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Jane S. Jaquette, ed. *Feminist Agendas and Democracy in Latin America*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2009. x + 258 pp. \$79.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8223-4437-7; \$22.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8223-4449-0.

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Feminist Strategies and Institutions in Latin American Democracies

Scholars of modern Latin American history recognize the significant role that women and women's groups played in democratization movements throughout Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s. Indeed women organized and resisted authoritarian governments and had a clear voice in agitating for political agency in their societies' struggles to reform democratic nations. What happened to women's groups and feminism after democratization? Did women find gender equity when their fellow citizens ended decades-long authoritarian regimes? Once women's groups achieved their immediate aim of democratization, did they retreat from politics? Do Latin American women make up a significant proportion of elected political positions today? The contributors to *Feminist Agendas and Democracy in Latin America* evaluate the outcomes of decades of women mobilizing to fight against tyranny and for justice.

Jane S. Jaquette has compiled a diverse set of essays by activist-researchers who are ably suited to reflect both personally and academically on the state of feminist agendas in Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Peru, and Mexico. The book is divided into three sections. The first addresses the intersection of feminist politics and legislation at the state level, focusing on the election of Michelle Bachelet in Chile, the efficacy of gender quotas in Argentina and Brazil, and feminist activism under the regime of President Hugo Chávez. The second section includes studies evaluating the success of legal strategies by Argentine women's organizations to effect change or

press for enforcement of existing laws to protect women; the role of international human rights organizations lobbying for domestic violence legislation and enforcement in Brazil; and the lessons of linking gender issues to human rights law, using the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a case study. The essays in the final section take a transnational view by exploring cross-border feminist activism, Latin American governments' commitments to gender equity, and gender violence and legal justice at the Mexico-U.S. border. Jaquette surveys the state of feminist organizing and agendas after democratization in the compilation's final essay. The collection is ambitious, and although limited in scope geographically to a few Latin American nations, it provides significant analyses of the agendas, efficacy, and new directions of women's organizations after their nations elected democratic governments and politics became more fragmented as more and more interest groups gained a political voice.

In general, the contributors focus on the intersections of feminist politics and agendas with institutions, including law, international organizations, and elected processes. Women took to the streets and used extralegal avenues of fomenting political change during Latin America's authoritarian era. Now Jaquette and her fellow scholars want to understand what happened when feminist politics either became institutionalized through measures like quotas or attempted to transform legal norms governing such realities as domestic violence. Gioconda

Espina describes the challenges faced by women's groups before and after the election and reelection of Chávez. She has found that women united across party lines for basic women's rights, such as freedom from violence and gender parity in elected positions. As Chávez became firmly entrenched in the executive seat and the opposition withdrew from official politics, women no longer mobilized in unity to press for common goals, but split along *chavista* and anti-*chavista* lines. The core activist group today is made up of university professors, and Espina stresses that communications with other women's groups have been cautious and restrained. Egalitarian feminists have had conflicts with those who recognize sexual difference and want to fight for the rights of gays and lesbians in Venezuela. What brought them together for a short time was their need to respond to the Enabling Law and the lack of plurality in Venezuelan politics under Chávez. In fact, it seems clear that plurality allowed women to shake hands across party lines and work together for common goals to improve women's private and political lives in pre-Chávez Venezuela.

Women's groups from both sides of the border have come together to fight violence against women in Ciudad Juárez. Young women have been victims of extraordinary femicides since the early 1990s. The murders continue to date even though the convicted suspect died in prison. When perpetrators dumped eight corpses in a field near the maquiladoras, activists from both sides of the border stepped up their efforts to seek justice for the

murdered women and to fight domestic violence for all women. The binational activists tread a fine line between violating each country's statutes and adapting to the often virulent political rhetoric that taints efforts to prevent the femicides and the drug trafficking thought to be associated with the murders. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have certainly brought attention to the violence faced by young factory women but also other women abused by family members or spouses. Kathleen Staudt and Gabriela Montoya, the authors of this fine essay, recommend that NGOs continue to cooperate and work on both sides of the border. Their essay, like most of the other contributors' chapters, presents an activist and scholarly tone that is refreshing to read in Latin American studies.

All of the chapters are excellent in this volume. The authors are recognized feminist experts and academics and their penetrating analyses point out the strengths and limits of feminist strategies in the target nations. My only criticism is that the volume's contributors address groups that are largely liberal and middle class. Indigenous feminism has received more attention in places like Bolivia and Mexico, as has the plight of domestic workers and other working-class women who fight for gender rights without calling themselves "feminist." Nonetheless, *Feminist Agendas and Democracy in Latin America* is a fascinating, well-organized volume that could be used in advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in feminist politics and history.

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