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Gender Studies within the Communication Field in Latin America: A Brazilian Perspective

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Introduction¹¹⁸

Since the late nineteenth century, women gradually initiated one of the great revolutions in the West, starting to be participating in society evermore actively. With this we positioned only a few in the public space, transcending the private sphere which until then was traditionally reserved to them. The change in social action is visible in the working environment and, consequently, in the extension of the possibility for a career– and the fundamental economic independence–, the emergence of community leadership, in research and education, including, though to a lesser extent, the representation in governmental and political systems (Miguel; Biroli, 2011).

This movement also occurs in Latin America. Here women's struggle develops supported by a great number of public spaces of academic discussion and exchange of experiences. We highlight the Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Encounters (EFLAC¹¹⁹), that have been taking place since 1981, which has an important position within the configuration of the region's feminists, in the articulation and conflicts in the feminist movement and also in their relationship with broader social movements.

This set of spaces constitute transnational spheres for dialogue which are organized outside the renowned public arenas, as the conferences

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118 This chapter takes more in-depth reflections from the authors in an article published in the Revista Famecos, vol. 23 nº2, cited in the bibliography.

119 The first EFLAC, placed in Bogota, in Colombia, gathered 189 women from 19 countries, aiming to gather feminists to exchange experiences, opinions and identify problems and allow a joint action towards these problems. These encounters than began to happen every two years, in several countries until 1990, when they became triennial. The last encounter (the event's thirteenth edition) happened in 2014 in Lima (Peru) and gathered about 1500 women, gathered around the theme "*Encuentros en la Diversidad: rebeldías, creaciones y transformaciones*" (Encounters in Diversity: rebellions, creations and transformations). The fourteenth EFLAC took place in November 2017, in Montevideo (Uruguay). We can find a History of the encounters, as well as a panorama of the discussions and activities of the thirteenth EFLAC in <http://www.13eflac.org>. The address on Facebook for the fourteenth EFLAC is <https://www.facebook.com/14EFLACUruguay/>. We can also find a reflection on the role and the promoters of the Encounters in Alvares, Sonia E., Friedman, Elisabeth J., Beckman, Ericka et all. (2003) referenced in this text's bibliography.

of the United Nations (UN¹²⁰). Considering these encounters “extra-official”, Alvarez, Friedman, Beckman, Ericka et al. (2003) discuss how to reinforce alternative ties and, by putting in contact women from several countries in different moments of their struggles, they help to build solidarities, changing the dynamics of movements on their local and national levels. Besides those, there are several national encounters organized in many countries of the continent, with a more militant character or mixing militancy in the academic discussion. It is the case of Brazil¹²¹ with its encounter *Fazendo Gênero*¹²² (Making Gender) among others, an event organized since 1990 by an interdisciplinary group of gender studies from the *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina* (Federal University of Santa Catarina) (UFSC) and that in its eleventh edition, in 2017, houses the 13th Women’s Worlds (WW) Conference, national encounter of that study area and militancy, which takes place for the first time in South America.

Women’s struggles, the Latin American feminism (Alvarez, Friedman, Beckman, Ericka et al, 2003; Femenias, 2007; Gargallo, 2007) is full of controversies, differences and distinct aspects among the several groups which are organized around it, since it is articulated from the women’s struggle which brings very diverse social and cultural impressions, composing specific agendas and sometimes even little compatible.

One of the aspects that characterizes the Latin American feminism is the binding and articulation to and of autonomous militance spaces as well as institutional with spaces within the universities (Machado, 1992). Since the eighties, these have become important loci to discuss either issue related to gender and sexuality, as feminist issues, since they contemplate the struggle for equality of rights electing, according to the place– the nation or university– some privilege matters. It was developed and are still studied in universities that emphasize the trajectory of women in the public world, the feminine work, marked by double or triple journeys in work and unequal incomes for the same

120 The UN has organized numerous conferences and encounters in which the issues on women’s inequality is central. It organized four World Conferences on Women (in Mexico in 1975, in Copenhagen in 1980, in Nairobi in 1985 and the fourth conference in Beijing). The conference in Beijing changes things when it switches the concept of Woman for that of Gender, adopting the Action Platform of Beijing, which addresses 12 critical situations as obstacles, as well as identifies specific measures to achieve equality. From Beijing, other meetings took place that pondered the difficulties to implement the Platform: Beijing+5, Beijing+10 and Beijing+15, in 2010 when it was formed the UN Women <http://www.unwomen.org/es/about-us/about-un-women>.

121 Since a very early stage, Brazil has featured as an important scene in the context of Latin America in women’s battles, but it wasn’t the only country showing the strength of this movement. On the other hand, its continental dimension has guaranteed the presence of an always significant number of activists in the transnational encounters, besides the organization of national spaces of exchanges and struggles which also gather hundreds of women.

