# "She is nothing if not a strategist": The Influence of Biologist Bertha Lutz's Scientific Perspective on Pan American Feminism

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## Abstract

*Thanks to Bertha Lutz, a young, European-educated tree frog scientist and women's suffrage activist, Brazil became a part of the lively Pan American feminist movement that developed in the early twentieth century. Relatively little research has been done on the Pan American feminist movement of the 1920s, and even less has explored Brazil and Lutz's unique contributions to the movement. While recent scholarship focused on Lutz concentrates on her later career and begins to illuminate the influence of her scientific career on her feminism, I aim to fill in the gaps by showing how Lutz's scientific perspective and work were intimately connected to her early feminist career (1920–1937). I argue that Lutz's scientific perspective and career drove her success in international feminist movements by giving her a relatively conservative, elitist, and narrow feminist perspective that captured the attention of U.S. feminists and the press.*

## Introduction

At 80 years old, Bertha Lutz, herpetologist and well-known women's rights activist, was still actively publishing research about tree frogs. In 1974, she identified a new species of Brazilian frogs in the *Journal of Herpetology*, yet she continued what she called the "Sisyphean task" of international feminist organizing.[1] Lutz remained active in the scientific community and Pan American feminism throughout her life, especially in the 1920s and 30s. In this paper, I will argue that Lutz's scientific perspective and work were intimately connected to her feminist activity and made her Pan American feminist organizing more successful. As a biologist, Lutz believed women were equal but biologically distinct from men, and this perspective drove her Pan American career. Her social prestige and scientific perspective gave her an elitist and conservative feminist viewpoint that was palatable to U.S. women and intriguing to the press, which made her—and, by extension, Brazilian suffrage—successful in the international realm.

Little research has been done on Pan American feminism in the 1920s. Most extant literature on international women's movements focuses on Europe and the U.S. Megan Threlkeld's book, *Pan American Women*, and Katherine M. Marino's recent work, *Feminism for the Americas,* provide the most thorough glimpses into Latin America's contribution to early 20th century Pan American feminism. Yet, Brazil's unique contributions to the movement are rarely the focus of modern scholarship. June Hahner, Susan Besse, Asunción Lavrin, and Francesca Miller provide significant background on Latin American feminism, Brazilian suffrage, and Pan American feminism before 1920.[2] While these works refer to Bertha Lutz as a principal actor in Pan American feminism, most research on Lutz concentrates on the later years of her career, especially her participation in the 1945 UN Conference.[3] Marino's *Feminism for the Americas* provides the most comprehensive depiction of Lutz's Pan American feminist career.[4] However,

1. Lutz qtd. in Cassia Roth and Ellen Dubois, "Feminism, Frogs and Fascism: The Transnational Activism of Brazil's Bertha Lutz," *Gender & History* 32, no. 1 (March 2020): 214. In 1974, Lutz published *"Eleutherodactylus gualteri,* A New Species from the Organ Mountains of Brazil," *Journal of Herpetology* 8, no. 4 (October 1974): 293–95.

2. June E. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex: The Struggle for Women's Rights in Brazil, 1850-1940* (Durham: Duke University, 1990); June E. Hahner, "The Beginnings of the Women's Suffrage Movement in Brazil," *Signs 5,* no. 1 (1979): 200–204; Susan K. Besse, *Restructuring Patriarchy: The Modernization of Gender Inequality in Brazil, 1914-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Asunción A. Lavrin, *Women, Feminism, and Social Change in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, 1890-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); Francesca Miller, "The International Relations of Women of the Americas, 1890-1928," *The Americas* 43, no. 2 (October 1986): 171-82. See also Ann Towns, "The Inter-American Commission of Women and Women's Suffrage, 1920-1945," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 42, no. 4 (2010): 779–807; Ilan Rachum, "Feminism, Woman Suffrage, and National Politics in Brazil: 1922-1937," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 14, no. 1 (1977): 118–34.

3. See Elise Luhr Dietrichson and Fatima Sator, "Les oubliées de San Francisco," *Le Monde diplomatique* 150 (December 2016 – January 2017); Elise Luhr Dietrichson and Fatima Sator, "These Women Changed Your Life," TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen, January 8, 2019, video, 10:39, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cPkvqb2gi0.

4. See also her earlier works. Katherine Marino, "Marta Vergara, Popular-Front Pan-American Feminism and the Transnational Struggle for Working Women's Rights in the 1930s," *Gender & History* 26, no. 3 (2014): 642-60; Katherine Marino, "Transnational Pan-American Feminism: The Friendship of Bertha Lutz and Mary Wilhelmine Williams, 1926–1944," *Journal of Women's History* 26, no. 2 (2014): 63–87.

while Marino clearly presents Lutz's vision for Brazil, she fails to adequately address the strategies Lutz used in earning Brazilian women the right to vote and involving Brazil in Pan American feminist movements. To be fair, Lutz is not the focus of Marino's book. This paper will focus on these strategies and perspectives Lutz used to ally herself with U.S. feminists and gain international acclaim for her suffrage movement focused on educated, higher-class women.

This paper will also demonstrate that Lutz's scientific perspective and career were important to her success. Kimberly Hamlin's book, *From Eve to Evolution*, provides an in-depth analysis of the way 19th-century U.S. feminists and suffragists used science in their work. Margaret Rossiter's 1982 work, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940,* moves into the 20th century and elucidates the role female scientists played in the U.S. suffrage movement. However, little research has been done on the role of female scientists—from the U.S. or Latin America—in the Pan American feminist movement. Cassia Roth and Ellen Dubois's recent article, "Feminism, Frogs and Fascism: The Transnational Activism of Brazil's Bertha Lutz," draws an explicit connection between Lutz's scientific perspective and her transnational work; however, this article focuses on Lutz's careers following 1945. This paper aims to highlight how Lutz's scientific perspective enhanced her earlier feminist career (1920–1937). Further, Maria Margaret Lopes has investigated Lutz's scientific career's influence on her feminism.[5] However, while Lopes argues that Lutz's success as a feminist helped her "make a name in the sciences," this paper will argue the opposite: that Lutz's identity as a scientist lent her social prestige and a moderate feminist perspective that prioritized educated women.[6]

## Beginnings of Pan Americanism

Born in the mind of Venezuelan independence leader Simón Bolívar, Pan Americanism initially sought to unify Latin America against the U.S.'s hegemony in the Western Hemisphere. Bolivar's 1826 Congress of Panama marked the first official Pan American meeting. The United States, believing itself culturally superior, refused to attend.[7] From then on, Latin American nations viewed any iteration of U.S. Pan Americanism, like the Monroe Doctrine, as a hegemonic "appropriation" of Bolivar's idea.[8] In 1889, the First International Conference of American States in D.C. became the U.S.'s first official recognition of Pan Americanism. The conference was organized to promote "commercial exchange"

5. For information on Lutz's scientific career, see Maria Margaret Lopes, "Proeminência na mídia, reputação em ciências: a construção de uma feminista paradigmática e cientista normal no Museu Nacional do Rio de Janeiro," *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos* 15 (2008): 73–95; Mariana Moraes de Oliveira Sombrio, Maria Margaret Lopes, and Léa Maria Leme Strini Velho, "Práticas e Disputas em torno do patrimônio científico-cultural Bertha Lutz no Conselho de Fiscalização das Expedições Artísticas e Científicas do Brasil," *Varia Historia* 24, no. 39 (2008): 311–27.

