

## Housewives, Mothers, Feminists, Fighters: women in the 1994 Brazilian elections

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The presence of women as protagonists in the institutional political game in Brazil has traditionally been weak. Even the growth of feminism in the 1970s and important gains in women's rights were not enough to significantly change this picture. Until the 1990 Congressional elections, the numbers of both women candidates and those that won were quite limited; even more restricted was the range of women's rights issues raised in campaign discourse.

This article is intended to discuss women's positions as candidates in the 1994 elections. I am interested in knowing whether the candidates used the fact that they were women to seek votes, how being women was formulated in their discourse, and to what extent women candidates incorporated the feminist movement's agenda into that discourse. That is, to what extent women and the issues from the feminist agenda gained space in the electoral dispute<sup>1</sup>.

The 1994 elections were without a doubt the most complex in Brazilian history, not only because of how many offices were at stake and how important they were, but also because of the country's recent history, marked by the impeachment of the first

directly elected President following the military dictatorship and a series of corruption scandals inside Congress. As a consequence, the electoral process came to be experienced and constituted by candidates as the milestone of a new era, in which corruption was no longer expected to have a place and major national problems could begin to be solved.

As a result, there was a constant concern over proof of honesty and the various candidates' demonstrations of serious proposals for Brazil as a whole and the various States in particular. Throughout the campaign there was a constant effort at warding off the phantom of the 1989 elections, marked by Fernando Collor's marketing fireworks. If there was indeed one marketing ploy shared by all candidates in 1994, it was to show a serious, committed stance towards solving the country's real problems.

Another characteristic of the 1994 campaign process was the overlap of issues discussed by the candidates. Beyond political positions and electoral alliances, the campaign agenda was defined by the country's socio-economic crisis over the last ten years and the need for the contenders, particularly those running for executive offices, to define the solutions. This central issue far outshadowed what are highly popular issues in countries less problematic than Brazil, like ecology, minority rights, etc.

In the past, the above characteristics have been more common in Gubernatorial, Senatorial, and Presidential elections, while more specific issues have been left to candidates for State and National Houses. However, this trend was not totally true in 1994. Legislative candidates also tended to underrate corporatist interests in favor of the

<sup>1</sup> This article was finished in the first week of October, 1994, in order to meet this journal's deadline. This imposed limitations in terms of the overall figures for Brazil as well as for an analysis of the election returns.

broad issues, or at least in favor of a discussion of the latter at the regional or municipal level<sup>2</sup>, contrary to what happened in previous elections, where the candidates' professional backgrounds and trade union activities were keys to defining their discourse<sup>3</sup>.

Considering this tendency in campaign discourse, the question that concerns me here is the position of women as candidates and the theme of women's rights as raised historically by the feminist movement. On a previous occasion, I argued that women had not succeeded in articulating their own struggles with more general ones in society, and that this had led to their isolation in general (and that of feminists in particular) in the electoral political game<sup>4</sup>. In a situation where general interests tended to direct the field of discourse and left little maneuvering room for expressing specific or corporative interests, the issue that needs to be addressed is the space found by women for running for office and expressing the struggle for their rights.

In this article, I examine two dimensions of women's participation in an electoral

process: the first has to do with the meaning of women's presence as candidates; the second is concerned with the presence of a feminist discourse and/or defense of women's rights in the women candidates' campaigns. These two dimensions do not necessarily coincide: there are female candidates who do not even mention the fact that they are women, and there are male candidates who incorporate women's rights issues into both their television campaigns and their campaign leaflets<sup>5</sup>. This article is divided into two parts: the first deals with women from various States of Brazil running for Senator, Governor, Assistant Governor, and Vice President, and the second with those from the State of Rio Grande do Sul running for the National and State Houses of Representatives. In the second part, my analytical material is made up of transcriptions from the Free Electoral Program on Television and the candidates' respective pamphlets. The choice of the particular State of Rio Grande do Sul was based solely on ease of access to the material. I presume that this may somewhat limit my conclusions. Still, while the State's characteristics cannot be extrapolated to those of Brazil as a whole, they are not so far removed as to not be taken as indicative of national trends.

### Women candidates

A limited number of women were amongst the overall group of candidates for higher office in Brazil: 12 for the National Senate, 12 for State Governor, 12 for Assistant Governor, and two for Vice President. Unfortunately, at present I do not have all the returns on candidates for the National and State Houses for the country as a whole. In Rio Grande do Sul, 13 women ran for the

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<sup>2</sup> Since the majority of candidates for legislative office and especially those who are running for the first time enter politics because of outstanding activity in class organizations, unions, or professional fields in specific regions or cities, it is quite common for these candidates to present themselves as representatives of a category or region, with specific proposals.

<sup>3</sup> As an example of this statement, I randomly chose a Free Electoral Program, part of the free television time provided by law to political parties during the electoral campaign. This particular program was devoted to legislative candidates, where in 60 minutes, 79 candidates for the State and National Houses from all the different parties in Rio Grande do Sul presented their positions. Of these 79, only eight addressed their remarks to specific voters, like truck drivers, teachers, or renters; 14 used the time to talk about their personal and political biographies; and the other 57 spoke about the major campaign issues, although their approach was sometimes based on regional problems (Free Electoral Program broadcast on the Regional Television Network at 8:30 PM).

<sup>4</sup> *Mulher e Política no Brasil*. *Revista Estudos Feministas*, special issue, 1994, p. 256-270.

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<sup>5</sup> Women's rights are referred to in the pamphlets of some male candidates in the State of Rio Grande do Sul. In the platforms of the two main Presidential candidates, Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Lula, considerable detail is used in defending women's rights. In this article I do not particularly analyze this aspect, but I do call attention to the fact that even when the issue is treated superficially, it points to its importance as a theme that cannot be overlooked.

National House of Representatives and 22 for the State House of Representatives, corresponding to less than 6% of the candidates from all the parties.

Considering women candidates for all offices, one observes that they entered politics by two routes: one group of women belong to families of politicians, and the other consists of women who have stood out as party or union activists or in their professional activities. Although it is true that male candidates also enter politics this way, what interests me is the peculiarity of these channels in the case of women. The first group of women who entered politics through family ties could be called "the Housewives", referring to women who have a "special role" to play in society as wives and mothers. This ideal type of woman is very present in the daily discourse of politicians and government officials when the issue is cost of living<sup>6</sup>.

During this election, women that entering politics through family ties ran mainly for Governor and Vice President: Gubernatorial candidates Ângela Amin in Santa Catarina, Lúcia Vania in Goiás, Lúcia Braga in Paraíba, and Roseana Sarney in Maranhão and Vice-Presidential candidates Íris Rezende and Gardênia Gonçalves are excellent examples. The two women Vice-Presidential candidates have no profession and are married to politicians who have occupied at least the position of State Governor. Íris had no previous experience in elective office, while Gardênia had been mayor of the city of São Luís do Maranhão. The situation for these two candidates was significantly different from that of the women Gubernatorial candidates, since the latter used their family name or that of their husbands to run for office with a real chance of winning. The Vice-Presidential candidates were in a different situation: Amin and Quêrcia,

respectively, were running for President under adverse conditions and with little chance of receiving a significant block of votes. Thus, the fact that they included women on their tickets should be interpreted in light of the men's difficulty in finding someone to run with them in a lost cause, in addition to the possibility that having women on the slate might increase their voting potential.

In the free television time during the campaign and in the press, the women Vice-Presidential candidates were given very little room, and when they did have the opportunity to speak they did so mainly as wives and mothers. Nonetheless, it is a matter of articulating a new terrain in such a way as to favor the feminist movement's struggle. When Íris was asked by the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo* why she had accepted the invitation to run for Vice President with Quêrcia, she responded: "Because it is not merely an honor, but recognition of women's work. Women's participation in national life is limited. My message is, let us have greater participation for women. Women should not just be herded around, but should participate in political decisions"<sup>7</sup>.

Gardênia Gonçalves refers to herself in similar fashion when she talks about her work as mayor of São Luís: "A few years ago nobody could have imagined that a woman could become mayor, much less undergo what I have experienced"<sup>8</sup>.

Both the presence and discourse of these women is a far cry from feminist candidates or defense of women's rights. On the contrary, they come across as concrete examples of ideal housewives. Nonetheless, they are not a broken link in the chain of feminist struggle: by circulating within the most conservative sphere of Brazilian society - in terms of both the parties to which they belong and the voters to whom they must appeal - they foster acceptance that a traditional woman and politician's wife

<sup>6</sup> Fernando Henrique Cardoso's speech on the Free Electoral Program on September 2, broadcast at 8.30 PM, is a prime example. Referring to critics of the so-called Real Plan, he states: "You (as a housewife) know that (such criticism) is not true. That is why housewives that most understand economics approve of the plan."

<sup>7</sup> *Folha de S. Paulo*, May 22, 1994, Section 1, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Transcript from the Free Electoral Program broadcast on television on September 2, 1994, at 8.30 PM.

can run for a position like that of Vice President, revealing a new way of conceiving of feminist spaces diluted in social discursiveness and reaching even the most conservative groups. On the other hand, running for Vice President under these conditions meant a sacrifice for politicians from both parties, due to the limited possibilities for victory by either Amin or Quêrcia. In short, these women appeared in politics in spaces that had been avoided by men, in electoral contests that were lost *a priori*, thus adding nothing to women's representation as citizens in the political arena. In addition, given their traditional stances, the little space they did succeed in occupying in the press and on free campaign broadcasts were not used to expound on women's rights issues. Still, even given these limitations, their presence revealed that the struggle for space in politics has reached the more conservative groups in society through a cascade effect. This break with the notion of politics as an essentially male sphere means a real spread of the possibility for women's political participation in Brazil. The twelve women Gubernatorial candidates have a varied profile and reveal other facets of women's participation in politics. In order to better define them, it is worthwhile to observe the data below:

#### GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES

State	Name	Party*	% votes
Alagoas	Angela Canudo	PDT	1
Ceará	Rosa Fonseca	PSTU	1
Federal District	Maria Abadia	PSDB	22
Espírito Santo	Rose Freitas	PSDB	5
Goiás	Lúcia Vania	PP	21
Maranhão	Roseana Sarney	PFL	51
Mato Grosso do Sul	Rita Lima	PRONA	2
Paraíba	Lúcia Braga	PDT	43
Paraná	Rosemeri Krenden	PRN	1
Roraima	Elvira Fonseca	PT	0
Santa Catarina	Angela Amin	PPR	40
Sergipe	Vera Tourinho	PRN	1

Source: *Zero Hora*, October 2, 1994

\* PDT - Democratic Labor Party; PSTU - United Workers' Socialist Party; PSDB - Brazilian Social Democratic Party; PP - Popular Party; PFL - Liberal Front Party; PRONA - Party for Renovation of the National Order; PRN - Party for National Renovation; PT - Workers' Party; PPR - Renovative Progressive Party; PMN - National Mobilization Party; PMDB - Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (Translator's note).

