

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276025654>

Globalization, gender politics and the media

Book · November 2016

CITATIONS
5

READS
412

1 author:



[Carolina Matos](#)

City, University of London

56 PUBLICATIONS 279 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Book: *Globalization, gender politics and the media*

Table of Contents

List of acronyms

Preface and acknowledgements

Introduction - Women and globalization: equality and emancipation

General perspectives

Rationale and Methodology revisited

Book Outline

Part 1

Chapter 1 – Globalization, gender and development: setting a framework for debate

Critical perspectives on development: assessing the WID and GAD approaches

Globalization, structural adjustment programmes and the “feminization of poverty”

Gender, media and development: theoretical frameworks

Chapter 2 – Postmodernism, equality and feminism: current contemporary issues

What is feminism? gender equality and why it matters

Post-modernism and post-feminism: contemporary gender representations

Part II

Chapter 3 - Gender and the media: international representations and stereotyping

The “Third World woman” in the West and issues of stereotyping

Post-colonialism and “The Third world women” in international media representations

Part III

Chapter 4 – “Women in the Third World”: contextualising the Brazilian women in an age of globalization

Feminists movements and struggles in Latin America and Brazil: from the past to the present

The myth of the “Brazilian women”: versions of femininity, the body and beauty

Chapter 5 - The media, advertising and images of femininity: a case study of images and representations in Brazilian commercials and magazines

Gender representations and the Brazilian media: an assessment

Advertising and sexism: from female magazines to beer commercials and International Women’s Day

Part IV

Chapter 6 – Feminism, politics and democracy

Gender, political philosophy and democracy

Feminism, politics and state

Chapter 7 – Gender politics, equality and new technologies for development

ICTS for development: cyberfeminism, blogging and the Internet

Female political representation and gender politics in Brazil

Online media activism and new feminist websites: from “Think Olga” to “Blogueiras Feministas”

Part V

Chapter 8 – Gender, development and democracy: future challenges for transnational feminisms and global gender justice

Gender inequality and the media: future challenges and suggestions for reform

Constructing avenues for democratic change: the future gender equality in Latin America and Brazil - Concluding remarks

Bibliography and references

Appendices

Interviewees biography

List of acronyms

Cepal – Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

CUT – Central Unica dos Trabalhadores

DFID – Department of International Development

ECLA – Economic Commission for Latin America

ESP – Estado de Sao Paulo

FSP – Folha de Sao Paulo

GMMP – Global Media Monitoring Project

IMF – International Monetary Fund

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

ONU – United Nations

ONU Women – United Nations Women

PT – Partido dos Trabalhadores (Worker's Party)

PSDB - Partido Social-Democrata Brasileiro

SPM – Secretaria de Políticas da Mulher

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

WB – World Bank

Preface and acknowledgements

The idea for this book emerged during the course of the research conducted for my previous work on the role of public service broadcasting and the public media in the democratization project in Brazil. One chapter of the book focused on the growing presence and role of new technologies in the country, and particularly the use that female politicians made of social media during the 2010 presidential elections. From the material I gathered then, I saw two important trends developing in Brazil as a result of the re-democratization process: mainly the escalation and intensity of the pressures for social inclusion by various social movements and other civil society groups in Brazil in the last decade, who have been historically marginalised from mainstream society and politics, and the ways in which these demands were increasingly assuming a *female* face, both in the realm of politics and within wider Brazilian society and everyday life.

A lot has changed in Latin America in the last 50 years, including the decline in the traditional hegemony of the US and a shift away from authoritarian forms of government towards more stable liberal democracies which are more socially inclusive and committed to equality. This is a continent which has been traditionally known also for having developed a strong “macho” and male dominated culture, and in the case of Brazil this is present throughout Brazilian society, politics and the media, standing in sharp contrast with a history of vibrant feminist struggles and mobilization. The development of a nation, and the strengthening of its democracy, is closely connected to the ways in which it treats its citizens and grants them citizenship rights and participation. A sustainable and inclusive growth is also dependent on affording more equal opportunities to diverse groups in Brazilian society, thus reducing inequality and advancing the rights of women and other minorities in the polity. Moreover, as Guy Berger, director of the division for freedom of expression and media development from Unesco has argued in the foreword of UNESCO/IAMCR’s 2014 report of the *Global Alliance on Media and Gender*, there

is significant scope for the media to make a much more substantial contribution to the advancement of women's rights.

Thus what emerged from the previous work was that, with re-democratization, a growing increase in the process of the *feminization* of politics was taking place across the continent, and here parallels could be made between the strengthen of the mobilization also of grassroots feminist activists as well as other women movements from across the country amid an expanding presence of women in public service and government, newsrooms, businesses and the wider marketplace since the decade of the 1990's.

An earlier version of this work appeared in a paper that I gave at the 2013 *Political Studies Association* (PSA) conference in Cardiff in March, followed by a summary presentation of the key theoretical frameworks and proposed empirical work at City's Gender Forum in June 2014 and a more developed version in the 2015 Global Studies conference in London. Part of this research was also presented at the 8th Nolan Nordic conference at the University of Helsinki, Finland, June, 2015. I also delivered a series of papers on part of this work at the 2015 Oxford Women's Leadership Symposium, the pre-BSA (British Sociological Association) Postgraduate Conference in April 2016 and at LASA's (Latin American Studies Association) 50th anniversary conference in May 2016, New York, US, as well as delivering a paper of the research at the Gender and Communication Section of the 2016 IAMCR (International Association of Media and Communication Research) conference at the University of Leicester. I am grateful for all the constructive feedback and criticism that I received in all of the conferences, which have helped me develop on particular points and work on the final adjustments made to this book.

I have many people here to thank for, including the interest of my first publisher, Lexington Books and the professionalism of my editor, Joseph Parry, and especially Brigid Stone and Sarah Craig for extending the deadline. I am also grateful for the support and encouragement of various

friend, journalists and academics, including Professor of Cultural Studies, Toby Miller, of Loughborough University in London; Daya Thussu, of Westminster University, as well as students and the Department of Sociology at City University, who also granted me a one semester sabbatical to conclude this work. I am also extremely grateful to professor Myles Wickstead OBE, of King's College University of London, for the assistance with the interviews with experts and others from international organisations such as the World Bank, the UK's Department of International Development, and the United Nations Development Programme. I would especially like to thank those who took time off from their busy schedules to participate in this research, among others economist Lucia Hamner from the World Bank, Linda Goulart from the former *Secretaria de Politicas da Mulher* in Brazil, and Randi Davis from the United Nations Development Programme.

Finally, I would like to thank the professional support and friendship of academics such as Jairo Lugo-Ocando, of Leeds University, Leo Custodio of Tampere University, Mauro Porto, of Tulane University, Sebastiao Squirra of Metodista University in Sao Paulo Brazil and Antonio Brasil, of Universidade Federal Santa Catarina, Brazil, among others. I have a lot to be grateful for the encouragement of close friends and family members, including my mother Heliana, husband Norbert and cat, Cassie. In a context where improvements in gender equality have begun to be felt in many regions of the world, I have hope that the future will take us to a better place. It is through the awareness of how oppressive discourses and practices operate that lies the first step towards enlightenment and the better treatment of the other as much as we demand for ourselves.

Introduction - Women and globalization: equality and emancipation

“I shall not go back to the remote annals of antiquity to trace the history of woman; it is sufficient to allow that she has always been either a slave, or a despot, and to remark, that each of these situations equally retards the progress of reason. The grand source of female folly and vice has ever appeared to me to arise from narrowness of mind; and the very constitution of civil governments has put almost insuperable obstacles in the way to prevent the cultivation of female understanding – yet virtue can be built on no other foundation!”

Wollstonecraft, M. (1792, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*)

Introduction

General perspectives

Feminist theory, with its emphasis on multidisciplinary, and through a combination of theoretical perspectives with practice and even activism, has been extremely influential in providing frameworks for combating forms of oppression in its multiple forms, in thinking critically about power relations between men and women in various disciplines in the Social Science and Humanities, and in articulating agendas of change that can strengthen democracy in many countries throughout the world. In a context following the decline of the European colonial powers after the Second World War, the world since mainly the 2008 economic crash has seen the rise of other global players in the geopolitical sphere, including the growth of countries such as China, Russia and India, and to some extent also Brazil, and the expansion in the number of people joining the global economy. Thus the debate on women’s oppression today is one which has

become increasingly more of a global concern, and is inserted within the benefits, as well as the contradictions, of globalization. Gender inequality today is juxtaposed to various other layers, including race, class, nationality and ethnicity, and can only be fully understood by taking into consideration historical, political, local as well as socio-economic circumstances and contexts.

The quest for civil and political rights has very much occurred parallel to the formation and development of modern Western democratic nation-states. Arguably, the search for *emancipation* has been present in women's movements in their search for civil and political rights since the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe. These have been part of the very struggles for worker's rights and universal suffrage in England during and after the Industrial Revolution, and in the battles for the abolition of slavery both in the West as well as in other parts of the world. Similarly to the struggles that African-American civil rights movements experienced in the US in the 1960's, voting rights were only conceded to women with a lot of reluctance in the first half of the 20th century, and in some countries as late as 1960s, with Switzerland granting this right only in 1971 (Philips, 1999; Lovenduski, J. and Norris, 1993). Thus the mistake has been to assume that struggles for political equality and civil rights have been a thing of the past. As Philips (1999) stated in *Why Equalities Matter*, many assumed wrongly that rights were fully conquered in the 1960s and 1970s, provoking a retreat from pursuing wider economic equality in the aftermath of the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe in the late 1980's.

Democracies in contemporary societies today are being challenged again in a context of discussions, within political communications, of suffering from a "democratic deficit", and thus holding a thin promise of democracy, political equality and popular participation (Scammell and Semetko, 2007). The relationship between equality and democracy has been, and continues to be, one of very close affinity, having marked the very development of European modern nation-states to the stage that they are in today. It is even more important at a moment when market dynamics

have taken hold of many spheres of political, economic and social life and pervaded most institutions throughout the world, having for many caused the undermining of politics and provoking a growth of disillusionment and apathy between significant sectors of the population, culminating in the retreat from the public sphere into the private realm (Habermas, 1989). At a time when many argue that democracy is being hijacked by corporate power and undermined by the supremacy of the market, with political disenfranchisement having caused the rise of nationalist and extreme right wing movements throughout Europe, the persistence still of the underrepresentation of women and ethnic minorities in various spheres of society threatens the very vitality and decision-making capacity of democratic societies. In the case of emerging and weak democracies like Brazil, the problem is significantly heightened and threatens the very future of the development of the nation.

Thus democratic struggles have undoubtedly been throughout history about expanding the space for the inclusion of a wider citizen body, avoiding exclusions based on property, gender, race, nationality or ethnicity. Despite the “cultural turn” and the shift towards a wider concern with discourses, language and representation as the space where possibilities for resistance are articulated and celebrated, feminism still has a lot to offer in terms of theories and thinking about democracy, as well as its relationship to women and other social movements groups. Notably, the feminist struggles involved in the fight for rights has returned in full force in different aspects throughout the world, from the UK, countries in the former Eastern Europe bloc to Brazil, and have been expressed in not just the growth in the representation of women political leaders to the debates on the reduction of the gender pay gap and the increase in grassroots transnational feminist activism, to name a few.

One of the consequences of globalization has been the increasing vulnerability of international labour, in particular that of women, who have been affected by structural adjustment

programmes, cuts in public spending and welfare benefits (i.e. Dua, in Essed et al 2009; Lebon, 2010). Our paradoxical times nonetheless have seen the rise of egalitarian concerns, with groups seeking political equality in the polity (Philips, 1999). As Desai (2009) and other authors (i.e. Appadurai, 2000) have underlined, economic globalization has brought to the global stage new players and actors, from NGOs to transnational social movements and particularly transnational feminist groups of solidarity. In her examination of middle-class and poor women traders, Desai (2009, 15) has argued that women are constituting globalization, whilst at the same time being impacted by it, seeing the emergence of a new form of *cosmopolitanism*, or what Nederveen Pieterse has chosen to call, “*emancipatory cosmopolitanism*.”

Undoubtedly today we are much more connected to others everywhere in a global civil society and public sphere. This *global stage*, which has opened various opportunities for activism, has paved the way for new and contradictory possibilities for empathy and networking in favour of particular causes. Networks of like-minded individuals from across the world, including feminist groups, have united on similar causes, creating economic opportunities as well as new political and social possibilities. Globalization has been understood by theorists both as *homogenization*, a process defined and shaped by transnational corporations and institutions through global markets facilitated by new technologies, and as heterogeneity or *hybridity*, through the focus on the increasing exchange of cultural flows between various regions of the world, as well as the migration of peoples, ideas and values (i.e. Desai, 2002, 16; Nederveen Pieterse, 2010; Appadurai, 1990, Hall, 1990). Globalization has also witnessed the intensification of conflict, xenophobia and racism in Europe, as well as an increase in the exploitation of cheap labour, including the work of poorer women from developing countries both in the North and the South alike.

The strive to achieve wider gender equality, from the reduction of the gender pay gap, to the end of all forms of discrimination, including rape and domestic violence, has in the last years

become a greater cause for concern in a context where change has been slow. It is part of the agenda of many international organisations, grassroots and mainstream NGOs. Many countries, both in the developed and developing world alike, are clearly re-assuming previous international commitments and other declarations signed in the decade of the 1990's on the need to eliminate all forms of discrimination and advance women's rights. It has been designated as one of the four main areas of concern for the World Bank up to 2014 as well as for other international donor agencies.

The good news is that there has been some reasons to celebrate. Reports from international agencies have pointed to significant improvements worldwide in the last 20 years, with 90% of children in developing regions for instance having full access to primary education. There has also been a fall in infant mortality rates and the growth of women's enrolment in higher education throughout the world. Since the 1980's, women are living longer than men. Over half a billion women have joined the world's labour force over the last 30 years. However, many jobs that women do take are precarious and low paid. The reality is that women's wider entry into the marketplace has not diminished the serious problems of female labour being used widely as a source of cheap and exploitative labour. The World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Index of 2014* gave Iceland the highest score for gender equality, with countries like Nicaragua and Philippines emerging among the top ten in the list. Thus the fight for wider gender equality has resurged and is influencing the mainstream based on the perception that it is a vital tool for the further economic growth of countries, serving to further strengthen the very vitality of our democracies.

Theorists writing on inequality, from political science, to anthropology and social psychology, have provided different insights as to the reasons why oppression of certain groups persists. Feminist theorists have also offered different perspectives on why women are oppressed,

including the variants such as the liberal, radical, Marxist, psychoanalyst and post-modern feminisms, among others, proposing solutions to tackle the problem of woman's subordination. Some perspectives in the development field, such as the WID and GAD approaches to gender, as we shall see, have had a very strong influence in both theory, research and practice in the field. There are fundamental different layers of oppression when it comes to examining women's experience, which must not be homogenized (Mohanty, 2000) and must be open to the contestation that not *all* women are oppressed.

Feminists have thus denounced globally in all societies of the world the problems with the underrepresentation of women in the high echelons of power, from corporate finance, banking and businesses to politics. Women have also traditionally been underrepresented in higher education. As Van Zoonen (1994, 2000) has argued, various forms of discrimination have inhibited women from gaining access to academia, and the same can be said of other core institutions, such as the judiciary system and legislative power, throughout the world. In the case of the UK, gender inequality has either stagnated and to some, has actually expanded in the context of the 2008 global economic recession. Journalism is also a particular case, where despite the increasing number of female journalism students in media courses and in the newsroom, women are seen as still struggling to achieve senior positions and to be ever promoted in their lifetime (Franks, 2013).

Many reports have indicated that Europe's economic recession has turned back the clock on gender equality in the workplace due to a diet of cuts, growth in women's unemployment numbers and persistence of part-time or "flexible" working conditions that are less about a good work and life balance more about low pay and career stagnation with long-term consequences. The 2014 PwC's second *Women in Work Index* showed that in spite of there being many working women, the UK was lagging behind most European countries on gender pay equality, occupying the 18th position out of 27 OECD countries for female participation and pay. According to the report, the

UK made an improvement of one place in relation to previous years, but this ranking was still less than it was at the turn of the century, when the country occupied the 14th position.

Many developed countries today find themselves in a situation where rights have come under attack, stagnated or egalitarian values or the fight for more equality has ceased to be a concern. Other developing countries on the other hand have experienced both setbacks and some advancements. This has been the case of many countries in Latin America. Latin America and the Caribbean region have made some important progresses in the last 20 years, promoting gender equality especially in education and access to land. According to the *2010 Atlas of Gender and Development*, improvements have included legal and institutional frameworks securing women's rights, such as laws protecting women's physical integrity which were approved in Paraguay in the 1990s. The *Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean* (ECLAC – UN 2004) also underlined that full equity was reached in the 1990's with access to primary education.

It is thus impossible to understand the nature of women's inequality today, and how the media represent women, either in the US, Brazil or the UK, without looking at the history of man's inhumanity to man and at the intersection of gender inequality with other forms of oppression, albeit racism and classism. The women question in developing countries is inextricably linked to the whole global capitalist model of accumulation, and may claim it has its roots in European colonialism (i.e. Acosta-Belem and Bose, 1993, 61). Both women *and* colonies have been seen as having served the very foundations of the industrial development of Western nations (Acosta-Belem and Bose, 1993).

Desai (2009) has argued that a lot of the literature on gender and globalization, most of which was written in the 1980's until the mid to late 1990's, drew a depressing picture of the situation of women in developing countries. It largely focused on how women were negatively impacted by globalization and by most "ethnocentric" development programs as well as by

technological expansion. Most of the current literature in the field continues to sustain this perspective (Desai, 2009), although important work has emerged since the 1990's that has looked at women in the developing countries in relation to post-industrialised nations in a much more sophisticated and complex light (i.e. Mohanty, 2000; Chant and Craske, 2003), influencing the field of development studies and other feminist debates in arguing for the need to take into account the differences and particularities of women's experiences, at a local, regional and global levels. Feminist perspectives in development studies for instance have been extremely influential in articulating the discourses around the "feminization of poverty", as well as assisting in providing more qualitative approaches to the discussion of poverty (Chant, 2006).

As Mohanty, Russo and Torres' *Third World Women and the politics of Feminism* argued in its introduction, First World feminism has in overall tended to adopt a narrow view of what constitutes "the oppression of women". It tended to undermine or not take the struggles of "Third World" women seriously as it should have done, and when it did, it engaged in a rigid separation between the "First" and "Third world" women that served to underline a paternalistic tone of superiority, thus contributing to reinforce divisions between groups. First World feminism has been charged of paying too much attention only to issues of sexual freedom and preference as synonymous with *empowerment*, reflecting the racism of their own cultures and adopting a narrow understanding of issues of equality, justice and difference (i.e. Mohanty, 2000; Radcliffe, 2015; Mills, 1998). However, feminism has developed significantly since the 1990's, with both feminist media scholars as well as those working within post-modernism perspectives for instance having acknowledged these critiques, and the need to address the multilayers of women's oppression (i.e. Gill 2007; Van Zoonen, 2000; Philips, 1999; Jackson and Jones, 1998; Ramazanoglu, 1989). A stronger emphasis has been placed since then on the importance of diversity and on recognising

the differences in the experiences of oppression suffered by women throughout the world, as we shall see here.

Despite the advancements in the literature, and the recognition taken on board by feminists scholars from the North of the need to emphasise the diversity of experiences of women's oppression, the discussion concerning women's oppression in the global age I believe has still yet to advance more and further away still from the divisions that still persist, intersecting more with other fields of knowledge and emphasising its internationalist scope as well as its multidisciplinary inquiry. Calls for a deeper and more updated and contemporary intellectual framework for understanding the complexities surrounding the discussion of "women's oppression", and how this plays in the political world and through communication processes, are still very much needed. There needs to be wider dialogue, intellectual exchange and more intense flows between disciplines in the North and the South, if we are to produce narratives and work which is even more sensitive to difference and to issues concerning inequality between the regions and within countries, such as the case of the defence of a wider proximity between Latin American Studies and British Cultural Studies made by Brazilian scholar Ana Carolina Escosteguy (Silva and Mendes in McLaughlin and Carter, 2014). It is still necessary to make more progress in the construction of a more inclusive agenda where international feminism is the frontrunner. We need more international research collaboration, grassroots and transnational feminist activism and wider links between theory and practice, and these will continue to matter more in the future (i.e. Desai, 2009), and not less.

Growing globalization, media convergence and the ways in which it overwhelms every aspects of our lives in an increasing complex world means that we are obliged to examine the persistence of gender inequality whilst also adopting multiple methods of inquiry and investigation, which can no longer afford to be nation specific and inward focused, and which need

also to move beyond mere textual analysis of stereotypical representations of women in the media (Van Zoonen, 1994, 2000; Orgad, 2014) amid the domination still of issues of representation and discourses when discussing gender inequality and the media. It is necessary more than ever to equate both cultural concerns and priorities when discussing gender inequality with economic and material conditions (Fraser, 2013), if our real aim is to construct a better world and to achieve global gender justice.

Traditional forms of understanding the world during the 18th and 19th century have persisted in many ways and continued well into the 21st century, and still define and shape the unconscious, culminating in attitudes, beliefs, behaviour and world views that reinforce differences and distances between people and groups, as well as between men and women. Anxieties and fears surrounding issues such as social mobility, the empowerment of minority groups and various groups of stigmatised people, and the decent treatment of others, are still pressing issues for both advanced and emerging democracies alike. If consensus and empathy in such a fragmented world is difficult to achieve, it can be argued that also current contemporary feminism has paved the way for a more democratic and inclusive agenda, one which is prepared to listen to others and also to accept criticism, and which is in tune with the sign of the times.

In a context of a formation of a post-imperialist post-colonial world order, which has seen the re-shaping of geo-political forces and the rise in the global stage of various developing countries, sometimes referred to also as the “BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China), the understanding of inequalities and how to tackle them has become not only a local matter but ultimately a global one. Contrary to what it might seem at first, Latin America has had a vibrant history of female struggles and feminism, with many women throughout the continent having fought against the Portuguese and Spanish European powers and for the abolition of slavery, having also had a vital role in resistant movements during the dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s

in their countries. Many of these women had an important role in helping shape the process of democratization in the contemporary years, although they have yet to be fully included as equal citizens within the state, politics and wider society. This is despite the rise of democratic governments throughout the region, with exceptions such as Cuba, and the persistence of high levels of income and social inequality in the continent, although countries like Brazil have left the map of hunger and managed to reduce extreme inequality in the last decades.

South America has undoubtedly changed a lot since the 1990's, and so has Europe. Most European countries for instance have become societies that are increasingly diverse and multicultural, with challenges being made to previous Eurocentric perspectives and a growing questioning of Europe's relation to its "others". Moreover, the shifting geopolitical order in the world in the post-colonial context has also occurred amid challenges being made to the welfare state, left wing movements and other pillars of European social democracy, from the discussion over the relevance of public service broadcasting (PSB) to how to continue funding free healthcare in the future, especially in the aftermath of the 2008 global economic recession.

It goes without saying that women from across the non-Western world as well as from emerging democracies, still are struggling to be treated, not just equally to men, but to have the same status as other women from the more developing countries, a problem which is less encountered by their male counter-parts. In a mediated age of media overload and abundance, the role that the media has, and should have more, in assisting democracy and promoting wider development, continues to be relevant. The contestation that much of the problem with reaching wider gender equality rests in the persistence of attitudes and ingrained beliefs that form the social fabric of our societies leads us to look automatically at the role of communication structures and networks in forming public opinion, in shaping how we treat others, and the ways in which these can seek to either perpetuate consensus around outdated forms of thinking, or can in fact work to

shape and provide us more with maps of meaning on how to look ethically and adequately at an increasingly complex and shifting world (Silverstone, 2002), where inequalities still persist despite innumerable efforts, but also where continuous mobilization and pressure for a better world have not ceased to exist, and in fact have seen a revival and a renewal in energy and commitments.

Rationale and Methodology revisited

Feminist media analyses of communication structures have been interested in the last four decades in understanding how images and cultural constructions are linked to patterns of inequality and oppression in wider society (Gill, 2007). Criticisms that have been made have included the role of the media in perpetuating and reinforcing stereotypes to the detriment of more complex representations of women's identities, as well as lacking in inclusiveness and in representing in a more equal manner women in the newsroom and in higher executive positions, further failing to remove barriers for women's promotion (i.e. McRobbie, 1991, 2010; Van Zoonen, 1994, 2000; Gill, 2012; Franks, 2013; Carter, 2014; Gallagher, 2015). Following decades since Tuchman et al's (1978) ground-breaking study on how women were represented in the US media during the 1950s and 1970s, similar questions on why representations matter, and how they are intersected to wider structural political, social cultural and economic inequalities in our societies, continue to matter for many scholars. Moreover, the question on how media systems can do more in order to assist in reducing these inequalities, and in contributing to further gender development and democratization, has in fact returned to the global agenda and not been removed and is far away from being something of the past, as we shall see here.

This book is concerned with the complex correlation between the persistence of gender biases and discrimination in society with media representations on gender and discourses on women's

issues. I understand that this relationship cannot be examined by a focus on texts and media representations only, cannot be nation-specific only and needs to be situated within the context of development and globalization. It develops further from research themes that emerged in my last work (Matos, 2012), which discussed the role that public service broadcasting (PSB) had in the formation of European democracies in comparative perspective with the project of strengthening the public media in Brazil and in other Latin American countries for democratization, having identified a trend of growing pressures for social inclusion coming from social movements and various groups in civil society in the country, from the MST (Movement of those Without Land) and student movements (UNE) to feminist groups, with reflections in the ways in which female politicians, from Marina Silva, Heloisa Helena and Dilma Rousseff, started to make use of online communication networks for political campaigning and to pressure for change.

There is a sophisticated body of international literature on women in Latin America, although a lot of it was written in the 1980's to mid-1990's (i.e. Desai, 2009) and is more in the field of economics and development, globalization, history, anthropology and Latin American and Brazilian Studies (i.e. Alvarez, 1990; Hahner, 1990; Chant and Craske, 2003; Lebon, 2010; Caldwell, 2010; Maier and Lebon, 2010; Macaulay, 2010). There is still very little on the intersection between media representations and feminist discourses with globalization and local practices on combatting gender inequality. There is a range of good contemporary work though on women's political participation and feminist movements and activism throughout the continent and in Brazil which analyses their struggles and interests as well as the intersections and negotiations with the state and civil society (i.e. Caldwell, 2010; Maier and Lebon, 2010; Macaulay, 2010).

In their introduction to the book *Contemporary Feminist Theories*, Jackson and Jones (1998,7) have sustained that it is important to continue to consider both aspects when we are analysing gender inequality, mainly the materialism surrounding women's subordination, the

“things”, as well as the “words”, such as the language and discourse we use to make sense of the world, defending the need for feminists to remain engaged with socio-economic issues and the persistence of inequalities. It is precisely this concern that I have had here in this research. I have sought to develop a working agenda here which is capable of connecting the local and national with the global quests for gender justice. My concern here is with finding both points of similarity and universality of women’s condition, as a means of increasing solidarity and empathy, whilst also recognising and emphasising differences. Philips (2010) for one has seen a close relationship between feminism and multiculturalism.

Many theorists have influenced and guided my thinking here, including Phillip’s (1999) discussion of the difficulties of reconciling political and economic equality; Young’s (1990) criticism of the universal form of citizenship and the ways in which oppression works in contemporary societies; Sen’s (1987, 1999) view of development as freedom and the focus on women as agents of change; Gill’s (2007) focus on post-feminism as a *sensibility* of our contemporary times as well as her work on the sexualisation of culture and analysis of media representations and Fraser’s (2013) emphasis on the need to equate redistributive justice with recognition, if we seriously aim to grant more justice to women. As Jackson and Jones (1998) have argued, theory is never abstracted from experience: it is the former that is capable of assisting us in better understanding the world, and in working through either theory or action (and experience) in trying to intervene, act and change it.

Van Zoonen (1994, 2000) has highlighted how the traditionally liberal feminist research on the media has been largely concerned with stereotypes and with the media’ role in socialization, nonetheless emphasising that a lot of researchers whose work is on stereotypes and representation do not necessarily consider themselves necessarily liberal. I believe that the division between the radical, liberal or socialist feminist traditions is not always that clear cut, and that many of these

traditions have points in which they overlap, with the concern on representations being in fact something that is the object of analysis and inquiry of feminists across a range of traditions and political perspectives.

A key concern here has been to take into consideration political and economic aspects that affect women's lives, and the ways in which these contribute to maintain rigid gender representations and stereotypes in the mainstream, despite the attempts of diversity, thus assisting in inhibiting, hindering and slowing down the pace of change. This is why I considered that a focus only on gender representations in the media, or an examination of material aspects of women's subordination within a particular gender and development framework, would only go so far and not fully do justice to a subject that deserves a more nuanced and sophisticated empirical investigation and analysis of gender inequality and its relationship to popular culture and the media within a global context.

The empirical work conducted for this book focuses on the last months of 2014 until early 2016. It adopts a triangulation methodology which aims to assess the correlation between patterns of gender inequality at the national and international level with images, discourses and representations in the Brazilian media. It thus looks at the end of the period known as Brazil's New Republic (1985-2016), a short period of re-democratization in a country that is still struggling to shed its authoritarian legacy and strengthen its democracy. These last years, which are the focus of this book, represent a rich and turbulent period in Brazilian contemporary history, one of intense unrest, of political activism and mobilization as well as alienation and deep disillusionment and frustration with the whole democratic process. It can be seen as an epitomise of the country's deep "crisis of identity" amid the battling of opposing competing projects of development for the nation: one attached to wider old, traditional and elitist rigid power structures of the past, of an acceptance of levels of high social inequality and where the subordination of less privileged sectors of the

population, such as working class groups, blacks and women, is naturalised, whilst another seeks to combine social democracy with market dynamics, and thus fortify social inclusion, strengthen democracy and promote more inclusive growth.

In an increasing complex world, multidisciplinary research - despite the resistance still in sectors of the academia and in more conventional understandings of certain fields, such as sociology - seems to me to offer the most potential for important and relevant work that can assist in explaining the world to us. Despite some of the criticisms that are still made towards multidisciplinary work, I believe that it is destined to be considered more important and better valued in the future than it is at present. It is not possible today to talk about gender equality without looking at global contexts, whilst also situating these within the experiences of the local. As Jackson (1998, 23-24) admits, the ways in which gender intersects with racism and colonialism has been undertheorized. Jackson and Jones (1998, 6-7) have stated that feminist theory has been leading the way when it comes to interdisciplinary work due to their wish to understand the role of women in a rapidly changing world, and to make valid and worthwhile connections between theorising and everyday experiences. The authors state that “feminist theory for the future must continue to acknowledge specific localised actualities and global contexts which shape women’s lives in a changing world” (1998,11). Although having written this in the context of the late 1990s, and which since then has resulted in a growth of studies, this remains a key point.

The advantage of the triangulation methodology is that one method compensates for the limitations of the other (Matos, 2012). My combination of methods has included a focus on four main fronts, which have included interviews with experts from international organisations, academics and politicians; semiotic and critical discourse analysis of a selection of ads and images from commercials and female magazines on the “Brazilian woman”, combined with the contrast to the proliferation of counter-discourses in the *blogosphere* on women’s issues by feminist

movements and groups. I conducted a series of in depth interviews with a total of 10 people, including policy experts, UN and governmental representatives, from the World Bank to UN Women, including a female Brazilian politician, senator Marta Suplicy. Professor Myles Wickstead served as gatekeeper to main of these interviewees, whilst I also sought to find governmental representatives to discuss policies for women in Brazil. I was committed to ask questions on the challenges posed to the achievement of global gender justice, to the difficulties of conciliating economic concerns with cultural preoccupations, as well as examine the current policies that have been developed in Brazil in the last decade, the problems of political representation and gender representations in the media, as well as analysing the future roadblocks that exist in the country for the further advancement of women's rights across the political, economic and cultural fronts.

I have also made use of international and national reports on gender equality, gender and the media and violence towards women as secondary data and in order to assist me in my analyses. The reports have included among others, the World Bank's *2014 Voice and Agency* and the *2012 World Development* reports; UNDP's *2014 Protagonist Women*; the *2010 Atlas on Gender and Development – how social norms affect gender equality in non-OECD countries*; Brazil's 2013 Ipea's (Instituto de Pesquisa de Economia Aplicada) (Institute of Applied Economic Research) study on violence against women and the 2015 *Global Monitoring Media Project (GMMP)* report.ⁱ Policy reports on the situation of women in Brazil have been chosen here as a means of analysis of the current challenges regarding improvements in equality levels, as well as providing an opportunity to look historically at the struggles faced by women in Brazil within the wider Latin American context.

The initial intention was to conduct a survey with young female students to assess their perceptions of how women are treated in the media and to assess how female audiences make

meanings out of gender representations. Another idea was to combine researched narratives of the ordinary lives of Brazilian women, giving voice and making visible their struggles, as well as conducting focus groups. Neither the survey or the focus group has been done due to lack of time, funding and resources, but it would be fruitful to develop further from this study and engage more with Brazilian women as media audiences from a feminist perspective, particularly due to the fact that there is significant room and need to advance such inquiries in Brazil (Escosteguy, 2004). What I have intended to do here is collect a small but significant representative sample from the contemporary context, particularly during the turbulent period of late 2014 until early 2016, which saw the impeachment process of the country's first female president go through and the temporary president, Michel Temer, take over.ⁱⁱ

The initial aim here had been also to collect a wider variety of discourses, images and representations in both the Brazilian mainstream media and in online platforms, from TV, newspapers and online platforms, including various types of *discourses* on women's rights and issues, from the traditional and regressive to the empowering, contradictory and ambiguous (i.e. are we to find pleasure in such images, or are they reactionary?). Due to time and resource restrictions, I eventually decided to collect my empirical work from a small sample of: 1) ads and commercials, which have been popular in the last years concerning discussions of sexism and women's rights, including from popular female magazines from the Abril Group; 2) a selection of campaigns practices from the 2010 and 2014 presidential elections, as well as media content from political posters and newspapers on gender politics, and particularly concerning the image of the president Dilma Rousseff and 3) a selection of popular feminist websites, mainly *Blogueiras Feministas* and *Think Olga*, as well as the Twitter campaigns of *#Primeiro Assedio* (First Sexual Harassment) and *#AgoraeQueSaoElas* (Now it is them (hers) and posters from the country's version of the SlutWalk (*Marcha das Vadias*)).

The intention here was also to examine two opposing and contradictory scenarios of contrast: one was connected to a sector of the mainstream media which is still heavily influenced by stereotypical representations and idealisations on what the “Brazilian women” should be, and the other is a growing online cyber space which is providing a series of opportunities and possibilities of resistance, contradiction and reaffirmation for various feminist groups and women’s movements, emerging as important, though still limited, political spaces in the Brazil’s still expanding political sphere.

I particularly focused on ads which raised debate in the public sphere and on social networks on sexism and prejudice towards women. Similarly to other authors (Rocha, 2001) who have examined advertising, I have selected the ads from three core categories: 1) beers and drink; 2) cosmetics, beauty and fashion and 3) International Women’s Day. I believe that advertising is a good space to discuss gender representations and reassess them in relation to social and political contexts regarding gender inequality, whereas new technologies by contrast have offered possibilities for marginalised and oppressed groups in Brazil to use them for their own empowerment. The magazines which I have examined have included the core ones from the Editora Abril group, the largest magazine publisher in the country and a leader in Latin America, and these have included *Claudia*, *Contigo!*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Boa forma*, *Estilo*, *Anamaria*, *Tititi* and *Women’s Health*. They can be accessed online through the portal *MdeMulher*, which markets itself as being the biggest portal on femininity in Latin America. Further research here would be able to provide more insights into how traditional Brazilian female magazines and ads have had in constructing the image of what the “perfect Brazilian women”, or “Brazilian femininity”, should be like.

The image of the “Brazilian woman”, which is followed by an analysis of a symbol of what for many is traditionally understood as the “Third World” women, is examined within a

contemporary context, but this analysis also takes into account the historically specific discourses around women's role in Brazilian society, situating this further within the political and economic environment. I have also explored a series of counter-hegemonic discourses and other messages which have proliferated the Brazilian *blogosphere*, and which aim to undermine stereotypical representations, mobilize politically in favour of women's causes, offer diversity in ideas and pluralism in the public sphere, as well as serving to raise awareness to these issues in the general population. Here I insert this within the intellectual framework on how ICTs and new technologies can contribute to social change, and particularly to the advancement of woman's rights.

The themes which I have focused on in order to collect and separate the material have included topics and images such as "feminism and women's issues"; "sexuality", "mobilization and protest in favour of women's rights", "victims of domestic violence", "beauty, body and fashion" and "male chauvinism and sexism." The idea here has been to take into consideration the correlation between low political representation, workplace pay inequality, discrimination and domestic violence and negative portrayals of women in the Brazilian media, in what is still a largely hierarchical nation attached to traditional understandings of the role and place of subordinated groups, and the inferior position of women and of other minorities, within it. Discrimination and overt (not even subtle) acts of prejudice towards these groups in Brazil is still a reality which is largely tolerated within mainstream society and politics, and is strongly identified as being part of a "liberty of expression" or the natural "common sense order" or everyday life. Less privileged women and minorities, especially Afro-Brazilians and members of rural, indigenous and working class communities, are the ones mainly affected by unemployment, exploitation, discrimination and by the wider social ills of inequality. This has produced a lot of suffering in the country, impeding economic growth and the advancement of democracy, further

limiting the standards of quality of life and well being of significant sectors of the population (Sen, 1999).

The three feminists blogs which I have focused on have included mainly the *Blogueiras Feministas* and *Think Olga*, with references and analyses also of the Brazilian version of the SlutWalks (*Marcha das Vadias*) and other Twitter campaigns that were successful in the later months of 2015. The qualitative data that I have gathered here has followed three categories, which have included selecting material on discourses around protesting and mobilization (1); what is feminism and what it means to be a feminist (i.e. as well as the future of the movement) (2) and issue-focused themes and concerns (3) (i.e. topics such as health and reproductive rights, political representation, domestic violence and rape, the body and individual pleasure). Some of the core debates which have been the attention of women's movements, and of Brazilian contemporary feminism more generally in the last five to ten years, have been notably issues around sexuality, reproductive rights, abortion and the body (i.e. and here the protests of the *Marcha das Vadias* have been crucial in emphasising this). Demands have also included requests for wider female empowerment, extension of equal rights and the pressures for recognition and respect towards multiple identities within Brazilian mainstream society, such as those of disadvantaged black women and working and lower middle class women.

Although I make reference to demonstrations of earlier years, such as those which took place in 2011 and 2013, the focus is on a selection of images and discourses that proliferated the blogosphere from the period of the 2014 presidential elections in October 2014 to the end of 2015, known as the year of the Brazilian women's "Arab Spring" due to the intensity of street protests and online activism in favour of advancing women's rights and impeding regressions. I also discuss the media campaign's on Twitter, the *#AgoraequeSaoElas* (Now it is Them (Hers)) campaign and *#PrimeiroAssedio* (First Sexual Harassment), organised by the NGO *Think Olga*.

Despite the enormous challenges and difficulties that the countries in Latin America are facing to uphold social democracy and to advance in the granting of rights to its citizens, including to women, there have been some positive inroads in the public sphere, including a growing awareness within the mainstream media of the importance of these debates. In the end of October 2015, male columnists of the mainstream media provided a voice for women journalists, scholars and other professionals in their columns to talk about the situation of women in the country, as I will be examining here.

I had also initially thought of conducting a media analysis of the political campaigns of the core female candidates of the 2014 presidential dispute, including examining the media coverage of the campaigns of Dilma Rousseff and Marina Silva, but decided against it due to the lack of sufficient material explored in these campaigns on gender and women's issues, which still struggle to reach the mainstream of Brazilian society. Notably the campaigns of the 2010 and 2014 elections are briefly discussed here, particularly the reference to women's issues in the first 2010 elections campaign, something which was not explored further either by Rousseff or the other female candidates. This stands as proof of the difficulties and barriers that still exist in both social and political life in Brazil of incorporating more fully women's agenda, issues and concerns within mainstream Brazilian society and politics, despite the existence of the federal Secretary of Policies for Women (SPM), which had a ministry status for a while and was then reduced back to being a secretary.

In early research that I conducted, I examined the role that mainstream Brazilian newspapers have had in the democratisation process following from the collapse of the military dictatorship in the mid-1980s (Matos, 2008). I examined the changes that the Brazilian mainstream media as well as journalism experienced from mainly the mid-1980's and 1990's onwards, including a wider commitment to professionalism and objectivity in the newsroom, as well as the inclusion within the

media, as sources and themes, of civil society representatives and centre-left wing politicians and interests of wider sectors of Brazilian society beyond business and economic elites. I have also discussed in past work (Matos, 2012) the ways in which public service broadcasting and the public media in Brazil and Latin American can contribute to strengthen democracy, serving as a type of “welfare communications”, similarly to the role that PSBs have had in Europe (i.e. Curran, 2000), as well as boosting pluralism and enhancing market competition, and thus providing citizens with both state and public communication structures that can produce quality programming and other educational material that the commercial media can or will not do due to profit motives. Moreover, PSBs stand as being more inclined to represent more regional and local diversity, being able to commission the work of independent producers and to include in the media minorities and multiple identities of Brazilian women, thus providing more voice to working-class and black women and other stigmatised groups.

Following from some of the important improvements of Brazilian journalism during the 1990s, including the strengthening of professionalism and the beginning of the growth of online networks of debate as well as other alternative media outlets, Brazilian mainstream journalism and newspapers have started to experience a serious crisis of identity and credibility with many sectors of the public in the country. Firstly, similarly to other countries in the world (i.e. Kuhn and Nielsen, 2013), newspapers in Brazil are also struggling in a climate of declining circulation caused by the competition provided by other media, from cable and satellite TV to the Internet, resulting in a series of redundancies of journalists from the main newspapers in the last decade. There has also been a considerable growth in politicisation and partisanship in the Brazilian mainstream media, seen by many as having taken on the explicit defence of particular political parties and groups of politicians on the right, disguised as legitimate anger of public opinion against governmental policies and economic mismanagement. All this has contributed to

undermine, or put in doubt, their previous commitments to more objective and impartial journalism, which had started to be strengthened during the decade of the 1990's in the aftermath of the dictatorship (Matos, 2008). Contrary to the case of other advanced democracies, where media saturation and the growth of multiple publics has made the achievement of consensus around important issues more difficult, the reality is that in countries with high media concentration like Brazil – which has been hailed by the 2013 Reporters Without Borders report as the nation with “30 Berlusconi” - , the construction of *hegemony* by the media over ideas and beliefs is all the more powerful and persuasive. In such environments, media representations and discourses matter *more*, and not less.

In the context of the anniversary of the journal *Feminist Media Studies* in 2011, Grindstaff and Press (in Waisbord, 2014, 157-158) pointed out how scholars Cynthia Carter and Lisa McLaughlin asked academics to suggest areas for future research in the field. They ended up picking six core concerns: 1) a political economy perspective on how markets and consumer culture shape gender relations; 2) the focus on cyber-culture and the use of ICTs for women's social and economic development, the digital divide and its impact for women, the potential for development of transnational social movements and virtual communities; 3) the relationship between media and identities, the notion of hybridity and difference and how these are mobilized in and around media discourses; 4) the examination of sexuality and the concern with the increasing sexualisation of culture, the objectification of women, sexism and media stereotypes and 5) the engagement with the literature and the concept of “post-feminism”. There were also calls for more *participatory action research* as well as ethnographically informed and/or sociological relevant work.

Kearney (2012, 12-13) has also underlined some of the core research areas in gender and the media since the 1990s. These include the emphasis on men and masculinity studies, which have

attempted to examine also how boys have been socialised, whilst the second trend is the exploration of sexuality, race and ethnicity, which has led to research on gender and ethnicities, such as the Latina and East Asian women. Thirdly, there has been wider attention paid to ideologies associated with feminism, such as post-feminism and third wave feminism. Other trends include what Kearney (2012, 13) calls the *gendering* of media consumption, the emphasis on reception and production studies due to the influence of cultural studies as well as the growth of research on gender and media done by scholars from diverse disciplines, from education, sociology to information science.

These are all important avenues for research in gender and media studies. I believe that many of these concerns overlap, and do not necessarily appear in isolation. My work touches on the uses of ICTs by women for their development and progress, whilst also looking at media power and gender relations influenced by the political economy perspective and at the same time is concerned with the persistence of gender inequality and sexism in its various forms in the media, and how these reflect and reinforce wider inequalities which exist in politics and society. It is thus evident that research into gender relations from a sociological, media and development perspective is highly complex, sophisticated and dependent on analyses of multiple texts inasmuch as it needs to place the emphasis of *local* practices in their *global* contexts. The interaction of the global with the local is precisely an attempt of inserting Latin America and Brazil within wider international debates on global gender justice and the role that media structures can have, or should have more, in development and democratisation. Here is a strive to contribute to the creation of more bridges of understanding between the developing countries and the more developed nations based on the notion that humans, and women's rights issues, are above all *global* concerns.

Feminist media studies for instance has placed considerable emphasis on the readings of content and visual texts (Grindstaff and Press, 2014). However, feminist media studies cannot

make use only of media theories, and is better illuminated by insights and intersections that it can make with other disciplines, be them feminist social theory, political science, development studies or sociology. As Grindstaff and Press (in Waisbord, 2014) have stated, feminist scholarship has had a significant impact on sociology and feminist media studies is now an important sub-field within the media. They argue that feminist media studies has tended to marginalise the sociological methods inasmuch as feminist sociology has paid little attention to the media, with an absence of textual analysis within sociology. The scholars argue that feminism made many contributions to sociology, but these had little to do with the media, with sociological research focusing mostly on studies of politics and news. They also defend greater collaboration between and among different disciplinary traditions, exploring multiple methodologies in multiple settings (Grindstaff and Press in Waisbord, 2014, 163).

Early British feminist analysis was more sociological and has been associated with the works of scholars such as McRobbie (2009) and Gill (2007) among others, whilst feminist scholars working within American sociology have been largely concerned with work and family life (Grindstaff and Press in Waisbord, 2014). Work on news-making has been seen as the strongest body of studies focused on the media within sociology's history, making significant contributions to both (i.e. Tuchman, 1972; Golding and Elliot, 1979; Gans, 1979).

Grindstaff and Press (in Waisbord, 2014) argue that feminist inquiry can be important in bringing together sociology and media studies. Feminist media studies has prioritised textual analysis over ethnography and other methodological approaches more identified with sociological inquiry (Grindstaff and Press in Waisbord 2014, 154). As I have defended here, it is important to bring also to the literature on feminist media studies more theorising and empirical studies on the experiences of other women in different parts of the world beyond the Northern European countries and the US. I have strived here to approach sociology and feminist media studies, with

development, further giving importance to text and image analyses and media representations but also inserting these discourses and practices within wider social and political contexts, economic concerns and within globalization. I have also made use of sociological methods of inquiry, including in depth interviews and the critical examination of reports, as well as making use of critical discourse analysis and semiotics in my discussion of a selection of texts and images.

Foucault's understanding of power as operating through discourse has led to the expansion of studies on discourse analysis, and on how meaning can be seen as a site of contestation and struggle. Fairclough (2001) has classified "discourse" as *social practices*, with discourses being ways in which social agents act in the world. Thus through discourse certain statements, ideas and values will be seen as truthful whilst others will be marginalised and seen as false, thus making certain *discursive regimes* be legitimised over others. As Fairclough (2001) states, it is through *language* that different social groups can exercise power over others, with language being the vehicle for the maintenance or rejection of the power relations in any society.

Developing further from this, Van Dijk (2001) argues that critical discourse analysis (CDA) provides the most promising instrument for examining how the construction of gender takes place in everyday speech. It most certainly emerges as the most suitable method for a more nuanced approach that does not limit itself to the boundaries of the text. Such a method is particularly important to examine media representations and discourses in a country like Brazil, where the mainstream media is still seen as extremely influential in shaping significantly public opinion and perceptions on vital issues of public life, from the role of women in society should have to social welfare programmes and other public policies.

Textual representations and discourses in themselves can have their limits if they are disassociated from socio-economic and political contexts. As Orgad (2014, 136) notes, CDA is concerned with how meanings are produced, and mainly with how power relations and hierarchies

are transformed symbolically. As she (2014, 136) states, sociological analyses have the capacity to advance our understanding of how media representations work beyond the limits of the text and their treatment in isolation by grounding these images and discourses in social contexts. For the sociologist, the analyse of media representations is not just about focusing on the multiple meanings of a text, but mostly investigating the invitations that these deliver to audiences in terms of telling them how to think and act in certain ways, suppressing other possibilities. “Thinking sociologically about media representations highlight their influence and centrality in the societies and cultures in which...they are produced....It also offers an important reminder that representation is one component in a complex social reality and its meanings....interact with a range of factors...”, states Orgad (2014, 136).

Kearney (2012, 2) further notes that the media are powerful agents of information, socialization and of regulating individual behaviour and social practices, with audiences and the public using their messages and images to construct knowledge about the world as well as values. As many authors have also argued, they can have an *ideological* role (i.e. Hall, 1977), and can be the sites of struggle, resistance and negotiation over meaning. Media representations are thus closely linked to the exercise of *symbolic power* (Orgad, 2014, 140). Here the link with ideology is clear. Many images of women for instance in the media have been used as a symbol of societies’ understandings about the role that these should have in social and political life, functioning even as a metaphor for a particular political ideology (Kearney, 2012, 26), something which was the case with the media’s representation of president Dilma Rousseff in contrast to the would-be future first lady, Marcela Temer, as we shall see. Thus the stereotyping and misrepresentation of particular groups by the media, many who are already subject to disenfranchisement in society and marginalisation, can have implications and reflect in the ways in which they are treated by others in everyday life.

Representations can thus work to reproduce the values of the status quo, and maintain firmly in place structural inequalities. Gill (2007) has argued that a problem of critical analysis of media representations of gender is that some can fall into the simplistic trap (moralistic even) of condemning the images, or feeling uncertain if they empower or are reactionary. There are shortcomings to such an analysis, which can result in being poor if it focuses on simply identifying “negative images”. This is not to say that “negative images” are innocent or have no power. Moreover, this also should not serve to undermine the important role that qualitative research, and analyses of texts by feminist media scholars and others, have had in contributing to develop research that has been used by disadvantaged groups and which has pressured for change (Kearney, 2012). Kearney (2012, 4) has further argued that qualitative scholars have been central in the development of media studies and literacy. They have been skilled in critical theory and interpretative analysis, making the use of methods such as semiotics and discourse theory to ask the more difficult questions, such as “how”, “why” and “what’s at stake” in their exposure of the inequalities of representation (Kearney, 2012).

The field of feminist media studies has thus advanced considerably since the 1970s and 1980s, with contemporary media research having become more sophisticated, going beyond analyses of ideology, stereotyping and negative images to deal with complex questions and areas of study, from gender identity to masculinity studies. It is thus not sufficient in itself to conduct textual analyses of gender representations based solely on the examination of stereotypes, and an integrated research framework which aims to investigate gender equality and development needs to adopt a series of strategies and perspectives in order to have a more detailed and sophisticated look, capable of establishing intersections between the media and the wider social and political world.

Negative representations however continue to be important and are still subject of debate, particularly in the context of hierarchical and unequal societies like Brazil, as well as the ways in which some can be seen as paving the way to reinforce sexist and reactionary norms and values. This has both direct as indirect consequences on the groups that are the target of these representations. The questions here however should not be one about positive versus negative images, discourses and representations, but the ways in which the media is *reflecting a diversity of representations* of different types of groups, different women (Gill, 2007). Thus I believe that one should not fall into the trap of dismissing the power of “negative representations”, in a context where consistent repetitive patterns of “negative images” in the media can in the short to long run have a real affect on people’s perceptions of what women’s role in society should be, what is appropriate behaviour and what is not, having damaging effects on whole groups of people. It is thus important not to embark in an excessive relativist, or cynical position in relation to representations, reading them as just *post-modern play* or fun, thus contributing to *underestimate* the power of stereotypes, visuals, texts and images in the media in shaping people’s perception about the world and others. These representations have consequences, such as the perpetuation of oppressive attitudes and behaviours that contribute to marginalise those who do not conform to rigid gender patterns or to “common sense” assumptions about the role of different groups in society.

Gender equality however cannot be achieved solely through a focus on dismantling reactionary and regressive media constructions and representations. In her book *Fortunes of Feminism*, Fraser (2013) has argued that any more serious commitment to achieve gender justice must focus on both *distribution* (in terms of concerns with poverty and the allocation of resources and income on a fairer basis) and *recognition* (of feminine identities in society without discrimination and disrespect), thus combining both *material* concerns with *cultural*

preoccupations. This is similar to what other feminists have already called out for (i.e. Jackson and Jones, 1998). Seeing a vital role for feminism now and in the future, Fraser (2013) also notes how feminist movements have been working with other egalitarian groups in their struggle for justice and equality. This is a bit what is happening in countries like Brazil in the contemporary context, where feminist movements have gained in a renewal strength in the last decade and for many are leading the way in protests against regressive policies as well as corrupt politicians associated with a traditionally male-dominated patriarchal order. They have also appeared in demonstrations alongside other movements, such as the MST (Landless Movement) and the student movement, UNE, among others. The vitality of their protests and organisations has even propelled many to see a new feminist *Arab Spring* having occurred in the last months of 2015, as we shall see.

Thus the four lines of inquiry that I have pursued in this book, and which have been developed from my intellectual frameworks and arguments explored earlier, can be summarised as follows: 1) the concern with the correlation between media representations of gender and patterns of inequality in Brazil within a global and regional context, and further exploring avenues for the advancement of women's rights in Brazil; 2) the ways of overcoming the paradox that still exists in our societies between the presence of a few women leaders in politics, businesses and the media in contrast to the continuous everyday practices of discrimination and hostility towards ordinary or less privileged women in everyday life, of which the consequences are felt in their lack of *empowerment*, vulnerability to domestic violence and rape as well as overrepresentation in low skilled and low paid jobs; 3) the possibilities offered by ICTs (information communication technologies) and online platforms in contributing to further gender development, serving as a contrast to the persistence of rigid images and discourses in the mainstream media, while at the same time boosting pluralism and diversity and working to influence the mainstream and the public sphere on women's issues and lastly 4) the possibilities of strengthening international

feminisms and transnational feminist networks, creating proximities between British Cultural Studies with Latin American Studies, enhancing intellectual exchange and collaboration between the North and the South, in both research, theory and practice.

The core questions that I ask here are simple, but nonetheless difficult to answer: how can media structures have a wider role in assisting change, particularly in relation to gender equality? In what ways can the media improve, and contribute, to wider gender equality through the representation of diverse gender roles? Can ICTs be a force for change through online feminist discourses? What advancements have been made in regards to gender equality in the last years, and what are the roadblocks and challenges for the future? How do the myths on Brazilian femininity, stereotypes and perceptions function to *inhibit* change at a local and global level? Progress in Brazil and Latin America will be understood here as being, among others, a move towards an improved status for women in terms of both appointments and promotion in the workplace, wider participation and representation in politics, the elimination of discrimination and vulnerability in social life and in the public/private sphere and the enhancement of multiple and diverse gender identities and representations in the media.

Moreover, there is still a lack of contemporary Brazilian studies on the relationship between gender inequality and media representations, and particularly in relation to globalization. The field of gender and the media in Brazil still remains under-theorised and researched (Martinez, Lago and Lago, 2015). The under-theorising of the topic on the intersection between gender inequality and the media becomes evident when one attempts to collect data in one of the key libraries in the country, such as Rio's *Biblioteca Nacional*, one of the ten largest libraries in the world and the biggest in Latin America, or consult other organisations. Feminist media studies in Brazil, as signalled out by Escosteguy (Silva and Mendes in McLaughlin and Carter, 2014), is still in need of strengthening, as I mentioned before. When it comes to gender studies, the situation is different.

As prominent feminist Miriam Grossi, coordinator of the unit on Identities, Gender and Subjectivities at the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil, has underlined, the Brazilian academic field has produced important studies in the field of gender in Latin America, particularly in areas such as sexuality and contemporary transsexuality.ⁱⁱⁱ

Feminism studies, movements and policy concerns directed to the improvement of the situation of women in Brazil, particularly from less privileged segments, including black and working class women, have become the topic of much wider concern in the last decade. In July 2015, the first library dedicated to research on gender and feminism was inaugurated in Sao Paulo (the *Biblioteca Feminista*), showing an attempt of preserving and collecting material on a topic that has been far too neglected within mainstream society in the country. More work in the last decades has been done in the fields of gender politics, political parties and public policies coming from the fields of anthropology, sociology, politics and Brazilian history, including more recent studies such as *Feminismo e Politica* (“Feminism and Politics”, Miguel and Biroli, 2014)^{iv} and Mary Del Priore’s *Historia das Mulheres no Brasil (History of Women in Brazil, 2004)*. Some of the notable studies in the field have included Dulcilia Buitoni’s (1981, 2009) study *Mulheres de Papel - a representacao da mulher pela imprensa feminina brasileira* (Paper Women - women’s representation by the feminist Brazilian press); Rachel Moreno’s (2013) *A Imagem da Mulher na Midia – Controle Social Comparado* (“The Image of Women in the Media – Compared Social Control”) and Alzira Abreu (2006) *Elas Ocupam as Redacoes* (They Occupy the Newsroom), among a few others.

Martinez, Lago and Lago (2015, 8) have correctly argued that many of these studies in the area of journalism, media and gender have been produced sporadically, something which contrasts to the work produced in the country on gender that comes from disciplines such as sociology and anthropology. Important national journals that publish work on gender in Brazil include *Cadernos*

Pagu and *Revista Estudos Feminista*.^v The authors researched these journals during the period of 2013 and 2015, underlining the scarcity of articles coming from Media Studies. A total of 251 articles were classified as being part of the field of Sociology and Political Science; History received 161; Anthropology, 155; Psychology, 142; Literature, 139 and Philosophy, 39. The category of Communications, Film and Visual Arts received a total of 22, close to the number of articles for the disciplines of Economics (17), Cultural Studies (13) and Interdisciplinary (18). Among some of the studies quoted are Jorge et al's (2014) on women in the newsroom and Assis et al's (2011) on media, politics and gender (in Martinez et al, 2015).

As the authors notes (Martinez et al, 2015), the number of articles in the Communications category represents less than 10% of the ones in the field of Sociology and Political Science, which occupy first place. The scholars also researched articles in 2014 in the archives of the *Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores em Jornalismo* (SBPJor) (Brazilian Association of Researchers in Journalism), the main forum in the country dedicated to the discussion of journalism issues, pointing to the presence of few studies that deal with women's themes,. The authors applied the search word "gender" in the research menu *Sala de Pesquisa* (ww.sbpjor.org.br) (Research Room) and found a total of 46 articles. They afterwards excluded studies on gender as a journalistic category, which further limited the total to seven articles, and even to as low a number as five considering the last studies produced during the period between 2010 and 2014.

This book thus aims to offer a modest contribution to national literature in Brazil on gender inequality and its relationship to the media. My contribution here has been to fill a gap in the literature in Brazil on gender, the media and politics, further adding on to the international literature on gender, development and the role of the media in contributing to social change. As we have began to see here, media representations do not exist in a vacuum and are part of the

structures and patterns of inequality of our societies, both in developed and developing countries alike. In a more fragmented and multiple media environment, where “feminism” has also made it into the Western media in a way which was not the case a few decades ago, it becomes ever more challenging to pinpoint stereotypical or damaging representations that could supposedly contribute to reinforce gender inequality.

Our difficulties in defining what exactly constitutes “sexism” from what is not, and the contestation that the discussion on feminism and feminist discourses have proliferated online amid what seems to be an increasing silence offline and a general acceptance of media narratives on what the “normal woman” should be like, indicates that we are still advancing slowly from the past. Moreover, as international reports on gender inequality in the world show, we should not take for granted that we are all living within a “post-feminism” intellectual and philosophical framework (Yuval-Davis, 1997, 2010), that has overwhelmed both academia as well as the media. The reality is that there is still much yet that still has to be achieved in many countries throughout the world, including in the most advanced democracies. In an epoch of enhancement of the calls for more transnational feminist networks and international collaboration between the North and the South, we still need to ask ourselves important questions, and deal with our own struggle over what it means to be a feminist in the 21st century, mainly as a means of finding the correct solutions to the problem of solving gender equity not just in our doorstep but globally.

