfiguration. The implications of these changes for the area of security are the subject of this essay.

Managing social and political instability in the present Latin American capitalist contexts has meant not only increasing social spending but also intensifying forms of social regulation. Most prominent today, though surprisingly overlooked in social democratic analyses, is the overt use of state violence to control and contain the marginalizations

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<sup>7</sup> John Williamson, the former World Bank economist who initially coined the term Washington Consensus insists, correctly, that—beyond theory – the minimal state never existed. In reality, what there has been is a restructuring of the state. The World Bank’s own vision of a newly reinvigorated state is a state that exists to manage and to delegate. Its unique capacity, the Bank claims, lies in its coercive powers “to tax, to prohibit, to punish, and to require participation” (quoted in Orford and Beard 1998: 202).



and exclusions generated by globalized economies and the effects of crisis-driven neoliberalism. Overcoming poverty seems to be rapidly overshadowed by the question of security, and the concern with securing the so-called “vulnerable” by targeting the neediest through novel social programs and modest expansions in health and pension coverage seems to be interrelated to the restructuring of the penal system, including judicial and police reforms, and the expansion of prisons. A rich literature has emerged to make sense of the use of the penal system, including revamped policing, courts, and incarceration as the dominant form of social regulation of neoliberal statecraft. Policing the poor has increasingly become an exercise in criminalizing the poor and militarizing police response, strategies used by both right-leaning and left-leaning governments alike to govern insecurity.<sup>8</sup> Using the military to fight crime and drug dealing has, furthermore, become widespread across the region as levels of insecurity remain high and trust has declined in a police perceived as corrupt and acting with impunity. Despite decades of police reform, the use of brutal force, including rape, severe beatings to extract confessions, and even disappearances persist as recent reports by human rights organizations make clear.<sup>9</sup>

In the following pages I rely on an analysis of how gender is deployed implicitly and explicitly to develop the argument that socially interventionist neoliberal states have both a punitive and an ameliorative, or remedial, dimension and that as part of the ongoing restructuring of the neoliberal state, now as a security state, these two dimensions are increasingly intertwined. Moreover, not only are these gendered phenomena in their configuration and their effects, but women’s invisible and naturalized care work makes a fundamental contribution to rolling-out the security state in its social management functions. Insisting on rendering visible the recruitment of women’s efforts for the rolling out of the neoliberal state as a security state, is a methodological appeal to a grounded analysis that acknowledges the epistemic effects of the social location of the researcher. The discussion that follows is informed by my long-standing research of

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8 The criminalization of poverty, with its consequent stigmatization and discrimination of those living in poor areas of Latin American urban centers, is rooted in deeply held prejudices and fear of poor and working class people, sentiments that have been fanned by decades of state violence. Writing about Chile, for example, Tironi states that despite the fact that studies have persistently shown that there is no correlation between a condition of poverty and an orientation to violence, public opinion and political elites insist on linking the condition of poverty with an “orientation to violence” (Tironi 1990: 180-181).

9 For a description of the phenomenon of the militarization of policing, see, for example, Deheza and Ribet (2012). Mexico is a dramatic case in point, as a recently-released report by Amnesty International (2014) shows. In Chile, where trust in the police is high in a regional survey, the brutal death of four men at the hands of the police during the first half of 2014 alone, reminds us that after over two decades of reforms and liberal democratic government, torture “is not an issue from the past, nor does it relate only to the dictatorship.” Torture it seems, is “totally entrenched in police practice” according to the Comisión Ética Contra la Tortura (Ethics Commission Against Torture) (Sepúlveda Ruíz 2014, own translation).

the transformations in the contradictory and fruitful relation between Chilean popular women's activism and an increasingly transnationalized, institutionalized and liberal feminist agenda. At the heart of this research has been the concern with understanding the changing social structures, institutions, and associated cultural expectations for the past nearly 30 years, from the stand point of those women who are most affected by them. In other words, this research informs a bottom up perspective on institutional changes associated with the roll out of the neoliberal state that takes for granted the particular social location of women as a valuable entry point for studying the rolling-out of the neoliberal state as a security state.<sup>10</sup>

The first section below discusses neoliberalism as an ongoing process of transformation in statecraft, rather than as a static set of ideas or ideology. Moreover, it proposes that the state be understood as a bureaucratic field of action rather than as a state-idea. Understanding who does what, how, and in what contexts, helps us render gender as a key category for analysing transformations in statecraft. The second section outlines the increasing centrality of the concern with security and proposes that the convergence between ameliorative and punitive forms of neoliberal regulation in the name of security—and the vulnerability of target populations—is a neoliberal project of statecraft whose “roll-out” on the ground depends on the work of women.

