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9-27-2018

The election and impeachment of Dilma Rousseff, Brazil's first woman president

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dos Santos, Pedro A. G., "The election and impeachment of Dilma Rousseff, Brazil's first woman president" (2018). *Forum Lectures*. 383.

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*“The Election and Impeachment of Dilma Rousseff,
Brazil's First Woman President”*

Pedro A. G. dos Santos, Political Science Department

Outline

- Rousseff's political trajectory
- Women's representation and women's empowerment
- Women's empowerment under Rousseff
 - Appointment
 - Policymaking
 - Symbolizing

Background: Dilma and 2010 Elections

- Involved in student and guerilla movements during dictatorship (1970s)
- Worked in state government (RS) as a PDT member (1990s-2000s)
 - Joined the PT in 2000
- Hand picked by Lula to be his successor (2010)
 - Mother of Brazil



Dilma Rousseff's Inaugural Speech

“I know that this tenure must include the most generous translation of this bold popular vote, after electing to the presidency a man of the people, a worker, **now decide to call a woman to direct the destiny of the country.** I come to open the doors so a multitude of other women can, in the future, be presidents; and so—today—**all Brazilian women feel proud of being a woman.** I am not here to laud my own biography; but to glorify the life of every Brazilian woman. **My supreme commitment—and I reiterate—is to honor the women,** protect the frail, and govern for all! I come, above all, to give continuity to the biggest affirmation process this country lived in the recent years. I come to consolidate the transformative work of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, I come to consolidate the transformative work of President Lula, with whom I had the most vigorous political experience of my life and the privilege to serve this country, by his side, these past years” (Rousseff 2011).





2011-2016: Election, Re-Election, and Impeachment

- 2011-2013: Relatively calm period (high approval ratings)
- 2013: June protests
 - Bus fare, World Cup, corruption, rejection of government
- 2014: Contested re-election
- 2016: Impeachment
- 2018: Senate candidate



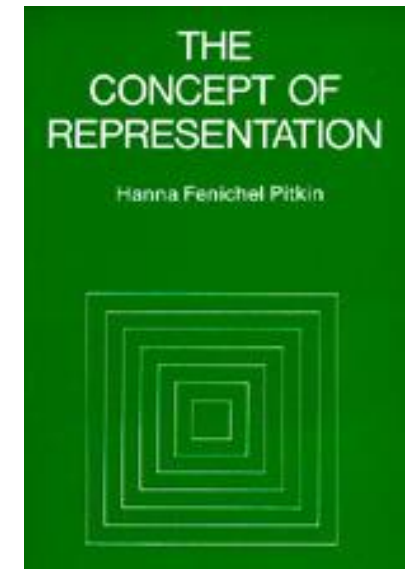
Presidentas, Women's Representation and Women's Empowerment

Theory of Representation (Hanna Pitkin)

- Formalistic (rules of the game)
- Symbolic (emotional response among constituents)
- Descriptive (composition of legislature-what representative **looks like**)
- Substantive (**acting for** constituents)

Executive Empowerment Framework: goes beyond “representation theory” (Pitkin) and links effects specific to national executives and interconnections between different institutions:

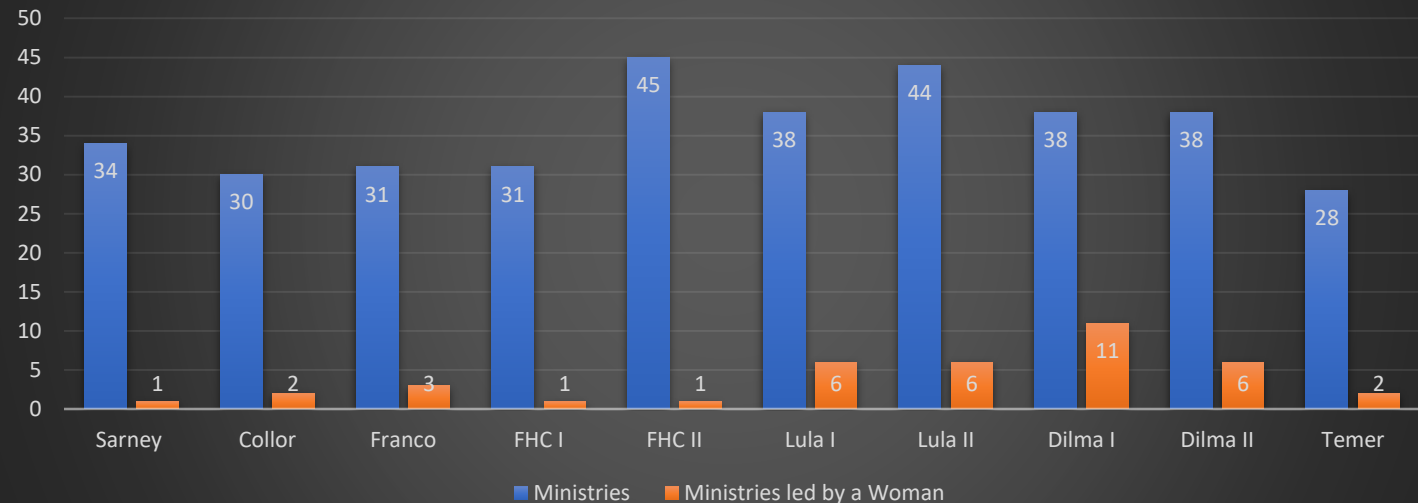
- Appointment
- Policy Making
- Symbolizing



