

Women in **POLITICS** **OUTSIDERS OR INSIDERS?**



Lois Lovelace Duke

WOMEN IN POLITICS: OUTSIDERS OR INSIDERS? A Collection of Readings

Lois Lovelace Duke, Editor _____
Clemson University



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PREFACE

This book is designed to provide a supplemental reader on the topic of women and politics to accompany a basic American government text, as well as for use in women and politics courses. We begin with a feminist theoretical framework, examine some gender differences in political attitudes and voting, explore how women have fared in competing for public office, and then look at the various branches of government and how women are (and in some cases are not) participating in the functions of government. Each chapter has been written with the college undergraduate in mind.

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The book is organized into eight chapters, divided into four parts. Part I includes an analysis of "Women, Equality, and Feminist Theory." Part II explores the topic of "Women and Politics," including women as participants, women and political parties, and women running for elective office. Part III, "Gender and Governments," examines women and their role as policymakers in political institutions; this topic includes women as state legislators, women in the U.S. Congress and projections for their future role, and the courts' differential treatment of women and men in the law. Part IV looks at "Women and National Policy" in such public policy areas as family and medical leave, affirmative action, and women in combat; it concludes with a chapter on female activists and their contributions to change. The following is a brief summary of the chapters included in the book:

CHAPTER 1 THE STUDY OF WOMEN: THE NEW FRAMEWORK

Feminist Theory and the Politics of Empowerment

Iva E. Deutchman

This study critically evaluates feminist theories about power. The concept of power has long fascinated not only political analysts, but political activists as well. Among many reasons to support an increase in the number of women officials, one overriding reason has been based on the belief that women feel differently about power and use power differently than men. Men, it is argued, see power as *power over*, an ability to influence or dominate, whereas women see power as *power to*, or empowerment. Thus, power for women can be seen as less confrontational and more cooperative than power for men. Deutchman critically examines the claim that women and men are different in both their concept of power and their use of power.

The Riddle of Consciousness: Racism and Identity in Feminist Theory

Nancie E. Caraway

Utilizing the political and epistemological contributions of contemporary Black feminist theory, Nancie E. Caraway points up the intersections of gender, race, and class as determinants of oppression. She argues that the texts of Black feminists teach us that feminist theory and politics should address this "multiple jeopardy." She cautions that feminists need to be wary of the damaging consequences of conceptions like identity and self, which have set up white norms. In her discussion of identity politics, Caraway questions many of the assumptions of mainstream white feminism. She proposes instead multicultural goals in which the themes of racism and identity come together in a configuration that can address the theoretical issues about the female subject. She argues that a critical identity politics cautions us not to become too comfortable too long in one spot with one identity lest we forget and stifle the ways in which we change, contradict, and grow in history.

CHAPTER 2 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND VOTING

The Gender Gap 1988: Compassion, Pacifism, and Indirect Feminism*Janet Clark/Cal Clark*

Studies have shown that women tend to be more liberal than men on issues relating to social programs and economic security; that is, women have shown more humanitarian, social welfare-oriented attitudes. Women have also tended to be less supportive of militarist or aggressive action in foreign affairs and have tended to oppose the use of nuclear energy as a power source, perhaps as a manifestation of their more environmentalist or pacifist views. This article evaluates this gender gap between men and women in how they vote and in their attitudes about a wide range of political issues.

**Changing Views about Gender Equality in Politics:
Gradual Change and Lingering Doubts***Linda L. M. Bennett/Stephen E. Bennett*

This article examines gender differences and similarities in political behavior and attitudes. Even while some attitudes are changing, women continue to be more politically passive than men. The authors conclude that the sex-role socialization process still tends to define a less politically active role for women than men.

The Generations of Feminism*Elizabeth Adell Cook*

Previous research has found that younger women are more likely to hold feminist attitudes than are older women. There is also some evidence, however, that young women in the 1980s are less supportive of feminism than were older women. This suggests there may be some generational influences at work. Cohort analysis of the 1972 to 1984 American National Election Studies indicates that women who came of age during the period of social activism of the 1960s and the growth of the women's movement in the 1970s exhibit higher levels of politicized feminist consciousness than do women of earlier generations, but that women who came of age during the more conservative late 1970s and early 1980s exhibit lower levels of feminist consciousness than do women of the Sixties and Women's Liberation cohorts.