6. Lopes, "Proeminência na mídia, reputação em ciências," 73.

7. Sara Castro-Klarén, "Framing Pan-Americanism: Simon Bolivar's Findings," *The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 1 (2003): 43–44, 47; Harry T. Collings, "The Congress of Bolívar," The Hispanic American Historical Review 6, no. 4 (November 1926): 194.

8. Megan Threlkeld, *Pan American Women: U.S. Internationalists and Revolutionary Mexico* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 11–12; Castro-Klarén, 36.

in the Americas and to sidestep "potentially thorny political issues," but it ultimately revealed "lurking sentiments of resentment" among American nations since U.S. representatives viewed themselves as superior.[9] It was not until after World War I, when the world began questioning the supposed cultural superiority of the West, that the Americas started to feel a truer sense of Pan Americanism.[10] None of this official governmental action, however, involved women.

The earliest example of Pan American women's work occurred in 1892 when Bertha Palmer, Director of the U.S. Women's Commission, organized a "women's pavilion" at the Chicago's World Columbian Exposition with the help of Josefina Peixoto, wife of the Brazilian president.[11] However, the well-organized Pan American feminist movement of the 1920s found its roots, instead, in Latin American scientific conferences between 1898 and 1916.[12] The 1898 First Latin American Scientific Conference in Argentina hosted five female doctors and educators. The subsequent scientific conferences in Montevideo (1901), Rio (1905), and Santiago (1908) featured even more.[13]

In 1915, several Latin American and U.S. women who had attended these conferences organized the First Pan American Women's Auxiliary Conference in conjunction with the Second Pan American Scientific Congress. Their goal was to allow American women "to exchange views on subjects of special interest to women as well as on those dealing with Pan Americanism." Thirty-one papers were presented, many by women, at this bilingual conference, which published all materials in English and Spanish. Hundreds of women attended, yet the conference was dismissed by the Pan American Union, whose report barely mentioned it.[14] Even John Barrett, who called the conference "remarkable," reported that the conference's main goal was "elaborate social entertainment" for "wives."[15] This conference was the first significant gathering of women across the Americas that considered women's issues in the context of Pan Americanism, and it notably was organized and attended by American women scientists.[16] Latin American female scientists laid the foundation for an organized Pan American feminist movement,

9. Miller, "The International Relations of Women of the Americas," 172; F. Alfonso Pezet, "Pan-American Cooperation in Pan-American Affairs," *The American Political Science Review* 11, no. 2 (1917): 225.
10. John Barrett, "The Pan American Outlook," *The Journal of Race Development* 9, no. 2 (1918): 114.
11. Miller, 172. Interestingly, at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, U.S. suffrage leader Carrie Chapman Catt gave a speech, "Evolution and Woman's Suffrage," in which she argued that evolution was ongoing and would inevitably move the world closer to "the perfect and ideal," which would include suffrage for educated women. Implicit in this argument was Catt's racist preference for educated white women. The connection between evolution, science, and "white racial superiority" continued to be a "core" feature of suffrage rhetoric throughout the fight for women's suffrage in the U.S. See Kimberly A. Hamlin, *From Eve to Evolution: Darwin, Science, and Women's Rights in Gilded Age America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 2014): 43–44.
12. Miller, 173.
13. Emma Bain Swiggett, ed., *Report on the Women's Auxiliary Conference Held in the City of Washington, U.S.A.* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916): 7–8; Eva Perry Moore, "Pan American, 1916," *The Woman Citizen* 6, no. 24 (April 1922): 19.
14. Swiggett, 7, 18; Miller, 175. 747 people reportedly registered for the auxiliary conference, and an estimated 250 to 400 attended each day. Swiggett, 18–19.
15. John Barrett, "Pan Americans to Hold Convention," *The New York Times*, December 19, 1915, S10.
16. Miller, 175–76.

and it was Bertha Lutz, a well-educated Brazilian herpetologist, who would continue this tradition with a new generation of Latin American feminists in the early 1920s.

## Political Role of Female Scientists in the U.S. and Brazil

Female scientists in the U.S. were especially politically active in the first two decades of the 20th century. Even as more women entered science fields in the early 1900s, they were forced mostly into "sex-typed employment" and roles that were considered "women's work."[17] Botany, for example, had been considered an acceptable field for women to enter for over 100 years.[18] In the 1910s, these female scientists became more aware of their segregated roles as feminist ideas circulated more widely, and they were politicized. Female scientists actively involved themselves in women's movements in the 1910s by participating in the war effort, campaigning for women's suffrage, and researching and refuting scientific ideas about women's bodies and biological inferiority.[19] Interestingly, many U.S. women in the biological sciences, who secured more "masculine" roles studying migratory animals and conducting field research in Latin America, formed Pan American professional relationships. However, racism and colonialism still influenced interactions between U.S. and Latin American scientists.[20]

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, U.S. feminists—scientists or not—began to use science as a powerful tool for defending women's equality. Science was considered an "impartial" way to discuss sex differences and disprove women's mental inferiority.[21] This became clear in January 1914 when Dr. William Sedgwick's shockingly antifeminist statements were published in *The New York Times*. He stated women's equality was "biological bosh," called suffragists "masculine women" and "mistakes of nature," and claimed women were physically and mentally too weak to become doctors or work in labs.[22] The article drew widespread criticism from male scientists and feminists.[23]

The most memorable response, interestingly, came 11 years later in 1925, when famous suffragist Helen Hamilton Gardener died and donated her brain to Cornell University.[24] Author of the "semi-scientific" work "Sex in Brain," Gardener felt previous studies showed women's brains were smaller and inferior

17. Margaret W. Rossiter, "The Women's Movement, the War, and Madame Curie," in *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982): 100.
18. Pamela A. Henson, "Invading Arcadia: Women Scientists in the Field of Latin America, 1900–1950," *The Americas* 58, no. 4 (April 2002): 590.
19. Rossiter, 100. Rossiter provides an in-depth review of the studies conducted from 1906 to 1917 about women's abilities and their sex's inferiority. See pages 104–13.
20. Henson, 577–78, 588.
21. Hamlin, *From Eve to Evolution,* 16.
22. George MacAdams, "Feminist Revolutionary Principle Is Biological Bosh," *NYT*, January 18, 1914.
23. See, for example, Frederick Peterson, "Woman's Uplift Means Man's Uplift," *NYT,* February 15, 1914; Franklin P. Mall, "Women Students Above Average," *NYT,* February 15, 1914; William H. Howell, "Has Found Women As Able As Men," *NYT,* February 15, 1914.
24. For a more comprehensive explanation of Gardener's donation, see Kimberly A. Hamlin, *Free Thinker: Sex, Suffrage, and the Extraordinary Life of Helen Hamilton Gardener* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 2020).

because they used the brains of "less fortunate women" or "hospital 'pick-ups.'" Educated and upper-class, Gardener was quite sure her brain would better represent "women who think."[25] Unfortunately for Gardener, her donation did not definitively prove women's equality; her brain exhibited only "a lesser degree" of sex differences associated with women's smaller brains. Her donation, however, was widely publicized. Feminist scientific work had largely been put on hold during the fight for suffrage, and science stubbornly remained a male-dominated field in the 1920s.[26] Kimberly Hamlin suggests that Gardener may have publicly donated her brain in order to remind the younger generation of women that science was a powerful tool for feminist work.[27] Yet, this paper will show they may not have needed the reminder.