## 2. Social Intervention as Neoliberal Regulation

Neoliberalism as a historically grounded political project—most explicitly evident in its “roll-out” phase—is a gendered project that both depends on ideas and ideals of femininity and masculinity, and on the concrete work of embodied agents in specific bureaucratic spaces. How best to characterize the real agencies out of which the state-idea is constructed? In the early 1990s French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu proposed the term “bureaucratic field” to rethink the state as “the agency that monopolizes the legitimate use of not only material violence [...] but also of symbolic violence” (Bourdieu

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<sup>10</sup> This position builds on feminist epistemology and, in particular, on its contributions to the critique of foundationalism. The critique of foundationalism challenges the ahistorical, Archimedean point assumed to provide a certainty to knowledge claims. As Cavell insists, “what is involved in knowing is heavily dependent upon what questions are asked, what kind of knowledge is sought, and the context in which cognition is undertaken” (Hawkesworth 2006: 67). Scholars like Dorothy Smith and Nancy Hartsock, two pioneers of this critique in the social sciences, insist that “social location systematically shapes and limits what we know, including tacit, experiential knowledge as well as explicit understanding, what we take knowledge to be as well as specific epistemic content. What counts as ‘social location’ is structurally defined” (Wylie, 2004: 343). This feminist social epistemology, and the so-called feminist standpoint theory which it informed, have come under fire by those who dismiss it as essentialist. In my view, we stand to gain significantly by revisiting it, and appropriating its insights for the study of ongoing capitalist state formation which is what this study attempts. Ultimately, as Alyson Wylie correctly suggests, the lack of grounding in Marxist theory of many critics explains their consistent misreading, especially of the early contributions by Smith and Hartsock (Wylie 2004: 341). For a comprehensive overview of this epistemological debate, see Harding (2004).

1998: 2). Appealing implicitly to the metaphor of the Leviathan, he characterized the so-called “spending ministries” in charge of social functions—public education, health, housing, welfare, and labor law—as “the left hand” of the state. This feminine side of the Leviathan, furthermore, which offers “protection and succor to the social categories shorn of economic and cultural capital”, is the trace of the social struggles of the past (Wacquant 2010: 201; see also Bourdieu 1998: 2). Those ministries concentrating technocrats, for example, the Ministry of Finance, the ministerial cabinets, and the private banks, he characterizes as the “right hand of the state” (Bourdieu 1998: 2). This right hand of the Leviathan, the masculine side, is charged with enforcing the new economic discipline via budget cuts, fiscal incentives, and economic deregulation (Wacquant 2010: 201). Reflecting on the bitter public sector struggles associated with state downsizing in France, Bourdieu observed that the two hands were clearly at odds with each other. After nearly two decades of neoliberal restructuring, however, it is more accurate to say that an agreement has been reached.

Loic Wacquant extends Bourdieu’s model of the state as a bureaucratic field, “by inserting the police, the courts, and the prison as core constituents of the ‘right hand’ of the state”, and concludes that, in neoliberal contexts, a “residual” left hand and a strengthened right hand of the state work in ways that are “functionally and organizationally complementary to fashion new forms of active-and-punitive statecraft” (Wacquant 2010, cited in Peck 2010: 105). The value of this conceptualization, he suggests, lies in its helping us understand under one conceptual framework “the various sectors of the state that administer the life conditions and chances of the working class”, and to “map the ongoing shift from the social to the penal treatment of urban marginality” (Wacquant 2010: 201). The new government of insecurity, Wacquant proposes, has seen a shift from the “nanny” welfare state to a stern “daddy” neoliberal state.

While provocative, Wacquant’s characterization renders invisible the coercive powers of what he refers to as the “nanny” state, especially its gendered nature.<sup>11</sup> The welfare state was not simply “caring” and nanny-like, but a project of political subjection that relied on “the self-discipline of the bourgeoisie, the discipline of labor imposed on the working class”, and, crucially, on what Corrigan terms as a “broader social discipline, the habituation of the meanings given to particular social orders and activities” (Corrigan and Sayer 1985: 184). State forms are “always animated and legitimated by a particular moral ethos” and, as a moral order, such a project has “a dual character, both externally regulative and internally constitutive: it ‘must [...] be not only obligatory but desirable and desired’” (Corrigan and Sayer 1985: 194).

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<sup>11</sup> See also Mayer’s critique of Wacquant on this point (Mayer 2010: 97).

Building on Wacquant's highly influential conceptualization of the neoliberal state, the literature on the "penal state" in Latin America argues compellingly that the central political project of the neoliberal governance of marginality is "the penalization of poverty" (Müller 2012: 58; Wacquant 2009). According to Wacquant the neoliberal state is Janus-faced: "caring and enabling towards the upper strata of society, but fiercely authoritarian toward the lower, precarious ones" (Mayer 2010: 94; see also Wacquant 2009, 313). The penalising and punishing character of neoliberal governance is, furthermore, a worldwide trend, albeit with distinctive features in Latin America. In that region, "'roll-out' neoliberalism has focused predominantly on a penal statecraft that is distinctive because of its transnational and geopolitical dimensions, as well as the practically exclusive focus on policing and imprisonment" (Müller 2012: 58). This approach to the neoliberal state as penal state makes important contributions to our understanding of the management of marginal and excluded populations; it is limited, however, in capturing the full dimensions of social regulation deployed by neoliberal statecraft. We must expand our assumptions about precariousness and marginality to include those dimensions linked to the increasingly privatized forms of reproduction of social and individual life which rendered the conditions for the reproduction and provisioning of caring needs. How else do we make sense of efforts underway in the region for the past two decades to manage marginal populations through forms of intense interventions of an ameliorative kind? Moreover, how do we explain the centrality that women have as agents and clients of these efforts?