**Gender, Partisanship, and Background Explain Differences in
Grass-Roots Party Activists' Political Attitudes***Anne E. Kelley/William E. Hulbary/Lewis Bowman*

The authors report the importance of gender as a variable in accounting for political attitudes among party activists in Florida. Using data from a 1984 survey, the authors develop a political ideology scale, which they then relate to gender, party, and social characteristics. They find that partisanship is the major discriminating variable but that, regardless of party affiliation, gender often is related to ideological differences among the party activists. Several social characteristics offer explanations about which of the women and men, representing Florida's precinct committeepersons, are more liberal or conservative than would be expected on the basis of partisanship alone.

**More than Pink and Blue: Gender, Occupational Stratification,
and Political Attitudes***Gertrude A. Steuarnagel/Thomas A. Yantek*

Women's lives are changing, and these changes are not without implications for political life in the United States. One of the most significant changes in women's lives during the twentieth century has been in relation to their roles as workers. A number of researchers have established the importance of understanding the relationship between employment and women's political behavior. Since it has been established that work force participation is linked to women's political behavior, there is a need to focus on the realities of women's employment and the details of the kind of workplace environment in which women find themselves. This study is concerned with the effects of occupational segregation on women's political attitudes. Using data from the 1984 University of Michigan National Election Study as well as statistics on occupation segregation and

integration from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the authors examined the attitudes of workers in three census occupational categories. The conclusions suggest a need to go beyond the sex of respondents in order to comprehend the significance of gender and its relationship to political attitudes.

CHAPTER 3 WOMEN AND ELECTIONS: THE UPHILL STRUGGLE

On the Eve of Transition: Women in Southern Legislatures, 1946–1968

Joanne V. Hawks/Carolyn Ellis Staton

Many scholars considered the post–World War II era a quiescent time for white middle-class American women. After a period of wartime involvement, many women supposedly retreated into a more traditional lifestyle. Yet, between 1946 and 1968, almost 100 women entered legislatures in the South, a particularly traditional region. Data indicate that they were predominantly women who were already involved in the public sphere in one or more ways. Even though many were serious legislators, the press emphasized their domesticity and femininity instead of their legislative achievements.

Women on Southern City Councils: Does Structure Matter?

Susan A. MacManus/Charles S. Bullock III

This article examines the influences of governmental structural variables (single-member district election systems, council size, incumbency return rate, length of term, staggered terms, and majority vote requirements) in assessing female representation on Southern city councils. The research data were drawn in the spring of 1986 from the 211 cities with 1980 populations over 25,000 in eleven Southern states. Although the researchers occasionally observed variations across the structural variables considered, the overwhelming thrust of their findings is that structural features are not associated with whether women serve as council members.

John Bailey's Legacy: Political Parties and Women's Candidacies for Public Office

Barbara Burrell

This essay reviews the relationship between political party organizations and women's candidacies for public office in the United States. Its theme is that the women and politics literature has developed a static and negative perspective on the role of parties in the recruitment of female candidates and has not carefully incorporated the changing nature of party organization as chronicled in the parties' literature into its research. The essay discusses various scenarios regarding the parties' impact on women's campaigns, the possible positive and negative effects of party decline, and the possible transformation of party leadership into more supportive organizations.

CHAPTER 4 LEGISLATURES, WOMEN, AND POLICYMAKING

Women in Congress

Marcia Lynn Whicker/Malcolm Jewell/Lois Lovelace Duke

In recent years, women have made some inroads in obtaining elected political office. Those inroads, however, have not included gains in female representation in Congress. Across the more than seventy years since women secured the right to participate politically with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, female representation in Congress has increased from a minuscule 0.2 percent of total membership in 1922 to only 5.2 percent in 1988. At that rate of increase, women will not achieve equality in representation until the year 2582. Women who do obtain congressional office do so at an older age than their male counterparts, serve significantly fewer terms, and are more likely to decline to seek reelection. The gap between democratic rhetoric and representational reality for women is great, despite a significant narrowing in the experiential backgrounds of men and women who are elected to Congress.

Why Are More Women State Legislators?

Wilma Rule

This research analyzes why women's recruitment in the fifty state assemblies and senates increased 100 percent in the decade from 1974 to 1984. Findings show that women's recruitment to state legislatures has doubled because of two trends occurring simultaneously in the last decade.