122 *Fazendo Gênero*: <http://www.fazendogenero.ufsc.br/>

task, the unbalanced division of domestic responsibilities and with their children in the private world, the legal guardianship of women, of control of their sexuality, among other matters.

It is within this context that we place, later in the academy, the gender studies, to speak of the relationship between life in reality and theory, between daily life and knowledge. The field of gender studies, multi and interdisciplinary, conceived in the previous relationship between academy and feminism, is fundamentally positioned in researches bound to humanities. What's more, the content of this chapter intertwines with studies that think the constituent role of media in the discursive representations about the feminine/masculine, sexuality and gender, among other facets.

The strength of the field of gender studies and its intermingling with the media, however, seems not to be reflected upon the researches in communication in the Latin American space, at least when we look into studies anchored in the field of Communication. Hence, researches devoting a good part of their efforts to the analysis of narrative and discursive processes operated by journalism (Veiga, 2014), and by representations built by the media, besides the analysis of media production processes, which involve workspaces evermore feminine in many Latin American countries, come from other areas more than from the Communication Field¹²³.

1. Latin American Feminisms

We don't intend with this work to have a historical and contextual discussion on the emergence and existence of Latin American feminisms. However, since its constitution will reflect upon the studies on women/gender, it is important to present them and, especially, identify the differences and positionings that differentiate them concerning conceptions and developments of the feminist studies produced mainly in the United States and Europe, which have influenced them initially hegemonically. According to authors such as the Australians Connel and Pearce (2015), these hegemonic views over the field of feminist and gender studies fail to account the specificities of the issue in other parts of the world and Latin America, with its

¹²³ the constitution of Communication as a study field has been an object of intense reflection among Latin American investigators, especially Brazilians. We can see some of the discussion terms in Lopes (2006) and Braga (2011). What is important to this work specifically is to understand that the strength of the gender studies is not translated in terms of presence within the field of communication studies which, on the other hand, already has a consolidated disciplinary trajectory.

multiple racial and ethno-cultural crossings¹²⁴.

In the beginning of the Latin American emancipating feminine movements there bourgeois women fighting for vindications considered bourgeois, such as the right to education, the access to professions (as long as they're "respectable") to which, in early twentieth century, were added vindications to the right to vote (Küppers, 2001:17). To these pioneers of the twentieth century there were more to add, according to the country and its social and economic conditions, such as workers and an urban middle class in movements organized dialectically, and in the case of Latin America also in the fight against dictatorships which raged in the second half of the century.

By then, Alvarez (2014:17) points out the heterogeneity in the position of several protagonists of numerous movements that, gathered in forums like the Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Encounters, debated on who would be a feminist and who would be a militant organized in general fights and who wouldn't have the complete perception of the feminist struggle. To amplify even more the heterogeneity of this moment, there were an early presence and inflexion of "other" women: poor, black, indigenous and migrants who broke the uniformity of the movement.

Later, along with the political overtures and the gradual end of military dictatorships in the continent, Alvarez (2014) points to the *NGOzation*, a moment characterized by the process from which feminism is incorporated and become absorbed by non-governmental organizations, usually supported by national and international governmental funding, aside from organisms like the UN which, in exchange, become to privilege a certain type of work and action, resulting in a paradox effect:

In Brazil, as in many other countries of Latin America, we can say that those sectors most "NGOgized" of feminism have consolidated and became dominant, if not hegemonic, within the feminist field– benefiting in a privileged access to a public microphone and to many economic and cultural resources, hence exacerbating inequalities already inscribed in the feminism field and generating some new ones. (Alvarez, 2014 p.32)

However, what Alvarez identifies has "hegemonic feminism" sets over a political and conceptual heterogeneity that is the basis for the

124 Iso check Hemmings, 2009.

Latin American feminism and that, in the sight of Francesca Gargallo (2007), is related to colonialism and ethnical divisions that have always marked its constitution:

The ideology supporting the Latin American feminism is the result, as all ideas of anti-hegemonic policies, of a process of identification of political vindications and practices which has varied throughout history. The participation of community leaders, indigenous creoles¹²⁵ in the fight against colonialism had a large scale, though not recognized, and the liberal's triumph, in the majority of the continent, did not result in the equality for women. The legacy of the colonial racism didn't allow women to be recognized as such, having relegated them to categories related either to class of origin as to their ethnicity: white, interracial, indigenous and black didn't share world insights neither social spaces, only the masculine mistreat which, in the case of the last, was added to violence of gender and violence of race (Gargallo, 2007, n.p., free translation)¹²⁶.