It is possible to identify three different groups here. The first consists of women with family connections and who are running for Governor because their fathers or husbands either are impeded from running during the current election or have other interests at stake. Contrary to the Vice-Presidential candidates, their presence represents the continuity of a given group in power, and thus all of them have a real chance of getting elected<sup>9</sup>. The second group, which is quite small, is made up of candidates with good prospects for votes and with political careers of their own, like Maria Abadia in the Federal District, who built her political career as administrator of a working-class suburb of Brasília and later as national Congresswoman.

Finally, the third group consists of candidates with an insignificant percentage of votes, mostly members of parties with no political tradition, like PRONA and PRN. Even where such candidates belong to politically consolidated parties like the Workers' Party (PT) or the Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB), one notes their limited potential for votes. Unfortunately, I lack the data to make more categorical statements about how they established their political careers. Nevertheless, according to the underlying

logic in the process of choosing candidates, it seems reasonable to state that the presence of such women as candidates corresponds to the low value of the offices they are running for in the auctioning process within their respective parties.

The group of women running for the Brazilian Senate has different characteristics from those observed for the Vice-Presidential and Gubernatorial candidates. In addition to women of reknown in national politics, like Benedita da Silva and Luiza Erundina, this list includes women who have already been successful in municipal or even regional political experiences. It is surprising that four out of the 12 women running for the Brazilian Senate were elected, including PTB candidate Emília Fernandes in Rio Grande do Sul<sup>9</sup>. As a total unknown in the State, she was in ninth place in a poll published by *Zero Hora* on July 18, with 3% of the projected vote. During the election day opinion poll, she tied for second place with two other candidates, with 19% of the projected vote<sup>11</sup>. How did the Emília phenomenon come about?

Emília Fernandes is a teacher from the interior of the State, a local teachers' union leader, and city councilwoman for three terms in Santana do Livramento. She ran for the Brazilian Senate under the PTB (Brazilian Labor Party), a party which in the State of Rio Grande do Sul has the peculiarity of being virtually synonymous with Sérgio Zambiasi, the most popular radio broadcaster in the region and the commentator whose voice was used in the background for Emília's television spots

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<sup>9</sup> Of the 12 women candidates for Governor, none was elected in the first round. Of the four who went on to the second round, three are wives of former Governors and one is the daughter of a former President of Brazil.

<sup>10</sup> The other women elected to the Brazilian Senate were Benedita da Silva (PT), Rio de Janeiro; Marluce Pinto (PTB), Roraima; and Marina Silva (PT), Acre. Júlia Marise (PDT) has four more years to serve in her term from Minas Gerais.

<sup>11</sup> Election day opinion poll by Datafolha published in *Zero Hora* on October 4, 1994.

in the Free TV Campaign Program. In order to understand her spectacular come-from-behind finish in the race, one should consider both Zambiasi's presence and the shaky competition she faced in the State. However, this does not appear to be sufficient to explain her victory. The question I would like to answer here is to what extent the fact that Emília Fernandes is a woman had an influence on her growth in the Senatorial race.

During the course of the Free Campaign Program, Emília Fernandes expounded on a set of themes discussed by candidates for Governor and the other Senatorial candidates: education, health, transportation, honesty in politics, and the State's interests vis-à-vis the Federal government. Because of her professional background, her major emphasis was on education and teachers' wages. At no point did Emília refer to women or women's rights, even when speaking repeatedly about teachers in the State public school system: i.e., she never mentioned the fact that the majority of the teachers are women. Still, she was a strong feminine presence because of both her meticulous appearance and the way she came across in speech. During her first television program, she presented herself as follows:

"What I want is for people to know me and understand my proposal as the first and only woman candidate for the Senate in the history of the State of Rio Grande do Sul. I was born in Dom Pedrito, and I grew up in Santana do Livramento in the company of my parents and brothers and sisters. I studied to become a teacher there, I got married there, and I have my two children and two grandchildren there. My family is my reason for being. I have a history of struggle in social and trade union movements. I want to show you my ideas and open up my heart to you"<sup>12</sup>. This brief introduction was the only time that Emília linked her candidacy to the fact of her being a woman. The first phrase she expounds to viewers is to launch a

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<sup>12</sup> Transcript from the Free Electoral Program broadcast on television on August 2, 1994, at 10:30 PM (Rio Grande do Sul regional network).

new situation: a woman candidate. The fact that she is a woman appears to be central: it is herself that she asks viewers to know and understand. This way of introducing herself to viewers seemed to indicate that Emília would reinforce this stance over the course of the television programs, but this did not happen. This may have been due to the positive, even aggressive way in which Emília established her politician's image as a far cry from the sweet little grandmother type.

In constructing her condition as a woman, Emília gives great emphasis to the family: before mentioning her professional and political activities, she emphasizes the family environment in which she grew up and now lives. Her identity as a woman is shaped in the expressions "My family is my reason for being", and "I want to... open up my heart to you." It is interesting to observe how such expressions are associated with feminine identity. It would be difficult to imagine a male candidate using such phrases in an election campaign.

The centrality of a woman devoted to her family is also present in Emília's campaign pamphlets, where she is presented by Zambiasi in the following way: "Teacher Emília Fernandes is the first woman in the history of Rio Grande do Sul to run for the National Senate. She is a mother, grandmother, city councilwoman, and tough, fighting union leader, committed to taking proposals for change to Brasília, to improve our people's lives."

It thus appears reasonable to state that this Senatorial candidate combines the identity of a traditional woman, like the Vice-Presidential candidates discussed earlier, with the stance of a union leader and involved politician. The latter characteristic does not contradict the former - thus the lack of any planks from the feminist platform in her discourse. This may be a reasonable explanation for her surprising victory in the State, mainly in the conservative interior of Rio Grande do Sul: a woman who would not relinquish what the most traditional side of society expects of a woman, yet who became a politician.

## **Women in the race for state and national Houses of Representatives**

Traditionally, the State of Rio Grande do Sul has not elected women to the State House of Representatives or the National House. Before 1994, only seven women had been elected to the State House in its entire history, while no woman had ever been elected to the Brazilian House. In the 1994 elections, out of 612 candidates to the National and State Houses, 35 were women. Thirteen were running for the National House and 22 for the State House. For the National House there were six candidates from the Popular Front, three each from the PSDB and PRN, and one from the PPR. For the State House of Representatives, there were 12 candidates from the Popular Front, two each from the PPR and PRN, and one each from the PSDB, PMDB, PDT, PMN, PTB, and PP. What is most striking about the above figures is the concentration of candidates in the Popular Front led by the PT, followed by the PSDB, and the limited number or even absence of candidates from traditional parties such as the PDT, PMDB, PFL, and PPR. Apparently, this distribution cannot be attributed merely to ideological factors. Certainly the parties with a more progressive world view would tend to be more open to the presence of women as candidates, yet what I feel is a more plausible explanation for this distribution is both the type of party organization *per se* (which is no doubt more democratic than in the more traditional parties) and the ways in which the internal struggle is processed in these parties in terms of women occupying space. What I mean in relation to this second characteristic is that these parties are less stratified, their leadership is less consolidated, and there are still available spaces to be occupied. As for the group as a whole, I am primarily interested in their profiles and identities as women candidates. Of the thirteen women running for the National House of Representatives, I found no information about the three candidates from the PRN or Jaci Borges da Silva of the PSDB. As for the former, I should point out that the party has absolutely no weight in the State and that it did not run

any kind of campaign except for the free television time, so that these women's names fail to reveal anything about the party's position, since they can be included on the ticket for the slightest possible political reasons.

Of the other nine women candidates, the common characteristic which best defines their profiles is their having stood out as professional women and ones occupying public positions, like Esther Grossi and Maria Luiza Jaeger, both from the PT and municipal Secretaries of Education and Health, respectively; Yeda Crusius of the PSDB, who was National Minister of Planning; and Mercedes Rodrigues, also of the PSDB, Secretary of Labor and Social Action for the State of Rio Grande do Sul during the Pedro Simon Administration. Two other PT candidates were outstanding trade union leaders and a third was an outstanding party leader.

These women's campaign pamphlets were quite concerned with demonstrating their competence in their resumé's. These women are proportionally more qualified than their male counterparts. Nevertheless, their campaign pamphlets show a repeated concern with explicit competence in their respective fields, academic credentials, and proposals for action. For example, Esther Grossi ran a campaign based on the idea of passion, and she appears in her pamphlets as "one of the greatest Brazilian authorities in the field of education". She has a solid academic background, with a Ph.D. in the Psychology of Intelligence from the University of Paris and a history of activities in the political and administrative field.

This exaggerated concern over proving one's professional competence in the campaign leaflets appears to indicate a need to counterbalance one's very condition as a woman (i.e., the traditional wife, mother, and grandmother). The question is thus how the candidates formulate their feminine identity in their political discourse without falling into a caricature as wife and mother. As I stated above, making explicit one's condition as a woman does not necessarily coincide

with a feminist stance. An example of a woman who presents herself as such, but not as a defender of women's rights, is Carmem Dreyer of the PPR. Her speech on TV starts like this: "I come before you today trusting that old prejudices have been destroyed, because women are becoming more active with each passing day, particularly in the major issues facing our society; my struggle is for education and professional enhancement, better living conditions and decent wages for teachers"<sup>13</sup>. This is the traditional way for women to present themselves and is quite similar to Emilia Fernandes' example. These are candidates without any experience in women's or feminist movements but who use the legitimacy of women's public position to run as such. They thus take a merely rhetorical stance for campaign purposes, since they are incapable of producing proposals that are even remotely related to women's rights issues. Another stance that is quite different from the former, albeit no less interesting, is that of Esther Grossi. Esther became an extremely popular woman in the State of Rio Grande do Sul for two completely different reasons: she is a widely respected and acknowledged educator with a number of successful projects in grassroots education, and is also known for her extravagant appearance, since she dyes her hair green, pink, and lilac and wears a lot of gaudy jewelry. Nobody mentions Esther Grossi's name without first referring to her clothing, hair, and costume jewelry. However, this intellectual, ludicrously feminine woman, whose campaign slogan was "Commit Passion", never once mentioned women's conditions or the need to defend women's rights in her brief TV appearances or abundant campaign leaflets.