Women in Brazil faced similar social boundaries to pursuing scientific careers as U.S. women but also faced additional legal restrictions. Like U.S. women, Brazilian women were largely confined to the home in the early 20th century. Brazil's 1916 Civil Code legally barred a married woman from pursuing a career without her husband's permission, unless he was unable to provide a viable income; historian Molly Ball argues this particularly restricted middle- and upper-class women from pursuing careers and higher education.[28] Additionally, by 1920, only 40% of Brazilian adults were literate despite nationwide education reforms.[29] Assuming rates were much lower for women around 1920, this also limited the number of women able to pursue higher education and careers in science. Further, unmarried women who did seek employment—especially in male-dominated fields requiring advanced degrees—were mocked. According to U.S. suffrage leader Carrie Chapman Catt, Latin American women pursuing higher education or a career "[took] her reputation in her hands."[30]

Importantly, however, women did achieve high-level science jobs, especially in the natural sciences, in Brazil and Latin America—perhaps more than is generally assumed.[31] Bertha Lutz, a successful biologist, is, of course, an example. Additionally, Emília Snethlage, an ornithologist, was director of Museu Goeldi in Belém, Brazil in the early 1920s.[32] Outside of Brazil, Dr. Alicia Moreau of Argentina and Dr. Paulina Luisi of Uruguay are notable examples. Most of these well-known female scientists were either European-born or -educated. Many of them, like Lutz, studied in French-speaking Catholic schools in their

25. "Woman Wills Brain for Research Work," *NYT*, August 4, 1925.
26. Hamlin, *From Eve to Evolution,* 58–59, 89.
27. Hamlin, *From Eve to Evolution,* 59.
28. Molly C. Ball, "Wife, Mother, and Worker: The Decision to Work in Early-Twentieth Century São Paulo," *Journal of Women's History* 29, no. 4 (2017): 112.
29. Ball, 120.
30. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 81–86; Carrie Chapman Catt, "Summing Up South America," in *Women in Latin American History: Their Lives and Views,* ed. June E. Hahner (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1976), 69. This summary of her travels in South and Central America is incredibly critical, as was her overall opinion of Latin America. However, she generally held a more positive view of Brazil. Regardless, her comment should be taken with a grain of salt.
31. Begonha Bediaga, Ariane Luna Peixoto, and Tarciso S. Filgueiras, "Maria Bandeira: uma botânica pioneira no Jardim Botânico do Rio de Janeiro." *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos* 23, no. 3 (2016): 800.
32. Bediaga, Peixoto, and Filgueiras, 800.

home countries or traveled to Europe; they were, therefore, "steeped in Western, European-racial logics" and received similar scientific educations, featuring Social Darwinism, as female scientists in the U.S. Moreau, for example, divided Argentinian women along racial lines, arguing darker-skinned women were "backward" and that white "Argentine-European[s]" were more modern.[33]

## Bertha Lutz's Early Career

Born August 2, 1894, in São Paulo to a half-Brazilian, half-Swiss father and an English mother, Bertha Maria Jùlia Lutz grew up in Brazil but was educated in Europe.[34] Lutz had the advantage of growing up in a middle class, well-educated, multicultural household and spoke three languages fluently: Portuguese, English, and French.[35] Described by Katherine Marino as an "Anglo-America-philia[c]," Lutz could also read, write, and speak in Spanish yet chose not to, believing Spanish-speaking Latin America was "racially backward."[36] Throughout her career, she would be praised for her "excellent English" and would insist on the English spelling of her name: Bertha, not Berta.[37] A graduate of the French Sorbonne, Lutz was extremely well-educated for a Brazilian woman of her time.[38] Influenced by her mother and father, a nurse and a physician, Lutz studied natural sciences and zoology at the Sorbonne. She became interested in tree frogs after accompanying her father on his epidemiological research trips in the rainforest, and she became a recognized herpetologist.[39] After studying in Europe for seven years, Lutz returned to her home country of Brazil in 1918.[40] She immediately accepted a job at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, leading the museum's biology section and translating scientific research into French, English, and German.[41] While in this demanding scientific position, she became preoccupied by women's issues. Having spent so many years abroad, she was well aware of the European suffrage movement and felt "great sorrow" when she determined Brazil was "lagging far behind" other nations in terms of women's rights.[42]

In 1918, Lutz published an article in the *Revista da Semana,* a weekly magazine, responding to the editor's wife, who wrote that U.S. and European

33. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 23.
34. Marino, "Transnational Pan-American Feminism," 70; "35 Women's Groups Fete Bertha Lutz," *NYT,* August 3, 1944.
35. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 11; Roy F. Nash, "The Brains of Brazil's Woman Movement," *The Woman Citizen* 6, no. 22 (March 1922): 9. Lutz may also have been fluent in German or at least had advanced German abilities. See Roth and Dubois, 212.
36. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 29.
37. "Feminist Leader of Brazil Here to Study Field Museum," Chicago Daily Tribune, May 3, 1932; Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 29.
38. Marino, "Transnational Pan-American Feminism," 68; Ball, n. 10
39. J.P. Kennedy, "Bertha Lutz, 1894–1976," *Copeia* 1977, no. 1 (1917): 209.
40. June E. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 134; "Await Suffrage in Latin America: Feminist Leader in Brazil Declares War Is Blocking Movement's Success," *NYT,* March 23, 1941.
41. Nash, 9.
42. Hahner, "The Beginnings of the Women's Suffrage Movement in Brazil," 201; Bertha Lutz, "Women's Letters," in *Emancipating the Female Sex,* Appendix F, trans. June E. Hahner (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 222; Carmen Silvia Araújo de Oliveira, "A Solitude Feminista de Patricia Galvão em *Parque Industrial." Miguilim – Revista Eletrônica do Netlli* 3, no. 2 (May–August 2014): 220.

feminist successes would have little effect on Brazil.[43] Calling women to stop "liv[ing] parasitically based on [their] sex," Lutz "propos[ed] the establishment of a league of Brazilian women." She defended education as the best way to improve women's position in society and to liberate them from their own apathy and passivity. While she wanted education for all women, she preferred women of "the more cultured sectors," who demanded at least slightly more respect.[44] Her preference for educated women was inherently classist and elitist. This focus could have been strategic, since moderate feminism and a narrow focus on suffrage was appealing to a wider audience of middle-class women.[45] However, this could also be a reflection of her limited, privileged perspective as a well-educated and publicly successful woman.[46] Regardless, her article set the foundation for a narrowly focused suffrage movement. Lutz's 1918 article also gave a glimpse into the pro-Western (specifically pro-U.S.) spirit that would characterize her career. She cited U.S. President Woodrow Wilson as "one of [her] greatest contemporaries" and presented U.S. suffragists as examples for Brazilian women.[47] With this article, she formally began the Brazilian suffrage movement and positioned herself the leader. She was clear from the beginning that this was a narrowly focused suffrage movement that would benefit and politicize educated, middle-class women, like herself, and not lower class or uneducated women.[48]