Book Outline

Following from the key points raised in the introduction, Part I provides a critical assessment of the theoretical perspectives on gender and development, and the ways in which feminist

perspectives have contributed to the pressures to include women in development campaigns, as well as to provide various avenues for female empowerment in developing countries and assisting in the debates on the measuring and understanding of poverty and inequality. These have raised important issues of citizens' rights, both political as well as cultural citizenship, as well as reflecting the tensions between the economic approaches to development, and the focus on socio-economic forces, at the expense of taking into account the cultural dimension. Questions raised here include how is it possible to achieve gender equity in a world increasingly diverse. This is important as it further problematizes the debate on the perspectives of thinking over gender equality versus gender difference (Hermsen and Van Lemig, 1991 in Van Zoonen, 1994, 2010), and encounters further points of connection with the preoccupations of post-colonial feminists in relation to their criticisms of so-called "First World" feminism, issues examined further in Part II.

Part II starts by examining some of the achievements of feminist social theory and of other variants of feminism, including liberal and radical feminism, before moving on to focus on post-colonial perspectives and on the current concerns that exist with post-modern feminism thinking, third wave feminism and most notably the trends within the field of feminist media studies in the UK. It particularly pays attention to the changing nature of gender representations in the Western media in both the UK and the US and other advanced democracies since the 1980's, further investigating the rise of post-feminism and the persistence of sexism in the media, as well as the focus of attention to representations of the "Third World woman" and other non-Western femininities, including Asian, black and Latinas. Notably, as we shall see, international representations of the "Brazilian women" have parallels with national representations and stereotyping.

Part III moves on to talk about gender inequality in Latin America and Brazil, first providing a historical critical analysis and summary of feminist movements in the continent and struggles for

gender equality in the region in key periods. It gives more emphasise to the contemporary period, looking specifically at issues of sexism in wider Brazilian society and the persistence of a strong chauvinistic culture of violence towards women. Following from the previous debates explored in Part II, Part III moves on to debate more closely issues of identity and the myth of the “Brazilian woman”, further looking at how media representations of the “Brazilian women” play out in commercials and advertising.

Part IV examines more closely the theoretical perspectives on the relationship between feminism, politics and the media. This part engages with the debate on the relationship between feminism, politics and democracy. It develops further from Parts I and II in terms of pinpointing the influences that feminism has had in contributing to further democratization of their own countries, and their pursuit of political struggles and causes. It also examines the dynamics of gender party politics, contrasting the case of Europe to Latin America (Lovenduski, and Norris, 1993), concentrating on the link between female political representation and gender equality and how such discussions are articulated in the media. Following from the previous media analysis of commercials and ads, which can be seen as working within the sphere of the mainstream media, Part IV examines a series of feminist blogs and websites on the Internet to assess the ways in which they are constructing counter-discourses and narratives to mainstream images and discourses that are circulating in the mediated public sphere.

Part V is the concluding chapter which puts together many of these debates, emphasising why gender, development and democracy matter and the role that the media can, or should have more, in pressuring for further advancement and change. This concluding chapter also makes reference to the reports discussed as well as the interviews, and thus assesses some of the core findings of the book and the suggestions on what to tackle and points to future policy-driven agendas. It investigates the possibilities of strengthening transnational feminist networks, how

these can work to further affect change, encouraging more international collaboration, shortening the distances and closing the bridges of division between the North and the South, at the same time offering more possibilities and food for thought for the media in developing countries like Brazil. It thus sets the path towards building a global framework for understanding, empathy and compassion with others who suffer in different parts of the world.

Chapter 1 – Globalization, gender and development: setting a framework for debate

Introduction

After more than three decades since the launch of the United Nations Decade for Women in 1975, with the Mexico City conference entitled “Equality, Development and Peace” culminating in many governments setting up offices for women’s affairs and putting in place what many saw as the first significant steps towards reaching greater gender equity worldwide (Parpart, Connelly and Barriteau, 2000), it is important to assess both how far we have come and what elements remain as roadblocks to pursuing a further path in development. Gender equality has returned to the agenda and become an important feature for development and for the economic growth of a country.

Feminists have made key inroads and lobbied international agencies, the United Nations and governments to pay wider attention to women’s issues, from integrating women into development programmes and acknowledging their experiences and practices (Boserup, 1970, 2008), to improving conditions for them in their countries and throughout the world. However, development thinking inserted within modernization theory has been criticised for failing to deliver on many of its promises, leading many to talk about an impasse in development studies or the end of development altogether (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009; Manyozo, 2012).

This chapter provides a critical assessment of some of these gender and development perspectives and further develops the key intellectual frameworks of this book, following from discussions of the Introduction. It starts by analysing the core debates that have marked the field of development studies, before shifting the focus to the relationship between gender, the media and development and the ways in which the media can serve as a means of not just correcting stereotypical representations but providing the avenues for wider female empowerment and exercise of multiple identities.

The most influential feminist intellectual frameworks within development thinking, from the WID (Women in Development) and GAD (Gender and Development) approaches to the *empowerment* and participatory perspectives, have marked development profoundly. I start here by first exploring intellectually the definitions of development, before moving to the assessment of the WID and GAD perspectives, the impact of structural adjustments programmes on women's lives and on the strives for greater gender equality, as well as the debates on empowerment and women's agency.

Following from the establishment of the key intellectual frameworks and lines of inquiry of the book, this chapter concludes with the discussion of the role of the media in development, and mainly how it can assist in undermining gender power relations as well as working towards greater gender equity. Questions that are explored in this chapter include the ways in which core theoretical perspectives on gender and development can provide us with intellectual frameworks to better understand women's oppression in developing countries like Brazil, and the ways in which they can shed light on how to tackle structural gender inequalities.

Critical perspectives on development: assessing the WID and GAD approaches

Development and progress have been central ideas within Western thought. As Nederveen Pieterse (2010) has argued, since the 19th century development thinking emerged as a reaction to the very crisis of progress. Some also treated development theory as part of social science, emphasising the influence of classical economic and social thought, whilst others saw development theory mainly as ideology. Authors associated with the Enlightenment, from John

Stuart Mill to even Karl Marx, can be seen as early figures in theorising about development. They have been crucial in their attempts to assess the ways that nations could alleviate the suffering of groups of people, and it can be argued that many of these authors were actually committed to working towards the formation of the “good” or ideal society for humans to live in (Kingsbury, 2004; Nederveen Pieterse, 2010). The thinkers of the Enlightenment were concerned with progress towards this goal, and with how the harnessing of rational thoughts, policies and actions might allow the realization of this ideal.

As Kingsbury (2004) has pointed out, it can be said that the core debate about development, its nature and how to achieve this has been the central concern of the whole Western social science. Similarly to John Stuart Mill, Marx also acknowledged in the 19th century that gender equality would be a means of judging if a democracy had “realised its ideals of social justice” (Einhorn in Evans and Williams, 2013, 30). Development nonetheless has acquired different meanings over time, with modernization theory for instance understanding development as the need of less developed countries of “catching up” with the advanced industrialised nations. For Bjorn Hettne (2008a: 6 in Nederveen Pieterse, 2010, 3), development can be understood as implying “intentional social change in accordance with societal objectives”.

Many debates in development have also fundamentally been about defining poverty and discussing the policies to tackle them. Questions that have been examined here include what exactly constitutes a “poor nation”, and what makes it poor. Poverty in itself has been associated with the key characteristic of the “Third World countries” (Escobar, 1995). As Hite and Timmons Roberts (2007) state, questions that have been asked include if nations are poor because their society lacks key elements, like an efficient government or fully operating markets, or is their situation the product of centuries of colonial exploitation and continuing political and economic domination by more powerful nations? As the authors (2007) note, the decade of the 1950’s and

1960's saw the US provide an explicitly non-Communist solution to poverty, taking on board modernization perspectives to development which would be soon followed by the reaction from the dependency theorists (i.e. Gunder Frank, 1969).

Escobar (1995 in Chua et al, 2000) has stated that “development” does not connote a singular ideology or project. As various critics to the dominant paradigm have pointed out, Chua et al (2000, 5) underline that development has usually been discussed through economic terms, and in terms of a nations' Gross National Product (GNP) or by their potential for economic growth. It is therefore possible to say that most definitions have tended to suggest an idea of *progress*, or a move towards it and in favour of the construction of a *better society*. It is *how* to reach this, and the most appropriate way of doing so, as well as what intellectual frameworks (WID or GAD) serve as guidelines, that are perhaps the main points of contestation. The same goes to the measures and approaches to use and adopt (i.e. the general recipe for all developing countries and structural adjustment programmes have been highly criticised), as well as the main role of actors, and how these can be the driving *agents of social change* (i.e. the government policy makers, the market or grassroots NGO activists?).

In the light of the criticisms made towards the modernization and dependency theories in development studies, there has been a move away from the “grand theories” to what some authors have called an *impasse* in development studies. The latter phase is also known as *post-development* (i.e. Nederveen Pieterse, 2010) and has been marked by a shift towards multiple perspectives and understandings on what development is according to specific actors and organizations, as well as an emphasis on pluralism, agency, polycentrism and sensitivity to local experiences and to difference. This has also been known as the phase of “alternative development”, which emphasises multiple perspectives for development depending on the actors and international organisations involved, with a focus on terms and concepts such as *diversity*, *empowerment* and *sustainable*

development (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010). There has thus been a shift away from the “grand theories” that have attempted to explain the subordination of women on solely materialistic grounds towards a focus on local contexts and the differences among women, thus emphasising the particularities of given social contexts rather than universalistic totalising models and striving to better account for the effects of social change (i.e. Jackson, 1998, 27-28).

Modernization theory was known for its emphasis on capitalism and on economic growth as the solution for developing countries that wanted to “catch up” with the more advanced nations and seek a path of development that was linear. A series of critiques were made towards the predominance of these key “grand theories” which had shaped intellectual thinking on development, particularly the modernization theory of the dominant paradigm (i.e. Waisbord, 2001), as well as to what many saw as the ineffectiveness of development programmes applied during the 1950s in Latin America.

Latin American scholars identified with the dependency school (i.e. Gunder Frank, 1969, 1979; Cardoso, 1972) criticised modernization theory for being what they claimed to be as yet another manifestation of the West’s urge to exploit the underdeveloped countries. Influenced by Marxism, this school emerged during the 1970s within the context of the cultural imperialism debates. The latter argued that the US was “injecting American values” (i.e. the hypodermic needle) in poorer countries through their media and cultural products, a debate which I have pursued in more detail elsewhere (Matos, 2012).

Despite their intellectual differences regarding the nature of the relationship of dependency shared between the former imperial power with the former colony, the dependency theorists saw modernization theory as a new form of neo-colonialism, mainly the continuation of an old process that basically promoted the interests of international capitalism at the expense of less developed and less powerful countries (i.e. Gunder Frank, 1969; Cardoso, 1972; Shohat and Stam, 1984,

2014). The global system was seen as controlled hierarchically by the post-industrialised nations, with their multinational corporations generating the wealth of the “First World” countries whilst maintaining the poverty of the “Third” (i.e. Gunder Frank, 1969; Shohat and Stam, 1984, 2014).

Dependency theory was thus seen as incapable of conceptualizing the interplay between global and local dynamics, and was later criticised for having ignored the impact of issues of gender and class (Shohat and Stam, 1984; Boyd-Barrett, 1977). If the former modernization perspective implied that the individual was to blame for the lack of development of the nation, disregarding the structures that impeded change, the dependency theory framework seemed to suggest that their problems were solely caused by external forces. These theoretical perspectives were seen as inadequate in explaining the complexities of the contemporary world. Moreover, the decline of the influence of the two “grand theories” of the field has also led to a shift away from the *state* as the main player in development towards a wider focus on the *market* and other actors, such as non-governmental, international organizations and grassroots activists.

There has thus been a shift away from the “grand theories” of development, which have attempted to explain the subordination of women on solely materialistic grounds and within the intellectual framework of economic growth and the need to “catch up” with the advanced industrialised societies, towards a focus on local contexts and the differences among women, thus emphasising the particularities of given social contexts rather than universalistic totalising models, and therefore striving to better account for the effects of social change (i.e. Jackson, 1998, 27-28). Criticisms were made also to the early development programmes of the 1950s grounded within modernization understandings of development, as well as the writings about global and international development. Various writings done by feminist scholars from the North, however well intentioned and ground-breaking, such as studies like Esther Boserup’s (1970), were too focused on underlining the absence and *invisibility* of women, who were portrayed as lacking in

agency and as being helpless victims of patriarchal, oppressive and “backward” cultures., societies and regimes (i.e. Mohanty, 1990; Chua et al, 2000).

Development and feminist perspectives would thus eventually intersect, culminating in the elaboration of two leading theoretical and intellectual frameworks, namely the Women in Development (WID) and the Gender in Development (GAD). These have been interwoven with the history of policy intervention in developing countries and with women’s movements around the world (Parpart et al, 2000, 54). It would be however from the 1970’s onwards that feminist analysts started to think about the importance of engaging with culture in discussions of development (Chua et al, 2000). Working within liberal feminism, the ground-breaking work of Esther Boserup’s 1970 *Women’s Role in Economic Development* was the first major academic work that underlined women’s exclusion from development projects in poorer countries. Boserup used data from sub-Saharan Africa to point out how women’s productive roles in agriculture were shaped by post-colonial aid policies which benefitted men (Steeves, 2003). Thus Boserup’s work drew attention to women’s contribution to agricultural and industrial development, highlighting how development policies since the colonial times had been biased against women (Kanji et al, 2008).

Her study was able to make the case for the integration of women in development, helping further to shape the 1975-1985 UN Decade for Women, including the implementation of programmes directed to women in donor agencies (Steeves, 2003). Boserup has been known for having developed the approach known as the *Women in Development* (WID), which questioned the welfare approach to women within development, having seen women and children as victims in need of saving and who should be beneficiaries of strong policies. As Parpart et al (2000) underscored, Boserup’s work challenged the idea that benefits from development projects would

automatically go to women in developing countries, underlining the need to bring women into development as farmers, and not just mothers and wives.

Merging modernization and liberal-feminist theories, these women at the time lobbied US policy-makers and donor agencies to rethink development policy and planning with women in mind, bringing in more accurate measures of women's lived experiences (Papart et al, 2000, 57). The authors (2000, 58-59) highlight how the WID approach paved the way for the very improvement in statistical measurement of women's work. The approach however has also been criticised, due to its dependency on modernization theory as well as having a tendency to see women as producers, ignoring their domestic labour and rarely addressing questions on women's subordination.

The WID intellectual framework led to a growth in influence and concern with women's issues in international organisations, with the United Nations Decade for Women being launched in 1975 with the Mexico City conference on the theme "Equality, Development and Peace." As Jacquette (2006) underscored, WID drew on the concerns of second wave Northern feminists of the 1970s, whilst the Gender and Development (GAD) framework, also known as the "empowerment approach", reflected the rise of post-colonialism feminist thinking and the growth of mobilization of women's movements from the developing countries, theoretical perspectives which will be examined in more detail in Part II of this book.

The United Nations has also had an important role in advancing women's rights internationally. In 1946, the United Nations set up the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and was expanded in 1987 to include equality, development and peace principles. It further monitored the implementation of initiatives that sought the advancement of women at regional, national and global levels. Chua et al (2000,4) note how from the second half of the 1970s, the influence of Marxism-Feminism on the *Women and Development* (WAD) led to the

questioning of the mere focus on the integration of women into development, which ignored how the dependency of less powerful nations was maintained by the richer countries.

Thus from the 1970s onwards, there were wider efforts to put women in the development agenda, with the World Bank adopting basic human needs as a priority and several UN agencies beginning to give attention to poverty and to women's status in society as *essential* development issues. As Chua et al (2000) note, the anti-poverty discourse became popular because it complemented the 1970's "basic needs" theory, whose solutions included training in skills. Moreover, the WAD framework underlined the distinctiveness of women's knowledge and called for the acknowledgement of the special roles that they had played in the development process, offering an important contribution to WID.

The 1980s and 1990s were thus marked by a new round of debates on how to think gender and development, within the context of the decline of the grand theories in development as well as the role of the nation-state as the main agent. This was in a context of the growth of the power of the markets and transnational corporations, and the emergence of new players in development. This included the rise of the third sector and of NGOs with different visions and takes on development. Referred to also as the "empowerment approach", the Gender and Development (GAD) perspective emerged in the 1980s as an alternative to the WID and WAD approaches (i.e. Jacquette, 2006). This intellectual perspective emerged from the writings of feminists from developing countries, and also included analyses of Western socialist feminists, having argued that a women's status in society is deeply affected by their material conditions and by their position in the national, local and international economies (Parpart et al, 2000, 62).

The GAD perspective thus started to see women as *agents* of change, and not victims of it. It also placed greater emphasis on *power relations* between men and women, stressing how the conditions of women in a given society are maintained by the accepted values that stipulate what

women's and men's roles should be in a particular context (Sen and Grown, 1987 in Parpart et al, 2000, 62). Moreover, the word "empowerment" has become a buzzword in development studies (Parpart, 2000). GAD further advocated for "mainstreaming" as a means of including gender into all development projects and, according to authors like Moser (1995 quoted in Jacquette and Staudt, 2006, 31), posed less resistance among donor agencies than WID due to their emphasis on "gendered structures of power".^{vi}

Both the WID and GAD approaches have influenced mainstream development thinking and, despite the criticisms made to the former, various authors argued that these perspectives were not that different and that GAD built on the strengths of WID (Jacquette and Staudt in Jacquette and Summerfield, 2006). Other authors nonetheless (Chua et al, 2000, 4) have criticised all the gender development frameworks, WID, WAD and GAD, for having focused more on the *economic* aspects of women's inequality without an adequate emphasis on *culture*. They have argued that these approaches tended to neglect a more thorough analysis of the ways in which capitalism, patriarchy and race/ethnicity shaped and informed women's subordination and oppression. The authors propose a new theoretical framework, the "Women, Culture and Development" (WCD), perspective, which they deemed as being more appropriate and capable of applying a multi-ethnic and multiracial dimension to development studies and to gender.

As Jacquette (in Jacquette and Summerfield, 2006,1) affirms, the WID and GAD perspectives have had an impact on both the *discourse* of development and how aid has been managed, having less an effect though on improving the lot of women in developing countries. Most importantly, the gender perspectives on development influenced the introduction in 1995 of the gender-related development index (GDI), as well as contributing to general analyses of poverty (Chant in Jacquette and Summerfield, 2006). Both *the Human Development* and the *World Development Reports* have shown the impact of the WID/GAD approaches (Rai, 2011, 135).

Various authors have pointed to the role that United Nations conferences and specialised agency meetings (i.e. Jain, 2005), such as the CEDAW and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), have had as providing key sites for the articulation of new forms of transnational feminist activism, including the “Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era” (DAWN) and the “Women in Development in Europe”, which emerged after 1985. An important contribution of the women’s movements and feminists, who worked with the United Nations was the recognition that *discrimination* was an important element that contributed to perpetuate gender inequality and not improve women’s status in countries throughout the world. As Jain (2005) notes, discrimination was seen as a key barrier in enhancing women’s status. The UN’s Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) produced two important documents on this, the *Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women* (DEDAW, 1967) and the *Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW, 1979).

The CEDAW, ratified in 1979 by over 155 nation-states, and the 1995 *Beijing Platform for Action*, have been considered important documents by which member nations have committed themselves to adopt in order to promote structural changes in favour of creating wider gender equality, although their application throughout the countries has been uneven (Desai, 2009, 38). These were able to set new standards by which to measure progress in how governments engaged with women and gave them a template to follow. Moreover, an important discussion here also was around the concept of *discrimination*, understood as grounded on notions of “difference”, such as the case of religious or ethnic minorities, stigmatized groups or those who, for reasons of class differentiation, are deprived of opportunities for advancement. Reeves and Baden (2000, 7), from the Institute of Development Studies, have defined discrimination as being “the systematic, unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies them rights, opportunities or resources.”

As Momsen (2003) reminds us, by the turn of the century three United Nations Development decades had been realised. Randi Davis^{vii}, director of the Gender Team for United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Policy and Support Programme, argues that the *Beijing Platform for Action* remains as relevant today as it was when it was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. As she underlined, gender equality and the empowerment of women are central concerns to the UNDP mandate and intrinsic to its development approach. According to her:

“One of the great achievements of the *Beijing Platform for Action* was the clear recognition that women's rights are *human rights*. The *Beijing Platform for Action* highlighted critical areas of action that have informed development approaches and actions since. Through these developments, approaches and actions, such as the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), national development plans or national gender equality strategies, there has been some progress... there is greater recognition than ever that gender equality is not only a matter of rights, but also is *instrumental* to sustainable development”.

Davis emphasised further the importance of gender for the post-2015 development agenda.

As she stated:

“In September 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals were formally adopted by the UN Member States. The document “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Development” acknowledges that realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the goals and targets, and that the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if one half of humanity continues to be denied its full human rights and opportunities. The document calls for: equal access to quality education for women and girls, economic resources and political participation as well as equal opportunities with men and boys for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels, to work for a significant increase in investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels and eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, including through the engagement of men and boys.”

Gender equality has thus become a top priority now for governments, international agencies, the United Nations and other bodies as well as for many governments across the world. Jacquette (2006, 1) had already underlined how the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has made gender a priority in many of their development reviews. According also to the leading economist of the *Gender Group* of the World Bank, Lucia Hanmer,^{viii} the institution documented nearly \$39 billion of gender informed lending in 2014, whilst OECD countries contributed with nearly \$ 26 billion in aid towards gender equality and women's empowerment projects.

Hanmer has celebrated some of the advancements on gender equality that have been detected in the last decades and examined in both the 2012 *World Bank Development* report and the 2014 *Voice and Agency* document, but has also underlined how progress is taking place at a slow pace:

“It's particularly encouraging to see that progress has been made in some of the poorest countries in sub Saharan Africa and South Asia, where girls enrolment rates compared to boys was lowest 15 years ago. There's still a lot more to be done in secondary education, where girls are still less likely to enrol in school than boys in some regions – for example sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia....There has also been progress on legislation. Seventy five countries have enacted domestic violence legislation since the adoption of CEDAW in 1979...Half the legislative constraints to women's equal participation in the economy, for example, are constraints on women's access and control over property, ability to sign documents, take up employment in different sectors and be fairly treated under the constitution, which were documented in over 100 countries in 1960, but had been removed by 2010. ...the progress has been slow and limited on outcomes such as female mortality and access to economic opportunities and for women in very poor countries... Gender discrimination compounds other forms of disadvantage – on the basis of *socioeconomic status, geographic locations, race, caste and ethnicity, sexuality or disability* (my emphasis) – to limit women's and girl's opportunities and life chances.”

Despite decades of official development policy planning, as I have discussed here, by the 1990s it became evident that a lot of the problems of poverty, disease, illiteracy and unemployment in many countries of the South had not improved, and that economic development in itself did not automatically eradicate poverty. Programmes of distribution and benefits to various segments of the population became of crucial concern within development theory

(Momsen, 2003). This is one of the reasons that has made gender equality return firmly back to the global agenda again in the post-2015 context, seeing a renewal in the commitments assumed by governments and international agencies in the past, and alluded to here by Randi Davie and Lucia Hanmer. However, increasing globalization and the decline of the role of the state as the traditional main agent of development in the last decades, in a context of growth in cuts to public spending, welfare benefits and the implementation of structural adjustment programmes, have also shaken the development field, raising new challenges, debates and concerns and culminating in what many have seen as an “impasse in development” (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010), issues which are examined in more detail in the next section.

Globalization, structural adjustment programmes and the “feminization of poverty”

The decade of the 1980’s would see a shift away from the preoccupations with poverty in the developing countries that dominated the period of the 1970s, coming from Keynesian liberals and other radicals associated with the dependency school, and which had influenced liberal development thinking and officials at the IMF and World Bank, towards emphasis on economic mismanagement (Papart et al, 2000, 61) and the need for structural adjustment reforms to boost efficiency of states and government. In the context of the rise of the “neo-liberal” dominant framework of the 1980s both in the US with Ronald Reagan and in the UK with Margaret Thatcher, structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) were suggested as a means of reducing the role of the state and thus boosting market forces to create economic prosperity capable of benefitting both men and women alike.

The restructuring of the state and the rise of what has been termed as “neo-liberal political thinking” has also led to the implementation of wider cuts to public spending in many Western

countries, as well as throughout Latin American countries who were entering the global market economy in the 1990s. Many of these policies affected women, young people and the more vulnerable sectors of society, further increasing the burden on women's labour and household work (Jacquette and Summerfield, 2006; Lebon, 2010).

Feminist research and other scholars over the last 25 years has been crucial in developing more holistic conceptual frameworks to understand what constitutes poverty beyond a focus on mere lack of income (i.e. Rai, 2011, Chant, 2006). The last two decades saw a broadening of the criteria used in poverty definitions, with a focus way from "poverty" as defining only the fulfilment of basic needs towards conceptions of quality of life and notions of "vulnerability". Among crucial influences have been Sen's capability and human development frameworks, as well as other perspectives which stressed the subjective dimensions of poverty, including paying attention to issues such as self-esteem, dignity and choice (Rai, 2011, 175).

In the 1980's Amartya Sen built on the basic needs theory, developing on the concept of *human entitlements* and *capabilities* (Rai, 2011). As Rai (2011) notes, the basic needs (BN), was first articulated in the 1970s and considered important, having paved the way for more sophisticated discussions of what poverty means and what constitutes a poor person. It argued that poverty cannot be eliminated only with a higher income. Sen talked about agency achievements, including participation, empowerment and community life. A person with "high income but no opportunity for political participation is not "poor" in the usual sense" of the term, but is clearly impoverished regarding their capacity of exercising an important political freedom.

Sen (1999) was been influential within development thinking, having highlighted the shift in concern away from the merely welfare approach towards a wider emphasis on women as *agents of change*. Sen (1999, 191) identified a correlation between women's agency and voice with education and employment and the reduction of infant mortality. In his famous chapter "Women's

Agency and Social Change” in the book *Development as Freedom*, Sen notes that the “limited role of women’s active agency seriously afflicts the lives of all people.” The crux of Sen’s argument was that there was a connection between women’s well being to agency. Reducing gender inequality could thus have a *positive* affect on women’s well being. Women’s agency should be encouraged, among others, by stimulating her economic independence or working outside from home, the pursuit of further education and of opportunities for participation in decision-making activities both in the private and public sphere, increasing women’s status and having an impact on social development (Sen, 2001).

Chant (in Jacquette et al, 2006, 95) argues that gender research has had three major implications for the measurement of poverty, such as contributing to broaden the indicators of poverty used in reports and emphasising the importance of “disaggregating households, which are the more common units of measurement in income-based poverty profiles” as well as permitting people to give their own views on their situation. In her analysis of feminist contributions to the analysis of poverty, Chant (2006, 88) has underlined the shift from a narrow emphasis on income and consumption to a more sophisticated understanding of poverty as a *multi-dimensional phenomenon*, reflecting a move away from a merely quantitative approach to a *qualitative* one capable of including subject criteria and challenging conventional narratives that were seen as gender-blind. As she states, issues such as power and *empowerment* have gained prominence in debates on poverty.^{ix}

During the 1980s, research focused on the impact of the structural adjustment programmes, cuts in state spending and other reforms, which were seen as having placed a greater burden on women than men (Chant, 2006; Parpart, 2000; Moser, 1989). Women headed households were also firstly seen as being synonymous with the “poorest of the poor”, as it was assumed that women had a series of burdens to carry and were more resource-constrained (Acosta-Belem and

Bose, 1995, Chant, 2006). However, authors such as Chant (2006, 90) have argued that this is misleading and that research has shown that the link is not automatic, and it has become more likely that women-headed households are more present in middle and upper income segments of the population.

Many have argued that it has been women who have been particularly hit by the economic adjustments programmes and by market-oriented growth during the 1980s and 1990s, particularly in countries in Africa and Latin America (Kanji et al, 2008, xiii), which later led to the implementation of social programmes to reduce these effects in the short-term. In Brazil, the period of the 1980s as been labelled by many as having been a “lost decade” for development, with the emphasis on economic growth and structural adjustments of the 1990’s having produced a lot of criticisms due to the rise in unemployment levels and increase in poverty levels .

The decade of the 1990’s would also see a gradual growth towards concerns with poverty alleviation and good governance, though not necessarily with the reduction of inequality, as well as other forms of development beyond the economic sphere. This included a wider emphasis on culture and religion and its role in development, with further discussions on the possibility of achieving *sustainable* forms of development gaining ground within development thought (Kanji et al, 2008). Momsen (2003, 9) has pointed to a series of studies which have shown evidence that societies which discriminate against women pay a higher price in terms of more poverty, slower growth and a lower quality of life. A report by the McKinsey Global Institute stated that closing the gender gap, and boosting women’s opportunities in the labour market, could add \$12 trillion to the annual global GDP over the next ten years (2015-2025). Researchers measured gender inequality across 95 countries and used 15 different indicators, including women’s role in the workplace, availability of contraception and access to bank accounts, concluding that the extra

revenue could be made by allowing more women to join the workforce and shifting those who are in paid work into more productive jobs.^x

Representative of United Nations Women in Brazil, Nadine Gasman, has underlined the link between gender equality with equality of opportunity, stating that few nations make use of the talent and skills of both men and women, and that this has an effect on the economy.^{xi} Gasman makes reference to the World Bank 2012 report on *Gender and Development*, which stressed that the economy of a country can grow up to 25% if gender inequality is eliminated. Gasman argues that countries need to make more use of women's talents in different occupations and professional activities:

“The main point is that the *empowerment* of women, and girls and equal opportunities, implies their decisions over their own lives. There are many fronts to reach gender equity: in the workplace, in healthcare, end of violence towards women, political representation, gender representation in the media and respect to the existence of a diversity of women. In the whole world, there is a lot to change considering that, if the current conditions are maintained, equality in the workplace will take more than 80 years to be achieved. Mechanisms such as patriarchal ideology, sexism, chauvinism have created the conditions for male dominance, for men to reach the high levels of power and to maintain under their control various social structures. To revert this situation, it is necessary to re-establish the equilibrium of forces and of power in relations between women and men. That is, gender equality demands consciousness and new attitudes of men and women about their own condition as men and women and in relation to each other. ...gender inequalities persist and demand positions, practices and decisions that restore human relations and social relations of equality. This needs the involvement of men so that the spaces of privilege and advantages can be demolished....”

A key question that is currently asked by development practitioners and various academics alike is *how* should we talk about development in an age of globalization, where governments and nation states are not the main agents in development anymore, and are constrained by public spending cuts and structural adjustment programmes. Desai (2009, 31) sees globalization as working as a double-edged sword, stimulating both inequalities due to imbalances of trade between the richer countries and the poorer ones, as well as a source of opportunity for activism

via international institutions such as the UN, global debate through information and communication technologies and the creation of opportunities for wider transnational feminist activism.

Globalization thus should be viewed more critically and understood as not being merely the homogenization of the whole world. The first wave of globalization scholars (i.e. Giddens, 2002; Ritzer, 2007) viewed globalization as increasing *de-territorialization* and growing interconnectedness, whereas the second wave (i.e. McDonald, 2006; Nederveen Pieterse, 2004) have talked of complex spaces and multiple globalizations that do not necessarily follow the traditional pattern of the “West to the rest” of the world (Desai, 2009, 3). Thus people do not only react to globalization, but they shape the global process by the way they engage with it. The emphasis on diversity, pluralism and locality, as mentioned earlier, has also led to growing criticisms of the hegemony of the narratives from the North in looking at the developing world. These were followed by attacks on the ways that capitalist globalization has enriched a few and imposed hardships on the most vulnerable, producing inequalities in and between countries of the North and South. This is said to have given rise to a new international working class or a *female proletariat*, such as garment sweatshops in major cities and nations on the periphery (Aguilar et al, 2004).

Concepts such as “empowerment”, “agency” and “participatory” approaches to development programmes have also been incorporated into the mainstream of development thinking and are very much part of the discourse of international organisations working with women’s rights. *Empowerment* is a concept closely tied to the notion of *agency*, and has become immensely fashionable, being included in the discourses, actions and practices of international organisations, donor agencies and grassroots activists. As Jacquette and Staudt (in Jacquette and Summerfield, 2006, 31) underlined, GAD’s approach to empowerment meant that women from developing

countries could choose if they wished to “make their practical needs more strategic”. For Batliwala (1994 in Parpart et al, 2000), empowerment can be seen as the “control over resources and ideology “and something which is capable of challenging existing power relations. In her discussion of empowerment, Moser (1995) has emphasised *self-reliance* and *internal strength*. Control over resources and *agency* are the concepts mostly emphasised in the discussions within development studies on women’s empowerment. Rappaport (1987) has further described *empowerment* as being a sense of personal control and a concern with social influence and political power (in Melkote in Mody, 2003), and thus can be seen as a way in which people gain control over resources. The *control over resources* – be them economic, social or political – is not always enough to secure women’s empowerment, at the same time that it is naïve to assume that the improvement of women’s position will be solely the responsibility of women themselves, in short, of their agency.

Paul Healey, Head of Profession Social Development of the UK’s Department of International Development, has argued also over the importance of *agency* and has written how society needs to start treating women as equals in order for them to be so, emphasising the importance of social change in habits and attitudes.^{xiii} *Empowerment* thus includes the encouragement to develop skills for self-sufficiency, with a focus on eliminating the future need for welfare in groups or individuals. It is also possible I believe to see empowerment in more political terms and part of an important aspect of an individual’s human rights, including the right to have self-esteem and the sense of intrinsic equal worth, of a sense of sharing an *equality* with other people and groups, and not only between women and men.

Here I want to examine more the concept of *power*, developing further on the initial discussion that I began to pursue here on *empowerment* and *women’s agency*. The concept of *power* have been central to feminist thought, and Foucault’s understanding of power as dispersed

and fluid, present throughout various spheres of society, has been enormously influential, as opposed to the more classic Marxist positions and traditional views of power as a *top-down* process, mainly between masters and slaves or bosses and workers. As Hinterberger (2013 in in Evans and Williams, 7) underlined, feminist theory has long attempted to assess the question of women's agency in relation to patriarchy, oppression and inequality. It has investigated the debate on the extent to which people are seen as *acting independently* or not from constraints placed on them by social systems. Many argue that social structures pose external obstacles for the very life choices of women. Butler (1997 in Hinterberger, 2013), in her account of agency, states that the concept can no longer be put in opposition to the notion of *subordination*, as it is formed with and through one another, with transnational feminists striving to develop an approach to agency that "does not patronise or exoticize" (Hinterberger, 2013, 10).

Critics have thus stated that an overemphasis on agency can end up serving a more "neo-liberal" agenda, and can be seen as having its roots in the emphasis on the individual proposed by Enlightenment thought (Hinterberger, 2013 in Evans and Williams). In a context influenced by post-colonial thinking, as well as post-modern theories, the notion that women can conform to social norms without this meaning that they "lack in agency" is seen as something necessary which needs to be taken into account. Post-colonial scholars and others within development thought have also been critical towards the concept, with some arguing that to have or not to have agency can be an issue of *choice* and not necessarily a synonym for being oppressed. The evident risks here are the possibility of being overly complacent with various forms of oppression due to a commitment to cultural relativism, thus ignoring power relations and failing to fully address them, especially when many of these function in societies to keep women *in their place* in the social order.

It is essential thus not to undermine or be dismissive in relation to the importance of the concepts of *empowerment* and *agency* for understanding the struggles of women with both internal

as well as external barriers in the fight for wider gender equality. The reality is that these concepts have been stripped off their more *radical edge* (Kearney, 2012), perhaps from the more *Paulo Freire* sense of the term, of *political consciousness* (conscientizacao). This does not mean that different individuals cannot make use of the *progressive* dimension that these concepts still hold, combining them with both individual will (i.e. the building of self confidence and notions of equal worth) with collective action (the struggle for the advancement of rights). Thus these concepts still remain useful frameworks to think critically women's subordination as well as unequal power relations, especially so for discussions concerning the barriers and constraints that are still placed in the path of many women, and which impede their progress. In an age when the struggle for global gender justice requires alliances with women from all around the world, it is crucial to examine the role that communications can have in the advancement of women's rights, and in helping to achieve wider gender equality.

Gender, media and development: setting a debate

The connection between inequalities in our societies, and gender representations in the media, are as relevant today as they were 20 years ago. The *1995 Beijing Platform for Action* (BPfA) for instance had already signalled out the importance of the role of the media in the struggle against gender inequality, having underlined that the media as being one of the 12 "critical areas of concern in the way of gender equality", having also moved away from the initial concerns with women's "advancement" to women's "empowerment" (Kearney, 2012). From community radio, to public service broadcasting, the universal access to the Internet and the uses of participatory forms of communications, the media is seen as vital to information and citizenship

rights, having the capacity to perform an important role in new democracies, from assisting citizens in deciphering manipulated information with partisan interests from more quality, accurate and honest information that can help people understand their country better (Voltmer, 2006), to helping in the reduction of inequalities and providing opportunities for wider social inclusion and democratization.

That the media has a role in development, and in gender development in particular, is not however what is debated but precisely what this *role* should be for developing countries, and what it has been in the past, and how can we make better use of communication structures for the advancement of democracy and nation building. The modernization paradigm, as we have seen, has been subject to a series of criticisms, having failed to produce substantial gender equality in development communications. The modernization approach to media development was founded on the notion that international mass communications should become the vehicle for spreading the message of modernity to underdeveloped nations who needed to “catch up” with the more industrialised nations. As Thussu (2000) has stated, here was the view that international communication had a role in the process of developing the “Third World”.

Scholars Lerner (1958) and Schramm (1964), who were later followed by Rogers (1974), have been considered to be the earliest advocates for communication for development in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s (Burton, 2001, 2004 in Coetzee et al). Influenced by the behaviourist model of communications, both scholars have become known for their theories on media and development within the modernization perspective. Lerner and Schramm argued that mass media could multiply development efforts and promote rapid economic growth and stable democracy (Stevenson, 1988). Daniel Lerner (1958, 50) believed that the mass media could break the hold of traditional cultures on societies and make them aspire to a modern way of life by injecting modernizing values onto them and stimulating the trait of empathy, seen as essential for people

moving away from traditional settings (Burton, 2001, 2004 in Coetzee et al). In *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, Lerner pointed to the “mobile personality”, seeing a high correlation between the measures of economic growth with those of communications. For him, the mass media served as the great multiplier in development, capable of spreading the requisite knowledge and attitudes more quickly and widely than before.

Schramm developed from these arguments, discussing Lerner and the mobile personality in his first chapter to *Mass media and national development*, “The Role of Information in National Development”. Sponsored by Unesco, Schramm (1964) in his classic *Mass media and national development: the role of information in the developing countries* saw a link between the development of a modern mass media with economic and social growth and levels of literacy, per capita income and urbanization (Servaes, 1996 in Burton, 2001, 2004). Development was equated with the introduction of media technology, with the number of TV sets, radio and newspapers and their penetration in a country being pointed out as indicators of modern attitudes and modernization (Lerner, 1958 in Waisbord, 2011, 6-7). This was also known as the *diffusions model*, sometimes called the dominant paradigm in communications for development. These perspectives were later criticised and seen as simplistic, reflecting a linear process of development and ignoring other structural problems of the countries in question. Drawing on Latin American scholar Paulo Freire’s work, critics argued that the dominant paradigm supported a one-way, linear top-down models of communications, viewing audiences as passive receivers (Burton, 2001, 2004).

Waisbord (2001, 15) has claimed that the field of development communications from the late 1960s onwards split into two broad approaches: one that revised the goals of modernization and diffusion theories and another that endorsed a participatory view of communications in contrast to information-centred theories.^{xiii} As the author (2001) further affirmed, the focus on

media-centred persuasion activities which could improve literacy and knowledge transfer approach would define the field for years. Another influential theory within these perspectives was the *diffusion of innovations model* created by Everett Rogers, who saw development as “a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce higher per capita income and levels of living” (1974, 75). Schramm and Rogers however did revise their main principles in the mid-1970s after having taken on board the criticisms, and with the latter even admitting the “passing of the dominant paradigm”. It was acknowledged that the early views contained psychological biases and that the “trickle down” model had not proven effective (Waisbord, 2001, 7).

The quantitative and behaviourist model to communication flows, with its “top down” approach, were thus eventually seen as inadequate in explaining the complexities of the communication process and its role in development. Critics associated with the Latin America dependency theory school criticised these models and what they saw as the imposition of Western mass media models onto “developing countries”. They viewed the modernization theory of development as emphasising too much the individual as responsible for the state of underdevelopment, and neglecting the role played by political and economic structures.

Within the context of the dependency theories, the cultural imperialism thesis also saw developing countries as being in a position of cultural dependency to the media and cultural products of the industrialised Western countries (i.e. Boyd-Barrett, 1977; Thussu, 2000). The cultural imperialism theories of the 1970’s and 1980’s further argued that the media in developing countries imported not only foreign news and cultural formats, but also values of consumption. Influenced by Marxism, they saw the media as serving an *ideological function*, and part of the cultural superstructure that results from the economic relations of dependency. There were also criticisms towards inequalities in global communications and technology structures between the

North and the South, and what was viewed as the continuation of the economic and cultural dependency of the former European colonies even after dependency. These lead to the New World Communication and Information Order (NWICO) debates during the 1970s, followed by demands for more equitable share of the world's economic and communication resources (Mowlana, 1993, 60).

New approaches in development thinking also started to shape the decade of the 1980s, from the basic needs theory to sustainable development approaches, as well as the rise in emphasis of *participatory approaches* to development communications. The main aim of the participatory approach was to *empower* the various subjects of development, moving away from the “top-down” approach of the expert imposing ideas on a community towards more equitable power relations between *all* the stakeholders involved, assuming a wider commitment to take on the views of the locals into account in development planning. There has been debate also on the extent to which the social marketing model has managed or not to adopt participatory approaches in its emphasis on consulting the public, with critics claiming that it treats them merely as consumers and *passive receivers*, contrary to the principles of participatory communications, where the public is viewed as part of the whole development process.

Since the 1980s and 1990s, the participatory approaches to communications evolved into a rich field in contrast to the first development models which were becoming more subject to criticisms. Participatory theorist advocates saw the need to be *culturally sensitive* and to respond to the needs of local communities, something which was not necessarily present in more social marketing approaches which tended to focus on research and treat people more as consumers. The scholar Paulo Freire in *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was a key influence. Freire underlined the importance of shifting away from the top-down approach in communications and engaging in a form of *egalitarian dialogue*, which could empower all the participants involved, thus making

communications more equitable and less exploitative (Melkote and Steeves, 2001), and contributing to the development of participatory action research (PAR). As Waisbord (2001, 11) further contends, programmes promoting immunization, family planning and other agricultural reforms were conducted in countries in Africa, Asia and South America during the 1970s.

Writing about communication and development, Manyozo (2012) has criticised what he claims to be a form of “binary thinking” or tendency within development which has placed diffusion theories and participatory approaches as opposites, ignoring that there can be overlaps and connections. Manyozo (2012, 4-5) moves on to talk about a binary opposition between what he deems the theoretical “experts” and grassroots practitioners, emphasising the “unequal relationship” that has characterised the history of development, and which has resulted in more inequality and problems. As we have seen, the influence of both the WID and GAD approaches within development, as well as the incorporation into the mainstream of the field of concepts such as *empowerment* and *agency*, are an indication in themselves that in an age of post-development there are more connections and fuzziness between the approaches than what would seem at first (i.e. Parpart et al, 2000; Jacquette, 2006). The interviews that I have conducted here with experts from international organizations and practitioners is a proof of how the language and discourse of development has fully incorporated these terms into their lexicon and thinking, in both practice and in the academia, and how there is room for more collaboration between the two, perhaps less so than in the past.

UNESCO has provided a framework for measuring development in its 2008 report, *UNESCO's Media Development Indicators*. These are in accordance with the priority areas of the *International Programme for the Development of Communication* (IPDC), and which include the promotion of freedom of expression and pluralism; the development of community media and human resource development, including capacity building of media professionals and institutional

capacity building. The international UN body suggested five categories of indicators which can be used to examine the *media development* of a country. The indicators were applied for the first time in the Caribbean region to assess the media environment of Curacao and the Dominican Republic. These media indicators can provide good parameters that can assist researchers in their evaluation of the state of communication development in a country, but these categories alone cannot explain the complexities of the role that the media can have in development.

Despite the fact that the field of development studies has produced work during three decades on gender issues, as I examined in the previous sections, Steeves (2003) pointed out how *development communications* on the other hand has neglected gender communications. As she (2003, 235) states, “feminists scholars and activists must recognise that the *democratization of communications* (my emphasis) is irrelevant to the majority of the world’s women, who remain excluded from access to the media or information technologies.” Although there have been improvements since the earlier studies, the reality is that women still need to be inserted more strongly in development, including in development communications as well as in other demands made to the media in terms of commitment to development and to gender issues. These can include from sensitive awareness training in newsrooms, to more community radios targeted to women to better and diverse representations of women in the media.

The conduction of media reform to make media systems more competitive and democratic, specifically in developing countries like Brazil, can serve women’s interests assist in promoting more gender equality. Various academic studies have shown how the media can have a role in democracy and nation-building (i.e. Matos, 2012; Waisbord, 2000) in not just developing countries but also in more advanced industrialized societies. One of my first works focused on the role that the mainstream media in Brazil, mainly the print press and journalists, had in the re-democratization period in the country and how sectors of the media, in different moments of

history and dependent of particular contexts, contributed to advance democracy or inhibited change (Matos, 2008). Another body of work examined how the public media, and public service broadcasting in particular, shaped and defined communication welfare in Europe and the relationship of these structures to European democracy in a comparative perspective with the initiatives of strengthening the public media in Latin America and Brazil as part of the democratization project (Matos, 2012).^{xiv}

There are thus different ways that the media can serve development. In the Introduction I mentioned that a key line of research inquiry is to assess *how* new communications and technologies are being used to articulate feminists discourses in the online public sphere, a discussion further pursued in Part IV. As Steeves (2003, 47) notes, various projects for women's empowerment are being created through alternative media and networking structures, stating among others practices such as *Women's Feature Service*, a women's news agency based in New Delhi, *Women's International Newsgathering Service (WING)*, a radio service based in the US, and the AVIVA website, which connects women across the world to exchange information and provide other forms of support.

The *Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP)*, run by WACC, a global network of communications that seeks social justice through communication rights, is also an example of a useful knowledge and information portal on gender and the media, which I will discuss further in Part V of this book. Thus media can and should be used for *emancipatory dialogue* and for the empowerment of groups. As Steeves (2003) notes, women are using new technologies on a global scale to link groups and individuals. My aim here has been precisely to look at different media channels in order to assess the extent to which communication platforms can contribute to development, including not just gender representations in the mainstream media, but examining

the uses of online networks and ICTs (information and communication technologies) for advancing further the gender equality agenda and women's rights.

The way that gender is represented in mainstream communication outlets, and the ways in which new technologies and ICTs are deployed for articulating discourses in the media on counter-representations, advancing women's agenda, interests and concerns, are among some of the key possibilities offered by communication structures for development. The media cannot always assist in development, and there needs to be certain conditions for communication platforms to be able to influence. This includes an attention to the social and political context in which messages and meanings operate, the activity and intentions of the actors involved as well as favourable conditions of reception by the public and society. These are some of the points that will be examined throughout this book. It is to the critical assessment of the work provided by post-colonial scholars and post-modern feminism, among other variants of feminism, as well as to the particular focus on the representation of "the Other" and of the "Third World woman", that I turn to next in the following chapter.

Chapter 2 – Postmodernism, equality and feminism: current contemporary issues

“It is my view that gender is culturally formed, but it is also a domain of agency or freedom and that it is most important to resist the violence that is imposed by ideal gender/norms, especially against those who are gender different, who are non-confirming in their gender representation.”

Judith Butler

What is feminism? gender equality and why it matters

There has been a myriad of different forms of feminism, all of which have provided knowledge and understanding on the nature of gender inequality, and what the strategies should be adopted in order to overcome them. As Ramazanoglu (1989) states, feminism does not have an agreed meaning around the world, and can either be defined in terms of radical American feminism of the 1970's or be more associated with 19th century feminist first wave movements. The different perspectives have been grouped together as forming part of the three core feminist movements, notably the first wave, second and third wave feminisms. The goal of universal suffrage for instance, and the right to own property and capital, to be educated and to go to work, where struggles associated with the first wave of feminists of the 19th and early 20th century. In the UK, the feminist movement known as the *suffragettes*, headed by the famous Emmeline Pankhurst, her daughters and other smaller feminists organizations, went to great lengths, including being marginalised, imprisoned, going on hunger strikes and losing their jobs, in order to secure voting and other civil rights for women.

Liberal feminism in the 19th century advocated the same civil rights for women as well as economic opportunities. Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792)

appeared as the first feminist document in favour of educational parity between men and women. Wollstonecraft celebrated rationality and insisted that women as well as men have this same skill and capacity. Writing one hundred years later in *The Subjection of Women* (1869), John Stuart Mill stressed that society should provide women with the same economic opportunities that men enjoyed, and was also a passionate defender of universal suffrage. Walby (1997, 149) has argued that first wave feminism has been misjudged in its importance within feminism, with the core political, sociological and historical texts being wrong in seeing these early women's movements as narrow in their focus. She argues that these movements included both liberal and radical versions of feminism, among others, and embraced a rich range of demands, attempting also to represent the interests of women beyond the upper classes.

“First wave feminism was a large, multi-faceted, long-lived and highly effective political phenomenon”, stated Walby (1997). As she further (1997, 149-151) notes, first wave feminist movements were responsible for campaigns which included not only the demands to vote, but also the control of predatory male sexual behaviour, access to employment, training and education, reform of the legal status of married women so that they could claim property. They were also active in labour and union movements and paid attention to women's domestic labour, identifying even the exploitation of women's labour in the home as a major source of the problems facing women. These rights were granted by the end of the 19th century, and some as late as the mid-20th century (Lorber, 2001).

Walby (1997) has emphasised that there has been a tendency within feminist thought to consider only second wave feminism as radical. This is explained due to the different conditions under which second-wave feminism was rooted, where women performed both unpaid house work and paid work. Quoting the studies of a series of authors, Walby (1997, 144-145) argued that first wave feminists contained significant radical elements, including their use of militant tactics such

as going on hunger strikes and destroying private property, and that developments of capitalism are not sufficient to explain the radical or liberal nature of feminism. These early feminist movements campaigned for public provision for education and healthcare, and managed to pave the way for the very formation of the welfare state (Walby, 1997).

Access of women to higher education is one of the major conquests of first wave feminists alongside suffrage, although the latter is the only one universally acknowledged (Walby, 1997, 151). Other authors have also underlined the important influence that liberal feminism has had in the struggle for wider gender equality, underlining how liberal perspectives in women's studies contributed to call attention to women's unequal treatment and neglect in disciplines such as history, law, culture, business and politics (Kearney, 2012, 9). It is thus possible to affirm that first wave feminism, as well as liberal feminism movements, mainly in Europe and the US, have been closely connected to the very cornerstone of the democratic project in their requests for the political and social equality of women to men. Although Ramazanoglu (1989) does recognise the importance of liberal feminism, claiming that the 19th century European and American movements did present splits between socialist and liberal positions, there is a tendency to underestimate their contributions. The period from the 1920s to the 1950s nonetheless was one which saw a quieting of the struggles for further advancement of women's rights, which can perhaps be interpreted as reflecting an assumption that the path towards equality had been constructed, and would be achieved after the granting of voting rights to women.

Thus I believe that a more thorough critique that can be made towards first wave feminism, or to other forms of mainstream or liberal feminism, is the one that has been articulated by post-colonial scholars, women of colour in the North and other radical or post-modern feminists. These have argued that women from the South, as well as others working towards gender equality in the North, have felt excluded from mainstream feminist movements, and they further believe that their

collaboration and struggles during the 19th century and afterwards in favour of women's rights had not been fully acknowledged. Moreover, first wave feminists did not fully question the impact of colonialism and of racism on the constraints and oppression suffered by women from developing countries.^{xv}

Similarly to Fraser, Carter (2014, 376) also criticises mainstream feminism for having mainly advanced the position of white, middle class women from the West, having done little to improve the status of women of colour as well as working class women. As she noted, the development of feminism after the 1980s saw the emergence of post-colonial, postmodern as well as cyber-feminism, among others, making evident the extent to which mainstream feminism had “silenced those who were not included in its discourses”. This led to a greater acknowledgement of the differences between women as well as the power relations that existed between them. It is possible to say that, despite some progress, change has continued to be slow in this respect. Despite the growth of studies on diversity and the influence of post-colonial thought, which I will explore further in the next section, feminist theory can still become more inclusive and open to be influenced by other voices and perspectives.

Despite the divisions and different schools of thought, Ramazanoglu (1989) made in the late 1980s a powerful argument in favour of the strength of feminist social theory. She correctly claimed at the time – an argument which I believe continues to be valid, particularly in a context of increasing uncertainty and disillusionment with all “grand theories” and policies that can enact change - that feminist social theory was among the few that retained some optimism for the future, having however admitted that the 1980s was seeing a decline (Lorber, 2000). In spite of the problems posed by post-feminism – which I will be discussing more in the next section -, it is possible to argue that a *renewed* enthusiasm and energy over feminism has emerged in the last years, and which shows a new commitment to achieving gender equality throughout the world.

Following from my discussions in the previous chapter, this has been largely expressed in various spheres of social, economic and political life, from the inclusion of at least four goals related to women in the Millennium Development goals, to the growing interest in the topic in universities and conferences worldwide to increasing (albeit slow) action taken by governments throughout the world to tackle the equal pay gap, as well as online campaigns and complaints against “sexism” in the media.

Contrary to the notion that we are currently living in a “post-feminist” age, where feminism is perceived as being something of the past (McRobbie, 2009), I argue here that feminism theory and crucial feminist perspectives within development studies, as examined in the previous chapter, can still provide fundamental insights and avenues to combat gender inequalities throughout the world, both in developed and developing countries alike. From feminist activism to gender empowerment and awareness, the media can also be used for the advancement of gender equity, from the representation of a diversity of images and multiple identities in the mainstream media, discussions of women’s issues in the mediated public sphere, to the use of new technologies to either mobilize or articulate counter-discourses against oppression.

Psychoanalysis and feminism perspectives, as well as post-modernism, have some common features, which include an understanding of the unsatisfactory relation between men and women and the need to change it. Marxist feminism has been strong in Europe, whereas radical feminism has been more influential in the US. The former recognised class divisions between women and borrowed from Marxism to analyse women’s oppression, whereas the latter questioned power relations whilst also having identified *all* women as suffering from a common form of oppression (Ramazanoglu, 1989).

Feminists have offered many contributions through their analyses on the types of oppressions that women suffer by proposing various solutions, from policy, to political and legal solutions to

tackle the problem (Lorber, 2001). Third wave feminists have underscored that there are many forms of sexualities as well as gender perspectives which regard race, class, transgender rights and sexual liberation as core issues. Further developing from liberal and radical feminists, and acknowledging the criticisms made by non-Western feminists and others of colour, third wave feminists in the early 1990s endorsed diversity and multiple forms of identity, paying attention to age and generational differences, and adopting a whole different approach to popular culture. Their critical thinking towards sexuality has contributed to discussions on women's sexual agency as well as sex work, gender violence and reproductive rights. They have been particularly attracted to the Internet and new technologies, which has become an important research inquiry within gender studies, particularly the ways in which women use ICTs for development and for articulating alternative discourses which oppose the rigid gender patterns offered by the mainstream media.

The question of inequality has been central to feminist thought, despite the “cultural turn” of the last years, and has actually returned to the international agenda. Besides feminist theories, there are also many contemporary theories in the Social Science, Economics and Psychology fields on social and structural inequalities, including Marxism, functionalism and conflict theories, with functional theory having seen inequality as inevitable. The discussion of inequality has also taken place within different approaches and traditions in sociology, political theory and philosophy, from the first examinations of democracy in Plato and Aristotle to Hobbes, Rousseau and Weber. The latter saw societies as heading towards a path of increasing bureaucratization, producing more inequality.

Drawing from a range of theories, including the authoritarian personality, Marxism and neoclassical elitism theories, Sidanius and Pratto (2001) have developed an influential theory within Social Psychology which is designed to explain the origins of social hierarchies. They have argued that intergroup oppression, discrimination and prejudice are the means by which human

societies organise themselves as group-based hierarchies. According to their theory, members of dominant groups obtain a disproportionate share of the resources in life (i.e. jobs, good housing and health) whereas members of less privileged groups are stuck with the bad things in life (i.e. poor housing and health, insecure jobs).

Making reference to Akrami and Ekehammer (2006) in their discussion of the relationship between personality and prejudice, Sidanius and Pratto (2001, 419) state that the prejudices and social beliefs that contribute to discrimination are coordinated with various acts of individual cruelty, helping to sustain hierarchies. Peoples' values and temperaments, be it either their authoritarianism or tendencies to be open, makes them less or more inclined to discriminate against subordinates. The authors (2001, 420) further argue that various forms of group-based oppression (i.e. sexism, racism, nationalism, ethnocentrism, classism and so forth) are to be seen as *group-based social hierarchies*. Such theories presuppose that societies are complex systems built in with particular hierarchies that differ according to locality, regional and countries, as well as time and history.

These theories are relevant to highlight how social control and dominance works in complex forms in societies, but they also imply a fatalism regarding the capacity for social change, as if group hierarchies are an inevitable feature of human nature. What is worth retaining here is the link of everyday individual attitudes to a wider societal system, which I believe is characteristic of authoritarian or semi-democratic societies like Brazil. This means that the change of attitudes at the *micro level* can have an impact and contribute to the wider societal structure, or the *macro level*. This also opens up an important role for the media, in helping *shape* individual attitudes, in providing role models, complex characters and representations, confronting stereotypes that can be harmful to women and ceasing from stigmatising through discourses and images particular groups to the detriment of others.

Despite the promises of mass democracies at the turn of the 20th century of wider inclusion of less privileged groups in the political and mediated public sphere, the fact of the matter is that new forms of *exclusion* have emerged, prejudice persists and biases have now largely left the conscious level to reach the *unconscious* (i.e. Young, 1990). In her discussion over the definition of the term “oppression”, Young (1990) has underlined that it is possible to evaluate if a group is oppressed or not by looking at what she defines as being the “five faces of oppression” which various minorities and women suffer from. These include *exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism* and *violence*. Judging by these criteria, it is possible to argue that women are oppressed, as in most parts of the world they are overrepresented in lower-ranking jobs.

Young (1990, 41) further affirmed that new left social movements of the 1960s and 1970s changed the concept of the term “oppression”, which previously was seen as associated to the oppression practices by state regimes (i.e. Communist USRR, right wing dictatorships). It acquired the meaning of the disadvantages and injustices suffered by some people not because of tyrannical state structures, but due to the persistence of everyday practises, reinforced and perpetuated by supposedly well meaning people in a more liberal society. Thus oppression here references to systematic forms of constraints, which are structural and go as “unquestioned norms, habits and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules....”. This includes their representations in the media and cultural stereotypes, and other bureaucratic features of everyday life. As the author (1990, 42) concludes, it is also not necessarily about one group actively oppressing another, for the actions of many individuals can daily contribute to the “maintaining and reproducing of oppression”. Many of these people are thus not aware of it, and do not see themselves “as agents of oppression.”

The classification of people in groups contributes to their oppression, and when people are treated as individuals, and not as members of a particular despised group, the stereotyping and

other forms of oppressive behaviour is weakened. The reality is that many groups of women are still relatively marginalised from mainstream society, including working-class women and others from various ethnicities, with individual attitudes on a daily basis contributing significantly for the perpetuation of this state of things. Women across the world, from developed to developing countries alike, albeit differences, still struggle to have their voices heard. They constantly find themselves excluded from politics and decision-making positions in their societies. Some find themselves victims of cultural imperialism practices and other forms of labelling, such as is the case of certain groups of women from the developing countries, whereas other women are victims of domestic violence.

