

# GLOBAL FRIDAY PRESENTS

Friday, January 15, 2021

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The COVID-19 pandemic made it clear that the most vulnerable people to having a severe or lethal infection are those with “comorbidities” such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, and other maladies exacerbated by being overweight or obese (Stokes, et al. 2020). Otero argues that the root cause of such comorbidities is what he calls “the neoliberal diet” (Otero 2018). This energy-dense, industrial, ultra-processed and cheap diet, popularly known as junk food, is directly or indirectly implicated in making working class humans vulnerable. He will offer a cross-national comparison of how income inequality accounts for the working classes’ greater risk of exposure to the neoliberal diet in Mexico and the United States. Ultimately, eating energy-dense food is much less about individual choice than about having more or less economic access to healthy and nutritious food. Otero will conclude by pointing to the state as the only societal actor capable of addressing root causes: inequality and a food system controlled by large agribusiness interests.



## The Neoliberal Diet: Root Cause of Covid-19 Comorbidities

12:00 – 1:30 PM

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