REFLECTING ON LOCAL REALITY: TENSIONS AND CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEXTS OF URBAN POVERTY

ANA PILAR PI PUIG
Universidad Nacional de La Plata (Argentina)
pilarpipuig@gmail.com

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to present some reflections on the tensions and challenges that emerge from both the literature review on sustainable development and the study of sustainable development as a paradigm in local contexts. In particular, a shantytown located in the outskirts of La Plata city (Argentina) is presented as a case study with the idea that there are some implications between the practices and social representations of people living in urban poverty and the sustainable development paradigm that rules environmental and waste policies in Argentina. The structure of the paper is a combination of two approaches: the macro or top-down approach and the micro or bottom-up approach. The challenge is viewing global as part of local. In addition, two tensions will be introduced: one theoretical at the macro level and one empirical at the micro level. Furthermore, regarding the local context, some preliminary findings of the case study will be introduced.

Keywords: sustainable development, global, local, tensions, urban poverty.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to present some reflections on the tensions and challenges that emerge from both the literature review on sustainable development and the study of sustainable development as a paradigm in local contexts. In particular, a case study is presented to illustrate the impact of the paradigm of sustainable development on the practice[1] and social representations[2] of people.

The idea that guides this work is that there are some implications between the practices and social representations of people living in urban poverty and the sustainable development paradigm[3] that rules environmental policies in Argentina, including the one concerning waste. A shantytown located in the outskirts of La Plata city was selected as a case study and the following reflections emerged from the first approach to the fieldwork.

The structure of the paper is a combination of two approaches: the macro or top-down approach and the micro or bottom-up approach in order to address ecological transformations and its consequences on local communities (Follér 2001)[4]. The challenge is viewing global as part of local. In addition, two tensions will be introduced: one theoretical at the macro level and one empirical at the micro level.

Through a macro or top-down approach the analysis will focus on the global ecological consensus around sustainable development and its effect on the terms of local waste policies. First, the role of sustainable development in the environmental Global Agenda will be shown. Second, the legislation and policies on environment and waste in Argentina and in La Plata city will be summarized. Last, a first tension will be exposed: a theoretical/conceptual tension that comes from literature review on sustainable development.

In order to question the core distinction in social sciences between "macro" and "micro" (Follér 2001), two contributions from literature will be presented: a progressive concept of place (Massey 2012) to think about the particularities of the local (in our case La Plata city) and the new geographies of urban theory (Roy 2009). Massey (2012) stands for a local sense of place and of its particularity and Roy (2009) states that theories being urged are simultaneously located and dislocated: they have to be produced in place (and it matters where they are produced), but they could then be appropriated exceeding its geographic origins.

The challenge therefore is this "epistemological turn" (Roy 2009) that dislocates the center of knowledge production to urban contexts in the South and considers local realities in connection to global processes and being affected by global paradigms (Massey 2012).

Following the latter, the micro or bottom-up approach will focus on local reality. The local context of La Plata city will be described showing that waste picking is a working strategy of the population living in urban poverty[5]. Consequently, a second tension, which is empirical, will be exposed. It is a tension between local legislation and policies and informal working with waste. Furthermore, Follér (2001) emphasizes the importance of local and space-specific variables that can be expressed as the community's understanding and knowledge of ecological processes. Therefore, some preliminary findings of the case study will be introduced. Fieldwork tried to recognize practices and social representations of indi-

viduals living in the shantytown through a qualitative methodology. Results show particular representations on environment and waste and point to discussing the idea of "environmental benefit" (Suárez, Schamber 2007; Paiva, Perelman 2008) regarding waste pickers.

HISTORY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The proposal of sustainable development is a particular response – among others – to an environmental concern, which has gained popularity and has was established as the guideline of the current Global environmental Agenda. Therefore, the history of sustainable development will be unpacked in order to understand its current role.

By the end of the 1960s several scientific reports (Carson 1962; Commoner 1966, 1971; Ehrlich 1968) had started showing the environmental limits of the economic growth model. Some alternatives emerged, like Zero Growth (Meadows et al. 1972); the Ecodevelopment – New World Order posed by Third World countries looking at poverty and marginality conditions – (UNEP 1973) and the Latin American World Model in response to Zero Growth Model (Fundación Bariloche 1976).