This woman went overboard in stamping her condition as a woman on her forehead. Contrary to her competent running mates from the Workers' Party and even the

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<sup>13</sup> Transcribed from the Free Electoral Program broadcast on television on August 18, 1994.

women running under the PSDB, who sought to be completely neutral in relation to gender, Esther sexualized her candidacy, while failing to sexualize her platform, devoted totally to education. She even failed to mention the sexism in textbooks or in unequal opportunities for boys and girls. At the other extreme from Esther is Mercedes Rodrigues of the PSDB. Of the candidates for National Congresswoman, she is without a doubt the one that most identifies with feminism, having participated in the feminist movement through the so-called councils on women's conditions and the women's department in the PMDB (when she still belonged to that party). Mercedes' campaign has the mark of a woman who has always struggled for women's rights from the various positions she has occupied, particularly during the period when she headed the Rio Grande do Sul State chapter of the LBA (the Brazilian Relief Legion, a traditional philanthropical organization). She did not enter party politics through the feminist movement, but vice versa.

One particular leaflet from Mercedes Rodrigues' campaign material is particularly interesting, since it shows how a woman who presents herself as a feminist articulates this stance in order to garner votes. The pamphlet consists of two tabloid-sized pages. On the first page there are three articles with the following titles: "Change the Face of Congress", where an impersonal text talks about the lack of women's representation in the House of Representatives and the need to increase their quorum. "Dear Reader" is a short article in which Mercedes talks about competence in National Congress, expounding on her platform in boldface: health, education, fair wages, and jobs. In the last article, "A Life of Struggle", one reads about this candidate's struggle for the teachers' cause ever since she was a young girl.

The back side of the pamphlet has a generic title, "A Defender of Women's Rights", dwelling on all her achievements on behalf of women as president of the Brazilian Relief Legion. However, surprisingly, the second half of the page is occupied by photographs

of Mercedes with Presidential candidate Fernando Henrique, Pedro Simon, and Antônio Britto, with quotes by each of these men supporting Mercedes. Britto's phrase is paradigmatic of the position this woman herself accepts in politics, to the extent that it is reproduced as campaign propaganda: "I have known Mercedes in all the circumstances that political life can reveal, and I have never seen her lacking in competence, dignity, or loyalty. Therefore, it is more than a matter of electing a woman candidate. It is the election of a competent politician, well-prepared to be a National Congresswoman".

Antônio Britto's discourse is revealing: in order to qualify Mercedes as a candidate, he deprives her of her condition as a woman. It is obvious that simply being a woman does not give anyone the credentials to be a member of the National House of Representatives. However, Britto appears to feel the contrary, that it would actually deprive her of such credentials, since in order to talk about Mercedes' qualities he refers to her as a "*político*" or "*deputado*" ("politician" or "Congressman", both in the masculine in the original Portuguese - T.N.), thus disguising her gender.

Mercedes' campaign leaflet shows a dubious posture in relation to both feminism as a whole and her own militancy. The fact that male candidates are recommending her and the revealing testimony by the PMDB Gubernatorial candidate show how the candidate needs to appear with a broader profile, more in agreement with that of the campaign as a whole.

Mercedes is above all a competent, above-average, and thus capable woman. Yeda Crusius, the other PSDB woman candidate for National Representative, presents herself in the same fashion. However, Yeda takes the opposite road: while Mercedes is a woman involved in the women's rights struggle and who tries to prove her competency in any situation, Yeda, an economist and University professor who occupied the Brazilian Ministry of Planning for a little over three months, tries to incorporate some items from the women's



rights struggle into her campaign. In her two-page, dissertational leaflet, where she describes what her activity will be in the struggle for "employment in an open, democratic economy", amongst other actions one sees integrated women's health programs and home loan plans for women as heads of households.

The way that women's rights issues appear in Yeda's campaign material is very similar to that of male candidates' leaflets. That is, women's rights discourse is expressed strategically in order to show that the candidate, whether she or he, is sensitive to the issue. Just as the appearance of the classical housewife in the campaign scenario reveals a new position for women in the public arena, the presence of a feminist agenda in the campaign discourse of various candidates - men and women who do not identify with feminism - is indicative of the space that the feminist issue has gained over the course of years of struggle. Based on the rather obvious premise that the short text in a tightly packed campaign leaflet is drafted according to a strict cost/benefit analysis, the fact that women's rights are mentioned by non-activist candidates is particularly indicative of this situation.

Among the women candidates for the National House, only one stresses her militancy in women's rights movements: a native of the interior of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, Marlise Fernandes, 27, stresses in her campaign leaflets her experience as a militant in the Rural Women Workers' Movement, member of the women's national committee in CUT (the United Workers' Confederation), and participant in feminist meetings in Chile and Mexico. Surprisingly, despite this emphasis, women's rights do not appear as priorities in her campaign leaflets. Unlike other women candidates, who point to specific women's struggles in the midst of a list of various other proposals, Marlise takes the struggle against misogyny as the point of departure for a struggle against discrimination in general. Her pamphlets read: "One of my proposals is to build - with

you - a country where various forms of discrimination are combatted, where one can develop all of a human being's potential and virtues".

Finally, among the women candidates for National Representative, there is a third type, whose best example is Maria Luiza Jaeger. Her curriculum emphasizes her militancy in the Workers' Party, her professional qualifications, and the position she occupied as head of the municipal health department. At no point does she mention her being a woman, nor does she link her platform in defense of public health to any of the demands from the women's or feminist movements. This gap is significant, since the health issue has been a priority concern for these movements. One would have expected it to be highlighted in the campaign materials of a woman belonging to the Workers' Party.

As a whole, with few exceptions, women candidates for National Representative from the State of Rio Grande do Sul tend to identify in some way with women's rights issues, yet without having a history of involvement in the feminist movement. They do not seek to identify with these struggles. The presence of women's rights issues is less a militant attitude and more a recognition of their importance as an enticing theme, one that allows them to have a kind of rapport with voters. On this count, such women candidates do not differ from various male counterparts, who acknowledge the importance of the women's rights issue and defend it in their campaign materials<sup>14</sup>.

The women candidates for the State House of Representatives have the same characteristics as those for the National House. They are divided up among party militants, some of whom have already held State and municipal legislative office, and women who have stood out in professional and trade union activities. Of this group of candidates, only one woman identifies completely with

<sup>14</sup> Rio Grande do Sul elected women to the National House of Representatives for the first time: Esther Grossi of the Workers' Party (PT) and Yeda Crusius of the Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB).

feminism, running for the State House under a feminist agenda. She is Helena Bonumá of the Workers' Party, currently city councilwoman from the State capital, Porto Alegre.

Helena Bonumá's perspective is that of a militant feminist with a proposal for radical democracy. The front page of her main pamphlet says the following: "For a Brazil of Free and Equal Women and Men". Helena attempts to incorporate the women's issue into the class struggle and the struggle against all forms of discrimination. In her leaflet entitled *Who Turns Your Head?*, she presents her proposal: "...free nights, light days, and plenty for all, where poverty only exists in dictionaries, where male chauvinism, racism, and everything else that divides, oppresses, and represses is nothing but a faded page thrown away in the trash can of humankind's history".

An interesting aspect in Helena Bonumá's campaign is that when she lists the rights for which she struggles, she makes no mention of decriminalizing abortion. Still, when her pamphlet describes women's subordinate condition, one can read between the lines a stance in favor of legalizing abortion: "We lack access to safe contraceptive methods, we are the victims of mass sterilization, maternal mortality, and illegal abortions with complications and death, and we are affected by the AIDS virus to an alarming extent".

It is interesting to observe that abortion is virtually ignored by women candidates for both National and State Representative. Except for Helena Bonumá, who refers to the complications of illegal abortion, only one other woman candidate refers specifically to a demand for legalizing it: Vera Guasso, candidate for State Representative under the ultra-leftist United Workers' Socialist Party (PSTU). Vera has a pamphlet addressed to women with the title *We Need to Dare*, where she openly defends decriminalization. Vera's discourse equates domination of women with capitalism, and when she speaks of oppressed women, she specifically addresses working-class women. When she defends legalization of abortion, she makes clear the way she

perceives oppression: "That abortion no longer be a crime, that it be legalized, is a vital issue for working-class women, since these are the women who are forced to risk their lives at underground butcher-shop clinics, while bourgeois women go to sophisticated private clinics".

Despite her feminist ideals, Vera Guasso fails to see any autonomy in the women's struggle, thus blending it into the greater struggle for socialism: "There is only one way for our demands and struggles to result in the liberation of women from our age-old slavery: we must defeat this system, which uses our oppression to better exploit the working class. We must fight for a new society that is just, egalitarian, and democratic - a socialist society".

Of the women candidates for State Representative, except for Helena Bonumá and Vera Guasso, only one of 19 mentions her subordinate condition as a woman. Rosinete Bispo of the Workers' Party presents herself during the free television campaign time as a Black woman, linking these two characteristics to oppression. It is interesting to note the way in which she formulates her text: "We women are excluded from all spheres of power and political decision-making, and we Black women especially so". However, Rosinete's discourse places more emphasis on her being Black than on her being a woman. She appears in several of her pamphlets alongside Congressman Paim of the Workers' Party, who is also Black.

As for the other women candidates for the State House, only three refer to their condition as women, but not to raise a platform of struggle for women's rights, rather to make their gender condition a quality for office. Psychologist and psychoanalyst Sandra Fagundes of the Workers' Party uses a pretensely post-modernist discourse to propose a "feminine way of legislating". This is a typical way of formulating one's very condition as a woman without establishing any sort of commitment to the struggles for gender rights. Although they may come in different wrappings, such slogans are very close to

those of traditional women who come across as housewives and mothers and also propose a feminine way of practicing politics. The most popular woman candidate for State Representative is Maria do Carmo Bueno of the PPR. Commentator on a local television program with a large viewing public, Maria do Carmo was actually the major anchorwoman for her party's candidates, having appeared in all the programs covering the State legislative elections for two months. Elegant, charming, with a sophisticated command of TV as a medium, she became her party's main hope in terms of votes. Lacking a line of her own, she uses her TV time to defend her party, its past administrations and proposals. Maria do Carmo uses her image as a woman without ever clearly enunciating it<sup>15</sup>.

Based on the characteristics described in this article, it is quite difficult to imagine what kind of work these women are going to do once they are elected. Except for the feminists who entered politics through their militancy in the feminist movement, and who are a minority, the candidates - and even those who formulated some women's rights issues in their campaigns - will no doubt be more inclined to engage in discussions of major national issues than to identify with the women's struggle. Still, even considering this reality, the Brazilian national political scenario will be changed by such a strong female presence. The consequences of this new situation cannot be predicted, but it is possible to state that the women's and/or feminist movement will have a greater potential for dialogue and negotiation within the field of institutional politics. In the Senate, there will definitely be a woman who one day

presented herself as "a woman, a Black woman from the *favela*" (Benedita da Silva, Rio de Janeiro). It is quite probable that Brazil will have its first woman State Governor (Roseana Sarney, Maranhão). There will be a significant increase in the number of women elected to the National House of Representatives. For example, this is the first time that the State of Rio Grande do Sul will be electing women to the National House. The number of women elected to the State Houses will increase in a number of States.

