

Drugs: Perspectives in Social Sciences

BEATRIZ CAIUBY LABATE & FREDERICO POLICARPO (EDS.)

Abstract

This book considers the practices and representations of the consumption of psychoactive substances. It discusses the theoretical and methodological instruments that enable us to deepen our understanding regarding the diversity of its uses, its social effects, and the institutional and informal controls that surround them. The starting point of our thought is to consider the coexistence of multiple discourses and practices about the so-called “drugs.” It is in this respect that both the strategies of control over the access, circulation, and the experiences of consumption, and those mobilized to ensure this consumption are examined side by side and treated with the same political and epistemological importance. With this relativistic perspective, our goal is to assure that no discourse or practice serves as an external referent to the description and interpretation of the other: What is said and done by the law and health care agents are as valid from the theoretical point of view as what is said and done by the persons who use ayahuasca, marijuana or crack. In this way, we hope to contextualize the “medical-legal” paradigm that informs the public policies on drugs nowadays. Going beyond a simple critique, the book is an invitation for an interdisciplinary dialogue; for this reason, the scope of objects and issues is broad and comprehensive. We hope that the articles of the book feed new debates and open new ground-breaking research.

Editor’s biographies:

BEATRIZ CAIUBY LABATE as a Ph.D. in social anthropology from the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP), Brazil. Her main areas of interest are the study of plant medicines, drug policy, shamanism, ritual, and religion. She is Executive Director of the Chacruna Institute for Psychedelic Plant Medicines (<http://chacruna.net>), an organization that provides public education and cultural understanding about psychedelic plant medicines and promotes a bridge between the world of plant medicines and psychedelic science. She is Adjunct Faculty at the East-West Psychology Program at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) in San Francisco, and Visiting Professor at the Center for Research and Post Graduate Studies in Social Anthropology (CIESAS) in Guadalajara. She is also Public Education and Culture Specialist at the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS). She is co-founder of the Drugs, Politics, and Culture Collective, in Mexico (<http://drogaspoliticacultura.net>), and co-founder of the Interdisciplinary Group for Psychoactive Studies (NEIP) in Brazil, as well as editor of NEIP’s website (<http://www.neip.info>). She is author, co-author, and co-editor of nineteen books, one special-edition journal, and several peer-reviewed articles (<http://bialabate.net>).

FREDERICO POLICARPO has a bachelor’s degree in Social Sciences from Rio de Janeiro Federal University; Master’s and PhD in Anthropology from Fluminense Federal University (UFF). He is professor of Anthropology in the undergraduate course of Public

Policy and in the Graduate Program in Sociology and Law, at the Federal Fluminense University. He is researcher of the National Institute of Science and Technology – Institute of Comparative Studies in Conflicts Resolution (INCT-InEAC) and the Interdisciplinary Group for Psychoactive Studies (NEIP). He is author of “The drug consumption and its controls: a comparative perspective between the cities of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and San Francisco, US” (ed. Consequencia, 2016) and co-editor of “Drugs, Public Policies and Consumers” (ed. Mercado de Letras, 2016).

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1. Redoing Subjects: An Ethnography About Therapeutic Communities and Their Goals

LETÍCIA CANONICO DE SOUZA E MATHEUS CARACHO NUNES

This chapter aims to expatiate—from ethnography held in four therapeutic communities at different locations of Brazil (Pernambuco, [2] São Paulo e Mato Grosso—how these communities intend to create the conditions for the change of subjects who are considered addicts and therefore go or are taken to these spaces of Internment/treatment. We stayed for fifteen days, full time, at each of these therapeutic communities watching the routine of activities proposed by them. Thus, we could pay attention to the daily life and how they propose to (re) create the social interaction of the subjects by activities focused on the axes of spirituality, work and discipline. In this regard, is sought in this chapter: i) understand norms, codes of conduct, values and moralities that emerge from the coexistence between inmates, employees, visitors and the institutional rules that guide the work of the employees. ii) understand the re-elaborations and significations of the treatment made by the inmates. Thereunto, we pay attention to the main proposals of the therapeutic communities, which are: abstinence and the building of a new moral standard to the subjects. Thus, pays attention to what is assumed as objective or goal that must be achieved by them, as well as the way that the residents/inmates/students deal with this proposal. It is important to emphasize that this treatment proposal is inserted at the current anti-drug policy in Brazil through the financing of the Plan named "Crack, é possível vencer" ("Crack, it is possible to beat it"), From SENAD.