The term sustainable development first appeared in 1980 in the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN-UNEP-WWF 1980) (Lelé 1991). But the currently popular definition of sustainable development: "development that meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs", comes from the Brundtland Report (WCED 1987). This formulation represents the mainstream of sustainable development thinking (Lelé 1991). The Report created a broad consensus around the idea of sustainable development. The Rio Summit[6] in 1992 was the next landmark of global importance and as a result it produced two major agreements: the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, a series of principles defining the rights and responsibilities of states, and Agenda 21, a comprehensive set of programmatic objectives for global action in all areas of sustainable development. It is worth noting that chapter 21 of Agenda 21 specifically refers to waste management.

Argentina participated in and subscribed to both agreements, which is reflected in the country's legislation and policies, as will be shown in next section.

NATIONAL AND MUNICIPAL LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Argentine environmental legislation and policies, including those focusing on urban solid waste, have adopted sustainable development as a guideline[7]. A brief list of documents is provided in tab. 1 to demonstrate the latter, focusing on the local scale in the case of the Municipality of La Plata.

As shown by the analysis of these documents, the paradigm of sustainable development regarding environmental concern and therefore regarding waste management is fully embraced by laws – according to the law hierarchy from the National Constitution to the local Ordinance –, reports and programs.

Especially interesting is the Waste Programme of Separation at source that was implemented in the Municipality of La Plata in 2008 focusing on differentiated disposal of recycling materials for subsequent recovery. This program aimed to accomplish with the outline of integrated management of urban solid waste, a policy proposal developed and carried out mainly in Europe and the United States to reduce the generation of waste, reuse and recycle: minimizing the final disposal. A more efficient use of resources is pursued according to the sustainable development principle.

On the contrary, little is said about the social context in which this kind of management can be carried out and the tensions that emerge when implemented in countries with populations living in poverty conditions.

Before getting to that point, the first tension around the principle of sustainable development will be presented in the next section.

THE FUZZINESS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Although various alternatives emerged around the environmental concern in the 1970s, the fact is that after some years the international community debate on the environment was hegemonized by the sustainable development proposal (Pierri 2005; Erwing 2017). According to Hajer (2000), sustainable development is the first global discourse-coalition in environmental politics and its hegemony should be seen as the result of a struggle between various unconventional political coalitions, each made up of actors who are scientists, politicians and activists.

Tab. 1.

Type of the document	Name of the document	Description	Key concepts or definitions
Law	National Constitution (1994)	Incorporation of the paradigm of sustainable development in the Reform of the National Constitution. Imposition of the national state to determine basic principles that are uniform for the whole country. These principles cannot alter local jurisdiction and provinces must implement those principles in their own territories	Article 41 develops the Brundtland definition of sustainable development, although it does not explicitly name the term
Law	National General Law of Environment (2002)	Main premises for environment based on sustainable development	Article 1 mentions sustainable development as the baseline for Argentine environmental law
Policy Report	Basis for a national environmental agenda (2004)	Set of definitions and statistics in order to plan a national environmental agenda	Sustainable development is the key concept that organizes the dimensions addressed in the document
Law	National Law of Household Waste Integrated Management (2004)	Criteria for household solid waste management in Argentina	Definition of household solid waste in terms of protecting the environment and quality life of population
Policy Report	National Strategy for an Integrated Management of Urban Solid Waste (ENG-IRSU 2005)	Presentation of waste situation in Argentina and grounds for an integrated solid waste management	It explicitly names sustainable development as the conceptual framework of the integrated urban solid waste management in Argentina
Law	Provincial Law of Urban Solid Waste Integrated Management (2006)	Criteria for household solid waste management in Buenos Aires Province	Article 3 explicitly names sustainable development among the principles and basic concepts that are the basis of the law

Tab. 1. *(Continued)*

Type of the document	Name of the document	Description	Key concepts or definitions
Policy	Programme of Waste Separation in La Plata (2008)	Programme of separation at source for households, differentiated collection and recycling of materials implemented by the Municipality of La Plata. It was not published in the official bulletin, but promoted in social media and through leaflets	The information given only established that separation of waste should be done: dry waste (recyclable materials) in a green bag and wet waste (non-recyclable) in a black bag. Different trucks would collect the two bags
Law	Municipal Ordinance (2009)	Known as "Zero Waste" ordinance. Criteria for urban solid waste management in the Municipality of La Plata	In particular, it mentions chapter 21 of Agenda 21 of Rio Summit, where waste management guidelines are presented

At this point, the first tension around the concept of sustainable development emerges from literature review and therefore it has been called a theoretical / conceptual tension. Drawing on discourse theory, two dimensions are used to address the process of hegemonization of the sustainable development principle: the existence of a myth and the construction of a collective imaginary (Howarth 2000). Myths are discursive formations that work as strategies to acquire and preserve hegemony and they become imaginaries if they succeed in representing those they want to address (Soage 2006). Consequently, the Brundtland Report (WCED 1987) can be framed as the sustainable development myth since after its release of the following report and paper production both in the academic field and in the international bodies regarding environment had to make a reference to it.