Regardless of whether they defend the feminist cause, by their very presence these women say a great deal about the space conquered by the female gender in the political arena. On the other hand, the fact that they are still few in number shows that this is a field where women's gains have only just begun.

The majority of these women have certainly entered political life by roads distant from feminism, as the examples above have shown. Yet many of them cannot avoid incorporating the simple fact that they are women into their political identity in one way or another, by either presenting themselves as wives and mothers, using feminine aesthetics, realizing that defending feminist causes is strategic, or because they are actually feminists in some cases.

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<sup>15</sup> The following women candidates were elected to the State House of Representatives in Rio Grande do Sul: Luciana Genro of the Workers' Party (PT), Maria Augusta Feldman of the Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB), Jussara Cony of the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B - Maoist) (reelected). These three belong to the Popular Front. Maria do Carmo Bueno of the PPR was also elected, with the second largest vote in the State. None of these women formulated any issue related to women's rights

# Feminism in Brazil Today<sup>1</sup>

Translation by CHRISTOPHER PETERSON

**REF:** After 20 years of feminist struggle, what have been the real gains for women?

**Hildete Pereira:** One of the issues that was raised in the 1970s - when the movement regained the impetus that dated back forty years to the women's suffrage struggle - was that of changes in the Brazilian Constitution. There was a real gain in the 1988 Constitution, even though women's daily lives have changed very little.

**Angela Borba:** I think this really was an important triumph for this period, even given such limitations, since the majority of the articles in the Constitution have still not been backed by enabling legislation, a situation which is leading to tremendous problems. For example, the entire Social Security issue is still pending. The proposed legislation to regulate working conditions for female domestic servants and rural workers has still not been discussed by Congress. However, there have been positive developments in the State Constitutions and enabling legislation that have allowed for gains that were not included in the Federal Constitution.

**REF:** Can the Councils (on Women's Rights) also be considered a victory?

**AB:** Of course, the Councils gave visibility to the kind of discrimination that women still suffer in Brazil. The government's recognition of the Councils was the first step towards drafting public policies to meet the needs of the female population, in addition to a concept that is almost taken for granted now, namely gender planning.

**REF:** Strictly speaking, the Integrated Program for Women's Health Care (PAISM),

the first major public policy in Brazil devoted specifically to women, preceded the founding of the Councils...

**AB:** Although the PAISM had already been drafted before - by feminists - it was only disseminated around the country after the National Council (on Women's Rights) went into action and there had been developments in the State Councils and Coordinating Boards. But there is another aspect that should be mentioned. I would not say that our real gains were limited merely to legal, formal, or constitutional achievements.

**HP:** Indeed, there was a cultural change in Brazil regarding the women's issue. In the 1970s, to say you were a feminist you had to be almost apologetic. It's not like that any more. There has been a real change in this sense.

**Jacqueline Pitanguy:** Now, just what kind of notion of reality is implicit in this question? I would rather begin with something that predated the Integrated Program for Women's Health Care, the National Council, and the State Councils, namely, a change in attitude by a significant share of Brazilian women in relation to the image of feminism in Brazilian society. It is obvious to me that none of this would have happened and been sustained if there had not emerged a new social identity among Brazilian women. It is also increasingly difficult for me to deal with the category of "women" in a homogeneous way, but the fact is that women of all different social shades have perceived this new identity, this new position.

This new reality reflects a change in both self-perception and social perception of women's position in society. As contradictory as it may seem, this reality is modern in many senses. As for our gains in the legislative sphere, they are both achievements and frustrations at the same time, but they are still relevant. For example, the Council has played a role in social change, albeit in a country where what is built today can be torn down tomorrow.

In order to illustrate this kind of instability, which is characteristic of Brazilian society as a whole, we might cite the point in time in which the National Council on Women's

<sup>1</sup> Interviewers from *Revista Estudos Feministas* in this debate included Lena Lavinas, Maria Luiza Heilborn, and Bliá Sorj. The idea was taken from the last dossier, 'Feminism Today' (vol. 2, no. 3/94), which was an international discussion. To think about feminism in Brazil today, a round-table was held in Rio de Janeiro, with local feminists only. Unfortunately, Rosiska Darcy de Oliveira couldn't participate.

Rights managed to reach 250 schools in the public school system with a program called "A Debate in School on Women's Role in Society". This program appeared to work and to be in place for good, since it was linked to the local school systems, had its own infrastructure, and did not depend on Federal resources. All of a sudden, it simply evaporated. So I think that the notion of reality cannot just hinge on that of continuity.

**HP:** I disagree with Jacqueline. As I see it, a real gain has to be something tangible, permanent. The issue of legislation is tangible, it's a feminist struggle dating back 20 years. But many things changed without direct interference from feminism. We were 11% of the labor force back in 1970, and now we're 39%. This is a real figure. Women have taken to the streets, to public life, to becoming breadwinners.

**JP:** But this wasn't because of the Councils or Coordinating Boards, or even because of the feminist movement itself.

**HP:** That is true, but things go hand in hand. The feminist struggle provided legitimacy for women's desire to work outside the home. To take the example of the labor market, some articles in labor treaties and some demands by working women predated the appearance of a self-ascribed feminist movement in Brazil. Such demands are linked to the struggle for women's social enhancement. I see the issue as more of a convergence, along the lines you mentioned, where the struggle specifically provides for an understanding of (and legitimacy for) processes that are much broader than the feminist struggle itself.

**REF:** The struggle for rights based on an ideal of equality between men and women has been criticized because it does not recognize the right to difference. This theoretical debate of course has strategic implications for the Brazilian feminist movement. Just what might such implications be?

**HP:** This issue of difference raises some doubts in my mind. We are different biologically. So what is feminine nature? I do not know. My biological self was already defined when I was born... In relation to maternity, we are different. What are the other differences?

Are we less aggressive? Sweeter? More submissive? Is that the difference?

**JP:** I would like to distinguish between equality and equity. When one talks about equality, one abolishes differences. To speak of equity means the possibility of justice, if we might use another concept, even while one acknowledges differences. The feminist movement's struggle, as I see it today, seeks precisely the political construction of difference and is therefore able to preach equity.

**REF:** The debate on difference, at least in the French context, appeared in a discussion where the massive entry of women into the labor market supposedly meant that they shared a male world. Furthermore, that the right to difference meant imagining that there was an entire female culture linked to private life, feelings, subjectivity, motherhood, etc. This supposedly meant that the feminist struggle would no longer focus exclusively on formal rights - access to jobs, lack of career discrimination, the right to vote and run for office, etc. - but that it would also contemplate this dimension of feminine culture.

**JP:** I'm not very familiar with the French debate, but rather with the American debate, which they refer to as Radical Feminism. There you get into the notion of essence, you deal with this idea of difference transcending History, and you end up in a kind of metaphysical essence. I have an ideological problem with this view of difference. So I do not go along with Radical Feminism, the kind of feminism that reestablished an idea of the absolute, an idea of transcendence of History based on a feminine essence and which thus leads to complicated political consequences. I feel closer to another kind of feminism. My experience in the United States was in the New York-New Jersey area. I belonged to a group of human-rights and women's-rights activists. It was quite a peculiar group. There was an attempt to make the women's issue a general issue. The big agenda, the big challenge, was no longer to particularize the women's issue, but to make the gender perspective present on any agenda, whether national or international. If you

were discussing violence, you had to carry into this debate on violence the issue of the gender perspective and not build a debate on gender and violence. The same was true for labor, the environment, etc.

**REF:** How do you see this in Brazil?

**JP:** Here, on the contrary, I see the reconstruction of little ghettos: women and the environment, women and violence, women and health. I mean, rather than raising the gender perspective in different issues, you particularize the issue. In my opinion, when you construct a particular field, you admit an essence. This kind of feminism is so essential and untranslatable in terms of a more general logic that it has become a particular arena of knowledge, of struggle, of strategy, of an agenda. It is obvious that here in Brazil the pathways for building feminism have always been completely different. Feminism was built in the midst of a struggle against the dictatorship, for social rights, for social justice. In Brazil, such characteristics were not so acute or so marked as I was able to perceive them in the United States.

**HP:** I disagree. From 1975 to 1980, the strategy of particularizing the field was important, because it called attention to the specificity of the feminine issue. In the midst of the struggle for democracy, we pointed to our specificity, and this even protected us from political repression. Today, the issue is being raised in other terms. The perspective of specificity has lost its strategic value and has become an issue of feminine essence. There is a new agenda that is being built on the basis of this view. But it has still not won out.

**REF:** But there is a feminist discourse today that ascribes to women a priority commitment to ethics, anti-bellicism, defense of the environment, solidarity, compassion. How can these be developed into a political agenda?

**AB:** What are the perverse effects of this essentialist ideal in a poor, underdeveloped country with thousands of contradictions? The movement's major contribution has been this ability to exercise a precise historical vision, an idea of circumstance, negotiation, alliance, something that

Brazilian feminists have learned and improved. And this is something that essentialism condemns, indirectly. Feminism in Brazil has succeeded in dealing well with the idea of good and evil, just and unjust. We admit ambiguity in the relationship among people. The notion of essence, on the contrary, conjures up the absolute. This horrible thing of extremes - of good *versus* evil - that this idea of essence inaugurates was not predominant before. Nowadays, such absolutist judgments are expressed all the time in the movement. Any kind of action receives some kind of judgment in the name of good or evil. And there is no political basis to this.

**HP:** I would like to make an observation. ECO-92 gave a lot of emphasis to this kind of discourse. A current has thus developed that has begun to work with the construction of difference. The equality we seek is *vis-à-vis* the law: "different yet not unequal" was our motto in the (1988) Constitution. However, we had not elaborated clearly on what our real differences were.

**AB:** In fact, there was an alternative to Article 5 in the Constitution that read, "We are equal in the eyes of the law." The alternative reading was, "Men and women are in fact equal in the eyes of the law, but historical differences must be acknowledged, and it is the state's responsibility to act upon these historical inequalities." This debate has sprung up in some political contexts where women are forced by the contingencies of activism itself to debate with men. For example, in trade union and political party spheres. At the time, we were unable to assess the scope of this wording. If we had affirmed not only the principle of equality, but also the need to make repairs for historical forms of discrimination, we would have left the door open for a body of legislation based on affirmative action, or positive discrimination.