Modern capitalist states have always been Janus-faced gendered states, as feminist scholars have shown for some time. They care deeply about the regulation of production and of social reproduction. The concept of social reproduction addresses three related aspects: First, "the biological reproduction of the species, and the conditions and social constructions of motherhood"; second, "the reproduction of the labor force which involves subsistence, education and training"; and third, "the reproduction and provisioning of caring needs that may be wholly privatized within families and kinship networks or socialized to some degree through state supports" (Bakker 2007: 541). Feminist discourses and political agendas, and women's activities inside or outside the state bureaucracy, either through their work as philanthropists working in the private sector, or as social workers, health practitioners and educators, are the historical force behind the making and re-making of welfare states and the associated gender orders through which gender relations and sexuality have been regulated (Gordon 1994; Skocpol 1992). Early transnational flows of ideas, resources, and people, enabled Latin American women to play an equally central—and equally invisibilized—role in the making of modern nation states as welfare states and related gender orders (Guy

2009; Roseblatt 2000). Setting the record straight about who does what, how, and in what contexts in processes of state formation, offers a more complex view of the transformations of earlier “Leviathans”, with community building, helping the poor, and providing social support strongly associated with normative femininity. It also offers important insights into present transformations associated with the broader project of security in which the penal state has its place.

In contrast to Wacquant, I argue that insecurity and precariousness characterize both production and social reproduction. And, although the penal form is a dominant response to the disorders generated by the flexibilization and precarization of labor, the complementary, or ameliorative, form is equally fundamental for the government of marginality and insecurity. Indeed, the ameliorative form of the state is a response to the threat posed by the precarization of the conditions for the reproduction of social life and for the reproduction and provisioning of care. The government of insecurity, then, characterizes the Janus-faced neoliberalized state. Security—and its appeal as a first and foremost citizenship right—looms large as the organizing logic for coordinating what the left and the right hands of the state do in the roll-out phase of neoliberalism. What we are witnessing, then, is an ever-evolving attempt to regulate Latin American societies that seems increasingly to weave together enabling/ameliorative with punitive forms into a new, gendered securitization of the state.<sup>12</sup>

The militarization of policing and the criminalization of poverty have gone hand in hand with efforts to modernize the police and penal systems, as well as expand prison systems throughout Latin America. In the case of Chile, for example, the penal population experienced an explosive growth of 75 percent between 1998 and 2008.<sup>13</sup> And, while those who have landed in prison are the poor, this category includes not only the marginalized but also those sectors of the impoverished middle class who are

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12 This dimension of the neoliberal state is, furthermore, not unique to Latin America, as recent debates in theoretical criminology have shown (Hallsworth and Lea 2011).

13 In Chile, the so-called “modernization of the prison system” initiated by socialist Ricardo Lagos in 2002 built on the approach of the dictatorship of involving the private sector in prison matters. During Michelle Bachelet’s government (2006-2010) ten new prisons were built under the modality of public-private partnerships. For a recent analysis of the implications of private participation in the modernization of the Chilean prison system, including its impact on costs and prison life, see Arriagada (2013). In addition, the Reforma Procesal Penal of 2005 led to a six-fold increase in sentences, from 35,000 in 1999 to 215,000 in 2008. Chilean legislation metes out particularly harsh sentences for robberies and theft, a trend that has been on the increase since 1973. According to former Defensora Nacional Paula Vial, “Chile is the Latin American country with the highest population behind bars. It is situated behind the United States which has one of the highest rates in the world.” (El Ciudadano 2010). For a comparative discussion of these trends, see Müller (2012: 64-71) and Dammert and Zúñiga (2008).

unable to pay their debts.<sup>14</sup> The disciplining and self-disciplining of the market, then, is supplemented with punitive regulation for those whose lives are rendered precarious, and this includes not only the marginalized working class (mostly male) surplus population but broader categories of precarious populations. Moreover, studies show that although males constitute the great majority of those in prison throughout Latin America, women are the fastest growing group.<sup>15</sup> Women who end up behind bars are typically there because of their participation in retail drug dealing (*narcomenudeo*) (Hernández 2010: 11; Villarrubia 2011a 2011b).<sup>16</sup> According to the report, “Women, drug offenses and prison systems in Latin America” published by the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) (Giacomello 2013), the precarization of life in urban and rural Latin America has affected particularly women negatively. Growing numbers of them are sole income providers, not just for their children, but often for elderly relatives too: “many of them [female prisoners in Latin America, V.S.] are single mothers who only enter the drug trade to feed their sons and daughters” (Parkinson 2013; see also Giacomello 2013).

Excessive attention to the punitive dimension of the governing of insecurity has come at a cost; however, the neglect of which I would argue is what is distinctive about this present moment of the neoliberalized state, that is, the articulation of enabling and ameliorative activities to the larger project of securitizing society. This, I propose, is a project in which feminist discourses, women activists and professionals, involved at different levels of government, in the private sector, and in their own communities, are key actors. Investment in those activities that help reproduce the conditions of life, by regulating communities and deserving individuals, takes the form of an appeal to active citizenship that focuses explicitly on enabling targeted populations by empowering women. More than a “cultural trope”, as Wacquant refers to it, then, “individual responsibility” is the appeal of practices of government to the agency of the governed themselves (Wacquant 2010: 197). It is a fundamental dimension of the new political rationality, and it is itself a gendered phenomenon. It is women, in their

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14 See, “Cárceles en Chile: Aquí estamos los que robamos poco” (Tijoux 2012). She evocatively refers to the spread of incarceration to middle class sectors as an “oil slick” that spreads to cover all those whose inability to play the market make them candidates to be jailed.

