

IMPACT ON SOCIETY VERSUS IMPACT ON KNOWLEDGE

Why Latin American Scholars Do Not Participate in Latin American Studies

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Abstract: Although Latin America is home to 8 percent of the world's population, only 1.7 percent of scholarly knowledge about Latin America is produced there. The limited voice of Latin American scholars in Latin American studies constitutes the loss of a valuable and unique cultural perspective. To address this issue, we interviewed Latin American studies scholars residing in Latin America as well as those residing in the United States and United Kingdom to reveal how and to what extent these scholars participate in the international academic community. Our findings show that the two groups were markedly different. Latin American scholars identify themselves as agents of change, motivated by a desire to solve problems and fulfill social needs in the region, whereas US/UK-based scholars see themselves mainly as experts in the field, driven by a desire to impact the knowledge about the region.

Although Latin America is home to 8 percent of the world's population (Guarda 2002), only 1.7 percent of the scholarly knowledge about this area, as measured in terms of publications in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), is produced within the region (UNESCO 2010). A review of academic articles about Latin America published by the two major peer-reviewed journals on Latin American studies over the past ten years, *Latin American Research Review* (LARR) and *Journal of Latin American Studies* (JLAS), revealed that 86 percent of those journals' content was produced by scholars outside the Latin American region, and only 4 percent was produced collaboratively by Latin American and Western academics (LASA 2011).¹

The failure of Latin American intellectuals to claim a prominent place on the international academic stage has not been explained and cannot be attributed simply to lack of academic knowledge exposure (Alperin, Fischman, and Wil-

1. Latin American studies is defined for the purpose of this research as any disciplinary or interdisciplinary academic study about the Latin American region. Scholars performing this study may be based in the region or outside the region, and similarly, their scholarly production can be showcased in local or regional publication outlets or in international journals with a broader worldwide reach (such as LARR, which is US based, or JLAS, which is UK based). Also, although Latin American studies is inter- and multidisciplinary by nature, it is largely formed by scholars from the social sciences and humanities. Hard sciences are not included in this research on knowledge production in Latin America.

linsky 2008). To address this problem, we performed a qualitative study to reveal how and to what extent Latin American scholars residing in Latin America avail themselves of international knowledge and participate in the international academic community. Our results reflect assessment of the vision, motivations, and academic priorities not only of the scholars residing in Latin America but also of those residing outside the region (in the United States and the United Kingdom).

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN LATIN AMERICA

The limited amount of knowledge produced in Latin American studies by Latin American scholars residing in Latin America leads to three main problems. First, the exclusion of third-world scholars from international publications prevents their voices from being heard (Canagarajah 2006). Second, given that the development of science is dependent on the scholar's sociological paradigm (Kuhn 1996), not using the paradigm of native Latin American scholars may result in a biased understanding of the region. Said (1978), for example, has shown that the representation of the Orient by the scholarly communities of the "Enlightenment" in the West constituted a biased view suitable to their own interests. Third, understanding the reasons for the limited amount of scientific productivity in Latin America is not only of academic interest but also essential for promoting the economic and social development of this marginal region of the world (Salager-Meyer 2008). For these reasons, we have sought in this research to better our understanding of knowledge production in Latin America, including the perspective of Latin American scholars themselves.

Many studies have explored factors that inhibit knowledge production and participation from third-world countries in the international academic community. A classic study by Canagarajah (1996) discussed nondiscursive factors affecting academic publishing, such as rhetorical differences, lack of knowledge of pecking order in journals, lack of peer-group support, and social instability, all of which contribute to the ability of scholars to focus and meet deadlines. Among discursive factors, non-English speakers in general have less facility of expression, take much longer to write, have a less rich vocabulary, find it difficult to make claims for their research with the appropriate amount of force, and have the process of their composition influenced by their first language (Gibbs 1995; Flowerdew 1999).

The literature reveals that most studies about knowledge production are empirical in nature and lack a theoretical framework (Englander 2009). For this reason, and based on a review of the history of scholarship in Latin America as well as the knowledge production literature in general, we designed a grounded theory study to explore how Latin American studies scholars experience their participation in the international academic community.

METHODS

We conducted a qualitative study using semistructured interviews to develop a grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss 2008) about how scholars in Latin Ameri-

can studies experience their participation in the knowledge production and knowledge-sharing activities of the international scholarly community.

Sample

Our sample was originally designed to reflect the geographical distribution of the academic work produced by Latin American studies' scholars and consisted of thirty scholars in Latin American studies. Half of the scholars were from Latin America (i.e., Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico), and half were from the United States and the United Kingdom. The final sample, which evolved on the basis of theoretical sampling considerations (Charmaz 2006), consisted of approximately two-thirds male and one-third female participants, reflecting gender representation in peer-reviewed publications in the previous ten years in *Latin American Research Review* and *Journal of Latin American Studies* periodicals (66 percent male and 34 percent female) (LASA 2011) (see table 1).

The fifteen scholars residing in Latin America were living in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico, countries with the largest number of scholarly publications during the past ten years (LASA 2011). These four countries are noted as having the most access to financial resources for research and development (Terra-Figari 2009), and most of our respondents from them were affiliated with large public institutions that were likely to encourage both research and teaching. The sixteen scholars living in the United States and United Kingdom in our sample contribute the largest number of peer-reviewed publications in Latin American studies in the world. In these locations, our respondents were affiliated with both private and public research universities that encourage both research and teaching. Our sample included scholars associated with seven of the most represented (each 5 percent or more) disciplines in Latin American studies (political science, literature, history, anthropology, sociology, economics, and education) (LASA 2011). Nineteen were scholars born in or before 1961 (fifty years old and older), and eleven were born after 1961 (forty-nine years old and younger) (see table 1). Also, scholars in the sample represented different levels of international publication (from none to several articles), measured in terms of the Hirsch's index (h index) and the Egghe's index (g index). These indexes attempt to measure the cumulative impact of a scholar's output by looking at the number of citations his or her work has received in journal articles published in the Institute for Scientific Information's (ISI) listed journals (h index) and other publications not included in ISI (g index) (Harzing 2011).