2. Between the Enclosure and the Care: The Networks and the Intersetorial Management of Health in the Streets

MARIANA MEDINA MARTINEZ

This chapter will present an ethnography of care networks. I describe how intersectoral management for drug users works, based on fieldwork in public health equipment in São Bernardo do Campo (Sao Paulo). The construction of networks for reception and support care, appointment and treatment for this targeted public is the empirical question that guides this research. The ambiguous figure of drug user (both patient and defaulter) resonates in the public policies for this population. For this reason, the networks both care

as well as enclose these subjects at the same time. The ethnography of network in the health sector explores the challenges and dilemmas that these intersectoral management apparatus evoke. I present the issues that revolve around the network's organizational model that is formulated by standardization of policies and the universalization of principles, but in practical terms they are invented according to the occasions. I also raised the dilemmas of how workers throw themselves on the challenge of tying partnerships, monitor the movement of people, flexibilize bureaucracy to ensure their stay in services. Such developments matches the dilemmas of an assistance project that aims to take care of people in freedom, accomplishing the democratic and humanistic precepts, but intends to monitor the movements and pursue many traces.

3. Uses, Users and Hierarchies: An Analysis of Cocaine Consumption in a Bar in the North Zone of Niterói – RJ

VICTOR CESAR TORRES DE MELLO RANGEL

This chapter aims to analyze discourses and knowledge about the use of cocaine from consumers of the substance. Empirical research was initiated in 2014 in a bar, located in one of the neighborhoods of the north of the city of Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, which congregates large numbers of users of cocaine and other drugs. The establishment can be characterized as a typical suburb bar, where shoppers range from bullet vendors who live in the region's slums (*favelas*) to middle-class merchants. The choice of this bar is justified by the fact that it already frequents it before the research and knows the owners, employees and some clients (many of these drug users), allowing a good entrance to this universe of consumption of the substance. I intend, therefore, to analyze how knowledge and practices are built on cocaine use and how the different users are classified in this space.

4. Beginnings of Drug Prohibition in Brazil and the Disputes in the Medical Field: A Microhistory Study

CARLOS EDUARDO MARTINS TORCATO

The image of a son of elite, snobbish, drug addict in his relationship with prostitutes dominates the imaginary of Brazilian historiography of drugs. In this context, the ban would not be concerned with the widespread use of drugs by the population; namely, it would have been the result of the political action of a medical elite who sought to consolidate psychiatry as a legitimate specialty. This chapter aims to discuss this representation and to show that the social reality of the use was greater than the discourses of psychiatry and newspapers thought. Based on an exceptional paper produced by pediatrics, it will be demonstrated how the use of drugs was widespread within the liberal medicine that was dominant in the period. Public policies to restrict use were based on an ethical perspective that presupposed tutelage of shared knowledge (pharmacological culture) by actors who did not participate in the official medical circuit.

5. The Structuration of the Illegal Drug Market in the Metropolitan Region of Goiania: Criminal Dynamics and Territorialization

GUILHERME BORGES DA SILVA E DALVA MARIA BORGES DE LIMA DIAS DE SOUZA

In this chapter we present the results of a research on the structuration of the retail market for illicit drugs in the Metropolitan Region of Goiania. The study was an ethnography carried out in 2012-2014 with people who deal drugs in a criminalized market. Contrary to the construction of the social imaginary about illicit markets, the retail of drugs in the Metropolitan Region of Goiania is organized in a pulverized way and follows two models of commercialization. These models can be understood by means of a logic of the process of criminal activities structuration which is defined by the types of substances that are traded, the profile of people involved and the territories where they sell their merchandise. Moreover, due to the illegality of the trade, such models help the comprehension of the market strategies of sale and distribution, as well as the forms of control and regulation produced by the actors in order to obtain success what leads to extralegal negotiations and to the use of violence.