A feminism built differently from the hegemonic, given that the struggles of Latin American women were pierced, from the beginning, by the anticolonialism fights and, later, in the twentieth century, by fights against dictatorships in the continent. According to Gargallo:

[...] the feminist ideas in Latin America are tied to the success of capitalism in the destruction of local cultures (called globalization), and to the continental reactive environment of a profound critique to the westernization of America, and to the sequels of

125 In Brazil and Portugal, creole means an afro-descendant. In some Latin American countries, however, the term means descendant of Europeans born in America. In Brazil, the derivative of the term "creole" is pejorative.

126 From the original: El ideario que sostiene al feminismo latinoamericano es fruto, como todas las ideas políticas antihegemónicas, de un proceso de identificación de reclamos y de prácticas políticas que han variado durante su historia. La participación de comuneras, criollas e indígenas en la lucha contra el colonialismo fue amplia, pero no reconocida, y el triunfo de los liberales en la mayoría del continente no redundó en el reconocimiento de la igualdad de las mujeres. El racismo heredado de la Colonia no permitió que las mujeres se reconocieran como tales, sino las relegó a categorías ligadas tanto a la clase de procedencia como a la pertenencia étnica: blancas, mestizas, indias y negras no compartían cosmovisiones ni espacios sociales, sólo el maltrato masculino que, en el caso de las últimas, sumaba la violencia machista y la violencia racista.

racism and colonialism which aim to reorganize the political ideas and practices of neoliberalism” (Gargallo, 2007, n.p., free translation)¹²⁷.

A feminism that questions the idea of the universal, that looks in part to de-westernize and decolonize¹²⁸ in order to rescue and build its own identity and a history reflecting life and culture of local populations decimated by the European colonialism, which in its most critique side fights the idea of liberal democracy as being empty, patriarchal and bound to heteronormativity.

Gargallo’s analysis also points to fundamental differences between the European and the Latin American feminism:

To get rid of the attribution of gender with its compulsory characteristics, women begin to be recognized in their history. They’ve suffered from exclusion and death, violence and denial of their word, belittlement and lack of rights since always. However, this is not the same as be recognized in the millions of witches murdered as a tribute to a modernity that wanted to exclude them from their economic power and their knowledge, as did the Europeans in the seventies, who recognized themselves in the massacre of the Latin American women, converting their body into an instrument for the subjection and reproduction of individuals against their culture, in a time *continuum* not detained in the sixteenth century, though reaches present times. (Gargallo, 2007, n.p., free translation)¹²⁹.

In the light of this, the explicit analysis which, in the Latin America

127 From the original: “[...las ideas feministas latinoamericanas se vinculan al éxito del capitalismo en la destrucción de las culturas locales (la llamada globalización), y al clima continental reactivo de profunda crítica a la occidentalización de América, y a sus secuelas de racismo y colonialismo que intentan reorganizarse en las ideas y las prácticas políticas del neoliberalismo.” (Gargallo, 2007, n.p.).

128 See Cláudia Lima Costa (2014) on the concept of decolonization.

129 From the original: “Para deshacerse de la asignación del género con sus características impositivas, las mujeres empiezan a reconocerse en su historia. Exclusión y muerte, violencia y negación de su palabra, inferiorización y falta de derechos las han acompañado siempre. No obstante, no es lo mismo reconocerse en los millones de brujas asesinadas como tributo a una modernidad que quería excluirlas de su poder económico y sus conocimientos, como hicieron las europeas, en la década de 1970, que reconocerse en la masacre de las americanas, la conversión de su cuerpo en el instrumento para la sujeción y la reproducción de individuos contrarios a su cultura, en una continuidad de tiempo que no se ha detenido en el siglo XVI sino que alcanza el presente.”(GARGALLO, 2007, n.p.)

case, there's still the aggravating factor of the massacre of ethnical/racial differences, which resulted in the lack of defining models. An example in Brazil is the lack of defining models to the afro-descendants and native ethnicities since they have been historically silenced/subsumed under the false idea of racial harmony. The Indians and afro-descendants, learn in schools versions of the history of white winners, with their heroes, both men and women. They were denied the cult to their traditions, to their heroes. With the change of paradigms of analysis, multiculturalism, the respect to differences, the strength to new social movements, have reversed this picture. It is where interdisciplinary gender studies come in, intersecting class markers, race/ethnicity, generations and other differences.

2. From Feminist Studies to Gender Studies¹³⁰

It was within this heterogeneous and extremely complex ensemble that were developed the academic feminist and gender studies in Latin America in a beginning stage, reflecting about feminist issues, the "feminism of equality" (Pedro, 2006).