All interviews were conducted during the seven-month period from April to October 2011. The principal researcher leveraged her professional network to identify scholars willing to participate in the study and also asked some participants to recommend other potential respondents. Interviews averaged sixty minutes, were semistructured, and were guided by an interview protocol (see the appendix).

Table 1 Demographic distribution (N = 30)

		Number	%
Residence	Argentina	4	13
	Brazil	4	13
	Chile	3	10
	Mexico	4	13
	US	13	43
	UK	2	7
Gender	Male	19	63
	Female	11	37
	Total	30	100
Birthplace	Argentina	7	23
	Brazil	4	13
	Chile	4	13
	Ecuador	1	3
	Mexico	5	17
	US	9	30
Discipline	Political science	13	43
	Literature	5	17
	History	2	7
	Anthropology	3	10
	Sociology	4	13
	Economics	2	7
	Education	1	3
Institutional affiliation	Latin American public research univ.	14	47
	Latin American private research univ.	1	3
	US/UK public research univ.	6	20
	US/UK private research univ.	9	30
	Total	30	100
Generation	1961 or before	19	63
	After 1961	11	37

Data Analysis

Consistent with the grounded theory approach, data analysis commenced simultaneously with data collection. The audio recordings of each interview were listened to several times and the transcripts of the recordings read repeatedly. Analysis followed the three stages of coding recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2008). First, all transcripts were open coded, a process that requires the researcher to identify fragments of data with potential interest (commonly called "codable moments") (Boyatzis 1998). We identified and labeled 1,051 such words, phrases, or longer sections of text in the thirty interviews. These codable moments were sorted and assigned to preexisting or new categories that included similar fragments from other interviews. In the second stage, "axial coding," we sought to recognize ideas and themes emerging from the categorized data

and relationships between them. At this stage of coding, the categories were further refined as we compared and contrasted them, a process that resulted in the emergence of patterns and themes. During the axial coding phase we reduced the number of categories to thirty-nine. During the third stage, "selective coding," we focused on key categories and themes that our findings generated. The selective coding process resulted in a reduction in the number of categories from thirty-nine to nine, yielding five major themes (vision of self, motivation, research agenda, scholarship type, and knowledge production outlets), which were used to develop a preliminary theoretical framework for this study. To test the reliability of the codes, a code book (Boyatzis 1998) was created on the basis of the five main findings. For this purpose, we distributed the interviews to two colleagues (a business professor and a doctoral student at Case Western Reserve University). The code development process outlined was repeated with all interviews. We achieved an initial average reliability of 85 percent, better than the recommended 75 percent (Boyatzis 1998), and we established a 100 percent final reliability for both intercoders after carefully revisiting the questionable codes.

FINDINGS

Our data revealed marked differences between scholars based in Latin America (LAT) and those based in the United States or United Kingdom (US/UK) in terms of personal vision, motivation to enter and remain in the field, research agendas, scholarship focus, and publication outlets favored. The findings are summarized in table 2.²

Vision of Self

Most of the LAT-based scholars in our sample (thirteen of fifteen, or 87 percent) see themselves as both actors and agents of change in the region's social and political environment. We saw only slight differences in the nature and extent of their activities to promote social justice and invoke political reform according to age and country of residence. Overall, for them, the academy provides an opportunity to generate social change, support unprivileged sectors, and take political positions using intellectual tools. Scholars described themselves as agents of change to achieve an equitable society or to influence minds to find solutions to societal and political problems in the region.

US/UK-based scholars (thirteen of fifteen; 87 percent), however, see themselves more as experts in the analysis of complex phenomena in the social and political processes taking place in the region, as well as teachers and mentors of the new

2. A word of caution: although our presentation of findings is done using a dichotomous classification for the purpose of an overall understanding the target phenomenon, reality is more nuanced than this because human preferences and academic scholarship are not zero-sum games. For example, scholarship of teaching and scholarship of application are not opposites of each other; they both require adjustment to the same principles of scholarship. Also, preferring one type of scholarship does not mean rejecting the others.

Table 2 Summary of findings

Theme		Description	LAT-based scholars (%)	US/UK-based scholars (%)
Vision of self	As actors	Scholars see themselves as actors and agents of change in the social and political dynamics taking place in the region.	87	33
	As experts	Scholars see themselves as experts and knowledge producers about the social and political processes taking place in the LAT region.	27	87
Motivation To enter the field	Experiential entry	Scholars entered the field after having endured social and political experiences (sometimes traumatic) during their youth.	100	33
	Role model entry	Scholars entered the field due to admiration to a strong role model during their college years.	0	73
To remain in the field	Action driven	Their motivation to remain is based on a strong desire to contribute toward promoting actions to make the LAT region a better place to live.	87	33
	Understanding driven	Their motivation to remain is based on a desire to learn and understand unique social phenomena taking place in the LAT region and derive knowledge from it.	20	80
Research agenda	Agenda tied	The research agenda is constrained to the needs (most of the times practical) of the institutions (governmental or nongovernmental) providing the research funds. Freedom to choose research topic is rare.	100	0
	Agenda free	These scholars have access to independent sources of funds and grants that allow them freedom to choose their own research topic.	10	100
Scholarship type	Pure research	Scholars show strong interest to work on theoretical development of the LAT disciplines.	7	20
	Applied research	Given that research is done to find answers to specific pressing practical questions the research tends to be of a more highly applied nature.	87	40

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Theme		Description	LAT-based scholars (%)	US/UK-based scholars (%)
	Teaching	Show strong interest to teach and mentor students, not limited to but in particular graduate students.	27	87
	Engaged scholarship	Research is done as a request and mainly in collaboration with societal stakeholders (e.g., government, NGOs); therefore, engaged scholarship is quite prevalent.	53	13
Knowledge production outlets	Latin American Journals	Scholars favor local Latin American (versus US/UK) journals and book outlets because they are interested in a quick and wide diffusion of their work to have an immediate practical social impact.	93	67
	International journals (US/UK)	Scholars favor publications in US/UK based journals because they are considered to be the respected and rigorous outlets for their work. When US/UK scholars publish in Latin American outlets, it is typically translated from work originally published English.	20	87

Note: In some cases, scholars have fallen into more than one category; therefore, increasing the percent reported to more than 100 percent.

generation of LAT-region investigators (table 3). US/UK-based scholars do more research in a traditional sense, and data suggest that they also feel very strongly about the importance of teaching and mentoring PhD students, who constitute the new generation of researchers. Some participants indicated that they saw themselves as bridges between the discipline and the new generation of scholars, sharing knowledge with young researchers and training them to think critically about the world they live in.