The power of the definition of sustainable development of the Brundtland Report (WCED 1987) lies in its broad vagueness: the absence of semantic and conceptual clarity. Due to its interpretational problems different authors called it a "contradiction in terms" or "another development truism" (Lelé

1991; Swyngedouw 2011). As stated by Swyngedouw (2011), sustainable development is a hegemonic discourse that can be analyzed under the logic of an empty signifier, since it articulates a wide range of diverse meanings (Swyngedow 2011; Brown 2016). According to Lelé (1991), the strength of the concept of sustainable development stems from the choice of an apparently simple definition of fundamental objectives from which a range of operational objectives cutting across most previous intellectual and political boundaries can be derived. This idea of sustainable development is a powerful tool for consensus (Swyngedouw 2010). Moreover, all the political fuzziness of sustainable development has enabled its co-optation by all sorts of agencies and international bodies who have been quick to adopt the new rhetoric (Lelé 1991).

Summing up, on the one hand, there is no clarity in the definition of the concept of sustainable development. On the other hand, it has however – or just because of that reason – spread worldwide and it has been implemented in many countries, such as Argentina. Of course, economic, social, political and cultural realities vary between countries and inside each country. So what impact can the sustainable development paradigm have in different contexts?

In the next section, a reflection will be posed around the importance of looking at the local level even in the case of global-scale issues like environmental concern and waste management.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGE

As mentioned above, a challenge is posed at this point: what happens at the local scale when the global – broad, vague, imprecise – sustainable development principle is implemented? Shall this be a problem? To address this challenge some contributions from literature approaching the global-local relation will be presented. That then leads to the further step of analyzing the case study of a shantytown in the Municipality of La Plata.

In the first place, a progressive concept of place developed upon interactions and connections (Massey 2012) becomes relevant in order to think about the particularities of the local – in our case La Plata city. By criticizing the notion of time-space compression[8] (where place as a closed local community tends to disappear), Massey (2012) stands for a local

sense of place and its particularity. She points out the im-
portance of looking at the geometry of power of the time-
space compression which implies that different social groups
and different individuals are placed in diverse ways in these
flows and interconnections, so that degrees of movement,
communication, control and habituation vary. In order to
"spatialize globalization", it is crucial to understand global
dynamics and how the actions influence each other. As Follér
(2001) states, the challenge in viewing global as part of local is
that it questions the conventional distinctions in social sciences
between "macro" and "micro", between macro-socioeconomic
processes and events and interactions within the community –
the practices of everyday life. The community can be the vic-
tim of global development processes, but it can also be a unit
actively involved in changing living conditions, and therefore
different boundaries between global and local are dissolved.

Secondly, the building of new geographies of urban theo-
ry (Roy 2009) becomes imperative. Roy (2009) criticizes the
"regulating fiction" of a few great cities of the First World –
located in Euro-America – seen as models, generating theory
and policy over the cities of the global South – the Third
World – that are assembled under the sign of underdevelop-
ment, seen as problems, and requiring diagnosis and reform.
Roy (2009) advocates new geographies of urban theory by dis-
locating the Euro-American center of theoretical production:
there must be a recalibration of the geographies of authorita-
tive knowledge through the production of "strategic essential-
isms". The sort of theory being urged is simultaneously locat-
ed and dis-located: theories have to be produced in place (and
it matters where they are produced), but they could then be
appropriated, borrowed, and remapped, exceeding its geo-
graphic origins[9].

The challenge therefore, is this "epistemological turn"
claimed by Roy (2009). By dislocating the center of knowledge
production to urban contexts in the South and by considering
local realities in connection to global processes and affected
by global paradigms (Massey 2012), the sustainable develop-
ment concept could be, for example, fulfilled with situated
content and gain meaningfulness in the local context. Moreo-
ver, new categories could be created that reflect local reality
and needs.