Several women's organizations were born from Lutz's call to action, and they created a new "spirit of self-consciousness" for Brazilian women.[49] Alice Rego Monteiro and Júlia Lopes, for example, formed the *Legião da Mulher Brasileira* (Brazilian Women's League) in 1919. The organization held a "not uncommon paternalistic attitude toward lower-class women."[50] Lutz directed its administrative commission until she founded her own *Liga para a Emancipação Intelectual da Mulher* (League for the Intellectual Emancipation of Women) with teacher and author, Maria Lacerda de Moura. The two women gathered 40 "hand-picked women" and some men for the League, wanting to move beyond "philanthropic establishments or any other local matters" and focus broadly on intellectual growth, though the League functioned as little more than a glorified study group.[51] Early in the Brazilian suffrage movement, then, there was already an elitist focus on education and middle-class women, as well as a desire to reject local issues in favor of national or international issues. Moura, an anarchist, quickly drew away from the League and Lutz's feminism when it became clear Lutz was focused on the vote, benefiting literate, higher-class women.[52]

43. Hahner, "The Beginnings of the Women's Suffrage Movement," 201.
44. Lutz, "Women's Letters," 222–24.
45. Rossiter makes a similar conclusion about U.S. suffragists. Rossiter, 101.
46. For a related discussion of the ways white, educated U.S. feminists used science and evolution to justify "educated suffrage," see Hamlin, From *Eve to Evolution,* 43–44.
47. Lutz, "Women's Letters," 222–23.
48. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 166; Oliveira, 218; Roth and Dubois, 209.
49. Frank M. Garcia, "Brazil's Women Score Gains: Their Right to Vote Is Widely Used and a Million Hold Jobs Outside Home," *The NYT,* November 8, 1936.
50. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 136.
51. Nash, 16; Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 136.
52. Oliveira, 223.

Notably, however, Moura earlier wrote that she hoped the League would create "a small army of propagandists—using the spoken word, the press, and direct action—for women's rational and scientific education . . . to achieve their complete intellectual emancipation."[53] These goals ironically became solid pillars of Lutz's elitist feminist movement. A self-described "feminist in fact before [she] became one in theory," Lutz became Secretary of the *Museu Nacional* (National Museum) of Brazil at the age of 25, beating ten male scientists and lawyers in a 34-day competition involving written and oral exams testing her knowledge of three languages, the natural sciences, law, accounting, and geography.[54] Her appointment, as the second Brazilian woman to earn such a prestigious civil service post, was met with "consternation."[55] However, this position lent her prestige as a woman and scientist and gave her access to the press. Roy Nash of Rio's National City Bank wrote that "she [was] nothing if not a strategist," and he speculated that she took the museum position in order to make her name "a familiar subject of conversation over the tea tables" of Brazil so that she could "persuade a few of the more mettlesome [women] to join her in launching a modern woman's movement."[56] Intentional or not, her success in science fed her success in organizing a Brazilian women's movement.

This leader of the Brazilian suffrage movement had no intention of radically reshaping Brazilian society. Her feminism focused on women's legal rights and intellectual advancement; she did not intend to change women's societal role as wives and mothers. She wrote that "the dominion of women, all of us feminists agree, is the home" and that she simply hoped voting would allow women to extend their domestic responsibilities outside the physical "four walls" of their homes.[57] Lutz herself had a fifty-year, international scientific and diplomatic career outside the home, so her support of traditional gender norms and her focus on women's domestic responsibilities seem almost hypocritical. Historian Margaret Rossiter, however, argues that this was a survival strategy employed by U.S. female scientists; these women "accepted" and even publicly endorsed sex-stereotyping in science in order to "justify" or maintain what few positions they themselves secured.[58] Lutz used the same strategy. In order to appeal widely to her network of middle-class Brazilian women, and to maintain the attention of the press and her own success, Lutz professed a surprisingly conservative feminism that allowed women's suffrage to gain support, to the detriment of other women's issues.

This perspective appears in Lutz's scientific writings as well. Lutz argued there was a "biological basis" for women's role as mothers in society

53. Moura qtd. in Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 136.
54. Nash, 9.
55. Nash, 9; "Await Suffrage in Latin America"; "Famous South American Woman Coming," Milwaukee: *City Club News,* June 9, 1922.
56. Nash, 9.
57. Lutz qtd. in Marino, "Transnational Pan-American Feminism," 71.
58. Rossiter, 101.

and contended the vote would—and could—not upset this.[59] Lutz maintained throughout her career that women were equal "but biologically distinct" from men.[60] As the world accepted women in more spaces outside the home, Lutz felt women could overcome their "biological limitations." Motherhood was a big physical limitation, according to Lutz, and in 1920, she wrote that a pregnant woman "feels the influence of parasitism upon all [her] functions."[61] A proud, self-described "bachelor woman" without children, Lutz herself believed it was a "privilege" to remain single, as it allowed her to devote herself more fully to her work and the women's movement. She recognized that Civil Codes and marriage limited women's access to education and many professions.[62] She herself evaded these legal and other social limitations to education because of her family's socioeconomic class.[63]

Independent, well-educated, and well-known, Lutz had access to government officials and the press. Working mostly with other educated, upper-class women, Lutz began to favor Moura's suggested techniques (propaganda, press, and networking). Reportedly, the League almost "immediately . . . leaped into the limelight." Lutz herself was extremely busy, producing a "perfect stream of articles," while continuing her translation work at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute and furiously writing male legislators about women's rights.[64] She continued in her position at the Museu Nacional, but apparently, her science career moved to the backburner. George Vincent, head of the U.S. Rockefeller Foundation, complained in 1922 that this "biologist of ability" was "too much interested in this woman's movement" to accept his offer to hire her as a researcher.[65]

Despite the League's early successes and Lutz's bustling professional career, Lutz grew restless and wanted, as always, to look internationally. She complained that in Brazil "it was possible to do very little. Our efforts could be summarized as consisting of interviews, newspaper articles, and cooperation with…legislators aware of women's rights."[66] Young Lutz wrote to Paulina Luisi, a famous Uruguayan doctor and seasoned women's advocate, looking for international opportunities, a larger stage for her feminist work. Luisi, delighted to hear of a fellow Latin American (and another female scientist, no less) interested in Pan American work, obtained Lutz's membership in the International Woman

59. Lutz qtd. in Cécile Brunschvicg and Germaine Malaterre-Sellier, *Le vote des femmes: état de la question d'après le récent congrès de Berlin* (Paris: Impr. d'Etudes sociales & politiques, 1929): 38. The original French is "des bases biologiques." All French translations are mine.
60. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas*, 27.
61. Bertha Lutz, "The Limits Imposed upon the Individual Activity of Woman by Biologic Factors," *A Folha Medica* (December 1920) qtd. in Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 27, 250 n. 72. The belief that pregnancy was essentially a "disease" that women had to survive and bear was widespread in the 19th century. Hamlin, *From Ève to Evolution,* 98–99.
62. "To Be a Bachelor is an Art, Brazilian Feminist Holds," *NYT,* January 1, 1939; Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 115; Bertha Lutz, "Le Mouvement Féministe au Brésil," *La Française: Journal de Progrès Féminin,* September 28, 1929.
63. Bediaga, Peixoto, and Filgueiras argue that successful Brazilian female scientists, like Lutz, avoided gender limitations thanks to their fathers or husbands. See page 819. While Lutz's interest in biology was certainly influenced by her father, her intelligence cannot be discounted.
64. Nash, 16.
65. Nash, 9.
66. Draft of speech by Bertha Lutz qtd. in Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 138.