One was a building on the gains in the Republican-moralistic states most favorable to women in the 1960s and 1970s. At the same time, women's dramatic legislative increases in the "new wave" states show that the Democratic party no longer constitutes a barrier.

CHAPTER 5 THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH: WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP

The Maleness of the American Presidency

Marcia Lynn Whicker/Todd W. Areson

The authors explore why the U.S. presidency has been a bastion of maleness. They identify factors that account for the unlevel presidential "playing field" that women candidates face: the presidential system of direct, popular election; the paucity of women who have gained experience in the three presidential "launching roles"; the difficulty women face in securing campaign funding for national and subnational races; and long-standing public images of a conflict for women—but not for men—between familial and political roles.

CHAPTER 6 THE COURTS: WOMEN AND DECISIONS

Views from the State Bench: Gender Roles and Judicial Roles

Elaine Martin

This study represents a new area of research in which the author attempts to establish some dimensions to the different, gender-based perspectives male and female judges might bring to the bench. Three areas of potential attitudinal differences between women and men are examined: perceptions of the role of female judges, perceptions of gender bias in the courts, and decisions on five hypothetical cases raising women's rights issues. A major underlying question in the study is whether gender or feminist ideology is a more important influence on judicial attitudes. Controlling for feminism reveals statistically significant variations between genders on almost every attitudinal variable tested. The influence of gender and feminism was less apparent in respondents' votes in the hypothetical cases.

On Credibility: Differential Treatment of Women and Men in the Law

Victor F. D'Lugin

This research indicates that one key variable in understanding the treatment of women in law is the differential awarding of credibility. The hypothesis: Regardless of rule, men are assumed to possess credibility, whereas women must earn credibility. Women's treatment as victims, expert witnesses, and professionals is examined. Credibility is shown to possess an intrinsic contradiction that permits courts to rely on sexist assumptions in exercising discretionary authority. The resulting action of courts is advantageous to men and detrimental to women.

CHAPTER 7 PUBLIC POLICY: THE FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

***The Handmaid's Tale* and *The Birth Dearth*: Prophecy, Prescription, and Public Policy**

Diane D. Blair

This chapter deals with the politics of reproduction. It compares and analyzes Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1986) and Ben Wattenberg's *The Birth Dearth* (1987). Blair argues that Atwood, writing from a feminist perspective, posits a dystopia in which women have been reduced to the function of breeders. By contrast, Wattenberg, writing from what Blair describes as a "nationalistic perspective," deplores the current American "birth dearth," attributes it primarily to "working women," and proposes a variety of pro-natalist remedies. Blair maintains that among the significant implications of these two books, especially when they are read in tandem, are the following: that pro-natalism, justified by the United States' relatively low fertility rate, has climbed high on many conservative agendas; that this movement seriously jeopardizes many of the gains achieved by feminists in recent years; and that the contemporary pro-natalist drive has long and powerful historical precedents.

The Family and Medical Leave Act: A Policy for Families

Joan Hulse Thompson

Exclusion of males has been a policy of the women's liberation movement for ideological, symbolic, and pragmatic reasons. Therefore, the transformation of the Congresswomen's Caucus into the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues raised questions about the viability of a political organization founded on gender and the optimal future strategy for the women's movement. Relying on extensive interviewing and participant observation, the author examines the benefits and challenges that come from forging a partnership with congressmen. The diversity of congresswomen formed an insurmountable obstacle to unity and effectiveness for the Congresswomen's Caucus. Sharing credit with the men has created tensions, but the expansion gave the caucus far more members in positions of power and a better media presence. Because their goals were legislative and reformist rather than revolutionary, partnership with men was the logical course for the caucus congresswomen.

Sex at Risk in Insurance Classifications? The Supreme Court as Shaper of Public Policy

Ruth Bamberger

Although numerous laws have been passed prohibiting sex discrimination in a variety of public policy areas, the insurance industry has retained the practice of discriminating by gender in determining coverage and premium rates. The industry argues its position on cost-efficiency and actuarial grounds. Civil rights and feminist groups have criticized such discrimination on grounds of fairness and prevailing social policy. Although they have pursued their cause through multiple channels of government, the Supreme Court is perceived to be the primary agent of policy change. The Court has signaled that sex may be at risk as a classification, but its role as shaper of policy on this issue has been incremental at best.

