

WOMEN, GENDER, AND POLITICS

A READER

CAMPAIGN

POWER

VOTES

RIGHTS

GOVERNMENT

POLITICAL PARTIES

WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

COMMITTEES

GENDER QUOTAS

STATE

MONA LENA KROOK & SARAH CHILDS

*Women, Gender, and Politics:
A Reader*

Mona Lena Krook and Sarah Childs, Editors

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Women, Gender, and Politics: A Reader

For our teachers, mentors, colleagues, and students

PREFACE

This reader is just one of the many products that have resulted from our first meeting at a women and politics conference in Belfast in March 2002. Being very young scholars, we booked ourselves into very cheap accommodations and met while roaming the halls for a hairdryer. Keeping in touch over the years, we had our first opportunity for sustained collaboration in 2004–2005, when Mona was an Economic and Social Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Bristol, which has been Sarah's home institution since 2003. We spent many afternoons and evenings discussing how to conceptualize and analyze various facets of women's political representation. In 2005, these interests spilled into new collaborations with Karen Celis, at the University College Ghent, and Johanna Kantola, at the University of Helsinki, which has led us to think about "representation" in a much broader sense as occurring in parliaments, but also in social movements, political parties, and the state, as well as through the vehicles of elections and public policy.

When Mona returned to the United States to take up a job at Washington University in St. Louis, our conversations turned as well to questions of how to teach a course on women, gender, and politics. Neither of us felt that existing books were appropriate for a general introduction to the field, as monographs and edited collections tend to focus narrowly on one aspect of women's political participation and/or one particular country or region of the world. This is a well-established norm in scholarly research, but creates a gap for students, both graduate and undergraduate, who seek exposure to a broader range of theoretical ideas and empirical examples. At the same time, we felt that a traditional textbook was inadequate to the task. These are too often overly general, focused on breadth rather than depth and pitched at a very introductory level. Furthermore, in our single- and co-authored research we have become increasingly aware of the need for both students and researchers to be able to access influential pieces "firsthand."

This reader reflects our effort to distill some of the key bodies of research on women, gender, and politics. We focused on selecting both classic and recent contributions in six areas of research: (1) women and social movements; (2) women and political parties; (3) women, gender, and elections; (4) women, gender, and public policies; (5) women, gender, and political representation; and (6) women, gender, and the state. Our aim has been to capture the various ways that research has developed in each of these areas, both thematically and chronologically. To draw connections between the readings, each section includes a short overview of the selections and their relation to one another. Each set of readings might therefore be read as an introduction to general trends in thinking about women, gender, and politics, or alternatively, as an entry into key sets of debates as they have evolved over time.

The resulting volume, as with our other work, is truly "co-authored." Despite the physical distance between us, we really do make decisions together: we engaged in a lot of back and forth exchanges on what to include and exclude, as well as on how the individual chapters and articles should be edited. We

hope that the authors feel that we have done justice to their work, in what was—ultimately, and perhaps inevitably—a rather ruthless process. In our efforts to ensure that the reader included both theoretical and empirical work, covered major themes related to gender and politics, and reflected—as far as possible—both temporal and regional variations, we realized that it was impossible to include every influential piece. Although our coverage could not be total, we hope that we have managed to put together a single collection that offers a thorough—if necessarily incomplete—introduction to the study of women, gender, and politics.

In compiling this reader, we became indebted to a number of individuals who helped shape this project and bring it to fruition. We are especially thankful to David McBride, our editor at Oxford University Press, who saw the potential of this reader and offered invaluable advice throughout the process, as well as to his assistant, Brendan O'Neill, for talking us through the details of putting together a volume such as this. In addition, the three anonymous reviewers who read our proposal offered very helpful suggestions for improving the content and flow of the reader, as well as crucial support for the project as a whole. Our students in our courses, "Politics of Gender" at the University of Bristol and "Gender and Politics in Global Perspective" at Washington University in St. Louis, inspired this project and in many ways helped us think through how we might best edit the pieces we have chosen.

Lydia Anderson-Dana, who was at the time an undergraduate student at Washington University, assisted with some of the initial paperwork for the reader. Diana Z. O'Brien, currently a graduate student at Washington University, performed something of a small miracle in helping us obtain clean copies of all the pieces, contact details of authors and publishers, and—at a time when the copy machine at the Department of Political Science was out of service—permission to copy and scan nearly all of our edits in other parts of the university at one point or another. She also became an expert with the fax machine, when it was necessary to send out our edits and permissions that way as well. Emma Qing Wang, currently an undergraduate at Harvard University, stepped in and assisted during the final stages, helping us implement the final edits and reviewing all the notes and references.