As introduced at the beginning the case study, this re-
search intends to be a step towards this goal by approaching
local practices and social representations on environment and

waste in a shantytown of the Municipality of La Plata. Therefore, local context and case study will be addressed in the following sections.

PUTTING POLICIES INTO CONTEXT: NATIONAL BACKGROUND AND LOCAL REALITY

Argentina has about 25 per cent of its population living in poverty conditions (INDEC 2017, data for the second semester 2017)[10]. A considerable part of the population of La Plata city is poor (24.2 per cent of inhabitants, INDEC 2017). Furthermore, the city presents a typical center-periphery pattern with the administrative and commercial center having better living conditions than the periphery (Segura 2011, 2012, 2014) where several shantytowns have been developed and where most of the poor population lives. Within this sector, many individuals work informally collecting waste as a working strategy to obtain an income.

The study of strategies has about fifty years in Latin America (Peiró 2005). Definitions of living strategies vary according to streams and authors. This approach tries to answer the question of how certain social sectors achieve in reproducing their existence despite the constraints they face regarding work, income and consumption in Latin-American societies. Particularly, family strategies of social reproduction (Eguía 1994) refers to a set of mechanisms, behaviors and relations that domestic units put into practice to achieve their comprehensive reproduction in the best possible conditions, facing the constraints of their social situation. Strategies include working strategies, that is, actions to obtain incomes. Working with waste, known as waste picking, is a widely recognized practice in poor social sectors in Argentina (Aimetta 2009; Gorbán 2014; Paiva 2006, Perelman 2012; Rausky 2016; Saravi 1994; Schamber, Suárez 2002; Suárez, Schamber 2007).

Furthermore, some common characteristics emerge from the literature about waste picking in Argentina: it is intermittent due to climate, health and family conditions; it is combined with other odd jobs as strategies to obtain incomes (Paiva 2006; Rausky 2016; Schamber, Suárez 2002; Suárez, Schamber 2007); and particularly in La Plata it is practiced with carts carried by horses (Pi Puig 2015). The latter causes an additional problem to waste pickers since there is a municipal ordinance (7280/1969) that forbids animal transportation.

Additionally, there is a campaign lead by an NGO against the use of horses for waste picking (Pi Puig 2015). The stigmatization of waste pickers becomes double: not only they suffer from social inequality and spatial segregation but also from prosecution of the police. Most importantly, this activity has been troubled and even disregarded by the local authorities in terms of waste management policies.

THE CASE STUDY

The case study is a shantytown located in the north periphery of La Plata City. Its population lives under structural poverty and income poverty (Eguía et al. 2005; Ministerio de Infraestructura 2014-2015). The lands have some organization (streets, basic services), and the inhabitants are only owners of the houses but have no legal property rights over the land. The shantytown tends to get flooded because of the gradient, the proximity to a river, plus the building of a motorway next to the shantytown without impact evaluation. In the last ten years, a state Housing Programme provided some families with new brick houses (there are approximately 300 houses including the very precarious structures as well as the brick ones). This would improve quality life and bring regular services provision, which did not happen in the past: nowadays, electricity network is still illegal, there are severe water pressure problems, there is no gas connection, and waste water pipes are broken and collapsed. The waste collection service has improved – there is daily collection in the whole shantytown – but still, waste is a problem. Pets (dogs, horses, pigs) live freely in the streets and eat the waste bags scattering the food waste and other materials; trenches are blocked with waste so water cannot go through; and some inhabitants throw their waste on the sidewalks making piles and burning it. Additionally, an important number of waste pickers live in the shantytown (Aimetta 2009; Rausky 2016) and there is also one store buying recycling materials from waste pickers and reselling them to bigger companies. The whole circuit is informal and belongs to the so-called "black market". The case study shows the ways in which waste affects people in a local context living in poverty conditions: not only do people work with waste but also in the shantytown waste is part of the environment, scattered or in piles, in the streets or in the sidewalks.

Therefore, as shown above, there are laws and policies in place on the one hand and on the other hand there are contexts of urban poverty in La Plata where waste picking is a working strategy of a population living in poverty. Then, the second tension, the empirical one, comes from the confrontation between laws and policies and the local social reality.

Both the National Strategy for Integrated Management of Urban Solid Waste and the Municipal Ordinance on waste in La Plata, recognize the existence of an informal sector of waste pickers normally named in these documents as "urban collectors". However, the Municipal Programme of Waste Separation at source (running in the city since 2008) does not include the sector of informal workers (waste pickers) who collect recyclable materials as a working strategy. Hence a question arises: what are the interests behind the black economy and the persistence of this informal circulation of materials and persons?

