

By examining the multiple dimensions of this expanding notion of proletarianization, the author emphasizes the importance of consumerist and cultural values in explaining behavior rather than deriving the explanation from the productive base. As an empirical study and conceptual debate on proletarianization, this book is useful. Yet the larger contextual issues, the imposition of neoliberal policies on most Latin societies and their impact on structures of employment and behavior, are not systematically analyzed. Also absent is a discussion of the ascendancy of free-market ideology and the shift in intellectual paradigms that has shaped the political aspirations and choices of the popular classes. The question arises whether the behavioral patterns observed here have emerged from internal structures of the “proletarians,” have resulted from “exogenous” forces (the World Bank, the IMF, the export elites), or represent some combination of forces, internal and external, that awaits further elaboration.

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Out of the Shadows: Women, Resistance, and Politics in South America. By JO FISHER. New York: Monthly Review Press/Latin America Bureau, 1993. Bibliography. Index. 228 pp. Paper. \$15.00.

In *Out of the Shadows*, Jo Fisher has woven together inspiring stories of women who united in grassroots movements to defy military rule in the Southern Cone countries of Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. Quoting extensively from the interviews on which the book is based, Fisher lets these women tell their own vivid, moving stories of how the military regimes' economic and political policies pushed them out of their traditional domestic roles and into the public arena, and how their experiences in becoming political activists gradually but profoundly changed their consciousness as women.

Through numerous case studies, this book demonstrates the creative and various ways that women of different classes and ethnic backgrounds have responded to poverty and repression since the 1970s. In the shantytowns of Chile, women coped with widespread unemployment and immiseration by forming communal kitchens, shopping collectives, child-care centers, skill workshops, and health campaigns. Uruguayan women, forced into paid employment in unprecedented numbers, established a Women's Commission within Uruguay's national trade union confederation and succeeded in introducing issues such as equal pay, child care, and health education into union policy. In Paraguay, the establishment of the Peasant Women's Commission not only confirmed women's importance as participants in land struggles, but provided them with a means to begin to break out of their traditional isolation. Argentina's Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo challenged military rule and redefined the role of motherhood as they organized first to demand information about their “disappeared” children, and then to condemn the military's human rights abuses.

What is striking about all these grassroots women's organizations, and what unites them despite their diversity, is the transformative power they have had in women's lives. The powerful (and optimistic) message of this book is that profound cultural changes are taking place, even if they cannot be measured in terms of numbers of women elected to public office or legal gains effected under new, democratic governments. While most of the women activists quoted here shun the label "feminist" and dissociate themselves from "radical," middle-class feminism, their words reveal a deeply felt awareness of gender discrimination, a growing self-esteem, and a determination gradually to democratize their relationships with their partners. They have moved slowly—to avoid alienating devoutly religious women and to minimize family conflicts—but in all the organizations discussed, women are breaking old taboos. Not only have they put gender issues such as wage discrimination and child-care on the national agenda, but they are openly discussing domestic violence, sexuality, even abortion, in most cases for the first time.

In their struggles against poverty, persecution, and machismo, Latin America's grassroots women's organizations are pioneering a new form of feminism—one that, Fisher suggests, is helping to collapse the differences between feminine and feminist agendas, or between women's "practical" interests (for improved living conditions) and their "strategic" interests (for gender equality).

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In Search of a Home: Rental and Shared Housing in Latin America. By ALAN GILBERT. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993. Maps. Tables. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xii, 177 pp. Cloth. \$45.00.

The title of this work is misleading. Based on field research, the text deals only with low-rent and "self-help" housing in three capitals: Mexico, Santiago de Chile, and Caracas. This comparative, in-depth perspective, however, achieves the title's implied goal, in that the three cities studied have made distinctive responses to the problem of the shortage of low-cost housing.

The study's general objective is to show how misguided government policies have ruined the rental market by controlling rents and protecting tenants at the expense of owners. Nevertheless, the author sees renting (or sharing, as he encountered it in Chile) as the most feasible solution, given that even "self-help" housing is getting to be too expensive and that the most convenient locations have been underutilized by one- and two-story houses. Even in the consolidated settlements, the present housing could be expanded for rental purposes if a more propitious environment existed for renting as opposed to buying.

The study analyzes the differing circumstances—political, economic, or geographic—that affect the development of "self-help" housing in each of the three cities, and presents the results of surveys conducted in different types of lower-class housing areas. Although it is clear why the particular survey areas were chosen,