

**Theoretical priorities for Child- Focused
Research:
Bridging Academic and Policy Priorities in
Latin America**

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Group background

- Critical Development studies
- Feminist and Gender studies
- Multi disciplines:

Sociology

Anthropology

Political science

History

Economy

Agronomy

Philosophy

Collective academic identity

General orientation: Understand and explain social, political, economic and cultural factors facilitating or constraining development paths toward democratic, equal and sustainable societies in a globalized world.

Focus on Bolivia and Latin America

- Globalization processes, dynamics and effects – significant diversity among regions and countries and within regions and countries
- Specific subjects are framed taking into account structural conditions (class, gender, ethnicity) - symbolic and material dimensions and tensions in continuing processes

Academic research and Public spaces

- *“Responding to the growing gap between the sociological ethos and the world we study, the challenge of public sociology is to engage multiple publics in multiple ways. These public sociologies should not be left out in the cold, but brought into the framework of our discipline. In this way we make public sociology a visible and legitimate enterprise, and, thereby, invigorate the discipline as a whole.” (Michael Burawoy, Presidential Address, For Public Sociology, 2004).*

Doing research and building theory

- Aims, publics: comprehension and explanation of social dynamics and results oriented to different publics: academics, civil society and policy making,
- Sources for framing research questions and building theoretical understandings: academic literature, social needs, public debates, emerging tensions and interpretations...
- Methodology – research and concept building, teaching, communicating advances and results...

Women's and Children's rights

Research subjects:

- . Persisting inequalities – old and new social dynamics perpetuating unequal access to resources (food, housing, health, education, basic services, social security, information to make decisions, institutional support to participate in public life, work and be able to live their differences)
- . Women, children, elderly or disable people as groups or categories with specific disadvantage social positions.
- . Social mechanisms playing across different social spaces and social relations

The concept of Care and sustainability of life (Vivir Bien)

- Different roots and meanings”: ethical horizon within critical thinking
- Common ethical and political grounds: solidarity, cooperation, spiritual, cultural and ecological dimension of well-being
- Understand how care is social organized and experienced by children, by women, men... scaling up from daily life to “systemic” levels.

Usefulness of the concept of care

- Citizenship rights – public good
- Critical approach to family, parenting, maternity and paternity, childhood, divide of public-private, life course and time use.
- Relationship between paid and non paid work, gender and generation relations and rights, reproduction of inter generation inequality, children exclusion of adequate protection and opportunities,
- The role of state, community, market and family in providing care and protection.

Questions

- What is the role of University (academic knowledge) in promoting democratic public spaces?
- Do you think this is an important question?
- What should be the relationship between University, civil society organizations, social movements and policy makers?
 - Teaching
 - Researching
 - Public policy advocacy
 - Public opinion formation
- What are the challenges to advance toward a proactive role of University in building democratic public spaces?
- What is the importance of international networks of universities in this matter?