Feminists have not though reached a consensus regarding the nature of women's oppression, the causes and how to overcome them. Many theorists sought to seek explanations for the reasons why males exercised domination through a focus on the exploitation of labour. Some Marxist feminists place emphasis on class exploitation, whilst radical feminists focused more on the power of patriarchy and others still see imperialism as the main reason (Alvarez, 1990). Marxists feminists saw capitalism as the cause of women's oppression, whereas radical feminists argued that the productive process of society included both capitalist and patriarchal relations (Jackson, 1998, 14).

Influenced by the Marxist theory of economic oppression, radical feminists in the 1960s and 1970s in the US argued that society was divided not by class but through *sex* and, in accordance with a patriarchal ideology that valued males and oppressed females. Women all over the world state that they share common interests regarding an end to forms of discrimination, such as domestic violence and the elimination of the gender pay gap, at the same time also stand apart to other women in differences regarding class, ethnicity, nationality and race, with many not claiming the same experiences of constraints and barriers that less privileged and ordinary women face.

Concluding her discussion on oppression, Young (1990) stated that in principal all people that can be classified as “oppressed” share a common feature of suffering some sort of constraint in their ability to develop their capacities and express their thoughts, and in that sense, they can be united in the *oppression* that they suffer and the need to correct the injustices of their situation.^{xvi} This is where the media has a role, in providing communication and information rights to various groups of people, and not just the more powerful groups in society, to have their say and to be able to express themselves. This is the true democratic component attached to the idea of *liberty of expression*, which should not be manipulated by the oppressor to work as a means of reinforcing the oppression of disadvantaged groups (such as through hate speech, for instance).

Feminist theorists of the 1970s and 1980s thus contributed by posing a vital question: how can we account for women’s subordination? (Jackson, 1998, 12). Moreover, the second wave feminism of the post-World War II argued that women’s subordination was not *biologically determined* but *socially constructed* (Lorber, 2001; Gill, 2007). Considered a key influential feminist text of the 20th century, Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* published in 1949 advanced the idea that woman was constructed as man’s lesser “Other”. Her famous quote stated that “one is not born but rather becomes a woman”, introducing a new understanding of gender as an identity which is socially constructed rather than biologically driven. This helped women understand that gender is used to regulate human behaviour and social relations, and that it is a part of the wider power structure of society, or what is known as *patriarchy*.

The concept of *patriarchy* is a widely debated term within feminist thought (i.e. Walby, 1986; Hartmann, 1976; Barrett, 1980 in Jackson, 1993). Quoting Lorraine Code who wrote in 1988, Pedwell (in Evans et al, 2013 underlined how patriarchy can be defined as “a set of power structures, social practices and institutions that disadvantage and marginalise women”. As Delphy and Leonard (1992: 58) further put it, “for us “men” and “women” are not two naturally given

groups...rather the reason the two groups are distinguished socially is because one dominates the other” (in Jackson, 1998, 135).^{xvii} Thus in accordance with the materialist feminist position, the relations between women and men have been as similar to a class-like relationship, with patriarchy not being based on sex differences but rather gender itself existing as a social division because of domination (Jackson, 1998, 135).

Marxist British feminist Michelle Barrett (1980) was critical of applying the concept of patriarchy in an ahistorical way to explain all forms of male dominance, recognising that the oppression of women, although not a prerequisite of capitalism, acquired a *material basis* in contemporary relations of production. For capitalism has been seen as having created a “reserve army” of cheap female labour. Walby (1986) saw different degrees of patriarchy, and saw a move in Britain from the *private* form to a *public*. Patriarchal societies can be understood as being those where men have more power and access to the valued resources in a society (Pedwell in Evans et al, 2013), and where many groups of women are inserted within public life in an unequal and low status position.

As Anthias (in Evans and Williams, 2013, 36041) further contend, societies tend to construct men and women differently, not necessarily “culturally different” but in terms of behaviour and attributes, with women been seen as passive and caring and capable of multi-tasking. The ideal male on the other hand is seen as assertive, competitive and rational. These are values grounded in the *public/private* distinction, which has guided the history of Western thinking and the construction of the notion of (the male) citizen. Many countries still cultivate notions of what “the ideal woman” should be like, and what her place in society is. The cultural reproduction of gender inequality, and of attitudes and beliefs regarding the role of women in society, their difference in terms of personality and traits, has persisted and resisted the test of time in many if not most societies in the world. This is why it is important to pay attention to cultural manifestations,

discourses, images and representations, and particularly to the role of ideology in reproducing beliefs and attitudes in relation to women and their place in society and in the world (i.e. Barrett, 1980).

Sex is thus seen as the biological differentiation between male and female, whilst masculinity and femininity were viewed as constructed within society through the process of socialization and education (Parpart et al, 2000). *Masculinity* and *femininity* in this sense are seen as historically and culturally variable and not fixed by nature (Jackson, 1998, 133). Such perspectives would eventually influence researchers studying gender, particularly the poststructuralism work of Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and Julia Kristeva (Kearney, 2012, 10), leading to a focus on language and to mainly the questioning of the very category of “woman”, which is seen by post-modernists as being essentially *fluid*.

Various theories of gender have been written since Beauvoir’s text, with Butler’s work within post-modern feminism being particularly influential. Judith Butler, a key theorist behind the theorization on gender identity, has affirmed that there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender (in Poscocco, 2013). In her classic book *Gender Trouble*, Butler (1990:171-190) stated that gender is produced as reality through *performance*. Butler argues that gender is materialised in society through repetitive performances that are transformed into patterns of identity, which human beings are then encouraged to see as normal and reproduce daily in their behaviour. Thus gender roles are performed and copied, and repeated many times and with such frequency that we experience it as reality (in Blencouve, 2013). We thus perform a gender role whenever we participate in social life, with the ‘true self’ or biological determination not being the cause of the surface level performance but rather the *effect* of the performance and the signs (in Blencouve, 2013). This does not mean that sex difference does not exist, but that it is a reality that has been long perpetuated throughout history through people performing their gender roles well (Blencouve, 2013).

It is only in refusing to repeat these patterns that gender can become “troubled”, and new identities and possibilities can emerge (Butler, 1990). The strength of such an analysis of gender roles is that it calls into question the *naturalness* and the “taken for granted” assumptions of what constitutes an ideal male or female, underlining that the ideas on gender have their roots in the repetition of gender performance with the belief that sex distinction is the cause. This also gives validation to the diversity of identities in society and to the recognition, within a post-modernism framework, that *all* are equally valid. This also helps us question the representations we see, and the tendencies within the media, or certain media vehicles or outputs, such as advertising, to play to traditional gender roles and stereotypes.

Thus the roots of women’s subordination are widely contested, and can be explained through different perspectives. But it can also be forcefully argued that this is very much also a question of ideology, mainly of how group structures and dominant groups function within society. This is not to dismiss the allegations that women have traditionally in history, both in the Western societies and in developing countries, been victims of injustice and been exploited, benefitting capitalism in many ways. But capitalism should not be seen as the only one to blame, but one among many other factors, including societal and cultural (as well as, in certain cases, religious) beliefs grounded in historical tradition and ways of viewing the world that consisted in the formation of group hierarchies of dominance, marking divisions between more powerful groups against the supposedly inferiority of less advantaged ones. This is why neither the concept of patriarchy, or capitalism or other forms of economic determinism, can help explain in themselves the roots of women’s subordination and oppression, which are complex and dependent on an interlink of factors, including historical specificities, locality and cultural customs.

These are also part of deeper societal structures of the particular country in question, where sexual difference has meant inequality of treatment between the sexes, thus permeating various

spheres of social life, from politics to culture. It could be argued that capitalism actually takes advantage of women's position in society for their own benefit and profit. For if women's subordination and capitalism were to be so intrinsically linked, there would be no explanation to the reasons why some women are managing to occupy higher positions in businesses. The constraints that are placed on the paths of many are also not solely the workings of capitalism, with many finding that the barriers exist still in the private sphere, among the influence of the family and social peers. It further helps to explain why in certain countries gender equality has been nearly achieved, such as in countries like Iceland.

It has been *social structures* which have organised social life in a particular way, with certain dominant or "in" groups exercising domination over others. Nonetheless, this does not work as a simple *top-down* process, but is integrated into the very fabric of social life and the power relations shared by many groups of people with each other. Societies like Brazil, through Foucauldian strategies of subtle *disciplinary power* which run throughout the social structure, combined with other hegemonic imposition of forms of traditional and conservative thinking coming from core Brazilian institutions, such as the media, compel many to conform and internalise their own oppression, further reproducing on a daily basis forms of social control on others. This is why the *recognition* of other people as equal to us in worth remains such an important point for us to continue to pursue, not take as a given but continue to be build on as part of the core values of advanced democratic societies. Susan Bordo has combined Foucault's analysis of disciplinary power to talk about femininity in the context of patriarchy, arguing that these societal structures create "docile bodies" which are subject to external regulation (Pedwell in Evans et al, 2013).

Thus the struggle against gender injustice is complex and needs to tackle various fronts, including the level of discourse, image and representations to material and economic conditions.

Scholar Nancy Fraser in an interview given to the *New York Times*' Opinion Pages (15/10/15) made a powerful critique towards the limits of what she has called "mainstream feminism", stating that it has focused mostly on "encouraging educated middle-class women to "lean in" and "crack the glass ceiling." For her, the main concern has been with climbing the corporate ladder. According to Fraser:

"the mainstream feminism of our time has adopted an approach that cannot achieve justice for women, let alone for anyone else.....By definition, its beneficiaries can only be women of the professional-managerial class. And absent structural changes in capitalist society, those women can only benefit by leaning on others – by offloading their own care work and housework...." ^{xviii}

Equality thus continues to matter, perhaps so more than ever in a context where egalitarian concerns have returned to the agenda in European countries as well as in developing countries due to a profound dissatisfaction with many of the injustices of the world, and concerns over our very future survival on the planet. Similarly to other minority groups, many categories of women are still relatively marginalised from mainstream society, including working-class women and others from various ethnicities. Women also still struggle to have their voices heard, and constantly find themselves excluded from politics, decision-making positions in their societies, businesses and the media. Some find themselves victims of cultural imperialism practices and other forms of labelling, such as is the case of certain groups of women from the developing countries, as we shall see, whereas other women are victims of domestic violence.

The discussion of equality, and the reasons for the unequal treatment of others, has also led to the examination of the notion of *difference* in relation to the concept of equality. Feminists have pondered on how it is possible, in an increasingly multicultural and complex world, to speak of equality without running the risk of undermining difference, and moving towards the tendency of homogenisation of women's experiences, and thus imposing universal values on people which

should be seen as the norm to which everyone should aspire to (i.e. Mohanty, 1984; Philips, 1999). In her comparison between cultural and sexual difference, Philips (2010, 21) underlined that one of the key means employed to assess the difference between “worse” or “better” cultures, more “backward” or “advanced”, was largely down to their treatment of women. This is an important point to make, and one which I pick up again in the next chapter where I move on to examine the feminist struggles in Brazil and Latin America for the advancement of women’s rights.

Feminists are thus also concerned with the dilemma between *gender equality* and *gender equity*. The former affirms that women and men are interchangeable and thus equal and should be treated in the same manner, whereas the latter focuses on the physiological differences between the sexes, recognising women’s historical disadvantages and arguing for fairness in their treatment and the need to level the playing field and empower women. Lorber (2001) further states that both *equality* and *equity* are essential for feminist politics, and that people need to be treated as equals, whilst “the advantages and disadvantages that come from the different social positions of groups and individuals” need to be taken into account as well. Some have seen these as being contradictory goals, and there still is a lot of debate and even confusion concerning the discussions on “equality”, with many asking how can we pursue such an aim if we are all so (individually) different.

I do not believe that this dichotomy actually exists, and that it seems also so self-evident. Arguably, the risk of emphasising difference too much can undermine important claims to equality, fairness and citizenship that disadvantaged groups and individuals seek to obtain in the political public sphere. Moreover, despite my preference for the term “equity”, I have chosen to use the more widely known term of “equality”, as it is also capable of encompassing some of the concerns of the previous term, at the same time that it is also identified with more egalitarian concerns which are more consistent with the struggles pursued by various disadvantaged groups.

The persistence of discriminatory practices against certain groups, from minorities to women, is closely linked to the notion of *equal worth*, and to the believe that some groups of people lack these characteristics and are does somehow not “like me” and therefore undeserving, and should not be treated fairly or compete within a framework of equal opportunities. Thus the acknowledgement that not *all* women are oppressed, and that some upper and middle class women from the more developed Western nations are in a position equal to men, and in a situation to “oppress” other groups of women (and men) from a working class background and/or other ethnicities, is evidence in itself that oppression is complex and is subject to the influence of various factors, as I have argued earlier.

Before developing further on these perspectives through the focus on the particular case of gender equality in Brazil, and the role that the media has played and can have here in Parts III and IV of this book, I want to provide a critical assessment of some of the core feminist media studies and post-modernism feminist perspectives, as well as post-colonial theoretical debates, as a means of constructing intellectual frameworks that further sustain my analyses of the relationship between gender inequality, politics and the media in Brazil.

Post-modernism and post-feminism: contemporary gender representations

The criticisms towards the “grand theories” associated with modernity, from Marxism and feminism to the questioning of the modernization and dependency theories, as we have seen, lead to a growth from mainly the 1990’s onwards of what many have termed as the *end-of-millennium consciousness*. This can be better identified by the application of the term “post” in front of key systems of thought, from “post-industrialism” to “post-modernism”, “post-feminism” and “post-

colonialism” (Waugh, 1998, 177). Post-modernism has been closely associated with the Internet age and is a term that is applied to characterise many works of art as well as artists and prominent intellectuals across the Social Science, from Lyotard’s (1984) *The Postmodern Condition* to post-feminists such as Judith Butler and Donna Haraway. As Waugh (1998, 177) notes, post-modernism has rejected universal and ethical principles, as well as the very possibility of an “objective” science. Both poststructuralism and postmodernism perspectives have confronted the very idea that “men” and “women” were natural categories, with the deconstruction of women being a central theme in many ground-breaking studies of postmodern feminism (i.e. Butler, 1990 in Jackson, 1998, 23).

The critique in the 1980s made it clear that “women” could not be seen as a unitary category, and that it could not capture the complexities of the forms of oppression suffered by different women throughout the world. This was an accusation that was made by feminists from the former colonies, or the “Third World”, in regards to the privileged position of some women from the North, who after having conquered their own freedom from the male “oppressors” of their country continued to establish hierarchies between themselves and less powerful women both in their nations and elsewhere, frustrating the creation of bonds of *sisterhood* between women (i.e. Mohanty, 1990).

By the end of the 1970s, a group identified as “Third World women” had denounced angrily Western feminists, who they say as having excluded them from feminists’ movements, or unconsciously included them under the universal banner of “sisterhood” (Jackson, 1998, 23). The emergence of post-modernism paralleled in many ways the development of post-colonial thought, with post-modernism’s emphasis on fragmentation, play and rejection of universal truths opening a door to diversity and the focus on multiple identities and subject positions. Butler here is perhaps the best exponent of the *need* to acknowledge new possibilities for gender performance.

Since the 1980s also, Marxism variants of feminism and other perspective which emphasised material inequalities gave room to a wider focus on language, discourse and representation in discussions of gender inequality. These have been known as the “cultural turn” in feminist studies. The decade of the 1990s has been seen as a turning point for feminism, as well as of critique within feminist theory itself, with important work influencing the field, from scholars such as Butler to other post-colonial feminists and perspectives, from Spivak (1990) and Mohanty (1990) to Bhabha (1994).

In the edited book *Feminism, Postmodernism and Development*, Marchand and Parpart (1995, 3-4) sought ways to reconcile postmodernism and feminism with development. Marchand and Parpart (1995) underline how postmodernists have criticised the West’s “grand theories”, casting doubt over their capacity of explaining the complexities of the world, and thus sharing with feminism a scepticism towards universal truth claims. Its strengths have included the *problematization* of the concept of identity, as well as that of difference (Marchand and Parpart, 1995). They make a case for *new thinking* regarding the relationship between women, gender and development, arguing further that the “discourse of development has disempowered poor women” (Marchand and Parpart, 1995, 17) and that a combination of post-colonial analysis of resistance to Western hegemony and articulations of hybridity, expressed in the work of authors such as Spivak (1990) and Bhabha (1994), with post-modern feminist concerns with difference and power, can precisely assist in these discussions.

I do not believe that post-modernism thought is sufficiently, or seriously enough, concerned with material and global gender inequalities, and with issues such as racism. In many ways it seems to imply that oppression is just another form of (permitted) discourse. Some theorists have also been critical about whether postmodernism is the only means of coping with gender complexities in a post-colonial world. There are arguments which point out to the impossibilities

that these perspectives can ever be fully matched, for social scientific perspectives assume a “real” world which exists prior to discourse. This has led many feminists to retreat away from postmodernism and back to the concern with structural inequalities (Jackson and Jones, 1998, 7-8). Or they have chosen to adopt what Waugh (1998) has called a “weaker” form of postmodernism.

The focus on *diversity* I believe is not sufficiently strong, is often superficial and shallow, and more a *fashionable* acknowledgement guided by what some would pejoratively call “political correctness”, or a sexy flirtation with difference. It is not deeply rooted enough, which means that in essence its commitment is weak and fragile, making a retreat away from the respect towards difference, tolerance towards others, compassion and non-discriminatory behaviour easier and more possible in times of economic hardship and political crisis. Others have gone as far as to argue that the “postmodernism turn” ended up endorsing an elitist theory, one which was incapable of confronting fully the realities of racism (Modleski, 1991 in Jackson, 1998, 23) head on as they should be. A similar argument is articulated by Walby, who has stated that postmodernism has led to a fragmentation of the concepts of race, sex, and class (Marchand and Parpart, 1995), thus leading to a refusal to engage thoroughly with the restructuring of power relations.

Criticisms have been actually made to postmodernists and their Foucauldian vision of power as disperse and diffused, and which is seen by many as a sign of failure to recognise that systematic oppressions of gender, class and race persist very strongly, and are in fact the hard reality of everyday life for many of the world’s population. Postmodernism thought in itself, and its interactions feminism, thus suffers from limitations in its capacity to be fully committed to materialist concerns and the demands for the advancement of rights and wider equality that are still made by various groups. In her discussion of the differences between what she terms as the

“weaker” and “stronger” versions of post-modernism, sympathising with the former, Waugh (1998 in Jackson and Jones, 1998, 183) affirms that stronger versions of postmodernism would make it impossible even for one to make an unconditional claim that it is wrong to oppress women.

An important component of this late phase of the feminist movement has undoubtedly been the articulation of “post-feminist” discourses which have mainly rested on notions of *girl power*, individualism, choice and play, and which were inserted within a predominantly capitalism worldview. These have been seen by many feminists as having negated the conquests of previous feminist movements, which rejected the need to continue to fight for gender equality (i.e. Gill, 2007, 2012; McRobbie, 2009; Van Zoonen, 1994, 2000). Gill (2012, 145) has underscored that one of the things that makes the media in the Western world today more different from what it was in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s is precisely the presence of feminist discourses. She classifies this trend as being part of a *sensibility* which pays lip service to postmodernism as much as it does to neoliberalism. Gill (2012, 136) states that similarly to post-modernism, the term “post-feminism” has become overloaded with different meanings, and the word has become very much contested. It is usually used to refer to a type of feminism that followed after the second wave feminist movement.

McRobbie (2009, 11) sees *post-feminism* as a process by which feminist gains of the 1970s and 1980s are consistently undermined. She claims that there is an “undoing of feminism” in the cultural field (as well as in the sociological), and a sense that feminism is aged and made to seem redundant. By feminism being taken into account, McRobbie (2009) means the acknowledgement of the achievements of women and their participation within the institutions of society, including education, law and employment. Making reference to Faludi, McRobbie (2009) states that there has been a conservative response to the achievements of feminism, including the rise of *anti-*

feminism, issues which I develop further in Parts III and IV of this book when I look at the particular case of Brazil in Latin America.

One of the difficulties lies in precisely underlining what makes a text post-feminist. Gill (2012, 137) defines post-feminism as being a type of *sensibility* which has been present in an increasing number of films, from TV shows, ads and other media products. Media texts such as *Sex and the City* and *Ally McBeal* for instance received significant attention. Gill (2012, 137-138) goes on to list certain features that constitute a *post-feminist discourse*, and among others these include the notion that femininity is a bodily property, a shift from *objectification* to *subjectification*, the emphasis on self-surveillance and discipline, individualism, choice and empowerment. They also include a resurgence in ideas of natural sexual difference, a strong sexualisation of culture as well as a wider focus on consumerism. Arguably, the media is a *site of contradiction*, and thus can contain discourses that empower women within texts that at first could even be considered ambiguous or even reactionary. Moreover, the charge that is made to post-feminist discourse is that it implies that women are seeing themselves as equal to men, and because of this, there is no need for feminism anymore. Such an understanding wrongly assumes that equality has been achieved and is a thing of the past, and we are thus invited to pay a shy tribute to the struggles of past feminists but in the end we should see them as a bit of angry trouble-making, man-hating and bra-burning women and, at worst, as *deviant* and marginal from society itself.

It is possible to argue that there is a correlation between the values of consumerism and choice, the obsession with the body and its surveillance, and the persistence of everyday sexism. This is again common throughout the world, both in developed and developing countries alike. There has been a series of online campaigns which have had considerable impact, from the UK's *Everyday Sexism Project* (www.everydaysexism.com), launched by Laura Bates who writes for

The Guardian, to the Brazilian *Chega de Fui Fui* (Enough of Whistling – www.chegadefiufiu.com.br), linked to the popular NGO *Think Olga*, as we shall see in Parts III and IV of this book.

In contrast to women from previous generations, girls and women in the UK are more aware of sexism at a younger age. A series of reports have highlighted that many foresee future barriers in the workplace because of them. The 2013 report, *Equality for Girls*, from *Girlguiding*, which surveyed more than 1.200 girls from the ages of seven to 21, found out that sexism is widespread in the UK and that it effects most aspects of girls' lives. There was also a growing number of girls who felt that they were more judged by their appearance than ability, representing 87% respondents out of the 11 to 21 year olds questioned.^{xix} All of this makes evident that feminism is still relevant in contemporary life, and has a lot to say about the experiences suffered by different groups of women throughout the world.

Third wave feminists for one have turned their attention to popular culture and also to new technologies, reclaiming derogatory and sexist terms such as *bitch* as a means to empower complex, sophisticated and strong women. As Budgeon (in Gill and Scharff, 2011, 2013, 280-281) has argued, third wave feminists see popular culture as being both a *site of pleasure* as well as *critique*. They do not limit themselves to any single issue, engaging in a questioning of the meanings attached to femininity. In response to post-feminism, third wave feminists argue that feminism continues to be an active and essential force in contemporary society, that it continues to matter. They acknowledge that it has been challenged but nonetheless current contemporary feminism in all its forms is concerned with developing *new ways* and discourses that aim to re-think gender, being conscious about difference as well as multiple feminist identities, embracing *inclusion* and seeking to make feminism relevant to women's lives (Budgeon, in Gill and Scharff,

2011, 2013). As I argue further in this book, contemporary Brazilian feminism, and various of its women's movements, is doing precisely this.

They also argue that there are a number of ways in which one can be a feminist, and that there is no "right" way of being one. Here there is a similarity with post-modernism in its focus on contradiction and flirtation with relativism. Because of this, third wave feminists have looked with scepticism towards claims of women's oppression being systematic (Budgeon, 2011, 2013). The latter is perhaps where the problem lies, as any continuous struggle in favour of gender rights already suggests that *there is* a struggle against oppression, in its various forms and in the diverse ways in which it impacts upon the lives of different women, as I examined in previous sections. What is important here is the recognition of the complexities of women's lives as well as the contestation that not all women are oppressed. Moreover, there needs to be a renewal of the commitment to advance a politics of social inclusion and of empathy, which recognises the need for women to articulate "their personal relationship to feminism in ways that make sense to them as individuals" and which, influenced by second wave feminism, underlines the ultimate feminist goal of shifting between *living for others* to *living a life of one's own* (Budgeon, 2011, 2013, 284).

Feminist analyses of the media have been interested in precisely this, mainly in understanding how images and cultural constructions are linked to patterns of inequality and oppression in wider society (Gill, 2007). Similarly to the variations of perspectives within feminist thought, the study of gender and the media is also quite heterogeneous: there are a plurality of different approaches, methodologies and theoretical perspectives as well as different understandings of power and conceptualisations of the relationship between representations and "reality", and of how individuals make sense of their own image through the media (Gill, 2007).

The concerns that dominated classic studies in the field, such as Tuchman et al's (1978) on the representation of women in the US media, and which pointed to the fact that women suffered from symbolic annihilation, being consistently trivialized and stereotyped, are still with us today. Writing about the representation of women in the American media during the 1950s and 1970s, Tuchman (1978, 4-5) pointed to the *symbolic annihilation of women* in media representations. Making use of a term defined by Gerbner (1972) to describe the absence of representation, or underrepresentation of a group in the media, Tuchman, Kaplan Daniels and Benit's (1978) classic study argued that *symbolic annihilation* was a process by which the media omitted, trivialized or condemned certain groups that were not valued in society. Tuchman et al's work (1978) looked at how sex role stereotypes within the mainstream US media portrayed rigid gender roles, to which women and men should adapt to, and with suggestions that if they did not conform to specific ways of appearing and behaving, they would be seen as inadequate to society (i.e. a boy who cries is not masculine).

Researchers in Tuchman's et al's (1978) study analysed television's content from 1954 through 1975 and found that males dominated the television screen, and concluded that American women had no value in the US. According to her, women were portrayed as child-like adornments in need of protection from children's shows, to commercials, prime-time and situation comedies. Soap operas were seen as showing more favourable images. Worried about the role of women in American society and in the workplace, Tuchman (1978, 7) argued for treating stereotypes seriously, pointing out that stereotypes of women as "the housewife" worked to impede the employment of women by limiting their horizons. Stereotypes, she underlined, presented individuals with a limited range of human possibilities within already limited sex roles (Tuchman, 1978).

Carter (2014, 366) argued that Tuchman et al's (1977) study underlined how the media was not reflecting the social and economic changes to women's lives, with her work having emphasised the importance of studying how the media treated women in the 20th century. Tuchman argued that representation "signified social existence" (in Carter, 2014, 366). From Tuchman et al's (1978) study onwards, feminist media scholars emphasised the ways in which certain stereotypes of women can contribute to the perpetuation of gender inequality. Thus these classic studies in the field have been important in discussing the extent to which the portrayal of such images influenced the *socialization* of women, telling them what type of gender role they should have, and what was deemed acceptable for them. This could then work to impose limits on women's aspirations, from their sense of self-worth and confidence to the roles that they could take on in life.

Since Tuchman's et al (1978) class study, there has been a range of studies which have attempted to better understand the relationship between women and the media from various fronts. Scholars have looked at a variety of studies, from female audience reception studies of US soap-operas such as *Dallas*, and how women take pleasure in media texts, in Ien Ang's (1985) classic work, to Mulvey's (1989) psychoanalysis of the predominance of the male gaze among the film spectator in Hollywood film, the deconstruction of ideological messages in advertising by Williamson (1978) to post-colonial media and film analyses (i.e. Shohat and Stam, 2003).

Media representations can thus be involved in subtle ways in reproducing domination, inequality and injustice concerning issues of class, race, sexuality and ethnicities (Orgad in Waisbord, 2014, 141) Numerous studies conducted by Hall and Said for instance have underscored how certain groups and places are stereotyped, victimised and demonised and invested, through discourse, with negative meanings (Orgad, 2014, 143). Developing from Foucault notion of a "discursive formation", Hall (1992, 60) sees *discourse* as a "group of

statements which provide a language for talking about something”, such as a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. It is also produced through practice, in other words, in behaviour and in how other people treat others. Thus as Foucault has argued, it is through *discourse* that power circulates (Hall, 1992, 63).

Writing at the turn of the 21st century, in a context where stereotypes have already begun to be a concern for mass communication research, Pickering (2001, 4) pointed out how stereotypes are usually considered inaccurate because they portray a certain group as *homogenous*. Pickering (2001) examined the relationship between stereotypes and power, stating that they create an illusion of order and is convenient to those who are in power. This occurs nonetheless at a cost for those who are stereotyped, for they take on a subordinated status and are judged accordingly to it (Pickering, 2001, 5). Thus the negative portrayals in the media of minorities are said to deny their very existence within society. The mass media is seen as sending a *symbolic* message to viewers about the societal values of certain groups of people, who are the members of a particular group: the ones that are more valued within a particular culture will be shown more frequently in the media, and those who are not will remain peripheral. This will have a consequence in how society sees them and in how they will be treated.

As various media and feminist media scholars have pointed out, Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) was the major work that questioned the images of the “happy housewife” (i.e. Gauntlett, 2008, 51; Kearney, 2012). Friedan was the first to examine the representation of women in magazines, surveying women’s magazines from the early to mid-20th century (Kearney, 2012). She pointed to the figure of the “happy housewife”, who subjugated her own ambitions in order to take care of her children and husband, further arguing that the idealization of the *feminine suburban middle-class white women* was responsible for deep

unhappiness among women who saw their lives constrained by such limitations (Richardson and Wearing, 2014).

The 1980s would thus be seen as the decade which started to assimilate the changes in the role that women were beginning to experience in Western societies, in education, the labour force and family life. Women began to be taken more seriously, with television programmes starting to feature women better and also deal with a series of women's issues, such as infertility, breast cancer and rape (Gauntlett, 2008). Moving forward into the decade of the 1990's, media representations of female characters in popular culture, from advertising, television to Hollywood films, were seen as having significantly improved. Various feminist media scholars for instance analysed the complexities of the play of femininity in texts which were seen as either more empowering or less reactionary, from *Sex and the City* to *Bridget Jones' Diary* and *Buffy the Vampire* (i.e. Gauntlett, 2008, Richardson and Wearing, 2014).^{xx}

The extent though to which there has actually been significant changes in the media from the 1990's onwards still remains contested (i.e. Gill, 2007, McRobbie, 2009). The idealization of femininity as being that of a *passive, pretty and dependent* woman still maintains its relevance (Richardson and Wearing, 2014), and I would argue more so in developing countries like Brazil. Femininity has been repackaged, reshaped and redefined in mainstream Western "post-feminist" popular culture texts, from *Bridget Jones* to more contemporary films such as *Joy* (Russell, 2015). It has been sold to audiences in what first appear to be a modern format, but which carries nonetheless a whole series of undertones which continue to pay lip service to traditional, and sometimes often reactionary, views of femininity. In the film *Joy*, the American entrepreneur played by the actress Jennifer Lawrence only acquires confidence to stand up for her business and fight the competition when she cuts her hair and casts aside the previous sloppy, single mother hard working secretary persona.

The *sexualisation of young girls* in the media and popular culture, as noted by Gill (2012) above, has been another topic of growing interest of sociologists as well as feminist media scholars working with popular culture. According to her (2012), the intense focus on women's bodies is closely tied to the growing sexualisation of contemporary culture, and to what she claims McNair (2002) has identified as being the "strip tease culture". This is evident in the increasing eroticisation of the images of girls and women, as well as men, and their bodies in popular culture. It can be argued though that men nonetheless are presented more often in more complex ways, whereas women are seen constantly in images where they appear with their underwear and play with sexual fantasies. In such a context, as Gill (2012) notes, women are not simply objectified as they were in the past, but appear as *active sexual subjects* who choose to present themselves in this manner because it attends to their liberated interests.

Examining the differences between the terms ideology and discourse in her discussion of meanings in advertising, and looking at why the former has become in disuse, Williamson (1978, 11) argued that *ideology* "mediates what we know, how we feel and the way we live". Williamson (1978, 11-12) has further seen advertising as having almost an autonomous existence and enormous influence, creating structures of meaning^{xxi}. "Advertising are selling us something else besides consumer goods: in providing us with a structure in which we use...they are selling us ourselves." (Williamson, 1978, 12). People are thus encouraged to identify with what they consume. This does not only apply to advertising, but to various representations, images and discourses in the media. Advertising has further responded to feminist critiques by constructing the figure of the *sexually autonomous heterosexual young woman* who is in control of her sexual power (Gill, 2012). All these points will be discussed more in the media analyses of Part III, but the reality is that even these images are open to contestation and charges of sexism, or on playing on the "empowerment" of women to sell products to them in an uncritical manner.

Popular “post-feminist” media culture thus has emphasised the monitoring and surveillance of women over their own bodies in order to reach a particular successful performance of femininity, one which would also emulate and take inspiration from the upper-class white female ideal (Gill, 2012). In such a culture, women from a very young age are constantly pressured to have perfect bodies, leading to all sorts of eating disorders and other problems of low self-esteem and anxiety. Gauntlett (2008) argues that the more obvious stereotypes from the past are not present in the media as before, recognising however that the play of “sexism” in the media has become much more subtle, and difficult to identify. (i.e. is the image actually sexist or are we being purist?). There have also been criticisms made to some feminists on the grounds that they are not letting younger women have pleasure in these images (Gauntlett, 2008). As we shall see in Parts III and IV of this book, this is missing the point. The risks of such a stance is undermining criticism, and encouraging people to accept images and not to connect them to the reality and the structural inequalities in our world. A more complex reading would state that it is both possible to enjoy problematic images, or negotiate with some of their meanings, as it is to recognise their capacity to reinforce unequal power relations and not contribute to the advancement of women’s rights.

As I shall examine in Part III of this book, there is still a serious problem with sexist and negative images and representations of women in many other parts of the world. We thus should not take for granted that feminism has overwhelmed the media, and that we are currently living in a “post-feminist” context. In many ways the overall Brazilian media, albeit with exceptions and despite some manifestations in favour of diversity and inclusion of topics on women’s rights, is still largely inserted within a “pre-feminist” traditional narrative that has a very defined and rigid vision of what the *Brazilian ideal women* should be like.

Following from the criticisms made towards the earlier narrower focus of feminism on mostly the realities of white, upper middle class women, it can be seen as still a form of unconscious Euro-centrism to continue to privilege discussions on gender representations in the media to mostly popular texts from either the US or the UK. In order to take seriously our task of pursuing a more inclusive agenda within feminism media studies and theory, we need to engage with studies that look more into the experiences of women across the world, and particularly in countries where there is still a weak tradition in this respect, as I have argued in the introduction of this book in relation to the case of Brazil. Before moving to look at these points, it is important to first examine some of the core debates from post-colonial theory more closely, including the theoretical perspectives concerning the stereotyping of the “Third World women.”

Chapter 3 - Gender and the media: international representations and stereotyping

“Sometimes people hold a core belief that is very strong. When they are presented with evidence that works against that belief, the new evidence cannot be accepted. It would create a feeling that is extremely uncomfortable, called cognitive dissonance. And because it is so important to protect the core belief, they will rationalize, ignore and even deny anything that doesn't fit in with the core belief.”

— Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

Representations of the “Third World woman” in the West and issues of stereotyping

Similarly to post-modernism and post-feminism, post-colonial theoretical perspectives have been enormously influential since the 1990's. Mills (1998) has argued that post-colonial feminist theory has been important in moving the theoretical debates on women's oppression from what she claimed was a previously *parochial concern* with white, middle-class English speaking women towards a focus on women in *diverse national contexts*. This forced feminists to re-think who they were speaking for when they talked about “women”. Post-colonialism intellectual thought has been enormously influential in providing theoretically understandings on the historical relationship of inequality between European powers with their former colonies, or between “the West and the rest” (i.e. Anthias, 2013; Bhabha, 2004; Gilroy, 2012; Grewal and Kaplan in Essed et al, 2009; Hall, 1992; Mills, 1998; Shohat and Stam, 1994, 2012; Spivak, 1988; Radcliffe, 2015). Many have claimed that for these powers, it was vital to know “the Other” for

mostly political and economic control (i.e. Gill, 2007), and less due to genuine interest in other cultures.

Shohat and Stam (1994, 2014) have argued that Eurocentrism is a form of thinking which has permeated the structures of contemporary practices and representations even after the end of colonialism. Eurocentric norms make the statement that certain races, mainly Europeans, hold a monopoly on technology and intelligence and have a natural, inherent “superiority” over others. This ends up ignoring or undermining Europe’s historically oppressive relationship to its former colonies, as well as to other countries from the developing world (Shohat and Stam, 1994, 2014). As discussed in Part I, modernization theory, and its approach towards the developing world, was accused by dependency theorists and others of having been build on intellectual foundations that were seen as being part of Eurocentric forms of thinking.

When expanding economies in emerging developing countries, like India, China to Brazil, are defining and influencing more geopolitics, whilst increasing globalization has resulted in the expansion of cultural goods between the North and the South as well as rising immigration, it is crucial to move beyond Eurocentric narratives that attempt to simplify the experiences of the “peoples” (and women) from the “Third World”. This is especially in a context which is also seeing a ultraconservative (and sometimes fascist and nationalistic) reaction - such as in the UK and France with the rise of extreme right wing groups to the political mainstream - to the globalization of culture and exchange between different countries, regions and peoples of the world. This is why scholars like Shohat and Stam (1984, 2012) have argued for the need to elaborate a more complex view of the world that is more up to date, and suited to the reality of our times. The authors also defend the idea of emphasising how cultures have been inherently *hybrid* since there very formation (i.e. Shohat and Stam, 1994, 2012; Nederveen Pieterse, 2010).

Thus *Eurocentric* thinking does not represent a world which has been largely multicultural since its very beginning. All countries can and should be considered multi-cultural. Neo-colonial forms of domination however are pointed out by post-colonial perspectives are still largely shaping trade relations and power structures in the world today, with economic domination being expressed through institutions such as the G7, IMF, World Bank and GATT; political through organisms such as the UN Security Council, military (NATO), techno-informational and cultural through Hollywood and international news agencies (i.e. Reuters and CNN) (i.e. Shohat and Stam, 2014; Nederveen Pieterse, 2010).

Post-colonial theory has had a significant impact on Media Studies, which has also seen the development of work which focuses on ethnicity, race and other non-Western cultures in Cultural as well as in feminist media studies. These have produced a variety of different studies coming from diverse perspectives and overlapping with sociology, globalization and film (i.e. McMillin, 2007; Hall, 1973; Dyer, 1997; Fiske, 1996; Canclini, 1995; Shohat and Stam, 1994, 2012; Miller, 2006). Issues concerning anti-colonial power relations and the relationship between feminism and imperialism have been among some of the core questions examined in studies on gender and modernity, transnationalism and globalization (Grewal and Kaplan in Essed et al, 2009).

However, post-colonial theory, at least in Media Studies, has not had the transformative appeal that it should have had (Gill, 2007), although it has had greater influence within feminist theory as well as development studies, as we have seen. Within Media Studies, there have been though more contemporary work done, coming especially from the US, on specific ethnicities, from black *Latinos* in Cultural Studies to the experiences of black women and their representations in the media (i.e. Guzman and Valdivia, 2012; Valdiva in Carter et al, 2015). There is a lack of research in the field of media, and feminist media studies, on international representations of Brazilian women in popular culture, film and television. Following from what I examined in the

first part of this book, a lot of work comes from the fields of anthropology, history, globalization and Latin American Studies, with studies looking particularly at issues of culture and national identity, political parties and feminism in Brazil and throughout Latin America, Brazilian popular culture and music, globalization and immigration (i.e. Chant and Craske, 2003; Macaulay, 2010; Lebon, 2010; Acosta-Belem and Bose, 1993; Alvarez, 1990; Hahner, 1990; Maier and Lebon, 2010; Caldwell, 2010). There has been also little work on Brazilian female identities both nationally as well as internationally, and how these are represented, contested and discussed in media texts.

Since its start in the 15th century, European colonialism is seen as having heavily shaped the relations of the West to the rest of the world (i.e. Shohat and Stam, 1994; Hall, 1992; Weadon, 1999), as well as stimulating the development of a lack of respect for difference. Even the expression “the West and the rest” can be seen as a *discursive practice* which carries within it ideological overtones, myths and fantasies about what it means to belong to the “West” as opposed to “the rest” (Hall, 1992 in Schech and Haggis, 2002; Nederveen Pieterse, 1990). As Hall (1992) has stated, the terms “West” and “Western” are not primarily ideas about geography, and in fact represent complex ideas. Hall (1992) further affirmed that Eastern Europe is not seen as belonging to the West, whereas the US, which is not in Europe, definitely is. Japan is seen as “Western” only in the map it is as far East as one could image.

How then can we understand the “West” in relation to the developing world? As Hall (1992 in Schech and Haggis, 2002) has sustained, the “West” is understood as a society that is developed, industrialised, secular and modern, and which rose during the 16th century. According to this perspective, any society that is included within “the West” will share these characteristics, with societies being placed into different categories (i.e. Western and non-Western) and helping shape the image in our minds when we think of what is meant by the “West”. This term ends up

assuming an *ideological tone*, setting up certain criteria for the evaluation of societies, with some being classified as *positive* whilst others are seen as *negative*, thus establishing the parameters for the relation that the “West” will have towards the others (Hall, 1992 in Schech and Haggis, 2002, 58).

Various authors have criticised the West’s view of the “Third World”, a term which was also contested, as being homogenous and static. Western scholars studying the developing world were also accused of Eurocentrism and intolerance towards the people they studied (i.e. Chua et al, 2000; Said, 1993; Spivak, 1988; McMillin, 2007; Parpart et al, 2000). Most notably, the “Third World” has been traditionally represented as static and timeless, lacking in complexity and in internal differences. Writing about the impact of colonialism on indigenous media in particular national contexts, McMillin (2007) has underlined the importance of gaining knowledge about the diversity that exists within what is labelled the “Third World”. McMillin (2007, 79) wrote how broadcasting structures, which imitated the UK’s and the French version of the PSB model, were set up in Senegal, modelling the French ORTF (*Office de Radiodiffusion Television Francaise*) and the radio and TV Hong Kong on the BBC.

Making reference to Canclini (1995), the scholar also noted how all countries in Latin America were seen as “backward”, despite the fact that variations of modernity and traditionalism co-existed in the region, issues which will be examining more in Part III. Further quoting Khiabany (2003), McMillin (2007, 73) underscored also the fact that there are approximately 1.2 billion Muslims in the world, as well as enormous diversity in relation to how Islam is practiced in countries with large Muslim population, such as Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Nigeria and China. Due to the highly charged and negative connotation of the term “Third World”, I have chosen here in this book to always put this word either in inverted commas or to refer to more precise terms, such as *developing country* or *emerging democracy*. Chua et al

(2000) have also pointed out to the slippage between the term “ethnic” and “Third World” people, with those who are not from the “Third World” assumed as being all white in contrast to the former. This ignores the diversity in the “First World”, as well as in developing countries. The category of the “Third World” has also been used to make reference to peoples not only in developing countries, but also to minorities from developing countries that live in the more advanced democracies of Northern Europe or the US.

Racism and Eurocentrism are thus seen as forms of thinking which have been pointed out by many (i.e. Shohat and Stam, 2012) as underlining reasons for current conflicts throughout the world. Writing about the liberation movements from colonialism in Algeria during the 1960s, Frantz Fanon (1965) in *The Wretched of the Earth* dissected the psychological degradation inflicted by imperialism, stating how Western bourgeoisie racism towards “the nigger or the Arab” was a racism of contempt. Fanon (1965) examined how the process of de-colonization was a complex one which had at its root the psychological problems suffered by the previously colonized people, who were still embedded in a “colonial mentality” and carried with them an “inferiority complex” which was difficult to shake off.

The relationship between colonialism and sexuality has also been widely debated by scholars. Mills (1998, 100) has written about the colonial context being one which was *sexually charged* and full of gender dynamics. The “exotic” was a space impregnated with sexual fantasy. Moreover, according to Mills (1998), the gender dynamics at play within the British imperialism project included a juxtaposition of the British female represented as innocent, whilst the indigenous females were the object of sexual fantasies. The figure of the “white woman” had also an important symbolic function in the maintenance of colonial rule (Mills, 1998, 102). Authors such as Edward Said have also critically looked at some of the classic works of art and literature of the Enlightenment and others produced during the 19th century, pointing out how paintings and

novels carried with them a series of sexualised bodies, with images of semi-naked women and others from India, Africa and the Orient (Mills, 1998). The threat of rape of British women by the native male for instance was also another image constantly invoked, having the effect of creating an image of the native as *barbaric*.

The case of Latin America was not much different. The region of Latin America is marked by diversity and by the mixing of many “races”, from Europeans to African descendants to indigenous populations, having been colonised by various groups of Europeans, from the Portuguese and Spanish but also Italians, Dutch, French and British and having one of the biggest Catholic populations in the world. The Brazilian anthropologist Gilberto Freyre in the classic book *Casa Grande e Senzala* (1933) (The Masters and Slaves) examined the colonial period in the country, and underlined how the environment, which started to shape Brazilian life, was a highly sexualised one. European colonisers, mainly the Portuguese settlers, came across many naked indigenous women when they arrived in Brazil, having to confront themselves with the “niggers” of the earth, as he put it. Such images are still widely reinforced today by both the Western and the national media, with the persistence of many ingrained notions of what constitutes the femininity of the “Brazilian woman”, as well as the links with *nationhood* and with various symbols of national identity, such as samba, Carnival and beach culture, as we shall see.

Modern science in the 19th century thus categorised certain bodies and skills through *racial* and *sexual* differences. Value judgements were applied to people, with the white, Western middle class man being the norm while those outside of this were perceived as different (Weadon, 1999). Fanon (1991) argued that the black man was placed in a complex relationship as “other” to the white, with oppressed subjectivities standing in relation to the dominant culture. In her discussion of British colonialism in India, Spivak (in Ali, 2013) also underlined the importance of subaltern histories, and of “recovering” marginal voices, stating how the combination of colonialism and

patriarchy made it difficult for “the subaltern to speak”. Spivak (1988:297) claimed that the “brown woman” was oppressed by both the colonizers and colonized, with native wealthier men managing to encounter a voice in contrast to the subordinated woman (in Ali, 2013). These *binary discourses* have thus shaped public attitudes and perceptions towards “Others” and the “rest” up to the present (i.e. Hall, 1992; Weadon, 1999). Difference is perceived as *inequality*, and is produced by economic, political and other cultural factors (Weadon, 1999). This has then conditioned us, according to Weadon (1999), to see differences in simplistic terms and in a *binary way* (i.e. *dominant/subordinate, inferior/superior, Western versus Third World, modern and traditional and liberated and non-liberated*).

Quoting Narayan, Weadon (1999) claims that two features are evident in what she terms as *colonial modes of representation*, such as the failure to pay adequate attention to social and historical details as well as context. Making use of psychoanalysis to examine the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, Bhabha (1994) expands further from Said’s emphasis on Orientalism to argue for the importance of seeing stereotypes both grounded in *fixity* and *fantasy*. Bhabha (1994, 107) has underlined how stereotypes are complex contradictory modes of representation, arguing for reading racial stereotypes of colonial discourse as *fetishism*. Bhabha’s (1994, 18) stated that fixity is the foundation of colonial discourse, functioning as the “sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism”, thus suggesting a rigid and an unchanging order. Bhabha (1994) sees this discourse as operating in a highly sophisticated and ambivalent manner. The colonizer and the colonized are thus continuously involved in tensions and interactions, and there is a constant attraction and repulsion between the *colonial subjects*. This is at the centre of the maintenance of colonial discourse, with stereotypes demanding an “articulation of forms of difference – racial and sexual” (Bhabha, 1994, 18-19) as well as *repetition*.

Feminists from the South and other post-colonial critics have also underscored that Western thought, and First World feminism, have contributed to the perpetuation of the oppression of women from the “Third World” (i.e. Mohanty, 1990; Shohat and Stam, 1994; Van Zoonen, 1994; Williamson, 1986). What Shohat (2012) has termed the *colonial gaze*, or the “exoticizing of the ‘Third World’ through Eurocentric articulations of power, is still seen as being part of the collective conscious (or unconscious), dominating the collective psyche in the West as much as in the South. Critiques of Northern representations of “Third World women” started to emerge in the context of the rise of post-colonialism perspectives, which underlined how Western narratives in the arts, humanities and science portrayed peoples from non-Western countries as the “vulnerable” and “backward other”. These functioned to perpetuate strongly held biases towards women from the less powerful nations, reinforcing their oppression and subjection to both men *and* women from the more developed countries (i.e. Said, 1985; Spivak, 1990).

Parpart et al (2000, 97) underscored how minority scholars in the North criticised traditional Western scholarship and its claims to homogenise the experiences of women in the South, with minority women in the North also contributing to develop Southern scholarship. Both thus attempted to undermine First World feminism hegemony, and to stress the need to acknowledge difference, local experiences and multiple forms of oppression, and how these can have a profound impact on women’s lives (i.e. Mohanty, 1991). First World feminism was thus charged of reflecting the racism of their own cultures and of adopting a narrow understanding of issues of equality, justice and difference (i.e. Mohanty, 2000), however having responded to these criticisms since the 1990s, as I examined in the previous chapters.

In the classic text *Under Western Eyes*, Mohanty underlined that Western feminist writing about women in the “Third World” homogenised their experiences, producing a singular “third world woman” embedded within a Western humanist discourse (Weadon, 1999). As the author

(1999) added, rather than portraying women as mere victims of patriarchal structures, attention needed to be given to specific *contexts*. Mohanty's (2000) further questioned the very concept of the "Third World woman". She (1991) questioned the production of "the Third World women" as a homogenous category in Western feminist discourse, stimulating the readings that state that these women are "ignorant", "poorly educated", "tradition-based" and "victimised" (Mills, 1998).

Mohanty (1990) further stated that "the homogeneity of women as a group is produced not on the bases of *biological essentials* but on *sociological universals*. Women are characterised as a singular group on the basis of a shared oppression. What brings women together is a sociological notion of the 'sameness' of their oppression." She further focused on 5 specific ways in which "women" were used in Western feminist discourse, and looked at the work of Fran Hosken (on female genital mutilation) to other feminist writers working with development policies. According to her (1991), a defined "universal ideal of women's emancipation" was used to justify the intervention of Western governments and NGOs in the lives of people of "developing countries" (in Blencouve, 2013, 169). These *deconstructions* of the category of women have exercised influential impact on feminist studies, leading us today to ask "which women" are we talking about, and whose experiences of oppression, when one hears the word "women".

The WID, WAD and GAD gender and development approaches, as discussed in the Introduction, were accused by scholars (i.e. Dua in Essed et al, 2009, 299) as having portrayed "the third world woman" as poor and vulnerable, presenting a view of gender inequality that was dependent on *colonizing discourses*. Other scholars also pointed out how the discourses adopted by development programmes reinforced the North/South divide, and the assumption that the former was technologically superior in contrast to the latter (Hirschman, 1995 in Dua, 2009).

In the same way as Shohat and Stam (1994, 2014), Weadon (1999) stated that such old patterns of thinking and looking at the world, which have only produced hatred and divisions, do

not serve us anymore. Weadon (1999) talks about a *racist humanism*, affirming that “Europeans have only become a man through creating slaves and masters.” The end result of this is that a colonial way of thinking still shapes many attitudes of Western countries towards the “Third World”. It is not surprising then when a colonial legacy ends up affecting both “Third World” and Western feminisms (Weadon, 1999, 188) and their relations to each other, making more difficult the establishment of empathy and solidarity between different groups of women, and thus not contributing to strengthen bonds of sisterhood and transnational feminist networks.

Ramazanglu (1989) has argued that we need to create *new bridges* between women, but this depends also on many acquiring a critical awareness in order to assess their role or not in maintaining or reinforcing oppression. I believe we can only start to do this if we begin to train our eyes to see things critically and *de-colonise* our gaze, and the ways in which it has been trained to see the world, and certain cultures, people and groups, in a particular way. This might not be easy but must be a constant daily practice of improvement and betterment of our relationship to others, and how we treat them, if we truly wish to live in a fairer, more just and happier world. Firstly though it is important to engage with the debate on what exactly constitutes the “Third World women” in visual terms, how she is represented and what she signifies and symbolises, before I move on to focus on the particular case of Latin America and on media representations of Brazilian femininity and the myth of the “Brazilian women”.

Post-colonialism and “The Third world women” in international media representations

So what is it then to speak of culture? How can we integrate this into an analysis of gender? To speak of culture critically one must not see cultures as stuck in an imagined past and immune to change. As we saw in Part I, from the 1970s onwards feminist analyses started to point out to the

need of including a *cultural concern* in the discussions of gender and development, going beyond the initial economic focus. Cultures thus must not be seen as being static, and are constantly changing and being modified by everyday experiences, attitudes and practices, as well as by social norms and religion. Many post-colonial theorists have argued that representations in the classic literature and canon texts of the West have been traditionally grounded on colonial modes of thinking, and that these have still continued to play a role in maintaining the oppression of women from the South, in keeping them in their place (Radcliffe, 2015). As Radcliffe (2015) further underlined, in the aftermath of de-colonialization, feminist from the South and other post-colonial theorists managed to provide significant contributions through their focus on the interlink between gender, race, class relations and power dynamics.

The reality is that representations of women from developing countries, or the “Third World”, have changed very little, with many images, discourses and representations continuing to remain firmly in static in place and time. “Despite decades of women’s struggles to insert difference into gender and development, the predominant representations remains of a “Third world woman” as authentic heroine, as a woman who is close to the earth...nurturing of cultures, community and family”, stated Radcliffe (2015, 44), quoting Wood (2001, 433). The WID gender and development approach, as we have seen, was also accused of paying lip service to these images. One of the key texts in post-colonial literature which aimed to de-construct Enlightenment thinking towards “the Other”, as mentioned before, was Said’s (1978) *Orientalism* book. The latter aimed to dissect the dominant representations in the West of the East, including examining the colonial discourse on women (Chowdhry, 1995).

In the narratives surrounding the “myths of the Orient”, “exotic”, “inferior”, “unclothed naked women” from the “Third World” appeared as in need of saving and being “civilized” by Western civilization. Many appeared in postcards to advertise “exotic” beach resorts in the East

(Chowdhry, 1995). As Spivak (1988) has brilliantly argued in what now has become another classic text in the post-colonial literature, women from the “Third World” have traditionally not been allowed to speak and have struggled for many centuries to be heard. Spivak’s literary criticism and the articulation of her arguments on the powerlessness of the “subaltern woman”, and how older forms of inequality have continued in different forms within globalization, have opened up a whole new scope within feminist scholarship. Her work has been as influential as the studies of other post-colonial scholars, from Said, Bhabha to Fanon, on the relationship of the European with the “other” (i.e. Grewal and Kaplan in Essed et al, 2009, 59). Besides the representations of such women as victims, many representations have also looked at them as housewives trapped by male-dominated cultures, whereas others still have depicted them as sex objects (Chowdhry, 1995, 28).

The criticisms from scholars from the South and other post-colonial theorists resulted in a lot of soul searching by feminist theorists and others from the second wave feminist groups. Some feminist media scholars from the North examined critically the representations of women from developing countries in Western popular culture. Van Zoonen’s (1992) for one studied the role of the media in constructing a public identity for women’s movements in the Netherlands in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s based largely on specific storylines, such as how feminism was seen as ‘deviant’ (in Creedon, 2003, 6). Van Zoonen, (2000) was also critical towards the myths surrounding Asian and black femininity in advertising and in popular culture. In the book *Feminist Media Studies*, Van Zoonen (2000) analysed some of the myths surrounding the femininity of “Third World” women. The author underscored the “exotic quality”, which was explored through images of African femininity, and emphasised also how a deferential nature and the values of modesty were often attached to Asian women.

Williamson (1986) also stressed how exoticism served an ideological function, having had its roots in European colonialism and in their double fascination with black female sexuality as well as repulsion of colonial bodies and peoples (in Van Zoonen, 2000). Thus imagining the peoples from the colonies as *sexually voracious* largely functioned to legitimise Europe's colonial project and moral "civilizing" mission, as opposed to the harsh reality of pure economic exploitation that characterised colonialism (i.e. Van Zoonen, 1994, 2000; Williamson, 1986). As Williamson (1986, 116) also developed further, the need for Western societies to exploit "otherness" can be understood as being not only part of an *ideological* or *structural* phenomenon, but actually having roots in the very development of capitalism itself. The scholar (1986, 116) made a further link between the "Otherness" of women with colonies, affirming that "if women is the great 'Other' in the psychology of patriarchal capitalist culture, the Other on which that culture has depended for its very existence is the colony, which....it needed to exploit and destroy."

Negative representations in the media of black femininity, such as the figure of the *nanny* or the *black matriarch* in American films, have largely contributed to justify their oppressed position (Rhodes in Creedon, 1993, 28). Many of these representations are thus still inserted within a colonial gaze that still portrays women and children as victims and lacking in self-agency. It is possible to say that many images are still very much the same as the ones that Mohanty (1990) and other scholars from the South pointed out in the 1970s, and which for them characterised the representations of peoples of the developing countries.

In her discussion of both classic Hollywood films as well as what she terms the "nostalgia for empire liberal films", Shohat (2012, 95) goes on to argue that Western imaginary rendered the very *colonised* land as a *female* in need of saving from her environment. Women were in need of saving from African, Asian or Arab men, reinforcing the myth of the Western liberator, a point which is also developed by Spivak (Mills, 1998). Since the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have

seen in both 24 hour news channels as well as in the international press a growth of images of suffering, helpless victims as well as many Afghan women who had previously been under the regime of the Taliban. Many of these images of Afghan women are a contrast to other representations of the “exotic” and of natural landscapes that have been invoked in many ads in the West.

The famous *National Geographic* photo of the Afghan girl for instance is simple and beautiful in its own right, invoking comparison’s do da Vinci’s famous *Mona Lisa* painting.^{xxii} As the interview with the grown up women from the *National Geographic* magazine has shown, among others, life has not necessarily improved for them with the fall of the Taliban.^{xxiii} This image was published in 1985, before the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and after the former colonies gained their independence in the 1960’s. The image of young, white blonde women has traditionally signified innocence, whilst brown or darker women have signified danger and sexuality. This image seems to be embedded in Eurocentric narratives of the backward and barbaric countries and cultures of the “Third World”, as analysed by Shohat (2012). The “Other” appears here as fearful and frightening, distant from us and from our way of life, while at the same time they cause pity and appear as helpless victims stuck in an unbearable fate. In many ways this can lead us to a lack of sympathy for their plight and rather a reinforcement of the hierarchy and the distance “between the West and the rest” (Nederveen Pieterse, 1992; Hall, 1992), or between “us” and “them”.

Similarly to feminism, post-colonialism assumed a critical stance towards knowledge, questions of power and difference. “The Third world women” became a site for development to carry forward agendas of modernization”, states Radcliffe (2015). Notwithstanding, as Radcliffe (2015) correctly argues, methodological challenges have persisted regarding the ways of *translating* post-colonial studies into programmes for change. There have been criticisms also

towards the highly sophisticated use of language and focus on discourse of a lot of post-colonial work (i.e. Spivak, 1990; Mohanty, 1990; Said, 1993; Bhabha, 1994), and the ways in which some of it is distant, disconnected and speaks little to the reality of the oppressive experiences suffered daily by millions of women throughout the world. There has also been accusations of bias as well as of being political (i.e. Grewal and Kaplan, in Essed et al, 2009, 52).

Many of these insights have remained fundamental nonetheless in helping to de-construct previously traditional, rigid and hierarchical discourses and representations which worked to reinforce the distances between cultures, races, groups and people. It also helps us to better understand the complexities of globalization and the inequalities that still persist in the international division of labour between men and women from different nations and races (Spivak, 1993 in Radcliffe, 2015, 38). Various post-colonial studies have further assisted in shedding light into the reasons why women from developing countries, or from nations of the South, still struggle to speak in various public spheres, from the local to the global.