**HP:** I believe that our difference is in relation to maternity. And this would require a specific agenda. Why? Because to have children is to raise them by ourselves as we have always done. This is an issue where we haven't succeeded in moving an inch. We

have not succeeded in getting the Brazilian government to increase the supply of daycare centers or to implement collective kitchens. Women have entered the labor market *en masse* and have yet to solve this problem. Maternity is an issue that has been raised, but which remains to be solved. We may need to have some privileges because of this difference.

**AB:** I think that other forms of differentiation are also justified. For example, a distinction *vis-à-vis* night shifts and retirement schedules according to years of service and age makes sense in a concrete framework where certain activities fall more heavily on women. Some such protective measures are justified on the basis of the country's overall situation, where women benefit rarely and poorly from opportunities in the labor market.

**REF:** Feminist practice in Brazil in the 1980s and 1990s has presented a new dynamic as compared to previous decades. Some changes include the rapid growth of feminist NGOs, a heavy degree of specialization and formation of networks - health, rights, the environment - strong participation in national forums and significant presence of women in governmental and other agencies. There are two issues here: A) The debate over representation in the movement has always been a delicate issue, in the sense of denying hierarchical forms of participation and thus characterizing it as radical democracy. But while this was the inspiration for the feminist movement in the beginning, the currently proposed institutionalized practice of feminism demands a rethinking. How does the issue of representation work in this case? B) A consequence of this process of institutionalization and professionalization of feminist practice may be the isolation of these feminists from the movement and its problems. How do you view this issue?

**HP:** Concerning the problem of representation in the feminist movement, we would have to think back to the 1970s, when leadership in reflection groups was denied. In fact, we only **said** that there was no leadership. We had a great deal of difficulty in recognizing this and living out this experience. We fought with the women from

the political movement *per se* because of all that business about needing to have a coordinator and plenary meetings for everything, while we came back at them with radical democracy. Today the problem is who represents whom. I believe that the NGOs do not represent the feminist movement. But every political movement needs institutionalization; it's inevitable. Just as there are professionals in politics - inside the parties - the NGOs are also a place for the professionalization of feminists. But they can't speak on behalf of the movement, for no other reason, for example, that when you hold a political meeting like March 8th, they never show up. To the extent that you professionalize, you don't take to the streets to struggle or go to the demonstrations.

**AB:** I don't think it's just a matter of the NGOs. On the one hand, it is an achievement to have institutionalized spaces and the possibility of concentrating more on certain issues. But we have occupied various other spaces, like the universities, and this has even backed a more highly-qualified kind of discourse on women's conditions in our country. We have created a broad range of spaces for activity that did not exist 15 years ago. This has been an important gain. On the other hand, there has been dispersion. We have not succeeded in occupying this space and at the same time maintaining a mobilizing force to act in circumstances where you have to bring political pressure to bear. If there were a Constitutional review now we would be running many serious risks. This is in sharp contrast with 1987, when we were petitioning on every street corner in Rio de Janeiro and Brazil as a whole. We submitted popular amendments to the Constitution on a broad variety of issues. We produced debates and seminars in trade unions. The "lipstick lobby" was not just in Brasília, it was all over the country. What I miss in this process now is this mobilizing force, and the responsibility is not just that of the professionalization phenomenon for feminists in the NGOs.

**JP:** What is happening in Brazil is not so peculiar. Demobilization of the grassroots is widespread in many countries. Despite the

vigor of the feminist movement, certain victories slow down mobilization. This becomes even worse in Brazil, where disbelief is widespread, in a very negative overall context in relation to major grassroots mobilization of men and/or women.

I am even surprised by the vigor that still exists in the movement. An example of this was the national meeting on Women and Population, which to the surprise of the entire organizing committee brought over 500 women to the Brazilian National Congress (1993), with active participation in the discussion process and a truly impressive energy.

**Wania Sant'anna:** I would like to point out that institutionalization is not a phenomenon that is peculiar to the women's movement. Various other segments of the social movement have been undergoing the same process. In fact, nobody even knows whether demobilization has been responsible for institutionalization, or vice versa.

Important causes have been attracting few people. The Campaign Against Hunger has been successful because you participate in small groups, doing various concrete actions. It is not a neighborhood, farmers', or consumers' association. The reason for this is the real impoverishment of the people, meaning that their time is taken up in guaranteeing their survival rather than in political/organizational activities. This economic crisis situation has led to the loss of primary gains, which in turn leads to demobilization.

Concerning women's organizations since 1988, the Constitutional Congress, and review, there was the disappearance of the National Council on Women's Rights as an agglutinating force vis-à-vis the National Congress.

**JP:** Getting back to the question of representation, authority, hierarchy, or discipline, I should mention my experience in the Council. During a critical moment in the National Council for Women's Rights, I had to wait a month for the grassroots groups to be consulted in order to authorize me to resign as chairwoman. The National Council was a good example of collective work combining professional efficiency with a representative

mandate. Professionalism should not be confused with lack of democracy.

The women's NGOs that are out there trying to get organized are also seeking efficiency and productivity. Their legitimacy is based on the kind and quality of their work and their capital. They try to listen to demands. You can belong to an NGO with greater or lesser legitimacy and even be there as part of some movement. I repeat, I do not believe that the NGOs represent the (feminist) movement.

**HP:** It is important to stress that the NGOs have emerged and developed in the absence of the state, which has pulled out because of its bankruptcy, its lack of funds. We are witnessing the destruction of the state in Brazil and the rest of Latin America, within a neoliberal context of new relations between the North and the South. With the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there is no longer the threat of communism. So now the South threatens the North with over-population, drug traffic, nuclear weapons, and violence. Funding for NGOs comes through First World organizations that are concerned with problems like these, that the South can transfer to the North. Since the North is worried about this, it finances the NGOs, which organize inside the social movements in order to meet the kinds of needs that the Brazilian state, and Latin American states in general, are unable to cope with.

**REF:** When we speak of professionalization, we are not just dealing with efficiency, but with the fact that some women are making feminism a profession and are therefore accumulating information and political contacts and circulating internationally. What is the impact of this new category on the women's movement?

**AB:** I think that there are situations where the NGOs speak for the movement when they shouldn't. They accumulate a huge amount of information in their daily work, and sharing this is difficult. This means that two spheres are created within the movement. There emerges a body of individuals who are able to speak about given issues and elaborate on them and so on, and there is another



body of people who are unable to do this. I'm not excluding NGO people from the movement. The problem is how to turn them into a mobilizing force.

I am concerned with the fact that the NGOs have emerged in a void of the state. And I ask myself: how does the movement feel when it goes out on the streets to make demands of the state, like changes in public policies, if we now have NGOs occupying this space? I can go to a government agency and make demands, but I can't demand anything of an NGO. At the most, I can say, "I like your work," or "I don't like your work." But I do make demands of the government. Although I think it is great to have professional feminists, I take a cautious stance towards the NGOs, particularly because of the nature of the link between the movement and them. The feminist movement in Brazil has always considered the state its interlocutor. We want rights. We want the Constitution, we want a fair, active state. The NGO dynamic short-circuits the possibility for continuing to have the state as an interlocutor. However, it is also true that NGOs facilitate things sometimes. Having CEPIA on the organizing committee for an experience (the process of the Brasilia Charter and preparation of Brazilian women regarding population policies) played an important role, and for many of us who went there, it revived moments from the National Council on Women's Rights. Another example is an NGO that does research. To raise data, study correlations, and distribute this kind of material helps the movement. This should be the fundamental role of the NGOs.

**WS:** We might say that NGOs have gone overboard on given roles, where they should have limited themselves to advising the social movement. For example, I believe that *Rede Mulher* (the Women's Network) and SOS provide advice to women on the periphery, and this is in fact - in terms of what you say relating to the agencies - their advisory role in various fields: health, sexuality, violence, and so on. NGOs are service organizations, and the research they do is entirely tied to the demands they receive.

**REF:** But when an NGO distributes contraceptives or sets up a gynecological clinic, is that an advisory role or the role of the state?

**JP:** The very concept of state has changed, and historical changes have occurred that have led to a questioning of its role. Who wants it? I don't want that capitalist, gigantic, bureaucratic, Brazilian state built by the military. At a given moment in time it was progressive to support the idea of an interventionist state. It was also at that time, during the dictatorship, that the major cadres joined the state. But nowadays, perhaps nobody wants certain kinds of developments that turned the idea of the state into a monster.

**WS:** No one can replace the state in terms of the reach of certain public policy activities. The world's largest NGO would be incapable of operating the kind of program that a well-oriented government can do at the national level. Based on a certain intuitive feeling, in given forums the representatives from NGOs do not speak individually, or at least their interlocutors do not presuppose this.

**REF:** But they are not speaking from the same vantage point, because they are speaking as individuals, while someone representing an NGO ends up having a differentiated kind of voice, because one supposes that she bears some kind of greater legitimacy: she is speaking on behalf of both the people who work in her NGO and also the groups they assist. Do you all agree with this interpretation?

**WS:** I agree, I think this is a sticky issue, the fact that the NGOs have occupied a space which in fact in the past pertained exclusively to the women's movement. An example of this is the conference coming up in Beijing. As it stands now, the women's movement is not going to participate, while the NGOs that are accredited by the United Nations system are.

**JP:** It is not just the NGOs that have the authority to speak. The position that many feminists have in the academe also gives them an immense amount of authority, and this has also produced tension vis-à-vis representation within the women's movement.

**REF:** Some feminists have called attention to the fact that the Brazilian feminist movement in recent years has trailed along behind the agendas and discussions proposed by the conferences. Do you agree?

**JP:** In 1985, at the time of the 3rd World Conference in Nairobi, one of the goals was to create institutional mechanisms that would promote women's development around the world. And it was "trailing along behind" - to use the expression - that we had legitimacy in Brazil for setting up the National Council (on Women's Rights). The United Nations suggested the implementation of "institutional machinery". The Council was precisely this institutional machinery. We put some teeth into this idea and provided the legitimacy for creating a National Council, whose statutes were already being drafted.

In similar fashion, with the Conference in Mexico in 1975, we began to meet in Brazil and organized a week of debates on women, based on the so-called International Women's Year. And this was right in the middle of the dictatorship.

**AB:** But the question I ask is the following: at that time, maybe we had not accumulated enough strength to legitimate the initiative for creating the Council. We based ourselves on a document that Brazil had ratified. Could it be that we still lack such legitimacy, given our practice, our gains, and the changes that have actually been occurring and that have allowed us to have a kind of discourse that is not forced to rest on what we might call an international formulation of such rights?

