

# EDITORIAL COMMENTARY

This new N° 20 of the CUHSO Review of the Faculty of Social Sciences is specially dedicated to discussion from the Latin American contexts of public policies, the multiple ways of being a family, and diversity from a critical perspective. This set of themes is relevant and important, because the social reality of the family has been much changed in recent years in Latin America. And not only has the family changed, but also its relations with the State, the Church and NGOs. In general we can say that there is a lack of development of specific knowledge of these transformations linked to families. This second number of 2010 has been co-ordinated by professor Lilian Sanhueza, and forms part of the strategic work of the nascent Social Work Department of the Faculty to consolidate its new Master's program in Social Work. The aim of this Master's program is to open a postgraduate program which we will start next year, and which is part of a process of consolidation of applied research in the field of social work; all these efforts are therefore inputs for a postgraduate program based on national and international Social Work networks to produce new knowledge about the family.

The first article, **The concept of the family: a social vision** by **Ángela María Quintero Velásquez** of the University of Antioquia (Colombia), refers to certain economic-labour problems, such as decent work, the economy of care, and gender inequality. In this context it invites us to rethink the notion of the family as a collective political subject, and understand it as a social construction, with specific conceptual and methodological developments, allowing us to give it a disciplinary foundation for Social Work and to position it in the knowledge society.

The article of professor **Carlos Enrique Berbeglia** of the University of Buenos Aires (Argentina), entitled **Order, implicit**

**recurrence**, considers the philosophical idea that order would appear to be the necessary pre-existence of all existence, and that this is a somewhat anthropocentric reading. This being the case, if this assumption is appropriate between people, it should be treated more objectively. The consequences of these characteristics allow us to evade ideologizing proposals for a more radical comprehension and development on the social plane.

The work of the Uruguayan **Mónica De Martino**, entitled **Eight critical notes on policies for the protection of Children and Adolescents in Latin America**, proposes certain critical observations of existing policies for the protection of children and adolescents in the region. The first four are derived from how the field of childhood and adolescence has been addressed from a historical perspective, from both the political and academic angles. The other four have to do with the existing social protection systems current in the region, which are aimed at regulating poverty under the sign of punitive socio-political policies.

The article by **Sandra Milena Franco Patiño** of the University of Caldas, entitled **Food security, Colombia. An exercise in the implementation of public policy**, considers the right to food as a right inherent in the human condition and shows how the efficient implementation of public policy on Food and Nutritional Security (Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional SAN) needs to assume the additional perspective of the right to food in its actions, as a central strategy for addressing food insecurity in its totality, not only from the perspective of lack or the expression of conditions of poverty, as is generally done.

The penultimate work, by **Lilian Sanhueza Díaz** and **Fabiola Hernando Pérez**, academic members of our Faculty, deals with **Significations of intrafamily child**

**sexual abuse in the rural Mapuche context**, presenting various views of intrafamily child sexual abuse in the complex context of intercultural and interethnic relations characteristic of the Southern Chile Macro-region. It highlights the loss of the protection mechanisms proper to the culture, the potential role of the traditional authorities, the vulnerability of the mother figure, the socio-family conditions which constitute risk factors in situations of child sexual abuse, and the value of the role of the intercultural facilitator and the mother tongue as therapy instruments.

The last article, by **Alejandra Santana López** of Andrés Bello University, Chile, entitled **The Family-School relation in contexts of poverty. Possibilities and limitations in Educational Processes**, analyses the Family-School link in contexts of poverty. The analysis is oriented by the hypothesis that this relation may be positive or negative, depending on the effect which it has on the children, their learning, and the educational environment.

By addressing in synthesised form these different socio-political themes, so important for an understanding of the transformations experienced by families in Latin America, this special number of CUHSO seeks to contribute to the critical analysis of the social problems of families in Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Uruguay, and offers interesting reflections and research, whose critique of the current situation allows new approaches for the applied social sciences in such themes as: an analysis of transformations to understand the social order; the role of the State in the social processes affecting Latin American families; the dehumanizing and alienating practices which erode them from within; inadequate and ambiguous public policies, as observed in the protection of children and adolescents and in food health policies for Latin American families; and finally the significations of child sexual abuse. Themes which are by no means exhausted and offer prospects for further research.

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