Yuval-Davis (1997, 2010, 6) has correctly stated that the *public/private* dichotomy associated to the subordination of women (i.e. women as part of the private sphere as opposed to the predominance of men in the public), is but one among many binary categories, with the *nature/civilisation* divide being another one, and which is evident in the *Brazil by OPI* ad example, as we shall see. “This identification of women with “nature” has been seen not only as the cause of their exclusion from the ‘unified’ public political domain...., but also as the explanation of the fact that in *all cultures* (my emphasis) women are less valued socially than men” (Yuval-Davis, 1997, 2010, 6). Thus according to Grewal and Kaplan (in Essed et al, 2009), post-colonialism should not be seen as clearly defined, but rather more like a “set of practices.... that connect questions of modernity to colonialism, and which insist that current forms of power in... cultural, aesthetics and media arena are linked to imperial and colonial practices.”

Moreover, although feminism and nationalism should not be seen as always being mutually dependent, they are obvious strong connections between them, resulting in difficulties of establishing networks of affinity and solidarity between nations and women from other countries due to differences that exist between them, and the ways they are inserted within particular local and national contexts with particular social, cultural and political histories. This does not mean to say that the differences between women – and nations – should prevail over the continuous strive to find similarities, common ground and empathy between different groups.

Despite decades of studies in development and feminist perspectives, the “Third World woman” has remained fixed in place in binaries that often have normalised masculinity and left it unmarked (Radcliffe, 2015, 39-40). Since the 1990s though, NGOs in the North and others working with development have rethought their publicity, with “new representations comprising of positive images of the Global South”, many which highlighted agency and not vulnerability (Radcliffe, 2015, 40). Radcliffe (2015) also has argued that there have also been changes in representations from the South coming from the Internet. However, change has been slow and traditional images and exotic female bodies have persisted.

The historical construction of the image of the Brazilian woman for instance has been one rooted in sensuality. Arguably, the “Brazilian woman” is seen as a cultural and national mythical stereotype both in Brazil and abroad. Since the colonial years, Portuguese and other Europeans arrived in Brazil and were astonished and tempted by the nudity of the natives (i.e. *the exotic*). This gained projection during the colonial period. Gilberto Freyre in *Casa Grande e Senzala* (1933) described how the environment which started Brazilian life was a highly sexually charged one. When Europeans set foot in the country, they came across naked indigenous women, or the “niggers” of the earth, as he put it.

According further to Brazilian anthropologist Da Matta (quoted in Adelman and Ruggi, 2008, 559), the cult of the “Brazilian body” has had its roots in the colonial past. The slave body was seen as the main tool for economic and social survival, represented in the equation “labour” and the “erotic”. The authors also quote Brazilian historian Del Priore (2000), who argued that the vanity placed on the body, and the complex relationship between power and desire, worked as a form of *aesthetic subversion* to the hegemonic Catholic cultural order in the country and its emphasis on the ‘virtue’ of mothers (Adelman and Ruggi, 2008, 559). Masculinity in Brazil has also been constructed in a rigid and hierarchical manner. The Brazilian male has been required to be in overall aggressive, competitive and in control, with the white, upper and middle class European descendant male positioning himself as the most valued subject in Brazilian society, above others and worthy of most of the countries’ resources, privileges and superior status.

It is possible here to trace the parallels between the colonialist discourses on *Asian* and *Black* femininity with the *Brazilian* femininity. Williamson (1986) has argued that in Europe, the fascination with black sexuality can be traced to the reports about the crusades, having been a known topic in the literature or travellers to Africa and the Orient. As she (1990) further pointed out, the discourses of the “wild savage” and of black female sexuality served the very purpose of European colonialism, situating the peoples of the colonies as *sexually voracious*, therefore contributing to legitimise Europe’s colonial project as a mission of civilization and not economic exploitation. The image of the “Brazilian woman” encounters analogies with this sexually voracious “exotic female” body, and has still been largely reinforced by many sectors of the media in the West for tourism (even sexual) as well as to sell beauty and other products.

The image of the “Brazilian woman” as representative of “the nation” is also linked with other cultural icons of identity, such as with samba, Carnival, beach culture and small bikinis. In order to have social acceptability within Brazilian society for instance, the Brazilian women is

asked to constantly exercise, control her own body obsessively and to narcissistically display it (almost like a super-model) for both international and national consumption. These images which were standard in the past continue to dominate in many international ads, images and discourses. This is made clear from the series of images that homogenise the “Brazilian woman” in the 2014 Spring/Summer collection of the *Brazil by OPI* advertising campaign for the Nail Lacquer brand for instance, as well as by the images published in the Canadian magazine *Sharp* on the “Women of Brazil” during the realisation of the World Cup in the country in 2014.^{xxiv}

Making reference to various authors, Carter (2014, 372) states that black women have been represented stereotypically as “exotic” or as “horny”, while Latinas are depicted as passionate and Asian woman as “sexually submissive”. The *Brazil by OPI* campaign combines the use of stereotypes of the nation and of Brazilian women to promote its product. In both cases, the figure of the women as *nation* plays on stereotypes, ideas and visions of the world that reinforce a double layer of oppression (sexism and racism), underlining the narratives of a “third world exotic” country composed of rainforests, heat, beaches, beautiful women and football. Such images do not seem to stand very far apart from the early images of European colonisers going to distant and uncivilised lands, encountering sexual bodies and wild savages.

The way in which these images equate the “nation” with “Brazilian women”, and with the values associated to a particular “national identity” or even “ethnicity”, work to homogenise and generalise not just about a whole country, but also about *all* of the women in it, thus paying lip service, however unconsciously, to standard colonial modes of representation (Shotat and Stam, 1994), and contributing to the narrowing of the possibilities of diverse identities that exist within the idea of the nation, as well its material manifestation. It is thus further implied here in this ad – which many would claim is what is expected of a normal” or average ideal Brazilian woman - that she be friendly, humble, submissive, fun to be with, playful and seductive.

According to Saussure, a sign consists of two elements: the first one is the signifier, which is composed of a combination of letters forming a word (i.e. “cat” or “rain”), while the concept it refers to – i.e. a small four legged animal – is called the *signified*. The relation between the words is completely arbitrary. Barthes went further to distinguish between the first and second order signification, mainly between *denotation* and *connotation*, with the literal meaning lying in the former and the various meanings that we attribute to a term or expression in the latter, leading to what Barthes saw as the realm in which *myths* were created (Barthes, 1972, 2009). As Williamson (1986) argues, despite the fact that texts are “polysemic”, the syntagmatic and paradigmatic combination of signs produces “closure of meanings”, in other words, a certain set of ideas and values can be read from images as opposed to others. It is thus not possible for signs, images and languages to connote *all* meanings (!), however much one would like to be able to play with multiple meanings and words and resist dominant readings within a post-modern setting.

If we situate these images within the wider socio-political, economic and historical context of Brazil as an emerging democracy formerly colonised by European powers, and also the portrayal of the Brazilian women within other modes of colonial representation, such as Asian femininity, it is possible to conclude that such representations acquire meanings that transcend the innocence and playfulness of the image to include a reinforcement of a particular (traditional and static) vision of a country and its women that is at once *ahistorical* and *apolitical* and used for the purpose of consumption and profit.

Both the *Brazil by OPI* advertising campaign and the *Sharp* magazine image contribute to the endorsement of the portrayal of the typical *Latina* body (despite the fact that this is used to refer to Hispanic women, and not Brazilian), further making strong connections between nationality and *Brazilian* femininity. Writing about the representations of *Latinas* in US television series and film and making reference to other Latina feminist media scholars, Valdiva (in Carter et al, 2015)

argued that the dominant image here is that of a woman who has long brown hair and light brown skin. In the case of the *Brazil by OPI* campaign, the models who were chosen were all young and attractive, and possibly in their twenties, with near perfect, slightly sun-tanned overly suggestive and sexualised bodies.

The emphasis on the identity, traits and characteristics of the “Brazilian woman” is not only clearly visible in this ad to sell nail varnish. It has also been a conscious effort of the marketing behind the campaign. In the material available online on the *Brazil by OPI* spring/summer collection, the OPI co-founder and executive VP, Suzi Weiss-Fischmann, stated that she “wanted women around the world to embrace the energy and playfulness for which Brazilian women are known. Through the Brazil collection, shades drenched in colour and charged with shine, women can express themselves, showing off their sexy, mysterious, fun and exciting natures. *Brazil by OPI* thus provided vivid hues to add a pop of colour to a neutral-toned wardrobe, as well as earthy tones that easily transition from day to night.”^{xxv}

The first image of the campaign has the *signifier* of a woman dressed in a wavy red blouse that shows her arms which look sun tanned. She is holding on to what appears to be a mobile phone and looks straight in front of us. We assume that she is in a warm place, possibly by the beach and is enjoying herself. The only connection made with the nation here is through the words “Brazil” included below. The image thus signifies *playfulness*, the sexiness of Brazilian woman and invites more a *male gaze* than a female one, although the products are directed mainly to young professional woman in the West. These images also allude to the old and traditional European fantasies of sexual tourism and playfulness in “exotic” countries with “wild women of nature”, inviting the gaze of the European male and reinforcing the display of sexualised brown bodies. The sentences beneath each of the nail varnishes further include statements that could be seen as largely stereotypical, and which do not need even much discussion given the obviousness

and bluntness of the messages. The statements under each nail varnish seem to equate the product with particular aspects that are seen as symbols of national identity, *Brazilianness* and femininity, and which include “OPI scores a Goal” (football), “AmazOn...AmazOff – I’m making the switch to this deep jungle green” (rainforest), “I just can’t Cope-acabana – Nothing lifts your spirits like this sunshine yellow” (beach); “Kiss Me, I’m Brazilian – plant this warm luscious pink on me!; “Live.Love.Carnival – this vibrant and festive coral is the life of the party” and “Red Hot Rio – A ruby red as hot as the most exciting city in Brazil”.

The second *Brazil by OPI* image is not that different from the first but is more emphatic. Here the woman is shown sitting down, and placed in a position that is more sexually suggestive and which connects more strongly women to symbols of the *Earth* (such as water and *nature* itself), thus playing heavily on the fantasy of a beautiful and tropical country with laid back, easy going and sexually promiscuous women. The association here thus alludes to the historical tradition of inserting “exotic female bodies” within natural settings, or as being very much part of nature in itself as one and the same thing. The woman is thus shown immersed in water and wearing another red dress (an obvious symbol of passion and lust), attracting more strongly the *male gaze* and inviting a visit to this “exotic” country where women are available for sex.^{xxvi} These images thus equate quite obviously the bright colours of the nail varnish with the colours of the country Brazil (i.e. the Amazon rainforest, the sand and beaches, the red excitement of the city of Rio). This campaign ends up playing to the binary classifications that have marked Western characterisations of countries of the East and other developing countries.

In this particular case of the *Brazil by OPI* campaign, what is contrasted is less a simple and straightforward “us” versus “them” dichotomy, but rather the juxtaposition of the serious neutral-toned business and professional wardrobe, associated with the Anglo and Northern European countries and the whole philosophy and values associated to work in post-industrialised capitalist

societies, or even with “civilization” itself, against the playfulness and exoticness of the bright colours of less developed countries, with their attachment to rural settings and traditional forms of life, including a dependency on nature, the Earth, rainforests and beaches.

The last image of the *Sharp* magazine, “The woman of Brazil”, also explored similar values and ideas in their representation of what they deemed to be “woman from Brazil”. Again the women chosen is a typical *Latina*, with long brown hair and fair skin. The images are presented in the context of the realisation of the 2014 World Cup in the country, with the intention of presenting male Canadians readers of the magazine with a glimpse of what the nation is like. Here we have again the equation of women with the nation. The image of Brazilian femininity is thus homogenised here into a perfect, sun-tanned and well worked out body. Contrary to the OPI advertising campaign though, the *Sharp* magazine attempted to provide a diversity of images of different Brazilian woman, including a total of 14. These ranged from models, such as Gisele Bundchen, to even actresses, such as Alice Braga. These images are thus not only stereotypical, but allude to a particular type of thinking regarding the country, and a significant part of its citizens, which can be seen as embedded in old-fashioned notions of what developing countries and its women are like, either victims in need of saving or sexually alluring women.

Such rigid representations on “what it means to be a Brazilian woman”, serve to suffocate and oppress diversity. They can contribute to the perceptions of them as inferior beings, thus not questioning power relations within the international labour force as well as within Brazilian society, opening a margin for the reinforcement of their vulnerability internationally as women for sexual exploitation. In Europe for instance, Spain is the main country for the prostitution of Brazilian women, which in 2010 was as high as 7.000, with many living in conditions of near slavery.^{xxvii}

In the next chapter, I explore a variety of representations which explore what is deemed appropriate for the “Brazilian woman”. As we shall see, these reflect a very narrow range of types, including “the sexy goddess with a perfect body” to “the inferior apolitical, submissive and boring housewife”. Similarly to the criticisms made to the depictions of “women in Africa in need of saving” (Mohanty, 1990), the complexities of the Brazilian situation cannot be explained solely by a focus on the country’s historically patriarchal culture, and are a result of the interlayers of various factors and multiple forms of oppression. These include cultural influences and social habits, as well as the economic difficulties of the country and its positioning within the global order.

The analysis of gender media representations are thus a crucial site where the social, political, cultural and economic is played out. It is a place of *diverse contestation*, of multiple roles and identities which have emerged more forcefully in the last years within the slow, weak and fragile process of democratization of Brazil, as well as other countries in Latin America. Representations also need to be diversified and to include a range of identities and possibilities, providing avenues for more challenging and complex images and not always emphasising old habits of thinking. They need to include more images of stronger, successful and powerful women, among others, but this alone is far from enough. I thus move next to discuss the myth of Brazilian femininity through a critical examination of gender representations in advertising, and particularly looking at the magazines of the Abril publisher group, *MdeMulher*, as well as a series of commercials and ads on beers and other products, many of which were considered controversial and raised a series of debates on social media and in the public sphere, something which is further developed in Part IV in my examination on feminist movements and the blogosphere.

Before beginning this analysis, it is important to evaluate the feminist struggles for equal rights in Latin America and Brazil since the late 19th century, as well as addressing some of the

key concerns of contemporary Brazilian feminist groups alongside gender representations, such as domestic violence and abortion, a discussion further developed in the next chapters of this book.

Chapter 4 – “Women in the Third World”: contextualising the Brazilian women in an age of globalization

Feminists movements and struggles in Latin America and Brazil: from the past to the present

Feminist struggles and movements in favour of gender equality and women’s rights in countries throughout Latin America paralleled the struggles of first wave feminists in the UK in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Despite the inspiration that many of these women drew from other countries, it is simplistic and misleading to affirm that feminist struggles were merely an imposition of foreign ideas. Although traditionally Latin American countries have reserved for women a subordinate and minor role in politics and in public life in general, the continent has had a history of vibrant feminist activism. Feminist and other women movements have had an important role in pressuring for social justice and the advancement of democracy in the history of most of the countries in the continent.

The activism of feminist Latin American movements nonetheless has had to sit side by side with the persistence of chauvinistic and negative attitudes towards feminism and the advancement of women’s rights (Craske, 1999). This did not work to undermine the enthusiasm and activism of many groups of Latin American women, who despite constraints managed to engage enthusiastically in the resistance to the dictatorship regimes of the 1960s and 1970s, whilst also historically challenging their subordination, and the enforcement on them of the need to live a domestic life and adapt to stereotypical or rigid traditional gender roles.

In her discussion of India and of the role played by Third World feminists in the West, Narayan (2002) has stated that their feminists’ consciousness was not born out of the imposition of foreign and alien ideas, and that it has had its roots closer to home. In her examination of the

relationship between feminism and national contexts, Narayan (2002) talks about *her own* experiences and the rise of a consciousness of living a situation of oppression and the need to struggle to construct new power relations. In this way, as Narayan (2002, 230) further contends, many Third World feminist issues are not “Westernized agendas” imposed by feminists onto “culturally authentic” contexts.

Following from what I argued in the previous chapter, it is important to move beyond Eurocentrism and understandings that still place developing countries as being part of a *homogeneous* group, all with similar attitudes towards women, “backward” and “patriarchal”. There are differences between regions of the world and well as within and between countries, and here reports prepared by international bodies and NGOs, such as the ones that I discuss here, are precisely important in helping us understand the differences within regions as well as the particularities of each country, and what are the challenges that need to be tackled in order to advance gender equality in these societies. Different forms of patriarchy and constraints, the development of capitalism in the country and the strength of the economy, the relationship between the state and feminism, cultural and social habits, the role of the media and the history of feminist struggles, conquests and movements in the nation in question all contribute to shape the way women are treated in these countries and their overall status in society.

Feminism and nationalism have arguably walked side by side in many of the struggles taken on by women’s groups throughout the whole Latin American region since the 19th century. Well before the dictatorship regimes of the 1970s in the region, women throughout the continent had already joined in the struggle for the independence of their countries. Brazil gave women the right to vote in 1934, although most of Central and South America gave woman suffrage rights only after World War II.

With the countries in the region having been colonised mainly by the Portuguese and the Spanish, Latin America is a diverse continent. There are some important common features, including four hundred years of colonization, distorted land redistribution, oligarchic elites and a small but expanding middle class which is squeezed between a large low income group and a tiny wealthy minority (Lebon, 2010, 4). Significant transformations in the role of women and gender ideologies in Latin American and the Caribbean have occurred in the last four decades (Lebon in Maier and Lebon, 2010). These have been largely dependent on women taking their destinies in their own hands.

Feminism movements have nonetheless developed with a lot of difficulty throughout Latin American. The conquering of rights for women throughout the continent has appeared as quite surprising given the way feminism is seen in a negative light in various sectors of mainstream Brazilian society. It has also often been perceived and dismissed as being merely the concerns of elite groups or professional women with no interest in the “ordinary woman” (Craske, 1999, 162). As the author (1999) states, feminist organizations in the region in the early years had initially been concerned with mainly three core issues: *the vote*, *protective labour laws* and *education*. Craske (1999, 166-167) further stated that women who did question gender relations tended to be exceptional, regardless of their class. The author pointed particularly to teachers as being the first group of middle-class women who started to provide a gendered critique of their societies.

Craske (1999) also traced a parallel between the struggles of Latin American women with their European contemporaries, who also faced similar restrictions. The historian June Hahner (1990), who wrote an extensively researched book on women’s rights in Brazil focusing on the period from 1850 to 1940, argued that women’s movements all over the world had been dependent on the input from educated women with some leisure time. As we have seen in previous chapters however, working class women’s movements had existed (and co-existed) with the middle class groups of the

British first wave of feminists. Hahner (1990) also points to the fact that many studies on Brazil were written as if women scarcely existed. The decade of the 1990's appeared as the period which would see a growth in the work done on women and their roles in contemporary society. Organised movements in favour of women's rights however only arose in Brazil in the early 20th century (Hahner, 1990).

During both the 19th and 20th centuries, female activists advocated for their emancipation, including through the use of newspapers that appeared in cities of the south of Brazil (Hahner, 1990, xiii). Korrol et al (1988, 1999) has written how it was during the 1870s that the country would see the rise of a few feminists publications. Journals dedicated to women's issues such as *O Domingo*, *Jornal das Damas*, *Myosotis* and *O Sexo Feminino* began to appear, with the latter aiming towards the educating as well as emancipating women (quoted in Hahner, 1978, 262 in Korrol et al, 1988, 1999). As early as the mid-19th century, newspapers such as *O Jornal das Senhoras* emphasised their commitment to the improvement of women as well as their emancipation (quoted in Hahner, 1978, 247 in Korrol et al, 1988, 1999).

Various groups of women throughout Brazil and Latin America have had an important role in the struggles for the abolition of slavery. Slavery would be abolished only in 1888 in Brazil, with the Portuguese monarchy being overthrown in 1889. Some feminists would begin then to oppose the subordination of women to men, whilst others focused on improving the education level of women. Some Brazilian women would have a role in the movement for the abolition of slavery (Hahner, 1990). Brazilian suffragettes attempted to address problems such as the condition of working class women, but largely the movement was seen as having been led by middle-class women, who did not necessarily want to work more to change significantly the role that Brazilian women had in society (Hahner, 1990, xvi). Similarly to the first wave of feminists in the UK however, these groups faced a lot of opposition from men and women and limited acceptance (Hahner, 1990).

By the end of the 19th century and up until 1920, women started to receive more education and began to compete for positions and in the government service, although large segments of the population would continue to be illiterate (Hahner, 1990). Led by the Brazilian feminist Bertha Lutz, who was one of the first women to compete for a high-level public service position, the suffrage campaign in Brazil finally reached its goal, managing to obtain the vote for women in 1932, however subject to the same literary qualifications as men (Hahner, 1990). Women movements would play a key role in the fight against the right military dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s, with many female activist groups during the 1970s and 1980s engaging in various forms of resistance and opposition to the dictatorships of their countries (i.e. Acosta-Belem and Base, 1993).

Nadine Gasman, representative of United Nations Women in Brazil, stated how since the period of colonialism in the country, indigenous and black women came across a system of violence whose real effects of inequality have persisted well over 150 years:

“Currently, indigenous women are the victims of violence against their territories...Black women suffer the perverse combination of racism and sexism, experiencing low levels of political representation, more instability in the workplace and are super exposed to urban violence...they need to have their identities and struggles made more visible, recognised by society and transformed through inclusion and justice“, affirmed Gusman.

As Caldwell (in Maier and Lebon, 2010, 175) has also stated, black women’s political activism has played a key role in the conceptualizations of equality and justice, which aims to revert processes of social exclusion. This was essential for the development of a gendered critique of Brazilian racism and the accusations of the perpetuation of contemporary social inequalities. Many groups of women in Brazil thus suffer from the oppression of a still strongly male-dominated culture that is also heavily influenced by religion, mainly conservative evangelism but also from some more orthodox sectors of the Catholic Church.

The last four decades thus saw significant changes on the political and economic fronts, with opportunities being created for activism at the same that social movements, civil society groups, academics journalists and others acquired more strength and voice in the public sphere and started to pressure as well as obtain more rights (Matos, 2008; Lebon, 2010). There were improvements in the life conditions of the poorer segments of the population from 1996 onwards, having started during the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso and continuing more strongly through an expansion of the nation's social programmes, such as *Bolsa Familia*, during Lula and Dilma's mandates. Mainly after the 1960's, a series of legislations were also approved, starting to slowly advance women's rights, from alterations in the marriage law (Lei n. 4.121/62) to the implementation of divorce (Lei n. 6.515/77). The region however began to shift away from the dictatorial and oligarchic regimes of the past, towards a slow and gradual political democratization and the insertion of the country into the global economic market economics (Lebon, 2010), although it is largely a fragile democracy which has seen many attempts of disruption and return to the authoritarian practices of the past, including in 2016 with the impeachment process against the nation's first female president and the installation of a temporary government.

Nonetheless, issues around class and ethnicity began to grow considerably more important from the decade of the 1990's onwards. According to the 2012 ranking of the *World Economic Forum* (WEF), Brazil went up in 20 positions on gender equality, moving from the 82nd position to the 62 from a list of 135 countries. An inclusive agenda started to emerge, moving beyond the mere quest for equality with men to include concerns over motherhood among others (Craske, 1999). However, the concentration of income among the 1% is still high and has not changed significantly and, although inequality has continued to fall in other countries in Latin America, Brazil is still a highly unequal society.^{xxviii}

Especially since the decade of the 1990s, women started to enter the marketplace in greater numbers, with many dominating in various professions, from the newsroom (Abreu, 2006) to businesses and commerce, although many stuck at the bottom of the ladder. Like in other countries, the gender inequality pay gap in Brazil has persisted. Various groups of less privileged women, including lower middle and working class, black and poorer women, still earn much less than men despite their qualifications and level of education.^{xxix}A story published by *Folha de Sa Paulo* stressed how if the rate of the fall of levels of inequality of income is maintained between the sexes, women will only start to earn the same as men in 2085.^{xxx}The story further stated that women would occupy 51% of the executive directorships in 2126, with this quota of vacancies being reached in the Senate in 2083, the Municipal Chambers in 2160 and the Chamber of Deputies in 2254.

Brazilian women have undoubtedly obtained rights and advanced since the granting of universal suffrage in the 1930s, but this is all the more admirable due to the fact that the slow and unsteady progress has been the result of a series of hard fought battles and struggles undertaken in the last decades, if not centuries, by various different groups of women.^{xxxi}In line with the concerns of third wave feminists, feminist struggles in the country in the last decades have focused on issues such as reproductive and abortion rights, quotas for political representation and demands for wider voice and participation in politics, diverse and better media representations as well as struggles even to maintain the rights that have been granted to women and minorities in the last 50 years. There are also struggles for further inclusion of diverse groups of women and identities, working class and black women, in movements that are still led mainly by white middle class women, issues examined more in the next chapters.

Feminists' movements in Brazil have thus expanded considerably in the last decade if not years. Social movements and organisations like *Marcha das Vadias* (March of the Sluts), *Instituto Geledes* and *Associação Brasileira das Mulheres* (ABM) have made a series of pressures and

demands, from the legalisation of abortion to rights for black women. Brazil experienced an important movement in its history of feminist struggles in the end of October 2015, early November especially, with a series of feminist protests and demonstrations occurring throughout the country, as well as during the whole year, characterising 2015 as the year of the Brazilian women's *Arab Spring*. Many events happened in parallel to each other during those months, inviting comparisons to the women's general strike in Iceland in 1975, which paved the way for the first female president in the world in 1980, Vigdis Finnbogadottir. This put the country back on track to be one of the most equal in terms of gender equality in the world.

Moreover, a project that strived to make abortion harder in cases of rape was approved in the Houses of Parliament. Various groups of feminists started to take to the streets particularly to protest against the abortion bill 5069/2013 put forward by the lower deputy of the House of Chambers, Eduardo Cunha, as well as to demand more voice in the public sphere, respect for their rights in Brazilian society and an end to violence and discrimination. Supported by the conservative sectors of Congress, the House Committee on Constitution and Justice approved the bill 5069/2013 that amended the Penal Code, permitting the criminalisation of those who encouraged, induced or provided assistance (such as the "pill of the day after") to a pregnant women to have an abortion. The bill required approval in the Chamber of Deputies before moving on to the Senate House for ratification.^{xxxii} The Cunha bill can be interpreted as an initiative that above all fed on conservative stereotypes of the women's body and on female culpability on being the victim of rape.^{xxxiii} It thus reinforced the traditional chauvinistic mantra of "blaming the victim", oppressing even further the vulnerability of many Brazilian women, and particularly the poorer segments of society, indigenous and black women.^{xxxiv}

Despite political democratisation and improvements in the reduction of inequality, violence against women in Brazil has not suffered a significant decline in the last decades. According to the

Map of Violence 2015 – Homicides of women in Brazil, which analysed the period from 2003 to 2013, Brazil appeared in the fifth place in a list of 84 countries where more women are killed. This was more than in Syria. Brazil is also behind only Russia, Guatemala, Colombia and El Salvador, registering 4.8 deaths for every 100.000 women. Compared to the 2013 report, the numbers have worsened (Brazil occupied the 7th place) with few improvements in particular states of the country. These include mainly Rio de Janeiro (-33.3%), Sao Paulo (-45.1%) and Mato Grosso (-16.6%), which had the highest falls, although some saw a big rise in female murders, such as Roraima, which went from 3.4 deaths per 100.000 in 2003 to 15.3 in 2013, representing an increase of 345%.

In March 2015, the Dilma government approved the *feminicide* law (Law 13.104), which altered the penal code to include the murdering of women amongst the worse crimes, and to increase the penalty for such crimes committed against women. With the law, Brazil became the 16th country in Latin America to include *feminicide* as a serious crime. The new law, which complements the *Maria da Penha* legislation, has not been without its critiques. Bloggers such as Bia Cardoso from *Blogueiras Feministas*, discussed more in the next chapter, claimed that laws against violence towards women do not by themselves solve the issue, and that harsher and stricter penalties are not enough. She emphasised the importance of the role of education and the change in attitudes and behaviour.^{xxxv}

The *Lei Maria da Penha* has been seen as an interesting legislation against gender violence, symbolising the validation of international arrangements such as the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Woman* (CEDAW) through its recognition of violence against women as a violation of human rights, having further created mechanisms to prevent domestic violence (Moreno, 2012, 46). The *Maria da Penha* law however is not seen as being fully capable of protecting women, starting with problems such as the registration of the

cases of violence against women to the lack of structure of many organs in attending to the victims.^{xxxvi}

Coordinator of the World Bank in Brazil, who in the last five years have significantly expanded their support for women's empowerment in the country and assisted in the investment in projects of protection of women's rights, Boris Utria, has underlined that compared to other BRIC countries, such as Russia, even to Colombia, Brazil has managed to advance in women's rights. Interviewed for this research, Utria has argued that the World Bank has been committed to projects in Brazil destined to empower women.^{xxxvii} The World Bank destined US\$ 15 million to a project dedicated to the protection of women known as the *Via Lilas*, which consisted in the construction of electronic points in all tube stations with information about the services for the protection of women.

Among the projects of the World Bank are the creation of a bank of statistics to monitor gender projects in the Chamber of Deputies, the implementation of a course in gender for the Chamber of Deputies and the continuity of the *Mutirao da Penha* project. Boris Utria nonetheless pointed to the difficulties of registering the cases of violence against women, stating that "50% of the cases of violence are not registered". Utria signalled also to the growth in the registration of attacks against women. This does not necessarily mean that violence has grown, but that more cases are being registered combined with the fact that there has been an increase in the conservative male reaction to the advancement of women's rights.

A study conducted by Ipea (Institute of Applied Economic Research) for instance estimated that the law in itself has not been sufficient in impeding the deaths of women provoked by their husbands and relatives. Between 2009 and 2011, Brazil saw 16.900 women being assassinated, or an average of 472 murders of women per month. In 2014, the United Nations pointed out that Brazil occupied the 7th place in the international ranking on such crimes, with approximately 5.000

women being murdered every year in the country. More than 92.000 women were murdered in the country between 1980 and 2010, which represents an increase in 230% in the number of female deaths due to gender throughout the whole period. Ipea also estimated that the law in itself has not been sufficient in impeding the deaths of women provoked by their husbands and relatives.

Many of the victims of violence in Brazil are poor women, shanty town dwellers as well as blacks. According to the statistic provided by the Ipea, 62% of the victims of *feminicide* are black women, many of which are under-employed despite education and are also head of households. There is also a gender gap between them with both white women and men. The institute DIEESE (Department of Inter Union of Statistics and Socioeconomic Studies) has underlined that there is a 19% difference with white women and an even further 46% if compared with white men. In the year 2014, 47.6 thousand were victims of rape, representing an alarming rate of one person being raped at every eleven minutes, according to the data provided by the 9th Brazilian Annual of Public Security.^{xxxviii}

Another study which came out in 2013, Ipea's *Tolerancia social a violencia contra as mulheres* (Social tolerance to violence against women) published findings which confirmed the predominance still of sexism in Brazilian society and of a patriarchal collective psyche that favoured the traditional Brazilian nuclear family. Three thousand and eight hundred and ten people of both sexes were interviewed in cities within the 5 main regions of the country during May-June 2013. Respondents were asked to comment on twenty seven sentences, which had the aim of assessing their levels of tolerance towards violence. Many of the results seemed to suggest that various groups of men believe that women were those to blame for being raped. It was initially announced that 65% of Brazilians supported attacks on women who wore revealing clothes. The number was later corrected to 26%. However, the researchers argued that in spite of the mistake,

the results largely confirmed the view already held by many people that sexism is still rife in Brazil and ingrained within Brazilian culture and social life.

The results showed a high level of agreement with statements that indicated dismissive attitudes towards woman and a certain level of tolerance towards violence and aggressive behaviour towards them. Nearly 60 per cent (54.9%) agreed totally or partially with the statement: *“some women are for marrying, some are for sleeping with.”* Another 58% agreed (totally/partially) with the sentence that: “if women knew how to behave, there would be less rapes”, in other words, that they had a role in impeding rape and somehow “had it coming”. Another 64% agreed (totally/partially) stated that the man should be the breadwinner, whilst some a very high number seemed to believe that a woman’s main goal is still to get married 79% agreed totally or partially with the idea that “every women dreams of getting married.” There was also little incentive to report cases of violence against women, with 63% agreeing that violence against women should be discussed among family members. The estimate is that only 10% of 500.000 cases of rape in Brazil ever reaches the local authorities. In 2012, there were still 106.000 reported cases of violence against women. A positive indicator however was that 78% of the respondents agreed that men should go to prison for hitting their wives.

Nadine Gasman has argued in favour of multiple actions to combat gender violence: “Violence against women is caused by multiple factors and its combat demands various responses, including public security, justice, the attention to the victims and the diffusion of non-violent practices which aim to change behaviour and attitudes. The campaigns which aim to create awareness are thus vital to alert the intended public on what is violence, how it happens and what are its types, besides stimulating new values and human relations. The Campaign of the United Nations Secretary (UNA-Se) for the end of violence against women has in Brazil developed different actions, among the most important it has developed has been a school curriculum which

aims to confront prejudices and gender stereotypes called “O Valente nao e Violento” (The Strong is not Violent)”, she pointed out.

As I discussed in the previous section, Brazilian feminist movements and women’s organisations have had a long history of activism in the continent as well as in Brazil. They have been extremely active through transnational networks, with feminists from the North and operating at various levels through UN and other international organisations networks, especially during the 1970s and 1980s in the context of the struggles against the Brazilian dictatorship. Since the decade of the 1990s, more local struggles started to take place, with transnationalism feminism beginning to lose its force. This was in the context of the rise of market politics and the decline of the state as the main agent in development. The rise of centre-left wing governments throughout the continent, from Chile, Argentina and Brazil to Venezuela and Uruguay, especially since 2000 onwards, also saw the increase of the reaction of conservative and religious groups against the advancement of the struggles of minorities, LGBT and women’s groups in Brazil, culminating in what some academics have claimed to be a confusing climate of uncertainty towards the reception of these demands and the very future of the democratisation project.

The problems faced by various groups of women in Brazil culminated in the last years, especially in a more intense manner since 2011 and mainly 2013, in various constant protests which have taken place in different states throughout the country. Many argue that this has taken place in the context of wider dissatisfaction of various civil society groups and citizens with democracy and a declining distrust in institutions and with politics in general. Groups such as the *Marcha das Vadias* (Slut Walks) started to occupy the streets of various capitals of Brazil since 2011. Many of these women who have taken to the streets come from diverse groups of Brazilian society and participate in different women’s groups. There is a particular focus on a revival of feminism coming from the periphery, which includes the participation of younger women, blacks,

indigenous and working-class feminist groups, and not just traditional middle class women. Given the impact that some of these campaigns have had internationally, such as *Think Olga's* sexual harassment campaign, I would argue that there has been not only a renewal of feminist energy in Brazil but a growing attempt of re-establishing, and strengthening, the links with transnational feminist networks in developed countries outside of the UN field only through connections with others across the globe online as well as through conferences, workshops and other social and professional networks.

A series of demonstrations were also held by ultraconservative sectors of Brazilian society, including in a municipal chamber in a city in Sao Paulo, in reaction to the rise of these groups and against the inclusion of the topic on violence against women in the national *Enem* exam, which evaluates secondary education. There was particularly a strong reaction to the reference to Simone de Beauvoir's famous sentence on the social construction of gender. An interesting result of these agitations was the impact that it had on the mainstream media which, as we will see, has been relatively distant, and many times even hostile, to discussions about feminism or women's rights. There have been however a few wider inroads that have been made into the mainstream, with a slow growing of awareness surrounding the importance of the theme, and the ways in which it needs to be better integrated into public debate. Male columnists of the main Brazilian newspapers, like *Folha de Sao Paulo* and *O Globo*, were convinced to provide a platform in the press for feminists, and other women academics and professionals, to talk about their experiences during the first week of November 2015, which I will be discussing more in detail in this book.

In order to better understand the challenges posed by the contemporary Brazilian reality, and the role that the media plays here in both the reinforcement and reproduction of ideology, or values and beliefs that perpetuate gender inequality through the production of meaning of messages and discourses, as well as the ways in which it can contribute to advance women's rights and create

awareness towards structural injustices, I want to examine more closing the myth surrounding Brazilian femininity and the roots of the construction of a rigid and idealised version of the “Brazilian woman”.

The myth of the “Brazilian women”: versions of femininity, the body and beauty

Brazilian femininity can be characterized by an obsession with keeping the perfect body as the core basis of one’s essence, identity and self-expression. Such a femininity functions within Brazilian society, family and the workplace as an idealization of a relatively passive, docile, submissive and family-oriented “average” human being with little or no intellectual capacities, artistic or creative talents or political consciousness. After the US, Brazil is the second country in the world with the highest number of women doing cosmetic and plastic surgery.^{xxix} There is no place where this idealization of a perfect form of apolitical, alienated, homely and body perfect femininity is more easily evident and available than in the depictions of women in Brazilian advertising and propaganda, as we shall see.

Women’s social acceptance is further tightly connected to a range of social skills and to very defined and specific character traits, such as commitment to the family, the capacity to show passivity and humbleness in relation to men and other authority figures, the refusal to stand out from the crowd and to be assertive and articulate. It is followed by a conscious and constant commitment to keep the body under surveillance and check, in an extreme playing out of “the culture of the body”, identified by various feminist theorists as a dominant feature of contemporary Western popular culture (Bordo, 1993, 2003, Gill, 2007). Such “docile feminine

bodies” are constantly exercising and dieting, showing sun tans in the beach and competing with other women in social settings and in the workplace.

In her discussion of female “anorexics”, Bordo (1993, 2003, 185) affirms that this state into which many women find themselves being placed into is not so much a result of external violence, but one where women choose to control their own bodies in connections that are made with a notion of an *ideal femininity* that is prevalent in cultural and media imagery. As Bordo (1993, 2003) claims, the notion of “women’s empowerment” is expressed above all in *sexual assertiveness* (and not intellectual capacity, mastery of skills or strong personality, my emphasis), providing a conservative view of gender equality which is equated mostly with lifestyle choice at worst, and individual success at best.

The case of Brazil is slightly a different one, where some forms of “post-feminist” discourses, texts and images circulate within a predominant “pre-feminist” set of media and cultural discourses. The ideal “Brazilian woman” is required to be attractive and intellectually inferior, whilst other more complex identities, or those associated to being a “strong woman”, are reserved for a few “career” women, equally stereotyped. Similarly to the idealization surrounding the femininity of women in Europe and the US, expected to be white, upper-class and educated, Brazilian women are also expected to aspire to middle class femininity, although the emphasis on their thinness, attractiveness and submissiveness is even more reinforced and pronounced, both socially, as well as within the country’s power structures. This has its roots in the history of Brazil and in the whole process of colonialization and the power relationships established since then, as I discussed in the previous section.

Brazilian women have thus been assigned traditional traits of femininity from a very young age, with little room for flexibility and freedom to pursue their talents, intellectual and creative abilities. The impact of religion in Brazil - which has the biggest Catholic population in the world

of 123 million, in a country of 200, as well as increasingly influential and expanding conservative Protestant and evangelical groups - in the construction of a passive femininity should not be underestimated. It thus seems a paradox that the image of the docile and family-oriented Brazilian woman can sit in the same body of the sexually provocative and Carnival “dancing babe”, although they are not always part of the same *persona*. Nonetheless, the values and personality traits of both mingle in the collective psyche to form an idealised version of what the *Brazilian woman* should be all about.

Brazilian femininity and gender roles are also very vulnerable to media influence in the country. From soap operas to *TV Globo's telenovelas* and other media texts, gender representations in the Brazilian media have played an important part in reinforcing the social acceptability of sexualised, tanned and beautiful bodies, further providing role models of *passive femininity* for Brazilian woman (Hamburger in Carter et al, 2015). Research on Brazilian soap operas nonetheless has been contradictory: earlier studies conducted by nationals underlined conservative leanings and undertones, whilst foreign researchers have been more positive (i.e. Mattelart and Mattelart, 1990), having seen the potential for political influence and debate (i.e. Skidmore, 1993 in Hamburger, 2015; Straubhaar, 2010).

There have been also classic studies in the field, such as the McAnany and La Pastina (1994) one which consisted of series of studies made between 1970 and 1993 on the Latin American soap opera audience, and which offered insights into audience interpretative processes and how they used the media (in Escosteguy, 2004). The author (2004, 50) also noted however that in many Latin American studies on reception the gender category was used as a mere biological differentiation, with little reflection on how women view these texts as women, making her sustain the claim that there has been no sustained connection between feminist and reception studies, particularly in the case of Brazil. This is one of the reasons why I argued in the introduction that

there is scope to develop much more audience research studies which is capable of prioritising more how women receive media messages, as women, and how they see themselves being represented.

Some early and later work though has attempted to make some inroads into this under-researched and untapped territory (i.e. Costa, 2000), with a lot of room still for further research. Making reference to the studies of Maria Rita Kehl and others during the 1970s and 1980s, which combined research on female reception, assessment of governmental reports and analyse of images, Hamburger (2015) affirmed that the authors saw the genre as conservative, stating that it reinforced subordinate and passive feminine roles. As Hamburger (2015) underlined, many settings of the *telenovelas* naturalised conventional domestic bourgeoisie models. Women were seen as responsible for domestic chores, whilst men worked outside the home. She stated nonetheless that representations changed from the 1980s and 1990s onwards, becoming more “liberalised”, and including more controversial topics such as female sexuality and orgasm. This was the case with the series *Malu Mulher*, which came out in 1979, and which showed a scene of female orgasm.

It is possible though to argue that the “liberal” dimension referred to here is more lenient or “radical” on the cultural and sexual sphere, and among educated and generally upper class groups. General representational images of Brazilian woman within the genre remain in essence politically and social conservative, albeit exceptions. Thus in spite of the fact that studies on soap operas have pointed out to progressive texts that aim to include political issues and discuss female sexuality (i.e. Hamburger, 2015), the reality is that many “ordinary Brazilian” woman, or poorer segments of the population, blacks and other groups, do not find that they are fully represented in the media, from soap operas to advertisements.

Contrary to what various feminist media scholars have argued regarding the predominance of post-feminism in media texts (Gill, 2007; McRobbie, 2009), the ads and other texts that I examined here point to a paradox between post-feminist and *pre-feminist* texts, with a wider emphasis on the latter than the former. The images of the *Brazil by OPI* campaign examined earlier carry within them elements of a “post-feminist” text in terms of their suggestion that women have a choice in buying the product and seeking pleasure with it, feeling *empowered* as sexy beings and thus choosing to travel to these “exotic” places, whilst also at the same time winking to the male and invited forcefully their gaze.

Various authors have traced the roots of the stereotypical image of the Brazilian women as overly sexualised to the Portuguese colonialism of the country, which started in the 16th century. Europeans were confronted with the nakedness of the indigenous women, seeing this as a sin instead of taking into consideration the cultural costumes in a context of a tropical climate. As Del Priore (2003, 12 in Albertini de Souza, 2009) put it:

“Brown, well disposed, with long hair, they walked naked and without shame, informed Gabriel Soares de Souza, one of the first to write about the peoples of the new world. Their daily existence was marked by the attention to their bodies, with their children and with survival.”

In her ground-breaking book *Unbearable Weight*, where she makes a powerful argument for taking cultural imagery seriously, including the impact it has in eating disorders, surgery procedures, mental health and other medical conditions, Bordo (1993, 2003) engages in an in depth investigation of the “post-modern” female body. The latter is constantly being put under pressure by society. She (1993, 2003) is particularly concerned with the popularity of surgical procedures among teenagers who aim to get the “perfect body”. This includes breast enhancements and other implants, which are sought after so that many can feel “normal”. Bordo (1993, 2003)

notes how Western philosophy and religion had a history of being uncomfortable with the body, from its physical vulnerability to threat to spin out of control. Del Priore (2001, 99 in Uzeda da Cruz, 2008) added that it was during the 20th century that women took their clothes off, with nakedness reaching television, magazines and beaches and being stimulated to show itself off in public. The *body* has thus been submitted to the *male gaze* throughout the world and across time and space, and it is possible to argue that this has occurred both in Europe as well as in its former colonies.

In contemporary societies the *male* body has also been subject to attention. Many argue that it is as much subject to control and manipulation as the female body, facing similar pressures to perform and exercise surveillance over their bodies. The body in its various forms has become the constant object of scrutiny, surveillance, self-control as well as academic debate (i.e. McRobbie, 2009; Bordo, 1993, 2003), which I will not have time to cover here, but which is important to make reference to as they offer some illuminating insights. Consumer culture thus stimulates us to fulfil our needs, to indulge in our desires and to “let go”, at the same time that it asks us to take control over our own bodies and to become “beautiful” and “cool”, to fit in with what the dominant culture wants and admires (i.e. McRobbie, 2009).

Bordo (1993, 2003) has discussed the understandings surrounding the human body in religion and science, and the ways in which it has been constructed in our Christian tradition as being sinful. In many of the ads discussed here, such as the *Brazil by OPI*, as well as others in the next chapter, the evocation of the female image as *sexual provocateur* has been a myth that has been played out again and again. Making reference to various feminists, Bordo (1993, 2003, 6) argues that, if women are “weighted down”, men are presented fully, as “the all, the Absolute Spirit.”

Western culture has been undoubtedly deeply influenced by classic Christian images of women, from Eve to Salome (Bordo, 1993, 2003), who are sinful and lustful and responsible for deviating men from good and their original path (i.e. Adam in the Bible). These images of the *sexual temptress* have also proliferated many television series and international films, including in films such as *Fatal Attraction*, and can be seen as a standard type (Bordo, 1993, 2003). In the Brazilian case a conservatively political and social culture sits side by side with a strong faith in Catholicism and a historical tradition of body play and semi-nudity, which has its roots in the indigenous culture that the Portuguese colonizers first encountered, and which for many also reflects an attempt of adapting to the warmth of the climate.

Bordo (1993, 2003) has further argued that men are also affected by the imposition of rigid gender roles. Not all men will choose to adopt the male gaze, and not all men are potential rapists either. In fact, many can actually feel uncomfortable with stereotypical and sexist images inasmuch as many women do, not to mention their anxieties in being called upon by society to act in a particular *manly* way. Men can thus also feel intimidated by women wearing sexy clothing and interpret this as women showing overconfidence in their own body, indicating that the man could be rejected should he choose to approach her (Bordo, 1993, 2003). The author (1993, 2003) points to the media as having a central role in “spreading” body-image problems and the “anorexic paradigm”, affecting not only white women but other ethnicities as well. African-American women for instance have wrongly believed that they were somehow protected from such images due to their cultural values (Bordo, 1993, 2003). The link between the media’s portrayal of the perfect and controlled body, and the quantity of aesthetic surgeries that women undertake in order to reach this ideal of *normality*, should thus not be dismissed.

Following from what I emphasised in earlier sections, black female bodies in Brazil have been further subject to multiple layers of oppression, carrying within them the legacy of slavery.

Nowhere is Brazil's social exclusion more evident than in its legacy of slavery and racism, which has relegated millions of men, and poorer black women, to the very margins of society. The social fabric of Brazilian society has *naturalised* racism quite heavily, and it is still denied mostly by sectors of the elite, who have bought into the myth of living in a racial democracy as a means of ignoring or undermining guilty feelings towards the country's legacy of slavery and social exclusion. This perception thus ends up serving an *ideological* and political purpose, redeeming elite guilt for past injustices and minimising the need for affirmative action policies in education and employment in Brazil for instance, which have been pushed forward by the federal government through law in the last decades and has also met with strong opposition by the nation's conservative and extreme right religious sectors.

In the last decades, black women in Brazil and throughout the continent have worked to develop a stronger voice and influence in policy-making in the area of gender, race and class (Caldwell, 2010, 179). Black feminists in Brazil contributed to shed light to the racism prevalent in the discourses of white Brazilian women, underlining their vulnerability to sexual exploitation and to work in the homes of whites as domestic servants (Caldwell, 2010). Brazilian anthropologist Freyer's classic 1933 book, *Casa Grande e Senzala*, is said to have played a role in upholding the *myth* of a racial democracy in the country as a means of coming to terms in the present with the country's high levels of racial miscegenation. Mythical (neo)colonial modes of representation, such as pictures of half naked women in the beaches of Rio and the Northeast, have been placed alongside images of Carnival and soccer, seen as having played the part in the construction of the nation's idea of itself as a *racial democracy* (Caldwell, 2010, 181), which has also been exported abroad and seen even as a form of *dominant ideology* that denies the very existence of racial discrimination.^{x1}

There is also a problem of representation in the media as well. Black men and women are underrepresented as actors on the mini-series and soap operas of *TV Globo* and other major networks, and are less visible on screen than off, within a population where 52% is classified as black.^{xli}Caldwell (2010, 178) makes reference to Sueli Carneiro, current executive-coordinator of the *Geledes Instituto da Mulher Negra*, who is an activist in the black women's movement. She has argued that multiple layers of oppression of racism and sexism against black women, combined with the lack of support "among some feminists and black activists has meant that the victories of the black movement tend to benefit black men."

It is thus possible to see a parallel between the racism constructed between the "first" and the "third" world, with the power dynamics and the colonial relationships also encountered in Brazil, where the colonization by the Portuguese and Spanish resulted in centuries of slavery and racism, producing a strong perception of whiteness among sectors of the Brazilian elites. A replication within the country of the "West versus the rest" is evident here, and this is encountered also in the prejudicial and racist treatment that wealthier segments of the population in the South (seen as largely of European descent) dedicate to their counter-parts in the Northeast, seen as inferior and still largely excluded by segments of the wealthier elite from the Southern cities, such as Sao Paulo and Rio.

As I discussed in the previous section, post-colonialism underlined the strands of European thinking that has emphasised the ideas of civilization in contrast to the pre-modern and traditional, placing countries and groups of people into categories, such as race, gender, ethnicity and religion that are also hierarchical (Ali in Evans and Williams, 2013). I would further add that these are subject to complex power relations, with the different positioning of people and groups in an *invisible scale* or line that places the most superior on top (i.e. white, Western middle-class, Protestant or Catholic men), to the most inferior, such as an Afro-Brazilian women (who suffers

the oppressive layers of race, sex, nationality *and* ethnicity). These have been learned and reinforced through forms of thinking or patterns of socialization and adaptation to (even implicit) hierarchical power relations, in sum, to the “reality of the world” and of *how things are*. Black Brazilian femininity for one has traditionally been associated with promiscuity and with cheap and disposable sex, having developed within the context of a legacy of a racist mentality that has its roots in centuries of the slavery trade and the oppression placed on Afro-Brazilians. During the slavery years, black women were raped by white men or coerced into being mistresses, while the man maintained his marriage to white women.

The poster for the *Devassa* 2011 beer campaign, called *Devassa Tropical Dark*, showed a black woman dressed in red, again symbolising passion, and sitting in a provocative pose and showing a bare back whilst she looked at us (to the man, we assume), with a sexually alluring and inviting gaze.^{xliii} The commercial campaign was considered abusive publicity for having equated the black woman with an object of consumption. The viewer to which this ad is targeted is invited to make a connection between her blackness with that of the “black beer”. This is reinforced by the text which started by saying, “E pelo corpo que se reconhece a verdadeira negra” (It is through the body that one recognises the real black. *Devassa* black...), and which juxtaposed the body of the sensual black Brazilian woman with the “body” and shape of the *Devassa* beer itself. In short, with the very image of brand.

The ad thus strongly reinforced the “exotic” colonial stigma and image of black Brazilian femininity as sexually voracious and promiscuous. In many ways this myth is also yearly sustained through the images of black sexy Brazilian women and half naked bodies which circulate during the Carnival festivals, and which are exported for foreigners abroad as well as sold to nationals in Brazil. Here in this ad a direct link is made between the consumption of the beer with the type of possible experiences that a man might have, including a night of passion and promiscuous or quick

sex with a black woman. This image of black femininity and sexual voraciousness does not appear in isolation. Images of hypersexualised black bodies abound throughout the media, from advertising to the selection of sexy black women to compose the *Globeleza* (“Globo Beauty”) sketches of the television network *TV Globo* during the Carnival period. This is in a country where two out of three prisoners are black women, and over 50% of the population identifies as black.

As we have seen, many colonial modes of representations have traditionally emphasised African men’s sexual organs, which were seen as being more highly developed (i.e. black men having genitally over-endowed organs). Black bodies have traditionally been depicted as more “voluptuous” (i.e. Bordo, 1993, 2003; Williamson, 1986). Many representations have further exaggerated the similarity of black women to animals, such as monkeys, an image that seems to still invade the collective psyche and which has resulted in criticism made by some regarding the darkness of the skin of some the Brazilian black models of *Globeleza* (the lighter version has had preference). Despite the fact that newsrooms and the media are hiring more blacks as actors, such as the case of the black journalist, Maria Julia Coutinho, who was the first black weather girl for *TV Globo’s Jornal Nacional* and suffered racist attacks in July 2015, *Globeleza* is still one of the few places where black woman have higher visibility.^{xliii}

Identity politics groups and other black feminists in Brazil have sought to impede this subordination by challenging the perception of a particular identity trait as negative, including within the group itself, and demanding recognition and respect for that same identity (Blencouve, 2013, 166). Various groups of women in developing countries like Brazil, with differences in their levels of oppression amongst the ones that are more privileged and the ones who are at the bottom, thus still struggle to speak and suffer from constraints both within the nation as well as abroad.

Similarly to the ways in which countries in Northern Europe, such as the UK, are discussing cultural hybridity and ways of coming to terms with the diversity of their population, in what some

scholars have called a *post-colonial melancholia* (Gilroy, 2004), or cultural cosmopolitanism and humanitarianism (Beck in Chouliaraki, 2013), Brazil, as a means of strengthening its democratic project will need to confront itself and revisit the myth of the country and the existence of a racial democracy, dismantling its current discourses of denial and lack of incentive to tackle fully issues of social inclusion. The wider inclusion of minorities, and of different groups of women, within the country's social, economic and political fabric, is a crucial step in this direction. The media is a fundamental avenue for the reinforcement, or repudiation and *problematization*, of such discourses, images, representations and ideas. It is to the analysis of gender representation in the Brazilian media, advertising and propaganda, that I turn to next.

Chapter 5 – The media, advertising and images of femininity: a case study of images and representations in Brazilian commercials and magazines

Gender representations and the Brazilian media: an assessment

The Brazilian mainstream media have been accused of lacking in pluralism and of not fully representing the diversity of the multiple identities and groups of women that are part of a highly diverse country of nearly 200 million citizens (i.e. Maia, 2013; Moreno, 2012; Matos, 2012; Buitoni, 2009, 1981; Costa, 2000; Piscitelli, 1996). The Brazilian key media and press, including mostly traditional outlets such as magazine *Veja*, *TV Globo* and newspapers such as *O Globo* and *Estado de Sao Paulo*, have been accused of reinforcing stereotypes of Brazilian women through a focus on images of young and pretty bodies. Despite the exceptions and the growing presence of images of independent women, or “career” or professional women, women are seen as still portrayed as victims of violence or mothers of criminals. They still rarely appear as experts, or in positions of power and influence (Moreno, 2012).

A lot of discussions on gender representations in the media also take place within social media networks and other online communication websites, such as *Observatorio do Direito ‘a Comunicacao* and *Agencia Patricia Galvao*. Brazil has also fallen down in the *Freedom of the Press Index*, moving in 2016 to occupy the 104th place out of 108 countries due to the persistence of a highly concentrated media market environment, where less than 10 families own the main newspapers, television in the country, from *TV Globo*, to *Folha* and *Estado de Sao Paulo*, and are responsible for nearly 80% of the printed and audio-visual market in the nation. It has also suffered a setback due to the rise in violence committed against journalists by the military police, especially during the coverage of the country’s many protests since 2013.

In her book on the representation of women in the media, Moreno (2012, 24) has argued that they remain largely “absent” from what she calls the “serious” spaces. She further underlines that the values associated to women seem to be those of the past, with the ideal woman still being young, white, thin, blonde and with straight hair. Similarly to Bordo (1993, 2003), Moreno states that the consequences of this is the obsession with the body and the early *eroticisation* of girls. The effects of this on woman is low self-esteem and conformity, and I would argue, a sense of fatalism and the belief that this order of things is natural and ahistorical. The images of women promoted in international campaigns like *Brazil by OPI*, as discussed in the section above, are not that far apart from many representations on women in Brazil.

Moreno (2012) also argues that the national representations of women in Brazil actually contribute for the neo-colonial and stereotypical images abroad, as I discussed in the last chapter, reinforcing the view that the nation is full of beautiful, sexy and passive women. According to her, this has consequences in the inferior treatment that many Brazilian women receive in Europe and the US, where they are frequently seen as stupid, exploited in the workplace and seen as cheap labours or potential prostitutes. *Colonialism* is thus put on its head here. Moreover, the notion of a type of *reverse colonialism*, or of Brazilians actually contributing to the perpetuation of their own oppression or inferiority within globalization by insisting on outdated representations and images of themselves nationally, and which do not do justice to the complexities of local and regional cultures of their country and the multiplicities of its identities, is reinforced.

Many images of women in the Brazilian media, even though within national contexts, also make a link between *women* and *nationalism* which is also problematic. Arguably, not necessarily all Brazilian women allude to the values and myths attached to some of the country’s symbols of identity expressed in the “myth of the Brazilian woman”, such as eroticism and an inherent liking for samba. This further undermines the diversity of women’s identities and multiple experiences of

oppression, or approach to life and to their own sense of self worth. Chauvinism in Brazilian society is thus taken for granted of how things are – and how they should be. This has also rarely been questioned fully within the mainstream despite decades of struggles of women for their rights in the history of the country, as I examined in the previous chapter. It is possible to argue that the naturalisation of violence against woman has its roots in the history of *colonialism* and its slave legacy in Brazil, and in its violation and exploitation of female indigenous and black (as well as white) bodies, discussed in previous sections. Women’s subordination is thus deeply naturalised within Brazilian culture and the collective psyche, to the point where many women are brought up unaware of the unequal power relations and adapt to this reality as *the way things are*.

Contrary to the growing importance given to women’s issues in politics and the judicial system in the country, various feminists in Brazil have argued that it is the media space where change is happening more slowly and with growing resistance. Questions that were asked by Tuchman et al’s (1978) and other feminist media scholars many decades ago continue to matter today. These include simply and straightforward questions like: is the media just reflecting the values of the society in which it is inserted in? How is it possible to move away from this? Is the media a mere mirror of the vices and prejudices of most people, or does it actively work against change, preferring to endorse what it understands to be the dominant values (or *ideology*) of the *status quo* in an attempt to guarantee profits and sell, while also avoiding going against what is seen as the “normal” and “common sense” view of the world?

Arguably, television in Brazil is seen as reinforcing a “standard model” of the “Brazilian woman”, denying racial and cultural diversity. The main television network in the country, *TV Globo*, is watched by over half of the population, and is away ahead in terms of audience ratings in relation to its other competitors, such as *SBT* and *TV Record*. Soap operas are also seen as portraying typical and recognizable stereotypical female characters, such as the villain, the bored and adulterous

house wife or the younger women wearing heavy make-up, dressed in mini-skirts and wearing earrings and competing with other women for men. *TV Globo's* political journalism has also developed considerably in the last decades and has become much more professional and balanced, especially in the decade of the 1990's (Matos, 2008), however it has become less committed to objectivity in the last years and more advocate of right wing political positions and sympathies. The network has however attempted to be more inclusive and incorporate the diversity agenda, such as in the case of *TV Globo's* weather journalist Maria Julia Coutinho.

There is also significant space for mainstream television to develop more sophisticated cultural, educational and political programmes, as well as the need for the public stations in the country, like *TV Cultura* and *TV Brasil*, be given more incentives to grow and expand (Matos, 2012), posing positive competition to the commercial networks. Public service broadcasting in Brazil can also contribute to represent more regional and local diversity, as well as offering more multiple representations of Brazilian women and their diverse experiences. Journalism in Brazil, as well as the wider mainstream media industries and newsrooms, have also been accused of being still predominantly male and white, and composed of segments of the upper and middle-classes, although since the 1990s women have increasingly started to take up many positions within the media (Abreu, 2006).

In contrast to the development of the printed press in UK and in other European countries during the 18th and 19th centuries, the Brazilian press and media is much younger and only saw an emergence of a more vibrant public sphere of debate much later and well into the 20 century. The emergence of the Brazilian press can be traced back to the late 19th century and to the Royal Portuguese family, and the development an incipient market for female magazines would start also to take off in the early 20th century, issues which I examine more closely in the next section.

Women journalists started to enter more fully the newsroom from the 1970s onwards, but it would be during the decade of the 1990s that they would begin to have a wider presence in the newsroom, with some reaching top executive or editorial positions, such as Ruth de Aquino, former director of the newsroom of the Rio daily, *O Dia* (Abreu, 2006). Arguably, female journalists in Brazil face similar problems to those of their female counter-parts in more advanced democracies in Europe and the UK, including mainly difficulties of career stagnation, job insecurity and flexibility, as well as getting promotion and receiving the same salary as male journalists (Franks, 2013).

Recent research in the UK has also underlined how inequality continues to be relevant for British journalism. In *Women and Journalism*, a study done for the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Franks (2013) found out that female journalists are less likely to reach the more senior and better paid positions. Franks also examined the gender pay gap in the journalism field, and found that it is not only a British but a global phenomenon. In a comparative study conducted by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in 16 countries, both developed and developing, across the world, there was a gender pay gap which favoured men over women.^{xliv}

A research carried out by the postgraduate political sociology programme of the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC) in Brazil, in association with the National Federation of Journalists (FENAJ), on the profile of the Brazilian journalist (*Quem e o jornalista brasileiro?* “Who is the Brazilian journalist?”) revealed that most Brazilian journalists are female, young, up to 30 years of age, single and white. This clearly indicates that the profession is *feminised* and dominated by low paid workers, many who live with their parents due to economic circumstances. The research heard 2.731 journalists from across the country and was conducted from the 25th until the 18th of November 2012 with a margin of error inferior to 2%. From the total, 64% were women and 36% men, with most journalists in the age range of 23 to 40 (48% between 23 to 30 years old) and 31 to 40 (21.9%).

Making reference to the FENAJ/UFSC research, Jorge et al (2014, 6-7 in Martinez et al 2015, 16) underlined also that Brazilian female journalists were less well paid than their male counterparts. They were also placed among the majority in all of the salary ranges until five minimum wage salaries, and the minority in all the scales above these. Jorge et al (2014 2014, 6-7 in Martinez et al 2015, 16) underlined also a key finding of the research, which pointed how women in positions of leadership within newsrooms could influence in a subtle way the criteria of news selection and the angle given to stories.

If one conducts a quick research and looks at the editorial board behind the main Brazilian newspapers, from *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Estado de Sao Paulo*, *Jornal do Brasil* and *O Globo*, men are seen as occupying most of the spaces. The editorial council and executive directorship of the *Folha de Sao Paulo* newspaper for instance includes one women, Judith Brito, and fifteen men, with men also outnumbering women as the main columnists of the paper. There are small variations between the dailies, with some having a few more female journalists in higher positions than others. The list of journalists responsible for publishing newspaper *O Globo* for instance indicates a wider balance on gender in comparison to other dailies, with quite a few female editors of supplements, such as Flavia Barbosa from the finance section, and one executive editor.

Despite the growing focus on the discussion of women's issues in the last years as a consequence of the slow democratization of Brazilian society, and the wider attention given to female rights by the governments in the last 20 years, many of the front covers of these main Brazilian newspapers continue to display images of beautiful women and bodies during the Carnival period as well as throughout the year. Many topics discussed in the press are also pigeon-holed as "women issues", and these include stories on love, romance and sexuality.

The front cover of the "*Mulher*" (Woman) section of the *Uol* portal (www.uol.com.br) for instance, accessed on the 1st of November 2015, would be a typical example. The stories that were

published on that particular day included one on the pain after divorce; another on a self-help recipe of how to get over falling in love in five steps; another on how to get inspiration for looks through the actress Megan Fox; a further on how a daughter of a celebrity managed to get a “perfect blonde”; another on how to deal with your kids as they grow up and one scientific journalistic piece on how the absorption of baby cells can protect the mother from future illnesses. The latter was the only more serious and worth the read.^{xlv} Although this is not always the case, as the media is a battle field, and a space for contradictions, with newspapers have been publishing increasingly more interesting stories that address feminism and other women’s rights issues, what still comes out is that the stories are being targeted to a predominantly upper to middle-class, white, either housewife, socialite or a woman without much sophistication or intelligence. Few exceptions are granted to the stories directed to the stereotypical “career woman”.

Feminism and the discussion of women’s issues is only just beginning to make wider inroads within the media industries and in the Brazilian newsrooms. Some have argued that the awareness of women’s rights and of gender inequality has reached more strongly the political and judicial sphere, but within the media, one of the reasons that this research decided not to interview female journalists in the newsroom. This topic on the analysis of the coverage of women’s issues in Brazilian journalism could definitely be appropriate for a future research project. The years of 2014 and 2015 for example showed a lot of evidence of the persistence of sexism and chauvinistic within the media, and particularly within certain forms of communication, such as advertising and commercials and throughout particular traditional spaces, such as female magazines. What becomes evident is the difficulty of certain sectors of the media of fully understanding what is meant by the “new Brazilian woman”, and a tendency to assume an idealised version of the past, as we shall see.

Many media outlets have shown difficulties in adapting to social change and to the shifting patterns of wider inclusion of a diverse citizen Brazilian body within the mainstream, including

working class and less privileged women who have become more socially mobile in the last decades. There has also been an overall lack of understanding of gender inequality issues, and what of exactly constitutes female emancipation. In other cases, there has been downright resistance to progress. The year of 2015 was considered by many Brazilian feminists as having been bad for the representation of women in advertising and other campaigns in the country, with many examples of ads that were seen as bluntly sexist.^{xlvi} Chauvinism has begun to be recognised as a serious social ill in the country, and which resulted among others in the launching during the 2015 Carnival of the campaign called ‘‘Neste Carnaval, Liberte-se do Machismo’’ (In this Carnival, free yourself from chauvinism). This initiative was part of the UN Women’s campaign *Unite for the End of Violence Against Women*, which included the partnership of the Pan-American Organization of Health (OPAS/OMS) and the High Commission of the United Nations for Refugees (ACNUR), with the institutional support of Brazil’s former Secretary of Policies for Women.

There is definitely thus a need for a more strengthened and pronounced, self-aware and in depth debate in the political and mediated public sphere on the ways in which the mainstream media treat women both within the newsroom, including in television, film and the advertising industries, as well as how it represents them in media content and as news sources and experts. The ‘‘feminism’’ that is being articulated in the Brazilian media or newsroom at present is thus at best incipient, or is seen as more allied with conservative mainstream feminism, which has been criticised by various scholars as the current problem with feminism, and perhaps the disillusionment with it, due to its incapacity to do justice to most women (i.e. Fraser, 2013; Carter, 2014). The critique has mainly pointed to the fact that the push for change has come mainly from privileged sectors, composed of middle class women who have sought for promotion and other opportunities to climb the career ladder, avoiding thus the tackling of more structural ingrained inequalities and the persistence of everyday practices of constraints for most groups of women in everyday life.^{xlvii}

Women have undoubtedly acquired more voice in Brazilian society in the last decade. Change nonetheless has been slow, and there are still sharp and clear inequalities, especially in the higher ranks of the media industries and within journalism in a context where Brazilian mainstream culture is highly hypersexualised and incidents of sexism are abundant. There are some reasons to be cheerful, including the acknowledgement of a growing and slow consciousness among many women in the newsroom. These women journalists are talking more among themselves about the problems they face: they are posting more discussions on social media about feminist issues and feeling much more confident and less embarrassed to criticise inequalities and to call themselves feminists. This has been particularly evident with the work carried out by particular NGOs and feminist movements, who have made important inroads into the mainstream, such as the NGO *Think Olga* with their campaign on sexual harassment, which I examine in the following chapters.

Among various positive initiatives was the slow growth of awareness of the need to give women more voice and space within the mediated and political public sphere, to state their concerns and advocate in favour of their cause. This culminated in the space opened up by male Brazilian columnists in mainstream newspapers to women of various sectors of Brazilian society to voice their concerns during the first week of November 2015, as we shall see. Moreover, before looking further at the cases of female resistance in the Brazilian *blogosphere* in the next chapter, I turn to the analysis of particular advertising campaigns and commercials, further providing a critical evaluation of female magazines and looking at the particular case of the segment of the Abril group dedicated to the female public, the *MdeMulher* online portal.

Advertising and sexism: from female magazines to beer commercials and International Women's Day

Commercials and advertising have been seen as having had a long tradition of stereotyping women and of encouraging rigid sex roles by displaying women's bodies in parts (i.e. thighs, legs, breasts), as well as portraying the "proper ways" of being female (i.e. Tuchman et al, 1978, 16; Bryerly and Ross, 2006; Carter, 2014). Various feminist media scholars have examined advertisements and have underlined how many are seen as demeaning to women, and are but inaccurate reflections of "real" women (Carter, 2014, 371). Many of these studies found that women had specific gender roles which usually were either the "submissive housewife" or "mothers inserted in domestic settings" (i.e. Goffman, 1979 in Carter, 2014, 371). Carter (2014) also argued that older and minority women have also been marginalised from commercials, being largely portrayed as having limited mental capacities, thus contributing to reinforce the images of established structures of social relations and showing resistance to change.

Gender representations in advertising and propaganda in Brazil have thus made heavy use of traditional stereotypes and rigid gender roles, not infrequently playing the role of reflecting and reproducing the prejudices and vices of Brazilian society. Ads are seen as selling lifestyles and visions of the world to audiences that are treated as consumers in need of satisfaction and pleasure, as well as those who seek to strengthen their social status and standing within society by the acquisition of cultural goods and products. Similarly to other media, such as television, commercials and ads can also contribute to socialise young people into learning acceptable social roles and on how to perform their *masculinity* or *femininity*.

Making reference to authors such as Williamson (2003) in her discussion of the entanglement of feminist and anti-feminist ideas, Gill (2012) notes that a common device adopted is the use of

retro imagery and nostalgia in contemporary forms of sexism. Notably, the use of nostalgia of a form of idealized femininity is still referred to by most if not all of the ads that are discussed here. If apologies afterwards were made due to the negative reaction of many and the offence taken, it was not inserted within a context where irony had been used or even acknowledged. Rather, what emerged, as we shall see, was the shocking lack of awareness in many cases and the upholding of the belief that such ads are merely reflecting *how things are* and how women actually view themselves.

I believe that the discussion of feminism and the media is enriched by a particular focus on the case of Brazilian feminine magazines as well as advertising and propaganda, spaces where the articulating of discourses, issues, representations and images of women and women's issues has predominated. Female magazines are important spaces to examine gender representations and to make connections between these images and discourses with the cultural and social values of a given society as well as with the political dimension. Gill (2012) states that magazines offer tips to young girls and women on how to work their femininity and self.

Female magazines in Brazil, from the popular and early *Revista Feminina* of the 1920s to the current magazines of the *Editora Abril* group, such as the former *Nova* and now *Cosmopolitan*, have sought to do just that: transmit certain values of femininity and those associated to what an "ideal woman" should be like. Among the first magazines published in the country were magazines like *As Variedades ou Ensaios Literarios* (1812), *Museu Universal* (1837), *Semana Ilustrada* (1860) and *Revista da Semana* (1901), although due to the precarious circumstances of most women during the 19th century, the feminine press had little strength and very few publications (Maia, 2013). As the author (2013) noted, in 1827 despite a vast population of illiterate women, the first newspaper dedicated to women, *O Espelho Diamantino*, was published (Buitoni, 2009).

The female press had a late start in the country similarly to the overall press, which only started to operate when the royal Portuguese family of Dom Joao VI came to live in Brazil. Thus

the feminine Brazilian press started to emerge in the decade of the 1820's in the context of the country's independence from Portugal (Buitoni, 2009, 32). Other publications included *O Belo Sexo* in 1862, which was critical towards the social role of women and their unproductive life (Lima, 2007). Thus since the 19th century, various publications dedicated to women started to explore fashion (Buitoni, 2009). Many magazines began to include sections dedicated to women's issues, such as the *Cartas de Mulher* (Letters to Women) in the *Revista da Semana* (Rio de Janeiro, 1901).

An interesting example of a female magazine that managed to later become successful was *Revista Feminina*, founded by Virgilina de Souza Salles and created in the first part of the 20th century (1914-1936). It was implemented by women with a full female staff and was largely directed to Brazil's upper class women and elites (Hahner, 1990; Lima, 2007; Maia, 2013). It managed to publish 30.000 copies which were freely distributed until the number 7 of the magazine. Although innovative in many ways, having had afterwards a female full time staff working for the publication, it adopted a conservative tone and dealt largely with topics such as fashion, decoration, health, cuisine, education of children, culture and other curiosities (Lima, 2007). Among some of the values associated to the magazine, Lima (2007, 230) signals to what can be understood as an *idealization of Brazilian femininity*, and specifically the upper-class one, including the emphasis on sentiments such as *sacrifice*, *abnegation* and *renunciation* at the same time that it exalted the importance of marriage and motherhood. Marriage was seen as the most important event in a woman's life.

In her analysis on the representation of women in the Brazilian feminine press, Buitoni (2009) pinned down some of the dominant representations of women during the 20th century, including among others the *suffering mother*, the *modern girl*, the *unsatisfied housewife*, the *liberated and the marginal* and the *confident and sexy woman*. Although it is possible to detect

these small variations in the representations of women, it is also possible to argue that many can be combined into two dominant narratives and discourses on women: *the housewife mother* who takes care of the kids, and is not particularly successful in the workplace, who might have or not a job, and *the sexy provocative young girl* (who in many ways feed into the pornographic fantasies of men), who is lustful and seems to be always willing to have sex.

Buitoni (2009, 21) has further underlined the paradox of the feminine press, stressing its role in talking about important women's issues, such as contributing for the sexual revolution, while at the same time emphasising ideals of beauty, being able to talk about "the most expensive clothes as well as famine in Africa." Similarly to the case of many Brazilian soap operas, as I examined in the previous chapter, it can be misleading to celebrate too quickly some female genres, assuming that discourses of female empowerment circulate throughout these spaces. This is to ignore the extent to which these spaces dedicated to women, and to the private sphere, as Williamson (1986) would argue, have a role in socialization and social control, teaching appropriate forms of behaviour and how to perform gender roles, and in this particular case, Brazilian femininity.

The decade of the 1970s would thus see the emergence of sexual themes being discussed in feminine magazines. This was the case of *Nova* magazine, with the 1980s seeing the emergence of the figure of the teenager consumer of female magazines (Buitoni, 2009, 15). Many of these magazines are also targeted heavily by advertisers and offer important spaces for them to reach out to a female public as consumers of their products. Today not just magazines but many Brazilian dailies have a section entitled "women", which include stories which explore topics such as fashion, beauty, celebrities, romance and love, sex and reproduction. A research conducted by *Fundacao Perseu Abramo/Sesc* in 2011 revealed that 80% of the women interviewed considered that the image of themselves in the media contributed to a general de-valuation of the female figure, with 74% being

in favour of some form of control, either through the state or the market, of the content shown in programming and in media advertising (Moreno, 2012, 54).

According to the research “Representations of women in television advertising campaigns” conducted by the *Data Popular* and the *Institute Patricia Galvao*, launched in September 2013, revealed that 56% of Brazilians do not believe that TV ads show real Brazilian women. The research heard 1.501 men and women over 18 years of age in 100 municipalities of the whole country. For 65% of those interviewed, the standard of beauty shown in the ads is very distant from the reality of the population, with a further 58% stating that they thought TV advertising showed women as a sexual object, reduced to breasts and to the bottom. The research also revealed that 70% defended some sort of punishment for those ads which showed women in an offensive manner.^{xlviii}

In Brazil advertising and propaganda is regulated by CONAR, the council of self-regulation of the sector, which acts based on the *Codigo Brasileiro de Autoregulamentacao Publicitaria* (Brazilian Code of Self-Regulation in Advertising). In its first section, in articles 19 and 20, it highlights respectability and advocates against disrespect for human dignity, further affirming that no ad should create “any offense or racial, social, political, religious and nationality discrimination”. There are also mechanisms for action within the Brazilian *Codigo dos Consumidores* (Code for Consumers), which permits consumers to complain. Section 3 is dedicated to advertising, with the article 37 stating that “all false and abusive publicity is prohibited”. Number 2 of article 37 considers “abusive advertising that is discriminatory in any way or nature, which incites violence, explores fear.....or which is capable of inducing the consumer to act in a prejudicial or harmful way to their health or security” (in Moreno, 2012, 54).

In his discussion of TV commercials of the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, Garborggini (2003 in Lima 2008, 24) underlined that most Brazilian ads represented women in a similar manner. Two roles were predominant: on one side was the young and beautiful women, shown in an

eroticised manner and as object of sexual desire and on the other was the adult married women, the mother and housewife. The first representations were directed to a masculine audience, whilst the next ones were used to advertise domestic, food and cleaning products and were targeted to women. As Garborggini (2003, 143 in Lima, 2008, 20-25) stated, the representations of women as housewives and sex symbols dominated mainly the period of the 1970s in Brazil and, similarly to the changes that occurred in the international level, as we have seen, the period of the 1980s saw some technical changes occurring in TV advertising, with women being portrayed as more active and modern.

Reflecting the entry of women in the workplace and their wider educational levels, the decade of the 1990s would also see further transformations, with women being targeted more as consumers and advertising becoming also more weary of discrimination, paying more attention to diversity (Lima, 2008, 26), although this has continued to be portrayed in a problematic light, as I discussed in the previous section in relation to the *Devassa* beer ad. Thus from the 1990s onwards more images beyond the housewife started to be shown, with the inclusion in ads of family members doing the house chores alongside the women for example (Lima, 2008, 27). Traditional images however continued to co-exist next to wider representations of women performing other functions (Lima, 2008). Advertising in Brazil however has not significantly improved very much since then, and it seems that many advertisers prefer the less problematic route of exploring gender stereotypes that they believe will sell products better and relate more comfortably to society's dominant values.

In a classic study, Brazilian anthropologist Everardo Rocha (2001) depicted the type of images of women which were predominant during the 1960s, 70s and 1980s in the country in order to compare these to more contemporary images in advertising. Rocha (2001) argued that the gender representations seen in the ads during that particular period showed themselves to be quite similar to the ones seen today. In his study on Brazilian ads and commercials of the 1980's published in

magazines, Rocha (2001, 28) made reference to Goffman (1977) to underline the categories into which women were inserted into in most of the ads analysed. Rocha (2001) picked one page ads from five magazines, *Nova*, *Claudia*, *Playboy*, *Isto E* and *Veja*, during the second semester of 1980. According to him, they were presented as *submissive*, *docile*, *doll like* and *childlike*, *thin* and *attractive*. Rocha (2001) emphasised the focus of Brazilian ads of the period on the female body, particularly a body which is *fragmented* and appeared to the public in parts, such as breasts, face, nails. Thus his analyses of the stress on sexy bodies, and the initial exploration of women's liberation, could be transported to more recent ads of the 2000 decade, and I would argue also 2015. Moreover, according to Beleli (2003 in Lima, 2008, 32), the dominant representations of women in advertising during the decades of the 1970s and 1980s were those of slave-maid, sexual object, enchanted doll, stupid and naïve, whilst the men were identified with the world of work and with their social and economic achievements.

Despite the fact that Brazilian advertising has been internationally recognised for its creativity, with the Gunn Report 2015 putting the country among the five best in the world, after Sweden, Japan, the UK and US, there is a lot of debate within social movements and other sectors of civil society stating that it can be considered still one of the most chauvinistic in the world.^{xlix}In 2014, out of 18 complaints of chauvinism existent in ads made to Conar, 17 were later archived and only one, of the beer Conti, ended up with a request for suspension, according to a story published in the magazine *Carta Capital* in April 2016.¹ In its Facebook page, the text for the Conti beer ad which caused controversy stated that “I am afraid to go to the bar to ask for another round and the bar tender bring my ex.”

Moreover, many women working in advertising agencies in Brazil have also stated that they suffer abuses in the workplace, and affirm that the ads that offend so many women are born of the culture that predominates in many Brazilian agencies. “Before we talk about chauvinistic advertising,

we need to talk about chauvinism in advertising”, stated creative director Thais Fabris, who idealised the project 65/10 which discussed the role of women in advertising. The 65 comes from the research conducted by the Institute Patricia Galvao, and mentioned earlier, which stated that 65% of Brazilian women do not identify themselves with Brazilian advertising. The number 10 is further based on research which has also shown that only 10% of those working in the creative section of the advertising agencies are women, who are over-represented in sales and customer services.

In her discussion of what Van Zoonen (2000) latter called “exotic advertisements”, Williamson (1986, 103) saw in her analyses of ads a correlation being made between the private sphere with the interests of mass media culture. She claimed that a lot of the former took place within the “feminine” spheres of leisure, family and personal life, values regarded as inappropriate in work and social life and which were overloaded onto women and the private sphere. This seems to be very much the case of many of the ads here. The association of the female gender with domestic work is a constant narrative which is played out throughout many of the ads and commercials, and is made evident in the ads discussed below, from the *Bombril* to the International Women’s Day washing machine ad.

The *Bombril* ad is a good example to discuss the ways in which rigid gender roles have a consequence also for men, who suffer with the restrictions imposed on them by the predominance still of values and beliefs of their role in society in relation to women. The commercial equates the images of three attractive women with cleaning products (women/clean/*Bombril*), suggesting that to be a whole women and to be really successful at your job, the priority is to always leave the house perfect. It is interesting to discuss in its attempt to “read” the “new Brazilian emancipated woman”, linking the success in the home with an “emancipated identity”, and thus suggesting that no matter the success that women have achieved in the public sphere, she cannot be a full and socially acceptable woman if she does not understand the basics of house cleaning. There seems here to be a

strive to equate a “new kind of femininity” with both beautification (Lazar, 2011, 2013) and with the domestic setting.

The commercial shows us three well dressed and attractive women smiling and making faces to the camera in what appears to be a playful interaction with the viewer. They stand in front of various products of the brand *Bombril* for cleaning the house, with one of the three women being a famous Brazilian celebrity called Ivete Sangalo.^{li}The singer Ivete Sangalo says to the viewer that “we” (woman) do “very well in our jobs, are successful during the day and still leave the house shining”. She further makes fun of the man for not being capable of doing the cleaning. The *Diva Devagar* (Slow Diva) ad further heavily explores the myth of the “superwoman”, which is referred to in the ad as the “diva”. Not surprisingly, the commercial managed to upset viewers, with many complaining to Conar (*National Council of Advertising Self-Regulation*) and accusing the brand of being responsible for “gender discrimination” and of “making fun of the masculine figure”. The discourses articulated in ads like these indicate a deep lack of awareness, as well as critical engagement and questioning, of traditional power relations. Instead, they reveal a misleading and misguided understanding of what the “new woman” is, refusing to fully embrace this new woman but rather insisting on applying values of the past to contemporary contexts in order to make this identity be *acceptable* and less challenging for a society that shows itself to be still heavily uncomfortable with the empowerment of groups that it considers subordinated or *inferiors*.

Similarly to some of the images of women explored by international ads, as I examined previously, the *Itaipava* beer shows an attractive light skinned good looking brunette holding two beers, a can and a bottle.^{lii} She is wearing a bikini and standing in front of what appears to be a beach and the sea, in what appears to be a sunny a day. She looks provocatively at us (the public) in what appears to be in a playful and flirty manner. Her breasts are enhanced, and a parallel is made between the size of her breasts (600 ml) and the amount of beer in the can and in the bottle

(300ml and 350ml respectively). Here we see a very clear and evident commodification of the female body and excessive appeal to fragmentation and to its parts (i.e. breasts). Here the woman is quite literally reduced to her breast, looks and to what she is wearing (bikini), which seems to be a thong. Here again the stereotype of the sexy half naked Brazilian woman is reinforced, with the link made between the values of the brand with the women's body parts, as well as an implicit connection between Brazilian femininity and the nation. Many images like these, as I have argued before, can be seen in both national and international contexts. This is regardless of the fact that many, if not most Brazilian women, do not wear such bikinis, not to mention the fact that the thong has become an international product which is constantly targeted to young women in the UK as well as throughout the developed world. Many bikinis for one are marketed internationally as "Brazilian swimwear" bathing suits, with various companies making use of these discourses, such as the case of *Bikini Brazil UK*. The latter markets itself as selling micro bikinis and Brazilian beachwear that is "stylish and sexy", and which has a "Brazilian flair".^{liii}

Most significantly, the relationship between Brazilian femininity and nationalism has been widely explored in Brazilian beer advertising. Here we can also make parallels to international representations of Brazilian women, as seen in the *Brazil by OPI* ad. The statement made by Sergio Valente, creative director of DM9DDB, that there is a natural association between beautiful women and beers as being something typical of Brazilian culture (quoted in Lima, 2008, 33), is a confirmation of what was said earlier by the female creative director and of my previous analyses. An equation that seems to be endlessly explored by many of these ads is that the consumer wants to consume beer, but also conquer beautiful woman with perfect bodies and, at the same time, be made to feel part of a *community* (in this sense, the nation of Brazil). Many beer ads have traditionally linked Brazilian women with notions of national identity and other symbols. The Kaiser ad of April of 2003 for instance showed images of Brazil alongside images of the model

Daniela Cicarelli (Lima, 2008), establishing connections between beautiful beaches and places with the warmth, beauty, playfulness and submissiveness of the “Brazilian woman”.

The images of young beautiful women, which were predominant during the 1970s and 1980s, are thus still widely explored by various advertising campaigns in the contemporary context in Brazil, with timid intentions of applying new modern layers as well as trying to desperately appeal to a “new Brazilian woman”. The use of celebrities are also a common feature in Brazilian ads, from Ivete Sangalo to famous models, such as Gisele Bündchen. Williamson’s (1978) semiotic analysis made evidence for instance how the connection of a celebrity with a product involved the “transference of meaning associated with the referent onto the product” (Lazar, 2011, 2013, 43).

An ad which caused a lot of uproar was the one published in 2011 for the brand *Hope*. This ad showed the internationally famous Brazilian model, *Gisele Bündchen*, who is also marketed abroad as an example of “Brazilian beauty” and femininity, and who is shown wearing *lingerie* in a commercial that in many ways adopts a similar tone to the ones examined before. It also heavily explores the fragmentation of the body, focusing on the attractiveness of the young, sexy and (white) Brazilian woman.^{liv}Bündchen is seen as being an emancipated and independent woman who has managed to succeed professionally, and even began to be an entrepreneur. Here what is explored is women’s passivity in relation to the man, and the attempts of socialising women into using their charm in order to keep “their man”.

In the commercial, the brand *Hope* “teaches” woman how to act with their boyfriends and husbands in situations of conflict in the everyday life of couples. It states that wearing clothes to give him bad news is the wrong thing to do, and it is best to wear sexy lingerie to tell him that the car has crashed. After a series of complaints, the commercial was asked by the then government’s former Secretary of Policies for Women to be suspended. The image of the housewife is equated here with the identity of the young sexy girl. These ads here are thus quintessential examples of

commercials for beer and lingerie which oversexualise the women's body, making easy, lazy and unintelligent parallels between particular rigid identities of "the Brazilian women" and the product in question.

A good moment to examine society's understanding of the role of women in it is through a look at the celebrations for international women's day. A series of ads which came out in March 2015 sparked a lot of controversy due to the difficulties detected of many advertising agencies of understanding precisely what sexism and chauvinism actually is, and of indicating lack of criticism towards Brazil's power relations, and the role of women in them. The washing machine ad of the *Samsung Eco Bubble* brand, which came out in celebration of the *International Women's Day* for instance, seemed to have merely transported the myth of the ideal women of the 1950's to the complexities of the reality of multiple identities and gender positions of Brazil of the year 2015.^{lv}This ad bears resemblance with the *Bombril* one discussed above. In both of these ads we also see a clear link being made between the success of women in public life with the insistence on the pattern of her attachment to the household, and "success" within it, clearly implied as being if not equally, but perhaps even more important than her life outside the home.

All these ads thus emphasised the *private sphere* over the public, further feminising strong this space. The washing machine ad included the sentence "Women's week", which was followed by the phrase "have more full time". This can actually be interpreted as being a form of "teaching" or "telling" women that they needed to work less, and retreat more into the household. Alternatively, it could be seen as a form of telling women that they should not wash their clothes by hand, but buy a washing machine to do this. Either way, the message amounts to the same thing. Thus the *myth* of the perfect housewife has been made evident, perhaps in a more updated form, in the *Bombril* ad, but in a much more traditional and old fashioned manner in the Samsung one. Here we see a narrow and similar range of discourses being articulated in these ads, such as a

woman who works or not but is perfect in the household and deserves to be congratulated because of this.

It can also be argued that the working outside of the home is *suggested* and *implied*, but downplayed, not taken seriously and not seen as particularly important. Both of these ads thus showed difficulties in trying to work with the “modern woman” image, and to understand what is meant by the “Brazilian woman”, and the existence in the country of a multiplicity of subject positions and identities associated to her. There is a predominance still in these contemporary images in advertising, as there was in previous years, of a narrow range of types that mostly point to an overrepresentation of the young, white middle class and sexy Brazilian women and the older adult, white, upper or middle class housewife, mother or worker. The lack of creativity and innovativeness, the constant play with old fashioned stereotypes and outdated discourses in the fear of taking risks, is evident in all these ads. It is no surprise then that the limitations towards women’s identities, self-expression and full exercise of their talents and skills in Brazil is a result of the persistence of discrimination in a culture that is still overly negative towards subordinated groups, such as women.

The situation is slightly different in the print press, which unfortunately I did not have time to examine here but will be the object of attention in future research. Female magazines on the other hand also follow similar patterns and trends of the earlier magazines that I discussed above. The *MdeMulher* online portal from the Editora Abril group, which claims to be the biggest portal on femininity in Latin America, includes a series of the country’s main and most female magazines, which are also available in print. These include *Claudia*, *Contigo!*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Boa forma*, *Estilo*, *Anamaria*, *Tititi* and *Women’s Health*. These magazines explore classic topics known as “women’s issues” and in many ways are not that different from the core themes and trends explored by the earlier magazines of the early 20th century mentioned above, such as *Revista*

Feminina. The core topics examined in these magazines range from beauty, hair and fashion to love, romance and sex, passing through family matters, health, diet and fitness, culture, lifestyle and work, not to mention the world of celebrities and the publication of cooking recipes. One of the stories accessed online from the magazine *Nova Cosmopolitan* (04/11/2015), “*Como a mulher de cada signo fica de TPM?*” (How a woman of every sign gets premenstrual tension), explores yet again discourses which culminate in the trivialisation of women, associating them to emotional and superstitious behaviour as well as firmly placing them in the realm of the private sphere.

This is an interesting story as it plays on stereotypes and common sense ideas about what “woman are like” and, although the argument can be made that this is just a harmless magazine dedicated largely to fashion and entertainment-driven, the matter becomes more serious when we contextualise these within other narratives that proliferate in advertising, and throughout the mainstream media, and in a context of a country with high levels of violence towards women and other problems related to women’s representation in the public and political sphere. The text under the cancer sign of this story for instance stated that women born under this sign with premenstrual tension started to cry and became dramatic, thinking that their boyfriends did not like them, and that their best girlfriend preferred someone else. The solution given by the text was then to “take a warm bath in order to relax”. The other signs shared similar advice, exploring repetitive stereotypes which included women’s anxiety over her body and eating disorders. The women born under the Taurus zodiac sign for instance were said to be the ones who became “very hungry, attacking the fridge”, with the risk of eating all the chocolate that they could find.

The front cover of the December 2015 edition of the magazine *Nova/Cosmopolitan*, which can be accessed online in the *MdeMulher* portal, has stories which also explore issues and discourses around Brazilian femininity, similarly to the ads discussed above. Among some of these stories are “6 positions for express orgasms”, “Summer is coming – the destiny that fits your income and the

bikini that fits your body”; “The best products for the perfect bath and post-bath”; “The perfect lipstick – tricks to apply to ease your life”; “The secret of happy couples (in practice)” and “Friend, look...how to speak those unnecessary truths”.^{1vi}The image in the front cover is of a young, blonde woman, a “Gisele Bundchen” lookalike, who wears white, revealing her legs, and stares straight at the camera at us. Similarly to the Gisele Bundchen ad discussed above, there are also attempts here of “teaching” woman how to behave, and what to do in order to be an ideal woman. Even considering that this is a magazine destined for entertainment and which aims to be light and fun, many of the issues included here seem to be extremely trivial and almost even naïve, infantile and unsophisticated. It seems strange to think that such language would ever be used to refer to men, and this is made evident when we look at satirical magazines which aim to mock female magazines, as I will do so shortly.

What is perhaps most shocking is that the themes explored here are not that much different from the ones that proliferated in female magazines of the 1920s, such as *Revista Feminina*. As I mentioned earlier, these also included stories which aimed to “teach” woman how to behave in everyday life. The problem with including these types of discourses and stories is that they clearly show an underestimation of women’s intellectual capacity or ability, showing a treatment towards women that is almost childlike, immature and little rational. Such images also encourage the reinforcement of Brazilian femininity as being ultimately passive and emotional, and one which is stuck within outdated and rigid gender roles that undermine other forms of identity and personalities grounded on more intellectual achievement, maturity and rationality, risk taking and creativity. This is where the core problem lies.

Media representations like these can thus have more serious consequences, including limiting women’s horizons and forcing conformity to a way of life that is deemed acceptable and appropriate, with all other forms being discharged. It can also stimulate women’s reluctance in

engaging in more rational matters and in the public sphere, such as taking a career in politics or finance, to being the victim of violence at the hands of men. It is thus not about being “puritan” or “moralistic”, or even “boring”, as those who criticise feminist media scholars and others who point out sexism in the media would claim (i.e. McRobbie, 2009). It is about stressing the ways in which these discourses, beyond causing the minor incident of mere offence on a daily basis in the lives of many women and other minority groups, is on a deeper level and longer term very detrimental for social inclusion and for democracy itself. It encourages the undervaluation of women and their achievements in the workplace and in everyday life, as well as reinforcing their inferiority and lack of self-esteem, creating in woman internal barriers to their own development and contribution to society and to the economy.

Linda Goulart, from the former SPM, has seen Brazilian advertising as directly reflecting the country’s conservatism: “If the subject is the image of women in advertising we can understand that, in some instances, ads, commercials and campaigns can be a reflection of Brazilian society, which has so many elements of chauvinism and conservatism.” As I have argued in previous chapters, based on various reports on violence towards women in Brazil and the perpetuation of sexism in Brazilian society, such a statement carries many elements of truth. The moment that the vice-president Michel Temer was sworn into office as temporary president following the first round of the impeachment proceedings in April 2016 was also seen as epitomising the reinforcement of traditional Brazilian values, conservatism and power relations, especially through the act of terminating the secretaries for Policies for Women, Race Equality and Human Rights, and combining them in a merged Ministry of Justice and Citizenship.

I am thus weary here of affirming that “women became emancipated” during the decades of the 1980s and 1990s, and today we have moved *beyond all that*. Arguably, as I discussed in the introduction, and especially in Part I, civil and political rights should not be taken for granted,

either in advanced democracies, which are also suffering from a democratic deficit and from apathy, seeing the rise of fascism and extreme right wing movements, or in emerging democracies like Brazil either. Thus the inclusion of minorities groups within the political polity and public sphere, and the sense that even in advanced democracies these rights have been fully consolidated, is far from a given. In the case of Brazil, I find the whole appeal to “women’s empowerment” by contemporary Brazilian commercials and ads of as late as the year 2015 to be highly problematic. This is also quite different though to what is articulated by international ads in advanced capitalist societies in the West in their portrayal of Western women, where feminism has in fact, however problematic also, become a wider part of the media environment and is strongly present and visible throughout media content. This is the core reason why I choose to call the current Brazilian media context as *pre-feminist*, or not fully post-feminist or with a post-modern sensibility just yet (i.e. Gill, 2007).

The themes which are associated to post-feminism, and which are explored in contemporary media texts in developed countries for instance, such as “personal empowerment, entrepreneurship, sexual agency, entitlement to pleasure and emancipation” (Lazar, 2011, 2013, 37), are weakly alluded to in these ads and commercials. Whenever there is a reference to any notion of “women’s empowerment”, however problematic in its association with “choice feminism” and the right to take pleasure in one’s own beauty, paying lip service to values of individualism, personal success and consumerism, as feminist media scholars have pointed out, (i.e. Carter, 2014; Lazar, 2011, 2013), it is done in an extremely fragile and shy manner. It also mingles confusion and anxiety in the treatment of the messages and in the articulation of some sort of vision of what constitutes Brazil’s “new woman”. The ads clearly show that they are not really sure, which ends up culminating in a series of complaints about these campaigns coming from

diverse sectors of Brazilian society, leading to the self-defence attitude of the agencies, which claim that they were “only joking” and that people are being boring with their criticisms.

Contrary to what is explored in international ads from the developed countries, the achievement of beauty and of the perfect body is not understood as a *feminist right* in Brazil, as this acknowledgement is far from a given and let alone “taken for granted”, albeit exceptions. Rather, traditional representations continue to be persistent and *naturalised*, and linked to notions of nationalism and *Brazilianness*, as is the case of many beer ads. They are also tied to notions of the nuclear family and the home. The few representations of diversity and of “career women” still appear as the exception to the rule, as somehow *deviant*, not totally socially accepted yet, and still struggling to make their way into the mainstream of Brazilian society, culture and politics.

The problem of blunt sexism is evidently particular to the national and cultural context of Brazil and needs to be considered. Arguably, various authors (i.e. Gauntlett, 2008) have stated that sexism in contemporary Western society and popular culture operate at a much more subtle level. Gauntlett (2008) has also underlined the fact that many young girls also encounter pleasure in such images. In the case of Brazil, a country that has high rates of domestic violence, rape and murder of women, as well as an underrepresentation of women in higher positions of power and low political representation in Congress, the persistent repetition of such standardised images and representations becomes all the more troublesome and worrying. It is not sufficient in such circumstances to argue mainly that some (or most) women have pleasure in these images, as this ends up serving a post-modern form of relativism where the denial of structural inequalities ends up being mitigated in favour of the play with words, images and discourses, which are then considered not “harmful” and appear as *closed* within the text, as if they existed in isolation from the wider cultural, political and social context in which they appear in, and which has further material and economic implications.

Such a contestation thus culminates in the recognition that many of these images cease to be “harmless fun”, and the very fact that they provoke so many complaints from the public, and discussions online, attest to this. Many people do take them seriously and, in the particular case of Brazil, as I shall discuss in the next chapter, it has been online platforms and websites which have actually created spaces and possibilities of the articulation of both anger against discrimination and other forms of stereotypical media discourses as well as provided the means for protest and mobilization and the articulation of counter-discourses. In such a context, these images acquire a highly political (and albeit *ideological*) tone, and to sustain the thesis of pleasure ends up being limiting and incredibly naive. This is not to disguise the fact that, as many have argued, it is possible for some to find pleasure in what are regressive images (i.e. Gill, 2007), but this does not excuse the fact that they are problematic and are inserted within a context where there is an urgent need to strengthen democratisation, reduce inequalities, advance women’s rights and impede the perpetuation or further marginalisation or exclusion of certain groups from mainstream society.

We have seen here how many of these ads represent a narrow range of female identities and subject positions, from the *women as victim in the need of saving*, similarly to some of the traditional images of the “Third world women” criticised by feminists within development studies, to the young, sexy, dumb and “inferior” girl/women which still predominates in these female magazines and ads as much as it did during the 1970s and 1980s. It makes little sense then to say that a “mixture of messages” are being provided by these magazines, for if one out of 10 is more reasonable and sophisticated, it can do little to change the scenario if we can still make strong connections between a predominance of these types of images, representations and discourses with the persistence of structural gender inequalities in Brazilian society. Isolated images here and there, and timid appeals to representations that aim to reflect “the new woman”, can only do so

much. Change needs to occur from various fronts, as I explore in Part V in the concluding chapter of this book.

Thus even the *consumerist discourse of emancipation* (Lazar, 2011, 2013) finds difficulties here to operate and are at best flirted with. As many feminist media scholars have argued, a lot of popular culture in the West has played to the notion of a “choice feminism”, mainly equating “women’s empowerment” with their capacity of choosing products, including the make up they want to use and the nail varnish, leading to a shift to the personal to the detriment of the social and political dimensions, in other words, from debates such as abortion rights to the pursuit of self-beautification (Lazar, 2011, 2013). However, in the case of the Brazilian ads examined here, they are less suggesting that if a women achieves beautification goals, she will be emancipated. This has been one of the conclusions of the analyse of Lazar’s (2011, 2013) study of a set of beauty ads collected in Singapore’s English daily *The Straits Times*, from 2001 to 2007, as part of larger project on beauty and feminism. Rather, they suggest beautification is a *natural* component of acceptable and “normal” Brazilian femininity, as is her attachment to the home and family life and, although she is allowed to work, the realm of public life should not take precedence over domesticity and the constant need to exercise control over the body in order to display it to others.

Another problem is the difficulties with dealing with diversity, highlighted in the *Devassa* beer ad of the previous chapter. In her discussion of the ads published in the Singaporean press, Lazar (2011, 2013, 46) argued that diversity was presented in terms of *individualization* as opposed to a wider political dimension, further highlighting how in Baudrillard’s conception, the commercialization of the idea of *choice* offers only a “simulation of freedom”. However, in a context of a highly problematic appeal to the “new woman”, there is thus very little implication here that any of these choices are equated to any ideal of “feminism”, to the extent that the dominant assumptions on the role that women should have in Brazil are presented as *naturalised*

values that are articulated throughout these images and, as we have seen, are deeply taken for grant. They do not come across as *gender ideology* which is being reproduced through cultural and social practices and discourses (Barrett, 1980) and, when they are called into question, as we have seen here, the reaction is of either denial, surprise or appeals to “playfulness” and “fun”. Thus in the Brazilian context there is little possibility yet of a full *simulation of freedom*, or an equation of *choice* (within the capitalist imperative of advanced democracies) with any form of post-feminist construction, or further acknowledgement or nodding towards the past achievements of feminism.

This is not to undermine that there are contradictions and strives for change. There are signs that the resistance to chauvinistic ads is creating a sense among publicity agencies that sexism is bad for business, and that there is much more space, and a public, for more positive, creative, intelligent and challenging material which is less afraid to take risks and reflects more the diversity of multiple identities and subject positions. I have made reference here earlier to a few studies which have underlined dissatisfactions with such images and representations, such as the *Data Popular* and the *Instituto Patricia Galvao* one. Another research conducted in April 2015 by the NGO *Think Eva*, with 1.000 women underlined that 55.7% of Brazilian women interviewed did not see any advertising campaigns that called their attention during the period. Moreover, 85.8% of these women stated that they would have liked if women had been portrayed by advertising in a more intelligent manner. One of the partners of *Think Eva*, Nana Lima, stressed how before advertising campaigns did offensive ads and got away with it, but now due to social media and other online networks, it is possible to take commercials off television and suspend them.^{lvii}

Senator Marta Suplicy, who gained fame in the 1980s with the presentation of the sketch “Sexual Behaviour” in *TV Globo’s* programme *TV Mulher*, which explored topics that were considered ground-breaking and innovative for the time, has argued that the representation of women in the media has had both advancements as well as some regressions. She also underscored

the growth of resistance by Brazilian feminist movements, who have reacted against these images, particularly pointing to online activism. As Suplicy stated:

“There are many sexist campaigns, but there has been also a growth in the resistance to stereotypes. In Brazil we do not have a monitoring project, but we do have feminist online groups which tend to question the companies regarding their sexist and chauvinistic ads. The way that women are represented in the media directly reflects how society thinks and how women view themselves. In average, Brazilians consume five hours of daily television, thus subject to all types of information. However, advertising that tends towards chauvinism today is not well received. Social networks already point out to these and women are reacting.... This is an advancement. There is a lot of things of bad taste and it is important that media professionals understand the strict relation between women’s rights and the rupture of social stereotypes. The reflection is more deep when we consider that we are not only talking about the uses of the image, but of a whole culture that is being reflected and reinforced...”

It is thus possible to argue that the image of the “Brazilian woman”, and of Brazilian femininity more generally, has been embedded within the collective psyche as consisting of a combination of factors which mingle an idealisation around purity, constraint and middle-upper class femininity - and here we can trace parallels also to the Western or European bourgeoisie idealisation of femininity – with the more national particularities of hyper-sexualisation, submissiveness, sinfulness, and promiscuity.

In her discussion of articles on the “sexual tourism” sought by foreigners in the country, published in the Brazilian weekly and monthly magazines *Veja*, *Isto E* and *Marie Claire* during the 1990s, Piscitelli (1996) stated that Brazilian women were portrayed as “brown Brazilians” who were happy, young, submissive, docile, passive and with an enormous disposition for sex. She saw a mingling of aspects associated to the depiction of femininity in Western culture, such as passivity, submissiveness and receptivity, with attributes more associated with the *mulata* (a term used to refer to someone of mixed race, white and black, and which has become widely used to talk about Brazilian black femininity). The latter is depicted as passionate, sensual and

“voluptuous”, but also naïve and loving. As I have argued before, these contribute to narrow the range of identities deemed acceptable for Brazilian women, and the roles available for them, limiting their horizons and future prospects. In such a context of weak institutions and fragile democratization, the role of the media is granted even more importance in contributing to strengthen crucial aspects for development of the nation, such as gender equality (and representation), as had been made evident even by senator Suplicy’s quote above.

As we have seen here, various sectors of the media, particularly in the case of advertising and propaganda, which has been my focus here, have taken on board a role which results in the upholding of conservative and traditional values around gender identities and the role of women in Brazilian society, amid a reinforcement of rigid divisions between the sexes. These are more and more considered outdated by various sectors of the population and deemed problematic, and there is a shift towards a growing questioning of power relations within mainstream sectors of Brazilian society, such as politics and civil society, as I examine next. Various feminists and women’s groups and other activists have resorted to online networks to articulate *counter-hegemonic* discourses that go against some of the dominant messages discussed here, including not only to criticise and voice their dissatisfaction with Brazilian advertising, but also to protest against the abortion law and pressure for further rights and recognition within Brazilian society and politics.

In an age which has seen a decline in the loyalty expressed to political parties, disillusionment with governments and the state and a growth in the third sector and NGOs, the *political sphere* must be understood *beyond* traditional politics *per se*. In contrast to advertising or to magazines directed largely to a female public, and which rarely touch on political issues, the Internet, blogs of interest groups and social movements as well as social media networks emerge as vibrant and important (political) spaces for media activism and for the articulation and mobilization around women’s issues, issues to which I turn to next.

Chapter 6 – Feminism, politics and democracy

Introduction

Democracy throughout many regions of the Latin America continent is still very fragile and in many ways still in their infancy. Problems with the impoverishment of the political public sphere of debate in the country are a result of a complex legacy of slavery, political, cultural and social authoritarianism, as well as the fact of the existence in the country of a highly concentrated and monopolistic media structure, where very few families control the many communication vehicles (Matos, 2012). There are thus various problems when it comes to debating policy proposals and ideas in the public sphere in favour of the advancement of particular groups, from LGBT and gay rights, to indigenous and rural workers, women and other minorities, in a more sophisticated and rational manner. This is particularly the case with crucial issues which are the cornerstone of any advanced democracy, such as human rights, civil and political rights, as well as the wider inclusion of groups that see themselves as increasingly disenfranchised, such as the working-classes throughout the world as well as poorer segments of Brazilian society.

In the last decades, countries throughout Latin America have experienced a series of changes affecting the whole continent since the collapse of military dictatorships, from economic reforms and demands for social inclusion and wider equality to media reform and the changing role of women in the continent. Another important feature that united various Latin American countries in the aftermath of the end of the dictatorship regimes of the 1970s was the rise of female politicians and leaders throughout the continent, following from the slow and gradual re-democratisation of the 1990s. Panama elected a woman president in 2003, Mireya Moscoso (1999-2004) (Buvinic and Roza, 2004, 1); soon afterwards, Chile and Argentina followed suit by electing the former

president Michelle Bachelet (2006-2010) and Cristina Kirchner (2007), wife of the previous president Nestor Kirchner (2003-2007), with Brazil electing and re-electing Dilma Rousseff in 2010 and 2014. However, by 2016, Michelle Bachelet was the only female president in the continent (in Chile).

Developing further from previous chapters, particularly from my discussion of feminist social theory and the first and second wave feminist movements, I examine here the historical roots of women's exclusion from the public sphere and from citizenship. This is to contextualise this discussion as to the reasons why the state, as well as other political avenues, matter so much in the fight against gender equality, in a combination with the strategies that can be adopted by the media. For the latter alone cannot correct such deeply embedded structural injustices. However, it can have a role in articulating new forms of discourses, challenging deeply ingrained stereotypes and ways of looking that have served particular groups and contributed to the maintenance of the *status quo*. And here the role that new technologies and ICTs can have in contributing to reduce gender inequality and empowering women cannot be dismissed. This is discussed here through the critical examination and analysis of a series of blogs, such as the popular *Blogueiras Feministas*, as well as campaigns which gained international recognition, such as *Think Olga's* sexual harassment campaign.

Before moving to the analysis of online communication networks, it is important to look at the theoretical perspectives provided by feminist political theory in its examination of the historical exclusion of women from citizenship, investigating further the relationship between feminism, democracy and the state. Making reference to Philips' (1999) examination of the paradox between political and economic equality, I argue here that political and civil rights cannot be taken for granted, and that more than ever both are at the centre of any debate on gender equality.

Following from Fraser's, Carter's and other feminist's criticism of mainstream feminism's role in advocating an agenda that has largely favoured white, upper-class women to the detriment of a wider and more inclusive approach to gender justice, discussed in previous chapters of this book, I further underscore the centrality of the *political sphere* in contributing for advancements in gender equality, and which has seen the implementation of legislation against gender violence and other forms of discrimination against women in Brazil. Moving on from the debates examined earlier in the previous chapters, I further stress how gender equality is interwoven with the democratic fabric of any society and which, in both developed and developing countries alike, stands today as one of the key elements for economic growth and for the construction of a better and more fulfilling world.

Gender, political philosophy and democracy

Ahead of the International Women's day celebrated on the 8th of March 2015, the United Nations released a report where it highlighted that, taking into consideration the slow pace that the world has been seeing when it comes to tackling gender inequality, it will take another 81 years to achieve full gender equity.^{lviii} The report that was released was an evaluation of the application of the norms adopted by the 189 countries which signed Beijing's *Platform for Action* in China twenty years ago. The overall assessment was that, despite progresses in aspects such as the fall in maternal mortality, increase of women in the labour market and wider access to primary education, the leaders of the respective nations had not done enough to advance the agenda of global gender justice. This sentiment of frustration shared by many feminists, academics and practioners is understandable, if we look at what has been achieved so far in the

last decades, taking into consideration the long historical road of struggle that many feminist movements undertook throughout Europe from as early as the 17th century, and especially from the 19th century onwards, and how they have managed to contribute to the very formation of European democracies and the welfare state, as discussed previously in this book.

The strive for political equality arguably started to emerge in the 17th century as a challenge to the established power of hereditary monarchs. Feminist struggles have had an important role in the consolidation of the democracies of post-industrialised nations, from the early calls for women's suffrage to alliances with the labour movements in the wake of the Industrial Revolution during the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as in their participation in campaigns for the abolition of slavery, including the case of the struggles pursued by feminists throughout Latin America. Ideas concerning the "inferiority" of women have throughout the history of mankind shaped and defined their very exclusion from citizenship, and from obtaining equal rights with men within the structures of the state. These ideas went largely unchallenged until the late 18th century, in the wake of the French Revolution which advocated egalitarian citizenship status to all (Einhorn, in Evans and Williams, 2013, 29). Women were thus seen as being both psychically as well as intellectually inferior to men.

Since the 1980s and 1990s particularly within the West, feminist political theory has criticised the universalism of the notion of the "citizen" and citizenship (i.e. Phillips, 1999; Maynard, 1998) within Western thought, underlining as problematic its automatic association with "the male" to the detriment of the exclusion of women. Feminist critiques thus managed to successfully apply a powerful critique of knowledge itself, as having been ultimately constructed within the male dominant perspective (Maynard, 1998). An early version of this critique came from Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1972), which stated how men made the world and went on to represent it from their own perspective, leading to the formation of universal and

absolute truths. Knowledge thus began to be seen as “sexist” and “biased” (Maynard, 1998, 248).

The notion that women are somehow “different” to men has been very much part of the tradition of Western political philosophy. Arguably, the idea of women as inferior can be traced back to ancient Greece. For Aristotle, women were nothing but an “impotent man”. In the first chapter to her book, *Women, Political Philosophy and Politics*, Sperling (2001,5) argued that the common feature in the development of political philosophy has been the “superficial” treatment of women. From the Social Sciences to many classic Western authors and other Enlightenment writers, the manifestation of negative views of women was quite common. During the 17th century, Descartes emphasised also the separation of emotion from reason, which further lead to women being linked to the former, to values such as intuition as well as impulsiveness, whereas men were associated with rationality.

Authors such as the acclaimed Jean Jacques Rousseau in *Emile* (1763) portraying the cultivation of reason as an important educational tool for boys, but not girls (Tong, 1989), and philosophers like the German Arthur Schopenhauer in *On Women* (1851) classifying them as “childish” and incapable of ever being judges due their lack of a sense of justice in comparison to men. These philosophers were very much a product of their time and particular circumstances. Despite the problems with their understanding of the role of women, the awareness of the sorry state of human nature, and the problems of human suffering, must be retained and have widely influenced political theory on inequality and philosophy.

Although written in the 18th century, the discussion of equality, exclusion, suffering and the treatment of others perhaps remains the core dilemma encountered by mankind still at the turn of the 21st century. Contrary to what Philips (1999) has argued, the debates on how to reduce economic inequalities in our society have not disappeared and have in fact come back to the

mainstream and are seen as equally, or perhaps more important, than civil and political rights, especially in the aftermath of the 2008 global economic recession. These have become defining and pressing debates across the political spectrum, on both the right and the left, throughout many countries in the world, and especially in more developed countries. Moreover, the exclusion of women from public life during the 18th century, and well up until the early 19th century, is not only part of the history of women's struggles in Europe and the West but it also sheds light on both what has been achieved until now and underlines the continuity still of persistent forms of exclusion and discrimination, remodelled in "modern packages", different forms and settings within globalization.

Feminist political theorists have underlined how the liberal democratic tradition placed emphasis on values such as freedom or equality, creating a relation between the citizen with the male gender where an assumption on *neutrality* resulted in preferential treatment to men (Philips, 1999, 25). A key debate within feminist political theory has thus been how to reconcile citizenship, seen as a concept constructed with an *universal, homogenous* and *uniform* male citizen in mind, with feminism and notions of difference (i.e. Philips, 1992; Fraser, 1995, Yuval-Davis, 1997), as I mentioned in previous chapters.

If our aim is to construct a better, and more sustainable world in the long run, where we can live in as decent human beings who are cooperative and who have compassion towards each other, then we must seriously engage with the notion of "equality", what we mean by this and how best to live up to one of our key democratic ideals. Is it thus possible to achieve such a thing in an increasingly complex world where inequalities between the rich and the poor, different groups both within and between nations, either persist or retreat at a very slow pace? The reality is that restrictions to women's access to the highest positions in political and economic organisations persist and, despite the "formal right to equal treatment" (Sperling, 2001, 3), in overall women's

rights within a state, and their contributions, are still less than equal (i.e. Lister, 1997; Philips, 1999, UN 1991 in Sperling, 2001, 3). A question that we need to continue to pursue is the extent to which the state can make a difference, and how this can have an impact within wider institutional settings, from the market to the media industries.

Feminism, politics and state

In our current globalized and digital age, where the market has entered into all spheres of society, both in the private and public sectors, is there still room for politics, and can politics actually pressure for further change? How can we conceive of the “political”, and can it contribute to reduce gender inequality? Can we still envision a relationship between the state and feminism? These are some of the questions that interest me here. We have seen how gender inequality is still a problem for various countries across the world, from developing to developed countries albeit their cultural and historical differences.

Walby (1997, 146) has defined gender politics as “forms of political practice which seek to change gender relations for or against women’s interests”. Political representation is thus seen as a strong component of gender equality, with the Scandinavian countries for instance having a greater participation of women in governance (i.e. Lovenduski and Norris, 1993). Lovenduski (1993) has underlined how during the 1960s and 1970s many second wave feminists were cynical about electoral politics, but by the early 1980s women already had become to enter politics and become active members of parties. Greater support grew in various countries in the West, such as Australia, the UK, France, Germany, Norway and Sweden, for women to participate in politics whilst gender also started to be an issue for political parties (Lovenduski, 1993). Lovenduski (1993, 2) notes how Norwegian feminists were pioneers in their attempts to include women into

party structures. Political representation increased significantly from below 10% of elected representatives in the 1960s to 35% by the early 1980s and the equality agenda also advanced considerably (Lovenduski, 1993).

The demands for equality in women's representation in Britain for instance came later and more in the early 1980s. By the 1990s, women comprised fewer than 10% of the members of the House of Commons (Lovenduski, 1993). Progress in female political representation has nonetheless been very slow. As Walby (1997, 137) notes, women in Britain after the 1987 election made only 6.6% of the House of Commons, and after that in 1992 were still less than 10%. It would be only in the UK 2015 general elections that a more significant number would materialise, with 190 women being elected. This has meant that 30% of all MPs are women, representing a rise up from 23% (there were 148 out of a total of 650) from the last legislature.

Since the 1980s mainly, parties throughout the world have been asked to implement policies to attract women and create campaigns to recruit women members, as well as promote them within the party ranks. Lovenduski (1993) has further stated that political representation in democratic societies has had two core dimensions: the first includes the presence of members of an interest group in decision-making avenues or when their interests are being taken into consideration. The second dimension implies that it is enough for an assembly to take into account the interests of all its electors.

The presence of women in party politics has been important as a means of challenging ingrained sexist attitudes, creating awareness in relation to the difficulties suffered by women, and culminating in a series of demands, among others the implementation of sex equality legislation in the workplace (i.e. the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts and the balancing of work and family life, including childcare (Lovenduski, and Norris, 1993; Walby, 1997, 137). Other successes that women managed to achieve in various countries included the inclusion of women's issues in

party programmes and the establishment of new structures of government, such as ministries for women (Lovenduski, 1993).

As I have started to examine in previous chapters, the concept of “equality” is complex and seems to presume at first the denial of the possibility of difference, and of articulating some form of reconciliation. There is though a very close relationship of affinity between equality and difference. In her discussion of feminism and democracy, Philips (1999, 17) has examined what she claims is a perceived clash between political democracy and rights with economic equality, understood as the unequal distribution of life chances, income and wealth. The structures into which people are born into, such as to rich parents or poor, can shape their very future lives. Philips (1999) is critical of the idea that equality necessarily means treating everyone the same, which can be seen as an “inequitable” assimilation policy which can culminate in the imposition of the values of one group (usually the dominant one) on those who have been subordinated (Philips, 1999). The idea that equality means treating everyone the same, as well as the view that it should be promoted by eliminating differences, continues to be relevant.

The author (1999) has further argued that contemporary industrialised societies have seen a shift away from the preoccupation with *economic equality*, very much tied to the disillusionment with socialism after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, towards a concern with *political equality* and difference in an age of increasing globalization and proximity between people of diverse cultures. If it is impossible realistically to eliminate fully economic inequality, political democracies nevertheless should create the means for wider social mobility, and the granting of further opportunities for citizens regardless of their background, group membership or race based on the principle that they are of equal worth (Philips, 1999, 78).^{lix} Similarly to Habermas, Young (1990) has advocated in favour of special rights for oppressed groups to guarantee political inclusion, fairer representation and participation for the disadvantaged and less powerful groups in the

political public sphere. Quotas can and have been used to address the under-representation of women in politics or other forms of incentive, such as positive discrimination or measures that can boost inclusion and strengthen diversity.

Liberal democracies, in principle, are assigned the function of granting the means for women to strive for equality of representation through the opportunities offered by the state and by parties (Lovenduski, 1993, 3). Women's issues and interests however began to be more fully addressed when women started to enter electoral politics (e.g. Lovenduski and Norris, 1993). The pressures for the increase in women's political representation for instance have thus occurred in a context where the struggle for political and civic rights began to be seen as already something which was taken for granted and a thing of the past, at the same time that the achievement of wider economic equality started to be abandoned and perceived as unattainable.

The quality of democratic decision-making depends on sustained conditions of *dialogue*, *deliberation* and *talk* (Habermas, 1989, 1992; Blaug and Schwarzmantel, 1988). Scholars such as Fraser (2013) have further criticised what she claims to be the "gender-blindness" of Habermas' conceptualization of the public sphere. Nevertheless, the expansion of political equality, embedded within the *democratic struggle* per se, is above all about expanding the space for the inclusion of a wider citizen body, avoiding exclusions based on property, gender, race or ethnicity and other deeply rooted assumptions which seem to imply that some people count more than others. Many people of certain groups or race do not reach more prominent positions not only due to discrimination but also due to the fact that some are allocated to roles that make it harder for them to engage in political activity. The granting of more equal forms of participation means that public debate should better reflect the points of view of those who are disadvantaged (Romm 2002 in Coetzee et al).

In her discussion of the “cultural turn” in feminism and the wider emphasis placed on identity and representation, Fraser (2013, 160) has argued that it is insufficient to focus only on *recognition*, and that this must be combined with a commitment to *redistribution*. Fraser (2013, 160) applauds the stress on recognition, stating that gender justice is no longer restricted to questions of distribution, and that it also encompasses issues of representation, identity and difference. She (2013, 161) further noted how struggles for recognition have increased throughout the world, including as examples of this the debates on multiculturalism and human rights. However, she claims that a broader, richer paradigm has not developed, and that there has been “stalled progress in the axis of distribution”. As I argued before, the strive for wider gender equality today has become much more complex and is encompassing various spheres, from issues of *distributive justice*, as Fraser (2013) notes, and which is reflected in the pressures for the gender unequal pay gap, among others, to other issues such as the maintenance of social welfare programmes and benefits for women and other initiatives to combat female poverty, including also, of equal importance, questions of representation and identity, and the reproduction of ideology regarding gender roles through cultural and the media channels (i.e. sexism).

In her chapter “Critical theory and development”, where she examines Habermas and our communicative capacities as a means of creating a “better society”, Romm (2002, 141 in Coetzee et al) argues that a *redefinition of humanity* is necessary, one which allows people to be assessed by what they *are* rather than by what they possess. Various authors (i.e. Mouffe, 2000) have been critical of Habermas’ understanding of people engaging in debate to reach a consensual understanding. Habermas has responded by referring to the literature on pluralism, which suggests that participants should seek to tolerate their differences without necessarily attempting an agreement (Romm, 2002 in Coetzee et al, 150).

Making reference to the work of Habermas as well as to Giddens's articulation of the "third way", Mouffe (2000) criticised in her book *The Democratic Paradox* deliberative democracy and the realization of the "rational consensus" as well as the idea that the *left/right* dichotomy has somehow ceased to be relevant, and that politics must be constructed through the "third way" avenue (Giddens, 1998). Mouffe (2000, 7-8) is herself critical of the "consensus model", arguing that it is "jeopardises the future of democracy."

In her critique of the logics of liberal democracies and of the necessity of distinguishing between the liberal and democratic order when we speak of "equality", Mouffe (2000, 8) is skeptical that through deliberation the overcoming of confrontations, such as what she calls "individual rights", "liberties" and the demands for participation and equality, can take place. Although acknowledging the limits of our liberal democracies, and recognising that the search for consensus can prove futile, it is important to state that *inclusive dialogue* and participation can still occur within these premises and should be continuously sought after and not abandoned. On the other point Mouffe (2000) is correct in underlying that the left/right dichotomy is far from over, and that it is still played out in the political public sphere, but that despite this there is still a strive towards consensus-building, and that this is equally important for both emerging democracies like Brazil as well as more advanced democracies, who in different ways also experience problems related to the disillusionment with the whole democratic process.

This seems to be the only realistic case, when the opposite scenario points to increasing polarisation and conflict, with the potential of leading to violence and disruption and to the weakening of the very democratic institutions to which we are seeking to improve and strengthen in the first place. It is precisely what led to the overthrow of the first female presidency in the country in May 2016, and its replacement by a semi-democratic and weaker government that saw conflict and antagonism exacerbated to an unprecedented level, with risks to a return to a semi-

autocratic regime where elections are seen as worthless and popular participation is low and largely excluded from mainstream decision-making, reinforcing an elitist and plutocratic form of democratic governance.

It thus seems unrealistic in this day and age to suggest that antagonistic politics should be sought after more to the detriment of rational politics and consensus-building, as this can culminate in the strengthening even more of powerful or authoritarian groups, and of their capacity to be more oppressive and disadvantage those already at a disadvantage. This is precisely what started to occur in the last years in Brazil, where the strength of the mobilization of ultraconservative sectors led to the development of a series of threats to women's rights, culminating in protests which took place throughout the year of 2015, as I discuss in the next section. Inclusion need not necessarily breed antagonism, and this can occur through various means, from state policies to lobbying, as well as the actions of other pressure groups to participate in the public sphere.^{lx}

This takes us back to the timidity of the political representation of women in politics across the world, from the parliamentary level to the presidency. The case of Brazil is very different from either Norway or Britain. Following from what I discussed in the previous chapter, the re-democratization years after the collapse of military dictatorship regimes of the 1970s did not see women occupying as much more space in the public sphere and in decision-making positions as would have been expected. It would be only with the Federal Constitution of 1988 that women's rights in Brazil would begin to start to be acknowledged, but even so, the threats to the continuity of these rights as well as their advancement has become a contemporary reality of the last years to which many women and feminist groups, as well as other minority groups, are standing up against.

Brazil has one of the lowest rates of political representation in the world, with a rate of less than 10% of women present in legislative bodies. The 2014 presidential elections, which also

included elections for the senate and chamber of deputies, saw a total of 25.919 candidates run, according to the TSE (Supreme Electoral Court). Of these, only 30.7% were women (16.5% white and 14.2% black). The final result was the election of 13 female senators of a total of 81 vacancies, representing 16%, and another 51 female deputies, of a total of 513 MPs. Brazil further lags behind other Latin America countries, with Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Venezuela, Panama, Peru and Colombia having more female deputies, whilst the number of women that have managed to reach the higher ranks in businesses throughout Latin American countries is extremely low.^{lxi}

Nadine Gasman of UN Women pointed out how female political participation has reached 25% in the world, whereas in Brazil MPs take up a total of 11% of the seats in Congress and are below the minimum of 30% stipulated by the 4th World Conference on Women. Gasman emphasised the complexities of the struggle for women's rights in Brazil, which includes the different struggles and forms of (historical) exclusion suffered by various groups of women in the country. "Since colonization, indigenous women and blacks have had to confront a system of violence whose real effects of inequality have persisted after nearly 150 years. Currently, indigenous women are the victims of violence against their territories... and black women confront the perverse combination of racism and sexism, culminating in low political representation, precarious inclusion in the marketplace, super exposure to urban violence among others."

In a country of a multi-party system with weak institutions and highly political fragmentation – there are, to start with, a total of 28 parties in Brazil – , the difficulties of reaching consensus has been extremely difficult. Various groups within civil society and social movements do not agree with each other and can be competitors. In many ways the "pact" formed by the former government of president Lula between employers and workers, and which guaranteed the success of this administrations from 2003 until 2012, was dissolved in the wake of the economic recession and mainly from 2013 onwards. Various authors have also talked about a divided civil

society, mainly between left wing and progressive groups and ultra conservative right wing factions but also amongst various smaller, fragmented and fringe groups from across the political spectrum. Divisions within the women's movement for instance have always existed: there have been particular problems with the inclusion of black female Brazilians within the wider feminist movement in the country. As Caldwell (in Maier and Lebon, 2010, 176) has noted, both the women's and black movements emerged during the 1970s. The "Manifesto of Black Women", which was presented during the *Congresso de Mulheres Brasileiras* in July 1975, highlighted the racial divisions with the women's movement, acknowledging for the first time the ways in which race and gender intersected in the oppression and sexual exploitation of black women.

An important avenue to combat unequal gender representation in politics has been the debate on the implementation of quotas for women in political parties and Congress. A Brazilian law of 1997 obliges political parties to reserve 30% of their vacancies to women candidates, although this has been having more effect on paper than in actual practice.^{lxii} Critics (i.e. Fraser, 2013) have correctly argued that quotas and the numerical presence of women in itself does not solve the problem. This seems a clear point to make. If we consider that firstly it was the wider presence of women in politics which helped to advance the women's agenda, from childcare to the prohibition of sex discrimination in the workplace, it seems evident that the mere presence of women and other minority groups in particular institutions and spheres of life is a step forward to say the least.^{lxiii}

Contrary to what pure market frameworks and rhetoric might suggest, the fact is that the state still has a crucial role to play in implementing policies, as well as creating conditions for equitable gender citizenship (i.e. Einhorn in Evans and Williams, 2013, 34-35; Norris, 1993). Thus the series of legislations discussed in the previous chapter which aims to combat gender violence, such as the *Maria da Penha* law, are but indications of the importance of state policies in reducing gender

equality, creating the conditions for women to compete better with men as well as strengthen their overall status in society.

As Macaulay (in Maier and Lebon, 2010) noted in her critical overview of contemporary feminist movements in Brazil and their relationship to political parties and the state, since the early 1980s these activist groups have sought to create the means for gender equity policies through state mechanisms. The *Conselho Nacional dos Direitos da Mulher* (CNDM) was one of the earliest units within the federal government dedicated to women's issues, implemented soon after the return to democracy in late 1980s and after the fall of the military regime (1964-1985). The women's movement managed to seize the opportunity and use its political capital, accumulated during the struggle against the dictatorship, to pressure for the establishment of the ministry, whereas the opposition party PMDB was eager to propagate its progressive credentials (Macaulay, 2010). Other gender-friendly policies included the creation of women-only police stations to deal with cases of domestic violence.

Similarly to other countries, feminism also had an ambiguous and complex relationship to party politics in Brazil. The CNDM's, whose work against the discrimination of woman was based on the principles of the CEDAW, put forward a series of proposals during the Constitutional Assembly (1987-1988) and managed to successfully incorporate 80% of its demands into the final text of the 1988 Constitution (Macaulay, 2010).^{lxiv}The PMDB's weak support for the CNDM led to its disintegration and reduction to a smaller unit during the late 1980s and 1990s. In September 2002, ahead of the presidential elections and close to the end of this term, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, whose government had initially been reluctant to advance the women agenda, issued a decree that created the *Secretaria de Estado dos Direitos da Mulher* (Secretary of State on the Rights of Women), which was later transformed into the Secretary for Policy for Women (SPM) in 2003 after the election of Lula (Macaulay, 2010).

After the dismantling of CNDM during the 1990's, the feminist movement and concerns would emerge again in a ministerial status only through the creation of the Secretary of Policies for Women in 2003, during the second mandate of Lula. This was later incorporated into the Ministry for Women, Racial Equality and Human Rights in 2015 and further dismantled by the Temer government in early 2016, with a special secretary on women's issues joining the newly merged Ministry of Justice and Citizenship. In 2015, the online website of the Secretary stated that its aim was to assist the presidency, introducing policies sensitive to women's issues from across the ministries, working in partnership with both public as well as private bodies as well as developing educational national campaigns.

Feminists groups would thus seek to influence more the Worker's Party (PT) at the turn of the century in Brazil. The Lula government also launched, after a nation-wide consultation, the *Plano Nacional de Políticas para Mulheres* (National Plan of Policies for Women), which was considered the most comprehensive document on gender equality produced in Brazil (Macaulay, 2010), and which had a particular focus on non-sexist education, women's health, discrimination in the workplace and violence towards women. The document was later revised in 2007 in the context of the 2nd *National Conference for the Policies for Women*, including issues such as women's access to the workplace, anti-poverty and inequality measures, social security, reproductive rights and violence (Macaulay, 2010, 277-278).

It is thus vital to acknowledge that political parties in Brazil, and governments, have had a crucial role in responding to women's demands and in attempting to push the equality agenda forward, however slowly. Norris (1993) for one has argued that centre left wing parties in Europe, from Germany to the UK, have been more responsive to the demands made by women, although as I have argued before, the consensus around the need to advance women's rights has expanded across the political spectrum in Europe, and particularly so in some countries more than others,

such as in the UK. However in the case of Brazil, it has been the PMDB, and largely the Worker's Party (PT), which has managed to launch the key female politicians of Brazilian politics. This has included the president Dilma Rousseff to the other presidential candidates of the 2010 and 2014 elections, such as Marina Silva and Heloisa Helena (in the newly founded party *Rede*) and Luciana Genro (PSOL), although with the exception of Dilma none are affiliated to the party any longer.

The former adjunct secretary of institutional articulation and thematic action of SPM, Linda Goulart, has stated that the secretary has worked in projects with the aim of combatting what she sees as a patriarchal culture, which still exists in the country: "We have worked to revert the situation, supporting campaigns like "Que mama abraça" (Those who love hug), directed to middle and high school students, among others, as well as specific programmes, such as the "Construindo a Igualdade de Gênero" (Constructing Gender Equality). We have also done TV and radio campaigns talking about zero tolerance to violence against women, specific campaigns for big events, such as the World Cup (2014) and the Olympics (2016)", she stated.^{lxv} The former SPM ministry also works closely with ONU Women in Brazil in areas such as education, work, political participation, health and the combat of violence against women.

Nadine Gasman from UN Women in Brazil also defended the action of other spheres of society in the struggle for gender equality, beyond state structures and including also the media. As she argued:

"..to combat violence against women is the responsibility of the states, companies and of society. Beyond the investments in public services that attend to the victims, it is important to allocate resources to prevent violence. Companies also need to play their part, supporting and financing actions from the community, articulating initiatives with their collaborators to end violence. Society *and the media* (my emphasis) also need to embrace the cause of eliminating violence against women, so that violence can be repressed and the guilty punished. Impunity is still the main challenge in the fight against violence."

State feminism has its limits and can be dependent on resources, the will and political commitment of the parties in power. Welfare programmes and other state benefits are usually the

first hit in times of economic crisis, as was the case of the structural adjustment programmes of the 1990s (Lebon, 2010) and the contemporary context of economic recession in Brazil, where powerful extreme right wing forces seek to dismantle the already very weak Brazilian welfare state. Despite economic difficulties and the lack of sufficient resources, at the very least the presence of such secretaries at governmental level can contribute to exercise a *symbolic* role in society by creating the necessary awareness amongst larger groups of people who do not question gender power relations of the problems suffered by various groups of women. They can thus influence the *political* public sphere, boosting public debate in society on the topic, creating links with the private sector and other firms, as well as opening avenues and opportunities for feminist activists and pressure groups to talk to the government and to have their concerns heard.

Politics is thus definitely a space where gender equality can be achieved, but this should not be limited only to the governmental sphere. As we have seen, Fraser (2013) has argued that gender justice needs to address two core dimensions: that of *redistribution* (i.e. poverty alleviation, in other words, the economic sphere) and of *recognition* (i.e. status subordination, in other words, the sphere of cultural values). It is insufficient to attempt to tackle gender injustice also through one sphere, such as the state, for it is important to note that one dimension impacts on the other and vice-versa (Fraser, 2013). Women who are subject to economic inequalities in society are more vulnerable to unemployment and struggle to rise above low paid jobs due to the injustices of *recognition* which are grounded on the cultural perceptions in society and attitudes that still claim (even within the level of the unconscious, my emphasis) that women are either inferior to men, have less value or are in a hierarchical category where they are placed in a *subordinated* status to them.

The relative success of state and other party policies incentives in countries like Germany, the UK and Norway (Lovenduski and Norris, 1993) as we have seen, indicate that the state can and

still has an important role in contributing to combat gender inequality. As Craske (1999) has stated, the *political environment* in which feminist organisations work is crucial for them in order to be able to further their objectives. “The Latin American experience illustrates how political institutions can be useful as structures of empowerment for women....”, stated Craske (1999). Thus the openness of the state, its capacity to dialogue with civil society and various groups, can be seen as an essential element in this process of strengthening of the democratic project. As I have shown here, the role of the state in Brazil, and its recognition of the demands of social movements and feminist groups, has grown since the late period of the 1990’s (Craske, 1999), and especially since 2003.

The development of feminism over the course of the last decades in Brazil and throughout Latin America has not been in a linear progressive line and has suffered from enormous challenges and setbacks. An important space where politics meets feminism has been the Internet world. Despite the limits imposed by the digital divide and the difficulties that less privileged sectors of society have still to access digital platforms, there is some reasons to be cheerful and find hope in social media and online networks which, as I have argued before, have become quite crucial throughout many Latin American countries. In Brazil such platforms are having a role in undermining stereotypical representations in the media, and articulating counter-discourses and positons which challenge chauvinism in society, mobilize grassroots networks and protests, pressure for public policies in favour of women, boost pluralism and diversity and strengthen democratic politics, as I turn to next in the following chapter.

Chapter 7 – Gender politics, equality and new technologies for development

ICTS for development: cyberfeminism, blogging and the Internet

The year 2015 in Brazil has been seen as the year when feminism invaded the mainstream of Brazilian society. After expanding significantly in the country since the decade of the 1990s, online media outlets and other social media communication networks became prominent in serving feminists groups in their struggle against discrimination and in favour of the advancement of women's rights. I have discussed elsewhere (Matos, 2012) how political campaigning in the country has largely made use of online platforms to mobilize voters, being able to provide alternative readings from the mainstream media, as well as connect better with the electorate without the mediation of journalists. Female politician candidates have largely used the web, as well as feminist activists and other movements concerned with women's rights. But can the Internet really have a positive impact for feminism? Do we risk falling into the trap of sounding too utopian, idealistic or even naive if we overemphasize the role of new technologies in social change and protest?

As Jensen (2010 in Shade, Carter et al, 2015, 225) has stated, it is important to go beyond the celebrations of the empowerment potential of social media, and engage more in "political economic analyses to critique and intervene in economic and governance structures." Before focusing on the analysis of the activism of key influential feminist *blogs* however, it is important to address some of the debates on the potential of new technologies for change and gender development. This includes examining the emerging global trend of blogging and, in particular, the

new found relationship that feminists have encountered with these online platforms, which has received the name of *cyberfeminism*.

Various authors have shown us the limits of the Internet for democratic politics, and we need to be realistic and acknowledge these critiques. Many scholars who have discussed online communications have done so in terms of strengths and limits (i.e. Curran and Seaton, 2010), and rightly so, they have moved away from the more technologically deterministic or euphoric understandings of the potential of the Internet more associated to its early years and predominant during the 1990s (i.e. Chadwick, 2006; Castells, 2007; Hesmondhalgh, 2002). The latter years tended to overemphasise the capacity of the web to promote revolutionary change in society and diminish structural inequalities. If on one hand online technologies can offer opportunities for wider political participation and mobilization, as well as assisting governments and institutions in becoming more transparent and engaging in direct contact with the public and voters without the mediation of journalists and experts, they can also suffer from the same problems as other media sectors, such as excessive commercialization and concentration and undermining or pushing grassroots mobilization to the margins (i.e. Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Chadwick, 2006).

There has been a growth in the body of scholarship on gender and the Internet in the last years, which I do not have time to assess here (i.e. Shade in Carter et al, 2015). The Fourth World conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 for instance recognised the importance of the then emerging Internet for women's equality (Shade, 2015, 223). Women are also constantly pointed out as heavy users of social media, even more than men. Some issues which are examined here in this discussion between gender and the Internet thus include the correlation between digital rights with those of women's rights, as well as feminist perspectives on political economy and demands for policy to be *gender* sensitive (Gallagher, 2011 in Shade, 2015, 225).

The gender divide which exists in terms of access to the web is also an important focus of both academic studies and policy concerns. Various studies for instance have been concerned with social inclusion within the technological environment (Shade, 2001, 2015). I have written elsewhere about the digital divide in Brazil, and the programmes which aim to bridge this gap (Matos, 2014). Moreover, Gallagher (2011, in Shade, 2015) has defended the centrality of policy interventions which are capable of identifying points that need to be tackled, including the need to create “gender sensitive policy”. Karikakis (2012; 364 in Shade, 2015) also argued that gender is absent from public policy, defending the need for a “human centred policy scholarship”, interrogating gendered social relations of the policy regulatory process.

Gender has thus began to loom strongly in cyberspace in the 21st century (McNeil in Evans and Williams, 2013). This has been particularly the case since the decade of the 1990s, and has been defined as being “a set of aesthetic-political-communication strategies oriented towards electronic culture” (Ferreira, 2015, 201). *Cyberfeminism* for one has been celebrated by many authors and academics, with Donna Haraway’s “Cyborg Manifesto” (1991, 1985) being seen as one of the most influential *cyberfeminist* texts which tries to dissect the nature of the relationship which exists between gender and new technologies.

As McNeil (2013, 42) has also noted, Haraway offered a generally optimistic look at the prospects for *cyberfeminism*, whilst authors like Plant (1998) having provided a celebrated vision for women in the digital culture. She went as far as proclaiming that computing was a *female sphere*, having identified cyberspace as a *feminine domain*, a place of freedom and disruption of the patriarchal order (McNeil, 2013, 43). As Plant (1995) argues in her poetic text *The Future Looms: Weaving Women and Cybernetics*, the convergence of women with the machine has been one of the key preoccupations of *cybernetic* feminism, with this particular text having engaged in

an intriguing comparison between the computer's history of weaving with the work done by women.

The field of feminism and cyberspace has culminated in research in a variety of areas, including computer gaming, social networking and media and pornography (McNeil, 2013). My interest here is in the relationship established between feminism and new technologies in terms of the ways in which these vehicles can be made *meaningful* for women in everyday life, and how they can function as tools for gender development and justice in localised contexts. Moreover, a lot of research and debate within feminism has focused on how online platforms can assist in political and feminist campaigns, as well as in the struggle against patriarchy and other conventions and in favour of women's rights (Harcourt, 1999 in McNeil, 2013). I am interested here however in engaging in what other authors have started to do, as McNeil (2013) indicates, which is to explore the opportunities opened up by *cyberculture*, and particularly examining what is happening on the ground and on an everyday basis. These everyday activities, that many would argue that are banal or trivial, are actually under-researched within feminist media studies, as pointed out by many scholars (Karikasis, 2014). I also believe, and particularly in the case of Brazil, that they are strongly connected to the *political sphere*, constituting another form of political engagement beyond the avenues of state feminism, political representation or even the mainstream media.

Third wave feminists have been particularly attracted to the Internet (Budgeon in Gill and Scharff, 2011, 2013), interacting intelligently with these spaces in their quests to appropriate previously pejorative terms, such as "slut" and "bitch", in a renewed energy to combat gender inequality. In previous chapters of this book, I underlined how new research trends in the gender field, as well as the concerns of diverse groups of third wave feminists, have focused on the role of new technologies in the struggle for gender equity. These have included debates on how online networks can offer spaces to undermine "sexist images" and articulate counter-hegemonic

discourses to the ways in which ICTs (information and communication technologies) can assist in gender and development. This is not to mention the opportunities created for women's inclusion in the digital world.

Despite the obvious acknowledgement that these can contribute for female empowerment and entrepreneurship, through the mere access to online networks and the further competency in computer literacy skills, this alone is not enough. Thus the limits to women's rights to access technologies, a demand which can be seen as merely replicating modernization discourses on the need to "catch up", and which argued that mere connectivity was needed (Asiedu, 2012 in Shade, 2015, 227), is important to acknowledge but is not the only focus of our concern. As I have examined in the first chapter in relation to the debate on the *feminization of poverty*, and the development of theoretical perspectives on what constitutes poverty, to struggle for mere access, or a certain level of income, is not enough if one does not have political participation or is properly included in the community and has access to decent welfare and resources, as Sen would say.

Access to new technologies is thus obviously important in terms of information and communication rights, particularly so in developing countries, where sectors of the population do not have access to these networks amid a context that is seeing an increase in connectivity. However, the *uses* made of these networks, and the ways in which online communications are being appropriated throughout Latin America as a crucial sphere of influence and political activity, are equally as important to discuss and research.

Concerns over the persistence of the digital divide throughout the world, and especially in developing countries, where groups of less privileged women, the old and the unemployed are the ones who still do not have access to online communications, are among some of the key reasons stated among others for the limits of online networks in political influence, mobilization and in its

capacity to boost democratic politics (i.e. Nederveen Pieterse, 2010; Curran and Seaton, 2010; Matos, 2012).

The 2013 report by the *Broadband Commission Working Group on Broadband and Gender*, published by Unesco, underlined how the sustainable development agenda can be advanced through the promotion of new technologies in support of gender equality. As the 2013 report stated, after more than twenty years since the emergence of the Internet, there are still two-thirds of the planet's population who do not have access to the world wide web and of these, most are women. The report further noted that there are some 200 million fewer women online compared with men, and that women are coming online later than men. "Digital gender gaps reflect gender inequalities throughout societies and economies – a range of socio-economic and political factors affect gender divides, with attitudes and cultural beliefs likely to be self-reinforcing", stated the report.

Most significantly, it is online networks which are actually offering the tools for many women in their struggle against gender inequality. The Internet has been expanding rapidly in Latin America and is also reaching different groups across classes. According to a 2014 report from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Cepal), around 58% of Brazilians have access to the Internet, a significant improvement from the 30% registered in 2006. The percentage however is less than in other Latin American countries like Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, with the former reaching as high as 70%. The report also highlighted the impact of new technologies on economic growth, stating that between 2005-2010, the web represented between 0.5% to 5.4% of the GDP in developing countries. Women also appear as significant users of online technologies, and are 53% of the users in the country.

Studies show that women from the lower classes are the group which are mostly connected and who use the web for shopping and other activities, such as to seek entertainment and. read

news.^{lxvi}The 2013 Broadband report also underlined the uses that new technologies have had in countries like Brazil in the fight against gender violence, pointing out the large use of mobile technology and computers in the country's *favelas*, or shanty-towns. It stressed how on *International Women's Day* in March 2013, UN Women, UNICEF and Un-Habitat launched a website, which also worked as a smartphone, with the intention of bringing together information on support services for women who were being the victims of violence.

A few authors have begun to look at the possibilities offered by the alternative media, and also the *blogsphere*, for the boosting of political diversity and pluralism and also strengthening the process of the democratization of the media in the country (i.e. Matos, 2012; Guedes Bailey and Marques, in Siapara and Veglis, 2012). Guedes Bailey and Marques (in Siapara and Veglis, 2012, 396) examined the possibilities offered by digital media and blogs in Brazil in terms of the ways in which these can offer people opportunities to become more active agents in the communication process (and I would add the *political* process as well).

Debates on the potential of the internet have been cast in what many authors have claimed as two opposite camps (i.e. Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Chadwick, 2006; Curran and Seaton, 2010), the more utopians or the sceptics. The first group has been seen as being more enthusiastic about new communication technologies, and seeing in them a potential to revolutionise our structures and ways of life, while the latter claiming that they are insufficient in their capacity to correct structural inequalities and to improve the world. In Guedes Bailey and Marques (in Siapara and Veglis, 2012) discussion of the arguments on the potential of online communications, I stress the one that they highlight which is more appropriate and realistic in its understanding of the potential of social media (as well as online communications more generally): namely, that *social media is neither positive or negative* and that ICTs can be both “socially shaped by the uses people define for them and society shaping” (Guedes Bailey and Marques, 2012, 396).

In Brazil as in most parts of the world, blogs are being used both by the mainstream media as well as by independent journalists and other social movements and activist groups. In previous research I have examined the debate on digital inclusion in the country and the growth of blogging during political campaigns and the importance that they had for people to obtain more information, knowledge and critical debate, especially during the 2006 and 2010 presidential elections (Matos, 2014, 2012). Despite the fact that newspaper and media blogs are still the ones most accessed, such as the *Blog do Noblat* of *O Globo* newspaper, mentioned by Guedes Bailey and Marques (2012), non-mainstream blogs financed by local, regional or federal governments, or private individuals, have had a significant level of connection with various sectors of the Brazilian population, stimulating debate with different sectors of civil society and across the political spectrum.

Guedes Bailey and Marques (2012) have further stated also how there was a lot of optimism when blogs emerged regarding their capacity to change journalism and the media logic, such as how they would offer opinions on topics relevant to local communities, providing perspective which were relatively absent from the mainstream media. This has occurred in a context where the members of the public are actively seeking a diversity of news sources and perspective on politics, current affairs and social issues beyond the discourses provided by the mainstream media only (i.e. Guedes Bailey and Marques, 2012, 399).

Many have argued that, due to the lack of commitment to media reform in the country and the insistence of partisanship practices in the newsroom, the mainstream media has seen a decline in its professional standards and commitments to objectivity and impartiality in the last years, following from its attempt of strengthening professionalism in the 1990s (Matos, 2008). The *2016 Reporters Without Borders* report put the country in the 104th position, a fall from the 58th position given in 2010, due to the risk posed on journalists lives in the country, including policy brutality

during protests, as well as the lack of professionalism of the mainstream media and its encouragement of the population to overthrow the president Dilma Rousseff, as mentioned before. All this has opened up new possibilities in the *blogosphere*.

In the last decades, the Brazilian *blogosphere* has undoubtedly seen a vibrant and dynamic growth of critical news commentary websites and others more politically partisan blogs and websites, and which include portals such as *Pragmatismo Politico*, *Revista Forum*, *Carta Maior*, *O Antagonista* and *Brasil 247*, to journalistic and academic ones such as *Observatorio da Imprensa* and *Portal Comunique-se*, among others, as well as blogs from social movements and civil society pressure groups. An important independent media group is undoubtedly *Midia Ninja*, a movement formed by amateur journalists and bloggers which has been extremely influential in the last years due to its reporting among others of acts of police violence in protests, and whom I have discussed elsewhere (2012, 2014).^{lxviii} These websites have contributed significantly to boost debate in the mediated public sphere, strengthening political diversity as well as providing different perspectives and angles on issues that are seen as sensitive and which do not yet receive as much in depth and quality critical coverage in the mainstream media, including topics such as inequality, social inclusion, worker's rights and women and minority rights.

The main Brazilian mainstream journalistic blogs include *Miriam Leitao's*, *Blog do Juca*, *Josias de Souza*, *Balaio do Kotscho*, among others, and many belong to key media groups, including five from the 16 key news blogs, which belong to the Abril group (i.e. Guedes Bailey and Marques, 2012). Some of these mainstream blogs are quite opinionated and differ from the practices of objectivity and professionalism of traditional journalism, such as O Globo's *Blog do Noblat* and *Cora Ronai's*. The boundaries between traditional journalism, and more interpretative, partisan or militant and opinionated forms, however have become increasingly blurred, with mainstream journalism for one having been profoundly shaped by the *language* of the

blogosphere, thus acquiring a much more personal, interpretative and commentary tone, which at times also is less professional and objective, leaning towards partisanship and more ideological tones.

I do not wish to examine further the theoretical aspects of the debate on the extent to which the mainstream has appropriated alternative online spaces, as well as the question if we can still call such spaces as “alternative”, a discussion that is pursued by various researchers elsewhere (i.e. Castells, 2007; Couldry and Curran, 2013). As mentioned above, my concern here is with the articulation of these feminists discourses in the *blogosphere*, and the ways in which they stand in *opposition to*, as well as *complement* in contradictory ways, the images and representations within the media, such as in the case of advertising and magazines. They also stand as a positive indicator of the media’s role still in development, and are important sites to research for anyone interested in the use of ICTs for gender, economic development and equality.

Although politics is not the core activity of those who access online networks, the popularity and intensity of the use of feminist blogs in Brazil, although evidently less popular than the mainstream media and journalistic blogs mentioned above, cannot be ignored. Feminism debates and perspectives have also seen a significant revival in the last five to ten years in the country, particularly the year of 2015, which was seen as vital for *cyberfeminism* and for online (as well as offline) feminist activism, as we shall see.

Female political representation and gender politics in Brazil

Feminist politics and other women movements have encountered many difficulties in the post-dictatorship phase in their attempts to construct avenues of dialogue with governments and the state to have their cases heard, and to influence the formulation of gender-sensitive policies as

well as to have a stronger role in Brazilian society in the same level as men. The re-democratization phase since the end of the 1980's nonetheless produced a paradoxical scenario: a rise of gender politics in the country, in line with the process of the *feminization of politics* encountered throughout Latin America, which saw the rise of political female leaders throughout the continent on one side as well as a continuation of the subordination of the "ordinary Brazilian woman" on the other. As scholar Miriam Grossi, concluded, "the elections of Dilma, Bachelet or Cristina Kirchner were important elements of political transformation in Latin America, but have not automatically guaranteed changes in gender representations, or inclusion of public policies for women in the three countries."

The last two presidential campaigns in Brazil of the years 2010 and 2014 saw various high profile female politicians run for the presidency, from Heloisa Helena, Luciana Genro, Marina da Silva to Dilma Rousseff, with the latter being elected the first female president in 2010. The 2010 and 2014 campaigns for the presidential elections of these candidates lacked a more nuanced focus on women's issues and rights, particularly in the case of the 2014 dispute, despite the presence of high profile female politicians like Marina and Dilma. In many ways there is still a dissonance between the debates on women's issues that are taking place within Brazilian society, both online and off, and the discourses on women included in the campaigns of the candidates, which are relatively minor or still somewhat marginal, despite the existence of secretaries for women in government, as we have seen. The year of 2014 was the same year that the blog *Blogueiras Feministas*, which will be discussed here, was created, in an attempt to discuss chauvinism in political campaigning and within wider Brazilian society, culture and politics.

The presidential elections of 2014 nonetheless saw a significant growth in the participation of female candidates of 46.5% in contrast to the previous 2010 dispute, according to the former Secretary of Policies for Women. Despite the presence of high profile female candidates in the

2010 elections, according to the Supreme Electoral Court of Justice (TSE), a total of 79% of men (15.780) ran for various political positions (governor, Senator and MP) against only 20% of women candidates, or 4.058.^{lxviii} Of a total of 25.000 thousand candidates in Brazil during the 2014 dispute, 7.407 were female, or a total of 29.73%.^{lxix} Nonetheless, the three female candidates who ran for presidency in 2014 were also among the main four in the first round, reaching a total of 67 million votes, or 64.5% of the total (Dilma Rousseff, Marina Silva and Luciana Genro, respectively).^{lxx} This was a contrast with the number of women who were actually elected.

Vera Soares, the coordinator of the study, which was conducted by the secretary of institutional articulation and thematic action of SPM, underlined that, despite the growth of female candidates for MPs in 88%, from 935 in 2010 to 1755 in 2014, as well as in the Senate, from 29 in 2010 to 33 in 2014, this was not reflected in the actual numbers elected. As of May 2016, the data provided by the Inter-Parliamentary Union placed Brazil in the 155th place, out of a total of 193 nations, in terms of percentage of women in the lower and single house, with 9.90% for the former and 16% for the latter. The country appeared ahead of Myanmar and Botswana, and after Ghana, Armenia, Jordan and Sierra Leone.

It is argued that ingrained gender stereotypes shared by many in traditionally chauvinistic countries tend to work strongly against women presidents (Santos and Jalazai, 2014). The authors (2014, 169) affirm that women presidents in Latin America share a common characteristic, which is family ties with established political leaders, and in this case of Dilma, this has proven to be the exception to the rule, as she was among the few female Latin American executives who later entered politics. Santos and Jalazai (2014)'s argument is that the few women who do reach top positions within government do so less due to female politics, or the recognition of their talents and capacity, and more due to their political connections with influential politicians. This has been the case of Michele Bachelet, who took office in Chile in 2006, and who is the daughter of a

Pinochet opponent, the Air Force General Bachelet Martinez. The underlying result of this is that such female top leaders tend to be taken less seriously than would be the case if they were a man.

Making reference to other authors, Santos and Jalazai (2014) underlined how Dilma Rousseff's election in 2010 was considered noteworthy in a context where the political system is heavily male dominated at all levels of government. Many politicians, academics and even feminists have argued that her representation has been symbolic above anything else, although it paved the way for a gradual strengthening of governmental politics on women's rights, and indirectly also encouraged wider online (and offline) feminist activism in Brazil society, which particularly started to see a renewal in the last years with the realisation of a series of protests from women's groups throughout the country. The country's low political representation, and the lack of presence of women in politics, was constantly alluded to in various online texts of feminist websites, such as the *Blogueiras Feministas*.

Bia Cardoso, one of the coordinators of the *Blogueiras Feministas*, which will be examined more in the next section, underlined that the blog sought not to defend any candidate during the presidential election campaigns.^{lxxi} Cardoso underlined the difficulties of debating gender politics in the public sphere in Brazil:

“We want to have a position of not supporting any candidate....but we have had many texts criticising the chauvinism and sexism that surrounds female politicians, like a recent one on jokes made to Dilma Rousseff....We also have some texts about the topic (the relationship between gender and politics), but unfortunately this is a debate that encounters a lot of resistance. The proposal of quotas for women as candidates in parties was rejected recently in the Federal Chamber, but approved in the Senate. However, we know that the parties do not commit to this requirement in many ways. The proposals for political and electoral reform hardly discuss this. On our website we publish texts that reflect this..... We have though more young Brazilian women interested, and society has positioned itself in a positive manner in relation to the issue of violence against women. However, you can still find a lot of resistance to put in practice actions that can really change the scenario of gender inequality. The good news is that there are more Brazilian women are acting and talking about this....” she stated.

Although political campaigning in the re-democratization phase has not emphasised or discussed in greater depth women's issues, there have been some underlying nuances of gender politics that are slowly entering public debate. The feminist dimension of Dilma's campaign was present to some extent during the 2010 presidential campaign, when marketers of the Worker's Party created the image of the "mother of Brazil" to voters and linked this to that of her mentor Lula, who had been a former president (Santos and Jalazai, 2014). To many, this was a more determinant factor in her victory than feminist politics or her capacity to take on the role. During the 2010 campaign however the issue of the right to abortion was used by her political opponent, Jose Serra, to his advantage and, despite Rousseff having won the election, the issues was played down within government and the debate did not advance in the public sphere.

Fashion and appearance were constantly evoked in the media during Dilma's first presidential campaign in 2010. These ranged from discussions regarding her use of a wig, after having gone through chemotherapy treatment, to the PT's aim in showing a more "feminine" side (Santos and Jalazai, 2014) to stand in contrast to what was perceived as a more "masculine" persona. The ambiguity around Dilm'a masculine tough persona, which led her to receive the nickname of Brazil's *Iron Lady*, a reference to the UK's Margaret Thatcher, during mainly her first mandate, was also mingled with other traditional notions of femininity, from being portrayed as being the "mother" or "grandmother" of the country, especially through advertising and political campaigning during the 2010 bid, to also having suffered pressures to exercise surveillance over her body. This led her to losing 15 kilos during the 2014 presidential dispute.

The 2014 elections were seen as having given less concern to women's empowerment and capacity of leadership than would be the case in 2010. The "mother of Brazil" image thus did not reach the 2014 re-election due to various reasons, ranging from the weakness of the entry of the women's agenda within Brazilian mainstream politics, society and culture to the difficulties that

the president encountered with managing the economy following from the start of the recession in 2014, as well as the accusations of corruption made against officials of the federal administration and others involved in the *Petrobras* oil company scandal. The 25 page political manifesto of the Worker's Party candidate for instance included only one paragraph on the topic.^{lxxii} The political campaign of 2014 was also a tightly competitive one, between the core opponents Dilma, Marina and the candidate Aécio Neves, from the main opposition party of the centre right, the PSDB, who flirted with the extreme right and engaged in heavy attack campaigning against Dilma, something which was seen as highly chauvinistic and which persisted after the elections and during the course of 2015.

During the campaign nonetheless some of her previous political projects, such the implementation of the programme *Mulher: Viver sem Violência* (Women: Live Without Violence), received some attention. Polls also showed during the 2010 campaign that voter's intentions among women grew in favour of Dilma after the image of the "Mother of Brazil" turned into a key political campaign strategy (Santos and Jalazai, 2014). It is possible to argue that the image of the "mother of Brazil" is not necessarily a progressive take on women's issues, on feminism or on the role of women in Brazilian society, and is rather an image that taps into a more conservative and old fashioned vision of women, albeit with a slight but timid signal towards a notion of women's empowerment and independence. This symbolises Dilma's position in Brazilian society also having been a successful self-made business women.

The timidity and the constraints of the discussion of gender issues within Brazilian politics, and during the political presidential campaigns, stood in sharp contrast to the growing and intense media and political activism that started to take place online by various feminist and women's groups. It is also important to recognise the limits of social media, and not to blindly endorse its emancipatory potential. Social media can be a place for thorough and in depth political debate, as

well as a space for chaos and manifestation of prejudices – which are disguised offline on a daily practice. Social media has not only been used by Brazilian feminist movements in order to advance their mains. It was also heavily used during the 2014 campaign, and afterwards for chauvinistic attacks in a context of increasing social unrest and growing economic recession. This campaign would later repeat itself as a strong feature behind the impeachment process in 2016, and would manifest itself symbolically with the posters with the phrase “Bye, Dear” during the session in the lower chamber of deputies which voted for her suspension.^{lxxiii}

The sexist attacks, which started mainly during the 2014 campaign, culminated in a range of sympathy expressed by other feminists and condemnation of a series of offensive stickers which were being sold online ridiculing Rousseff with misogynist language. Some of the grotesque images which circulated online included car stickers which fitted around the gas tank and showed Rousseff with her legs open, inviting drivers to penetrate her until they fill up. Another blogger posted an image of her covered on mud, with the title “The Lying Prostitute of the Planalto”, in a reference to the practices of Brazilian Congressmen of hiring prostitutes.^{lxxiv} In July 2015, a PT senator launched a campaign in favour of restoring female dignity and amid the persistence of the attacks also after the end of the 2014 bid.

The campaign *E Pela Dignidade Feminina*” (For Feminine dignity, or It is for the dignity of women) had the image of Dilma hugging a small indigenous girl. The image signalled to the values of inclusiveness and diversity in the representation of what a Brazilian women is, establishing a connection between two very different women of different ages, socio-economic background and ethnicity, implying that respect must be equally granted to both through the hug that Dilma gives the young indigenous child. This image can also be read from another aspect, as an image that reinforces the the myth of Brazil’s “multi-racial” democracy. The campaign has also its Facebook page, with 16.079 likes, including journalists and academics as followers.^{lxxv}

An important story published in the weekly *Veja* magazine, known to be excessively conservative and extremely partisan (Matos, 2008), was the story on the first lady Marcela Temer, the vice-president's wife, in the aftermath of Dilma's suspension by Parliament, called "Beautiful, restrained and from the home", and published on the 18th of April.^{lxxvi} Here a young, blonde woman in her early 30s, married to a man who is 40 years her senior, is presented as the ideal version of Brazilian femininity, and appears in contrast to the harsher treatment afforded to Dilma, a former left wing leader during the dictatorship, turned executive and governmental official during the re-democratization phase before becoming president. The start of the story is excessively sentimental and almost a fantasy over the past and an idealization of a long last epoch of entrenched elitism, restraint and table manners. "Marcela Temer is a woman of luck. Michel Temer, her husband of 13 years, continues to give her prove that passion does not die down with time, and not even with the political turmoil that the country went through....", began the story. For many who took on to social media to protest against the story, the image of Marcela Temer was implicitly contrasted to that of Dilma, perceived as the short haired, masculine, career woman and former left wing fighter, against the well behaved, naivety, passivity, submissiveness and beauty of Marcela, or what the ideal Brazilian woman should be like.

The hashtag *#Belarecatadaedolar* circulated intensively on Twitter on the day that the story was published, and until mid-June was still stimulating a lot of discussion and debate. What mattered here for many was less the fact of criticising a politician, a citizen and political right, but the highly gendered aspect which supported the criticism and the articulation of a vision of femininity which is in contrast to the growing empowerment of women in the country in the last decades. For many it also contributed to undermine or marginalise the identities of women similar to Dilma, in other words, women who were "empowered" or active in public life, and who are also aging. The result was a series of criticisms by many on social media, through Facebook as well as

Twitter. The tone of the story was thus considered enormously revealing for its reinforcement of the perception among public opinion that the campaign against the president had strong sexist undertones, and that gender was a major component in the undermining of the president and the attacks that she received, when before this had been denied. It was thus not only limited to a self-righteous anger with economic woes and corruption.

Political campaigning and online mobilization thus increased significantly in Brazil in the last years, particularly since the 2006 and 2010 presidential campaigns (Matos, 2012). Since the demonstrations of June 2013 however, the use of the Internet politically and as a means of mobilization and of advancing democracy has received a boost in a context of growing social unrest due to a combination of factors, from the initial signs of the beginning of an economic stagnation to dissatisfaction with local as well as national governments, including demands for quality public services and better investments. Della Porta (in Loader and Mercea, 2012, 49), has argued that new technologies has boosted the communication confidence of social movements, who have mainly utilised them to engage in forms of mobilization as well as resistance to mainstream media discourses and representations, as I have been examining here. It is to the ways in which feminist movements within the *blogosphere* are responding better to various political and social challenges regarding gender politics and women's rights to that I turn to next.

Online media activism and new feminist websites: from "Think Olga" to "Blogueiras Feministas"

Various social movements and feminist groups have began to constantly mobilize, with the year of 2015 being seen as crucial in feminist political mobilization both online and offline. Social media is providing an important space not only for political campaigning, but to criticise

politicians, to denounce hypocrisies, to push debate and more controversial issues on women's rights which are not well explored by the media, or within public debate. Many Brazilian feminists have also been very influential in the struggle against the reactions of more conservative sectors of the Brazilian right to the advancement of women's rights and attempts of criminalising abortion by approving a law (5069/13) which makes it difficult for health professionals in the country's national health service (SUS) to assist women in need of abortion. The scale of the Brazilian feminist opposition to the possibility of a return to a more repressive state for instance was clearly manifested in the protests held throughout the country during the year of 2015 regarding the changes to this law, which was pushed forward by the president of the lower house of Congress, Eduardo Cunha, and which consisted in the demand for medical examination for victims.

The feminist groups and their websites that I examine here are managing to contribute, however sporadically and in a limited manner, to either mobilize and organise protests, assist in public policy debate and decision making as well as creating greater awareness within public opinion over the relevance of certain topics. These blogs also function in a highly fragmented cyber space where mobilizations, protests and debates are discussed and occur with more or less intensity during particular periods, and in the context of the issues which are being debated within the political sphere, from the chauvinism expressed during Dilma's campaign to the *Maria da Penha* law. Issues that are discussed thus range from sexism in Brazilian society, to violence against women and rape, sexual harassment to political representation and discrimination in the workplace. Further criticisms are also made towards media stereotyping and the increasing intolerance and authoritarianism of conservative sectors of Brazilian society in their denial of difference and refusal to recognise the extension of citizenship rights to diverse groups of the population.

The Internet in Brazil and throughout Latin American is expanding and slowly becoming less elitist. Mobile phones are already widely used by everyone and have been since the late 1990's. However, access to the web is restricted by economic factors, as well as race, geographical location and generational differences. According to the data from the 2014 *PNAD - Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicilio* (National Research per Household Sample), 54.4% use the web while 45.6% of the population do not. The regions of the North and the Northeast of the Brazil are also were the lowest levels of connectivity are, 55% and as high as 58%, respectively, whereas the South East, the richest region of the country, has 38%. When it comes to race, 60.5% of blacks are disconnected against 38.5% of whites and among those who earn less than two minimum wages, the number of disconnected surpasses those that are connected (Nassif, 2016).

Authors like Harcourt (in Bhavnani et al, 2016, 180) have argued over the important role that ICTs can have as political tools for women, although at the same time acknowledging the fact that online networks can also be negative and provide spaces for pornography and cyber-stalking. Without endorsing the hype, it is essential to recognise that even the small activism that is taking place within online networks in Brazil, from across the political spectrum, including many social movements and diverse civil society groups, is having an impact on mainstream Brazilian society and even the media. It is also important to conduct further research into this, as these movements and their use of online networks are in expansion, having become more influential in the last few years in defining and shaping public debate offline, with many even having claimed that social media and online networks exercised a critical role in Dilma's re-election in 2014, in a way which would not have been possible in the past.

There are thus many active women's movements and feminist groups, which would be impossible to do justice and examine all of them. I intend here to conduct an analysis of the discourses which are circulating among a series of influential feminist blogs, including mainly

Blogueiras Feministas and the new NGO *Think Olga*, as well as images of protests from Brazil's *Marcha das Vadias* movement (the national equivalent to the *SlutWalk*). The hashtag campaigns *#AgoraeQueSaoElas* (Now it is them (or her in plural) and *#PrimeiroAssedio* are examined also. Different groups of women are taking part in these new forms of contemporary feminism in Brazil, and which include both working and lower middle class women as well as some from the middle classes, ranging from the age of 18 to early 40's. The *Marcha Mundial das Mulheres* and *Marcha das Vadias* for instance, which takes place throughout different states in Brazil, as we shall see, includes the participation of many young working class feminists from the periphery as well as others from the middle classes. Other feminist protests who marched during 2015 against Cunha for instance included a broader range of groups and movements from the middle classes.

Important pressure groups which have assisted in policy-making have included also the *Geledes Instituto da Mulher Negra*, the *Agencia Patricia Galvao* and *CFEMEA* (Centro Feminista de Estudos e Assessoria). These groups serve different purposes, and not all of them have necessarily as their main aim to stimulate debate, working more as centres on policy formulation and discussion, such as *CFEMEA*. The later has had impact in the area of human rights and race equality, having taken part in national and international feminist networks, whereas the *Articulacao das Mulheres Brasileiras*, founded in 1994, had the purpose of coordinating actions and developing agendas for the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, also had its role in pushing for change (Macaulay, 2010).

The *Geledes Instituto da Mulher Negra* has had an important role in the debate on intersectionality in Brazil and bringing awareness to this concept and what it means, emphasising the need to acknowledge more the double discrimination that can be implicated in the combination of race with gender. The *Agencia Patricia Galvao- Midia e Direitos*, created in 2009, has a news agency specialised in providing information on women's rights, and has also worked in partnership

with the government, publishing studies which provide various analyses, such as the 2011 report *Imprensa e Agenda de Direitos das Mulheres -Uma análise das tendências da cobertura jornalística* (Press and Agenda of Women's Rights – An analysis of the trends of the journalistic coverage). Other personal blogs that are also popular include *Escreva Lola Escreva* (Write Lola, write, in a reference to the German film, Run Lola, run) and *Blogueiras Negras* (Black Bloggers).

The *Escreva Lola Escreva*, created by professor Lola Aronovich in 2008, paved the way for many young girls to get acquainted with feminism for the first time, and as of 2014 it has had approximately 250.000 visits per month and is considered one of the most popular in the area, together with *Blogueiras Feministas*. One of the key aims of the site is to break down stereotypes, including alerting to the fact that feminism should not be understood as the opposite of chauvinism.^{lxxvii} One of the most popular feminist discussion blogs in the country nonetheless is, *Blogueiras Feministas*, website for one has 37.000 followers and which is situated in Brasilia, the capital, counting with a series of collaborators throughout the country. They demand from the government the construction of nurseries and shelters for the victims of violence, among others.

As Sorj (2014) has argued, the new face of feminism in Brazil is again mixing the personal with the political, with many of these websites including personal stories and testimonials and a variety of different emotions. Arguably, one of the strengths of the *Blogueiras Feministas* website for instance has been precisely its list of discussion in the forum section, an initiative of Cynthia Semiramis, but which has also migrated to the social media platform, *Facebook*. According to Bia Cardoso, the main purpose of the blog, a very much grassroots initiative which is run by eight people, is to encourage debate on feminism and stimulate Internet activism within an editorial policy that favours intersectional feminism.

The front page of *Blogueiras Feministas* highlights as the main themes of the blog issues such as the women's body, reproduction and abortion rights, including legislation and laws such as

the Maria da Penha one, as well as issues of intersectionality and the emphasis on the awareness of how patterns of gender oppression are interlinked with other forms of constraint, such as race and class. Moreover, the editorial line of the blog emphasises how its aim is, through debate, discussion and awareness, to achieve a more just and equal society. The editorial of the blog further stated that its main objective is to discuss feminism, adding that its focus is on the articulation of critiques of institutions and structures, combatting prejudices, which it admits are even present in some of its material.

The text also stresses the fluidity of feminism, and signals towards the inclusion of multiple identities and understandings on what it means to be a feminist in Brazil: “We do not believe in stereotypes, in absolute truths, our feminism is political and it always in constant construction”, states the text. It thus acknowledges the fact that the discussions that take place in this space are not totally immune from the influences of the prejudices which exist within what it calls as being a “patriarchal society”.

It is possible to situate the editorial as being preoccupied with discussions on what feminism is, and the examination of particular thematic issues which are deemed important in Brazilian society, which are part of the second and third categories that I mentioned earlier. Cardoso acknowledged a growth in the debate on feminism and gender inequality in the country, but emphasised that the process has occurred extremely slowly:

“The representation of women is still very limited not only in the mainstream media, but in other contexts. It is difficult for people to think beyond the box and the tendency is to reinforce stereotypes, be it of the women mother or the women that engages in multitasking.... The debate on gender is happening but change has been slow. It is also not just a question of electing more women, as the ones who are elected are committed to conservative agendas. To see more expressions of diversity would require not only changes in the companies, but also in the consumer, who needs to start rejecting these limited representations. I also believe that there is resistance in showing the diversity of the Brazilian women. Because there is no interest in women seeing themselves as stronger and

more independent, owners of their own destiny...To keep women in the same social roles is always interesting.....”

Moreover, the most read stories of 2015 were the celebration of the 5 years of the existence of the blog; a piece on the recent creation of the *Partido da Mulher Brasileira* (Brazilian Women’s Party), which is accused of not representing women; a story on Dilma and the impeachment proceedings; another text on the Occupy student protests, which took place in Sao Paulo in 2015, as well as a text on the representation of women in the media. This included a piece on the Netflix series *Jessica Jones* and another on the representation of domestic workers in Brazilian soap operas. The topics that were most sought after included abortion and reproduction rights, intersectional feminism, law Maria da Penha, feminist movements and indigenous women. Topics on violence against women were core issues which occupy the first page of the blog, with stories that date from late 2015 until early 2016.

The most read stories on the blog though included those focused on the *body*, and the emphasis placed on women’s own control of it, such as “Our support for women, prostitutes, feminists and trans-feminists from the *Marcha das Vadias* of Rio de Janeiro”; “Anatomy of pleasure: clitoris and orgasm”; “The conquests of the black population and the value of their identity”; “Simone de Beauvoir: what is it to be a woman?”; The dictatorship of the ideal body and the hidden prejudice” and “How to approach women without being filthy.” It also has a section for women seeking help with cases of violence, attacks and abortion, including links where women can download information on the ethical aspects of legal abortion for women in Brazil, including reproduction rights and abortion in cases of violence and when the women’s health is at risk. Other links include a connection to the *Think Olga* sexual harassment campaign, as well as others on how to denounce cases of domestic violence, and information on the numbers to call for assistance in case of attacks.

Similarly to women's magazines, as I discussed in the previous chapter, there is a lot of stories which focus on *discourses* around the body and what it means to be a women. However, the emphasis given here is different in tone, language and scope: there is an emphasis on female emancipation and on encouraging women to gain control over *their own bodies*, and not adapt themselves to images of perfection offered to them by ads and commercials. There is thus a strive towards emancipation, and a retreat away from the values of restraint, emphasised in stories such as *Veja's* on Marcela Temer one, as well as an acknowledgement of past feminist struggles – the story on Beauvoir appears in the fourth place – and an attempt to make other Brazilian aware of it. The ignorance towards Simone de Beauvoir in Brazilian society is widespread, and was manifested in the conservative backlash to the inclusion of her name in a national exam on violence against women for high school students. There is also an attempt to target men and make them more aware of their own socialization into sexism, with one story highlighting how women should be approached when courted, without disrespect and rudeness.

The *Blogueiras Feministas* gives support to the Brazilian version of the *Slutwalks*, the *Marcha das Vadias*, which has also met with some degree of success, from stimulating attention to the images and styles of demonstration during the marches to encouraging debate in the *blogosphere*. They have also been the subject of recent research by academics and others. A strong component of the action of the *Marcha das Vadias* movement in Brazil has been their appeal to imagery, to the visual and the body. The series of protests of the *Marcha das Vadias*, which took place in Brazil during 2015, constantly restored to strong visual images. These were used in the posters with an aim to mobilize other women, calling them to participate in the demonstrations.

In line with the aims of third wave feminists, and sharing similar concerns regarding the body as *Blogueiras Feministas*, the many posters for the *Marcha das Vadias* in Brazil have played with language and words using irony, play and provocativeness, subverting the use of the word

“slut”. The *Marcha das Vadias* has regional versions, which include twenty five states in Brazil, such as Sao Paulo, Brasilia and Belo Horizonte, and have their pages on the social media platform, *Facebook*.^{lxxviii} Each region has their own blog and organise their own meetings and the different grassroots feminist groups in each state like to adopt provocative slogans for each protest.

Much of the focus of the *Marcha das Vadias*’ different regional pages on *Facebook* and on *Wordpress* are have been on discussions of feminism, ranging from the importance of women taking control over their own body and the uses that women can give to it, from protest to pleasure. This is one of the reasons that women protesters are encouraged to appear topless during the demonstrations. They also play on the word “slut”, stating that the term is used in a pejorative way within Brazilian patriarchal society as a means of emphasising a separation between women who are condemned to be merely “slept with” from those who are “for marrying”.

One of the posters for their third march, which took place in Fortaleza during the year 2013, ahead of the World Cup in 2014, adopted a slogan on their posters which stressed the right that women should have over their own bodies, in what can be read as an allusion to both abortion rights as well as sexual pleasure. The slog was: “O meu corpo e meu. Nem da Copa, nem da igreja e muito menos seu!” (My body is mine. It is neither of the World Cup, or the Church or yours!). The tone here makes less political connections and strives to influence party politics or state feminism from a policy perspective, as the other feminist movements do, and emphasises much more individual freedom, subversion from the established order, liberty, freedom and emancipation.

Other posters have included phrases such as “Cansei! - Se ser livre e ser vadia, entao somos todas vadias” (I am tired - If to be free is to be a slut, then we are all sluts!) – “Venha para a Marcha Nacional das Vadias – 26 de Maio” (Com to the national march on the 26th of May). Here the pejorative word “slut” is taken on its head and used as synonymous with “freedom” and

“liberty” from all forms of oppression. Here the use of the term can be seen as *all* inclusive of all types of women and their multiple identities. The use of the expression “Cansei! (I am tired) can be seen as an indication of the exhaustion in trying to conform to rigid identity roles or stereotypes assigned by society to women, denying them their own true individuality and creative expression beyond the limited permissions assigned by the traditional and conventional codes of Brazilian society, and what is expected for the ideal Brazilian woman. From a philosophical perspective, it can also be understood as going *beyond feminism* itself, signalling towards the necessity of including *all* humans as deserving freedom from oppression (everyone is a slut in the end of the day!).

Another feminist movement which has proven to be successful in making inroads into the mainstream, and influencing public debate on women’s rights across a variety of platforms, has been the internationally recognised NGO *Think Olga*. The movement perceived clearly the intensification of the various feminist protests and the pressures towards social change of the last years. In its examination of the year 2015, *Think Olga* in January 2016 underlined it as being the year of the “never ending spring” for women, in a direct reference to the Arab Spring of 2011. It published the story “Mulheres em 2015 ocupam as redes para exigir direitos e pedir o fim do assedio sexual e da intolerancia” (Women in 2015 took to online networks to demand rights and ask for the end of sexual harassment and intolerance).