15 For example, in Mexico between 2000 and 2010, the number of women in prisons increased by 19.89% compared with a 5% increase of the male prison population (Hernández 2010: 11). For current comparative data on trends, by gender, of prison populations, see World Prison Brief South America published by the International Centre for Prison Studies (2014).

16 The proportion of women prisoners incarcerated for drug crimes is very high throughout the region: In “Ecuador, 75 to 80 percent of female prisoners are imprisoned on drug charges, compared to 18.5 percent in 1983. Elsewhere in the region drug charges dominate, with 60 percent in Brazil, 70 percent in Argentina and Venezuela, and 89 percent in Nicaragua among the highest proportions of women imprisoned for drug offences. Notably, in Mexico 30 to 60 percent are imprisoned on drugs charges; a figure that rises to 75 to 80 percent in the US border region, a key drug smuggling zone” (Parkinson 2013).

capacity as care providers, who are called upon as “empowered” subjects to do their bit for families and communities. Today this means nothing short of helping them pull themselves out of poverty and prevent crime. Nowhere is the demand on women’s time and efforts clearer than in the newest generation of gender-sensitive anti-poverty programs, the Conditional Cash Transfer Programs (CCTs).

CCTs were pioneered in Mexico in 1989, and Chile and Honduras in 1990. By 2008, every country in Latin America, with exception of Cuba, Haiti, and Venezuela had enacted CCTs. Programs like *Bolsa Família* in Brazil, *Oportunidades* in Mexico, and *Chile Solidario* and *Programa Puente* in Chile, aim to lift families out of poverty and indigence by recruiting women as key, rational agents of transformation. The stated goal of these programs is to “break the intergenerational transmission of poverty by conditioning payment on compliance with co-responsibilities aimed to develop children’s human capital” (Stampini and Tornarolli 2012: 2).<sup>17</sup> Although they target poor families who are typically identified through means—tests, CCTs usually focus on women. Because women are assumed to be more likely to spend the vouchers on the well-being of their families, they receive the cash vouchers but only on condition that they and their families meet program requirements in areas like education, health, and employability. Sanctions for non-compliance with the requirements of the programs vary from punitive measures such as the suspension of part or all of the voucher, to more benign responses such as Brazil’s where non-compliance with the *Bolsa Família* program is treated as a sign that the family needs additional support (McGuire 2013: 3).<sup>18</sup> Although by now there is an extensive literature on the social, economic, and political impact of this form of social assistance, it remains by and large gender biased. Thus, rarely are the implications for women of their ostensible co-partnership with the state contemplated in mainstream economic and policy analysis. The rationale for directing the transfer of cash vouchers to women, and the perceived advantages of recruiting them as co-partners in the implementation of programs is merely recorded as one more fact. Taking gender seriously, and starting from the experiences of the women who are clients of the programs, reveals a more ambiguous outcome. For women, it turns out, these programs increase the amount of time dedicated to caring for dependents. And, rather than promote empowerment and equality, the principles

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17 These programs have been credited in some cases with contributing to the decline in poverty in the region for the past decade, though even sympathetic critics remain skeptical about their long term effectiveness. A study of CCTs that relied on extensive household data survey published by the Inter-American Development Bank in 2012, for example, concluded that: “Over time, CCT beneficiaries have become relatively less poor and more educated, tend to live in better quality dwellings, and are increasingly engaged in formal wage employment. Nonetheless, CCT beneficiaries remain highly vulnerable, as their endowments of physical and human capital are still scarce, and their labor market outcomes mostly informal” (Stampini and Tornarolli, 2012: 3). Missing from these gender neutral assessments is any consideration of their impact on women.

18 See McGuire (2013), Hanlon et al. (2010): 127-128, and Lindert et al. (2007): 55.

programs make explicit or implicit reference to, they reinforce rather than challenge traditional maternal roles.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, women's co-responsibilities extend today to the tasks of securitizing their own communities and preventing crime. While the literature on the penal state has offered compelling analyses of the use of policing and the courts to address security issues in poor neighbourhoods, it needs to be complemented with an examination of prevention efforts. Securitizing "vulnerable" neighbourhoods, especially those in which drug dealing and drug cartels are actively present, involves a heavy police presence and repression. It also involves, however, crime prevention programs that typically recruit women as co-partners who are assumed to have more time for community-based activities, and to want to be involved in them in any case.<sup>20</sup> Thus, not only do social assistance programs that recruit women living in poverty as co-partners add to women's family-related responsibilities but they also expect them to be responsible for their community's wellbeing. Clearly, both the programs themselves and mainstream assessments continue to take for granted women's time and care work, and hence to render invisible the costs to women of this added burden.