SOME PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS

Regarding how to think "locally" or how to deconstruct "global" categories, some examples are presented based on the first reflections from the approach to field work in the shantytown. It is worth noting that I have gone to this shantytown every week since 2012. I participate in a workshop with children, where educational activities are developed. Therefore, participant observation has been made for several years and systematic interviews to inhabitants have been conducted during specific months in 2015, 2017 and 2018. Fieldwork notes and transcriptions of interviews are the written material for the analysis, seeking practices and representations regarding the environment and waste.

First of all, contrary to what the sustainable development paradigm embraces as environment – a general, broad, abstract concept – the representation of the environment of the people in the shantytown is fragmented into different dimensions: water, soil and wastewater. The representation of waste also shows differences between the interviewed persons and it might be that the pure/dangerous distinction (Douglas 1966) varies among people even within the shantytown. For example, pieces of wood and plastic pots are scattered in the front gardens of many houses: they are not meant to go to waste, as it might seem at first sight, but are left there in case something

in the house needs to be repaired. Furthermore, regarding practices, many times waste pickers leave the collected materials in the sidewalks. On the one hand, those objects are their means to obtain incomes. On the other hand, neighbors complain because the materials have no value for them but instead make the neighborhood ugly. This is an interesting point to deepen the research.

Besides, the research is an opportunity to discuss the idea of "environmental benefit" that the waste pickers would provide according to some literature (Suárez, Schamber 2007; Paiva, Perelman 2008): who gets this benefit? Which concept of environment are they referring to? It is true that in global terms the recovery of materials provides a more efficient resource use? However, looking at the close environment of these individuals, it cannot be stated that they benefit from being surrounded by waste. Even if this benefit exists, it should not be the main argument to legitimatize the demand for recognition of waste pickers. The activity of collecting and selling recyclable materials is part of their working strategies to procure incomes – which barely allows them to live. Therefore, this is the reason to include them in waste policies. An interesting turn in fieldwork, however, shows that calling themselves "environmental agents" is a tool of waste pickers to make demands from the State. In this way, they take the hegemonic discourse that frames them as "urban collectors" who *work benefitting the environment,* and play the game of power in order to be taken seriously into account.

FINAL WORDS

One of the significant weaknesses of the mainstream formulation of sustainable development is its characterization of the problems of poverty and environmental degradation (Lelé 1991). Given the confusion in terms, perceptions and concepts, policy prescriptions being suggested by sustainable development mainstream thinking are often inadequate since they do not conform to the basic idea of ecologically sound and socially equitable development and are often even counterproductive.

In fact, environmental policies in Argentina are ruled by the principle of sustainable development. Which are then the impacts of these policies, particularly waste policies, on population living in poverty conditions? This paper has tried to

show that they fail in two ways in addressing the waste problem in urban spaces such as the shantytowns. First, they do not consider a reality where the inhabitants manage and dispose waste making individual decisions that affect the whole neighborhood (burning, accumulation, etc.) and the pets live in the streets without control, the result of which is an unhealthy environment for the people living in the shantytown. Second, the policies of waste collection do not integrate waste pickers into their system but create systems that compete with waste pickers for the recycling materials. This way, waste pickers continue as informal and marginalized workers and the "black market" can go on imposing prices and exploding them.

Clearly, there is a gap between theory globally sounded and local reality. Therefore, the challenge is to deepen the bottom-up approach to further explore practices and social representations on environment and waste of people living in poverty. Ultimately, the aim is to provide knowledge about the local reality in order to either reform or adequate the concept of sustainable development or to overcome it and pose new strategies to address social and environmental issues in our local contexts.

NOTES

[1] Practices are what human beings do, their actions and everyday activities (Lindón 2006).

[2] Social representations are a kind of knowledge, ordinary knowledge, which is socially built and shared in a certain social group. This knowledge has a practical aim: drawing on the experience of people, it works for both understanding the reality and acting practically in everyday life (Jodelet 2011).

[3] Through the paper I will alternatively use the terms sustainable development paradigm, principle and proposal depending on the context.

[4] In her work Follér (2001) addresses the relations between global environmental changes and local health problems.