Suffrage Alliance (IWSA), connecting Lutz to the League of Women Voters' 1922 Pan American Conference in Baltimore. This is where Lutz would make her Pan American debut.[67]

## 1922 Pan American Conference

In April 1922, former Director General of the Pan American Union John Barrett warned U.S. feminist leaders "not only to make sure that their brains [were] working fast, but that their gowns [were] up to date!" because the Latin American delegation arriving for the first women's Pan American Conference would surely match U.S. women "in ability, brilliancy, dress and social attainment."[68] On the morning of April 21, in the roof garden of Baltimore's Century Theater, Maud Wood Park welcomed these 2000 women—including 31 official delegates representing 20 Latin American countries, the U.S., and Canada—to the three-day conference.[69] Bertha Lutz was the first Latin American official delegate to arrive.[70] Ultimately, most Latin American women would walk away from the conference disappointed, but Lutz would walk away widely adored by U.S. feminists and the press.

The 1922 Baltimore Conference was filled with female scientists. Most of the conference roundtable leaders were women in science. Dr. Valeria Parker, a physician, led the "Prevention of Traffic in Women" discussion as executive secretary of the U.S. Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board. Leader of the roundtable on women's civil status, Mabel Walker Willebrandt, the first woman to be made U.S. Assistant Attorney General, was interested in aeronautical law and sciences.[71] Approximately 13% of the 139 official delegates listed in the conference report were women in science.[72] Three of these women—Graciela Mandujano (Chile), Mme. Charles Dubé (Haiti), and Florence Kelley (U.S.)—attended this 1922 conference and the 1915 Women's Auxiliary Conference in

67. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 26; Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 138. Lutz attended the 1919 International Labor Organization's conference as the Brazilian delegate, but the 1922 conference marked her first venture into Pan American feminism. Hahner, 140.

68. John Barrett, "Women's Big Conference: What Pan-American Gathering Will Attempt to Accomplish," *NYT,* April 16, 1922.

69. "A Significant Pan American Conference," *Bulletin of the Pan American Union* 55 (July 1922): 10–11; "Woman Conference Seeks World Peace: Pan-American Delegates Would Cement Friendship of Women of the Americas," *NYT,* April 21, 1922; Barrett, "Women's Big Conference."

70. "Pan-American Women at the Baltimore Convention of the League of Women Voters," *The Woman Citizen* 6, no. 24 (April 1922): 8. The other Brazilian representatives at the 1922 Pan American Conference were Beatriz de Queiroz and Annie d'Armand Marchant. "A Significant Pan American Conference," 32.

71. "Mabel Walker Willebrandt Dies: Lawyer for U.S. in Prohibition," *NYT,* April 9, 1963, 31. Willebrandt stated, "I loved science and medicine and wanted a career in either field . . . I have partially made up for that disappointment [of not getting a medical degree] by treating law as a science."

72. To find this number, I used the list of delegates that appears in "A Significant Pan American Conference," 32–35. I included all female scientists, doctors and physicians, nurses, and women possessing higher education degrees in science or affiliated with scientific organizations. This list includes Grace Ritchie England (Canada), Margaret Patterson (Canada), Alicia Moreau (Argentina), Margarita Conroy (Peru), Mme. Charles Dubé (Haiti), Ester Niero de Calvo (Panama), Carmela Nieto de Herrara (Cuba), Valeria Parker (U.S.), Mabel Walker Willebrandt (U.S.), Helen Gardener (U.S.), May Kennedy (Canada), Augusta Stowe Gullen (U.S.), Elena Torres (Mexico), Eulalia Guzmán (Mexico), Laura Meneses (Peru), Mary E. Sweeney (U.S), Carrie Chapman Catt (U.S.), and Graciela Mandujano (Chile).

official capacities, creating a tangible connection between these two important conferences.[73] Many of the women at this 1922 conference were unusually educated and scientifically oriented, so Bertha Lutz's presence as a European-educated scientist made her welcome there.

The conference was planned with two overarching goals in mind: first, to encourage "international peace" and, second, to establish a Pan American "spirit of cooperation" and friendship.[74] Park opened the conference by stating women were uniquely "cooperative" and "better fitted than men to bring about an era of international neighborliness."[75] This idea that international peacemaking was women's work and that female pacifist diplomacy should express itself through informal, interpersonal connection was popularized by Jane Addams and expressed very clearly in her speech at the 1915 Women's Auxiliary Conference.[76] This women's scientific conference birthed this gendered focus on peace that would characterize Pan American feminism in the 1920s and biologist Bertha Lutz's career. In Lutz's opinion, women were "morally superior" and better suited to peace-making.[77] Her idea that women have different international political roles than men was closely aligned with her scientific opinion that women were biologically distinct and hold different roles in the home. In her closing speech at the 1922 conference, Lutz shared her vision of American women "united in a great league of progress and peace," while also praising "the splendid women of the United States" for agreeing to "guide [Latin America's] first feeble efforts with . . . mother[ly] feeling."[78] Lutz showed, as always, a pro-U.S. sentiment. This was likely strategic. She emphasized women's "motherly," peaceful roles, showing her moderate and acceptable feminist perspective and endearing herself to U.S. women. Through these women, she projected Brazil's suffrage movement into the international realm and gained recognition—for herself and for Brazil. At the conference, she was named vice president of the new Pan-American Association for the Advancement of Women (PAAAW) with Carrie Chapman Catt as president.[79] Lutz's connection to Catt would lend prestige and press coverage to Brazil's suffrage movement.

To most Latin American delegates, Catt represented the "epitome of the imperialist U.S. feminist."[80] U.S. feminists, Catt included, became "increasingly

73. Other women could have attended both. Unofficial delegates are not listed in the conference reports.
74. "A Significant Pan American Conference," 10–11.
75. "Woman Conference Seeks World Peace."
76. Jane Addams, "Toward Internationalism," in Swiggett, 60.
77. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 99.
78. "A Significant Pan American Conference," 28.
79. Marino, "Transnational Pan-American Feminism," 69; Mildred Adams, "All the Americas Meet at Baltimore," *The Woman Citizen* 6, no. 25 (May 1922): 12. At the conference, Catt and Lutz developed an intensely close friendship. They maintained a consistent correspondence by mail. Lutz called Catt her "mother," and Catt called Lutz her "Brazilian daughter." Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 31; *De Vriendinnen van Carrie Chapman Catt,* 1929, Institute on Gender Equality and Women's History.
80. Threlkeld, 12; Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 31. Catt used her own scientific knowledge to support the idea that white Western women should be leading feminism globally. At Chicago's World Fair, Catt gave a speech, entitled "Evolution and Woman's Suffrage," that used "social evolutionary" ideals to suggest the world's progress was inevitably moving towards educated (i.e. white, middle-class) suffrage. Hamlin, *From Eve to Evolution,* 43–44.

racist" around 1920 and often used "evolutionary" scientific language to hide it.[81] Latin American delegates faced this racism in various forms at the conference. For example, higher-class, lighter-skinned Elena Landázuri (Mexico) was, like Lutz, described as "delightful," "exquisite," and easy to get along with at the conference. Torres—younger, poorer, and sharper—was described as "forceful" and "radical."[82] Likewise, Peru's Margarita Conroy's "energy and exquisite[ness]" were attributed to her British father and her mixed-race heritage.[83] U.S. women held strong preconceived beliefs about their nation's and race's superiority. The official conference report describes how U.S. women believed there was a "'gulf' between the Anglo Saxon and Latin races." After the first session, many U.S. delegates "expressed their pleasure and—it must be confessed!—their surprise to learn of the up-to-date character of much of the work accomplished by the Latin American" countries and women delegates.[84]

They were likewise shocked throughout the conference by the "perfectly clear and intelligible" English of some of the Latin American delegates. The official report of the conference even suggests that this made U.S. women question whether the "gulf" between U.S. and Latin American women might be something simply imagined by "Anglo Saxons" and furthered by their laziness in language learning.[85] Regardless, the conference was held exclusively in English, so some Spanish-speaking delegates were excluded from the dialogue.[86] Latin American leaders were given time to speak, but their time was nowhere equal to speaking time of U.S. feminist leaders. U.S. women were more likely to work with and appreciate those that looked and acted like them. Lutz was a perfect candidate for their Pan American partner. Lutz and her feminism had several advantages: she was white, fluent in English, well-educated, and an admirer of the U.S. Lutz with her European appearance, education, and name navigated the conference with relative ease. Lutz was a "bit of a foreigner" to other Brazilian feminists who did not have European parents or degrees.[87] She likely felt much more comfortable surrounded by Western-educated, U.S. feminists who appreciated her language prowess and her international connections and maneuverings.

## The *Federação Brasileira pelo Progresso Feminino*

The U.S. press adored Bertha Lutz. She was praised for her "charming and fascinating personality," excellent English, and energy.[88] As a result, Lutz was invited to speak by 50 U.S. organizations and spent the summer of 1922 completing an LWV-sponsored tour of the United States, sharing the success of the Baltimore conference and applauding U.S. women as "teacher[s] for all

81. Rossiter, 101; Hamlin, *From Eve to Evolution,* 19–20.
82. Threlkeld, 77–80, 106. See also Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 23.
83. "Pan American Women at the Baltimore Convention," 9.
84. "A Significant Pan American Conference," 11.
85. "A Significant Pan American Conference," 11–13.
86. The YWCA provided an interpreter for those who could not speak English, but Spanish-speaking delegates were still "at a serious disadvantage." Alice Stone Blackwell, "The Pan American Conference," *The Woman Citizen* 6, no. 24 (April 1922): 14.
87. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 143–44.
88. "Famous South American Woman Coming," *City Club News*, June 9, 1922. For additional examples, see Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 251, n. 101.

America."[89] Following the conference, Lutz spent a weekend at Catt's house. There, they drew up a constitution for a new Brazilian feminist organization, and by August of 1922, Lutz had converted her study group into the *Federação Brasileira pelo Progresso Feminino* (FBPF), or the Brazilian Federation for Female Progress.[90] Importantly, though, Lutz never lost her scientific focus; while at Catt's farm in 1922, Lutz enthusiastically spent an entire day catching frogs, which she described in great detail to her bewildered host, in a stream on Catt's property so that she could take back them back to Brazil.[91] In a later letter to Catt, Lutz wrote that these "days of growth, and of happiness and repose" that she spent with Catt "were amongst the happiest in [her] life."[92]

Lutz—unlike other Brazilian feminists, such as communist Pagu or anarchist Moura—did not affiliate her organization with a political party or social movement.[93] She continued to advance a moderate feminist perspective focused on suffrage, and the FBPF shared her perspective that women had a different biological and social role than men.[94] This attracted primarily middle-class women interested in social and philanthropic issues.[95] Professional women with advanced degrees led the movement, while those in white collar jobs, like schoolteachers, made up the "ranks."[96] As a result, the FBPF focused on strategies accessible and familiar to educated middle-class women, like Lutz. This included networking, letter writing, and "varied" propaganda techniques, including postcards, radio messages, and even advertisements on airplanes.[97] Lutz, already well-known thanks to her science career, continued gaining domestic and international renown throughout the 1920s. She maintained her international work through PAAAW; as vice president, however, Lutz failed to connect with and unite Latin American women.[98] Instead, she focused exclusively on Brazil's suffrage movement and making Brazil, and herself, a leading international force. This especially benefited her and her country when Catt came to visit.

89. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 33–34; "Rio's Leader in Woman's Sphere Due Here Today," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* June 11, 1922; "Woman Delegate from Brazil to Give Talk Here," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* Jane 8, 1922.

90. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 141; "Await Suffrage in Latin America"; Besse, *Restructuring Patriarchy,* 167; Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 39. Sources disagree on the extent of Catt's involvement in the creation of the FBPF. Marino suggests Catt and Lutz founded the organization together. Hahner writes that the constitution was written during Lutz's visit but does not indicate if it was a collaborative or individual writing process. The 1941 article, "Await Suffrage in Latin America," reports that Catt wrote the constitution and that Lutz brought it back to Brazil.

91. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 146.

92. Letter from Lutz qtd. in Mary Gray Peck, "First Pan American Women's Conference, Baltimore, 1922," in *Carrie Chapman Catt: A Biography* (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1944): 359–60; Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 99.

93. Oliveira, 218, 221.

94. Roth and Dubois, 210.

95. Lutz, "Le Mouvement Féministe au Brésil." The original French reads: «Les femmes qui le mènent appartiennent généralement à la bourgeoisie, et s'occupent plus spécialement des questions sociales et philanthropiques.» Besse, *Restructuring Patriarchy,* 165.

96. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 90.

97. Lutz, "Le Mouvement Féministe au Brésil." The original French reads: "Nos moyens de propagande suffragiste sont variés. Nous nous servons de cartes postales et buvards…de la radio et même de l'avion." Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 144–45.

98. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 34. For example, she did not respond to letters from Elena Torres or reach out to Spanish-speaking women.