Bourdieu's characterization of the bureaucratic field as comprising a left, or feminine, hand, and a right, or masculine, one offers too neat a split between the use of ostensibly benign forms of regulation versus violent ones. It bears repeating first of all, that those areas of the bureaucratic field that Bourdieu refers to as the left hand of the state bear not only the traces of social struggles, implicitly of those associated with labor, and therefore male activism. They also bear the explicit traces of feminist struggles and women's activism, as feminist historians of Latin America and North America have compellingly shown. The left hand of the state, moreover, has historically been linked with women's (naturalized) capacities for care work, which has extended beyond the private realm of their own domestic environment to encompass state and private welfare efforts. In the "roll-out" phase of neoliberalism, this continues to be the case. The story of the left hand of the state, then, is to a large extent a story of women as "state caretakers", to borrow Linda Gordon's apt formulation (Gordon 1994: 37).<sup>21</sup>

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19 For a critical assessment of the effectiveness of these programs that takes into consideration their effects on women, see Lavinias (2013a, 2013b). See also Molyneux (2006) and Schild (2013: 2007).

20 This is the assessment of neighbourhood-based crime prevention programs in Chile. Furthermore, women participate at the rate of 60 percent versus men who do so at the rate of 40 percent, according to Denuncia Seguro, the confidential crime reporting program of Chile's Ministerio del Interior y Seguridad Pública, Communication from Andrés de Castro, September 2014.

21 For the role of women activists, feminists, social workers, and philanthropists in the shaping of welfare states, see, for example, Guy (2009) for the case of Argentina and Roseblatt (2000) for Chile. For the participation of women in the making of the seemingly exceptional case of welfare in United States, see Gordon (1994) and Skocpol (1992). For the case of the Canadian province of Ontario, see Little (1998).



Going back to the metaphor of the Leviathan used by Bourdieu, we could argue that today, after nearly four decades of neoliberal state restructuring, one thing is for certain, the opposition between the left and the right hands of the state has been replaced by a shared agreement, crystallized in the bureaucratic language of so-called New Public Management. At the core of the neoliberalization of the state, in other words, lies a shared rationality of government, or a political rationality based on the norms and ideas of the market.

My argument, therefore, also goes against the grain of those feminist critics of Latin American neoliberalism who have characterized the so-called retrenchment of the social dimension of the state of the 1980s and early 1990s as a “remasculinization” of the state.<sup>22</sup> In their view, this characteristic was the corollary of the reduction in public spending and the privatizations in health, education, and welfare that resulted in thousands of public sector job losses. Nonetheless, the actual work of caring for the young, the old, and the sick that is essential for reproducing societies did not disappear with neoliberal restructuring but was re-privatized. That is, it was absorbed by women alongside their own productive activities, removed from the ledgers, and rendered invisible. Indeed, as feminists have shown convincingly, the globalization of capitalism and the subjection of institutions and practices of the social field to the rationality of the market have been achieved on the backs of the majority of women. Despite the ongoing rationalization of social reproductive activities, the requirements of livelihood and care work are ongoing, and are increasingly being met through the expansion of women’s paid and unpaid work.<sup>23</sup> Latin America is no exception. Indeed, the history of popular women’s community organizing and activism in the region, and their present involvement as co-partners in neighbourhood based social improvement initiatives, are an indication of the extent to which social provisioning and social reproduction continue to rely on the unpaid and invisible efforts of women.<sup>24</sup> Thus, attention to the more recent changes in neoliberal governance suggests that we need to reconsider the characterization of neoliberal states as “remasculinized” states *tout court*. On the contrary, I argue that in cases of “roll-out” neoliberalism, in which states acquire renewed prominence and visibility in the ethical and coercive regulation of societies in the guise of enabling states, what we are witnessing is in fact a re-feminization of the

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22 On the remasculinization of the Latin American state, see Nikki Craske (1999).

23 This work reaches across borders today as the massive migration of women from the non-West as care workers in Europe and North America reveals. The economic contributions of these migrants to their home countries through remittances are well documented. For an overview of recent feminist debates on social reproduction and the constitution of a gendered political economy, see Bakker (2007).

24 There is a vast literature on this central topic in feminist political economy. For an early and comprehensive discussion, see Sparr (1994). For Latin American case studies, see Lind (2005) and Schild (2003: 2002).

social dimension of the state. This re-feminization follows the logic of decentralization, privatization and efficient public spending of an earlier phase of neoliberalism and casts a wider net, ensnaring female clients of the state as co-partners of state caretakers.

In the ongoing reconfiguration of the neoliberal state, gender has acquired renewed prominence. A grounded analysis of the policy field that begins from the experiences of women in the bureaucracy, for example, suggests that what we are witnessing is a feminization of the social state in two senses: First, in terms of the extensive resources found in the efforts of different categories of women—from clients to experts, and to a vast army of female personnel working in the public, volunteer, and private sectors, often under precarious conditions and poorly paid. Women are called upon to be genderless workers and rational economic actors, yet at the same time they are expected to be the social support for reproductive and caring work. This naturalized expectation, and self-expectation is extended to their participation in public sector work and contributes to the exploitation and self-exploitation of female workers. In Chile, for example, women make up 60 percent of all public employees, making the neoliberalized social state the largest employer of women.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, “women are the social face of the state”, according to the Asociación Nacional de Empleados Fiscales (ANEF (n.d.), National Association of Public Employees), and they are also its most precarious workers. Labor flexibilization not only predominates as a modality of work in the private sector, but it has become entrenched in the state bureaucracy at all levels.<sup>26</sup> Women are employed mostly through yearly renewable contracts (*contrata*) or on a fee-per service basis (*honorario*). Figures for the period 1999-2009, for example, show that career civil service jobs grew by a total of 3,000 while yearly renewable contract jobs grew by 54,382, and that women constituted the majority of those hired on a temporary contract basis.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the figure of workers hired on a fee-per service basis during 2009 was 53,042 (Ibañez 2011: 64-65).