Motivation to Enter and Remain in the Field

The motivation of LAT scholars to enter and remain in the Latin American Studies field also differed from US/UK-based scholars.

Without exception, LAT-based scholars revealed being drawn to the field by personal involvement in sociopolitical events in Latin America. One scholar recounted witnessing, as a young teenager, the invasion and search of his family home by the military and the interrogation of his mother as a suspected traitor. Another described her college as being closed by the government in an effort to control edu-

Table 3 *Vision of self: First-person accounts*

Latin American scholars (see themselves as actors and agents of change in the social and political dynamics taking place in the region)	US/UK scholars (see themselves as experts and knowledge producers about the social and political processes taking place in the region)
I followed very closely and increasingly participated in current debates about, what was called at that moment, “the transition period” and then for the consolidation of democracy. (01-ARG-M)	I try [in my academic role] to make a contribution by researching and writing, and by advising specially PhD students. (31-B-UK-M)
My role as an academic . . . has to do with researching themes socially relevant in terms of social change or the potential for social change in order to achieve a more equitable society . . . and at the same time, linked to an ethical-political commitment. (02-ARG-M)	First of all, I believe we have the responsibility to pass our knowledge on to other generations . . . and that for me it is very important. To be like a bridge between the discipline and the new generations. And the second part of being an academic is to, obviously, do research. (21-US-M)
I have formed many people but not always within academia. My role is more or less of social protesting. . . . I have also worked with many government servants and social movement leaders. (10-CHI-M)	I see my role as not only teaching, but also trying to work through my research to make the world correspond better to what I think would be a more just and equitable society. (20-US-M)
My role is to transform minds to help produce a change of attitude to better understand social problems and to support people in order to find alternative solutions for those problems. (13-MEX-M)	On one hand, it seems to me that being a teacher is sharing myself and my knowledge with my students and to wake them up a little bit to critical thinking about the world they live in. . . . On the other hand, research I feel is my mission. (26-US-F)
I believe that what I do . . . overall . . . is political, you know, in other words, I do what I do with a political perspective. . . . I am a feminist and I defend that from my trench. I believe I do take a political stand and for me, that is very important. That is how I raise my voice. (16-MEX-F)	I guess somebody who is strongly committed both to teaching and research. So I enjoy both parts of that, and probably more than some, I guess, I feel my role is also to try to sort of reach out beyond the academy to help people to—well, to help students and others really understand issues of Latin American politics and the economy. (22-USA-M)

cation and the abrupt abandonment of her studies. In contrast, most of the US/UK-based scholars (eight of eleven, or 73 percent)³ reported being motivated to enter the field by a mentor or role model. Most of these scholars did not report first-person experience as igniting their fascination with Latin America. Instead, they described taking classes at institutions employing influential Latin American studies scholars, and having heard them speak on occasion about their research and/or writing.

3. Only eleven US/UK-based participants reported motivation to enter the field.

Table 4 Motivation to enter the field

Latin American scholars (entered the field after having endured social and political experiences [sometimes traumatic] during their youth)

I studied sociology because I was interested in the problems of my country and the sociopolitical processes we were experiencing. I did not study for a simple reason as if someone studies any object, no? . . . As the scientist that says: well, I am interested in the stars, or in any other phenomenon. . . . I decided to study in the context of the 1970s, I mean, when the sociopolitical problems were very strong. (10-CHI-M)

When I was a teenager, I was in the Catholic Church movement, youth movements in the Catholic church, so I was always interested in issues that had to do with promoting justice. (08-BRA-F)

Well, I remember since I was young, I began as a political militant in high school and my interest for political science was related to that, to my militant role in a country with political instability. (01-ARG-M)

I participated intensely during the eighties, in the process of the Brazilian democratization. That, and other political activities linked to the Brazilian democratization led me to academia. (06-BRA-M)

In my case, and that of many Latin American people, [my studies] were interrupted by the process of military dictatorship. I was an activist and militant of the left-wing party. Then while young at the university, I started to do political work in addition to my studies. That meant that when the military coup took place, I was in a very popular party in the government, and because of this, I was in jail and followed and all that. (12-CHI-F)

US/UK scholars (entered the field due to admiration to a strong role model during their college years)

It's a region where there's always something new and interesting going on politically, even if it's not sort of a centerpiece of attention in American foreign policy. . . . I've always been fascinated by the politics that are [going on] and, in particular, I do a lot of work on politics and inequality. How do social and economic inequality shape political outcomes in a way in which low-income groups in particular engage in the political process? (22-US-M)

My professors . . . the most influential at UCLA were Latin Americans . . . so, even though I was born here in the US, my professional world is dominated by people and Latin American themes. (21-US-F)

I was studying Spanish in high school and I really loved it. And when I got to college I was able to study with R. Camp, who you might know as a major scholar of Mexican politics. And so it was just really lucky for me that I was able to be introduced to Mexico, and I continued my Spanish language and then went to study in Mexico. (28-US-F)

I just thought he was interesting, and I liked the research that he did. And he had a real commitment to social change and teaching his students more than just the cut-and-dried, typical political science stuff. And he obviously treated me nicely. And so in a lot of ways he was kind of a role model, and then I did some research for him and I really enjoyed doing that. (20-US-M)