An interesting aspect is that the feminist studies were elaborated mainly by women in academies who, engaged or not in certain feminist movements, began to reflect upon feminine issues, on the movements themselves and on sciences from which they were educated and with which they worked: History, Anthropology, Letters, Sociology, Psychology, Health Sciences, Politics, Justice, Engineering, among other subjects. The same way they questioned their places in social life, they also questioned the knowledge that was excluding them or, in some cases, belittling them. For that, they started to question the very theories that explained the social world, their organizations and their subjects. By questioning them, it became natural to develop studies and propose new concepts.

Also, we saw that in Latin America, development of studies on women since the sixties of the past century, motivated by feminist movements¹³¹. At first, studies about the *feminine condition*, fighting for *equality between sexes*, for the nondiscrimination of women, for the

130 The field of Gender Studies haven't substituted that of Feminist Studies. They were incorporated, opening the possibility to the unfolding of their issues, which caused, initially, a strong reaction of theorists groups and feminist militants (and not only in Latin America). Despite the resistance, the concept of gender was incorporated into the feminist field, causing to open it to new issues. Within the conception that gender is relational and the same social and historical structures that produce feminalities is also built masculinities, either homo or heteronormatives.
131 There a vast bibliography on this perspective beginning with the *Coleção Perspectivas Antropológicas da Mulher*, published by Zahar Editores, with numerous authors.

right to the participation in the public world, for equal opportunities in education, work, political participation, leading positions in companies and public service. A fight that, as shown by reality, is still in course.

In this stage, there were studies developed about the condition of women within the family and the sexual division in work, using theoretical conceptions of social sciences referent to the patriarchy and the class struggle. Que issue on the sexual division in the workplace has been fundamental to the discussion of the differences between men and women and for the debate on the persistence of inequality still today, as much in the private world, in domestic work, as in the public world, in the performance of professions which still today, in a way, tend to be sexualized as feminine– the case of those related to care–, and masculine– technical and managerial.

Then, studies in general turn to what was once called feminism of differences: women would be different from men, and those differences should be affirmed but should not be used to justify discriminations against women in a private context (e.g. in the family) or public (e.g. at school, at work).

Some of those studies did not escape the persistent tendency to naturalization, dichotomizing feminine and masculine roles, in a discourse that could be characterized as the other side of the coin: different women, though baring characteristics that made them superior to men. Parallel to this unfolding, either the concept of sexual roles as the classic theories of human and social sciences couldn't deal with¹³² the intricate issues of differences between men and women, in society in general and today. It is within this context that the categories woman, women, feminine condition, sexual roles, used in feminist studies, is substituted by the concept of gender¹³³, an important analysis tool in this field of studies.

According to Machado (1992), the incorporation of the concept of gender occurs in simultaneous with reflux in the traditional feminist militancy. From then, the academy begins to reorder its insight, by assuming as a paradigm the notion of gender which, as the author exemplifies, “points to the character implicitly relational of the feminine

132 Classic theories didn't provide Human and Social Sciences with the theoretical instruments that could deal with relevant issues in gender relations, as confirmed by Rubin (1975) and numerous feminist theorists (Many of them Marxists) like Heleith Saffioti (1992) in Brazil.

133 the category gender was initially used by the New Zealander psychologist John Money (1955), in his studies on hermaphrodites, published in the fifties in the United States. It was resumed by the North American psychoanalyst Robert Stoller (1968), in clinical studies he made about the sexuality, in which he developed the concept of gender identity. In the called second wave of the feminist movements, the category was then used by American feminist theorists (verify Rubin, 1975 and Scott, 1989, among others) in the senses to them attributed today and complexified (Butler, 1990).

and masculine. It indicates the demand for a theoretical positioning; it is not enough to choose the empirical object that is a woman. The studies do not need, nor induce into congregating exclusively women studying women” (Machado, 1992, p.9).

An insight highlighted in Brazil was the *Seminário Estudos sobre Mulher no Brasil: Avaliação e Perspectivas* (Seminar Studies about Women in Brazil: Evaluation and Perspectives), which took place in 1990 in Sao Roque (SP), and that “became a milestone in the transition from women studies to gender studies and the reflection about this field of knowledge” (Machado, 1992, p.10). To this author, the transition from the feminist studies to gender studies meant the overture into thinking the non-universality of the woman category and, consequently, the non-universality of all mentioned categories.

With the use of the gender concept, women theorists manage to emphasize the notion of the cultural building of feminine and masculine roles in the different societies, pointing out the relational aspect in the historic build of masculinities and femininities.

The conceptualization of gender as a category of analysis was significantly referred in Brazil and other Latin American countries, to the already classic text of the North American historian Joan Scott (1995) who highlighted the perception of the difference between sexes as a constitutive element of gender, first *locus* of the power relationships. The adherence to gender studies established different perspectives, first emphasizing the inexistence of a feminine identity that deals with a universal woman (white, belonging to the elite). As there isn't a universal man, there are singular women, of different generations, nationalities, social classes and ethnicities.