A second dimension of the feminization of the neoliberalized social state has to do with the contribution of the rich legacy of feminist activist practices, expertise and broader feminist knowledge to the new terms of social regulation. What is innovative about

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25 Formal labor rate participation by women is 37.4 percent and in the public sector it is 60 percent. Combining public workers and career functionaries, Chile’s public sector is the smallest in Latin America, and represents approximately 7 percent of Chile’s total labor force (de la Puente 2011: 14).

26 Figures for June 2013, show that of total jobs created for the previous 39 months, 62.7 percent correspond to subcontracted work and other precarious forms of work. For women, moreover, this percentage increases to 76.9 percent (Fundación Sol 2013: 4).

27 An estimated 8,000 workers on limited contracts have been employed for over 20 years in public administration, and an additional 18,000 have between 11 and 20 years of seniority. During Bachelet’s government (2006-2010) the number of workers hired on a limited contract basis rose by approximately 43,000 (de la Puente 2011: 14).

social assistance and community-based security programs is that women are their explicit and implicit targets. Whether as novel conditional cash transfer programs or crime prevention programs which aim to invest in children and youth to break the cycle of poverty or to make communities safe from crime, they do so in the name of empowering women as active citizens. For example, in Brazil's program, *Mulheres da Paz*, a key component of the larger *Programa Nacional de Segurança com Cidadania*, coordinated by the Justice Ministry, "empowered" women play a critical role. In Rio de Janeiro, the program is linked with the *Programa Proteção* (Protection) whose focus is "citizenship education" among youth exposed to urban or domestic violence.<sup>28</sup> Women identify potential beneficiaries, direct them to the program, and accompany them on their journey, offering advice and guidance (Sorj and Gomes 2011: 151). Clearly, the capacity of these clients to act or make choices, as Clarke and Newman writing in a different context remind us, "is not their intrinsic property but an effect of their relationship with the state in which they are both empowered and disciplined" (Clarke and Newman 1997: 29).<sup>29</sup>

### 3. The Gendered Security State Form: Neoliberalized Ameliorative and Punitive Regulation

In the present, roll-out phase of neoliberalism, solutions to poverty and inequality have been framed in terms of a search for societal consensus and political stability. The suppression of conflict by repressive means, if need be, as the militarized response to dissidence and criminality throughout the region, is the underside of this search for consensus and stability. Furthermore, the concept of *seguridad ciudadana* (citizen security) as a right of citizenship is a central justification of punitive social regulation. *Seguridad ciudadana* gained currency in Latin America during the course of political transitions from authoritarian rule as a tool to address questions of criminality and violence, and to distinguish the nature of security in a democratic regime from security in authoritarian contexts (CIDH 2009: 6-10). Since the 1990s, the problem of insecurity in Latin America has increased steadily. Violence is a complex problem with distinct regional forms and features. It covers "organized crime, fire arms, drug use, violence against women, violence against children and adolescents, violence against indigenous and afro-descended populations, social and community conflicts, youth delinquency" (Wigodsky 2011: 46). Insecurity, Diane Davis tells us in a recent, particularly poignant

28 The program was established in 2008, and the Rio version was a pioneer. It was under the Secretaria Estadual de Assistência Social e Direitos Humanos (Seasdh, State Secretariat for Social Assistance and Human Rights of Rio de Janeiro). 2,550 women were selected from eighteen areas of the state identified as having "high rates of violence and criminality." Participants, in this case women and youth, receive R\$190 and R\$100 respectively (Sorj and Gomes 2011: 151, 153).

29 For a grounded discussion of the convergence of feminist legacies and Chile's Programa Puente, see Schild (2013).

piece, appears to be more of a “garden variety that permeates the most routine of daily activities.” It is manifested in “rising homicides, accelerating crime rates (despite a decline in reportage by victims), unprecedented levels of police corruption and impunity, and an inability to move around freely without fear of armed robbery, violent attack, or extortion” (Davis 2010: 36; see also Davis 2007). She concludes, with others, that these contemporary problems of violence and insecurity seem today to be “broader and perhaps more insidious and damaging to the quality of life than even the violent struggles over authoritarian rule of the past” (Davis 2010: 36; see also Huggins et al. 2002). There is a vast literature documenting the rising levels of violence, its characterization by sub-region, and increasing levels of insecurity.<sup>30</sup>

Understanding the phenomenon more comprehensively than addressing it in the context of the broader analysis of democracy and democratization is, however, a different matter. Typically, this approach has tended to regard violence as “a deviation from the ideal of polyarchy”, according to Arias and Goldstein, overlooking altogether the question of the relation between state power and violence (Arias and Goldstein 2010: 19). Instead, my view accords with Arias and Goldstein’s argument that “violence in Latin America today is an integral component of both the state-formation processes and challenges to the state” (Arias and Goldstein 2010: 19).