For this crucial assistance, we gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Washington University; the Weidenbaum Center on the Economy, Government, and Public Policy Research at Washington University; and the Radcliffe Research Partnership Program. The time and resources to write the introductory essay were facilitated by Mona's fellowships at Harvard University at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, as well as the Women and Public Policy Program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, where the fellowship was funded by The Women's Leadership Board.

Finally, we would like to express an enormous thanks to the authors and publishers who agreed to have their work included. We hope that they can be proud of this reader, and the role that they have played in the development in this field of research, even if in the process we may have cut out the one sentence that they really think is the most important statement of their work. We sincerely appreciate their generosity.

In closing, we would also like to thank our friends and colleagues in the wider gender and politics community, which is in many ways one of the best aspects of being a women and politics scholar. They provide a challenging but supportive—and fun!—environment within which to work on theoretically and substantively important questions in political science. Some of the key networks—always open to new members—include the Women and Politics Research Section of the American Political Science Association, the Women and Politics Specialist Group of the Political Studies Association, the Gender and Politics Standing Group of the European Consortium for Political Research, and the Gender and Politics Research Committee of the International Political Science Association. For these reasons, we would like to dedicate this book to our teachers, mentors, colleagues, and students, who together form part of this growing community. They continually remind us of the value of reading, teaching, and doing research on women, gender and politics.

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Women, Gender, and Politics: A Reader

Chapter 1

WOMEN, GENDER, AND POLITICS:
AN INTRODUCTION

Mona Lena Krook

Sarah Childs

In recent years, the status of women as political actors has captured the imagination of spectators around the world. The growing number of female presidents and prime ministers, as well as record proportions of women elected to national parliaments, suggest that women have made important gains in the political sphere. Yet the experiences and portrayals of female politicians, in addition to the continued under-representation of women in politics, draw attention to the many ways in which access to political office is still very much stratified by gender. At the same time, women continue to be involved in large numbers in social movements and political parties. However, their participation has increasingly taken new forms, as women have ascended to leadership positions, focused on a wider array of issues, and experimented with new tactics of political protest. Women have also received renewed focus from the media and political elites as voters and candidates. This is due to the increased salience of the gender gap in recent elections in many countries and the dramatic rise in female candidates as a result of newly adopted quota policies. The presence of more women in politics has in turn raised questions about whether or not women make a difference in terms of introducing new policy priorities, proposals, and outcomes. Such a lens suggests that public policies are not gender-neutral, and thus that state actors and agencies play an important role in shaping gender relations in ways that produce and reproduce inequalities between women and men.

To make sense of these developments, this volume seeks to offer an introduction into the

broad body of research on women, gender, and politics. This work is informed by feminism, the belief in the social, economic, and political equality of women and men. It is marked by two major contributions to political analysis: (1) introducing the concept of “gender” and (2) expanding the definition of “politics.” Although the term “gender” is often elided with “women” (cf. Carver 1996), but it is crucial to distinguish between “sex,” normally taken to denote biological differences between women and men, and “gender,” referring to the social meanings given to these distinctions. The concept of gender thus makes it possible to move the analytical focus away from biological sex, which treats men and women as binary opposites, to constructed gender identities, which view masculinity and femininity as features that exist along a continuum, often in combination with other identities (Childs and Krook 2006). As such, theories of gender offer a chance to explore masculinities and femininities, as well as the relative status of men and women, in the conduct of political life.

The term “politics,” in turn, is often used by political scientists to refer to the formal processes and institutions of government and elections. Women’s movement activism in recent decades, however, has inspired feminists to theorize at least two additional meanings. One group expands its range to encompass informal politics and the dynamics of everyday life. Some scholars insist, for example, that social movements are a form of political participation on par with engagement inside the state (Baldez 2002; Beckwith 2007).

At the same time, feminists draw attention to the power relations that permeate all levels of social life, including relations within the private sphere of home and family. For them, “the personal is political” (Okin 1979; Squires 1999). A second group, together with postmodern theorists, has adopted a notion of “politics” as any instance or manifestation of power relations (Butler 1990; Foucault 1995). They are thus interested not only in the politics of the state and the politics of social movements, but also the politics of language, the politics of exchange, and the politics of representation, which they have analyzed using a wide variety of research tools.