Gender studies are, therefore, intersectional (Brah, 2006; Piscitelli, 2008), for the gender differences are always intersected by other differences, of the race (ethnicity, of class, of age, among others. There is an infinity of differences through which subjectivities are built. Ideological, religious, political and other diversities that make the subjects live singularly their professions, creeds, social movements, political choices, sexual orientations, marriages, maternity, paternity, familiar relationships.

At last, this sort of studies refers that gender relations are not only between men and women but also between men and men, women and women, adults, children and elders, for we've always been gendered beings crossed by the gender identity building. The use of the gender category has opened conceptual possibilities for studies of masculinity, as well as it has amplified academic spaces of studies on sexuality, a

common object between academic militances and feminist, gay and lesbian movements.

In the epistemological field studies, which began with the discussions on the patriarchy under perspectives marked by these theories, Marxist theory and for the confrontation with the psychoanalyst's conceptions of subjectivity (Scott, 1995), were developing through the use of theories post-structuralist, resulting today in the so-called queer¹³⁴ studies (Preciado, 2011, 2013, 2014; Butler 2006; Miskolci, 2012) and Latin America, de-colonial studies (Costa, 2014; Lugones, 2014).

3. Gender and Communication in Latin America

The fourth *Conferência sobre a Mulher* (Conference about Women), organized by the UN, known as the Beijing Conference (1995), referred to the centrality of the relationship with the media since it is a field of production of representations and insights of the world essential in contemporary societies, perhaps the field of production of meanings— included there those of gender, race, sex, ethnicity and social identities. Therefore, thinking about the relationship between Gender and Communication is not only necessary as it is strategic.

In Latin America, an important and necessary facet linking Gender and Communication pertains to the institutionalized mapping of international organisms which gathers militants of journalism, communication companies and scholars to 1) identify the way gender issues are reflected upon the media; and 2) propose specific actions in the change of the relationship between media and issues and aspects of gender matters. There are many efforts in this sense, and one of the most notable initiatives is the *Proyecto de Monitoreo Global de Medios* (Project for Global Monitoring of Media), carried out by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) which, from the Beijing Platform (1995), every five years registers and analyzes how news media treats and represents women around the world. The monitoring is worldwide and has been important to show the way women are represented in the media and incentives actions of transformation in the several supporting countries.

The results in Latin America are significant. According to the last

¹³⁴ Despite the possible overture of the studies to the employment of the gender category, authors such as Burke and Reigada (2006) refer to damaging developments in case the concept sets apart from the feminist theory, which the authors understand as a political and theoretical base of the concept. The same happens to queer studies. Many feminists say the use of the concept de-politizes the field, for it would take the focus off issues such as subordination and oppression of women. See Connell and Pearse (2015:140).

mapping released, referring to the relationship between women and media between 2010 and 2015¹³⁵, despite showing that “in the last decades, the difference of gender between people who appear in the news decreased drastically in Latin America, with an impressive 13%, going from 16% in 1995 to 29% in 2015”¹³⁶, the report shows that regional news include as sources only 27% of women, in the Caribbean region 29% and in North America 32%.

Other mentions are the unbalanced representation of men and women in news media, being that men dominate the scenario while subjects of news and as journalists¹³⁷. In general, women are in charge of the matters referent to the private: health and society, while men are usually in charge of what refers to the public, reproducing and reinforcing stereotypes of specific places or the masculine and feminine, which is also reproduced in the news about women, which in the great majority focus on “traditional” spaces and occupations of the feminine.

Analyzing the sources present in journalistic matters, the Mapping shows that men are privileged as sources in all matters considered important, as women are sources of “minor” issues, therefore of the “feminine sphere”. Furthermore, women are often referenced through their kinship (wife of, daughter of); in other words, they’re branded as non-self-sufficient nor independent people.

Another fundamental aspect relates to the research made starting from the relationship between gender and media. In this sense, there is in the region an important production about the matter, starting from other fields of knowledge, especially that of human sciences, and that are organized in workgroups and disperse studies, besides seminars and national and international encounters, like the *Seminário Internacional Gênero, Sexualidade e Mídia* (International Seminar of Gender, Sexuality and Media), which takes place in Brazil and it’s going on its fourth edition. In these spaces, the discussion on the representations of the feminine and otherness takes place and there is special care with the identification of stereotyped representations in journalism and propaganda¹³⁸.

135 Available in <http://whomakesthenews.org/gmmp-2015>

136 From the original: “En los dos últimos decenios, la brecha de género entre las personas que aparecen en las noticias se redujo radicalmente en América Latina, con un impresionante 13% al pasar de 16% en 1995 a 29% en 2015.”