Affirmative Action as a Woman's Issue

Roberta Ann Johnson

This reading offers a generic definition of affirmative action and then does three things. First, it raises the development of the federal affirmative action policy from the issuing of Executive Orders by Presidents Roosevelt, Kennedy, and Johnson to its full implementation in the Department of Labor. Second, the paper summarizes and evaluates all the affirmative action cases decided by the Supreme Court, starting with the Bakke decision. Finally, using Census Bureau and Department of Labor statistics and secondary sources, the study considers the ways in which affirmative action increases opportunities for women. Throughout the paper, the author recognizes affirmative action for its redistributive thrust.

Affirmative Action and Combat Exclusion: Gender Roles in the U.S. Army

Richard D. Hooker, Jr.

The women's movement has resulted in the removal of many obstacles for women—obstacles that crossed political, economic, social, cultural, and legal boundaries. One significant change, and one that elicits emotional arguments on both sides, extends to the role of women in the military. Specifically, this debate centers around the question of whether the military should permit women in combat. With the intervention of U.S. forces in the activities of other countries, this issue has become even more salient to the U.S. public. This article reviews the current policy of the U.S. Army with respect to the role of women, examines court cases brought about as a result of this issue, and evaluates the arguments for those who would favor full participation of women in all aspects of military life versus those who take a traditional approach to the role of female soldiers.

CHAPTER 8 WOMEN ACTIVISTS: ATTITUDES, TACTICS, AND CHANGE

Virginia Foster Durr: An Analysis of One Woman's Contributions to the Civil Rights Movement in the South*Lois Lovelace Duke*

This research explores Virginia Foster Durr's contributions to the civil rights movement in the Deep South, using the theoretical framework of leadership as outlined by James MacGregor Burns. For many years Durr worked behind the scenes in efforts to eliminate the poll tax and bring about the right to vote for all Americans. She also supported the civil rights movement by giving aid and encouragement to many civil rights activists, including Rosa Parks and the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycotters. Durr worked as her husband's legal secretary in support of many civil and human rights cases. She opened her home in Montgomery, Alabama, to many civil rights workers who traveled to and from Alabama, and provided them with room, board, and support. Those who stayed in the Durr home included the Kennedys, Tom Hayden, and C. Vann Woodward.

American and British Trends in Gender Differences: A Comparison of Anti-Nuclear Weapons Activists*Glen Sussman*

This research examines the extent to which gender-based differences are in evidence among one set of political actors involved in a salient contemporary issue—nuclear weapons. On the basis of cross-national survey data gathered from anti-nuclear weapons activists in the United States and the United Kingdom, the author compares political attitudes and policy preferences. Consideration of participation levels is also analyzed, with attention directed at both conventional and unconventional political action. The findings are discussed against the backdrop of the "gender gap," which has received much publicity in recent political literature.

A Grassroots Approach to Change: Anarchist Feminism and Nonhierarchical Organization*Kathleen P. Iannello*

This study analyzes systems of power within the framework of organizations. The author argues that it is from the notion of power as a type of energy or "empowerment" that a feminist framework for organizations emerges. Three feminist organizations were selected for in-depth study, identified as follows: (1) the feminist peace group, (2) the women's health collective, and (3) the business women's association. Findings reveal that in both the peace group and the health collective, critical decisions are reserved for the entire membership of the organization, whereas routine decisions are delegated horizontally. The business women's association did not provide a model of collectivist organization; it was found to be clearly hierarchical both on paper and in operation. The author concludes that whereas examples of male-value-linked hierarchical organization abound, female-value-linked forms of organization are more difficult to find.

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This book is specifically dedicated to the more than seventy scholars, female and male, who responded to the call for papers for a special edition of *The Journal of Political Science* published at Clemson University on the theme of "Women in American Politics," Volume 17, Numbers 1 and 2, Spring 1989. The response was overwhelming and pointed up the need for this book.

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THE STUDY OF WOMEN: THE NEW FRAMEWORK

Until the 1960s, most of the research about movements for women's rights centered on women's suffrage in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Since the 1960s, however, an enormous number of studies on women and politics have been added to the scholarly literature. Even a superficial review of the wealth of books, journal articles, and other publications analyzing the relationship between gender and politics reveals that the field of research in this area has grown substantially.

Over the past twenty-five years, scholars who wished to research the influence of women's political behavior in the American political process experienced numerous "growing pains." These included limited financial support for research on the topic, initial efforts to study a field that had established norms identified and defined from a male perspective and male-shaped understanding of the political world, and a tendency to view gender-related research as a "special-interest" focus, "outside" the normal theoretical framework. For all these reasons, many studies on women and politics turned out to be simply descriptive narratives drawn from traditional concepts, as opposed to empirically driven research studies.