As PAAAW's president, Catt toured Latin America in 1922 and concluded that Latin American feminism was "a backward movement . . . forty years behind that of the United States." She felt illiteracy, religion, and oppressive social customs enfeebled Latin American women.[99] However, she spent a "busy" three weeks observing the "undying organized woman suffrage movement" of Brazil. Catt could not have been more complimentary towards the FBPF membership, describing them as "highly educated, of good families and actuated by noble aspirations." This highlighted both her own elitism and the elitism of Lutz's movement. Catt showered Lutz with praise, even remarking that Lutz did "not really belong to Spanish America." Catt further noted that women held many notable positions in science in Brazil.[100] We can assume this observation was due, at least in part, to Lutz. Acting as Catt's interpreter, Lutz took Catt to Brazilian museums and showed Catt "all the strange and beautiful" flora and fauna of Brazil, showing her scientific side.[101] The upper-class women of Brazil and Lutz made a uniquely positive impression on Catt. Catt's visit and glowing review "lent further prestige" to Lutz's suffrage movement.[102] Without Lutz's strategic connections to U.S. feminists and her own professional prestige, the suffrage movement would not have been kickstarted the way it was.

After establishing the FBPF, Lutz developed a strong hope for Pan American feminism. In 1925, PAAAW became the Inter-American Union (IAU), and Lutz became president. In a speech at a meeting of Rio's Engineer's Club, Lutz, introduced as a woman from "the finest class of [Brazilian] society," optimistically claimed Pan American feminism was gaining momentum. The goal of the IAU was, she explained, "to strengthen friendship between the American countries" and maintain "perpetual peace . . . between free and educated populations."[103] Again, we see that Lutz's education and elevated position in society lent prestige to her feminism, which remained moderate, focused on peace and suffrage for educated women. Lutz's optimism was apparently unfounded. The IAU barely survived a few years.[104] Lutz and Esther de Calvo (Panama) worked desperately to organize conferences in their respective countries but received little response from U.S. feminists.[105] Around 1923, when U.S. women's organizations hosted

99. Carrie Chapman Catt, "Anti-Feminism in South American," Carrie Chapman Catt Papers, Speech and Article File, 1892–1946, Library of Congress, 1029–34.
100. Catt, "Summing Up South America," 70; Carrie Chapman Catt, "Busy Women in Brazil," in *Women in Latin American History: Their Lives and Views,* ed. June E. Hahner (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1976), 74–76; Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 35; Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 143.
101. Carrie Chapman Catt, "Tour of Europe and South America, 1922–1923," Carrie Chapman Catt Papers, Diaries 1911–1923 File, Library of Congress, 32, 34, 36–37.
102. Besse, 167–86.
103. Bertha Lutz, *D. Bertha Lutz: Homenagem das senhoras brasileiras a illustre presidente da União inter-americana de mulheres* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. do Jornal do Commercio, de Rodrigues & C., 1925): 5, 7–9, 14. All translations from Portuguese used in this paper are by Dr. Amy de Farias. See page 5 for original Portuguese: "Elevadíssimo numero de Senhoras da primeira classe da nossa sociedade. " Also, page 14: "estreitar as relações de amizade entre todos os paizes americanos afim de assegurar a manutenção da paz perpetua e da justiça no hemisfério occidental."
104. Threlkeld states it barely lasted a year. See page 114. Marino writes that it survived until 1929, at which point it became "too anemic to be continued." *Feminism for the Americas,* 97.
105. Threlkeld, 114.

the All-American Conference in 1925 as a last-ditch effort to renew Pan American motivation, only 25 women from 13 countries attended.[106] Historians have argued that Lutz held onto the IAU because she did not want control of Pan American feminism to fall into the hands of Luisi or Doris Stevens of the U.S. National Women's Party (NWP), for personal reasons.[107] For example, Lutz admitted in letters to Catt that she "just can't stand [Luisi]" and that she considered Stevens' (and her IACW's) methods "as unscrupulous as those of Hitler."[108] However, this was also her main channel of international attention for Brazil—and for herself. Of course, she wanted to hold onto the organization that allowed her to direct Pan American feminism and put Brazil at the helm.

In the late 1920s, Lutz's perspective came into direct conflict with Doris Stevens'. In 1927, Lutz was transferred from the Museu Nacional to the Botanical and Plant Physiology department of Rio's Botanical Garden.[109] She maintained her scientific and diplomatic perspective that women were naturally mothering and peacemakers, which stood at odds with Doris Stevens' perspective at the 1928 Sixth International Conference of American States in Cuba. Stevens felt women were equal "political actors" in the masculine spheres of international law and government action.[110] Female protesters at the conference were rewarded with the temporary establishment of the Inter-American Commission of Women (IACW) with Stevens as chair.[111] Stevens declared that "international feminism was born" at this 1928 conference.[112] This callously disregarded the actions of Pan American feminists, like Bertha Lutz, in the 1920s, but the IACW certainly changed Pan American feminism. Stevens' appointment marked the return of U.S. "dominance" in the Western world of women, a turn away from the pacifist internationalist perspective of the 1922 Conference, and a move towards a rigid focus on the NWP's equal rights amendment (ERA).[113] Lutz felt personally and professionally threatened by Stevens. Stevens' control over Pan American feminism meant that Lutz herself was not in control. Further, Stevens' focus on equal rights and international law took the wind out of the conservative feminist perspective Lutz effectively used throughout the 1920s. Stevens' modern ERA made Lutz's conservatism and desire to maintain the gender structure of Brazilian society seem archaic, and this threatened Lutz and Brazil's position in the international feminist world. Thankfully for Lutz, domestic success quickly followed.

106. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 39; Threlkeld, 114.
107. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 38, 97.
108. Catt agreed that Luisi was "indiscreet" and "dangerous." Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 37–38. Lutz also called Stevens a "sex psychopath." Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 113–14. See also Marino, "Transnational Pan-American Feminism," 72–73.
109. Bediaga, Peixoto, and Filgueiras, 810.
110. Beatrice McKenzie, "The Power of International Positioni19ng: The National Woman's Party, International Law and Diplomacy, 1928–34," *Gender & History* 23, no. 1 (2011): 130; Towns, 791; Threlkeld, 6–7, 145.
111. Threlkeld, 144–48; McKenzie, 134.
112. Doris Stevens qtd. in Threlkeld, *Pan American Women,* 144.
113. McKenzie, 134; Threlkeld, 6–7, 145. For additional discussion of the IACW, see Towns, "The Inter-American Commission of Women and Women's Suffrage, 1920–1945."

## Women's Suffrage in Brazil

Getúlio Vargas overthrew Brazil's Old Republic (1889–1930) in 1930 and proved receptive to Lutz and the FBPF's suffrage campaign, giving literate Brazilian women, 21 and older, the right to vote in 1932.[114] The FBPF's middle-class propaganda and networking, as well as Lutz's international renown, were successful in winning educated women this right. Brazilian women reportedly exercised this new right for the first time in May 1932, but women's suffrage was not official until the new constitution was written. Vargas appointed Lutz to the 20-person committee that wrote the Constitution in 1934.[115] Around that time, Lutz published her *13 Princípios Básicos* (13 Basic Principles), based on the opinions of the FBPF, and many of these "principles" (including women's suffrage, women's access to civil service positions and work, maternity leave, equal pay, and more) made it into the constitution.