137 This reality has been changing in several countries and, especially in Brazil, it has been altered with the massive presence of women in the profession (63% of journalists are women). However, this quantitative increase does not reflect in promotions to leading positions and hasn’t changed the relation of subordinate either, as the study by Mick and Lima (2013) shows.

138 Aside from works for the identification of how women are understood in the media productions there is an increasing scope of works that amplifies the discussion involving all open perspectives through the discussion of gender which, however, we won’t address it

However, the perception of the media centrality in the building of gender roles, very explored by many disciplines, is not as significant in studies made within and from the Communication field¹³⁹. In Brazil's case, for instance, known in the continent for its strength and solidity either concerning the feminist movements as gender studies and research, it is a paradox that there is little relevance in these studies in the field of Communication and the initiatives that think the relationship media and gender, for instance, usually come from other fields of study, namely Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology and Letters.

In a previous work (Martinez; Lago; Lago, 2015), in an exploratory study based in data on the research in Journalism in Brazil, in ten years there were only seven works relate with women's studies and in only one of them was there the presence of the gender concept. We've opted for the data basis of journalism, for researches in journalism in Brazil go side by side with pioneering initiatives of research in journalism in Brazil. It stands out the work of Dulcília Buitoni (1981/2009), on *Mulheres de Papel* (Paper Women). The authors' intention with this work was that of making the first study on the representation of women in Brazilian feminine press and this work had become a classic in this area. By approaching the feminine press in the country, this work addresses broader issues, such as the social role of women and her political participation which has been increasing in the last decades. However, since the beginning, these study initiatives in journalism are scarce and, unlike other areas, seem not to follow the tendency of Gender studies which pervade close disciplinary fields.

In Brazil, the little insertion of gender studies from the Communication field was already perceived and pointed out; we believe this can also be so in Latin America. Despite the difference of consolidation of gender studies in many countries, we have strong indications of its evidence, which we can refer in observations in Latin American journals in the Communication field.

It is the case of the journal *Chasqui*, published by the International Center for Advanced Studies in Communications for Latin America (Ciespal). The importance of Ciespal for the consolidation of the Communication Field in the region was already documented by several authors (Berger 2001; Melo, 2009). Its publication, *Chasqui*¹⁴⁰, Latin American Magazine of Communication, since 1972 and is in its 131st

in-depth in this work.

139 As an example, we see that either the *Revista de Estudos Feministas* as *Cadernos Pagu*, published special dossiers on Gender and Media (respectively nº15, 2007 and nº 21 in 2003), dossiers that gather, in comparison to other fields, little investigators of Communication, as we'll explain later in this text.

140 Search made the publication's website: <http://www.revistachasqui.org/index.php/chasqui>

issue. In a universe of 168 articles, published from 2013 to 2016 in 21 editions (among reports, articles and essays, not counting on reviews) only ten works mention gender concerning the matter¹⁴¹, most of them only by inserting the word in the text¹⁴².

The same can be observed when related to the *Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencias de la Comunicación*, published since 2004 by the *Journal of Latin American Communication Research* (ALAIIC). Looking for the word “gender” in their website¹⁴³ there were found nine works, being that only in four of them the concept of gender is understood under the perspective of this text.

We point out to the sex of the authors. In total, there were six authors responsible for the four articles. Of these, four (70%) were men, which contradicts gender studies of other areas of knowledge, at least until the present moment. We must also stress out that none of the works has established profound discussion with the literature on gender studies of other areas of knowledge devoted to the matter, notably History, Anthropology or Sociology. That result is similar to that found in the universe of investigators in journalism (Martinez; Lago; Lago, 2015). Therefore, in the light of this, Communication investigators, who in some way context the gender perspectives in the Latin American magazine are exploring the matter from epistemological and methodological experiences which dominate, though they still can't extend this dialogue with their peers of other areas of knowledge. It is particularly interesting when we realize that the authors of three of the four selected texts are from Spain, a country where studies intertwining Gender and Communication follow a distinct tradition and have stronger ties.

If this webpage turned to the scientific publications from the field of communication points to the minor representativity of gender studies, then we can see the same when we look into specific publications on Gender, traditionally multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary.

This is what we see, for instance, in the production of articles for the *Revista de Estudos Feministas*, an important interdisciplinary journal devoted to the field of gender studies in Brazil. This journal, created in 1992 by renowned Brazilian women theorists of the Southeast region of the country, since 1999 based in the *Universidade Federal*

141 As in Spanish as in Portuguese, the term gender in communication either refers to issues of gender as it refers to gender studies (e.g. opinionative and informative in journalism, drama and melodrama in cinema) the term, when searched goes for works not related to what is discussed in this text.