I was in the master's program in the School of International and Public Affairs in Columbia University from 1980 to 1982, and I received a Fulbright to Peru. I had taken some Latin American courses at Columbia, but didn't know that much about Latin America. I just wanted to do something exotic. I went to Peru and I met all of these people that were working on their PhD, and they were doing fabulous projects. And so I decided to apply to the PhD program at Columbia. I was accepted with a full fellowship, and as they say, the rest is history. (27-US-F)

LAT-based scholars (thirteen of fifteen, or 87 percent) are motivated to do purposeful work to effect positive change in their countries and to develop LAT-originated knowledge to understand the region. One participant made clear that his interest in the field was solely for the purpose of solving the problems of his country and that he did not perceive his target of study as an inanimate object. Many other LAT scholars reported being motivated by a burning desire to create local knowledge aimed at understanding and developing creative solutions for the region. In contrast, US/UK scholars (twelve of fifteen, or 80 percent) are motivated to analyze and understand the rich and unique sociopolitical phenomena taking place in the region and strive to derive valuable knowledge from it. Participants from this region reported being motivated by the richness of the Latin American phenomena and their desire to understand and offer explanations to what occurs in the region. They also reported enjoying the opportunity to travel to the region and meet interesting and politically active people there. As one participant indicated, he felt the necessity to learn more about the region, which was his motivation to get up every morning and study (see table 5).

RESEARCH AGENDA

Unanimously, the LAT-based scholars we interviewed (ten of ten, or 100 percent)⁴ reported doing their work as part of research teams inserted in investigative units at major state universities or in private institutes funded by the government or international nonprofit organizations (table 6). These academics described their research agenda's as largely "demanded of" them because of the requirements of the government or funding agency. Given that research funds in Latin America are usually provided for the study of specific problems or communities, LAT scholars' narratives of research experiences tended to be more oriented toward specific problems of interest to their institutions. Although LAT scholars are not forbidden from exploring themes of their own interest, the availability of research funds means that they have to choose from those research activities for which funds are available. In contrast, all of the US/UK-based scholars (fifteen of fifteen, or 100 percent) described access to funds and grants that allowed them flexibility to pursue research topics of personal interest. Mentions of "freedom," "autonomy," "self-expression," "passion," and personal choice" punctuated their stories of research experiences.

Scholarship Type

The types of scholarship practiced by LAT- and US/UK-based scholars fell into four groups, following Boyer (1990) and Van de Ven (2007)'s classification:⁵ scholarship of discovery (pursuit of new theories), scholarship of application (to

4. Similar to previous cases, not all fifteen participants reported on a research agenda.

5. This scholarship classification was used to provide structure and understand the data (participants were not directly asked about scholarship preferences). Also, and at a more philosophical level, Bourdieu (1998) has vigorously argued that all knowledge is engaged and that scholarship distinctions (e.g., pure versus applied research) are artificial.

Table 5 Motivation to remain in the field

Latin American scholars (motivation to remain in the field is a strong desire to contribute toward creating positive changes and making the region a better place to live)	US/UK scholars (motivation to remain in the field is a desire to learn and understand unique social phenomena taking place in the region and derive knowledge from it)
I continue to feel that I have this responsibility of promoting these bridges with this world of the civil society, social movements, and third-sector NGOs. Because I still think that I have something to contribute, so that we can make better links. (08-BRA-F)	I get to travel a lot and meet really interesting people. And I get to learn from a lot of unique and different experiences about what it means to be politically active; what it means to struggle for democracy for greater levels of inclusion. (20-US-M)
In general, I would tell you that [it is] the ways in which Latin America tries to reinvent the political models that come from other places . . . and that to me is fascinating. . . . I love the way in which we not only try to survive but also to reinvent new things. Things like that make the academic career a fantastic challenge. (05-BRA-M)	That is an interesting question because a lot of things about Latin American subjects irritate me. The general tendencies in politics and the economy that I see don't make me happy. But I like it because I think I could contribute to some debates that could offer explanations of complicated things that the people need to take seriously. I think that is what motivates me the most. (18-US-M)
I believe that studying the region is to be . . . I, contrary to many other colleagues, decided to stay here, and it was a well thought out choice, because I see it as if I were working in my own laboratory. Definitely, one has another vision, another perspective being here . . . observing. . . . [I]t is different to observe a political campaign by visiting rather than by being here and seeing how it evolves. (09-CHI-M)	I have a project right now that I was working on all summer, and it is a book that I made, which I am excited about. . . . I spent the summer in Peru, interviewing policy makers, business people, economists, policy analysts, think-tank types about their views on their country's growing relationship with China. It's super interesting. (27-US-F)
I believe I see Latin America as an extraordinary creative continent . . . where the sociopolitical phenomena are happening. It is extremely interesting. I also believe that it is a subordinated continent in terms of knowledge production. We depend too much on knowledge produced elsewhere. I think it is a necessity to get stronger on that area. I believe Latin America will not fully develop if it is not capable of developing its own knowledge. (10-CHI-M)	One of the things that moves me is the necessity to know, you need to learn more. And it's never enough. . . . What's Latin America? We can talk about Paraguay the same as Costa Rica like it's the same thing. Of course not. They have nothing to do with each other. I'm motivated to share this knowledge with others, more than anything my students. . . . And I want to learn more. It's what motivates me the most. When I get up in the morning, I love to learn new things about all aspects of Latin America. (17-US-M)
Well . . . what excites me the most is to see that the Latin American region has developed politically and economically in the last twenty years. When I began my academic career, I was concerned about the region suffering with a double crisis: leaving a great period of authoritarian regimes and at the same time entering into a period of deep economic crisis, and at the same time with many problems implementing democracy. So, what I like the most is . . . the possibilities of a region that has had so many reverses and to understand the commonalities. (06-BRA-M)	I love Latin American studies. And I think that, for me, the most exciting thing is the interdisciplinary aspects about it. That is to say, many of us—many people like me—come into area studies, Latin American studies, even though we're in political science, or in social science, we really got very excited about the language, about Spanish. . . . We really got excited about the culture. People who were studying in Latin America, they had experiences that shaped their lives. (28-US-F)