[5] After the 2001 economic crisis that hit Argentina, the White Train (Tren Blanco) became an emblematic case of new poor population having to develop working strategies to gain an income. The White Train worked from 2001 to 2008 and in general terms was a train service specially provided by the companies for the exclusive use of waste pickers. Only waste pickers living in the periphery of Buenos Aires city took this service or to go to the city center to collect recyclable materials and come back to their homes. The round journey was during the late night. For further information of the White train of the Mitre Line, see Gorbán (2014).

[6] Rio Summit was an international meeting organized in 1992 by the United Nations where the countries tried to get to an agreement about how to operationalize the sustainable development in concrete policy guidelines.

[7] For a complete analysis of the documents, see Pi Puig (2011).

[8] The time-space compression refers to the movement and communication through space, to the geographical extent of social relations and to our experience of all that (Massey 2012).

[9] Roy (2009) gives an example in the field of theory on the production of space: he recovers the Latin American experience and tradition of studies on informality, pointing out that it can be also useful to approach city-regions in the EuroAmerican center.

[10] We are referring to income poverty. There are two poverty measurements in Argentina made by the Institute of Statistics and Census: income poverty which is an estimation based on a survey in urban areas and structural poverty which is an index made out of the results of the national census (every ten years).

REFERENCES

C. Aimetta (2009), *Salir a carrear ¿trabajo o rebusque?*, in "Trabajo y Sociedad", XI, 12, pp. 1-14.

T. Brown (2016), *Sustainability as Empty Signifier: Its Rise, Fall, and Radical Potential*, in "Antipode", 48, 1, pp. 115-133.

R. Carson (1962), *Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin).

B. Commoner (1966), *Science and Survival* (New York: Viking).

B. Commoner (1971), *The Closing Circle* (New York: Bantam Books).

M. Douglas (1966), *Purity and Danger: An analysis of the concepts of pollution and taboo* (New York: Praeger).

A. Eguía (1994), *Estrategias familiares de reproducción social en sectores populares urbanos del Gran La Plata*, el IV Congreso Argentino de Antropología Social, Olavarría.

A. Eguía et al. (2005), *Diagnóstico integral de las condiciones de vida de los barrios La Unión y El Mercadito*, Informe basado en censo realizado en barrios pobres del partido de La Plata elevados a la Municipalidad de La Plata y al Ministerio de Desarrollo Humano PBA, Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación, Universidad Nacional de La Plata.

P. Ehrlich (1968), *The Population Bomb* (New York: Ballantine).

J.A. Erwing (2017), *Hollow Ecology: ecological modernization theory and the death of nature*, in "Journal of World-Systems Research", 23, 1, pp. 126-155.

M.L. Follér (2001), *Interactions between global processes and local health problems. A human ecology approach to health among indigenous groups in the Amazon*, in "Cadernos de Saúde Pública", 17 (Suplemento), pp. 115-126.

Fundación Bariloche (1976), *Modelo Mundial Latinoamericano*, in "Nueva Sociedad", 22, pp. 16-29.

D. Gorbán (2014), *Las tramas del cartón. Trabajo y familia en los sectores populares del Gran Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires: Gorla).

M. Hajer (2000), *The politics of environmental discourse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

D. Howarth (2000), *Discourse* (Buckingham&Philadelphia: Open University Press).

INDEC (2016), *Incidencia de la pobreza y de la indigencia en 31 aglomerados urbanos*, Resultados segundo trimestre de 2016, Buenos Aires.

INDEC (2017), *Incidencia de la pobreza y la indigencia en 31 aglomerados urbanos*, Segundo semestre de 2017, Condiciones de vida, 2, 4, Buenos Aires.

IUCN-UNEP-WWF (1980), *World Conservation Strategy*.

D. Jodelet (2011), *Aportes del enfoque de las representaciones sociales al campo de la educación*, in "Espacios en Blanco" (Serie indagaciones), 21, pp. 133-154.

S. Lelé (1991), *Sustainable Development: A Critical Review*, in "World Development", 19, 6, pp. 607-621.

A. Lindón (2006) *Geografías de la vida cotidiana*, in D. Hiernaux, A. Lindon (eds.), *Tratado de geografía humana* (Iztapalap, México: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana).

D. Massey (2012), *Un sentido global de lugar*, in *Un sentido global del lugar* (Barcelona: Icaria).

D.H. Meadows, D.L. Meadows, J. Randers, W.W. Behrens III (1972), *The limits to growth*; *a report for the Club of Rome's project on the predicament of mankind* (New York: Universe Books).