It was also argued that 2015 was the year when “feminism” ceased to be a “dirty word”, being incorporated into mainstream Brazilian society. In a text published on its website on the 18th of December 2015, “Uma primavera sem fim” (A Spring without end) Luise Bello of *Think Olga* emphasised how 2015 was the year of feminism on the internet. As she noted, between the period of January 2014 until October 2015, the web search for the words “feminism” and “female empowerment” grew from 86.7% to 354.5% respectively. The former reached 90.500 in October

2015 and the latter 3.600 in the same period. Among popular campaigns and hashtags throughout the year where “lei do feminicídio” (femicide law) in February 2015, which received 12.822 hits, the protest movement *Marcha das Margaridas* (March of the Daisies), with 28.633 in August, the realization of the Enem exam (with the controversy surrounding Simone de Beauvoir) and the sexual harassment campaign *#PrimeiroAssedio* (First Harassment), with 252.101, and *Marcha das Mulheres Negras* (March of Black Women) and *#MeuAmigoSecreto* (My Secret Friend), with 221.736 in November.

Similarly to *Blogueiras Feministas*, it is also interested in stories on intersectionality, and likes to publish also personal testimonials and stories about women and their everyday life experiences of oppression and sexual harassment. The website affirms that it aims to promote the achievements of women within Brazilian society, including a link for the public to access women experts (“Entreviste uma Mulher”, “Interview a Woman”). The story “Claudete Alves e a solidao que nao e so dela” (Claudete Alves and the loneliness of the black women, 14/12/2015) examined the rejection of black men by black women. The categories emphasised by the site included arts; the campaign *Chega de Fiu Fiu* (*Enough of Fiu Fiu*, which is the whistle made by men when they see a sexy women in the street); “Girl Power”, “inspirations”, “perceptions” and “reflections”. These were included alongside the tags such as “abortion”, “acceptance”, “arts”, “sexual harassment”, “beauty”, “courage”, “body”, “education”, “entrepreneurship”, “rape”, “heroines”, “chauvinism”, “inspiring women”, “advertising”, “TV”, “racism”, “sex”, “technologies” and “violence against women”.

Given the focus on similar topics, including discourses on feminism, representations of women in the media, discussions of everyday sexism, harassment and the body, as well as thematic concern with violence against women and legislations such as the *Maria da Penha* law, it is possible to see both *Blogueiras Feministas* and *Think Olga* as being very much quintessential

examples of what Brazilian new contemporary feminism is and can be seen as inserted within third wave feminism. These feminist blogs frequently reference each other, including images from other blogs, such as the posters for the *Marcha das Vadias* protests in the *Blogueira Feministas* blog. *Think Olga* also has links which encourages women to report abuse and violence against them, such as the *Manda Prints* section (send your prints), and which refers to online sexual bullying and harassment. It also includes numbers of the police. The NGO also has the aim of boost the skills and training of women entrepreneurs, including a link called *Olga Mentoring*, where women can sign up and take on weekly courses and learn business skills. It also includes information and updated journalistic stories on current national and international conferences on women's rights. It further has a link called *Girl Power*, which includes the activities of the members of the NGO.

Feminists groups have also restored widely to Facebook, and particularly to Twitter, to protest, criticise sexism in Brazilian society and mobilise in the last years. The NGO *Think Olga* for example has managed to engage in a creative manner with *Twitter*. The successful *Chega de Fiu Fui* campaign, launched in July 2013, was set up to tackle sexual harassment in public spaces. It was initially met with a lot of resistance, but afterwards managed to engage various people. The campaign was also supported by findings of a research conducted by the journalist Karin Hueck, which interviewed 8.000 people to discuss sexual harassment in public spaces. The results showed that 98% of them suffered some form of sexual harassment, with 83% not agreeing with it and another 90% deciding to change clothes before leaving the house to avoid harassment.

The campaign on Twitter started after a young 12 year old girl, who appeared on the Brazilian television programme *Master Chef Junior*, suffered later from sexual harassment comments on social media. This lead to the launch of the campaign *#PrimeiroAssedio: voce nao esta mais so* (First Sexual Harassment: you are not alone anymore) by Juliana de Faria, founder of *Think Olga*. The hashtag had 82.000 mentions. The main reasoning behind the campaign was to provide

women victims of harassment as a child a voice to speak of their experiences. This was a ground breaking moment in Brazilian history, as for the first time various groups of women took to Twitter to talk about their concerns. Women were invited at the time to talk about their first sexual harassment case. The hashtag would be retweeted more than 100.000 times, culminating in 11 million searches and being the highlight of Google in 2015. An important link was made here between the existence of the social ill of sexual harassment in Brazilian society with the high statistics on rape and violence against women. Another topic which was also discussed was the law against femicide, which has turned into a horrendous crime the killing of women due to their gender. According to Think Olga, of those who engaged in these discussions, 55% where men.

The NGO *Think Olga* also found out, through an analysis of 3.111 tweets, that the average age of the first sexual harassment experience was 9.7 years old. Juliana de Faria's quote, which expressed her own personal experience in sexual harassment as a young girl, is also evidence of the *naturalisation* of the practice in Brazilian society and its acceptability by many women of an older generation, who have been brought up to see these attitudes as "normal":

"The first time I was harassed I was 11 years old. I was returning from the bakery, and a car passed next to me and started to swear loudly. I did not understand it and I started to cry. An old women stopped me in the street and said: "do not be silly, accept it as a form of praise".

The *#Primeiroassedio* sexual harassment campaign continued to be popular even after 2015, including international tweets, such as the ones below. Among some of the examples of quite active political engagement on Twitter also, in the wake of the protests against Cunha in November 2015, were the hashtag *#MulheresContraCunha* (Women Against Cunha). Below are some examples:

“Lugar de mulher e onde ela quiser #MulheresContraCunha #EmpurraQueCunhaCai (Push Cunha and he will fall) (8.29 pm, 25/11/15, Brasilia, Brazil)

“As mulheres apoiando a democracia (Women supporting democracy) #ToComDilma #GolpeNuncaMais #GolpeNao#Dilma Fica (12.08 pm – 7/12/15)

“ No Women Ever #primeiroassedio” – Women tell their harassment stories online across #social media (with the BBC News story “No Women ever turned down a barking guy. Right?” being shared, 11.40 am - 21/06/16)

The *Marcha das Mulheres Negras* was also another protest which occurred in the end of 2015, with approximately 10.000 women uniting in Brasilia to call attention to the battle against discrimination and prejudice and, despite the police repression and the clashes with other conservative groups, culminated in another discussion on Twitter of over 33.000 tweets. Other successful campaigns were the *#MulherescontraCunha* (Women against Cunha), with the hashtag being mentioned 40.000 times.

Another influential Twitter campaign was *#AgoraeQueSaoElas*, which took place in the end of October, start of November, saw mainly male columnists ceding their space in the mainstream media for women, with the hashtag receiving 5.000 mentions. Idealised by Manoela Miklos, the hashtag proved to be widely successful already in the second day (2/11/2015). Many texts by women of different backgrounds were published in the mainstream newspapers across the country, such as the philosopher Djamilia Ribeiro in the *Blog of Sakamoto* (on the *UOL* website, of the *Folha* group). These dealt with a variety of issues relating to gender inequality and the role of women in Brazil. The campaign had the purpose of highlighting in overall women’s exclusion from debate within the public sphere, giving women more visibility at the same time that it shed light on to the fewer spaces that women have in the newsroom and within the mainstream Brazilian media, as I discussed in the previous section.

Afterwards the UOL portal from the *Folha de Sao Paulo* media group included a page dedicated to the hashtag “#AgoraeQueSaoElas – um espaço para mulheres em movimento” (Now it is them – a space for women in movement). This was presented as a tribune for feminist and women voices. Coordinated by Alessandra Orofino, Ana Carolina Evangelista, Antonio Pellegrino and Manoela Miklos, the blog appears as evidence of the slow inroads that women’s issues are having in the mainstream media. However, the page is not active and the discussions are very timid in contrast to the other feminist blogs examined here. One of the last major texts that is included in the very front of the webpage is actress’ Fernanda Torres controversial article called “Mulher” (22/02/16), where she acknowledged women’s hardships in life but made reference to her *mulata* nanny who did not feel undermined by men’s whistling but empowered, while also ending the text by stating that women should stop assuming the role of victims and not blame the man, which could be read as a diminishing of men’s role in oppression as well as the constraints posed by societal structures. There was an implying tendency here to point to individual factors as solely responsible – such as issues of self confidence and working to show merit.

In the space of two days the article caused a lot of controversy amongst feminists in Brazil, which led to Fernanda Torres - who is seen as a liberal actress and part of the more progressive sectors of Brazilian society - having gone through a process of sincere reflection which lead her to publish another article on the blog called “Mea culpa” (I am sorry). Here she humbly recognised that she spoke from the position of privilege and as a white upper class Brazilian women who had not been subject to any form of constraint during her upbringing and life, further acknowledging that by this she had ignored the experiences and suffering of millions of women who correctly needed to make use of collective struggles in order to push for change and to advance their rights.^{lxxix} This is a very good example of how there is still a lot of lack of information, misconceptions and stereotyping around feminism and women’s issues within the debate that is

currently taking place in Brazilian mainstream society and it is, at worse, excessively timid, fragmented and heavily infused still with certain traditional values and common sense assumptions about the role of Brazilian men and women in both public and private life. There has been even some criticisms on the Twitter campaign #Agoraequesaoelas on the absence of wider public debate in the blog.

“Uma pena que o blog da Folha #Agoraequesaoelas se negue ao dialogo em sua plataforma (“It is a pity that the Folha blog #Agoraequesaoelas denies dialogue in its platform”, 21/06/16)

Nonetheless, there have been some occasional in depth features about the new feminist groups in Brazil and the demands for women’s rights. The mainstream media thus began to provide more in depth features of the activism of Brazil’s new contemporary movements, with some occasional stories like “A Primavera das Mulheres – Uma nova geracao toma as ruas e as redes” (The Women’s Spring – A new generation takes to the streets and social networks), 07/11/2015), a debate which is seen by many as still being quite absent from television. All these initiatives are proving very fruitful, if anything, to give an opportunity for women to have more voice. As Natasha Mosley, one teenage girl interviewed for the story said:

“A person who does not know me does not have the right to say certain things against me. I have an urge to react, to say that I do not want to hear this, but I get afraid. If a boy from a school chats me up, I can say to him that that does not suit me because we are in equal conditions. But in the street, from an unknown person, I cannot say anything. That oppresses me.”

Brazilian feminists are thus also slowly beginning to benefit from the opportunities opened by globalization and the expansion of new technologies in the country, and there is a sense among many that women are slowly being empowered in the last years mainly in the context of the

increasing protests and demands. There is also great potential also for an enhancement of the previous transnational activism of earlier years, thus embarking on a path towards the strengthening of democratic processes through regional and global civil society spaces (Vargas, 2010). Nonetheless, scholars such as Alvarez (quoted in Vargas, 2010, 321) have underlined how these strategies and spaces have become more diverse: “a broad, heterogeneous, polycentric, multifaceted and polysemic field of discourse field of discourse and action.” Thus a downside of these multifaceted feminist global and local spaces is the increasing danger of fragmentation of strategies and the enhancement of divisions, largely due also to an emphasis on difference that tends to undermine connections and links of solidarity between different groups of women both within localities as well as globally. As I mentioned in previous chapters, since the year 2000 there has been a shift within Brazilian feminism away from transnational engagement beyond the UN and governmental spheres, but there are also increasing signs of new possibilities of *dialogue* that can be forged between these new groups of grassroots women activists, as well as other Brazilian scholars, journalists, NGOs and policy groups, with transnational activists, researchers and organizations.

Despite the limitations imposed on the capacity of the web to increase democratisation, stimulate diversity and engage sectors of the population in mobilization around political issues due to the lack of access that some still have to these new technologies, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the web *is* offering opportunities for many different groups to engage in critical debate, to articulate counter-hegemonic discourses which go against traditional and old fashioned representations of gender roles, such as the ones explored in advertising and commercials discussed in previous chapters, as well as to organise demonstrations in a way that they would not be able to do so in the avenues offered by the traditional mainstream media.

Moreover, the evaluation of the impact of new technologies on society needs to be time and context-specific, taking into consideration national specificities. Judging by the impact of these new technologies in events such as the Arab Spring in 2011, it can be argued that these platforms can have in developing countries more positive benefits than would be the case in more advanced democracies, despite the limitations imposed by lack of access. This on the other hand needs to be tackled urgently to permit wider participation and inclusion within these expanding networks of debate and democratization.

In this sense we need to avoid the hype, while at the same time recognising the significance that it can have in stimulating debate within elites and other important segments of public opinion and decision-making segments. The ways in which the Internet can assist in the struggle for gender equality alongside the political and social sphere has been emphasised by various experts and policy-makers, such as Linda Goulart, of the former SPM:

“The interactivity of the internet and the ways in which it can be accessed by a vast majority of the population puts them in contact with various discussions on the situation of women in the country. There are many institutions, NGOs, blogs, agencies and research which seek to address issues related to the images of women, body rights, sexuality and health. These (in contrast to the mainstream media) are in fact spaces of information and discussion which can clarify, mobilise, create campaigns and initiate educational processes, reaching a relevant public”, she stated.

Cardoso from the *Blogueiras Feministas* is also quite positive about cyber-feminism in Brazil, and the ways in which it can have a far reaching political role:

“New technologies are essential in the dissemination of information and communication. And today the Internet is a vast space for political action and it is important that women use it more and more, because there is a wider democratization of the use of media space through the web. Our website seeks to be a reference in the field of feminism without forgetting that we do not have all the answers, but we are in constant process of elaboration and reflection, seeking new paths as the world presents to us new demands.”

Gender representations, images, discourses and ideas on the role of women as subordinated and inferior are strongly connected to the patterns of structural inequalities of any society. Thus the material reality of the redistributive injustice suffered by many women in Brazil, from their overrepresentation in low paid jobs to their vulnerability to unemployment, is a reflection of, and a consequence of, the persistence of the playing out of gender stereotypes and old fashioned values through wider cultural and social networks within societies, and which find their expression in the mainstream media. Attacks hurt psychically and are against human dignity. But other forms of symbolic or subtle violence, such as misconceptions, stereotypes and the trivialization of women (and young girls) in society, with assumptions on what they should be like, can be equally damaging and have strong and lasting psychological consequences on women. This can range from cases such as sexual harassment attacks during the early years, which can contribute to their sense of low self esteem and difficulty in gaining confidence in everyday life, to other forms of harassment later in life in education and the workplace, where they constantly see themselves having to fight battles for dignity and respect during different periods of their lives.

Most of the discourses which circulated in these blogs were quite similar in scope and tone, with many focusing on either encouraging and stimulating protests and mobilizations, criticising violence towards women and rape and the practice of sexual harassment, among others. Debate on issues of political representation, sexism in political campaigning, the Dilma impeachment process and the treatment of a women politician in contrast to the man, the vulnerability of women in the workplace and gender stereotyping were also issues raised and discussed in many of the texts posted on these websites to some extent, although there is much more scope to expand on these themes and they have not yet taken on a wider discussion within the country's public sphere and in the mainstream media.

New technologies in themselves thus cannot do all the work in terms of paving the way for more progressive change, but they can have an important role in helping shape debate, influencing and creating awareness. This evidently depends on how these online platforms are used, either in developing countries or industrialised societies, for what purpose, with what effect and what consequences. I have here attempted to examine part of some of these debates that are taking place within the Brazilian blogosphere. Equality thus requires above all change in perceptions, attitudes and mentality in relation to social groups and a continuous questioning of power structures of society, which must not be taken for granted, and alone cannot depend on legislations and governmental intentions alone. This all leads me back to the initial questions articulated at the start of this book: what, after all, can be done? It is fundamental to recognise that, more than ever, the media needs to make a greater contribution to the advancement of gender equality and to women's rights more generally.

Chapter 8 – Gender, development and democracy: future challenges for an international policy-driven agenda and global framework

Gender inequality and the media: future challenges and suggestions for reform

After decades of feminist media scholarship research and activism, scholars have expressed frustration at the little progress that has been made so far (Byerly and Ross, 2006). As the authors note, the stereotypes that emerged from work such as Gaye Tuchman et al's (1978) study on the mass media are "almost exactly the same ones that feminist media identifies in the contemporary context." This probably comes as little surprise, given the extent of the slow advancements in gender equality throughout the world, as I have examined here, after more than 20 years since the *1995 Beijing Platform Action*, which suggested among others that media and information technologies could be allies for women in their attempts to advance their rights (Unesco, 2014). Similarly, despite decades of feminist influence in gender and development theory, women still need to be more included in development, and remain excluded in large numbers from access to information technologies and development communications practices and debates (Steeves, 2003).

Given the every growing centrality of the media in our everyday lives since then, and the close connection that communication structures have had with democracy, it seems pertinent to demand more of the media and to examine more the role that it should be having, both globally and within national contexts, in contributing more to reduce gender structural inequalities and assisting more in strengthening democratization. This is especially so in developing countries which need to implement many changes and conduct reforms in order to advance and fortify their democracies.

Many of the concentrated efforts of feminist groups and women's movements lead to the creation in 1995 of the *Global Media Monitoring Project* (GMMP), which started to examine

patterns of gender representation in news (Gallagher, 2014, 2015). During that year, the findings revealed that globally 19% of the people in news stories were women, with the most popular roles being those of victims, mothers and housewives (*Media Watch*, 1995, in Gallagher, 2014, 2015, 41). The results showed little improvement over a period of 15 years in the “position of women as media professionals or news actors” (Gallagher, 2014, 2015). The organisation’s latest 2015 GMMP report, discussed during the *2016 World Press Freedom* conference in Finland, also underlined that, similarly to 2010, only 24% of the people who were heard on radio, seen in newspapers or TV or read about were women, with parity having moved only 7% in the last two decades. Some of the key problems that the report found was the lack of women reporting political and economic news as well as the absence of female experts. It also stated that only 37% of the stories in television, radio and dailies are reported by women.

A few reasons to be cheerful was the acknowledgement of the narrowing of the gap in most of Latin America and Africa, with women catching up to men in 14 and 11 per cent respectively. However, North America appeared with the highest percentage of women experts (32%), followed by the Caribbean (29%) and Latin America (27%). Other results were less reassuring, including the findings related to news quality, which underlined that gender difference has become more pronounced over 10 successive years, with no progress being made in the proportion of political news stories that challenge gender stereotypes. The report also found that gender stereotypes have remained in place in news media output over the past decade. “Only 4% of stories clearly challenge gender stereotypes, a one per centage point change since 2005”, stated the report.^{lxxx}

International organisations and bodies worldwide are thus renewing and reinforcing their commitments and push for the wider advancement, and consolidation, of women’s rights. The *Finlandia Declaration* on the “Access to Information and Fundamental Freedoms – This is Your Right!”, approved on the 3rd of May 2016, included two mentions on gender equality

(“Recognizing the importance of acknowledging the role of women journalists and the specific threats they face...” and “To adopt and support gender equality policies and programmes in implementing the right to information, and to use the *Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media* to advance press freedom”). It also included another three on the promotion of media diversity and pluralism as well as access to communication structures by minority groups.

In March 2016, during the realization of the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), UN Women launched a partnership with 35 media outlets from across the globe, from grassroots to international media outlets, to advance gender equality in the media, called the *Media Compact – Step it up for Gender Equality*. Among the media organisations which have signed up as founding members are *Instituto Patricia Galvao*, from Brazil, to *Thomas Reuters Foundation* and *Radio France Internationale*. The initiative is part of the commitments on gender equality assumed in the 2030 Agenda. Media organisations will need to defend the rights of women in editorials, that women should be included as news sources; that institutions should promote gender equality in newsrooms and also create a code of conduct in reporting.^{lxxxix}

It is important for feminist media scholars and others to monitor these initiatives, and to make sure that advancements are made that go beyond the mere signing of documents and manifestations of good intentions. As Ramazanoglu (1989) wrote at the start of the decade of the 1990s, feminism theory has still much to offer in many ways, from theoretical work and policy-interventions to grassroots activism and other forms of transnational solidarity and empathy (my emphasis) to the world. This is certainly the case now in our contemporary context and, as I argued in the introduction, gender equality has become a pressing economic (and political) concern for many nations. The advancement of gender equality throughout the world is without a doubt dependent on various factors, and on mainly the interlink between economic conditions with the legitimacy granted by the political environment, inasmuch as it is connected to changes in beliefs,

attitudes and habits (i.e. *the social realm*), which in turn have impact on the media landscape (*the cultural fields*). Fraser's (2013) acknowledgement that global gender justice can only be achieved through a focus on the dual realms of *redistributive justice* (the economic and political realm) and *recognition* (cultural values and beliefs) is thus pertinent here.

Feminism for one has emphasised the recognition of diversity and difference, and has contributed to expand the struggle beyond gender equality per se to a commitment to strengthening and expanding rights (Vargas, 2010) in democratic politics. Both of these are thus very much alive and have a lot to offer in the future. As Parpart and Marchand (1995) have argued in their discussion of the growing encounter between feminism and postmodernism, as well as development, many feminists have managed to leave their differences behind and unite around core issues in discussions of class, race and ethnicity in the pursuit of global gender justice. As they state, "differences and ambiguities can be celebrated, without sacrificing the search for a "broader, richer, more complex....feminist solidarity", the sort which is vital for overcoming the oppression of women in its various forms (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990: 35).

Feminist media studies research has thus advanced considerably since the decade of the 1980s, moving away from mere small samples analyses of ideological assumptions about femininity towards work that is more sophisticated and which is capable of engaging in socio-economic and political contexts, and which is critical in its analysis of gender and the media. This is not to mention the contributions to feminism from post-structuralist and post-modern thought, including the work of Foucault, Derrida, Lacan, Butler and Kristeva (i.e. Gill, 2007; Van Zoonen, 1994; Gallagher, 2014, 2015). Thus the range of issues which are researched and theorised in the field today, some of which I have examined here, are impressive. All have contributed to shape the field in interesting ways. However, there is still more scope and room for research on non-Western media texts and content, including also the conduction of studies that are creative and innovative

in their approach to methodology and which aim to be more multidisciplinary, making further connections with other disciplines. There is also more scope for politically grounded work, as well as research which is less conventional, and which is committed to humanity and can be capable of shedding more light into the nuances and particularities of discrimination and women's oppression, with the intention of undermining more power relations and hierarchies and creating more empathy and awareness towards women's rights (Sarikakis, Rush and Grubb-Swetnam, 2008).

Sarikakis (in McLaughlin and Carter, 2014, 106) has underlined how feminist media studies has focused on two dimensions of media, mainly "representations of women and the construction of femininities, and the ways in which women make sense of cultural and media texts, thus making their own meanings". As she stated, contributions have included the "breaking down of stereotypical representations of women as victims" and passive consumers (Sarikakis, in McLaughlin and Carter, 2014, 106). As Sarikakis (in McLaughlin and Carter, 2013, 107) goes on to affirm, the "celebratory focus" is in line with corporate dynamics, as "we are told we have achieved it all, proven we can have it all...", weakening positions which demand change. This also can be seen as a reluctance of some to criticise the links between media and cultural products, as well as possible negative impacts on citizens (Sarikakis in McLaughlin and Carter, 2014), culminating in a position of complacency. As Sarikakis (2014) concludes, feminism is at its best when it is enraged by social injustice, and when it manages to make connections between cultural and social practices with everyday life.

I am sympathetic to Sarikakis' (in McLaughlin and Carter, 2014, 106) criticism towards the limitations of the practice of overemphasising texts, based on the assumption that the *polysemic* text is sufficient in itself as a means of creating either avenues against ideological constructions or challenging inequalities. As I have stated here, the lack of inserting these representations and

discourses within broader social, cultural and political (and global) contexts ends up making the text analysis effort fruitless and insufficient as a means of intervention in reality in order to promote transformation and change. Mostly, it represents a retreat away from discussions of power relations, resuming them to individual acts of resistance and passivity and in the end, functioning to serve the interests of those who want to maintain *things as they are*. This has been at the heart of the nature of some feminist critiques towards Foucault's emphasis on discourse and power for instance, which has been seen as being an overemphasis on the individual's response, thus a move away from tackling broader unequal power relations (Marchand and Parpart, 1995).

As I have examined also in the first part of this book, feminist theory, from second wave feminists as well as post-colonial scholars, among others, has much to offer, including powerful and important contributions to the advancement of both theoretical debates as well as policy discussions and interventions in various fields of study, from gender and development, political theory to feminist media studies and sociology. At the moment, what feminist theorists and scholars also need to be more concerned about is how to translate their rich work into action and policy intervention. The post-2015 development agenda, or the 2030 *Agenda for Sustainable Development*, continues to underline gender equality and the empowerment of women as a key development goal. Thus there is a lot to be done in the future. In 2015, various countries united around an ambitious programme which included 17 new features for *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) and 169 targets that aim to combat poverty, inequalities and to promote prosperity.

I believe that there is also more scope here for work on the role of ICTs and new information technologies for development, and here I have attempted to provide an initial glimpse into some of the political and feminist activism that has been taking place in Brazil in the last years. An important aspect which I have identified here through my research, and which tends to be undermined or not given enough importance in the context of the debates surrounding the

impasse of development studies and its supposed “death”, is the ways in which there has been some approach in this area and within the discourse of development studies, more sophisticated and more inclusive of diversity and of the importance of taking into consideration local specifications. As Lucia Hamner, leading economist from the World Bank has argued:

“The recognition of the importance of women’s agency and empowerment for both to achieve development outcomes and as having an intrinsic value is a very positive development. The World Bank’s report on *Voice and Agency* was produced following the WDR2012 established that progress on voice and agency was a critical area where progress had been slow or lagging. As focusing on agency is a relatively new operational frontier for the Bank, the goal of the report was to add value by capturing recent advances in knowledge, exploring previously unexploited data, and identifying policy and program implications. The WBG approach to agency was to look at ‘expressions’ of agency: women’s access to and control over resources; freedom of movement; freedom from the risk of violence; control over sexual and reproductive health and rights; and voice and collective action..... Developing country governments can take steps to ensure women’s participation in political and other institutions in society, including promoting measures to ensure their equal representation in parliament and other legislative measures at the national and local levels..... Developing country governments can promote measures that promote positive norms change about women and girl’s rights and role in society, including through implementing programs that engage with men and boys, community leaders and community leaders.... governments can invest in programs that have specifically designed components to support women and girls acquire new skills, information and training that enable them to take up new economic opportunities, including through greater use of ICTs..”

As noted by many of the international reports discussed in this book, the more underlining and pressing concern is that discrimination and gender inequality can have a wider impact on the economic growth of a nation, impeding the strengthening of democracy. These can only do so much, but are not enough to tackle the structural inequalities that reflect the core differences between people and groups. The advancement of gender equality throughout the world is dependent on various factors, and on mainly the interlink between economic conditions with the legitimacy granted by the political environment. It is also connected to changes in beliefs, attitudes and habits (i.e. the social realm), which in term have impact on the media landscape (the cultural fields). The celebration of feminist or media activism or alternative blogs, internet websites and

other avenues thus needs to be situated into context, and analysed in terms of the extent to which these political activities can actually contribute to bring more change. This needs to be the object of further research and inquiry. The reality is that we still do not know enough about how audiences and the public use online communication technologies, and we need to continue to build on research here in this field (Livingstone, 2004).

Moreover, the ways in which alternative media outlets and online platforms are also contributing to influence the mainstream needs also to be the subject of debate, for both media scholars, feminist as well as political communication analysts. As Unesco's 2008 *Media Development Indicators* report stated, independent journalism is necessary, but in itself it is not enough to boost pluralism in the public sphere, strengthening more democracy and granting good governance and further nation building. Unesco's report pointed to five categories of indicators that can be used to examine the media development of a nation. These should be considered also as part of the wider pressures to improve gender equality in the media, if we take into account that the strive to work for a better, freer and more plural media is one which can pave avenues for its better capacity to contribute for women's advancement.

Unesco has also defended that indicators be *gender-sensitive*, defending the idea of community radio stations owned and managed by women, such as the case of Cambodia's *Women's Media Centre* (www.wmc-cambodia.org), and warning that information systems skewed towards traditional view of citizenship can work to exclude women. The categories included in the report were thus: 1) *a system of regulation conducive to freedom of expression, pluralism and diversity*, where policy is enacted to protect and promote freedom of expression and information; 2) *the plurality and diversity of media in economic terms and transparency of ownership*, with the state promoting development of the media so as to prevent undue concentration and to guarantee competition and pluralism across public, private and community media; 3) *the media function as a*

platform for democratic discourse, and within a climate of self-regulation, reflects the diversity of views and interests of society; 4) *the professional capacity building and supporting institutions that underpin freedom of expression*, with media workers having access to professional training and development and 5) *the infrastructural capacity capable of supporting independent and pluralistic media*, with high levels of public access and inclusion of marginalised groups.

The categories which have mainly interested me in this book have been mainly numbers 2, 3 and 5, such as how pluralism, in the context of gender equality, can be strengthened in the media and serve better the interests of marginalised, oppressed or less advantaged groups. I have examined this empirically by focusing on both the level of *representation* (and particularly ads and commercials) as well as political *activism* (i.e. through campaigning practices, media content and new communication technologies). It is thus to the final conclusion of my analyses on gender representations, discourses and activism in the Brazilian media and online networks that I turn to next.

Constructing avenues for democratic change: the future for gender equality in Latin America and Brazil - Concluding remarks

The Latin American continent has seen significant social, political and economic changes in the last 50 years, with many countries in the region seeing a decline in the hegemony of the US after the collapse of the dictatorship regimes throughout the continent. This was followed by the strengthening of national economies and political democratisation during the re-democratisation years. The last three decades have also been extremely important in terms of providing avenues of entry for new players in the public sphere, including wider social mobility, expansion of the

middle classes and a gradual shift towards the *empowerment* of women and other minorities. The decades of the 1980s and 1990s shaped significantly the development of many feminist movements and women's groups in the country in different ways, with new political arenas having opened mostly since the 1990s onwards (Vargas, 2010), as we have seen. These were later expanded into stronger calls for gender equality in the 2000's in the context of the policies implemented by the governments of the post-dictatorship phase, as I examined here, and further later fuelled with the election of the first female president, Dilma Rousseff, in 2010, as well as in the context of the growing participation of women during these last decades in the media, businesses, politics and in the workplace.

Many representations of Brazilian women discussed here however continue to have a neo-colonial and stereotypical undertone, both in international as well as national representations. Most Brazilian women are also firmly divided and separated by layers of class, ethnicity and race. The diversity of the causes and struggles of the feminist groups in Brazil happens in a place of intense fragmentation. However, the diversity that does take place within the activism of different segments of Brazilian civil society, as well as on online networks, does not make sufficient inroads into the mainstream media, which still favours dominant and traditional representations of Brazilian femininity over others.

However, gender inequality in Brazil, as well as in other Latin America countries, is not just a result of the existence of a "background patriarchal traditional" culture, which is non-Western or is rather "typical" of so-called "Third World countries". This is to reinforce a stereotype and the persistence of the dichotomy and division between the "First" and the "Third" Worlds. To endorse such an analysis also is to ignore that there are many Brazilian men who are also very disadvantaged and exploited in these countries and in Brazil, and that gender inequality in Brazil is also a result of the intersection of other layers of oppression, including class and ethnicity, which

means that different groups of Brazilian women experience constraints and barriers differently. An upper class Brazilian woman is, particularly if she is well connected to powerful men, and with exceptions, in overall “not oppressed”, similarly to her counter-parts in Europe, US or the UK, and mostly benefits from her class position as well as from the conquests provided by what some see as a form of “mainstream corporate feminism” (Fraser, 2013). This is an entirely different reality which is not the experience of most ordinary women, and less privileged sectors of the population, in the world.

Feminists throughout the world have encountered in the last years multiple forms of expression and action in both local, regional and global contexts. Democratic politics and debates have undoubtedly encountered space in the online world. As I have examined here, different feminist groups in Brazil are investigating the *emancipatory* possibilities offered by new technologies and other mediated and political spaces. Particularly in the last decades, there has been a growth in independent journalism and online platforms and blogs, including both blogs that are written by columnists who work for the mainstream media, such as the *Blog do Noblat*, as well as independent blogs, from *Midia Ninja*, to others from across the political spectrum, such as *Brasil 247*, as well as a series of vibrant feminist online network, such as *Blogueiras Feministas*. As I have argued however, the acknowledgement of the growth of a robust and dynamic public debate space in the *blogosphere* is not enough as an indicator of media development and democratization of communications, and also in a context still of a high digital divide which exists in countries like Brazil, can only go so far in political influence and in shaping and changing hearts and minds regarding pressing issues such as the need to combat more fully the reduction of inequalities and advance more women’s rights.

Feminism in Brazil as we have seen has seen an enormous revival, with many groups restoring increasingly to social media networks for self-expression and criticism towards societal

structures of oppression, making more demands of governments and politicians, of Brazilian society in general as well as the mainstream media, and beginning to articulate an agenda that is slowly making wider inroads into the mainstream. A key feature of this new contemporary Brazilian feminism is the emphasis on the *personal as political*, and the urge to tell stories of suffering and personal painful experiences and other forms of oppression in an attempt to get collective sympathy and empathy. These can further result in political collective acts to push further for change within governments, policy making and within wider society, as well as influencing more the mainstream media and further advancing various forms of collaboration with international feminist networks.

The vibrancy of new online platforms and other forms of alternative media has their limits and needs to be contextualised. In Brazil there are many fascist and extreme right wing groups that are poisoning the Brazilian political discourse and contributing to undermine the advancement of social inclusion and democratic politics that has been unfolding in the last three decades. Brazil is a deeply unequal, traditional and profoundly hierarchal society, where stratification touches nearly every part of daily life and where many people hold on strongly to conservatism with fear of any form of change, even if it is for the better and would benefit them also. Some hierarchical societies are so rigid that any attempt to advance within them is nearly impossible or met with considerable resistance. Hierarchical societies moreover are not meritocracies, where people receive reward and some status in reflection of their achievements. These are not societies that reward *human capital*, but rather have a very peculiar way of working with meritocracy, which functions alongside ingrained and strong practices of *clientelism*, nepotism and partisanship.

Practices of discrimination in such societies are thus widespread, and can have more serious health consequences, leading to continuous low self-esteem and sense of worthlessness, and at worst, they can be life threatening. If you are constantly discriminated against, put down, told that

‘you are unworthy’, despite the evidence on the contrary, you will come to believe it. People are individually very different, rich and creative, and can have talents and skills which are not well tapped into or encouraged, and which can remain dormant and unused by people if not whole countries. This is the experience of social exclusion, in other words, the lack of integration and the permission of the use of the potential that people have to offer in order to build a nation, boosting economic growth and well being.

Gender discrimination for instance can contribute to undermine even productivity in the workplace, in social and family life and culminating in loss of capital and resources for the economic and healthy democratic growth. It is not just discrimination that can hold people back (external barrier), but people can also retreat from even trying in the first place due to the lack of self-esteem granted by their social position and the place they occupy in society. Thus many people are well aware of external barriers and of society’s assumptions about the role and low status position of certain people within them, and that consciously choose to remain in their place for fear of being put down or downtrodden upon. And the cultural and media space is where not only ideology is continuously played out and reinforced, but also where values, beliefs and ideas on the role of women, and how one should socialise oneself and act their identity, are played out. Thus the continuous reinforcement by the media of traditional gender roles and forms of outdated thinking can have a series of both direct and indirect consequences, from more mild and harmless to the more serious. As I have tried to show here through an examination of different contemporary media material in Brazil, they can prove to be significantly damaging in the context of weak democracies with authoritarian tendencies, and which need to be strengthened in order to become more mature.

Differently to the international development trend in the last years, which has seen a decline in the role of the state as the main agent of development amid a rise of the “marketization” process

of development, with the increase in the role afforded to the third sector and NGOs in the implementation of policies, Brazil has seen the continuation of the presence of the state in the development process. This has happened in conjunction with and collaboration with other sectors of society, from sectors of the market, to NGOs and civil society as well as other international organisations. The workers-capitalist pact that secured the development project in Brazil, particularly in the last decades with the governments of Lula and Dilma but also finding their roots in the Cardoso administration of the 1990s, benefited not just the capitalist and bourgeoisie sectors but growing numbers of the more impoverished population but however has been in crisis since the start of the economic recession in 2014. Arguably, the model of consensus in Brazilian politics is in need of being re-constructed and revived, in a context where increasing ideological and political polarisation has led to a form of antagonistic politics which is impeding dialogue between the various political and social groups of Brazilian society.

There has thus been a growth in recognition and consciousness among Brazilian women from all social backgrounds of their oppression, evident in the series of protests that have occurred in the country in the last years, which erupted in a Brazilian female version of the famous *Arab Spring* in 2015. Feminists groups in Latin America have also participated in various conferences and forums, including being present in events like the World Social Forum since its creation in Brazil in 2001, although having struggled to gain more visibility and only having a wider presence in the fourth version in Mumbai in 2004 (Vargas, 2005). Thus with the deepening economic recession that the country entered into since the year 2014, as well as the intensification of class struggles and antagonistic politics which are being fought between different groups (Mouffe, 2000), who hold diverse views on what national development is, these gains are at serious risk.

National media, inserted within globalization dynamics, also have an important role to play. As I argued in previous research (2012), discussions concerning media reform, legislation, what

constitutes best practice and the need to boost measures to enhance competitiveness in the Brazilian media sector, respecting the articles of the 1988 Brazilian Constitution in relation to the co-existence in the country of the public, private and state, need to be taken up again and dialogue here needs to expand. The strengthening of the public media is a vital step to pursue, as well as the wider endorsement of a social responsibility ethos from media companies, who should commit themselves to initiatives such as the one put forward by UN Women in partnership with 35 other media companies. Especially in the case of the market media in Brazil, where six families control a total of more than 70% of the audio-visual and content in the country, it is important for pressures to be placed on the sector for an undermining of partisan and ideological biases and practices which stimulate and encourage conflict and division in society.

There further needs to be a return to some of the values endorsed and pushed forward by the mainstream media during the decade of the 1990s in the wake of the beginning of the re-democratisation period, and which include a wider commitment to serve the public and to uphold classic liberal media values of balance, professionalism and objectivity in newsrooms and within the media landscape as a whole (Matos, 2008). These need to be *gender sensitive* and aware, and conscious about the need to advance women's rights and provide more spaces for the representation of women's multiple identities, strengthening diversity and assisting in social inclusion and in better democratic practices.

The research conducted here has underlined the important role that internet feminist blogs have been playing in boosting media diversity, strengthening pluralism within the wider media landscape as well as in Brazilian society by providing other narratives that both complement as well as interact with the mainstream media. There have been some reasons to be cheerful or at the worst, to have some hope for the future, given the current renewal and strength of the movements in the country and the slow inroads that these groups are making within the mainstream, as I have

shown here. This includes the initiative of the *#AgoraeQueSaoElas* campaign, which has made some timid inroads into the mainstream newspaper *Folha de Sao Paulo*, in the aftermath of the week in October-November 2015 when male journalists gave up their space in the media for women from various fields to voice their concerns.

Other initiatives have included some features which have been published by the mainstream media on the vibrancy of the protests, such as the *Epoca* story, but most positive initiatives are still restricted to the campaigning of these feminist groups within society, through the visibility granted by the protests and through other fragmented forms of online networks, as I have shown here. The growth of the discussions on women's issues in the mediated public sphere, from the Maria da Penha law, to sexual harassment of young women, abortion, rape and violence, are also very positive, but are still quite limited and restricted to a number of thousands and operate largely still within a fragmented political and mediated space. Nonetheless, they have been sufficient to raise reaction, and even attacks, from more conservative members of Brazilian society.

I have also underlined many problems that exist in the relationship between media and gender in the country. These have included the persistence still of problematic representations of women, albeit a small growing tide towards more complex representations in the last years, to a lack of more in depth discussions on gender issues in the mediated public sphere and amongst media professionals and journalist – a reason why I decided not to conduct interviews with female journalists. Another problem has been the persistence of the trend of many young women being caught and stuck in low paid positions in the newsroom with difficulties of being promoted.

Moreover, as I have also shown here, feminist media studies is also a discipline in Brazil that is still in expansion and which needs more work and strengthening (Martinez, 2016). It does not have the same level of production and quantity of work that more traditional disciplines such as anthropology, conventional approaches to sociology, such as on work, violence and class, and

politics do (Escosteguy in Silva and Mendes, 2014). As a discipline, it still needs to build a much stronger body of knowledge and work which aims to look at the correlation between gender representations with inequalities in Brazilian society, inserted within a wider socio-economic context and in conjunction with the political reality as well as paying attention to international trends and to globalization.

In this book I have analysed a series of commercials as well as having discussed a series of popular feminist Brazilian websites. As I argued in the introduction, my intention has not been of finding “resistant readings” and possibilities of subversion within the limits of *polysemic* texts, or either to celebrate instances of “women’s agency and empowerment”. The gender representations, discourse and images discussed here have been strongly contextualised within the country’s social, political and economic dynamics, and have not been analysed in isolation to the complexities and contradictions of these realities. I have also made many links with the problematic patterns of oppression in Brazilian society. As I have shown here, the persistence of the *idealisation* around Brazilian femininity, and the “myth of the Brazilian woman”, both nationally and internationally, is evidently clear across various media outlets, in advertising and within the media discourses explored in female magazines as well as in mainstream journalism (i.e. the Marcela Temer story).

As I have argued here consistently, it is not enough to focus on words, and ignore material conditions and the “things” (Jackson and Jones, 1998). Demands for *redistributive justice* are coming from across the social and political spectrum, as much as demands for recognition (Fraser, 2013) and improvement in cultural and media practices. The advancement of gender equality in Brazil thus cannot, and should not be dependent only on media reform and regulation. As I have argued here, it needs to be tackled through various fronts: on the *economic* front, at the level of redistributive justice, this includes the commitment to policies on lowering the gender pay gap, as well as maintaining welfare programmes that benefit women or other of resources and funds that can assist

women in establishing firms and becoming entrepreneurs; and on the *political* front, this means the commitment of governments and states to both international laws on elimination of discrimination against women, including the principles upheld by various UN conferences and the Beijing Platform of Action, to national obligations of implementing legislations and initiatives to reduce gender equality, from the *Maria da Penha* law to other measures discussed here. The strengthening of political mobilization and activism from feminist movements and other women's groups at a national and global level is also vital here, and is dependent also on the wider access to new information and communication technologies by diverse groups of women in Brazil.

Brazil needs to make the conscious choice towards the path of reaching greater equality for its citizens, striving for furthering equal opportunities and constructing a better quality of life for its citizens. At the cultural level and in the realm of *representation*, this means a wider commitment by media groups to reject stereotypical gender representations or the incentive to reproduce common sense assumptions about the role of women in society in order to reach a wider public, and rather including in the mediated space diverse and multiple identities that more reflect the complexities of different groups of Brazilian women. Women's issues and agendas also need to be more discussed within the mainstream media, with the realization of conferences, workshops and training in gender awareness and other issues related to the treatment of minorities and of "the other" in Brazilian society.

The NGO *Think Olga* for instance launched an online manual in pocket format, known as *Humanised Journalism*, which has the intention of providing basic rules to avoid journalism mistakes with stories on women. It is divided into four parts, which explore the topics such as violence against women, racism, transphobia and negative stereotypes. It also includes practical examples for each, including an emphasis on the awareness that rape should not be understood as sexual practice.^{lxxxii}

Women journalists in the newsroom thus need to engage more, and in a much more in depth and rational manner, in this dialogue. Further studies in this area would be more than welcome. The media needs to restrain from endorsing outdated social beliefs, attitudes and patterns of thinking that reinforce oppression and division between groups in Brazilian, perpetuating discrimination and, in the long run, doing very little to strengthen social inclusion and the fortification of democracy in the country. A renewal of the country's commitment to international laws on the elimination of all sorts of discrimination is very much needed at this stage, as much as the wider commitment which should come from the mainstream media to attend international conferences on the topic, and to sign up to initiatives such as the UN Women's Media Pact mentioned here and assume *Unesco's* principles defended in the 2016 *Finlandia Declaration*.

As I have argued in Part I of this book, the need for wider dialogue between academic disciplines, such as British Cultural Studies and Latin American, and the wider exchanges between the North with the South, also needs to be significantly strengthened and amplified (Escosteguy, 2004). This research found a lot of difficulty encountering studies in the field, both nationally and internationally, albeit a few exceptions mentioned here, confirming Martinez et al's (2016) statement that most of the work still comes from traditional social science disciplines, and in Brazil particularly from sociology, anthropology and political science. There thus needs to be more research and discussion of both gender representations in the media, as well as gender awareness in the newsroom, the working practices of female journalists and the inclusion of stories on women's issues in the media. All are much needed and could be the object of more inquiry and attention of both feminist media studies scholars working nationally as well as internationally.

This book has attempted to make some wider inroads into these avenues, creating further proximity between the disciplines and exchange of intellectual concepts, frameworks and wider understanding between some of the key international debates in the field of gender and

development, feminist media studies and sociology. Not only do we need more quantity of studies that tell us more about the complexities of the relationship between media structures and gender issues, we also need quality work and further internationalization and connection with the international literature on gender and development, sociology and British Cultural and feminist media studies. Senator has Suplicy has correctly underlined the none-existence in the country of a *Gender National Monitoring Project*, similarly to the GMMP, and this also could be met with some serious consideration. Such initiatives are positive but in themselves are not enough.

As I have shown here, only by tackling gender inequality from various fronts, both at a global and national level, can we begin to conceive of the possibility of constructing a more just, democratic and equal world in the future. Moreover, the work that we do in particular national contexts also needs to resonate to the wider globe and encounter points of further connection and collaboration. We cannot thus afford any longer to stay in the comfort zone, of investing solely our energy, expertise, research time and effort in deconstructing media representations and discourses in very isolated national contexts, and which are dissociated from the complexities of our extremely unequal world and the problems that social, cultural, political and economic factors play in perpetuating inequalities and other forms of oppression and constraint on well being.

Finally, feminism needs again to strengthen its transnational activism networking as well as intellectual exchange and scholarship (Desai, 2009; Sarikakis, 2014) between different regions of the world, creating more diverse flows and contra-flows between the North and the South (Thussu, 2006). Feminism needs more than ever to recover its strength and voice, and to act more in favour of social justice in particular and humanity in general.

Bibliography

Abreu, A. (2006) Elas Ocupam as Redacoes, RJ: FGV

Acosta-Belem and Bose, Christine E. (eds.) (1993) Researching women in Latin America and the Caribbean, Boulder CO: Westview

Adelman, Miriam and Ruggi, Lennita (2008) “The Beautiful and the Abject – Gender, Identity and Constructions of the Body in Contemporary Brazilian Culture” in Current Sociology, vol. 56 (4), International Sociological Association, London: Sage, p. 555-586

Alexander, A. C. and Welzel, C. (2007) “Empowering Women: Four Theories Tested on Four Different Aspects of Gender Equality”, paper presented at the Midwest Political Science Association Chicago

Ali, Suki (2013) “Post-colonialism” in Evans, M. and Williams, Carolyn H. (eds.) Gender – the Key Concepts, London: Routledge, p. 169- 175

Alvarez, Sonia (1990) Engendering democracy in Brazil - Women’s movements in Transition Politics, New Jersey: Princeton University Press

Ang, Ien (1978) Watching Dallas: Soap Opera and the Melodramatic Imagination, London; Routledge

Anthias, f. (2013) “Cultural Difference” in Evans, M. and Williams, C. H (eds.) Gender –Key Concepts, London: Routledge, 36-41

Appadurai, Arjun (1997) “Global Ethnoscapes: Nets and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology” in Modernity at Large: cultural dimensions of globalization, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 48-66

Assis, C. S. De and Soares, R. P. de A. (2011) “Midia, politica e genero: as mulheres politicas no noticiario” in Associacao Brasileira de Pesquisadores em Jornalismo (SBPJor), p. 1-15

- Bailey, Olga Guedes and Jamil Marques, Francisco Paulo (2012) “Brazilian News Blogs and mainstream news organizations: tensions, symbiosis or independency?” in Siapara, E. and Veglis, A. (check) (eds.) The Handbook of Global Online Journalism, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, p. 395- 412
- Barrett, Michele (1980) “Women’s Oppression Today” in Jackson, S. (1993) (eds.) Women’s studies: a reader, London: Routledge, p. 11-13
- Barriteau, Eudine V. (2000) “Feminist theory and development: implications for policy, research and action” in Parpart, J., Connelly, P. and Barriteau, Eudine V. (2000) Theoretical perspectives on Gender and Development, Canada: International Development Research Centre, p. 161-179
- Barthes, R. (1972, 2009) “Myth Today” in Mythologies, London: Paladium, p. 131- 187
- Berger, G. (2014) “Unesco Foreword” in Montiel, A. V. (2014) Media and Gender: a scholarly agenda for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender, France: Unesco and IAMCR publication, p. 8-9
- Bertotti, R. (2009) “Desmistificar a imagem da mulher na midia e o nosso desafio” in Articulacao Mulher e Midia (<http://www.mulheremidia.org.br/site/2009/03/desmistificar-a-imagem-da-mulher-na-midia>)
- Bhabha, H. (2004) “The other question: stereotype, discrimination and the discourse of colonialism” in The Location of Culture, London: Routledge, p. 94-121
- Bhavnani, Kum-Kum, Foran, J. Kurian, P.A. and Munshi, D. (2016) “Conversations Towards Feminist Futures” in Feminist Futures – Re-Imagining Women, Culture and Development, Chicago: Zed Books, p. 178- 187
- Billig, M (1997) “Discourse, rhetorical and ideological messages” in C. McGarthy and Haslam, A. (eds.) The Meesage of Social Pyschology, Oxford: Blackwell

- Blaug, Ricardo and Schwarzmantel, J. (1988) (eds.) Democracy: A Reader, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1-25
- Blencouve, C. (2013) “Performativity” in Evans, M. and Williams, C.H. Gender – the key concepts, London: Routledge, p. 162-169
- Bordo, S. (1993, 2003) “Introduction: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body” in Unbearable weight: feminism, Western culture and the body, Berkeley: University of California, p. 1 – 42
- Boyd-Barrett, O. (1977) “Media imperialism: towards an international framework for assessing media systems” in Curran, J. and Gurevitch, M. (eds.) Mass Communication and Society, London: Arnold, 5-20
- Boserup, E. (2008) Women’s role in economic development, London: Earthscan
- Brah, Avtar (1993) “Questions of Difference and International Feminism” in Jackson, S. (eds.) Women studies: a reader, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pg. 29-35
- Brooks, A. (1997) Postfeminism: feminism, cultural theory and cultural feminisms, London: Routledge
- Borj, B. (2014) “Corpo, geracao e identidade: a Marcha das Vadias no Brasil” in Sociedade e Estado, vol. 29., no. 2, p. 433-442
- Bryerly, C. and Ross, K. (2006) (eds.) (2006) Women and the media: a critical introduction, Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, p. 36- 72
- Budgeon, S. (2011, 2013) “The Contradictions of Successful Femininity: Third-Wave Feminism, Postfeminism and ‘New’ Feminities” in Gill, R. and Scharff, C. (eds.) New Femininities – Postfeminism, Neoliberalism and Subjectivity, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 279- 292
- Buitoni, D. S. (2009, 1981) Mulher de papel – a representacao da mulher pela imprensa feminina brasileira, SP : Summis Editorial

- Burity, J. A. (2009) "Inequality, culture and globalization in emerging societies: reflections on the Brazilian case" in Nederveen Pieterse, Jan (eds.) Globalization and Emerging Societies: Development and Inequality, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 161-181
- Burton, S. (2001, 2004) "Information and communication for development" in Coetzee, J. K. et al (eds.) Development – Theory, Policy and Practice, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Butler, J. (1990) Gender Trouble, NY: Routledge, p. 1-34
- Buvinic, Mayra and Roza, Vivian (2004) "Women, Politics and Democratic Prospects in Latin America" for Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, DC: Sustainable Development Department Technical Paper Series
- Caldwell, K. L. (2010) "Advocating for Citizenship and Social Justice: Black Women Activists in Brazil" in Maier, E. and Lebon, N. (eds.) Women's Activism in Latin America and the Caribbean – Engendering Social Justice, Democratizing Citizenship, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, p. 175-187
- Canclini, N. Garcia (1995) Hybrid culture: strategies for entering and leaving modernity, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- Cardoso, F. (1972) "Dependency and development in Latin America" in Hite, Amy Bellone and Timmons, J. Roberts (2007) The Globalization and Development Reader, London: Blackwell Publishing
- Calhoun, Craig (eds.) (1997) Habermas and the Public Sphere, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, p. 1-50, 73-143, 359-402
- Cardoso, F. (1972) "Dependency and development in Latin America" in Hite, Amy Bellone and Timmons, J. Roberts (2007) The Globalization and Development Reader, London: Blackwell Publishing

- Carter, C. (2014) "Sex/Gender and the Media: From Sex Roles to Social Construction and Beyond" in Ross, K. (eds.) The Handbook of Gender, Sex and Media, London: Wiley Blackwell, p. 365-382
- Castells, M. (2007) 'Communication, Power and Counter-power in the Network Society', International Journal of Communication, 1: 238-266.
- Cavalcante, S. (2009) "Bale no ar: a midia e a transformacao da mulher na sociedade brasileira (1960-1980)", paper presented in the 7th Encontro da Associacao Brasileira de Pesquisadores de Historia da Midia, Unifor, Fortaleza/CE
- Chadwick, A. (2006) Internet politics, Oxford University Press
- Chant, Slyvia (2011) "The 'feminization of poverty' and the 'feminization' of anti-poverty programs: room for revision?" in Visvanathan, N. and Duggan, Lynn et al (eds.) The women, gender and development reader, London: Zed Books, p. 174-197
- , S. (2006) "Contributions of a Gender Perspective to the Analysis of Poverty" in Jacquette, Jane S. and Summerfield (eds.) Women and Gender Equity in Development Theory and Practice – Institutions, Resources and Mobilization, London: Duke University Press, p. 87-107
- , Slyvia and Craske, N.(2003) "Feminisms in Latin America" in Gender in Latin America, London: Latin America Bureau, p. 162- 191
- Chouliaraki, L. (2006, 2013) "Solidary and Spectatorship" in The Ironic Spectator: solidarity in the age of post-humanitarianism, London: Polity, p. 1-26
- , L. (2008) "The symbolic power of transnational media: Managing the visibility of suffering" in Global Media and Communication, 4 (3), p. 329-251
- Chowdhry, G. (1995) "Engendering development? Women in development (WID) in international development regimes" in Marchand, M. A. and Parpart, J. L. (eds.) (1995) Feminism/postmodernism/development, Oxon: Routledge, p. 26-42

- Chua, P., K. K. Bhaunani & J. Foran (2000). 'Women, culture and development: A new paradigm for development studies?' in Ethnic and racial studies, Vol. 23 No. 5, pp 820-841
- Cloud, D. L. (2004). "To veil the threat of terror": Afghan women and the 'Clash of Civilizations' in the imagery of the US war on terrorism" in Quarterly Journal of Speech, 90 (3), 285-306
- Coetzee, J. K. (2001). 'Modernisation theory: A model for progress' (Ch 3), in J. Coetzee et al (eds.) Development: Theory, Policy and Practice, Oxford: Oxford UP, p. 27-44
- Coles, A. et al (eds.) The Routledge Handbook of Gender and Development, London: Routledge
- Connelly, Patricia M, Murray, Tania L., MacDonald, Martha and Parpart, Jane L. (2000) "Feminism and Development: theoretical perspectives" in Parpart, J., Connelly, P. and Barriteau, Eudine V. (eds.) Theoretical perspectives on Gender and Development, Canada: International Development Research Centre, p. 51-161
- Costa Pereira, F. and Verissimo, J. (2008) "A Mulher na Publicidade e os Estereótipos de Gênero" in Observatorio (OBS) Journal 5, p. 281-296
- Couldry, N. and Curran, J. (2003) (eds.) "Introduction and theoretical perspectives" in Contesting Media Power: Alternative Media in a Networked World, London: Rowman and Littlefield
- Costa, Cristiane (2000) Eu Compro Essa Mulher, RJ: Jorge Zahar Editora
- Cramler, Judith and Creedon, Pamela (1990) "Introduction: We've come a long way, maybe..." in Women in Mass Communication, London: Sage Publications, p. 3- 9
- Curran, James and Seaton, Jean (2010) Power Without Responsibility, London: Routledge
- , James and Park, Myung-Jin (eds.) (2000) "Beyond Globalization theory" in De-Westernizing Media Studies, London: Routledge, p. 3-19
- Del Priore, M. (2000) Corpo e corpo com a mulher: pequena historia das transformacoes do corpo feminino no Brasil, Sao Paulo: Editora Senac

- Desai, Manisha (2009) Gender and the politics of possibilities: rethinking globalization, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, p. 1-13, 31-59
- , M (2002) “Transnational solidarity: women’s agency, structural adjustment and globalization” in Naples, Nancy A. and Desai, M. Women’s Activism and globalization: linking local struggles and transnational politics, NY: Routledge, p. 15-33
- Desai, Vandana and Potter, Robert B. (2008) The Companion to Development Studies, Oxford University Press, p. 1-18, 50-58, 124-139
- , V. et al (2002) “Theories and strategies of development” in Desai, V. and Potter, R. (eds.) The Companion to Development Studies, London: Arnold, p. 59-139
- Desposato, Scott W. and Norrander, Barbara (2005) “The Participation Gap: Systemic and Individual Influences on Gender Differences in Political Participation”, Proceedings of the Western Political Science Association Conference, March 17-19, Oakland, CA: Western Political Science Association
- Dorling, D. (2015) Injustice: why social inequality still persists, London: Policy Press
- Dua, Enakshi. (2009) “Development under Globalization” in Essed, P., Goldberg, D. T. and Kobayshi, A. L (eds.) A Companion to Gender Studies, John Wiley and Sons, pg. 293- 307
- Dyer, R. (1997) White – Essays on Race and Culture, London: Routledge
- Eagleton, T. (1991, 2007) “What is Ideology?” in Ideology: an introduction, London: Verso, p. 1-33
- Einhorn, B. (2013) “Citizenship” in Mary, Evans and Williams, Carolyn H. (eds.) Gender – key concepts, London: Routledge, p. 29-36
- Escobar, A. (1995) “The problematization of poverty: the tale of three worlds and development” in Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the Third World, Princeton: U of Princeton, p. 21-55

- Escosteguy, A. C. (2004) "Latin American media reception studies: notes on the meaning of gender and research methodologies" in Revista Famecos, Porto Alegre, n. 24, p. 46-52
- , A. C. (2001) "Cultural Studies: a Latin American narrative" in Media, Culture and Society, London: Sage, vol. 23, p. 861-873
- Evans, M. and Williams, C. H (eds.) Gender –Key Concepts, London: Routledge
- Fanon, Frantz (2001) The Wretched of the Earth, Penguin Books
- Fairclough, Norman (2005) "Political Discourse in the Media: an Analytical Framework" in Bell, Allan and Garrett, Peter (eds.) (2005) Approaches to Media Discourse, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p. 142-163
- , Norman (1998) Discourse and Social Change, Cambridge: Polity Press
- Ferreira, Carolina Branco de Castro (2015) "Feminisms on the web: lines and forms of action in contemporary feminist debate" in Cadernos Pagu, 44, January-June, p. 199 -228
- Foucault, Michel (1972) The Archeology of Knowledge, London: Verso, p. 21-76, 79-88, 141-148, 166-177
- Fox, Elizabeth (1997) Latin American broadcasting: from tango to telenovela, Bedfordshire: University of Luton Press
- Franks, S. (2013) Women and Journalism, London: I.B. Tauris, p. 1-20
- Fraser, N (2013) Fortunes of feminism – from state-managed capitalism to neoliberal crisis, London: Verso, p. 19-53, 159-175
- , N (1990) "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy" in Social Text, no. 25/26, p. 56-80
- Frazer, E. (1998) (eds.) "Feminist Political Theory" in Jackson, S. and Jones, J. (1998) (eds.) Contemporary Feminist Theories, Edinburgh University Press, p. 50 – 59
- Freire, P (1970) The Pedagogy of the Oppressed, London: Penguin