Table 6 Research agenda

Latin American scholars (agenda is constrained to the needs [most times practical] of the institutions providing the research funds)	US/UK scholars (have access to independent sources of funds and grants that allow them freedom to choose their own research topic of interest)
Sometimes I've had incredible discussions with [funding] agencies because they would demand that you produce certain knowledge that would be used directly by the social intervention. (12-CHI-F)	The academic world has granted me freedom of speech and I believe this is what I like the most about academia. . . . [W]e have the freedom to study, to do new things. (21-US-M)
My thesis advisor invited me to [work at] this research institute . . . and I began to work on regional history because it was imposed on me. Everything I was doing about the history of women, I was doing it on the side because nobody was interested. (16-MEX-F)	As Bob Dole once said about the American vice presidency, it's indoor work and no heavy lifting. It's basically the freedom to explore research topics of my interest as much as anything else. (31-UK-B-M)
It was a negotiation between us and one of the vice presidents of the foundation who was interested in this topic. . . . [I]t was negotiated, in other words, there were institutional interests directly inherited in what we needed to work on. (10-CHI-M)	I think the most important thing is lot of autonomy to set our own research agenda, and to teach what you want to, so even if you are teaching a core Latin American History course, then you can decide within that, what focus precisely you want to give to it because you can't cover everything. So I think autonomy is the important thing. (31-UK-M)
It was coordinated by a man from . . . England. I don't remember very well but he established the agenda. This created many problems with the researchers from different regions. . . . I believe the project was never completed. The problem was related to the conceptual development. [The Latin American researchers] left the project because the conceptual framework was not useful for what was happening in our continent. (10-CHI-M)	The nice thing about it is it lets me work on things that I'm passionate about, that I am really interested in, that allows me to define what I'm doing, whether the issues, I am teaching about, the issues that I am writing about, doing research on. That's a great thing about being an academic is we have the autonomy to pursue what we think is realistic and important, and so that's something that I really like is it gives me a chance to work on things I'm very passionate about. (22-US-M)
There was some project under way . . . but then another official arrives and gets rid of it only because he's part of a new administration. Even if you are in the middle of the process . . . and they'll say "but that was some old law form the last administration . . . we don't want to know anything about [this] work." (04-ARG-F)	On the whole, I've been very happy that I chose an academic career. I do think the financial rewards are not necessarily great, but it does offer a great deal of personal freedom, both in terms of what one works on, and in terms of how one organizes one's day. (31-B-UK-M)

answer specific practical questions in the region), engaged scholarship (in many cases combined with activism), and teaching.

Scholarship of Discovery / Scholarship of discovery refers to theoretical developments in the field of Latin American studies or any of its supporting disciplines (e.g., sociology, political science). Interviews suggested that many more US/UK-based scholars work on pure research (three of fifteen, or 20 percent) than their LAT-based colleagues (one of fifteen, or 7 percent). US/UK-based interviewees mentioned the “thrill of discovery” and understanding the root of problems such as electoral volatility and involvement of poor people in the political processes. In contrast, when describing their research, LAT-based scholars referred to the solution of specific local problems, that is, mainly applied research.

Scholarship of Application / LAT-based scholars (thirteen of fifteen, or 87 percent) focus their work on applied research that seeks to answer specific questions about diverse problems affecting their own region, whereas for US/UK-based scholars (six of fifteen, or 40 percent) applied research is limited. LAT-based scholars referred to solving inequality problems as well as addressing macroeconomic issues among many other relevant topics in the region.

Teaching / US/UK-based scholars (thirteen of fifteen, or 87 percent) assign significant importance to teaching and mentoring the new generation of scholars, whereas LAT-based scholars (four of fifteen, or 27 percent) rarely highlight this part of their work. US/UK scholars constantly expressed their passion for training and mentoring new generations of scholars. The majority of the US/UK scholars also explicitly mentioned teaching as their most important role as academics.

Engaged Scholarship / Community engaged scholarship involving collaboration between faculty and the community (Van de Ven 2007) is more prevalent among LAT-based scholars (eight of fifteen, or 53 percent) than their US/UK counterparts (two of fifteen, or 13 percent) (table 7). Although the term *engaged scholarship* was not explicitly mentioned, the rich description provided in LAT-based scholars’ narratives about their work in and with communities in their home countries strongly suggested the practice of engaged scholarship much more than in the case of their US/UK counterparts.

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION OUTLETS

LAT-based scholars (fourteen of fifteen, or 93 percent) favor local LAT journals (versus international) and book outlets because the ability to diffuse their work quickly and widely allows for more immediate practical social impact (table 8). At the same time, they dislike the long and tedious review cycle of US/UK-based (e.g., SSCI) journals. When asked about publishing in international (US/UK) journals, expressions such as “exhausting editing process,” “arrogant

Table 7 *Scholarship type*

Latin American scholars (applied research as well as engaged scholarship is more prevalent)

It is very difficult in Latin America, at least for me, to eliminate the activist persona. . . . It is said that we simply need to study our reality, right? And I disagree. I do believe that we have to be objective and I try to be objective all the time; however, in a region with so many problems (and I profoundly disagree with those problems), it is very difficult to pretend that those disagreements don't permeate to some extent into what I write. (13-MEX-M)

The studies of immigration of the Bolivians in Buenos Aires, a group extremely discriminated in Argentina and where I was doing field work about the Bolivian collectivity . . . that redefined some aspects of my research because I found strong internal inequalities [within the group]. So, that helped make my commitment even stronger for those sectors with more need. (02-ARG-M)

[I work on] research that can be developed together with some local group or some social movement, so that this can be useful for their own agenda. . . . [F]or instance, I work in a project that was a training program for women about human rights. (08-BRA-F)

I always see it as a possibility to contribute to the development of our country, to improve the system for political change, etc. This type of research, I believe is a good thing. (10-CHI-M)

When I returned to Mexico, I worked as the chief of the advisors to the ministry of the religious area. I had to work with not only one church but with a group of churches of diverse denominations to understand the relationship between the state and the churches. That part of my job, strictly non academic, was for me, part of my academic work. I am in favor of the academics who do not get lost in curricula. (15-MEX-M)