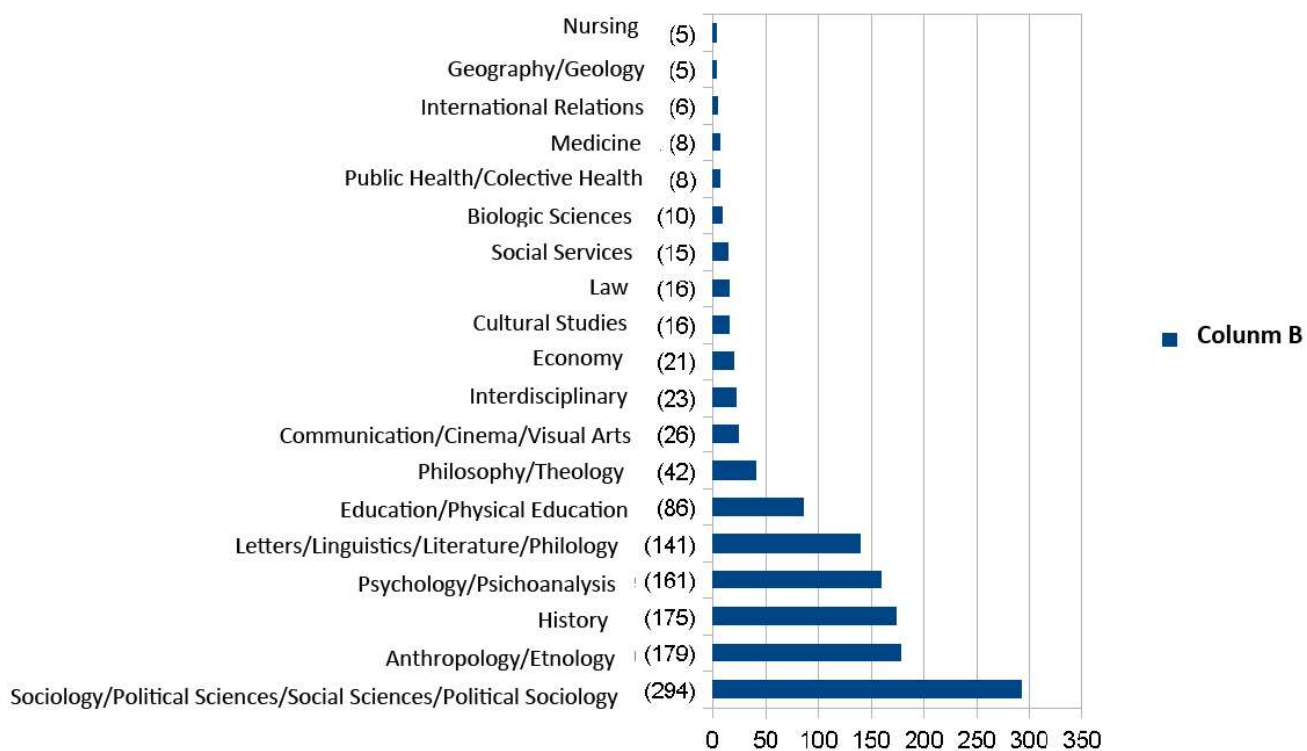
142 it is interesting mentioning that in 1994, the Magazine dedicated a special edition to the matter of Communication and Gender. However, recently it's been observed that the allusions are only passing by. Only one work is true about the problematic of Gender.

143 <http://www.alaic.net/revistaalaic/index.php/alaic>

de Santa Catarina (Federal University of Santa Catarina), South Region, constitutes, together with the *Cadernos Pagu*, edited in the Universidade Estadual de Campinas (State University of Campinas) (SP), the most important academic journals in Brazil in the field of gender studies. Has as its main objective to disseminate and promote the extensive production of knowledge in the field of gender and feminist studies, looking to subsidize theoretical debates in this area, and to the practices of feminist movements and the defence of sexual, ethnical and racial equality against all forms of discrimination. When we look upon its production between 2003 and 2016, we see that articles from the Communication area appear in a much lower number concerning other disciplines, like Sociology, History and Anthropology (Lago and Uziel, 2014).

The graphic below identifies the areas of the authors published in the journal:

Disciplinary fields by author (2003/2017)



Source: Banco de Dados da Revista de Estudos Feministas,
by Rita Maria Xavier Machado

The graphic puts in first place in the ranking the area of Social Sciences– Sociology and Politics and also shows a significant production in the area

that gathers Letters, Literature, Linguistics and Philology. However, even though the area of Communication, Cinema and Visual Arts is ahead of the others, the sum of texts produced in that area is not even 10% of the field. Besides, the number is still very incipient given the prominence of media in the building of representations of gender and sexualities, fundamental aspects in the field of gender studies. Furthermore, the studies taking media as an object, thinking of the construction of gender representations in journalistic vehicles, for instance, occur from spaces not dedicated specifically to research in Communication.

