In 1975, Neoliberalism was first applied in Chile after the Pinochet regime in alliance with the US government destroyed the Allende government. Under the aegis of Milton Friedman and the “Chicago Boys,” the country became the test case for privatization and other policies that decimated the radical left and working people. Come 1979, the UK, under Margaret Thatcher’s government, became not only the staging ground for the neoliberal experiment in Europe but also an all-out attack on Socialism. Across the other side of the Atlantic in the US, Ronald Reagan assumed the presidency in 1980 and immediately championed the free market, and like Thatcher, pledged an all-out war on Socialism across the globe. During his tenure, his administration implemented the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) after the US invasion of Grenada in 1983. Post-Reagan and the fall and demise of the USSR and its allies in Eastern Europe, every president has pursued policies that have advanced US interests that continues to undermine the region.

The Caribbean is a unique geographical place. Its history and legacy is connected to European colonialism and imperialism, US imperialism and hegemony, Slavery, the African past and present, and now Neoliberal globalization and Capitalist exploitation and domination. Additionally, this geographical space has staged revolutions, revolts, mass insurrections, radical working-class movements, and philosophical ideas that have shaped Pan-Africanism, Socialism, Marxism, and critiqued Capitalism. Moreover, it has shaped and reshaped cultural expressions in the music, dance, the arts, literature, and sports.

Notwithstanding these developments and contributions, the US government under Bill Clinton placed the region under more economic fetters with the adoption of the Washington Consensus policies of fiscal adjustment, tax reforms, deregulation, trade liberalization, competitive exchange rate, privatization, removal of barriers to investment, financial reforms, protection of property rights, redirection of public sector investments. Working in tandem with the IMF, World Bank, and WTO, the US has used its Military might to pressure the region to open up their economies not only to the flood imports but also to the American values as they pertain to democracy, economic development, education, religion, culture, and entertainment.

While there has been resistance from below from some working organizations, community organizations, cultural organizations, women groups, youth, and student organizations, by and large, the transnational elites, traditional political parties, and some leftists have all acquiesced to what the late Samir Amin called “the Neoliberal Virus.” During the Cold War of the 1930s to the 1950s, historian Gerald C. Horne described the Caribbean as a place of radical struggles where people envisioned a new type of society and waged struggles for independence. In the late 1960s to the 1980s, radical groups from the region waged struggles and joined in solidarity with peoples across the globe against US imperialism. Today, this struggles has been largely crushed and the region as become landscapes where multinational corporations and local conglomerates shape and dominate all outcomes. However, we
know that a volcano remains dormant for years until it erupts violently and destroys everything in its path. Therefore, Franz Fanon reminds us, that “every generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it.”

The editors of the Journal of Labor and Society seek contribution from academicians, activists, and organic intellectuals to theorize and unpack how the neoliberal paradigm has shaped and continue to shape the Caribbean region as it deals with the ravages of Covid-19, climate and environmental changes, gentrification, high unemployment, crime, extreme wealth and poverty, and violence on women. The call is not limited to these issues but may address issues such as:

- The collusion of the state, the one percent, and transnational elites in the implementation of the neoliberal project.
- Gender and neoliberal development
- The political economy of neoliberalism.
- The US and neoliberalism in the Caribbean.
- Popular culture and neoliberalism.
- Tourism and neoliberalism.
- Pan African and neoliberalism.
- Trade unions and neoliberalism.
- The media and neoliberalism.
- Foreign Direct Investment and neoliberalism.

Special Issue Proposal:

Proposals should be written in English and not exceed a total of 500 words. We expect that final papers will range from 6000 to 8500 words. Additionally, original papers may be submitted by a single author or co-authors. Moreover, we seek original work that draws on the most recent literature on neoliberalism in the Caribbean. Furthermore, proposals may be rooted in or derived from prior work, but the submitted proposal must reflect significant development. Please submit proposals in MS Word or (equivalent) format using double spacing and 12 font or larger. All proposals received by the deadline date (15 September 2021) are deemed as original and final.

Timeline for submission and publication:

1. Submission of proposal: September 30, 2021
2. Editor reviews returned: November 30, 2021
3. Completion of manuscript: February 30, 2022
Please send proposals to *Journal of Labor and Society (JLSO)* Editors:

Godfrey Vincent  
Email: gcymande@gmail.com  

Immanuel Ness  
Email: iness@brooklyn.cuny.edu