The question posed by the challenges of political transition from authoritarianism to democracy in Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s must be framed in the context of an export-led capitalist model that is exclusionary and incapable of resolving the persistent issue of inequality. In such a context, then, the challenges were first and foremost about legitimizing political subjection anew. In a rapidly changing capitalist context this meant eliciting the support of the population by adapting society and individuals to an increasingly globalized economy which is exclusionary. This entails not only the disciplining of labor and containment of those surplus populations, assumed to be male par excellence, thus rendering the particular circumstances of women invisible, but also the re-regulation of the terms under which society is reproduced. The intensification of the privatization and reprivatisation of social reproduction, and its normative justification, have had the effect of fundamentally shifting the gender order that shapes the “everyday activities of maintaining life and reproducing the next generation” (Bakker 2007: 541). Resolving the fundamental question of security as social reorganization has been characterized by the “aggressive re-regulation, disciplining and containment” of targeted populations (Peck and Tickell 2002: 389). These strategies extend into the concern with the “responsibilization” of individuals

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<sup>30</sup> For regional and comparative discussions, see for example, the articles in Arias and Goldstein (2010), Koonings and Kruijt (2007a) and Koonings and Kruijt (1999).

–what the literature on neoliberal governmentality, building on Foucault’s legacy, has addressed—and they rely heavily on women’s everyday provisioning and caring practices at the micro level of the household and the community.

More concretely, political transitions entailed a move from the use of instrumental coercion and repression as modes of class domination (justified by the doctrine of national security with its notion of the enemy within, and upheld by the legal figure of the state of exception) to forms of violence defended in terms of citizen security and the state of law, along with renewed forms of indirect coercion. The appeal to security argues today for an inclusive view of the national community, one that has to be protected from itself. The community, moreover, is envisioned in the form of the market where citizens are defined first and foremost as individual consumers. In this context, social interventions in the area of poverty reduction with their focus on empowering the poor and the indigent are about downloading of systemic problems onto individuals in the name of active citizenship. For women, who are the co-partners of the state in a panoply of ostensibly novel poverty reduction programs, this appeal to autonomization and responsabilization is done in the name of empowerment.<sup>31</sup>

Michel Foucault has argued that in neoliberalism, government “has to intervene in the very being of society in order to make competition the dominant principle for guiding human behaviour [...] more fundamentally, the state must also make it impossible for people to simply opt out of the game” (Oksala 2012: 141). That is, not only must the necessary legal, cultural and institutional conditions be created and maintained through effective policing, but those who opt out must be managed, by violent means if necessary. In her reading of Foucault, Johanna Oksala concludes that for neoliberalism as a comprehensive political project, state violence is required (Oksala 2012: 141).

Although ending authoritarianism and promoting democracy was supposed to usher in a period of deepening democratization, both at the level of institutions and civil society, this has been a limited and contradictory effort. Democratic governance has, in fact, coincided with substantial increases in inequality, violence and insecurity and, as Arias and Goldstein remind us, “large segments of national populations (especially poor and indigenous communities) have continued to suffer significantly from violence, including crime, police violence, domestic abuse, and human rights violations” (Arias and Goldstein 2010: 3). Indeed, the wave of optimism that accompanied democratization processes in the 1980s and 1990s has long subsided. This period also coincides

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<sup>31</sup> See, for example, Schild (2007, 2000) for an analysis of the redefinition of citizenship along market lines and its implications for women, and for a feminist emancipatory agenda. See also, Fraser (2009) and Eisenstein (2009). For an assessment of this emerging consumer citizenship in Latin America, and its implications for marginalized groups, see Pérez Sáinz (2014: 402-478).

with massive increases in urbanization—today Latin America is the most urbanized region in the world according to a recent UN study (UN HABITAT 2012). Today, most Latin Americans, or roughly 80 percent, live in urban centres and an estimated 111 million (out of a total of 588 million) live in poor neighbourhoods or shantytowns.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, Latin America is today the most violent region in the world and, although there are substantial variations within and between countries, ongoing violence and rights violations, especially among poor and marginal groups, characterize the whole continent (UN 2013; Arias and Goldstein 2010; Davis 2010; Portes and Hoffmann, 2003; Morrison et al 2003).<sup>33</sup> Violence, insecurity, and un- and underemployment, are concentrated in poor areas and have resulted in the steady, and sometimes dramatic, deterioration of the quality of urban life for the majority of Latin Americans.<sup>34</sup> This is, furthermore, a thoroughly transnationalized phenomenon. Latin America “has become the continent in which in most of its countries a significant segment of the population is, at once, poor, informal and excluded” (Koonings and Kruijt 2007b: 9). Most migrants to urban centres are poor and have moved either to existing neighbourhoods or to new ones, and this has led to a significant expansion of peripheral irregular settlements (shantytowns) or new housing settlements often reaching well beyond the edges of established cities, and to the steady deterioration of existing poor neighbourhoods. The precarious living conditions of the majority of urban dwellers, coupled with limited access to employment, to quality education, and other urban amenities are intensifying social exclusion and marginalization, as well as violence and insecurity (Ward 2004; Perlman 2004; Roberts 2004). Furthermore, in such a context even the provisioning of caring needs has become precarious for many, drawing women who do not qualify for targeted social assistance to engage in the illicit drug economy as mentioned above. In short, the appeal of Latin American states to “public security” is a response by the neoliberalized state to a crisis of its own making.