6. Weed Seeds and the Risk: An Analysis of Prosecutors Practices at the Federal Prosecution Service in Rio de Janeiro

LUANA ALMEIDA MARTINS AND LAURA TALHO RIBEIRO

The years of internship in the Criminal Department of the Federal Prosecution Service of Rio de Janeiro, during our graduation in Law revealed to us many different practices of each prosecutor regarding the importation of weed seeds.

For some prosecutors the cannabis seeds—considering it as a drug—when imported must be denounced as international trafficking; For others, this same conduct should not be criminalized since the seed by itself would not have the conditions, and chemical qualities necessary to produce the forbidden narcotic, by transformation or addition. Also, there are those who believe that it is a matter of smuggling, like an importation of prohibited goods for sowing, which does not comply with the specific procedure (Law 10.711 / 03) and also configures a crime. These different practices emphasize the plurality of decisions taken by this institution before the same issue. Our perceptions and experiences in that space have revealed to us how legal discourses are not built in a homogeneous way and that in most cases the drafting of the pieces that serve justice shows the understanding that each prosecutor has about the risk to be fought and in this case, they update different discourses about prohibition. Therefore, we seek to describe the practices of the cabinet, especially regarding the treatment given to the importation of cannabis seeds, analyzing how the perception of risk is constructed considering the point of view of the prosecutors.

7. Users, Moralists and Experts: An Analysis of the Debate on Marijuana Regulation in Public Hearings Promoted by the Brazilian Senate in 2014

GUILHERME ALVES ELWANGER

This chapter discusses the discursive conflict present in the public hearings promoted by the Brazilian Federal Senate in 2014, which discussed the proposal of the marijuana use regulation in Brazil. Although the discussion about the change in drugs use legislation is primarily focused on a juridical-legal and medical-scientific debate, it is notable another element in this discussion that involves moral-value issues. In this sense, it is possible to

observe that the individuals involved in the debate are part of social groups that have specific interests in the subject and use different discourses (legal, medical and moral) to support their propositions about what they consider "right" or "wrong" regarding marijuana use. Therefore, the chapter discusses how the subjects involved on this debate employ medical-scientific and juridical-legal arguments to support propositions based on moral-values conceptions. More specifically, it was sought to understand the discursive conflict involving groups of "moral entrepreneurs", organized groups of marijuana users and specialists in the medical and juridical areas. To that end, the relation between "power-knowledge" established by Michel Foucault was rescued, since the discussion on marijuana regulation develops in such a way that the conflict is between what is "true" and what is "false" and the speeches of the specialists ended up being fundamental to support the arguments in conflict, which were aimed to establish what is the "correct" position regarding the regulation or not of the marijuana use in Brazil.

8. The Regulation of Santo Daime in the State of Oregon

HENRIQUE FERNANDES ANTUNES

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the legal dispute between the US government and a Santo Daime church—the Church of the Holy Light of the Queen, located in Ashland, Oregon—that culminated in the regulation process of ayahuasca in that state. Initially, I will briefly describe the insertion of the Santo Daime in the United States, the beginning of tensions with the governmental institutions, and the development of the dispute between CHLQ and the federal government. The focus then turns specifically to the analysis of the dispute between the CHLQ and representatives of the US government, taking into account the particularities of the dispute, as well as to the ways in which the ayahuasca regulation became effective after the final decision of the district court. Thus, one of the central objectives is to analyze how different norms are put into action, operated, and how categories are disputed in the midst of this process. Based on these elements, I intend to problematize the particularities of the forms of regulation of ayahuasca as a result of this dispute that reaches an outcome, but without establishing a consensus between both parties. In fact, the case study in question will be valuable in reinforcing the analysis of the US government's modus operandi in dealing with ayahuasca groups, as well as the orientation of its courts as they face the challenge of mediating disputes between such institutions and the government.

