

'sentient body' between the 'happy experience' of the 1820s and the rule of Rosas, exploring particularly the role of the senses in Sarmiento's *Facundo* and Esteban Echeverría's works 'as central tropes for defining the individual in a land of savage indignity' (37). Continuing in the nineteenth century, Chapter 2 highlights women's voices amongst technological and social transformation. Masiello mainly tackles literary works by four authors – Juana Manuela Gorriti, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Clorinda Matto de Turner, showing how they engage specific senses – hearing, sight, touch and taste, respectively – to articulate a moral dimension of our relationship to 'others'. Chapter 3 opens in the twentieth century, examining efforts of 'collective synesthesia' – fusing and blurring of the senses – in avant-garde culture, particularly spiritualist practices. Masiello focuses on Roberto Arlt and Xul Solar to present opposing sentiments to this trend: while 'the effects of the sensate world lead Arlt's characters closer to a lawless underworld than any collective goodwill' (167), Solar was 'clearly inscribed in a spiritual belief for collective identities in which a sense blending and a connectedness among people are his guiding forces' (175).

Chapter 4 deals with sensation under dictatorship: "'Sense work" was being put into effect on both sides of the political divide, and the body was caught in the middle, but from the position of oppositional artists, sense work also supplied a route to remembrance' (203). After reviewing preliminary phenomenological efforts by Di Tella artists, Masiello turns to writers Juan José Saer and Raúl Zurita, and artist Guillermo Núñez, to show how they engage the senses to counteract the imposed silence and relate to the pain of victims. Finally, Chapter 5, which also acts as the conclusion, explores a contemporary culture concerned with sensation 'often by setting human life in competition with technologies of the virtual' (239). Using works by Nuno Ramos, Eduardo Kac and Damien Schopf to set the scene, Masiello ultimately resorts to Damiela Eltit's *Fuerzas especiales*, where 'the question of autonomy or integration' posed by posthuman debates becomes fully articulated (249).

Subtly weaving the influences between North and South thinkers (from Condillac and Alcorta to Merleau-Ponty and Masotta),

Masiello draws the history of the philosophy of the senses that constitutes the theoretical backbone of her work, particularly grappling with the relationship between the senses and thought or knowledge. Several overarching concerns stand out throughout. She presents 'sense work' as intrinsically temporal: it 'roots us in the "now"' while reframing how we think of the past or imagine future possibilities (3). Emphasizing the senses, she reveals the body as an always interconnected thing. Finally, she enticingly points to 'sense work' as a threshold capable of leading us to a more meaningful connection to ourselves and others. While perhaps a thorough conclusion reviewing the implications of 'sense work' would prove useful to some readers, Masiello's work is undoubtedly persuasive and engaging throughout, offering a refreshing method to pursue studies of politics and emotion.

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MARCY SCHWARTZ, *Public Pages: Reading along the Latin American Streetscape*.

Austin: University of Texas Press. 2018. xvii + 286 pp. ISBN 978-1-4773-1518-7.

Marcy Schwartz is well known in Latin American Literary and Cultural Studies for her rigorous, innovative work on urban culture, in particular her monographs *Writing Paris* (1999) and *Intervenciones urbanas* (2000), and the volumes co-edited with Daniel Balderston (*Voice-Overs*, 2002) and Mary Beth Tierney-Tello (*Photography and Writing in Latin America*, 2006). Her latest book, *Public Pages*, which synthesizes ten years of research, travels and conversations, is surely her magnum opus.

*Public Pages* provides a panoramic picture and detailed analysis of contemporary reading practices in Latin America, with a focus on literature (rather than literacy), from the canon to the writings of emerging writers. Schwartz explores how diverse actors and institutions, from municipal governments to grassroots collectives, promote literary reading through diverse public programmes, 'insert[ing] it into public space for the social good'. This book addresses a gap, identified by the literary critic Susan Zanetti (2004), in the literature on reading habits in Latin America. Yet it also fulfils a broader function, contributing to research on urban public citizenship

and, particularly in the aftermath of neoliberal privatization in the 1980s and 1990s, the reclamation of public space in Latin America.