Ministerio de Infraestructura (2014-2015), *Registro Público Provincial de Villas y Asentamientos Precarios*, available in http://190.188.234.6/mapa/.

V. Paiva (2006), *El "cirujeo", un camino informal de recuperación de residuos. Buenos Aires, 2002-2003*, in "Estudios Demográficos y Urbanos", 21, 1, p. 189.

V. Paiva, M. Perelman (2008), *Recolección y recuperación informal de residuos. La perspectiva de la teoría ambiental y de las políticas públicas. Ciudad de Buenos Aires 2001-2007*, in "Cuaderno urbano: espacio, cultura y sociedad", 7.

L. Peiró (2005), *La organización doméstica en el marco de las estrategias familiares de reproducción en la pobreza. El caso de las unidades domésticas del barrio La Unión*, Tesina de Grado, Universidad Nacional de La Plata.

M. Perelman (2012), *Caracterizando la recolección informal en Buenos Aires, 2001-2007*, in "Latin American Research Review", 47, p. 41.

N. Pierri (2005), *Historia del concepto de desarrollo sustentable*, in G. Foladori, N. Pierri (eds.), *¿Sustentabilidad? Desacuerdos sobre el desarrollo sustentable*, Colección América Latina y el Nuevo Orden Mundial, México, Miguel Ángel Porrua, UAZ, Cámara de Diputados LIX Legislatura.

A.P. Pi Puig (2011), *Residuos sólidos urbanos (RSU). Aproximaciones sociológicas al medio ambiente: La gestión de los RSU en Argentina: el caso del Programa de Separación de Basura en Origen implementado por la Municipalidad de La Plata. Opiniones, actitudes y prácticas de los ciudadanos en torno al medio ambiente y al RSU*, Tesis de grado, Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación para optar al grado de Licenciada en Sociología.

A.P. Pi Puig (2015), *Algunas reflexiones en torno a la gestión de la basura en contextos de pobreza urbana a partir del estudio de caso en los barrios La Unión y El Mercadito (La Plata, Argentina)*, XI RAM, Montevideo.

E. Rausky (2016), *Espacialidad y trabajo: los cartoneros en la ciudad de La Plata*, in "Revista Pilquen", 19, 1.

A. Roy (2009), *The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory*, in "Regional Studies", 43, 6, pp. 819-830.

G. Saraví (1994), *Detrás de la basura: cirujas. Notas sobre el sector informal urbano*, in G. Quiróz, G. Saraví, *La informalidad económica. Ensayos de antropología urbana* (Buenos Aires: CEAL).

P. Schamber, F. Suárez (2002), *Actores sociales y cirujeo y gestión de residuos. Una mirada sobre el circuito informal del reciclaje en el conurbano bonaerense*, in "Realidad Económica", 190, 16, p. 12.

R. Segura (2011), *La trama relacional de la periferia de la ciudad de La Plata. La figuración "establecidos-outsiders" revisitada*, in "Publicar", 10, p. 85.

R. Segura (2012), *Elementos para un crítica de la noción de segregación residencial socio- económica: desigualdades, desplazamientos e interacciones en la periferia de La Plata*, in "Quid", 16, 2, pp. 106-132.

R. Segura (2014), *Desigualdad social y espacio urbano. Reflexiones sobre naturalización, legitimación y reproducción de las desigualdades en el espacio urbano*, XI Congreso Argentino de Antropología Social, 20 al 26 de julio de 2014, Rosario, Universidad Nacional de Rosario.

A. Soage (2006), *La teoría del discurso de la Escuela de Essex en su contexto teórico*, in "Círculo de Lingüística aplicada a la comunicación", 25, pp. 45-61.

F. Suárez, P. Schamber (2007), *Recuperadores urbanos de residuos (cartoneros), inclusión social y sustentabilidad*, XXVI Congreso de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Sociología, Guadalajara, Asociación Latinoamericana de Sociología.

E. Swyngedouw (2010), *Impossible "Sustainability" and the Post-Political Condition*, in R. Krueger, D. Gibbs (eds.) *The Sustainable Development Paradox* (Estados Unidos: The Guilford Press), pp. 185-205.

E. Swyngedouw (2011), *¡La naturaleza no existe! La sostenibilidad como síntoma de una planificación despolitizada*, in "Urban", 1.

UNEP (1973), *Report of the governing council on the work of its first session* (New York: United Nations).

WCED (1987), *Our Common Future* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS