

**DOIS GÊNEROS, DUAS HISTÓRIAS? A FUNDAÇÃO
DA CIÊNCIA POLÍTICA NO BRASIL
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By the late 1990s, US academia had begun to critically examine women's status and gender inequalities within political science, marking the emergence of a specialized subfield focused on issues such as publishing, citations, education, and harassment in the discipline. However, scholarly work addressing these themes in Latin America only started to appear in the mid-2010s and remains limited, especially in book-length form. In this context, Marcia Rangel Candido's *Dois Gêneros, ¿Duas Histórias?* represents a significant milestone in advancing the study of gender and political science in the region and beyond.

This impressive book, based on Candido's award-winning doctoral dissertation (Institute of Social and Political Studies of the State University of Rio de Janeiro, IESP-UERJ), was published as part of the "Sociedade e Política" collection by Editora da Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (EdUERJ). It asks how men and women contributed to the institutionalization of political science in the Global South (p. 38). Through an empirical study of Brazil's political science community from the mid-1950s to the present, Candido analyzes how gender inequalities have shaped its development (p. 41).

The book is organized into four chapters, progressing from general data to in-depth analysis, plus an introduction and conclusion. Chapter 1, "Uma crítica às narrativas da História da Ciência Política no Brasil", critically examines the history of political science in Brazil, highlighting gender biases in foundational narratives. Chapter 2, "Relações de gênero na profissionalização da Ciência Política no Brasil: formação, associações e redes", provides data on gender diversity in education, professional careers, and networks within the field. Chapter 3, "Cartografia e tipologia das pioneiras da Ciência Política brasileira", presents a typology and mapping of the intellectual contributions of pioneering women in Brazilian politics. Finally, Chapter 4, "Dois gêneros, duas histórias? Trajetórias de fundadoras e fundadores da Ciência Política brasileira", compares the trajectories of six male and six female founders, analyzing how gender influenced their education, internationalization, citation impact, and teaching legacies.

This research constitutes, to date, the strongest example of a coherent, methodologically robust, and comprehensive study of the state of political science in a country from a gender perspective. In terms of its approach, the book is novel in (at least) two aspects.

First, while most studies in this field rely on a single methodological lens — often quantitative — Candido adopts a mixed-methods design which enables her research to capture the phenomenon in its complexity. By integrating diverse tools such as archival research, descriptive statistics, interviews, career trajectory, and

bibliometric analyses, the author reveals connections between dimensions usually studied separately.

Second, the book proposes a historical approach to the study of gender inequalities in political science, departing from the premise that the origins of the discipline are essential to understanding its contemporary structure and dynamics.

The book's main contribution lies in revealing the (in)visibility of women in the history of Brazilian political science and its implications. Candido demonstrates that women were present and active in the discipline from its foundation, sometimes holding positions of power, defying the narratives that portray political science as a male-dominated field. This is relevant because, as the author explains:

The definition of founders of an academic discipline is important because it affirms an intellectual legacy for future generations and guides a possible symbolic perspective on which social profiles are more suited to certain fields of work. The identification of pioneers also provides exemplary cases for long-term studies that undertake trajectory analyses and allow the examination of potential obstacles faced by individuals, according to their socially constructed characteristics (p. 40, the translation is mine).

However, from the analysis of the works of political scientists in the editorial circuits of pioneering journals — according to their place of publication, frequency of output, and timing of dissemination (p. 183) — Candido finds variation in women's participation. Based on this, she proposes a categorization of female contributors into three groups: "Consolidated", with long-established careers mainly in traditional topics of political science; "Derived", who prioritized other fields or careers and did not strictly continue within the boundaries of the field (among them, there are scholars associated with feminist perspectives); and "Disappeared", women whose academic trajectories are unknown due to lack of available information.

The inquiry goes further, trying to address the following puzzle: if women have been present from the very beginning and throughout the development of Brazilian political science, why do they still face unequal conditions compared to men in various aspects? For example, consistent with studies on this issue in other countries and regions, Candido finds that in Brazil, women's presence decreases as educational levels and academic career stages advance. How is this possible? In this regard, the book proposes the following hypothesis, which future research on other academic communities would benefit from addressing: "[...] women have less prestige among those who consolidated the discipline because they are affected by the gendered division of labor, which concentrates them on activities and topics that are less valued in the systems used to assess scientific production [...]" (p. 221; the translation is mine).

As Bourdieu (1988) explains, academic prestige (or symbolic capital) is unevenly distributed which shapes who is recognized as a legitimate subject in the discipline. From a gender perspective, the unequal allocation of prestige — documented by Candido — has both contributed to and reinforced the invisibility of women's contributions to Brazilian political science. As the author notes: "But even

the silence about the pioneers in the narratives about Brazilian political science seems to tell us a lot about the filters activated over time, about practices that reproduce advantages for men” (p. 32, the translation is mine).

Reflecting specifically on how the history of political science is constructed, Almond (1990) argues that it is not a linear and progressive story, even though it is often presented as such by those who write about it. In these efforts to historicize the discipline, certain schools of thought, approaches, or figures are privileged, while others are marginalized or forgotten. Ultimately, Almond claims, these narratives tend to reflect power relations within the field, resulting in a history “written by the victors” — that is, by those who achieved academic hegemony. In this sense, Candido’s contribution goes beyond what most studies on women’s presence and gender inequalities in political science achieve. Her book deconstructs and rewrites the history of Brazilian political science by making visible the role played by women, allowing us to gain deeper insights into the discipline itself — its contents, its objects of study, and the forms its institutionalization has taken.

In addition to the underrepresentation of women, other voices have been rendered invisible in narratives concerning the development of the sciences (Harding, 1991). Future research in this area would benefit from advancing not only a gender perspective but also an intersectional one — capable of addressing how multiple inequalities intersect and operate within the academic field. As the author herself notes, incorporating the racial dimension particularly remains a significant challenge in providing a more complete account of the history of Brazilian political science (p. 45). So far, the difficulty of making progress in this direction in Latin America primarily lies in the weakness of the available information systems and the variables they encompass. In this regard, it is imperative to support the development of more comprehensive and reliable monitoring tools within universities — an effort in which professional political science associations, which fortunately have a strong presence in the region, can play a key role.

In sum, *Dois Gêneros, 2 Duas Histórias?* is a essential reading for a broad audience interested in the past, present, and future of political science and gender equality in academia.

Its value lies not only in recovering women’s hidden contributions to the discipline in Brazil but also in offering a sophisticated methodological approach to studying gender in academia. Moving beyond isolated indicators, the book offers a historically grounded, multifaceted analysis of the power relations that shape inequality in political science in an academic community.

Candido’s contribution is a crucial resource for scholars and practitioners committed to transforming universities and research communities into more inclusive spaces. During the recent wave of feminism, debates about gender disparities in science and higher education came to the forefront. In this context, the book provides a clear picture of the challenges we are facing in this regard, thus enabling the development of practical tools for designing adequate interventions, with relevance extending beyond political science.

For the Brazilian political science community, in particular, the book offers an unprecedented reconstruction of the field’s institutional and intellectual development,

challenging dominant narratives and bringing into focus the gendered dynamics behind the recognition of scholarly legitimacy.

Finally, the book invites international dialogue by engaging with comparative references — particularly from the United States and Argentina — and situating Brazil's experience within a global context. This perspective is also informed by Candido's various international experiences throughout her academic career, as she is currently a researcher at the Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology at the Lisbon University Institute (CIES-Iscte). This comparative approach provides valuable insights for scholars interested in recovering neglected trajectories and rethinking disciplinary narratives in other national settings.

Originally published in Portuguese, an English translation would significantly broaden the book's international reach and impact, allowing it to engage directly with, and contribute to, current global debates on political science from a gender perspective.

References

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