

LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES



Call for Manuscripts for a Thematic Issue of *Latin American Perspectives*

Latin Americans Seeking Asylum in North America: Documenting the Crisis as Researchers and Expert Witnesses

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The international definition of refugee and **asylum** was originally written in the 1950s to address the refugee crisis created by WWII. It was then used in the US primarily to give asylum to political dissidents from communist countries fleeing state sponsored persecution. In the 1980s the types of asylum seekers from Latin America expanded from political refugees fleeing persecution by the state to those fleeing “private” persecution by “non-state” actors such as abusive husbands, gangs and organized crime, and private security forces. While immigration lawyers and other advocates had made progress in getting courts to accept some of these forms of persecution as legitimate bases for asylum, others have been more difficult and the Trump administration launched an attack on asylum that has set that progress back tremendously. Immigration courts are severely backlogged with cases, criteria for being granted asylum have been narrowed, and asylum seekers arriving to the US/Mexico border are being sent to so-called “safe third countries” to await their legal process where they are often subjected to similar levels of violence that they were fleeing from in their home countries. Researchers who work in Latin America and on issues related to immigration are getting increasingly involved in documenting this assault on asylum as well as providing expert witness testimony for asylum cases.

The goal of this thematic issue is to explore the current dynamics of Latin Americans seeking asylum in North America (US, Mexico, and Canada) by addressing the socio-economic conditions that are driving so many people from Latin America to leave their countries, the changing landscape of asylum law and policies that they are encountering, and the way that researchers have been involved in documenting these processes and serving as expert witnesses in asylum cases.

We welcome theoretically informed and empirically rich articles on these and other relevant topics:

- 1) The origins, causes, and experiences of the different socio-economic and political crises and forms of persecution that asylum seekers are fleeing throughout Latin America and the Caribbean;
- 2) The history and politics of asylum law and border control in general as it has been applied to people from Latin America, including the policies of the Trump and Biden administrations and how those are affecting Latin Americans right now;
- 3) Reflections on the inherent limitations of asylum as a form of relief for individuals as well as a way to deal with instability and violence in the region;
- 4) The types of persecution and social group that can be a basis for an asylum claim (political affiliation, gender, sexuality, religion, race, etc.) and the struggles over how to define those in asylum cases;
- 5) Asylum as a political issue in the US, Canada and Mexico;
- 6) Asylum as an instrument of foreign policy. This could include consideration of politically-based treatment of asylum seekers from “enemy” countries such as Venezuela and Cuba.;
- 7) The political economy of the detention-industrial complex;
- 9) The consequences of the denial of asylum and/or the “wait in Mexico” policy;
- 9) The impact of family detention and child separation policies;
- 10) The kinds of arguments that researchers make when serving as expert witnesses and why; and
- 11) Reflections on the ethical and scholarly challenges of serving as expert witnesses, for example: How do we write asylum briefs that make convincing claims on behalf of clients without reifying stereotypes about Latin America and Latin Americans (failed states, violent macho men and submissive women)? How do we balance the kind of nuance that we strive for in our other scholarly writing with the need to make more general claims in an asylum declaration? Does our work help shore up a flawed and failing system instead of tackling fundamental changes in immigration policy?

SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

To avoid duplication of content, please contact the issue editors to let them know of your interest in submitting and your proposed topic. We encourage submission as soon as possible, preferably by March 31, 2021, but this call will remain open as long as it is posted on the LAP web site.

Manuscripts should be no longer than 8,000 words of paginated, double-spaced 12 point text with 1 inch margins, including notes and references, using the LAP Style Guidelines available at www.latinamericanperspectives.com under the “Submit” tab where the review process is also

described. Manuscripts should be consistent with the LAP Mission Statement available on the web site under the “About” tab.

Manuscripts may be submitted in English, Spanish, or Portuguese. If you do not write in English with near native fluency, please submit in your first language. LAP will translate manuscripts accepted in languages other than English. If you are not submitting in English, please indicate if you will have difficulty reading reviews and/or correspondence from the LAP office in English.

Please feel free to contact the issue editors with questions pertaining to the issue but **all manuscripts should be submitted directly to the LAP office**, not to the issue editors. A manuscript is not considered submitted until it has been received by the LAP office. You should receive acknowledgment of receipt of your manuscript within a few days. If you do not receive an acknowledgment from LAP after one week, please send a follow-up inquiry to be sure your submission arrived.

E-mail Submissions: send to lap@ucr.edu

Subject Line: Author name – Manuscript for Asylum issue

Please attach your manuscript as a Word Document (doc or docx)

Include: Abstract (100 words), 5 Keywords, and a separate cover page with short author affiliations (less than 130 words) and complete contact information (e-mail, postal address, telephone).

Postal correspondence may be sent to: Managing Editor, Latin American Perspectives, P.O. Box 5703, Riverside, California 92517-5703.

For an article with more than one author, provide contact information for all authors but designate one person as the Corresponding Author who will receive correspondence from the LAP office. If any contact information changes while your manuscript is under consideration, please send the updated information to LAP promptly.

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