Both of these feminist innovations have come under challenge in recent years. On the one hand, there has been increased recognition of the ways in which multiple facets of identity may interact to shape not only personal interactions but also large-scale political outcomes. In these debates, scholars have offered various schemes for analyzing how the dynamics of gender shape and are shaped by other patterns of inequality based on race, class, sexuality, ability, and other features (Hancock 2007; Weldon 2006). For some, this critique means that it is no longer possible to speak of “women” as a group; for others, it simply entails recognizing that there may be strategic value to retaining the category of “women” while also remaining aware of differences among women that may at times make it difficult to generalize about women as a group (cf. Fuss 1989; Squires 1999). On the other hand, increased globalization, combined with decentralization, has posed major challenges to traditional configurations of political organization, creating new opportunities and constraints for feminist change. As a consequence, “politics” is now an even more diffuse entity, with new and developing arrangements that are not yet well understood.

To acquaint readers with this vast literature, this volume brings together classic and more recent contributions on central topics in the study of women, gender, and politics. It is divided into six sections to reflect the range of research in this subfield of political science: (1) women and social movements; (2) women and political parties; (3) women, gender, and elections; (4) women, gender, and political representation; (5) women, gender, and public policies; and (6) women, gender,

and the state. Within each of these sections, readings have been selected to capture the various ways that research has developed in each of these areas, both thematically and chronologically. To aid the reader, each section begins with a short overview of the readings and their relation to one another, as a means to better situate each piece within the context of the whole. Each section might therefore be read as an introduction to general trends in thinking about women and politics or, alternatively, as an entry into key sets of debates on gender and politics as they have evolved over time. To reflect the diversity of trends and approaches, the collection includes readings that, as a group, analyze both developed and developing countries, as well as historical and contemporary examples, and use both statistical and case study methods. This introductory essay provides a brief survey of the state of the art in the six areas covered in this book. It draws out general trends, notes recent developments, and concludes with thoughts as to how a gender lens improves knowledge of both formal and informal political processes.

Women and Social Movements

Social movements have long been a central focus of studies of women, gender, and politics. This is due in part to the fact that women have largely been excluded from other arenas of political participation, like elections, political office, and international politics. While formal barriers like lack of suffrage have been overcome in most countries, informal norms associating women with the private sphere and men with the public continue to exert influence, leading fewer women than men to hold top-level political positions. At the same time, women have also played a major role in many civil society organizations, including churches, choirs, and charities. While social movements form part of civil society, they are distinguished from other voluntary organizations in that they involve “collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interactions with elites, opponents, and authorities” (Tarrow 1998, 4). Given feminists’ strong interest in changing the status quo, it is perhaps not surprising that they have been attracted to the study and practice of social movement organizing.

Women's participation in movement activities falls into three broad categories (Beckwith 2000). Women's movements encompass any type of systematic organizing by women. Although this term is most often associated with movements promoting women's rights, including suffrage and women's liberation, it also refers to movements that draw on—and possibly even seek to preserve—more traditional gender roles, like mothers' movements and right-wing women's groups. Some key questions asked by researchers concern definitions of "women's interests" (Molyneux 1985), relationships between women's movements and political parties (Lovenduski and Norris 1993), how political opportunities for women's movements are gendered (Chappell 2002), and determinants of women's movement failure and success (Banaszak 1996).

Feminist movements are often seen as a subset of women's movements. However, they are distinct in that they may include men and, more fundamentally, are informed by a gendered power analysis that aims to overcome women's subordination. Nonetheless, they may be inspired by different types of feminism. Liberal feminism emphasizes equality between women and men and believes that change can be achieved through legal and social reform. Radical feminism, in contrast, stresses differences between women and men and views gender inequality as a basic system of power that organizes human relationships. Socialist feminism combines ideas from Marxism with radical feminist ideas about patriarchy to highlight economic and cultural sources of women's oppression. Finally, postmodern feminism merges ideas about "sex" and "gender" with postmodern or poststructuralist theory to call attention to the multiple and contradictory aspects of individual and collective identity, which undermine the possibility of a unitary category of "women" or "men."¹ Key dilemmas for feminist movements, therefore, include whether to engage or not engage with state actors (Kantola 2006; L. Young 2000), mobilize separately or in coalition with other actors (Beckwith 2000; Molyneux 1998), and emphasize sex and gender over other identities (Goetz and Hassim 2003). A related concern is whether to use the term "feminism" at all, given its various negative connotations in many parts of the world as "man-hating," "bourgeois," a tool

of "colonial oppression," a measure of "Western decadence," and even a type of "forced emancipation" (Basu 1995; Franceschet 2005).

A third subset of this literature concerns women in social movements. While the content of these groups may not relate directly to questions of women or feminism, they are often deeply gendered in terms of their participants, issues, and tactics. Some social movements, for example, tend to attract women, like antinuclear, peace, and environmental groups (Braidotti et al. 1994; Roseneil 1995), while others are dominated by men, like guerrilla and terrorist organizations (Cunningham 2003; Reif 1986). These patterns stem in part from metaphorical associations between women, peace, and care, on the one hand, and men, war, and violence, on the other. Within many groups, further, women have often been relegated to support roles, although this pattern has begun to change in some movements as women have assumed a greater number of leadership positions. However, the enduring tendency to view men, but not women, as political actors continues to play an important role in how various groups have devised strategies and recognized opportunities for mobilization. Indeed, the fact that women are often not seen as "political" has enabled them to protest when members of other groups have been violently repressed (Baldez 2002), as well as—more recently—carry out terrorist attacks because they are less likely to be searched by authorities (Cunningham 2003). In the former case, women often gain moral force by mobilizing as mothers; in the latter, they may draw on maternal imagery—even to the point of posing as a pregnant woman in order to conceal a bomb—as a means to achieve violent ends.

While it is possible to distinguish analytically between women's movements, feminist movements, and women in social movements, there are also important overlaps between these categories. Feminist movements are often viewed as a subset of women's movements; in many cases, they are even seen as synonymous terms. A less well-known connection is that women in social movements often launch women's movements, especially when the movement in question aims to overcome injustice or fight for equal treatment. In some instances, like campaigns for civil or human rights, women gain a gender consciousness after

being treated in sexist ways (Bunch 1990; Evans 1979). In others, such as revolutionary or nationalist movements, women experience frustration after being asked to delay their demands for gender equality until the “broader” cause is achieved (Basu 1995; Luciak 2001). The issues that have in turn become central to women’s and feminist movements include legal and political rights, employment opportunities and discrimination, reproductive choice and abortion, violence against women, sexual freedom, and women’s political participation and representation. Nonetheless, the particular emphasis of individual movements varies across countries and over time.

Differences in priorities may also be debated within movements themselves. In some cases, activists disagree on the best strategies for accomplishing the group’s goals. Early suffrage organizations split on several occasions on the question of whether to pursue lobbying or more disruptive tactics (Daley and Nolan 1994). Similarly, while liberal feminists are more open to working inside existing institutions, radical feminists prefer to stay outside on the grounds that engaging with patriarchal structures only serves to legitimate and perpetuate these institutions (Squires 1999). In other instances, there are critiques from within and outside the movement regarding claims to speak for “all women,” when in fact these tended to reflect the needs and viewpoints of Western, white, middle-class, heterosexual, and able-bodied women (Mohanty 1988). This tendency, however, is not limited to feminist groups: national organizations that represent marginalized groups are substantially less active on issues affecting disadvantaged subgroups than they are when it comes to issues affecting advantaged subgroups (Strolovitch 2006). These patterns not only pose challenges to articulating “women’s interests,” but also call attention to the dynamics of power at work within and across groups working for social justice.

Debates over how to define women’s movements have led to discussions over the nature and location of social movements. While some argue that a group must be autonomous from other political structures in order to be classified as a women’s movement (Gelb 1989; Weldon 2002), others suggest that women’s presence and struggles inside male-dominated institutions should

be viewed as a type of social movement activity (Katzenstein 1998; Sainsbury 2004). This boundary has been pushed even further with increased globalization and a concomitant rise in transnational contention, which have served to create new opportunities and constraints in women’s movement organizing.² On the one hand, local groups have adopted new discourses and practices as a result of increased contacts with other women’s groups across national borders. Some have forged new personal bonds of solidarity with others who share locally stigmatized values, while others have learned new strategies for lobbying more effectively for an expansion of women’s rights (Alvarez 2000). On the other hand, patterns of governance have shifted with state reconfiguration and increased multilevel governance, such that activists are not limited to petitioning state actors, but may also appeal to—or seek strategic alliances with—international organizations and transnational advocacy networks as a means to achieve policy change (True and Mintrom 2001). At the same time, however, changes in the structures of states have made it less clear which actors have the capacity to implement these reforms in meaningful ways (Banaszak, Beckwith, and Rucht 2003).