The early pioneers of scholarly research on gender and politics, however, may currently reflect on a significant legacy of contributions. These include the present solid body of literature analyzing gender socialization, women's political behavior (at both the individual and the group level), and women's role (to include officeholding) in the political sector. As we enter the 1990s, however, it appears that the early scholars analyzing the issue of women in American politics have passed along to the next generation of researchers on this topic a clear challenge: to ascertain why it is that women are still represented in such small numbers in both elective and appointive political offices. Clearly there is a need to use the previously researched information to provide a new agenda in which findings on the role and performance of females in the public sector can be more conclusive. Why are more women not serving as elected and appointed officials in politics? Why are more issues of concern to women not being addressed in our public policies? Why are women still being discriminated against and still suffering sexual harassment?

The next research agenda to explore further this issue of women and politics should address these questions, thereby leading the way in putting equal rights for women into practice. We begin this book by considering the issue of equality for women from the perspective of feminist theory. We will then move to an examination of gender differences in political attitudes and voting. We will look at women in U.S. government and continue with an analysis of women and national policy. We will

conclude with a look at female activists who have themselves moved from theory to practice. Along the way we hope to provide some insight into the questions raised herein. First, however, let us consider several issues of concern to women from a theoretical feminist framework. For our purposes here, we define *feminist framework* as an overall analysis of the nature and causes of female inequality and an accompanying alternative or proposal for ending women's discrimination.

In our first reading, Iva Ellen Deutchman critically evaluates feminist theories about power. The concept of power has long fascinated not only political analysts but political activists as well. Among the many reasons to support an increase in the number of women officials, one overriding reason has been based on the belief that women feel differently about power and use power differently from men. Men, it is argued, see power as *power over*, an ability to influence or dominate, whereas women see power as *power to*, or empowerment. Thus, power for women is seen as less confrontational and more cooperative than power for men. Deutchman critically examines the claim that women and men are different in their concept of power and their use of power.

Nancie E. Caraway uses the political and epistemological contributions of contemporary Black feminist theory to point up the intersections of gender, race, and class as determinants of oppression. She argues that the texts of Black feminists teach us that feminist theory and politics should address this "multiple jeopardy." She cautions that feminists need to be wary of the damaging consequences of conceptions like *identity* and *self* that have set up white norms. In her discussion of identity politics, Caraway questions many of the assumptions of mainstream white feminism. She proposes instead multicultural goals in which the themes of racism and identity come together in a configuration that can address the theoretical issues about the female subject. She argues that a critical identity politics cautions us not to become too comfortable too long in one spot with one identity, lest we forget and stifle the ways in which we change, contradict, and grow in history.

Feminist Theory and the Politics of Empowerment

Iva Ellen Deutchman

INTRODUCTION

Power is often seen as one of the most important concepts for political analysis. Indeed, many political scientists would define *politics* as concerned primarily with the allocation and distribution of power.¹ It is perhaps surprising, then, that there is so much disagreement about how to define, let alone measure, power.

Most contemporary scholars define *power* as a relationship rather than a property or quality. In other words, power is not something an actor has or possesses. Rather, it is an ability to influence another actor or actors. Someone can exercise power in a proactive manner, meaning that he or she engages in a behavior designed to influence another actor or actors. Alternatively, someone can choose *not* to act when he or she might be expected to do so; that, too, is an exercise of power.

Consider, for example, that you are an unseen witness to an important conversation. If you make your presence known and stop the conversation, that would be an exercise of power. But if you remain hidden and learn information you aren't supposed to know, that, too, would be an exercise of power.

The concept of power has long fascinated not only political analysts but political activists as well. In the twenty years or so since the so-called second wave of feminism, many female political activists have argued that we need more women in politics. Among the many reasons to support an increase in the number of women officials, one overriding reason has been based on the belief that

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women feel differently about power and use power differently from men. Men, it is argued, see power much as I have described it here. Women, by contrast, see power as less confrontational and more cooperative. From this it follows that we will have a more humane government with better policies if we elect more women to political office.

Before we come to such conclusions, however, it is wise to examine critically the claim that women and men are very different in their concept of power and their use of power. It is to this task that I now turn my attention.