9. Drugs, Counterculture and the Beginning of the Repression of LSD in Brazil

JÚLIO DELMANTO

This chapter discusses the relationship between drugs and the counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s, presenting the origins of the term counterculture and showing how strong the importance of psychoactive drugs was in the ideals and even the origins of the counterculture. In the specific case of Brazil, the chapter focuses mainly on LSD, presenting the medical context of its arrival in the country. Based on the first lawsuit filed in a Brazilian court for trafficking and possession of LSD, it also presents how the drug

began to be repressed in the country, which at that time was governed by the military dictatorship in its hardest phase.

10. Genealogy of the Ayahuasca Cultural Heritage Registration Process in Brazil

GLAUBER LOURES DE ASSIS E BEATRIZ CAIUBY LABATE

This chapter aims to investigate the genealogy of the ayahuasca cultural heritage registration process in Brazil. Through a historical and comparative perspective, we identify the main players involved, as well as the conflicts, disputes, and alliances that form this scenario. First, we describe briefly the cultural heritage registration process of various psychoactive plants in Latin America. Then, we critically analyze the positioning of various ayahuasca groups and the discussions about the cultural heritage registration process of the religious use of ayahuasca in Brazil. Finally, we examine the entrance of the indigenous ethnic groups in the public debate and how this has made the process more complex. Beyond its technical and political challenges, we will see that the discussion about the process of cultural heritage registration and religious practices raises interesting debates about tradition, culture, environment, and ethnicity.

11. Facebook, Marijuana and Drugs Liberation in Colombia

ANDRÉS GÓNGORA

The article aims to describe the organizational process developed by members of the so-called "cannabis" and "anti-war-drugs" movements and civil society organizations that propose to change current drug policies. Based on an ethnographic work carried out since 2011 in several cities in Colombia, the chapter shows how, for activists who fight against the "drug prohibition", the "social movement" is, among other things, the effect of relations built on Internet and particularly on social networks like Facebook. In methodological terms, it is a challenge to deal with the river of information that the ethnographer received on the electronic devices: Is it correct to use the term "virtual" to describe such flow? Is it possible to make some kind of ethnographic description from the Facebook profiles of cannabis collectives? Is it worth separating the interactions based on electronic devices from "real life"? What is the emancipatory potential and what kind of regulatory practices do emerge when one intends to build politically oriented relationships through the Internet? This text hopes to answer these questions and reflect on the contemporary construction of political causes and the use of computer mediated communication, starting from some ethnographic problems encountered during the fieldwork with Colombian cannabis and anti-war-drugs movements.

12. On the Government of the Uses and the Users of Marijuana in Brazil

TIAGO MAGALHÃES RIBEIRO

This chapter presents a reflection on the results obtained from a doctoral research. It analyzes some relations that can be established between political rationalities that have

historically instituted the use of marijuana as a thinkable and manageable problem in this country, with the production of knowledges about this drug, its uses and users, particularly by the psychiatry and medicine fields, thus allowing for the advancement of social controls over the practices of consciousness alteration by means of this substance, on the one hand; and the ways through which marijuana users have problematized and acted on themselves and their peers in a process of constitution of themselves as subjects of their practices of consciousness alteration, on the other hand. This text emphasizes the description of the ways by which a certain type of self-controlled, self-managed marijuana user has emerged from discourses and practices spread in a virtual community of users of this drug. Furthermore, considering this process of (self)constitution of marijuana using subjects attempting to govern themselves, the text analyzes the relations perceived between freedom and control, ethics and politics, legalization and prohibition, government of the others and government of the self.