Women and Political Parties

A second relatively large literature is research on women and political parties, for some of the same reasons as social movements: until recently, political parties have served as the main avenue for women’s participation in the formal political sphere. This work can be divided into three primary areas of research. The first concerns women’s modes of participating in the party system. In many countries, women have played an active role inside political parties—in many instances, even before women gained the right to vote. However, they rarely assumed leadership roles and even now still make up a minority of all top party officials (Kittilson 2006). Women have instead often been relegated to more ancillary roles, such as cooking, doing clerical work, and mobilizing female voters, although they have also been involved in giving speeches and writing campaign literature (Bashevkin 1985; Freeman 2000). Their

participation has often been facilitated by the presence of women's sections within the parties, although there is ongoing debate as to whether such organizations serve as a platform for formulating women's demands or as a mechanism for marginalizing women and their concerns within the party at large (Sainsbury 2004; Tripp 2001). For some, this insider position has been crucial for gaining greater presence in political decision making and attention to women's concerns in public policy (Lovenduski 1993), while for others it results in cooptation and reduced effectiveness overall (Goetz and Hassim 2003).

A second major topic is interactions between women's movements and political parties. Stemming from concerns about cooptation, a key dilemma in feminist organizing has been whether or not to participate in mainstream power structures. For some, engaging with political parties is the only effective means for promoting women's interests; they believe that change must—and can—come from within existing institutions (Sainsbury 2004). For others, however, true change requires remaining outside the party system; participation, for them, can only serve to legitimize and perpetuate patriarchal power relations (Lovenduski 1986). Although these perspectives are informed by different types of feminism, the strategies of particular women's movements may vary within and across countries, with movements adopting partisan, crosspartisan, or apartisan stances vis-à-vis parties (L. Young 2000), and shift from a separatist toward a more integrationist approach, or vice versa, over time (Britton 2005; Lovenduski 1993). On the occasions where women's groups have decided to engage with political parties, they have tended to do so overwhelmingly with parties of the left (Kittilson 2006; Lovenduski and Norris 1993). However, a growing literature also reveals mobilization by women inside parties of the right (Clark and Schwedler 2003; Wiliarty 2001). The choice to engage, in turn, often creates a new dilemma of “double militancy,” namely what to do when there is a conflict between identities as a party versus a movement activist (Beckwith 2000).

A third and related area of research involves the responses by political parties to women's movement demands. One typology discerns two broad categories of responses—representational

responsiveness, which entails recruitment of more women to positions of power, and policy responsiveness, which involves greater attention to issues of concern to women—and argues that parties may be responsive, promoting representational and policy concerns; cooptive, recruiting more women but not altering policy priorities; nonresponsive, making no changes in response to feminist demands; and oppositional, outwardly refusing to change their recruitment practices or policy stands (L. Young 2000). Although it does not necessarily adopt this language, much of the literature on this question explains these variations with reference to party ideology, strategy, and structure. In general, scholars find that left-wing parties are more open to feminist demands, being more likely than right-wing parties to nominate female candidates and alter their party platforms (Lovenduski and Norris 1993). In part, this is due to a greater willingness among established left parties to take steps to overcome patterns of exclusion and marginalization, as well as among new left parties to promote new ways of doing “politics” (Kittilson 2006). It is also crucial to note, however, that parties of the right have and can play a role in promoting women's rights; indeed, in several countries they were at the forefront of promoting women's right to vote and equal pay (Wolbrecht 2000). Party strategy also plays an important role: studies find that parties tend to be more willing to respond when they believe they will gain something in return, like electoral benefit (Lovenduski and Norris 1993) or support for an existing regime (Goetz and Hassim 2003). The effects of ideology and strategy, in turn, are affected by the organizational structures of political parties, stemming from their degree of decentralization and party discipline (Caul 1999; L. Young 2000).

The literature on women and political parties thus focuses on gendered patterns in party activities, lobbying, and priorities. Most of this work analyzes trends in established parties, exploring how women's engagement may reinforce or challenge “politics-as-usual” within these organizations. A small number of studies, however, have addressed the phenomenon of women's parties. While rare, these parties have appeared in a wide range of countries and, in various ways, reveal the potential and limits for women to engage with