US/UK scholars (show more emphasis on pure research and teaching followed by applied research)

It is what I always wanted since I was a child. . . . My mother was a primary teacher, so I was always interested in teaching, in becoming a professor. That is exactly what I ended up doing. I feel good at the university setting. I think it is a noble job. (21-US-M)

For me, I came to the academic world from a pedagogical standpoint. So for me it's the diffusion of knowledge, sharing knowledge with everyone else. Teaching is for me, one of the fundamental pillars. . . . I'm motivated to share this knowledge with others, more than anything with my students. (17-US-M)

Teaching motivates me a lot. I like to give classes. So research I like a lot, but what I like best is giving classes. (18-US-M)

One thing is to obviously teach. . . . I want to give them [my students] a perspective on the world so that they appreciate differences and they appreciate complexity and don't look for simple or easy solutions and that they learn to think critically. (20-US-M)

I've always enjoyed teaching . . . and there have been occasions in which I've actually had insights into my own research by trying to explain something in terms that made sense to students. But the thing that's always really motivated me about an academic career is the research and writing. (31-B-UK)

reviewers," and "infinitely long process" were common. They also feel that international journals tend to deal with themes not immediately relevant to the LAT region. Findings also show that LAT-based scholars participate in the academic life of their country through books, presentations, and publications in local outlets that are, in their view, the most relevant and fastest paths to produce social impact. For this reason, they rarely publish in US/UK outlets. Some informants dismissed US/UK journals overall as "dealing with questions not relevant for Latin America." US/UK-based scholars (thirteen of fifteen, or 87 percent), however, publish regularly in ISI journals because of the expectations of their institutions. Although US/UK-based scholars may also publish in LAT-based publications, the content is rarely original cutting-edge work but rather translations of successful previously published work. Assertions of having some work translated into Spanish or not recalling ever writing directly for LAT academic consumption were common.

DISCUSSION

This research, based on a grounded theory approach, provides a better understanding of how scholars in Latin American studies (LAS) experience their participation in local (LAT) and international academic communities. The most important implication this study revealed is that there is a very different academic experience depending on whether the scholar is based in Latin America (LAT) or in the United States or United Kingdom (US/UK). How people see themselves determines their approach to life and careers, and constitutes a manifestation of self or personal vision or an image of what the person hopes to accomplish in life and work (Boyatzis 2006) and their various meanings attached to them by self and others (Gecas 1982). Analysis of our interviews showed two distinct ways in which academics see themselves: (1) as experts in their field or (2) as social actors. Most LAT-based scholars see themselves mainly as agents of change in Latin American society, whereas most US/UK-based scholars see themselves as experts in the discipline of Latin American studies. We found that scholars' vision of themselves has profound implications for the type of scholarship they prefer.

Scholarship, in this study, refers to the full scope of academic work and was categorized into four separate but overlapping categories: pure research, applied research, teaching, and engaged scholarship (Boyer 1996; Van de Ven 2007). The first three closely relate to Ernest L. Boyer's (1990) scholarship of discovery, scholarship of application, and scholarship of teaching. The priority given to the different types of research by LAT and US/UK scholars was related to their intention and ability to participate in local (LAT) or international (US/UK) academic communities.

Scholarship of discovery is the advancement of knowledge and comes close to what academics call "research" or "pure research" (Boyer 1990). The study of a specific region such as Latin America may be more applicative than theoretical by nature, as indicated by the definition of the field (Cline 1966). This may be one reason the percentage of scholars emphasizing pure research is rather small for both LAT and US/UK scholars. Some changes are occurring in the LAT region

Table 8 Knowledge production outlets

Latin American scholars (favor local Latin American [versus US/UK] journals and outlets because of they are interested in a quick and wide diffusion of their work to have an immediate practical social impact)	US/UK scholars (publish regularly in SSCI journals and alike as expected by their institutions; also publish translated work in Latin American journals by invitation)
Then at the opposite spectrum of that, there's the academic research that takes a large amount of time and money before the research is finished and can be circulated among the universities. But until the study is finished and really creates policies, it could take decades. . . . I've tried to publish [in the United States] but due to lack of time, because of the conditions in which we do research and live are intense, I have not done it. (12-CHI-F)	It [the Spanish version] has the same articles, by and large, but we had to really write a very different introduction, and we had to—actually, there are a couple of additional articles, I think. So it looks quite different than the English version, to tell you the truth. So that was a really good experience. So we had all of our articles in English translated into Spanish there. (28-US-F)
We have to reinforce our production of knowledge adequate to our own reality. (10-CHI-M)	They [the Spanish pieces] were all written in English, and, I mean, in some cases they were original pieces that I wrote in English and then the journal translated it. And that was the case with Nueva Sociedad, and with the one in Argentina. (20-US-M)
Exhausting from the point of view of editing or the difference in criteria for editing. . . . I had to go through editing the article so many times when it was already well-written to begin with. . . . I could have written at least another article or two. In my specific case, there were absolutely no comments about the content; however, in terms of citation and tabulation, it was an infinite process to the point that every time I would go back to check, a new error was generated. (04-ARG-F)	Some of our work had been translated into Spanish, but I had never, I don't think. . . . I think this is true. . . . I don't know that I've ever written in Spanish destined for publication in Spanish. . . . I've had a number of my things translated, and I have worked with a translator, but the original writing was in English. (31-B-UK-M)
To discuss with the reviewers by email is unbearable. . . . [T]he level of arrogance of some of the reviewers is unbelievable. (02-ARG-M)	I think also I have had my work translated and published in Brazil, but not as much as I would like. (23-US-M)

because of the trend in certain countries such as Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina to pressure LAT-based scholars into doing research and publishing internationally. This is aided by the growing number of US/UK-based research-trained scholars working in the LAT region. Still, the number of US/UK scholars doing scholarship of discovery (pure research) is three times higher than LAT scholars.⁶

6. Most US/UK, but especially US, researchers explicitly try to develop theory. This was very polemical in the 1990s when US academics debated whether area studies were by definition descriptive and

Scholarship of application is the application of knowledge to consequential social problems helpful to individuals and institutions (Boyer 1990). We found that most LAT scholars engage in this type of scholarship, whereas less than half of US/UK scholars do so. This is consistent with both the way research agendas are set (more need driven in the LAT region) and the fact that Latin American studies is an interdisciplinary, application-oriented field. This means that its focus is a region rather than a specific discipline. The field critically examines the history, culture, politics, and experiences of Latin Americans in Latin America and elsewhere (such as Latinos or Hispanics in the United States) (Cline 1966).