The introduction provides an informative historical overview on the 'place of reading in Latin America'. Her historical perspective is impressively comprehensive and appropriately pedagogical, as is her review of the relevant literature. She starts by highlighting the use of reading as a tool of domination under colonial rule, passing through a review of Angel Rama's concept of the Lettered City, William Acree's argument in *Everyday Reading* regarding the crucial role of reading in post-Independence nation-building, onto the expansion of reading publics through the proliferation of print journalism and public education programmes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She then moves on to present the key factors at stake in the book: the perhaps surprising fact that, even within the digital era, Latin American reading initiatives reveal a preference for the printed book; the crucial role of public libraries and book fairs in the proliferation of print culture; the predominantly urban nature of reading programmes (with some notable exceptions in rural communities); and the ways in which contemporary urban reading initiatives form part of a broader reconceptualization of public space in and beyond Latin America.

Chapter 1, 'Campaigning for the Capital', analyses public reading campaigns in the two Latin American cities nominated by UNESCO as World Book Cities: Bogotá in 2007 and Buenos Aires in 2011. Interweaving textual readings with a trenchant depiction of the political and historical contexts of these year-long campaigns, Schwartz offers fascinating insights into the contrasting approaches adopted in each capital. The sections on Bogotá reveal a vast array of programmes geared towards the extension of reading opportunities to wider publics, with a focus on grassroots initiatives, ordinary citizens and unconventional venues. Seven key examples are presented, from the *Cartas de la Persistencia* initiative, which elicited 5,400 letters from the general public about their experiences of perseverance through adverse experiences from family violence to armed conflict, to *Leer... Severo Viejo*, which held graffiti workshops for 60 young people involved in gang activity in marginalized neighbourhoods, and *Crónicas Barriales: Escribir con los Cinco Sentidos*, a

series of workshops in journalism and chronicling for 100 young people. These are peppered with readings from the resulting texts/artworks, including the 'investigative project' by the new chronicler Herrera Casilimas into the graffiti in men's toilets on the National University campus in Bogotá. By contrasting the grassroots, participatory strategies in Bogotá with those adopted in Buenos Aires, Schwartz voices a subtle critique of the latter campaign. In Buenos Aires, the focus was less on redefining reading than on re-establishing Buenos Aires as a global capital of literature and culture through the promotion of its canonical writers from Borges to Sábato. She explores one exception to the government's high cultural take on public reading – a grassroots reading and writing initiative at a homeless shelter – but concludes that, disappointingly, even such initiatives were not given longevity, as the Ministry of Social Services discontinued the project's funding after publishing the book resulting from the intervention.

Chapter 2, 'Reading on Wheels', moves on to examine two ongoing programmes – *Libro al Viento* in Colombia, and *Santiago en 100 palabras* in Chile – that take reading to the heart of urban infrastructures and experiences, circulating free books on buses and subways to facilitate what Bogotá's mayor Mockus refers to as *convivencia* (a concept that encompasses social integration, peaceful negotiation, interpersonal trust and tolerance for diversity). Schwartz begins by placing these mass reading programmes in their respective contexts: Colombia in the aftermath of the massive displacements resulting from the violent fights between guerrilla groups, drug cartels and military troops in the 1980s and 1990s; and post-dictatorship Chile, with its ongoing process of remembrance and restorative justice in the aftermath of Pinochet's neoliberal military regime (1973–1990). After an introduction to the transportation systems (the TransMilenio and the Transantiago) on which these reading programmes are enacted, Schwartz provides an in-depth analysis of both through their key actors, principles, texts and impacts. Whereas *Libro al viento*, departing from the notion of 'reading as a right', has circulated dozens of books through Bogotá's transport systems since 2004, *Santiago en 100 Palabras* (the number of words that can be read in the two-minute stops or in

the time between trains on the platform) is an exercise in democratizing culture through a minifiction contest whose winners' texts are published and circulated in small paperbacks and on colourful billboards. Both, according to Schwartz, represent attempts to 'foster inclusivity across social class' and indicate a 'cautious reinvestment in the public sphere' in the wake of fierce neoliberalism (119–20).