**JP:** I think that the legitimization process occurs through a meeting of as many voices as possible, joining the agenda. For example, to succeed in taking the issue of genital mutilation to a United Nations forum, overcoming cultural relativism, means imposing our agenda on the United Nations. It is women who are doing this. It is Muslim, African, Brazilian, American, and European feminists who are doing this, and it is the women's agenda. When you have one or two delegates using the expression "genital mutilation", that's a victory! So, the relationship between the women's move-

ment, its agenda, and the international United Nations conferences is a two-way street. This *démarche* does not necessarily mean trailing along behind, but to be contemporary. Besides, what does one's own agenda mean in a globalized world?

**REF:** The Brazilian national feminist meetings were supposedly the forum where this agenda was built. But they exhausted themselves as forums for proposals, giving way to the international global agendas. To what extent has there been communication between the two?

**JP:** What has happened with the national feminist meetings? I'm asking you because I did not actually go to the last meeting, but I heard comments that it was extremely dispersive. And this was not because some international agenda was being discussed. I think it has a lot more to do with the internal dynamics of the women's movement itself. Maybe it was a moment when the movement was there for reasons other than to establish an agenda.

**REF:** One assessment of the last national meeting - in Caldas Novas in 1991 - is that it lost steam because feminists, particularly those who belonged to NGOs, were overburdened with an agenda of international meetings. For economic reasons, whether because of a crisis or lack of funding, this meeting, which used to be held every other year, is now going to take place every three years. This is seen as a sign of its exhaustion.

**WS:** I agree that there is a predominance of these agendas, these dates, and these articulations, in which the NGOs are particularly involved. This depletion of the national meetings in the Brazilian case dates back to 1987, in Garanhuns, when feminists experienced extreme difficulty in coping with something called the popularization of feminism. Many feminists said, "Very well, I come here to deal with feminist issues, and these women say that they're feminists, so you have to tell the whole story all over again, starting from the beginning. We've lost our place." There was a block in communications between various women's groups. This problem is not just Brazilian, it's a

Latin American problem, because you can find the same criticism in Latin American feminist meetings.

**AB:** I disagree with Wania's assessment of what she's calling the depletion of feminist meetings. I think one of the important things in this last five or ten years in the feminist movement has been precisely this possibility of us - from the major urban centers and with a middle-class background - no longer being the only feminists. Feminism has undergone a process of popularization. There may not be huge demonstrations in the big cities, but things are happening in the interior that never happened there before.

Many of the so-called historical feminists, who have been involved in other activities, feel that they are not available for this kind of so-called grassroots work. There is a degree of arrogance in this view, which indeed is a mistaken one, since one can learn a great deal through the experience of such women.

**REF:** Is the emergence of a Black women's movement a reflection of this diversification of the social base of feminism in Brazil?

**WS:** There are three new developments: the Black women's movement, a repositioning of women within the churches, and the organization of rural working women. As for the latter, one has to acknowledge that they are operating in a difficult field, that of trade unionism, land ownership, and land tenure. The Black women's movement has reclaimed an identity that is not only gender-based, but racial as well. In fact, many women recompose their racial identity first, before recovering their gender identity. This is quite a new development.

**REF:** Has the Black women's movement given greater priority to the issue of race than that of gender?

**WS:** Since the women's movement has proven incapable of perceiving the racial issue as a central one in Brazilian society, in the forums where white and non-white women meet, racial differences become polarized. It is impossible to talk about gender inequality without discussing racial inequality. On this point, Black women have put up a hot struggle within the Black

movement itself, and they have gained respect within the movement. The Black women's movement has succeeded in becoming independent. The challenge is how to maintain relations with the women's movement on the one hand and the Black movement on the other.

**REF:** In the American women's movement, the major opposition is between Black feminists and white feminists. This is the watershed in the movement today, and apparently it has proven impossible to negotiate common strategies. Could the same thing be happening in Brazil?

**WS:** Well, I think the situation is a little more low-key here because there is an issue of social class, a discussion which has been secondary in the United States. Here in Brazil, one of the major criticisms by Black women and the Black community in general regarding the white community is that the latter tends to deny ethnic specificity, underestimating it vis-à-vis the class issue. It is not just a class issue. So much has been said about self-esteem and women's pride, and they have ignored self-esteem from a racial perspective. This has been an extremely serious political and theoretical mistake, since we have been subjected to a strictly class-based analysis. The Brazilian women's movement, the feminist movement, needs to readdress the ethnic issue. And not just readdress it! It needs to incorporate and understand what it means in greater depth.

**REF:** What are the difficulties in doing this?

**WS:** The difficulty is acknowledging that we live in a racist society and that we have a racist monster inside us, Black women and white women. Racism is a daily practice, and as such it has to be understood first in order to be exposed. Black women have been trying to organize since 1975, within the Black movement. But in fact it was within the perspective of a feminist organization that we found the strength to organize autonomously. It is important to point out that the first National Meeting of Black Women was decided on during a Feminist National Meeting, in Garanhuns, Pernambuco State, in 1987. We held the first National Meeting of Black Women

(Valença, Rio de Janeiro State, 1988) before the Black movement had held its first national meeting (São Paulo, 1991). This is a major historical triumph for the women's movement. Without a doubt, workshops and other methodologies from the meetings in the women's movement have reached the Black movement. We should value the positive aspects of this relationship, although it is still a conflictive relationship, with distrust on both sides.

**REF:** In Brazil today, the reproductive rights issue appears to be the watershed in the women's movement. Do you all agree with this?

**JP:** In the first place, I would like to challenge the notion of "movement", because it's a fiction. I would prefer to say "among feminists". I don't know what I'm referring to when I say "movement". I don't think there's a feminist who isn't struggling for reproductive rights. In my opinion, reproductive rights mean *decision-making* autonomy in relation to one's reproductive life. They imply both option and responsibility. Other feminists tie down reproductive rights, giving priority to certain reproductive rights over others. For example, I believe that little is being said in Rio de Janeiro today about abortion. Few feminists have raised the banner of abortion as an inherent, fundamental issue in reproductive rights. Yet the sterilization issue is given priority. In this context, an essentialist perspective may emerge that can lead to biologism through the notion of mutilation. And what about abortion? Is it also an act of mutilation? Within this logic, it is. There are thus some feminists who struggle against sterilization without joining the struggle to decriminalize abortion. I wouldn't say that they take sides with the anti-abortionist campaigns, but neither do they come out publicly in favor of decriminalization. So there is a real division there, which is expressed in different political agendas. But that's all right! I believe that the movement has never marched forward homogeneously. Regarding population, the most significant share of Brazilian feminists, those who were involved in ECO-92, have taken a stance against population policies, favoring so-called social policies instead. This line enjoys

legitimacy in Brazil, but it's a minority stance elsewhere in the world. International forums have proven this. It's the case for Africa and Asia, and for Mexico, Chile, and Argentina in Latin America.

**WS:** This nationwide consensus on population policy issues did not exist before, and it was produced as a political fact during the Hotel Glória Conference.

**AB:** I disagree. I think this position had already appeared in the Charter of Brasília in 1993. In Brazil, the population debate occurred in the midst of the discussion on the environment, as a function of ECO-92. I would like to talk about the environment, and I don't want it to be shackled to the population issue.

**WS:** During ECO-92 there was a division amongst the NGOs, and the women's movement was left in charge of the population issue, in what was called Agenda 21.

**JP:** It isn't "politically correct" to talk about population policies today. But we should understand that population policies also have to do with factors relating to mortality, natality, demographic variables, migration, and so on. This is called population policy. We should address these policies by questioning not the concept of population, but the use made of it by the government, private agencies, etc.

In this specific case, I think that to deny the use of the expression "population policy" in order to be "politically correct" is to restrict one's self, to shut one's self off. On the other hand, what we all want are social policies: to ensure access to information, decision-making, and abortion, too.

**WS:** I'm not a specialist in the debate on reproductive rights, which is a discussion for specialists. It's an internationalized discussion, one that is criss-crossed by the various NGO positions, and if you miss one of these major conferences you never catch up again. My fundamental issue in relation to reproductive rights is not whether or not to have children. It's sexuality. And that's where the international agenda really changed the focus of the analysis, because in the discussion over reproductive rights, nothing is said about sexuality. I'm referring to a radical change in the way people in

general-and not only women - experience their sexuality. If I don't want women to be sterilized, I don't want them to take contraceptives right and left, either. If the discussion on sexuality were developed properly, reproductive rights would be the last point on this agenda.

**REF:** Do you think that sterilization in Brazil has hit the Black population the hardest?

**WS:** The Black women's movement is against population policies. Because historically, the focus of population policies has been the non-white populations. There is a given cultural identity that (the powers-that-be) do not wish to see preserved over the course of history. And this is not just an issue of social class or poverty.

It is a fact that the Black population has been affected the most by genocidal actions. The worst of these in the Brazilian case has been miscegenation and mass immigration. This was a public policy generated by the Brazilian national state from its outset. This is not just political discourse or rhetoric. National immigration policy (a series of Brazilian governmental incentives for European immigration, following abolition of slavery, in 1888 - translator's note) was aimed entirely at controlling the Black population.

For example, take the propaganda by (gynecologist) Elcimar Coutinho in the mass media in the city of Salvador, with Brazil's largest Black contingent, showing a Black child, with the following caption: "factory defect". Or another piece of propaganda showing a pregnant Black women with the caption, "Some people are whining, while their bellies are full." Take the State of Maranhão, with a huge contingent of sterilized non-white women! On the other hand, I'm against the idea of Black women as baby factories. I don't want a throwback to slavery, when Black women reproduced for the slaveowners. So neither do I want that image of Black women bearing little Black kids to reclaim the Black unity lost at some point in the past. I want for women to have the possibility of doing other things in their lives besides raising children.

**AB:** I have an observation about what

Jacqueline said at the beginning of the debate on population. The population issue was addressed by the Committee on Reproductive Rights in the State House of Representatives when it began to discuss sterilization, thus four years prior to ECO-92. What we ascertained was a process of mass sterilization. We discovered that the Brazilian Federal government was at least an accomplice, and at most a co-author, in implementing this enormously successful policy. I agree with Wania that the sexuality issue has been overlooked, and I disagree with Jacqueline when she adopts a liberal discourse about each individual's right to opt. The right to individual option has to be read in light of this country and the conditions in which women live. It's democratic to opt when you have the conditions to do so.

**HP:** If we compare feminism in Brazil with the rest of the world, we notice that violence against women and abortion have been the issues around which women have organized elsewhere. Here in Brazil it has been different, since feminism has been marked by the struggle to redemocratize the country, by citizens' rights and equality. In 1975, nobody talked about abortion. This issue was only presented with force more recently, as a function of the international agenda and population policies.