Empowerment through Appointment

- Tracking quantities and types of executive appointments and comparing women presidents' appointments of women to cabinet positions to their male predecessors and successors
- Assesses respondent views about reasoning behind appointments
- Complications-partisan and coalition context; influence of male predecessors, pipeline of women

Ministries Led by Women

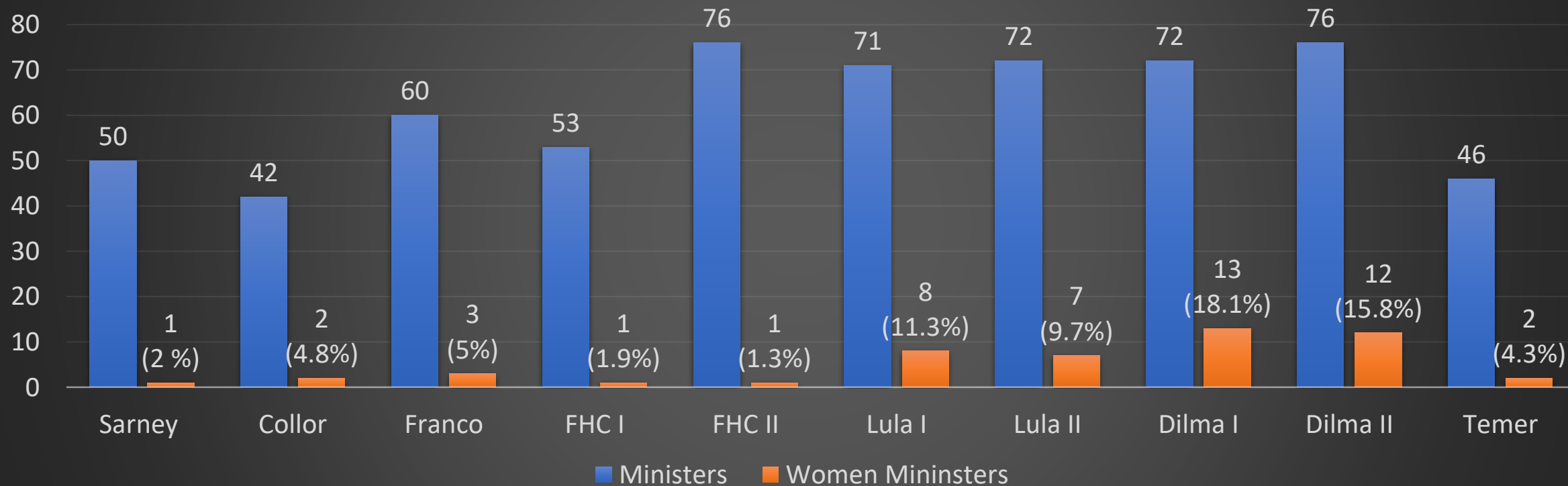


*All women appointed by Lula and Dilma were from the PT's "quota" for cabinet positions (no other party proposed a woman in a ministry)

Source: Biblioteca da Presidencia

(<http://www.biblioteca.presidencia.gov.br/presidencia/ex-presidentes>)

Women Ministers



Gender-composition of Cabinets, by Cabinet Prestige (Rousseff, I-II)

2011-2014	Total Ministers	Low Status	Medium Status	High Status
Women	15 (18%)	5 (36%)	4 (11%)	1 (8%)
Men	68 (82%)	9 (64%)	32 (89%)	11 (92%)
Total	83 (100%)	14 (17%)	36 (43%)	12 (14%)

2015-2016	Total Ministers	Low Status	Medium Status	High Status
Women	7 (11%)	2 (22%)	2 (8%)	1 (10%)
Men	55 (89%)	7 (78%)	22 (92%)	9 (90%)
Total	62 (100%)	9 (14%)	24 (39%)	10 (16%)

Empowerment Through Policy Making

- Engages president's policy priorities and public statements including speeches to their presidential decrees, policy initiatives, offering support to legislation from Congress, executive funding of projects
- Incorporates respondent views about the extent to which presidents supported policies that empowered women
- Complications-partisanship/ideological similarities to the previous administrations in which some shaped policy; partisan/coalition/legislative dynamics; strength of parties; role of women's movements

Checkered Status

- Most policies an extension of Lula's policies:
 - Gendering Bolsa Familia and Minha Casa Minha Vida
 - Brasil Carinhoso
- A Few (controversial) "Dilma Policies":
 - Rede Cegonha (Controversial Name)
 - Casa da Mulher Brasileira (Controversial Policy)
- Move backwards on abortion
 - "Dilma gave away the abortion issue during the 2010 campaign."





Empowerment through Symbolizing

- Examines data from representative surveys before and after women took office
- Perceptions about the treatment of women, whether the public views politics as a domain for women, and if they think women make good political leaders
- Assesses respondent views about symbolic representation effects of presidents

Context from Interviews

- Dilma's presidency an important symbolic event for women in Brazil.
 - Positive (almost unanimous feeling): "She showed that a woman can be president."
 - Negative: It showed the level of misogyny in Brazilian politics (possibly deterring women from running for office)
 - True verdict still a question mark: Gender quota law enforcement (fundo partidario) and a Dilma/Marielle effect may be at play in 2018- wait and see.
- Woman as a political symbol a complex issue
 - Presidente/Presidenta
 - Political violence against women
 - Conservative Congress and population