The graphic above reveals the little significance of the number of authors from the field of communication publishing back then (which is repeated in *Cadernos Pagu*, according to Lago and Longhini, n.p.).

We see a paradox when analyzing the number of texts produced on media, for instance, we see that the picture is not the same, for the articles keep on piling, including with the publishing of dossiers about this matter in issues of both journals¹⁴⁴. However, we will also verify that those articles were produced by professionals from other areas of expertise, namely Letters, History, Anthropology and Sociology.

Sure, many journals are interdisciplinary, and many investigators prefer to direct their production to qualified journals of their area of expertise and professional action. But the analysis of Brazilian publications in academic journals and congress annals of the Communication area, have revealed a very incipient production of articles and researches in the field of gender studies. These observations do not extend to the analysis of the publication of books and collections in Brazil and Latin America, where the production by researchers from communication can be more significant.

This undersizing of matters of gender/feminists/women in the communication field is not identical in all of the Latin American continent, as it couldn't be in any other way. However, some countries, like Argentina, have the tradition of regularly producing scientific knowledge about the matter from the perspective of Communication.

However, the phenomena observed in Brazil seems to repeat itself, that is, the prevalence of studies which come from other disciplines and not from the field of Communication. Although this perspective anchors in the transdisciplinary inherent to the gender concept, it is important to observe that this concept is not yet ingrained within Communication like other fields of knowledge.

144 The dossiers are in *Revista Estudos Feministas*, v.15, n° 1, 2007 and in *Cadernos Pagu*, n° 21, 2003, as quoted before.

4. Final Deliberations

Gender studies, which began tied to the feminist matrix, have extended and made visible in Latin America, no matter the regional differences or of countries. An important part of these studies, which focus on the relation between gender and communication, has been stimulated from a militant perspective, recognizing that media represents an important role in contemporary societies, by being a privileged agent in the construction of meanings either about the feminine as about the masculine, but also about sexuality and sexual normative. These constructions, however, aren't linear nor follow only one determiner. On the contrary, they are extremely complex and in need of insights also complex, able to embrace the numerous aspects related to the attribution of meaning and the construction of identities, which is also in play in this process.

This complexity hasn't been gone unnoticed in the studies that articulate gender and media in Latin America, that problematize the relation media, gender and consumption, for example. Studies that, most of them, involved investigators tied to other disciplinary fields than that of Communication. This perception is based in mappings we've been doing, mentioned before, and also in the daily life of the field, in congresses and scientific meetings, and needs to be problematized.

The first issue refers to the interdisciplinary status of the study field of gender, which mixes necessarily knowledge from several points of the universe. This condition, in a way, explains the set of significant works that, devoted to thinking in the media/gender relations, originate in other fields than that of Communication. But it doesn't explain the why of, in Communication, works and investigations devoted to that relationship were so visible, or, despite existing, they don't form a cohesive body capable of being consolidated in lines and projects of research easily identified and legitimized in academic spaces.

This little visibility of works is as important as we thinking that gender issues have occupied an ever larger space in the mediatic mainstream, and in alternative models, especially in a moment when, in Brazil's case, conquests in the struggle for the end of inequalities of gender and the acceptance of other patterns of sexuality not based in heteronormative patterns, they've been under attacks and reactions of conservative sectors of society, many linked to religious groups.

The possible consequences of this picture aren't unequivocal, for they must articulate the issue of the theme and the concern towards gender studies, which motivate investigators into embracing them,

building of the Communication field (Bourdieu, 2008) in the midst of internal disputes which classify the choices of their objects, methods, themes and theories more or less legitimate.

Is not the goal of this work to try to answer to this ascertainment, for that would demand another kind of investigation and approach. But we can point to some elements that help to redirect the posterior hypothesis. The first element relates to the constitution of the Communication field of studies as a close connection to the professions of Communication and many times reflecting on demands directly bound to these spaces. On their turn, these spaces are branded by the absence of a look over gender issues, as seen in previous work (Lago, Lago and Martinez, 2016), in which the majority of journalists men and women (in an average of 70%) questioned if the gender differences affected their work, they responded no, that gender is not something that might be perceived as a problem or a professional matter. This disregarding of the questions about gender in the professional field can be related to the yet small production of gender studies by the scholars and professionals in the field of communication, at least by those investigators who have established careers.

As an encouragement, we've perceived, namely through our daily life in classrooms, that a new crop of investigators in training, in post-graduation degrees, or even in early investigations in graduation, has brought the perspective of Gender in their multiplicities. These new investigators will certainly impact the Field of Communication, making of Gender Studies a fundamental part in this space. This is our hope.

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