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# Gendering the Nation-State



*Edited by Yasmeeen Abu-Laban*

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**Gendering the Nation-State**  
Canadian and Comparative  
Perspectives



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A volume such as this owes a great deal to a great many people and organizations. I would like to thank the CPSA for support given to me, as the 2004 section head for women and politics, in developing this workshop; David Laycock, the 2004 CPSA program chair, for his vision and encouragement; and Michelle Hopkins, CPSA executive director, for her galvanizing work connecting political scientists across Canada. At the University of Alberta, I would like to signal my appreciation for the work of E. Anne Mackenzie (Research Services Office) and her ongoing commitment to facilitating the research that takes place across faculties at the university; the funding given by the Research Services Office to support indexing this volume; the computing assistance of Lenise Anderson; the work of Leslie Robertson, who compiled an integrated bibliography while also teaching and doing her own research; and the library assistance of Alexa DeGagne, a master’s student in the Department of Political Science. I would like to acknowledge the financial assistance of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences and its Aid to Scholarly Publications Programme, which made this volume possible. I am grateful to Emily Andrew, senior editor of UBC Press, for skilfully guiding this project from its inception; and to production editor Anna Eberhard Friedlander and copy editor Deborah Kerr for their skilled and valuable work in the final stages. Not least, I also thank the anonymous reviewers for their insightful and constructive comments.

This volume arises out of the larger ongoing feminist struggle for justice, equality, and analytic understanding. Challenges to traditional ways of

understanding the nation-state demand a rethinking of past understandings; they foster new ways of thinking, new forms of questions, and new linkages that frequently transcend disciplinary boundaries. These original essays, written specifically for this book by senior and junior academics, social activists, and graduate students, illustrate the dynamism and multiplicity of the struggle as it unfolds across generations, across geographic space, and across genders and other forms of social divide.

I would particularly like to thank the contributors for their passion and their dedication in this quest and for their commitment to ensuring that this volume reached fruition.

Yasmeen Abu-Laban

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# Gendering the Nation-State



# Gendering the Nation-State: An Introduction

*Yasmeeen Abu-Laban*

The idea of a world without borders, a world in which the state was not all-powerful, captured the popular imaginary at the end of the twentieth century. This could be seen in the 1990 bestseller *The Borderless World* by corporate strategist Kenichi Ohmae, in the frequent invocation by business, media, and political elites, in all major world languages, of the idea of globalization (Held et al., 1999: 1), and even in the unfounded fear that Y2K computer glitches would have worldwide apocalyptic consequences (Kingwell, 1996; Swerdlow, 1998). Yet, despite all the anxiety, particularly in North America, the year 2000 came and went without the global disasters some predicted. More to the point, the early years of the twenty-first century are rife with examples of how much we are still collectively impacted by political processes in which states, national citizenship, and nationalism remain powerful forces.

Perhaps the most striking reminder of the continued import of these political processes comes from the fallout and response to the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York and Washington. In very real terms the “war on terrorism” has involved states – hence, the American-led war in Afghanistan in 2001, and the American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. Across Western countries the rapid passage of anti-terrorist legislation, as well as renewed attention to policing borders in the name of national security, speaks to the relevance of national citizenship in the twenty-first century. Both the anti-terrorist legislation and the focus on borders have served to differentially target and restrict the rights and liberties of non-citizens (visitors, immigrants, asylum seekers) (Macklin, 2001; Fenwick, 2002; Cole, 2002-03; Haubrich, 2003; Abu-Laban, 2004). Amidst the surge in US sales of American flags and the renewed popularity of Huntington’s (1993, 1996) essentialist argument about a “clash of civilizations,” the immediate aftermath of September 11 does not suggest a post-national world. Rather, what has been underscored is the continued currency of Orientalist discourses that differentiate the

civilized “us” (a community in which women have purportedly achieved autonomy and social equality) and the barbarian “them” (where women are unequal) (Said, 1979; Abu-Laban, 2001).

Feminist analyses, attuned to the playing out of notions of masculinity and femininity, have much to add to our understanding of why state-led military violence came to be viewed by many Americans as the best response to the events of September 11 (Cohn and Enloe, 2003: 1203-5). Cynthia Enloe (Cohn and Enloe, 2003: 1201) notes feminist analyses also have much to say about the manner in which “national security” has assumed a prominence over other conceptions of security since September 11, and, moreover, that a feminist understanding of Orientalism can reveal how the oppression of women “has been used as a measure of how enlightened a society is, without a much deeper commitment to deprivileging masculinity.” More broadly, feminist analyses have much to add to our understanding of the nation-state both before and after September 11.

This volume takes as its focus “gendering the nation-state” by bringing the insights of feminism front and centre to show how socially constructed notions of both masculinity and femininity play out in relation to nation and state processes in Canada, in other countries, and internationally. The central thesis guiding this book is that a comprehensive approach to the theoretical and empirical study of political life in the twenty-first century demands that explicit analytic attention be given to gender. Specifically, current feminist scholarship draws attention to how gender matters for understanding relations of power, and therefore the ongoing contestation over the allocation of both symbolic and material resources in which nation-states are implicated historically and today. Consequently, when one approaches the major issues now dominating social science and political science research, such as the challenges posed by globalization to the nation-state and its autonomy, gender is a critical consideration.