- Freyre, G. (1933, 2006) Casa Grande e Senzala, RJ: Global Editora
- Galetti, Camila Carolina H. (2014) “Feminismo em movimento: a marcha das Vadias e o movimento feminist contemporaneo” em 18* Redor, tema: Perspectivas Feministas de Genero: Desafios no Campo da Militancia e das Praticas, 24-27th November, p. 2196 – 2210
- Gallagher, M. (2015, 2014) “Media and the representation of gender” in Carter, C., Steiner, L., and McLaughin, L. (eds.) The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender, London: Routledge, p. 23-31
- , M. (2014) “Feminist scholarship and the debates on gender and communication” in Montiel, A. V. (2014) Media and Gender: a scholarly agenda for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender, France: Unesco and IAMCR publication, p. 11-14
- Gans, H. (1979) “Deciding What's News” in Tumber, H. (ed.) (1999) News: A Reader, Oxford University Press, pp.235-248
- Gauntlett, D. (2008) “Representations of gender in the past” in Media, gender and identity, London: Routledge, p. 47 – 62
- Giddens, A. (2002) Runway world: how globalization is reshaping our lives, London: Routledge
- , A. (1998) The Third way: the renewal of social democracy, London: Polity Press
- , A. (1994) Beyond Left and Right: the future of radical politics, London: Polity Press
- Gilroy, Paul (2005) Postcolonial melancholia, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 1-87
- Gill, R. (2012) “Postfeminist media culture – elements of a sensibility” in Kearney, M. C. (eds.) The Gender and Media Reader, NY: Routledge, p. 136-149
- , Rosalind (2007) Gender and the media, London: Polity Press, p. 7-42
- Golding, P., & Elliot, P. (1979) “Making the News” in Tumber, H. (eds.) (1999) News: A Reader, Oxford University Press, pp.112-120

- Grewal, Inderpal and Kalan, Caren (2009) "Postcolonial scholarship" in Essed, P, Goldberg, David Theo and Kobayashi, A. (eds.) A Companion to Gender Studies, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, p. 51-59
- Grindstaff, L. and Press, A. (2014) "Too Little But Not Too Late: Sociological Contributions to Feminists Media Studies" in Waisbord, S. (eds.) Media Sociology: a reappraisal, London: Polity Press, p. 151-168
- Gunder Frank, A. (1969) 'The Development of Underdevelopment' in Roberts, J. Timmons & Hite, Amy (2000) The Globalization and Development Reader, London: Blackwell Publishing
- Guzman, Isabel M. and Valdivia, Angharad N. (2012) "Brain, brow and booty: Latina Iconicity in US Popular Culture" in Kearney, M. C. (eds.) The Gender and Media Reader, NY: Routledge, p. 307-319
- Gwynne, Robert N. (1999) "Globalization, neoliberalism and economic change in South America and Mexico" in Gwynne, Robert N. And Kay, Cristobal (eds.) Latin America Transformed: Globalisation and Modernity, New York: Arnold, p. 68-98
- Habermas, Jurgen (1997) "Further Reflections on the Public Sphere" and "Concluding Remarks" in Calhoun, Craig (eds.) Habermas and the Public Sphere, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, p. 421-479
- , Jurgen (1994) "The Emergence of the Public Sphere" in The Polity Reader in Cultural Theory, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 81-90
- , J. (1989, 1992) The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, London: Polity Press
- Hall, S. (1992, 2002) "The West and the rest" in Schech, Suanne & Haggis, Jane (eds.) Development. A Cultural Studies Reader, Blackwell Publishing, p. 56 -64
- , S. (eds.) (1999) Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices, London: Sage, p. 1-75

- , S. (1977) "Culture, the Media and the Ideological Effect" in J Curran et al (1977) Mass Communication and Society, London: Arnold
- , S. (1973, 1993) "Encoding/decoding" in During, S. (ed.) The Cultural Studies Reader, NY: Routledge, p. 90-103
- Hahner, J. E. (1990) Emancipating the Female Sex: the Struggle for Women's Rights in Brazil, 1850-1940, Durham: Duke University Press, p. 1-42
- Hamburger, E. (2015) "Telenovelas, gender and genre" in Carter, Cynthia, Steiner, L. and McLaughlin, Lisa (eds.) The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender, London: Routledge, p. 419-427
- Haraway, D. (1991, 2000) "A cyborg manifesto – science, technology and socialist feminism in the late 20th century" in Bell, D. and Kenedy, Barbara M. (eds.) The Cyberculture Reader: London: Routledge, p. 291-324
- Hartmann, H. (1976) "Capitalism, patriarchy and job segregation by sex" in Women and the Workplace: the implications of occupational segregation, University of Chicago Press, p. 137-169
- Hesmondhalgh, D. (2013) The Cultural industries, (3rd edition), London, Sage, p. 1-27, 29-51, 75-80
- Hinterberger, A. (2013) "Agency" in Evans, M. and Williams, C.H. Gender – the key concepts, London: Routledge, p. 7-13
- Hite, Amy and Roberts, J. Timmons (2007) "Development and Globalization: Recurring Themes" in The Globalization and Development Reader, London: Blackwell Publishing, p. 1-17
- Hoogvelt, Ankie (1997) Globalization and the postcolonial world – the new political economy of development, Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, p. 3-14, 165-173, 239-258

- Huesca, R. "Participatory Approaches to Communication for Development" in Mody, B. (2003) International and Development Communication: a 21st century perspective, London: Sage Publications, p. 209-227
- Jackson, S. and Jones, J. (1998) (eds.) "Thinking for Ourselves: an Introduction to Feminist Thinking" in Contemporary Feminist Theories, Edinburgh University Press, p. 1-11
- , S, (1998) "Theorising Gender and Sexuality" in Jackson, S. and Jones, J. (1998) (eds.) Contemporary Feminist Theories, Edinburgh University Press, p. 131- 143
- , S. (1998) "Feminist Social Theory" in Jackson, S. and Jones, J. (1998) (eds.) Contemporary Feminist Theories, Edinburgh University Press, p. 12- 29
- Jacquette, J. S. and Staudt, Kathleen (2006) "Women, gender and development" in Jacquette, J. S. and Summerfield, G. (eds.) Women and Gender Equity in Development Theory and Practice – Institutions, Resources and Mobilization, Durham: Duke University Press, p. 17- 53
- Jain, D. (2005) Women, Development and the UN – A Sixty-year quest for equality and justice, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press
- Kanji, N., Fei Tun, S. and Toulmin, C. (2008) "Introduction: Boserup Revisited" in Boserup, E. Women's Role in Economic Development, New Delhi: Viva Books Private Limited, p. v- p. xxvi
- Kearney, M. C. (2012) "Introduction" in Kearney, Mary Celeste (eds.) The Gender and Media Reader, London: Routledge, p. 1 – 17
- Kingsbury, D. (2004) "Globalization and Development" in Key Issues in Development, London: Palgrave Macmillan. P. 91-115
- Kuhn, R. and Nielsen, R. K (eds.) (2013) Political Journalism in Transition: Western Europe in a Comparative Perspective, London: I.B. Tauris, p. 1-27

- Lazar, Michelle M. (2011, 2013) “The Right to be Beautiful: Postfeminist Identity and Consumer Beauty Advertising” in Gill, R. and Scharff, C. (eds.) New Femininities, Neoliberalism and Subjectivity, London: Palgrave Macmillan p. 37-52
- Lebon, N. (2010) “Women Building Plural Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean” in Maier, E. and Lebon, N. (eds.) Women’s Activism in Latin America and the Caribbean – Engendering Social Justice, Democratizing Citizenship, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, p. 3-26
- Lerner, Daniel (1958) ‘The Passing of the Traditional Society’ in Roberts, J. Timmons & Hite, Amy (2000): From Modernization to Globalization, Oxford: Blackwell. p. 119-134
- Lima, Juliana A. (2008) “A Imagem do feminina na publicidade: estudos de casos”, Fortaleza, Publicidade e Propaganda, Faculdade 7 de Setembro, unpublished thesis
- Lima, Sandra L. (2007) “Imprensa feminina, revista feminina. A imprensa feminina no Brasil” in Projeto Historia, Sao Paulo, n. 35, p. 221-240
- Little, Walter (1997) “Democratization in Latin America, 1980-95” in Potter, David, Goldblatt, Kiloh, Margaret and Lewis, Paul (eds.) Democratization, London: Open University Press, p. 174-195
- Livingstone, S. (2004) “The challenge of changing audiences: or what is the researcher to do in the age of the Internet?” in European Journal of Communication, 19 (1), p. 75-86
- Lorber, J. (eds.) (2012) “The Variety of Feminisms and their Contribution to Gender Equality” in Gender inequality: feminist theories and politics, California: Roxbury Publishing Company, p. 1-23
- Lovenduski, J. (1993) “Introduction: the dynamics of gender and party” in Lovenduski, J. and Norris, P. (eds.) Gender and Party Politics, London: Sage, p. 1-16

- Lugones, Maria C. and Spelman, Elizabeth V. (2005, 2000) “Have we got theory for you! Feminist theory, cultural imperialism and the demand for the ‘woman’s voice’” in Feminist theory: a reader, Kolmer, Wendy K. and Kouski, Frances Bart, N York: McGraw Hill, p. 16-27
- Lyotard, J. F. (1984) The Postmodern Condition – A Report on Knowledge, Manchester: Manchester University Press
- Macaulay, Fiona (2010) “Trickling Up, Down and Sideways – Gender Policy and Political Opportunity in Brazil” in Maier, E. and Leblon, N. (eds.) Women’s Activism in Latin America and the Caribbean, Rutgers University Press, p. 273-287
- Maia, Mayara L. (2013) “A trajetoria do feminino na imprensa brasileira: o jornalismo de revista e a mulher do seculo XX”, paper presented in the 9th Encontro Nacional de Historia da Midia, Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais
- Manyozo, Linje (2012) “Media, communication and development – school of thoughts and approaches” in Media, communication and development, London: Sage Publications, p. 1-53
- Marchand, M. A. and Parpart, J. L. (eds.) (1995) “Part 1 – Exploding the Canon: An Introduction/Conclusion” in Feminism/postmodernism/development, Oxon: Routledge, p. 1-23
- Martinez, M., Lago, C. and Souza Lago, M. C. (2016) “Estudos de genero na pesquisa em jornalismo no Brasil: uma tenue relacao” in Revista Famecos, v. 23, n. 2, p. 1-23
- M., Lago C, e Lago M. C. S (2015) “Gender Studies in Brazilian Journalism Research: a tenuous relationship”, paper presented at JRE Section – IAMCR Conference, Montreal, UQAM. 12-16 July
- Marx, K. (1852, 2013) The 18th Brumarie of Louis Napoleon, Create Space Independent Publishing Platforms
- Masmoudi, M. (1992) “The new world information order” in Journal of Communication, 29 (2), pp 172-185

- Mattelart, M. and Mattelart, A. (1990) The Carnival of Images: Brazilian TV Fiction, NY: Praeger
- Matos, Carolina (2014) “The Internet for the Public Internet: Overcoming the Digital Divide in Brazil” in Martens, C., Vivares, E. and McChesney, R. W. (2014) The International Political Economy of Communications – Media and Power in South America, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan
- , C. (2012) Media and politics in Latin America: globalization, democracy and identity, London: IB Tauris
- , C. (2008) Journalism and political democracy in Brazil, Maryland: Lexington Books
- , C. (1999) “Gender representation: liberating the female and repressing the male in Absolutely Fabulous” (unpublished article)
- Maynard, M. (1998) “Women’s Studies” in Jackson, S. and Jones, J. (eds.) Contemporary Feminist Theories, Edinburgh University Press, p, 248- 257
- McLaughlin, L. and Carter, C. (eds.) (2014) Current Perspectives in Feminist Media Studies, London and New York: Routledge
- McMillin, Divya (2007): ‘Reviving the Pure Nation: Media as Postcolonial Savior’ [ch. 4] in International Media Studies, Malden, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, p. p. 66-101
- McNeil, M. (2013) “Cyberspace” in Evans, Mary and Williams, C.(eds.) Gender – Key Concepts, London: Routledge, p. 41- 48
- McRobbie, A. (2009, 2010) “Postfeminism and Popular Culture: Bridget Jones and the new Gender Regime” in The Aftermath of Feminism – Gender, Culture and Social Change, London: Sage, p. 11-24
- McPhail, T. (2009) “Feminism in a post-development age” in Development communication: reframing the role of the media, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, p. 141- 159

Melkote, Srinivas R. (2003) “Theories of Development Communication” in International and Development Communication: a 21st century perspective, London: Sage Publications, p. 129-147

-----, Srinivas R. and Steeves, Leslie H. (2001) Communication for Development in the Third World – Theory and Practice for Empowerment, London: Sage Publications, p. 19-46, 71-103

Miguel, L. F. and Biroli, F. (2014) Feminismo e politica, SP: Boitempo

Mill, J. S. (1869) The Subjection of Women, London: Longmans Green Reader and Dyer

Miller, T. (2006) Cultural Citizenship: Cosmopolitanism, consumerism and TV in the neoliberal age, US: Temple University

Mills, S. (1998) (eds.) “Post-colonial Feminist Theory” in Jackson, S. and Jones, J. (1998) (eds.) Contemporary Feminist Theories, Edinburgh University Press, p. 98 – 111

Minella, L. S. (2004) “A contribuicao da Revista Estudos Feministas para o debate sobre genero e feminismo” in Estudos Feministas, Florianopolis, 12 (NE): 264, setembro-dezembro, p. 223-234

Mody, B. (eds.) (2003) International and Development Communication: a 21st century perspective, London: Sage Publications, p. 1-5

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade (1984, 2000). Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses. In Kolmer, Wendy K. and Bartkowski, Frances (Ed.), Feminist theory: a reader, N York: McGraw Hill, p. 372-379

-----, Chandra (1991) “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarships and Colonial Discourses” in Mohanty, C., Russo, A. and Torres, L. (eds.) Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism, Indiana University Press, p. 51-81

Momsen, J. (2003) “Introduction: gender is a development issue” in Gender and Development, London: Routledge, p. 1-20

Montiel, A. V. (2014) Media and Gender: a scholarly agenda for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender, France: Unesco and IAMCR publication

- Moreno, R. (2012) A imagem da mulher na mídia – controle social comparado, SP: Publisher Brasil, p. 21-54
- Mouffe, C. (2000) The Democratic Paradox, London: Verso
- , Chantal (1993) The Return of the Political, London: Verso, 61-89
- Mowlana, H. (1993) “Towards a NWICO in the 21st century?” in Journal of International Affairs, 47 (1). p. 59-72
- Mulvey, L. (1989) Visual and other pleasures, Basingstoke: Macmillan
- Narayan, U. (2002) “Contesting Cultures: Westernization, Respect for Cultures and Third World Feminists” in Schech, S. and Haggis, J. (eds.) Development: a cultural studies reader, London: Blackwell, p. 225- 238
- Nassif, L (2016) “Internet promove a inclusao, mas acesso ainda e restrito no Brasil” in GGN (17/06/16)
- Navarro, Marysa and Korrol, Virginia Sanchez (1988, 1999) Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: Restoring Women in History, Indiana University Press
- Nederveen Pieterse, Jan (2010) Development Theory, London: Sage, p. 1-35
- , Jan (2009) Globalization and culture: global mélange, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield
- , J. (1990) Empire and Emancipation: power and liberation on a world scale, NY and London: Praeger
- Nielsen, R. K. (2013) “Americanization Revisited: Political Journalism in Transition in the United States and Western Europe” in Kuhn, R. and Nielsen, R. K (eds.) (2013) Political Journalism in Transition: Western Europe in a Comparative Perspective, London: I.B. Tauris, p. 171-195

- Norris, Pippa (2004) "Global Political Communication: Good Governance, Human Development, and Mass Communication." in Frank Esser and Barbara Pfetsch (eds.) Comparing Political Communication: Theories, Cases, and Challenges, Cambridge University Press, p, 115-150
- , P. (2001) Digital divide: civic engagement, information poverty and the Internet Worldwide, Cambridge University Press
- Orgad, S. (2014) "When media representation met sociology" in Waisbord, S. (eds.) Media sociology: a reappraisal, London: Polity, p. 133-151
- Parpart, J., Connelly, P. and Barriteau, Eudine V. (2000) Theoretical perspectives on Gender and Development, Canada: International Development Research Centre, p. ix-xiii
- Pedwell, C. (2013) "Power" in Evans, M. et al Gender-Key Concepts, p. 181-186
- Petras, James (1999) "Globalization: a critical analysis" in Chilcote, Ronald H. (eds.) The Political Economy of Imperialism: critical appraisals, Boston: Klower Academic, p. 181-215
- Philips, A. (2010) "Multiculturalism, universalism and the claims of democracy" in Gender and Culture, Cambridge and Malden: MA: Polity Press, p. 16-38
- , A. (1999) Why Equalities Matter, London: Polity Press
- , A. (1992) "Universal pretensions in political thought" in Barrett, M. and Philips, A. (eds.) Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates, London: Polity Press, p. 10-31
- Pickering, M. (2001) Stereotyping: the politics of representation, London: Palgrave
- Piscitelli, A. (1996) "Sexo tropical: comentarios sobre genero e raca em alguns textos da midia brasileira" in Cadernos Pagu, SP: Campinas, 6/7, p. 9-33
- Plant, S. (1995) "The Future Looms: Weaving Women and Cybernetics" in Body and Society, London: Sage, p. 45-64
- Posocco, S. (2013) "Gender Identity" in Evans, M. and Williams, C.H. Gender – the key concepts, London: Routledge, p. 107-112

- Priore, Mary del (2004) Historia das Mulheres no Brasil, RJ; Planeta do Brasil
- Radcliffe, S. A. (2015) “Gender and Post-colonialism” in Coles, Ann, Gray, Leslie. and Momsen, Janet. (eds.) The Routledge Handbook of Gender and Development, London: Routledge, pg. 35-47
- Rai, Shirin M. (2011) “Gender and development: theoretical perspectives” in Visvanathan, N. Lynn Duggan et al (eds.) The women, gender and development reader, London: Zed Books, p. 28-38
- Ramazanoglu, C. (1989) “Feminism as Contradiction” and “What is wrong with feminism?” in Feminism and the contradictions of oppression, London: Routledge, p. 5-23, 24-42
- Reeves, H. and Baden, S. (2000) “Gender and development: concepts and definitions”, prepared for the Department for International Development (DFID)
- Remenyi, J. (2004) “What is Development” in Kingsbury, D., Remenyi, J., Hunt, J. and McKay, J. (eds.) Key Issues in Development, London: Palgrave Macmillan
- Richardson, N. and Wearing, S. (2014) Gender and the media, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 1-15
- Rocha, E. (2001) “A mulher, o corpo e o silencio: a identidade feminine nos anuncios publicitarios” in Alceu, v2, n. 3, p. 15-39
- Romm, N. (2002) “Critical theory and development” in Coetzee, Jan K. et al Development: theory, police, practice, Oxford University, p. 141-155
- Rousseau, Jean Jacques (1910, 2004) Discourses on the origins of inequality, Dover Publications Inc
- Rushton, W. and Lindstrom, E. (2013) “Intersectionality” in Evans et al Gender-Key Concepts, London: Routledge, p. 129-134
- Said, E. (1993) Culture and Imperialism, New York: Alfred Knopf

- Santander, P. (2010) "Latin America: political communications and media discourse in contexts of social and revolutionary transformations" in Journal of Multicultural Studies, 5 (3), p. 227-237
- Santos, Pedro G. and Jalazan, F. (2014) "The Mother of Brazil: Gender Roles, Campaign Strategy and the Election of Brazil's First Female President" in Raicheva-Stover, M. and Ibroscheva, E. (eds.) Women in Politics and the Media – Perspectives from Nations in Transitions, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, p. 167-180
- Sarikakis, K. (2014) "Arriving at a Crossroads: political priorities for a socially relevant feminist media scholarship" McLaughlin, L. and Carter, C. (eds.) Current perspectives in feminist media studies, London: Routledge, p. 105 – 111
- , K. Rush, Ramona, and Grubb-Swetnam, A. and Lane, C. (2008) "Feminist theory and research" in An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research, 2nd edition, London: Taylor and Francis, p. 504- 522
- Scammell, Maggie and Semetko, Holli (eds.) (2007) The Media, Journalism and Democracy, Brookefield, VT: Ashgate
- Scharff, C. (2013) "Femininities" in Evans, M. and Williams, C. H (eds.) Gender –Key Concepts, London: Routledge, p. 59-64
- Schech, S. and Haggis, J. (eds.) (2002) "Development as discourse" in Development: A Cultural Studies Reader, Oxford: Blackwell, p. 79-123
- Scheunich, J. (1997) "A Postmodernist critique of research interviewing" in Research Method in the Postmodern, London: Falmer Press, p. 61-80
- Schramm, W. (1964) Mass Media and National Development: the role of information in the Developing Countries, California: Stanford University Press, p.1-58
- Schopenhauer, A. "On Women" in On The Suffering of the World, Penguin Classics

- Schudson, M. (1989) "The sociology of news production" in Media, Culture, and Society, 11 (3),p. 263-282
- Shade, L. R. (2015) "Gender and digital policy: from global information infrastructure to Internet governance" in Carter, C. et al (eds.) The Routledge Companion to Gender and the Media, London: Routledge, p. 222-233
- Sen, Amartya (1999) "Women's agency and social change" in Development as Freedom, Oxford University Press, p. 189-203
- Serveas, J. (2012) "Comparing Development Communication" in Esser, F. and Hanitzsch, (eds.) The Handbook of Comparative Communication Research, p. 64-81
- Shohat, E. (2012) "Gender and the Culture of Empire" in Kearney, M. (eds.) The Gender and Media Reader, p. 86-103
- , E. & Stam, Robert (1994, 2012) "Stereotype, realism and the struggle over representation" in Unthinking Eurocentrism, multiculturalism and the media, London: Routledge, p. 178-219
- Sidanius, J. and Pratto, F. (2001) Social dominance theory: an intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Sigle-Rushton, W. and Lindstrom, E. (2013) "Intersectionality" in Evans, M. and Williams, C. (eds.) Gender – The Key Concepts, London: Routledge, p. 129-134
- Silva, K. and Mendes, K. (2014) "Negotiating the local/global in feminist media studies – conversations with Ana Carolina Escosteguy and Anita Gorumurthy" in McLaughlin, Lisa and Carter, Cynthia (eds.) Current Perspectives in Feminist Media Studies, London: Routledge, p. 127 – 130
- Silverman, D. (ed.) (2004) Qualitative research – theory, method and practice, London: Sage
- Silverstone, R. (2002) 'Complicity and Collusion in the Mediation of Everyday Life', New Literary History, 33(4): 761-80

- Snyder, L. B. (2003) "Development communication campaigns" in Mody, B. (eds.) International and development communication – a 21st century perspective, London: Sage, p. 167-188
- Souza, Lisani Albertini (2009) "A pre-historia da imagem estereotipada da mulher brasileira: desvendando o estereotipo" in Revista Cordis: Revista Eletronica de Historia Social da Cidade (www.pucsp.br/revistaacordis), unpublished
- Sparks, C. (2007) Globalization, Development and the Mass Media, London: Sage Publications, p. 126-176
- Sperling, L. (2001) "Women, political philosophy and politics: theory and practice in conflict" in Women, Political Philosophy and Politics, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, p. 1-21
- Spivak, Gayatri (1988): "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (eds.) Marxism and the interpretation of Cultures, University of Illinois Press, p. 271-316
- Steeves, L. (2003) "Development Communication as Marketing, Collective Resistance and Spiritual Awakening" in Mody, B. (eds.) International and Development Communication – a 21st Century Perspective, London: Sage, p. 227-244
- Stevenson, R. L. (1988). Communication and Development in the Third World: The Global Politics of Information. New York: Longman
- Straubhaar, J. D. (2010) "Beyond media imperialism: asymmetrical interdependence and cultural proximity" in Thussu, D. (eds.) International communication: a reader, London: Routledge, p. 261-278
- Tavares Soares, L. (2005) "A persistencia das desigualdades de genero no Brasil", *Outro Brasil*, 10th of April 2009, <http://www.lpp-uerj.net/outrobrasil/docs/2811200516244An%C3%AlliseLaraNov05.doc>
- Thussu, D. and Nordenstreng, K. (2015) "Introduction: contextualising the BRICS media" in Mapping BRICS Media, London: Routledge, p. 1- 23

- , Daya Kishan (2006) International Communication – Continuity and Change, London: Arnold, p. 11-21, 53-82
- , D. and Freedman, D. (2003) War and the media, London: Sage Publications
- Thomas, P. (2014) “Development Communication and Social Change in Historical Context” in Tufte, Thomas et al The Handbook of Development Communication and Social Change, John Wiley, p. 7-20
- Thornham, S. (1998) (eds.) “Feminist Media and Film Theory” in Jackson, S. and Jones, J. (1998) (eds.) Contemporary Feminist Theories, Edinburgh University Press, p. 213 – 227
- Tuchman, Gaye (1972, 1999) “Objectivity as Strategic Ritual: An examination of Newsman’s notions of objectivity” in Tumber, H. (eds.) News: a Reader, Oxford University Press, p. 297-308
- , G. (1978) Introduction – the symbolic annihilation of women by the media. In Tuchman, G., Daniels, Arlene Kaplan and Benit, J. (ed.) Heart and home: images of women in the mass media. NY: Oxford University Press, p. 3-38
- Tomlinson, John (1997) “Cultural Globalization and Cultural Imperialism” in Mohammadi, Ali (eds.) International Communications and Globalization: a critical introduction, London: Sage Publications, p. 170 - 190
- Uzeda da Cruz, S. (2008) “A representacao da mulher na midia: um olhar feminist sobre as propagandas de cerveja” em Revista Travessias, vol. 2, Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Parana
- Valdiva, A. N. (2015) “Latinas on TV and film – exploring the limits and possibilities of inclusion” in Carter, C. et al (eds.) The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender, London: Routledge: p, 579 – 587
- Van Dijk, Teun A. (2005) “Opinions and Ideologies in the Press” in Bell, Allan and Garrett, Peter (eds.) (2005) Approaches to Media Discourse, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p. 21-64

-----, Teun (2001) “Critical Discourse Analysis” in Schiffin, Deborah, Tannen, Deborah and Hamilton, Heide E. (eds.) (2001) The Handbook of Discourse Analysis, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p. 351-372

Van Zoonen, L. (1994, 2000) Feminist Media Studies, London: Sage Publications

-----, L. (1992) “The Women’s Movement and the Media: constructing a public identity” in the European Journal of Communication 7, p. 453-476

Vargas, V. (2010) “Constructing New Democratic Paradigms for Global Democracy – the contributions of feminisms” in Maier, E. and Lebon, N. (eds.) Women’s Activism in Latin American and the Caribbean – Engendering Social Justice, Democratizing Citizenship, p. 319-334

Veiga, M. (2014) Masculino, o genero do jornalismo: modos de producao das noticias, Florianopolis: Insular

Visvanathan, N. and Duggan, Lynn et al (eds.) (2011) The women, gender and development reader, London: Zed Books

Voltmer, Katrin (2006) (eds.) Mass Media and Political Communication in New Democracies, London and New York: Routledge, p. 1-21, 246-256

-----, Katrin and Schmitt-Beck, Rudiger (2006) “New democracies without citizens? Mass media and democratic orientations – a four century comparison” in Mass Media and Political Communications in New Democracies, London and New York: Routledge, p. 199-211

Waisbord, S. (2001) Family tree of theories, methodologies and strategies in development communication: Convergences and differences. Available at: www.comminit.com/pdf/familytree.pdf

-----, Silvio (2000) Watchdog Journalism in South America: News, Accountability and Democracy, NY: Columbia

- Walby, Sylvia (1997) "Gender politics and social theory" and 'Backlash' to feminism" in Gender Transformations, London: Routledge, p. 137-166
- Waugh, P. (1998) (eds.) "Postmodernism and Feminism" in Jackson, S. and Jones, J. (1998) (eds.) Contemporary Feminist Theories, Edinburgh University Press, p. 177 – 193
- Waylen, G. (1996) Gender in Third World Politics, Open University Press
- Wendon, C. (1999) Feminism theory and the politics of difference, London: Wiley-Blackwell, p. 1-26, 178-198
- Weber, M. (1905, 2013) The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism, Create Space Independent Publishing Platform
- Wilkinson, R. Pickett, K. and Dorling, D. (2015) Injustice: why social inequality still persists, London: Policy Press
- Williamson, J. (1978, 2002) "Introduction – Meaning and Ideology" in Decoding advertisements: ideology and meaning in advertising, London: Marion Boyars, p. 11-20
- , J. (1986) "Women is an Island – Femininity and Colonization" in Modleski, T. (ed.) Studies in Entertainment – Critical Approaches to Mass Culture, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p. 99 – 117
- Wilkinson, K. and Pickett, E. (2009) The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better, US: Bloomsbury Press
- Wollstonecraft, Mary (1996) A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, New York: Dover Publications
- Young, Iris Marion (2002) Inclusion and democracy, USA: Oxford University Press, p. 52-108
- , Iris Marion (1990, 2011) Justice and the politics of difference, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p. 39-66, 192-226

-----, Iris Marion (1990) “A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship” in Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory, Indiana: Indiana University press, p. 114-141

Yuval-Davis, Nira (1997, 2010) “Theorising gender and nation” in Gender and nation, London: Sage Publications, p. 1-25

International reports and secondary documents

Atlas of Gender and Development: How Social Norms Affect Gender Equality in non-OECD countries, 2010. A report by OECD – Better policies for better lives

Broadband Commission for Digital Development, 2013. Doubling Digital Opportunities: Enhancing the Inclusion of Women and Girls in the Information Society. A Report by the Broadband Commission Working Group on Broadband and Gender. Geneva/Paris: ITU/UNESCO
Finlandia Declaration (World Press Freedom Day, Access to Information and Fundamental Freedoms – This is Your Right!), 2016. A Report by UNESCO, 03/05/2016

Global Monitoring Media Project, 2015. A Report by the Global Media Monitoring Project

The Global Gender Gap Report, 2012. A Report by the World Economic Forum

“Tolerancia social e violencia contra a mulher” (Social tolerance and violence against women), 2013. A Report by IPEA (*Instituto de Pesquisas de Economia Aplicada*), Brazil

Instituto Patricia Galvao, Representacoes das mulheres nas propagandas na TV (Representation of women in TV commercials), 2013. A report by Instituto Patricia Galvao and Data Popular, with the support of Ford Foundation.

Protagonist Women, Policy in Focus, March 2014, no. 27. A publication of the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Reporters Without Borders For Freedom of Information. 2016 World Press Freedom Index

Plano Nacional de Políticas para as Mulheres (National Plan for Policies for Women), 2013-2015.

A report by the Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres, Brazil.

UNESCO, 2013. World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development Report. Paris:

UNESCO

UNESCO, 2008. Media development indicators: a framework for assessing media development,

2008. Paris: UNESCO

UN Women. Annual report 2013-2014. A Report by the United Nations Women.

WORLD BANK. The World Development Report – Gender Equality and Development, 2012

WORLD BANK GROUP, Voice and Agency – Empowering Women and girls for shared prosperity, 2014.

Appendix

Bio of interviewees

- 1) Randi Davis – Director of the Gender Team, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- 2) Miriam Grossi – Professor of Anthropology and coordinator of the unit on Identities, Gender and Subjectivities at the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC)
- 3) Nadine Gasman – Representative of the Office of ONU Mulheres in Brazil
- 4) Bia Cardoso – Brazilian feminist activist and coordinator of the web portal, *Blogueiras Feministas*
- 5) Lucia C. Hanmer – Lead economist in Gender and Development at the World Bank Group.
- 6) Ashleigh Kate Slingsby – Guest editor of the Protagonist Women, Policy in Focus report, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- 7) Paul Healey – Head of Profession Social Development for the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID)
- 8) Linda Goulart – Former executive-secretary of the Secretaria de Políticas da Mulher (SPM)
- 9) Marta Suplicy – A former psychologist and minister of Culture, Marta Suplicy is a senator of the PMDB party.
- 10) Boris Utria - General coordinator of operations of the World Bank in Brazil.

ⁱ See full list in the appendix.

ⁱⁱ The whole process was seen as very controversial, resulting in a cabinet of ministers composed of all white and rich men, many with corruption allegations. Moreover, important ministries dedicated to social issues, such as the Ministry

for the Policies for Women, which I examine in Part IV, as well as the Ministry of Culture, Race Equality and Human Rights, were all extinct and reduced to secretaries.

ⁱⁱⁱ Grossi was interviewed for this research via e-mail in October, 2015.

^{iv} See also Miguel and Biroli (2008) article on gender and politics in Brazilian journalism and also *Caleidoscopio convexo* (2011) on women, politics and the media.

^v *Revista de Estudos Feministas* can be accessed at the link (http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_serial&pid=0104-026X&lng=en&nrm=iso) and *Cadernos Pagu* also at (http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_serial&pid=0104-8333&lng=en&nrm=iso).

^{vi} The term “gender mainstreaming”, which means the assessment of the different implications for men and women of planned policy action, came into use with the adoption of the Platform for Action at the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference which was held in Beijing.

^{vii} Randi Davis was interviewed for this research via e-mail in October 2015.

^{viii} Interviewed by phone and via e-mail for this research on the 12/08/2015. See further details in the appendix.

^{ix} The term *feminization of poverty* was first coined in the 1970’s but only started to influence development debates in the mid-1990s in the context of the 1995 UN conference and the perceptions that women were the ones largely affected in the world by poverty (Rai, 2011, 174). The strength of the “feminization of poverty” thesis is that it brought attention to the large numbers of women in the world living in poverty, and the consciousness of the vulnerability that many women in the world face (Rai, 2011, 175).

^x See “Closing the gender gap worth \$ 12tn globally, say researchers” in *The Guardian* (24/09/2015).

^{xi} Interviewed for this research via e-mail in October 2015.

^{xii} Paul Healey was interviewed for this research on the 28/08/2015. See the article also “If society does not treat women as equal – they won’t be” (19/09/2014) (accessed on (<https://dfid.blog.gov.uk/2014/09/19/if-society-doesnt-treat-women-as-equal-they-wont-be/>)).

^{xiii} As Burton (2001, 2004 in Coetzee et al, 442) notes, the Indian satellite TV experiment (SITE) launched in the country in the late 1970s saw the combination of politics, technology and development communications in its aim to provide information to remote areas of the country. This was done through the use of satellites and TV receivers based in schools, producing mixed results. Some argued that it was envisioned by elites as a way of providing moments of relaxation to rural Indians, whilst others stated that it was successful as an infra-structure for learning.

^{xiv} See Matos (2008) and (2012).

^{xv} In 2015, the film *Suffragettes*, directed by Sarah Gavron, was seen by some critics as an opportunity for many to have wider knowledge of the early feminist movement. Some have seen the film as a conservative portrayal of a revolutionary movement (“Suffragette review – a conservative account of a revolutionary moment” in *The Observer*, 11/10/2015). Others remembered some of the conservative and paternalistic tendencies of some members of the movement, who would later join in the war effort and in the British Union of Fascists. However, there was also controversies around the use by the actresses in the film, such as Meryl Streep, of the T-shirt with a sentence which is attributed to Emmeline Pankhurst, “I would rather be a rebel than a slave”, with accusations of insensitivity and proof that “white feminists” had still to come to terms with their racism.

^{xvi} The acclaimed Brazilian film, *The Second Mother* (Muylaert, 2015) is a social commentary on how ingrained class and hierarchical attitudes in Brazilian society are, and are examined in a context of changing social changes of the last decades, since the re-democratization phase of the 1990s, and which produced the strong conservative backlash which culminated in the take over of the government in April 2016 by an extreme-right wing coalition. These oppressive strategies in Brazil have always functioned to “kept certain people in their place”, having been reinforced (even unconsciously) by supposedly nice and well meaning liberal people, and this can be said of other countries besides

Brazil. Thus in the case of *The Second Mother*, this is made evident in the oppressive behaviour practiced by upper class (even liberal) groups towards members of the working class, which the film depicts.

^{xvii} For more on the discussions on the concept of patriarchy within feminist theory, see among others Walby 1986, Hartmann, 1976 and Delphy and Leonard, 1992 in Jackson, 1998. As Yuval-Davis (1997, 2010, 7) notes, the criticisms towards the notion of “patriarchal societies” as being part of a distinct social system rests on the assumption that in some cases, women do have power over men. The concept also does not seem to take into account the intersection of other forms of oppression, including the impact of capitalism and racism.

^{xviii} See the full story in “A Feminism where ‘lean in’ means leaning on others”, by Gary Gutting and Nancy Fraser (accessed on 18/10/15 http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/10/15/a-feminism-where-leaning-in-means-leaning-on-others/?smid=fb-share&_r=1)

^{xix} For further details, see the full report *Girls’ Attitudes Survey 2015*, on the website of the charity (<http://new.girlguiding.org.uk/latest-updates/making-a-difference/girls-attitudes-survey-2015>).

^{xx} In the UK, feminists have long campaigned against the so-called “Page 3 girls” from the *The Sun* and also against the objectification of women done by what is known as the “lad’s magazines”. Some argued that these images contribute to form part of the country’s *collective psyche* on what the average or “normal” British women should be like.

^{xxi} The term ideology is highly contested and has a range of meanings, with no one having come up with a single definition. As Eagleton (1991, 2007, 1) affirms, some definitions of ideology include, among others: “1) the process of production of meanings, signs and values in social life; 2) a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group...; 3) ideas which help legitimise a dominant political power...4) false ideas which help to legitimise political power...5) distorted communication... and 6) forms of thought motivated by social interests.” As Eagleton (1991, 2007) further argues, some of the definitions are pejorative, including the more Marxist idea of a “false consciousness”, or definitions which imply that some forms of thinking are ideological over others, seen as “impartial or neutral”, and which are usually attached to beliefs such as the free market and capitalism. These in themselves can also be seen as *ideological*. I thus use ideology more in line with the first definition, mainly the process of production of meanings, signs and values, and how these interact with wider social and political factors. This is more closely associated with the notion of *discursive practices* which are at play in everyday life.

^{xxii} See the image on the following website: <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2002/04/afghan-girl/index-text>

^{xxiii} See the story “A Life Revealed”, by Cathy Newman, (April 2002 – accessed <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2002/04/afghan-girl/index-text>). Asked if she ever felt safe, she responds that no, and that her life was better under the Taliban. “At least there was peace and order” is the response. The story also revealed that her name was Sharbat Gula and that she was from Pashtun, considered one of the most warlike of the Afghan tribes.

^{xxiv} See the image at *OPI launches Brazil collection* (accessed at <http://www.hellomissniki.com/2014/02/opi-launches-brazil-collection/>) and Sharp’s magazine story “The women of Brazil” (<http://www.sharpmagazine.com/women/the-women-of-brazil>) accessed on the 11/13/2015.

^{xxv} See “ChitChatNails” (January 2014, accessed at (<http://www.chitchatnails.com/2014/01/09/opi-brazil-collection-for-springsummer-2014/> on 11/11/2015).

^{xxvi} See the image at the *Collection by OPI- Brazil* (<http://www.opi.net.au/brazil.html>).

^{xxvii} See the story “Prostitutas brasileiras chegam a 7 mil na Espanha, afirma pesquisadora” (“Brazilian prostitutes in Spain reach 7.000, says researcher” in *Reporter Brasil*, 19/10/10).

^{xxviii} See “Medeiros: “A desigualdade do Brasil é disfuncional para a democracia” (Inequality in Brazil is dysfunctional for democracy in *El Pais Brasil*, 04/11/2015).

^{xxix} What the data gathered by various institutes reveals is that the *reduction* in the gender pay gap has been uneven and not steady, moving backwards and forwards, with better improvements for women in the public sector and of services, and worse in the industry where men still dominate.

^{xxx} See “Dois seculos separam mulheres e homens da igualdade no Brasil” (“Two centuries oppose men and women from equality in Brazil”, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, 26/09/2015).

^{xxxi} Data from the United Nations Women in Brazil further underscored that Brazilian women, although being represented by 51.5% of the population, controlling 24 million families in a context where the chief householder has passed from 22.2% to 37.3% between 2000 and 2010, men still earn 25% more in average than their female counter-parts.

^{xxxii} See among others the stories “Brazil: Feminists take to the streets against Cunha and bill 5069/2013” in *Sexuality Polity Watch* (29/10/2015) and professor Carla Rodrigues’ article “Mulheres pagam a conta de Cunha” (Women pay Cunha’s bill, in *O Globo*, 29/10/2015).

^{xxxiii} Abortion in Brazil remains a taboo topic, and is permitted only if the pregnancy puts the life of the woman in danger or if the pregnancy is the result of rape.

^{xxxiv} A crime that shocked public opinion in Brazil in May 2016 was the collective rape of a 16 year old girl by thirty three men in a shanty-town in the country, with the video of the incident filmed and later shown in social media networks.

^{xxxv} See “Brasil aprova a lei do feminicidio, mas nao ha consenso quanto a sua eficacia no combate a violencia de genero” (Brazil approves the femicide law, but there is no consensus on its efficiency in the fight against gender violence) by Fernanda Canofre in *Global Voices* (27/03/2015).

^{xxxvi} The *Maria da Penha* Law was implemented in 2006 during the mandate of former president Lula. The law stipulates protection to women victims of violence, tougher penalties for the aggressor and judicial mechanisms for domestic violence. The law nonetheless has not been immune from controversies, including the accusations that violence against men also occurs and needs to be better addressed, and that the legislation could also be subject of abuse. The executive-secretary of SPM, Linda Goulart, emphasised some of the contributions of the law, including the reduction in 10% of homicide against women inside their homes. “The law increased the penalty for light corporal punishment in cases of domestic violence to until three years and also took out the obligation for the victim of maintaining the complaint against the aggressor during trial and reduced the time between the police investigation and the judicial decision,” stated the executive-secretary of SPM.

^{xxxvii} Interviewed for this research in August 2015.

^{xxxviii} See the story “20 mil mulheres negras de todas as regioes do Brasil estarao reunidas em Brasilia para marchar contra o racism, a violencia e pelo bem viver” (20 thousand black women of all the regions of Brazil are in Brasilia to march against racism, violence and for quality of life) in the website *Articulacao de Mulheres* (<http://articulacaodemulheres.org.br/>). For more details on the report, see *Mapa da Violencia 2015 – Homicidios de mulheres no Brasil* <http://www.mapadaviolencia.org.br/pdf2015/mapaViolencia2015.pdf> and the *9*Anuario Brasileiro de Seguranca Publica* (<http://www.forumseguranca.org.br/>).

^{xxxix} According to the statistics provided by the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (Isaps), Brazil moved to be world leader in the practice in 2013, surpassing the US with 1.49 million operations. These represented nearly 13% of the world’s total aesthetic surgeries. The US came in second place with 1.45 million. The most common surgeries in the country, according to Isaps, were the liposuction (228.000), the implementation of breast silicon (226.000) as well as breast enhancement (140.000). Women also corresponded to a total of 87.2% of those contemplated in all aesthetic surgeries and non-surgeries conducted in 2013 worldwide. For more information on this, see “Brazil lidera o ranking mundial de cirurgias plasticas” (*Brazil leads the world ranking in plastic surgeries* in *Veja*, 30/07/2014).

^{xl} For a critical evaluation of the emergence and development of the black women movement in Brazil, see Caldwell’s chapter “Advocating for Citizenship and Social Justice: Black Women Activists in Brazil” in Elizabeth Maier and Nathalie Lebon’s edited book, *Women’s Activism in Latin America and the Caribbean*, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press. Moreover, the problem of the denial of racism, and the reluctance of taking a more active stance to combat it, has been widely criticised. A story published in the newspaper *O Globo* in 2011 (“EUA criticam racismo no Brasil” (US criticise racism in Brazil, *O Globo*, 16/02/2011) showed US diplomats criticising the country for its difficulty in dealing more seriously with discrimination and racism. Nonetheless, significant measures have been adopted by governments in

the last decades. Caldwell (2010) argues that the policy shift started during the second mandate of the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso. In a 2001 report to the *Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*, the Cardoso government admitted to the existence of racism in Brazil, implementing an affirmative action programme in Brazil's diplomatic institution, the *Instituto Rio Branco* as well as having signed a decree that implemented an affirmative action programme in Brazilian public administrations (Caldwell, 2010, 183). The administration of former president Lula further advanced many measures, including the creation of the Special Secretary of Promotion of Racial Equality (SEPPIR), with Brazil becoming the first country in Latin America to have a federal organ dedicated to challenging racism (Caldwell, 2010, 184). Governments have implemented quotas in universities and public institutions to increase the representation of blacks and indigenous populations in these sectors, a measure which has for years widely resisted in universities as well as attacked by sectors of right in the country. The University of Brasilia (UnB) was the first institution in the country to implement the quotas. Gradually other public universities and institutions started to adhere to the programme. In 2013, the Dilma government implemented a law obliging the federal institutions and public universities to adopt the quotas. According to the law, 12.5% of the vacancies must be reserved for students from former state schools, and which needed to be taken by blacks, *mestizos* and indigenous groups. Half of the total of quotas, which correspond to 25% of the vacancies of the institution, must be filled by students who are from families with an income inferior to 1.5 of the minimum wage per capita ("Implementacao da Lei de Cotas em 2013 sera exigida por decreto", (Implementation of the Quotas law will be demanded by decree in *Portal Brasil*, 08/10/12, www.brasil.gov.br/educacao/2012).

^{xli} See Djamila Ribeiro's article "O corpo da mulher negra como pedaco de carne barata" (The body of naked black women as cheap meat in *Blog do Sakamoto*, 04/11/2015).

^{xlii} See the image in the story "Devassa pode ser multada em 6 milhoes por propaganda abusiva" (*Devassa* can be sued in 6 million for offensive propaganda) in *Revista Exame* (04/10/2013). In October 2013, the ministry of Justice said it was going to install a law suit against the beer brand *Devassa*. The complaint against *Devassa* was done by the consumer complaints service from the state of Espirito Santo to the *Department of Protection and Defence of the Consumer*. The Conselho Nacional de Autorregulamentacao Publicitaria (Conar) (National Council for Advertising Self-Regulation) never suspended the ad, although it did recommend changes. However, in November 2013, a judge from Espirito Santo argued that there was no racist message, having ruled that the beer brand *Devassa* should not accept the complaint made by three women who had filed a petition against the brand.

^{xliii} See the story "Por ser mulher e negra, Maria Julia Coutinho sofre duplo preconceito" (For being black and a woman, Maria Julia Coutinho suffers from double prejudice in *Mulher Uol*, 06/07/2015, accessed at <http://mulher.uol.com.br/comportamento/noticias/redacao/2015/07/06/por-ser-mulher-e-negra-maria-julia-coutinho-sofre-duplo-preconceito.htm>).

^{xliv} For further details see Franks (2013) *Women in Journalism*, London: I.B. Tauris. See also "Women Experts – or the lack of them – on TV and radio news" in *National Union of Journalists*, 25/04/2014).

^{xlv} The stories published were "A separacao doi, mas pode trazer a sensacao de renascimento"; "Pare de sofrer, aprenda a se desapaixoaonar em cinco passos"; "...inspire-se com 30 looks da atriz Megan Fox"; "Filha de Kelly Key tem loiro "perfeito"...."; "Absorvidas, celulas do bebe protegem a mae de doencas futuras" e "Lidandao com filhos – Oscilacao de humor reduz a medida que o jovem cresce".

^{xlvi} For more information, see the stories "Propagandas machistas e o mimimi dos homens" (Chauvinistic ads and the mimimi of men) in the feminist blog *Frida Diria*, accessed at <http://www.fridadiria.com/propagandas-machistas-e-o-mimimi-dos-homens/> and "Sua propaganda vende machismo, nao produtos" (Your ads sell chauvinism, not products) in *Carta Capital*, 24/03/2015, accessed at <http://www.cartacapital.com.br/blogs/escritorio-feminista/sua-propaganda-vende-machismo-nao-produtos-4119.html>).

^{xlvii} The sexual harassment in Brazilian newsrooms has always been a problem. In June 2016, a journalist who denounced that she had been the victim of harassment by a Brazilian male celebrity was dismissed from the news website that she worked for, the IG portal. Shortly afterwards, the journalist Janaina Garcia launched the campaign *#jornalistascontraassedio* (journalists against sexual harassment) on social media.

^{xlviii} See "Maioria dos brasileiros acha que publicidade trata a mulher como objeto" (Most Brazilians think that advertising treat women as objects" in *Carta Capital*, 30/09/2013) and the details on the research at:

http://agenciapatriciagalvao.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/representacoes_das_mulheres_nas_propagandas_na_tv.pdf.

^{xlix} See the story “A publicidade brasileira e a mais machista do mundo” (Brazilian advertising is the most chauvinistic in the world) in *Articulacao Sindical* (27/07/2015) and also “A publicidade brasilita e ridicula” (Brazilian advertising is ridiculous), by Jarid Arraes in *Revista Forum* (05/03/2015).

^l See “Na publicidade, o machismo e a regra da casa” (In advertising, chauvinism is the rule of the game”), in *Carta Capital*, 22/03/2015.)

^{li} See “Bombril – Diva Devagar – Ivete Sangalo- Monica Iozzi – Dani Calabresa”, accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftSYeutKdZU>, August 13th, 2015.

^{lii} See the image in the story “Conar manda Itaipava suspender cartaz por apelo excessivo” (Conar tells Itaipava to suspend the poster due to its excessive appeal), accessed at <http://www.revistaforum.com.br/2015/06/20/conar-manda-itaipava-suspender-cartaz-por-apelo-excessivo/>

^{liii} See <http://www.bikini-brasil.co.uk/>.

^{liv} See “Gisele Bündchen’s Lingerie Ad Sparks Controversy”, accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFgpL15zKDE>, October 2011.

^{lv} See image in the story “Mulher tera mais tempo livre se comprar maquina de lavar, diz Fast Shop” in *Ad News*, accessed at (<http://adnews.com.br/publicidade/mulher-tera-mais-tempo-livre-se-comprar-maquina-de-lavar-diz-fast-shop.html>), 05/03/2015.

^{lvi} See the front covers of the magazine in the link (<http://www.serpui.com.br/br/press/cosmopolitan-brazil-april-2015/>).

^{lvii} See “Publicidade comeca a dar primeiros passos para deixar de ser machista” (Advertising starts to take the first steps to stop being chauvinistic, in *Mulher Uol*, 03/09/2015) and “Like a Girl vence Emmy de melhor commercial” (Like a Girl wins Emmy of best commercial” in *Revista Exame*, 14/09/2015.

^{lviii} See “ONU estima em 81 anos o prazo para se atingir a equidade de genero” (UN estimates in 81 years the time needed in order to reach gender parity”, in *Agencia Brasil*, 07/03/15).

^{lix} Philips is not the only author who has noted the problem of equal worth, and the current zeitgeist of our times which creates a culture of disdain and disrespect for the poor, seen as envious of the rich, in contrast to an exaggerated respect (and even uncritical) respect for the rich and successful. In his acclaimed book, *Injustice: why social inequality still persists*, which I have discussed more elsewhere (2012), Daniel Dorling talked about what he claimed to be the five tenets of injustice, or beliefs and attitudes, that perpetuate inequality, such as elitism and the fatalism with prejudice, examining those most affected by these beliefs. In *The Spirit Level: why more equal societies almost always do better*, which I also discussed elsewhere (Matos, 2012), Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) examined the social ills brought by inequality, including the lack of respect granted to the poorer and less advantaged sectors of society, causing various problems which range from low self-esteem to mental health issues, such as depression. What also becomes evident here, similarly to what Philips (1999) had already argued through her reference to David Miller, is that *social* inequality appears to be more damaging than economic equality, given that people are not really interested if the rich have finer cars, but are more worried about the judgements made towards them of their equal worth (and the lack of opportunities that comes with this assumption). The sharp differences between people in terms of income also reinforces in group thinking, with the tendency of the members of more privileged groups of only socialising and relating to others similar to them.

^{lx} The lack of consensus-building amid the growth of ideological polarisation between the main parties in Brazil during 2014 and 2015 culminated in a search for consensus through the judicial system. This was largely due to the refusal of the opposition party to Dilma and the Worker’s Party (PT) to compromise and engage in talks, taking political advantage of the economic recession and of corruption scandals, which also marked the administration of previous Brazilian presidents. Rather the choice taken was to undermine the government in power, leading to the overthrow of the government and the installation of an authoritarian administration.

^{lxii} Women represent only 6.4% of the directorships of the biggest 100 firms in Latin America, according to the *Corporate Women Directors International* (CWDI), and which was launched by the *Global Summit of Women* in 2014. Nearly half (47) of these firms do not have one woman in their administrative council. Latin America is behind North America with 19.2%, Europe 20% and the Asian Pacific, 9.4%. Among the Latin American countries, Colombia appears as leader, with 13.4% of the seats in the council of their biggest firms occupied by woman, which represents more than double the average of the region. Brazil, whose companies compose nearly half of the biggest firms on the list, the average is merely 6.3%.

^{lxiii} See the story “Partidos que nao cumprirem cotas de mulheres poderao ser punidos” (Parties that do not compromise with the quotas for women can be punished) in *Jornal do Brasil*, 17/03/2009).

^{lxiiii} Senator Marta Suplicy is emphatic in her defence of the implementation of further quotas to increase the participation of women in politics: “...the current state of inequality that we have in politics is a mere reflection of what we face as a society. The election of the first female president signalled at first to be something that would give impulse, but we still need to go a longer way. When we launched the legislation on quotas for the parties, the requirement was of 7%. We know that we cannot advance more with this. If the quota for the parties had actually punished those who had not compromised with it, we could be in a better situation today. But the parties systematically twisted the legislation until, from 2009 onwards, with the 12.034 law, there was an alteration to the 9.504 bill. This changed the scenario, and made the parties act in order to uphold the minimum number of 30%, in other words, it forced the adherence to the law. That is why we are trying to approve quotas in Congress. Our priority is to approve quotas for women in the legislative powers (of 10%, 12% and 16%) in the next elections. If we keep the current rules, only in 2114 we will reach 30% in the Chamber of Deputies and only 2118 in the Senate. We recognise that women do not compete in the same equal conditions as men, and we need to reserve seats in the legislative houses so that the participation of women in politics is increased.” This interview though was given before the overthrow of the president Dilma Rousseff, with the creation afterwards of a cabinet of ministers by Michel Temer of only white, rich males, forcing the UN Women in Brazil to take the country off the list of female representation in government, previously alongside other Latin American countries.

^{lxv} Macaulay’s article “Trickling Up, Down and Sideways: Gender Policy and Political Opportunity in Brazil” gives further details and knowledge on the relationship between state structures, party politics and feminist movements and groups in Brazil. As she notes, the CNDM collaborated with the Ministry of Education on non-sexist school books and with the Ministry of Health to promote information on reproduction and contraception, including the implementation of the *Programa de Assistencia Integral ‘a Saude da Mulher* (Macaulay, 2010, 275). In the context of the re-democratization phase, it was also responsible for a series of important measures, including among others the creation of a Committee for black women, the application of institutional sanctions against businesses that violated labour laws and the establishment of women’s right to have land titles.

^{lxvi} Goulart stated that the main aims of the secretary until 2018 were to include the national implementation of the law Maria da Penha as well as the construction of twenty seven houses for the Brazilian women. Other measures included the stimulus for the economic independence of women in rural and urban areas and the incentive for female entrepreneurship, and the reduction in inequality of opportunities in the workplace through the Pro-Equity Race and Gender programme. The latter includes the participation of 83 private and public companies, and the creation of gender committees in all ministries to guarantee that policies contemplate the interests of women. The technical norms of the Secretary of Policies for Women (SPM) included a chapter on integrated mechanisms for prevention, including the articles on the prohibition of stereotypical roles that legitimate domestic violence in accordance with the Constitution; the promotion of educational campaigns to prevent domestic violence against women; the promotion of educational programmes which disseminate ethical values of respect to human dignity as well as the emphasis in school curriculums to human right issues, gender and race equality and the problem of domestic violence towards women (Moreno, 2012, 49).

^{lxvii} For further information, see “Quase 60% da populacao brasileira tem acesso a Internet, aponta relatorio da Cepal” in Nacoes Unidas (“Nearly 60% of the population have access to the Internet, highlights Cepal report”) and “Mulheres representam 53% dos internautas no Brasil, diz pesquisa” in *O Globo* (“Women represent 53% of the internet users in Brazil, says research”). According to the latter, 66.09% of the users are among the lower middle classes and 31.64% are represented by the middle and upper classes.

^{lxviii} See the website <https://ninja.oximity.com/>.

^{lxxviii}“Eleicoes 2010 - As outras candidatas” (*The other candidates*, Ligia Martins da Almeida in *Observatorio da Imprensa*, 21/09/2010).

^{lxxix} See “DivulgaCand 2014: aumenta participacao das mulheres na politica brasileira” (Participation of women in Brazilian politics increases) in *TSE Imprensa* (<http://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2014/Julho/eleicoes-2014-aumenta-participacao-das-mulheres-na-politica-brasileira>).

^{lxxx} See “Participacao das mulheres nas eleicoes cresce 46.5% em 2014” (Participation of women in the elections grows 46.5% in 2014) *Blog do Planalto* (19/01/2015) and “As mulheres nas eleicoes de 2014” (Women in the 2014 elections) in *Secretaria de Politicas para as Mulheres* (SPM) (16/01/2015).

^{lxxxi} Interviewed for this research via e-mail in October, 2015.

^{lxxxii} For more on this, see “Apelo feminista perde espaco no programa de governo de Dilma” (Feminist appeal loses space in the governmental programme of Dilma), 22/07/2014.

^{lxxxiii} See the story “ONU Mulheres condena violencia sexista contra Dilma” (UN Women condemn sexist violence against Dilma), in *Exame* magazine, accessed at <http://exame.abril.com.br/mundo/noticias/onu-mulheres-condena-violencia-sexista-contradilma> and also “The campaign to impeach Brazil’s president is viciously sexist”, in *The Cut*, accessed at <http://nymag.com/thecut/2016/04/brazil-sexist-impeachment-campaign-dilma-rousseff.html#>.

^{lxxxiv} See the story “Adesivos misoginos sao nova moda contra Dilma” (Misogynist stickers are the new fashion against Dilma”, in *Revista Forum*, accessed at <http://www.revistaforum.com.br/questaodegenero/2015/07/01/adesivos-misoginos-sao-nova-moda-contradilma/>.

^{lxxxv} See the image in the story “Contra a agressao a Dilma, Gleisi lanca movimento pela dignidade feminine” (Against the aggression towards Dilma, Gleisi launches a movement for the dignity of women”, published in the black feminist website Geledes, accessed at <http://www.geledes.org.br/contra-agressao-a-dilma-gleisi-lanca-movimento-pela-dignidade-feminina/>

^{lxxxvi} The story, “Bela, recatada e do lar” (Beautiful, restrained and from the home” can be accessed on the weblink <http://veja.abril.com.br/noticia/brasil/bela-recatada-e-do-lar> .

^{lxxxvii} See “Blogueiras impulsionam causas feministas na internet” (Bloggers encourage feminist causes on the Internet”) in *Diario MS*, 15/03/2014. The website can be accessed at <http://escrevalolaescreva.blogspot.co.uk/>

^{lxxxviii} The marches have taken place in Belem, Bahia, Minas Gerais, Brasilia, Campinas, Curitiba, Goiania, Guarulhos, Manaus, Natal, Porto Alegre, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Carlos, Sao Jose dos Campos, Sao Luis and Uberlandia.

^{lxxxix} The stories can be accessed at <http://agoraquesaoelas.blogfolha.uol.com.br/2016/02/22/mulher/>

^{lxxx} For details of the full report, see <http://whomakesthenews.org/gmmp/gmmp-reports/gmmp-2015-reports>.

^{lxxxii} The full list of founding members can be accessed on the website: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/3/press-release-media-compact>

^{lxxxiii} The manual can be accessed at Think Olga’s website, and through the link <http://thinkolga.com/2016/05/30/minimanual-do-jornalismo-humanizado-pt-i/> .