While offering important critiques of more traditional theories, some feminist theories about power are themselves deeply problematic in their understanding of power. The particular difficulties in these theories include a tendency toward essentialism (seeing men and women as inherently different in their natures), an ahistorical understanding of some nonfeminist theories of power, and some unresolved contradictions in implementing a feminist approach to power. What is needed is a feminist approach to power that is nonessentialist, structural, and historical.

POWER AS GENDER-RELATED

Although there are a variety of approaches to the treatment of power within feminist scholarship, feminist analysis insists that to talk about power is to discuss gender; in other words, power relations are themselves gendered. Holding perhaps the most extreme position, Jean Lipman-Blumen considers gender roles as “the model for power relationships between generations, socio-economic classes, religious, racial and ethnic groups, as well as between imperial powers and their colonies, and between less developed and post-industrial societies.”² Gender as model implies that the dominance–submission roles that men and women play are the basis for power relations of all kinds.

Other feminist theorists hold that it is difficult and perhaps impossible to sever gender from power. As Joan Scott reminds us, “gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power. It might be better to say, gender is a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated.”³ Because men and women do not have the same access to resources that are associated with power and because they are socialized to use power differently, “gender becomes implicated in the conception and construction of power itself.”⁴ That is, women do not have (much) power because their gender has denied them access to resources (such as inheritance) that often yield power.

Power as gender-related goes beyond discussions that consider authority and wealth as primary attributes. Many feminist theorists hold that conditions of oppression often reveal real strength in the oppressed, challenging traditional notions that women are perpetual victims. Jean Lipman-Blumen and Elizabeth Janeway,⁵ among others, speak of the reciprocal relationship between influencer and influencee. As Elizabeth Janeway says, “the two members of the power relationship—we can call them the powerful and the weak, or the governors and

governed, rulers and ruled, leaders and followers—do not interact at the ultimate level of total dominance and utter subordination.”⁶ Linda Gordon, in her brilliant social history of family violence, argues the need to recognize women victims’ “bravery, resilience, and ingenuity, often with very limited resources, in trying to protect and nurture themselves and their children.”⁷ To argue that gender relations are power relations, as much feminist theory does, is not to argue that women are perpetual victims.

Feminist theory argues not only that power is gendered but also that women both define power and use power differently than men do. Feminist theorists such as Janet Flammang⁸ and Nancy Hartsock⁹ argue that women define power as empowerment or *power to*, whereas men see power as domination or *power over*. Certainly, as Jeffrey Isaac states, “[e]mpiricist power theorists have confined themselves to one particular locution, ‘power over,’ corresponding to their belief that a proper social science is a science of behavioral regularities.”¹⁰ These empiricist theorists have clearly monopolized the power debate,¹¹ and hence their definitions of power have predominated. Power as gender-related thus forces us to reconsider our everyday relationships as models of power.

For a better understanding of the power debates, it is useful to know that traditional social science has often made a distinction between what is called empirical and normative theory. *Empirical theory* refers to theory about what is or what exists—in other words, “is”-based theory. *Normative theory* refers to “shoulds” or “oughts”—what *should* exist in a prescriptive sense. Although this duality is extreme in that it is arguably impossible to separate what is from what should be, many theorists have seen themselves as representative of one position and sometimes hostile to the other. This is certainly true regarding conflicting theories of power, both feminist and nonfeminist.

The concept of empowerment or “power to” suggests a broadness that “power over” lacks. “Power over” only captures the ability to act or compel actions, whereas, “power to” is more inclusive, comprising both the ability to act and the ability to refrain from action. However, the power to refrain from action, when exercised, is never quantifiable.¹² Hence, empirical theorists cannot fully capture the feminist concept of “power to” or empowerment.

EMPOWERMENT AS A FEMINIST CONCEPT

Some feminist theorists have argued that empowerment is a particularly feminist concept which stands in striking opposition to masculinist ideologies of power. Such theorists argue that empirical differences in women’s and men’s power behaviors are apparent. Lipman-Blumen asserts that “men and women engage in the gender power relationship with notably distinct styles.”¹³ Janet Flammang asserts that whereas “[f]eminists recognize that women have been denied power . . . women do not want power if what that means is business as usual, ‘getting yours at someone’s expense,’ a zero-sum game where one person’s gain is another’s loss.”¹⁴ Feminist theory thus calls for women’s empowerment without