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32 Though decidedly upbeat, a recent UN Habitat Report, points out that this growth has been “traumatic and at times violent because of its speed, marked by the deterioration of the environment and, above all, by a deep social inequality” (Barbassa 2012). Erik Vittrup, head of human settlements of UN Habitat’s regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean, commented at the time of the report’s release that “Cities didn’t grow more inclusive; the prosperity wasn’t for everyone” (Barbassa 2012).

33 The United Nations Regional Human Development Report 2013-2014 offers some stark statistics and suggests that “Latin America is the only region in the world where lethal violence increased between 2000 and 2010. While homicide rates in most regions of the world have fallen by as much as 50 percent, in Latin America they increased by 12 percent. In a decade, more than one million people have died in Latin America and the Caribbean as a result of criminal violence” (UN 2013: 1). Based on a study of 18 countries, the report highlights the fact that lethal violence affects young males disproportionately, and that although the majority of victimizers are male, 1 in 10 victims of homicide are female. In fact, the rates of femicide—or, the killing of women because they are women—have also increased in some countries. The high rates are linked in the report to a number of factors, among them low wages, deficiencies in the criminal justice system, and family breakdown (UN 2013: 7).

34 For those who seek to make sense of the situation from a policy perspective “it is clear that it cannot be reversed with conventional policy tools” (Davis 2007: 57). See also, Moser (2004).

It is in this context that the poor—even if they constitute a shifting social category—are perceived as a source of anxiety and moral panic because of the association made between them, criminality and societal insecurity. The privatization of, at best, precarious security nets, and the commodification of health, education, and housing, which were part of “roll-back” neoliberalism, coupled with the social fragmentation and marginalization caused by the deregulation of labor and orthodox economic policies adopted to open up Latin American economies to global competition, have rendered the lives of millions precarious.<sup>35</sup> The neoliberalized state has sought to reform certain categories of individuals into active, responsible citizens through corrective interventions, as well as penalizing those who do not comply. These interventions, it bears repeating, have always been gendered, both in their configuration and their effects, and today they increasingly take the form of altering “the physical and social structures within which individuals behave” (O’Malley 2009: 7).<sup>36</sup>

#### 4. Conclusions

The foregoing has made a case for the value of making gender an important category of analysis in our approaches to neoliberal statecraft. From feminist scholarship we have learned that attending to gender as a crucial structuring process of culture, however qualified by other vectors of power, makes visible the persistent heteronormative and androcentric assumptions of institutional reconfigurations through which societies are organized and regulated. Moreover, it helps us transcend our own persistent epistemological blind spots as social scientists, and overcome the veritable division of labor that prevents feminist contributions from entering our own specialized lexicons and concerns. Methodologically, it helps us render explicit our positioning in the process of knowledge production. The preceding discussion has proposed a situated approach to the study of the rolling out of the neoliberal state as a security state in Latin America. Given women’s overwhelming presence, not only as the “face of the social state” but also as the primary clients of its programs, the discussion attends to on women’s involvement with efforts of social regulation in the form of novel anti-

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35 Lavinás (2013b) rightly questions the capacity of the much celebrated new generation of targeted social programs to create genuine conditions of equality in Latin American societies.

36 Pat O’Malley (2009: 7) uses a governmentality approach that rescues the centrality of the state from earlier studies of decentralized power and disciplining. Focusing on shifts in places like the United States, they suggest that the rise of a security state is characterized by a shift away from disciplining techniques informed by “the welfare ethos that all members are recoverable” to what they refer to as “actuarial techniques” that “seek to alter the physical and social structures within which individuals behave” (O’Malley 2009: 9). A new actuarial justice has become widespread, he claims, which is “aimed at classifying and incapacitating high risk offenders through either prison warehousing or newly emerging techniques such as electronic monitoring and house arrest” (O’Malley 2009: 8). While this is no doubt an important shift in the ongoing criminalization of marginal and excluded populations, the characterization of it reveals a persistent gender bias.

poverty programs. Beginning from the experiences of these clients and practitioners, understood as lived, every day practices and as demands on their time, and on their paid and unpaid work, we are able to elucidate the increasing interconnections between punitive and ameliorative forms of regulation of precariousness. As I argued, two trends characterize the ever evolving managing of crime and social insecurity by Latin American neoliberal states in their “roll-out” phase, and they are dynamically interrelated. These are, on the one hand, an increasingly punitive form, as evidenced by penal reform, more severe and longer sentences, and the explosion of incarceration rates and, on the other, the increasing articulation of ameliorative social programs—especially those that aim to “break the cycle of poverty”—to the project of crime prevention. In this article I have argued that the notion of the security state as a gendered form is a more effective category to capture this dynamic relation between the ameliorative and punitive dimensions of the neoliberalized state. The practices of ensuring “security”, furthermore, occur at different levels, including centralized and decentralized state agencies, with different resources and degrees of effectiveness. At the local level, they involve a variety of public and private organizations, including NGOs and community-based organizations—not only national but increasingly transnational ones. Above all, they seek to turn communities, families, and individuals into active citizens who are responsible for their own security. Although largely invisible in the literature, women—appealed to as empowered citizens—are present and visible throughout. In the name of turning women into active agents of change, “roll-out” neoliberalism relies on their (naturalized) care capacities to manage insecurity.



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