Here in Brazil there's another issue, that of the Catholic Church and its power over government agencies working in the field of health. At any rate, I believe that if we were to hold a plebiscite, abortion would pass, because Brazilian society is very permissive. It depends on how you put the question to the population. If you ask, "Are you against abortion?", everybody is! But if you put the question differently, like "Do you think that a woman who has an abortion should go to jail?", there would be a unanimous **no**.

**REF:** We would like to draw the debate to a close and to thank you for taking part. We hope that this initiative of raising polemical issues characterizing the current stage of the feminist debate will help it gain greater vigor and presence in the Brazilian scenario.

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SONIA E. ALVAREZ ET ALII

### **Feminists in Latin America: from Bogotá to San Bernardo**

The authors analyze the experience of various Latin American feminisms in the 1970s and 1980s and project the changes occurring in the 1990s through a critical description of the regional Encuentros held in Bogotá (1981), Lima (1983), Bertioga (1985), Mexico City (1987), and San Bernardo (1990), including an analysis of the key debates and organizational and theoretical issues at each of these meetings.

### **Féministes d' Amérique Latine: de Bogota à San Bernardo**

Les auteures analysent l'expérience de plusieurs féminismes en Amérique Latine dans les années 70 et 80 et prévoient des changements importants pour la décennie 90 à partir d'une lecture des rencontres régionales: Bogota (1981), Lima (1983), Bertioga (1985), Mexico City (1987) et San Bernardo (1990). Elles en font une étude des débats et des enjeux organisationnels et théoriques.

### **Feministas en América Latina: de Bogotá a San Bernardo**

Las autoras analizan la experiencia de varios feminismos latinoamericanos de los años 70 y 80 y proyectan los cambios producidos en los 90, a través de una descripción crítica de los Encuentros regionales, realizados en Bogotá (1981), Lima (1983), Bertioga (1985), Ciudad de México (1987) y San Bernardo (1990). Incluyen un análisis de los debates claves y de los asuntos organizacionales y teóricos de cada una de estas reuniones.

CÉLI REGINA JARDIM PINTO

### **Housewives, Mothers, Feminists, Fighters: women in the 1994 brazilian elections**

During the 1994 elections in Brazil, women candidates gained considerable ground, even though their position in the political and institutional game remained weak. Pinto analyzes the presence of the feminist agenda in the discourse of women candidates, with special emphasis on the State of Rio Grande do Sul.

### **Femmes au Foyer, Mères, Féministes, Combattantes: les femmes dans les élections brésiliennes de 1994**

Le poids des femmes candidates aux élections s'est accru au Brésil lors du scrutin de 1994, malgré leur position toujours fragile dans le jeu politico-institutionnel. Pinto cherche à repérer la référence - où l'absence de - aux thèmes féministes dans le discours des femmes candidats, en particulier dans l'état du Rio Grande do Sul.

### **Dueñas de Casa, Madres, Feministas, Luchadoras: mujeres en las elecciones brasileñas de 1994**

En las elecciones brasileña de 1994, el peso de las mujeres candidatas creció de forma significativa, aunque su posición en el juego político-institucional permanezca frágil. En este artículo, Pinto analiza la presencia de la agenda feminista en el discurso de las mujeres candidatas, especialmente en Rio Grande do Sul.

## **Of Bloodletting, Taboos, and Powers: menstruation from a socio-anthropological perspective**

Based on the classics, Sardenberg does a reading of the various meanings that culture ascribes to menstruation and models for biological reproduction. Menstruation's symbolic dimension in contemporary Brazilian society is analyzed on the basis of field research.

## **De Sang, Tabous et Pouvoirs: les règles dans une perspective socio-anthropologique**

Sardenberg identifie, par le biais d'une relecture des auteurs classiques, plusieurs sens attribués par la culture aux règles menstruelles et aux modèles de reproduction biologique. La dimension symbolique des règles dans la société brésilienne contemporaine est traitée à partir d'une recherche de terrain.

## **De Sangramientos, Tabús y Poderes: la menstruación en una perspectiva socio-antropológica**

Sardenberg hace una lectura, a través de los clásicos, de los diversos significados que la cultura le da a la menstruación y a los modelos de reproducción biológica. La dimensión simbólica de la menstruación, en la sociedad brasileña contemporánea, es expuesta a partir de la pesquisa de campo.

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ANA ARRUDA CALLADO

## **A Walkyrie Comes on Stage in 1934**

This article provides a view of Brazilian feminism in the 1930s through a little-known journal, *Walkyrias*, launched in 1934 to commemorate the approval of women's suffrage in the country and published until 1960. The author stresses the lack of ideological clarity in this journal for women at a time of profound radicalization in Brazilian politics and describes its demise from the history of Brazilian feminist press.

## **Une Walkyrie monte en scène en 1934**

Cet article présente une vision générale du Féminisme au Brésil dans les années 30 à travers l'analyse d'un magazine nommé *Walkyrias*, fondé en 1934 pour célébrer l'obtention du droit de vote pour les femmes. Callado met en évidence le manque de clarté idéologique de ce journal à une époque où justement il y a forte radicalisation des luttes politiques au Brésil. Le texte introduit une réflexion sur la presse féministe au Brésil.

## **Una Walkyria entra en escena en 1934**

Este artículo ofrece una visión del feminismo brasileño en los años 30, a través de un periódico poco conocido, *Walkyrias*, lanzado en 1934 para conmemorar la aprobación del voto femenino en el país, y que se publicó hasta 1960. La autora enfatiza la falta de clareza ideológica de este periódico para mujeres, en un momento de una radicalización profunda de la política brasileña y describe su muerte en la historia de la prensa feminista brasileña.

## **Contraception, Population Control, and Social Inequalities: a french-brazilian comparative analysis**

This article discusses how contraceptives are prescribed and used in France and Brazil, comparing statistical data based on the hypothesis that women's command over their fertility is proportional to the society's respective level of development. The comparative figures show striking social and sexual inequalities for the two countries.

## **Contraception, Contrôle Démographique et Inégalités Sociales: une approche comparative franco-brésilienne**

L'article met en évidence les formes de prescription des moyens de contraception au Brésil et en France. L'on compare des données statistiques à partir de l'hypothèse que la maîtrise de la fertilité des femmes est proportionnelle au niveau de développement de la société. Les chiffres démontrent l'ampleur des inégalités sociales et sexuelles.

## **Anticonceptivos, Control Demográfico y Desigualdades Sociales: análisis comparativo franco-brasileño**

El texto discute la prescripción y el uso de anticonceptivos en los casos específicos de Francia y Brasil. Se comparan datos estadísticos, basados en la hipótesis de que el dominio que las mujeres tienen sobre la fertilidad es proporcional al nivel de desarrollo de su sociedad. Los números se presentan como reveladores de las desigualdades sociales y sexuales.

MARIA ODILA LEITE DA SILVA DIAS

## **New Subjectivities in Feminist Historical Research: a hermeneutics of difference**

The author refuses to adopt linear methods for writing the history of the women's movement, arguing that they necessarily involve categories of domination. Rather, she defends a historicizing approach as an unstable yet critical category that respects cultural and conceptual transitoriness.

## **Nouvelles Subjectivités dans la Recherche Historique Féministe: l'herméneutique de la différence**

L'auteur refuse l'adoption des méthodes linéaires dans la façon de faire l'histoire du mouvement des femmes. L'argument repose sur le fait qu'il s'agit de méthodes se servant de catégories de domination. On y préfère une approche qui privilégie des catégories instables, bien que critiques, et qui tient compte de la transitorité des cultures et des concepts.

## **Nuevas Subjetividades en la Investigación Histórica Feminista: una hermenéutica de las diferencias**

La autora se rehusa a adaptar los métodos lineales para registrar la historia del movimiento de mujeres, argumentando que estos métodos, necesariamente, envuelven categorías de dominación, y defiende un abordaje histórico dentro de un nuevo paradigma, como categoría que, aunque inestable, es crítica; abordaje que respeta las transitoriedades culturales y conceptuales.

## **Lélia According to Lélia**

Lélia Gonzales, outstanding militant intellectual in both the Black movement and women's movement in Brazil, passed away in 1994, leaving an empty space in both these fields of struggle for citizens' rights. By reproducing key excerpts from a famous interview of hers, this issue of *Revista Estudos Feministas* pays tribute to her and reminds us all of her remarkable strength as a great Black feminist leader.

## **Lélia par Elle-Même**

Lélia Gonzales, intellectuelle militante du mouvement des femmes et du mouvement noir, est décédée en 1994, laissant un grand vide dans ces deux fronts de lutte. Dans ce numéro de la *Revue Estudos Feministas*, nous voulons lui rendre un dernier hommage publiant quelques morceaux d'une interview de cette femme noire admirable par son leadership.

## **Lélia Habla sobre Lélia**

Lélia Gonzales, militante intelectual del movimiento negro y del movimiento de mujeres, falleció en el año 1994, dejando un vacío en estos dos frentes de lucha por la ciudadanía. Con la reproducción, en este número, de trechos de una antigua entrevista, la REF pretende brindar un homenaje y recordar el perfil admirable de esta gran líder feminista negra.

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ELVIA R. ARRIOLA

## **Gender Inequalities: lesbians, gays, and feminist legal theory**

This article describes how contemporary legal culture deals with discrimination and prejudice, stating that on the legal plane, prevailing analytical models deny the multifaceted identity of all individuals. Discrimination is interpreted through arbitrary, narrow categories, denying the plaintiffs - notably lesbians and gays - their legal needs.

## **Inégalités de Genre: lesbiennes, homosexuels et théorie légale féministe**

Cet article discute la façon par laquelle la culture légale contemporaine s'intéresse à la discrimination et au préjugé. Arriola considère que les paradigmes actuels dans le domaine du droit renient les si nombreuses facettes de l'identité des individus. La discrimination est considérée d'après des catégories arbitraires et étroites qui ne permettent pas à certains groupes - parmi lesquels les lesbiennes et les homosexuels - de faire valoir des besoins spécifiques en matière de loi.

## **Desigualdades de Género: lesbianas, gays y teoría legal feminista**

En este artículo se identifica la manera como la cultura legal contemporánea trata los problemas de discriminación y de prejuicios y se afirma que los modelos de análisis vigentes, en el plano de la ley, niegan la identidad multifacética de todos los individuos. La discriminación viene a ser entendida a través de categorías arbitrarias y estrechas, que le niegan a los querellantes, fundamentalmente lesbianas y "gays", sus necesidades legales.