Firmly maintaining her scientific opinion that women were biologically different but equal, Lutz had expanded her feminist views to include equal rights and economic rights for women. Lutz reasserted her scientific "defense" of women in *13 Princípios Básicos*, arguing that women's physical differences "have been illogically extended to psychological, economic, and social spheres" and that women's legal situation should improve as they work outside the house.[116] Around this time, Lutz continued to insist that the traditional family unit "rest[ed] on biological foundations that [were] stronger than anything" and that no feminist movement could "shake" those foundations. However, she recognized that as women stepped out of their homes to work to "support [their] family," feminism became "more an economic question."[117]

1n 1933, the FBPF founded their journal, *Boletim da FBPF,* with a "bold new priority" of equal working rights, equal pay, social welfare, and maternity legislation.[118] Similarly, once elected to Congress in 1936, Lutz chaired the Special Congressional Commission on the Status of Women and "reluctantly respond[ed]" to economic demands from communist, working-class women.[119] There are many reasons why Lutz could have made this major shift to consider the cause of working women. First, the Great Depression hurt women's job prospects, which were further limited by Vargas's 1932 Decree-Law 21.417 limiting women's working hours. Emboldened by her recent success with women's suffrage, Lutz may have recognized the exploitation of lower-class women and

114. Roth and Dubois, 210; Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 97.
115. "Women Helping Draft Brazil's New Constitution," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* November 13, 1932; Marino, "Transnational Pan-American Feminism," 74; Roth and Dubois, 210.
116. Roth and Dubois, 210; Bertha Lutz, "13 Princípios Básicos," (Federação Brasileira Pelo Progresso Feminino, 1933), 38-41. The original Portuguese reads: "A diferenciação entre a mulher e o homem tem sido ilogicamente estendida ao domínio psicológico, econômico e social." See page 38.
117. Lutz qtd. in Brunschvicg and Malaterre-Sellier, 38. The original French reads: "La famille repose sur des bases biologiques qui sont plus fortes que tout et il n'y a pas de mouvement, féministe ou autre, qui puisse les ébranler . . . la question féministe est plutôt une question économique. Certainement il y a eu un changement dans la vie de la famille quand la femme est sortie de son foyer . . . [pour] subvenir aux besoins de sa famille."
118. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 98.
119. Roth and Dubois, 210.

chosen to ambitiously grow the FBPF's goals and set "her sights even higher."[120] On the other hand, historians Cassia Roth and Ellen Dubois suggest that Lutz's shift from educated suffrage to economic equal rights changed in conjunction with her scientific activity. It is possible that, as Lutz gained more prestige as a scientist, she desired greater professional access for other women as well.[121]

Lutz had reason to be optimistic. Relatively few women registered to vote, despite urging from the FBPF, but those who did register voted enthusiastically. By 1936, 60 women were in elected offices, including Lutz and Carlota de Queiroz, a doctor and scientist, both elected to the Chamber of Deputies.[122] Though Lutz noted many Brazilians were "indifferent and even hostile" to women's progress, she firmly believed that Brazilian feminism was just in its "infancy." Lutz's could perhaps have achieved more ambitious goals, but Vargas's 1937 dictatorship, the *Estado Novo* (New State), slowed progress almost to a stop, as the New State ended voting and political parties. Just like that, Lutz wrote, "the vote [was] gone with the winds of adversity."[123] Women's suffrage, though enshrined in the Constitution, was widely unenforced. Domestically, Lutz continued with the FBPF; though, after 1937, it reduced to only a "mere handful of women." Internationally, Lutz continued attending conferences, but Pan American feminism, which she had worked hard to establish herself in, was, in her own words, "flimsy."[124]

Lutz's activism was further curtailed by her father's death in 1940. She spent the 1930s caring for him and assisting him with his field work. In 1937, they coauthored a paper on *hylidae*, a family of frogs. She continued this work on tropical frogs into the 1970s with her brother, who photographed the frogs detailed in her 1973 paper, "Brazilian Species of *Hyla.*"[125] After her father's death, she devoted herself to her herpetological research and to finishing her father's work. In the final 30 years of her life, Lutz completed his unfinished research and requested in her will that his biography and complete works be published.[126]

Under the Estado Novo, Vargas supported the sciences in an effort to modernize the Brazilian identity; Lutz's scientific career flourished and grew as she cooperated with his authoritarian regime. In 1939, Vargas placed Lutz on the *Conselho de Fiscalização das Expedições Artísticas e Científicas do Brasil* (Brazilian Inspections Council on Artistic and Scientific Expeditions), and she acted as the Council's liaison to international scientific figures. This "thankless"

120. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 97; Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 166-67; Besse, *Restructuring Patriarchy,* 171.
121. Roth and Dubois, 212.
122. Garcia, "Brazil's Women Score Gains," *NYT,* November 8, 1936; "Await Suffrage in Latin America,"; Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex,* 171.
123. Lutz qtd. in Roth and Dubois, 210.
124. "Await Suffrage in Latin America"; Roth and Dubois, 210–11. For a detailed account of Lutz's experience at the 1933 Montevideo conference, see Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 102–16.
125. Kennedy, 209. In 1935, Adolpho Lutz invited famous U.S. herpetologist Doris Mable Cochran to study with him and Bertha in Brazil. Cochran returned in the early 1960s to work with Bertha Lutz. She published *The Herpetology of Hispaniola* in 1941 and "The Frogs of Southeastern Brazil" in 1955 with the Lutzes' help. See Doris Mable Cochran Papers, circa 1891–1968, Record Unit 7151, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
126. Roth and Dubois, 211; Marino, *Feminism for the Americas,* 233; Jaime L. Benchimol, Magali Romera Sá, Márcio Magalhães de Andrade, and Victor Leandro Chaves Gomes, "Bertha Lutz and the Memory of Adolph Lutz," *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos* 10, no. 1 (2003): 241.

Council role allowed her to become a "scientific diplomat," combining her scientific and feminist networking in an official capacity.[127] Once again, her scientific career opened her up to international opportunities. Because of Lutz's flourishing scientific career, in addition to her track record in Pan American feminist organizing, Vargas sent Lutz with the delegation to the 1945 UN Conference on International Organization in San Francisco.

Throughout the 1920s and 30s, Lutz's scientific beliefs and successes supported her conservative feminist approach, exposed her to the press in Brazil and abroad, and connected her to the U.S.'s female scientists and feminists. Lutz's impressive scientific education lent her social prestige and gave her a rigid, narrow focus on the vote for educated women. For better or for worse, without this perspective, the Brazilian women's suffrage movement may not have been successful. Until the end of her career, it was her relationship with "[her] brothers the frogs," as she called them, that fueled her relationships with her sisters in the U.S. and Brazil.[128] From the beginning of her feminist career in 1920 to her death in 1976, Lutz remained, always, a feminist strategist *and* a scientist.

127. Dubois and Roth, 212.
128. Kennedy, 209.

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