Scholarship of teaching refers to the effective communication of knowledge to students. Teaching is important because it educates and entices future scholars (Boyer 1990). One surprising finding of this study was that most US/UK scholars explicitly emphasized teaching as a very important part of their role as academics, whereas hardly any LAT scholars did so. In general, LAT-based scholars have a heavier teaching load than their US/UK counterparts, and therefore the greater emphasis on teaching by US/UK scholars is puzzling. One possible explanation could be that most US/UK scholars in research institutions have doctoral students with whom they establish a strong mentor relationship that heightens their sense of responsibility toward their role as trainers of the next generation of researchers.

Engaged scholarship was first proposed by Boyer (1996) and later expanded by Van de Ven (2007). This term redefines scholarship from application of academic expertise to community-engaged scholarship, which involves the faculty member in a reciprocal partnership with the community. Engaged scholarship encourages participation of nonacademics, along with scholars, in the resolution of social problems. Funds for this type of scholarship are provided by government or social development private institutions that are interested not only in their own research agendas but also in the development of communities. For this reason, engaged scholarship is more prevalent among LAT-based scholars than in the US/UK. In many cases LAT engaged scholarship is pursued to promote activism and provide societal and political tools to underprivileged groups. In contrast, US/UK scholars have access to funds and grants that allow them flexibility to pursue research topics of personal interest. These funds are rarely tied to specific communities.

Having discussed the different types of scholarship that LAT and US/UK scholars engage in depending on their regional location, the next question that comes to mind is, in what way do they disseminate the knowledge they have produced? Here again, a sharp difference was found between LAT and US/UK-based scholars. Our data reveal that the majority of LAT-based scholars use conferences, books, reports, and Latin American journals to disseminate the knowledge they have produced. Their preference is for outlets (whether academically rigorous or not) with the potential for quick and broad dissemination. In contrast, most US/UK-based scholars prefer "international" journals with high impact rat-

atheoretical or simply theoretical. However, LAT research is generally considered the most theoretical of the area studies fields.

ings that promote career advancement in the West. Many US/UK scholars also publish in Latin America, but when they do so it is typically work previously published in a US/UK academic journal that has been translated and edited for a LAT publication.

Our data indicate that LAT-based scholars participate more actively in local than in international (US/UK) academic communities despite the fact that “international” journals lead the discipline. Several LAT scholars described the US/UK publication process using phrases such as “too long,” “unfair,” and “patronizing.” LAT scholars prefer a faster process and more “relevant” outlets than traditional peer-reviewed journals for disseminating their work (e.g., reports, informal presentations, conferences). This allows their findings to have a more immediate impact on the problems of the region. Very few have published in US/UK journals and surprisingly, few seem interested in doing so. This goes against the common wisdom that lack of participation of LAT scholars is mainly due to English-language limitations (after all, some international journals such as *Latin American Research Review* accept submissions in the original Spanish or Portuguese). However, a strong pressure for LAT scholars to publish in US/UK journals is beginning to emerge among LAT institutions in the region (some LAT scholars criticize this as another copy of US/UK models); therefore, the number of LAT contributors to US/UK journals may begin to increase in the coming years.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study suggest that Latin American scholars in the field of Latin American studies view themselves as agents of change, are more intrinsically motivated, and favor academic outlets with the potential for social impact. In addition, they tend to be more involved than their US/UK counterparts in engaged scholarship; that is, a research partnership between academics and stakeholders. This occurs not only because of their intrinsic motivation but also because of their reliance on funds mainly from local government or private sources interested in community and societal development.⁷ In contrast, US/UK scholars see themselves as experts in the field, tend to have strong extrinsic incentives in the form of raises and promotions, have broader access to unrestricted funding and favor international (e.g., US/UK based) academic outlets perceived as relevant to their academic careers.

US/UK scholars tend to favor traditional research with academic rigor that facilitates getting published in international outlets (US/UK journals), whereas LAT scholars pursue engaged scholarship and publish in outlets with less academic

7. An argument could be made here that the availability of local funds for community and social development could be the driver (extrinsic motivation) for Latin American scholars to pursue engaged scholarship; however, during our interviews, not a single interviewee from the Latin American region mentioned this as a reason to enter or stay in the Latin American studies field. However, it is true that there seems to be a tension between research promoted by funders that, though related to community development, may not be the specific topic of interest for the scholar. Although this may constitute a partial restriction for the specific engaged scholarship the academic may pursue; it certainly constitutes a serious restriction if the LAT academic were interested in pure research.

rigor (at least as judged by US/UK standards) but more visible to their social communities. The reason for this is that LAT scholars pursue local impact from their work, which is possible with more immediacy through the publishing outlets they choose. The US/UK academic community is beginning to accept the need for relevant research (Mohrman and Lawler 2011), and the LAT academia is beginning to push for higher academic rigor. This presents an opportunity for synergy through engaged cross-cultural collaborative scholarship between US/UK and LAT academics involving rigor, relevance, and community involvement. However, it may be difficult to find the proper balance between “relevant research” as defined by LAT scholars (which may be very locally focused) and by US/UK scholars (who may view only work that allows derivation of theory as relevant).