Chapter 3, '*Cacerolazos y bibliotecas*', explores the grassroots reading and library projects that, as she argues so compellingly, played such a key part in the solidarity economy that emerged in response to the Argentine Economic Crisis (2001–2002). In the context of the street protests, *cacerolazos* and neighbourhood assemblies that characterized this period as much as the rocketing levels of unemployment, Argentines turned to culture as a mode of resistance, community building and horizontal participation through a 'critically thinking, informed, and empowered citizenry' (139). Though much has been written on this fraught period of Argentine history, Schwartz makes an important, original contribution to the literature by examining the role of newsletters in solidarity organizing, and the importance of the 'bibliotecas para el barrio' given the demise of the vast network of public libraries first established by Sarmiento in 1879. Schwartz depicts these grassroots projects through vivid examples, such as that of the Asamblea Popular Begrano-Nuñez, whose newsletters provide extensive documentation of the process of 'occupying' the Casona de Mansilla – a government building that had fallen into disrepair since 1999 – as a new library space through active neighbourhood consultation. This chapter thus demonstrates the ways in which books and reading activities, in times of crisis, may play much more than a didactic function, occupying public space to 'promote socializing, support local pride in the neighbourhood, and contribute to the solidarity movement' (140).

Chapter 4, 'Recycling Reading and the Cartonera Collectives', is one of the first comparative analyses of 'cardboard publishers' in Latin America. As such, it is an important contribution to the relatively sparse literature on a burgeoning grassroots publishing initiative that has spread, from Buenos Aires, across and beyond Latin America in the last sixteen years. Though their aims vary, they share a common practice of making low-cost

books by hand out of recycled cardboard bought from *cartoneros*, the figures that first inspired Eloísa Cartonera to publish in these alternative formats. Taking as examples four key cartonera collectives – Eloísa Cartonera (Buenos Aires), Sarita Cartonera (Peru), Dulcinéia Catadora (Brazil) and Amapola Cartonera (Colombia) – Schwartz explores the ways in which these collectives respond to 'decades of contraction in the publishing sector, to ever widening socioeconomic inequality, and to urban environmental degradation that disproportionately affects the poor' through 'place-based activism, public outreach, and material self-reflection' (154, 188). Schwartz highlights the contrasts between these diverse, colourful collectives: in contrast to Eloísa, for example, which offered cheap books in a city with high literary demand, Sarita set about 'creating inexpensive books for non-existent readers' through active outreach activities and pedagogical interventions. She devotes the longest section to Dulcinéia Catadora, a collective based in a recycling cooperative in São Paulo, demonstrating how the project's founder, Lúcia Rosa, brings actors, texts, and practices together in a highly integrated practice that locates itself both aesthetically and politically on the streets, in the favelas, and in a long-term struggle against the invisibility of Brazil's most vulnerable communities.

Chapter 5, 'Books that Bite', brings this inspiring journey through Latin America's 'public pages' to a close with a discussion of Argentina's recently established libraries of books banned during the dictatorship (1976–1983), which combine their collections with performances, workshops and interactive events. Focusing on the Olimpo center (Buenos Aires), the Archivo Provincial de la Memoria (Córdoba) – libraries located in former sites of detention and torture – and finally La Grieta (La Plata), Schwartz explores the performative strategies used to commemorate the violence and victims of dictatorship and resuscitate the 'prohibited pages' and buried books in the wider context of a broad range of current human rights efforts.

Schwartz concludes her book with 'Stories at the Intersection', beginning by highlighting the convergences among these diverse reading programmes, before turning to the current political, economic and social climate in Latin America, with a particular focus on the turn to the right in countries like Argentina, Brazil

and Venezuela that had until the 2010s undergone significant transformation through left-leaning party politics. As she concludes, 'these recent political transitions have produced enormous uncertainty in the cultural sphere, and it's difficult to predict the future of public reading and of the organizations that initiate, host, and lead these activities' (234).

Combining a celebratory tone with a cautious, critical edge, Schwartz's book is a stellar contribution to research on print culture, urban studies and literary and cultural studies in Latin American and transnational contexts. As befits a book that champions public reading, *Public Pages* is clearly written and highly engaging, making it accessible for researchers and the general

public alike. The book thus has the capacity not only to attract and create new research communities but also to inspire further transformational public reading initiatives in and beyond Latin America. The prestigious Texas University Press, with its well-earned reputation in Latin American Studies, is an apt home for Schwartz's *Public Pages*. To complement this publication, I do hope that chapters or fragments of this book might find themselves translated into Spanish and Portuguese and enjoy suitably public after-lives through alternative publications, thus reintegrating elements of Schwartz's magnum opus into the alternative reading ecologies described in these pages.

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