## COLABORADORES

**Ana Arruda Callado.** Professora da Escola de Comunicação da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, doutoranda em Comunicação e Cultura e autora de *Dona Maria José* (Relume-Dumará, 1995) e de *Como se Faz um Jornal Comunitário* (Vozes, 1985).

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**Angela Arruda** Psicóloga social, pesquisadora na linha de representações sociais, professora da UFRJ. Participou das coletâneas *O Conhecimento no Cotidiano* (Brasiliense, 1993); *Em Tempos de AIDS* (Summus, 1991) e de publicações do Conselho Nacional dos Direitos da Mulher (*Quando a Paciente é Mulher*, 1989; *Da Domesticidade à Cidadania*, 1987).

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**Hélène Bretin.** Pesquisadora-doutora em Sociologia do INSERM (Institut National Santé Recherche Médicale) em Paris, França, onde é integrante do grupo ISIS (Industrialisation Santé et Inégalités Sociales) dentro do qual é responsável pelas pesquisas na área de saúde da mulher. Realizou trabalhos sobre contracepção e desigualdades sociais, tais como o livro: *Quel Choix Pour Quelle Vie? Paroles des Femmes/Discours des Médecins* (Ed. INSERM, 1992).

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**Ilana Strozenberg.** Professora da Escola de Comunicação da UFRJ e vice-coordenadora do Centro Interdisciplinar de Estudos Contemporâneos (CIEC). Graduada em Sociologia e Política e especializada em Antropologia Social pelo Museu Nacional da UFRJ, é autora, junto com Myriam Moraes Lins de Barros, do livro *Álbum de Família* (Comunicação Contemporânea, 1993). Atualmente desenvolve um estudo sobre as relações de emprego doméstico no Brasil.

**Jacqueline Pitanguy.** Socióloga e cientista política, co-fundadora e diretora da CEPIA, co-fundadora e membro do Conselho Diretor da Comissão de Cidadania e Reprodução (CCR). Presidente do Conselho Nacional dos Direitos da Mulher (CNDM) de 1986 a 1989, membro do Conselho Diretor do Allen Gutmacher Institute - USA, membro do Conselho Internacional de Direitos Humanos

do Carter Center, membro do Diálogo Inter-Americano, membro do Conselho Editorial da revista *Health and Human Rights* da Escola de Saúde Pública da Universidade de Harvard. Professora visitante da Universidade de Rutgers, USA, de 1991 a 1992. Tem vários livros publicados.

**José Américo Pessanha** (*In memoriam*). Foi professor de Filosofia no Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Sociais da UFRJ e da FGV no Rio de Janeiro. Foi também diretor do Centro Cultural São Paulo. Autor de ensaios nas coletâneas *Os Sentidos da Paixão*, *O Olhar*, *O Desejo*, *Ética*, *Tempo e História*, *Artepensamento*, (Cia das Letras); além de vários livros, entre eles: *Paradigmas Filosóficos da Atualidade* (Papyrus, 1989); *Clarice Lispector: o itinerário da paixão* (Cadernos Brasileiros, 1965). Faleceu em 05 de maio de 1993.

**Lena Lavinas**. Doutora em Economia. Professora-adjunta da UFRJ, atualmente cedida ao Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (IPEA). Autora de livros e artigos, é editora da *Revista Estudos Feministas* desde sua criação. Tem pesquisa em várias áreas, inclusive na de gênero.

**Lucila Scavone**. Professora-assistente. Doutora do Departamento de Sociologia da UNESP/Araraquara e pesquisadora do CNPq. Autora de diversos artigos na área da saúde da mulher. Está atualmente realizando pesquisa conjunta com Annie Thébaud-Mony sobre as consequências familiares (destacando as relações de gênero) das doenças profissionais.

**Marcos Santarrita**. Jornalista, crítico literário e romancista. Autor de *A Ilha nos Trópicos* (Nórdica, 1990) e de *Danação dos Justos* (Francisco Alves, 1977). Traduziu para a Cia. das Letras *Personas Sexuais e Sexo*, *Arte e Cultura Americana*, de Camille Paglia.

**Maria Lúcia de Barros Mott**. Historiadora, está escrevendo tese de doutoramento sobre o parto no século XIX. Autora do romance *Ana Durocher*, que será publicado pela Editora Siciliano, em outubro de 1995. É membro do Comitê Editorial da *Revista Estudos Feministas*.

**Maria Luiza Heilborn**. Doutora em Antropologia Social pelo Museu Nacional (UFRJ) e professora-adjunta do Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas da Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ). Trabalha sobre questão de gênero, sexualidade e família, tendo publicado na *Revista Estudos Feministas* v. 1 nº 1/93 *Gênero e Hierarquia. A costela de adão revisitada*. É membro do Comitê Editorial da *Revista Estudos Feministas*.

**Maria Luísa Albiero Vaz**. É professora e historiadora e está escrevendo dissertação de mestrado sobre as mulheres de elite em São Paulo.

**Maria Lygia Quartim de Moraes**. Socióloga, doutora em Ciência Política pela Universidade de São Paulo (USP). Foi fundadora dos jornais *Nós Mulheres* e *Em Tempo* e autora de *A Experiência Feminista nos Anos Setenta* (UNESP, 1990); *Mulheres em Movimento: o balanço da década da mulher do ponto de vista do feminismo, das religiões e da política* (Editora Nobel/Conselho da Condição Feminina, 1985) e *Vida de Mulher* (Editora Marco Zero, 1981). Atualmente é professora do Departamento de Sociologia da UNICAMP; membro do Centro Pagú e coordenadora do GT "Família e Sociedade" da ANPOCS.

**Maria Odila Leite da Silva Dias**. É autora dos livros *Quotidiano e Poder* (Brasiliense, 1984) e de *O Fardo do Homem Branco* (Brasiliense, 1974), além de diversas monografias e ensaios sobre aspectos das relações entre sociedade e política no Brasil nos séculos XVIII e XIX. Também tem publicado estudos teóricos sobre a historiografia brasileira contemporânea. Professora titular aposentada de História do Brasil da Universidade de São Paulo (USP), onde ministra cursos e orienta teses de pós-graduação. Membro do Comitê Editorial da *Revista Estudos Feministas*.

**Mary Del Priore**. Professora-doutora de História do Brasil Colonial na FFLCH/USP e autora de *Festas e Utopias no Brasil Colonial* (Brasiliense, 1994); *Ao Sul do Corpo - condição feminina, maternidades e mentalidades no Brasil colonial* (José Olympio/EDUNB, 1992); *A Mulher na História do Brasil* (Contexto, 1989) e de diversos artigos sobre vida social e familiar, cultura e mentalidades no mundo colonial brasileiro. Pesquisa cultura e mentalidades no mundo ibero-americano. No Centre d'Études et Recherches

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**Marysa Navarro-Aranguren.** Professora Charles Collis de História e catedrática do Programa de Estudos Latino-Americanos e do Caribe de Dartmouth College. Autora de diversos artigos sobre mulheres na América Latina, incluindo temas como as mães da Praça de Maio e o movimento operário na Argentina. Autora de *Evita*, uma biografia política de Eva Perón. Atualmente escreve um livro sobre mulheres, cidadania e Estado, relativo ao caso argentino. É membro do Conselho Consultivo Internacional da *Revista Estudos Feministas*.

**Mirian Goldenberg.** Doutora em Antropologia Social pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia Social do Museu Nacional/ Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro e autora dos livros: *A Revolução das Mulheres*, (com Moema Toscano) (1992); *Ser Homem/Ser Mulher: dentro e fora do casamento*; *A Outra: um estudo antropológico sobre a identidade da amante do homem casado* (1991). *Nicarágua-Nicaragüita: um povo em armas constrói a democracia* (1987); todos pela Ed. Revan.

**Nancy Saporita Sternbach.** Professora-associada de espanhol do Smith College. Co-editora, com Asunción Horno-Delgado et alii de *Breaking Boundaries: latina writing and critical readings* e autora de inúmeros artigos sobre latinas e discurso de mulheres latino-americanas. Sua investigação atual se centra em ensaios sobre mulheres e teatro, em uma releitura dos cânones literários latino-americanos.

**Patricia Chuchryk.** Professora-associada e catedrática do Departamento de Sociologia da Universidade de Lethbridge, Canadá. Desde 1982 realiza pesquisas no Chile e atualmente trabalha no projeto Mudança social, democratização e movimentos de mulheres na América Latina, sob os auspícios da Social Science and Humanities Research Council do Canadá. Co-editora da coleção *First Nations Women of Canada*, a sair. Prepara um livro sobre o movimento de mulheres e a transição democrática no Chile.

**Sandra Maria Lapeiz.** Educadora. Exerce a função de psicometrista na Fundação Carlos Chagas. Co-autora de *O Que é Pornografia?* (Brasiliense, 1982).

**Sérgio Cabral.** Jornalista e compositor, autor de livros sobre música popular brasileira entre eles *Elisete Cardoso, Uma Vida*. É um dos fundadores do *Pasquim*. Atualmente é Conselheiro do Tribunal de Contas do Município do Rio de Janeiro e cronista da *Veja Rio*.

**Sonia Alvarez.** Professora-associada do Departamento de Política da Universidade de Califórnia, Santa Cruz. É PhD em Ciência Política pela Universidade de Yale. Autora de *Engendering Democracy in Brazil: women's movements in transition politics* e co-editora com Arturo Escobar de *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: identity, strategy and democracy*. Sua investigação atual se centra nas dimensões políticas e culturais da cidadania democrática. Prepara outro livro com Arturo Escobar e Evelina Dagnino provisoriamente intitulado *Cultures of Politics/Politics of Cultures*. Assessora de Programas da Fundação Ford no Rio de Janeiro

**Teresa Creusa de Góes Monteiro Negreiros.** Psicóloga, mestre e doutoranda em Psicologia Clínica, professora do Departamento de Psicologia da PUC. Pesquisadora do Núcleo de Estudos sobre a Mulher nesta mesma Universidade. Participou de diversas publicações e seminários nacionais e internacionais sobre o tema da mulher.

**Wania Sant'Anna** Do Rio de Janeiro, é historiadora com especialização em problemas de desenvolvimento relacionados às mulheres. Politicamente atua fundamentalmente no movimento feminista junto às organizações de combate ao racismo. Profissionalmente, trabalha em organizações não governamentais.

**Wilton Garcia.** Mestrando em Comunicação e Semiótica. Desenvolve atualmente pesquisa sobre as semióticas aplicadas (códigos Intersemióticos), na filmografia do cineasta inglês Peter Greenaway. Integrante do grupo Etcétera & tal, participa das reflexões produzindo material de orientação sexual, a partir de uma visão semioticista da sexualidade.