Another concern of LAT scholars is the excessive delay in the review and publication process of international journals. This delay discourages journal submissions from the LAT region, where the desire is to produce an immediate impact with one’s work. This concern is related to a similar complaint that is growing among US/UK academics. In general, academics worldwide are interested in getting their work published as soon as possible, and this is clearly not the case with the current review and publication process. One approach that is gaining acceptance is to post working papers in institutional repositories or to allow posting on the researcher’s institutional website a preliminary version of an accepted paper.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although appropriate for the type of exploratory inquiry we conducted, our sample was small (thirty respondents) and not random. Because of this, and common to qualitative studies of this kind, we caution generalization of our findings to all LAT-based scholars. Would more interviews would have been better? Not necessarily. When performing the last interviews, we noticed that we had reached a point of theoretical saturation, as discussed by Corbin and Strauss (2008). The concept of sample size is different in qualitative studies than in quantitative studies. A good sample size in qualitative studies is one where theoretical saturation has been reached; that is, “the point in the analysis where all categories are well developed in terms of properties, dimensions, and variations and where further data gathering and analysis add little new to the conceptualization” (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p. 263).

In addition, to avoid selection bias, an effort was made to represent the key disciplines in the field of Latin American studies in a proportional number to LASA membership distribution in terms of disciplines and countries. However, because of interview scheduling problems, political science ended up being overrepresented. To address the question of whether our findings still hold in the absence of political scientists, we repeated the thematic analysis without including political scientists. The results showed that our findings also held in this situation. In other words, selection bias (in terms of discipline) does not seem to be a problem for the validity of our study.

Another potential concern is that our sample included academics in only four Latin American countries (although the most academically productive). Our find-

ings, thus, are suggestive but not conclusive, and their external validity is limited to the disciplines of the study, in a distribution approximately representing LASA membership, and for the four target countries:⁸ Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, and Chile. Future research should include a broader representation of disciplines and regions. A broader sample with more ample disciplinary balance might have yielded some variation in the results.

Finally, another important consideration is that two-thirds of our participants were born before 1961; therefore, our findings are applicable mainly to senior-level faculty (who, it may be argued, are the ones leading the knowledge production efforts in Latin America). It would be important to extend this study to a greater number of younger scholars to understand how their experiences differ from those studied in this research.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The results of this study have profound implications for the field of Latin American studies in terms of understanding why Latin American scholars participate so sparsely in the international academic community. Our study suggests that although they do not participate as *knowledge experts* in the theoretically oriented international community (e.g., publishing in peer-reviewed US journals), they actively participate as *agents of change* in their Latin American communities (e.g., research and policy reports, media activism, and books). In addition, we posit that our results contradict some common assumptions about why Latin American scholars do not participate in the international community. For example, English-language limitations, insufficient academic publishing training, and/or scarcity of research resources, though a harsh reality for Latin American scholars, do not seem to be key reasons for their lack of participation in the peer-review international publishing scene. Our research shows that even for those who have training and language skills, US/UK journals themes and topics of interest (many times highly theoretical) are not their main concern. As one of our interviewees said (referring to US/UK journals), "Their research questions are not our research questions." Furthermore, interviewees complained that the process for publishing an article is too long which drastically diminishes its social impact. These concerns explain why even forward-thinking publications such as *LARR*, which accepts submissions in both Spanish and Portuguese, still have a small representation of Latin American scholars in their published articles.

In summary, a key lesson of this study is that the field of Latin American studies would be enriched by promoting the participation of Latin American scholars in the international academic community. For this purpose, the international academic community needs to be inclusive of the different but complementary worldviews of scholars and scholarship inside and outside the Latin American region in order to develop a truthful Latin American studies discipline in both depth and breadth.

8. Our selection of these four countries was based on them having the most access to financial resources for research and development (Terra-Figari 2009).

APPENDIX

Interview protocol

Step 1: Introduction and explanation

Purpose and format of the interview (interviewer): *"As you know from the letter you have received from me, I am interested in the work of scholars and the production of knowledge."*

Confidentiality (interviewer): *"Everything you share in this interview will be kept in strictest confidence, and your comments will be transcribed anonymously – omitting your name, anyone else you refer to in this interview, as well as the name of your institution. Your interview responses will be aggregated with all the other interviews I conduct."*

Audiotaping (interviewer): *"To help me capture your responses accurately and without being overly distracted by taking notes, I would like to record our conversation with your permission. Again, your response will be kept confidential. If at any time, you are uncomfortable with this interview, please let me know and I will turn the recorder off."*

Step 2: Opening icebreaker question

Interviewer: *"(Name), tell me about yourself."*

Probing questions to ask only if respondent does not provide responses to:

- *"Where are you from?"*
- *"What is your educational background?"*
- *"Have you studied abroad?"*
- *"Where?"*
- *"Did you enjoy the experience?"*
- *"Are you still in contact with your peers?"*
- *"How long have you been with [affiliation]?"*

Step 3: Specific questions

Introduction: *"I am going to ask you a few questions regarding your experience as an academic. Please be as specific as you can and provide me with as much detail as you can remember. If I have a clarifying question, I will ask you."*

Interviewer (1): *"First, let us focus on your life as an academic. What is your role as an academic?"*

Probing questions:

- *"How do you define yourself today?"*
- *"What does it mean to you to be an academic?"*
- *"Please tell me how you decided to become an academic?"*
- *"Tell me what you do as an academic"*
- *"What do these . . . mean to you?"*
- *"Can you give me specific details?"*
- *"Would you consider Latin American studies your primary or secondary field of study?"*

Interviewer (2): *"What is exciting to you about being in the field of Latin American studies?"*

Probing questions:

- *"Where is your passion?"*
- *"Can you describe a specific moment?"*
- *"Can you give me specific details?"*

Interviewer (3): *"Who would you consider to be the most significant contributor to the field of Latin American studies?"*

Probing questions:

- *"What makes you think that?"*
- *"Can you give me specific details?"*
- *"How would you describe that person?"*

Interviewer (4): *"Tell me about a time you collaborated with others on a project."*

Probing questions:

- *"What was it?"*
- *"Tell me about it."*
- *"Can you give me specific details?"*

Interviewer (5): *"Is there anything else you would like to share with me about your career as an academic and/or your participation with others in academia?"*

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