Eschewing the assumptions about the “borderless world” that underpinned much popular discussion in the 1990s, feminism is, by definition, attuned to boundaries. This has specifically involved attending to the manner in which the historically and culturally specific drawing of boundaries around “the public” and “the private” have differential implications for men and women (Lamphere, 1993). Moreover, by the 1990s feminist theorizing and feminist praxis began to increasingly, as well as explicitly, consider the manifold ways in which the experiences of both women and men vary by class, race, ethnicity, religion, and disability, among other forms of difference. Of course there remains a lively debate among feminists about how best to recognize difference in light of the dangers inherent in essentialism, in light of present (if not growing) economic inequalities, and in light of the status of the project of eradicating gender oppression (McLaughlin, 2003: 7-22). Chandra Talpade Mohanty’s *Feminism without Borders* (2003) epitomizes the

spirit of one contemporary response to this debate by arguing that in fact difference must be acknowledged before change and justice can exist across social divides. Mohanty remarks that “Feminism without borders is not the same thing as ‘border-less’ feminism. It acknowledges the fault lines, conflicts, differences, fears and containment that borders represent. It acknowledges that there is no one sense of border, that the lines between and through nations, races, classes, sexualities, religions, and disabilities, are real – and that a feminism without borders must envision change and social justice work across these lines of demarcation and division” (2). Mohanty’s articulation of a feminism without borders, insofar as it involves the recognition and crossing of divides, is useful for thinking not only about the social but also the disciplinary borders that are traversed in the chapters of *Gendering the Nation-State*.

### **Crossing Divides: Scope and Goals**

Contributors to this volume use the insights of feminism to reveal the manner in which the nation-state – a central organizing unit in the modern world and thus equally central in modern social science and especially political science – is variously encoded by gendered assumptions, which in turn produce gendered outcomes. The book’s central thesis, that the serious study of social and political life requires attending to gender, unfolds in separate sections devoted to gender and nation, gender and state processes, and gender and citizenship. Here political scientists come together to address how and why gender matters by examining constructions and reproductions of “the nation,” the differential impact of state and international institutions and policies on specific groups, and access to rights and forms of participation and belonging.

At a very basic level, this collection illustrates the theoretical and empirical importance of engaging with gender. The chapters speak to the contributions multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary gender analysis makes to the discipline of political science by broadening the definition of the political through politicizing the public and the private. As a package, this collection also shows the import of addressing both “nation” and “state.” The variety of nationalisms and the complexity of state processes are particularly relevant for understanding a multinational and federal country such as Canada, which was founded on settler-colonialism and still receives immigrants. However, the placement of Canada in a comparative frame of reference illustrates that political outcomes at international, national, sub-national, and local levels are also related to power relations infused by gender and other forms of difference. It is this kind of attention that paves the way for better understanding such diverse issues explored in the book as the formation of nation-states (Chapter 1), the collapse of nation-states (Chapter 2), neoliberalism (Chapter 8), globalization (Chapter 12), the

international criminal court (Chapter 7), public policy (Chapters 5, 6, 9, and 10), elections, parties, and representation (Chapter 4), and immigration (Chapter 3). It is also this kind of attention that can inform our understanding of the past so as to envision a different future (Afterword).

The chapters in this collection, in their engagement with theory and empirical evidence, reflect current developments. However, in a very real sense, *Gendering the Nation-State* builds on extensive work that has been done for well over three decades in the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary areas of gender/women's studies, as well as within the field of women/gender and politics in the discipline of political science. Indeed, in the past decade alone, Canadian and international scholars have made a number of contributory interventions to the study of gender, diversity, and politics, including the state and gender, as well as nation and gender.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, despite the large body of feminist scholarship that has been and continues to be produced, the discipline of political science as a whole has yet to fully acknowledge and engage the implications of this work. Put differently (and to extend the observations of Mohanty), there is no "political science without borders" when it comes to feminist scholarship. Rather, it appears that disciplinary biases, assumptions, and practices have discouraged analytic attention to gender (see Vickers, 1997). Thus, writing in 1999, Jane Arscott and Manon Tremblay suggested that in both Quebec and Canada outside Quebec, the absorption of feminist scholarship within the discipline, and within the major disciplinary journals, was at best a work in progress. For many years, there have been sections within the Australasian Political Studies Association, the American Political Science Association, and the Canadian Political Science Association that aim to showcase scholarship in the field of gender by recognizing the best of it. One example that comes to mind is the 2003 introduction of the Jill Vickers Prize for the best paper on women, gender, and politics given at the Canadian Political Science Association's annual meeting (Sawer, 2004). However, as recently as 2004, Marian Sawer's analysis suggested that not only has the discipline of political science remained male-dominated in most parts of the world, but the impact of feminist scholarship on curricula and the field as a whole "remains additive rather than transformative" (563). Sawer contrasts this with the more decisive impact that feminist scholarship has had on such related areas as sociology and history in the scholarly work undertaken by both men and women in those disciplines (553-60).

Therefore, by bringing feminism front and centre, *Gendering the Nation-State* is a response to a disciplinary incompleteness in political science; thus, the focus on the nation-state is deliberate. Even in the face of increasing discussions about globalization, it has been noted that the study of the state provides the most unified focus for the various subfields within political science (O'Lary, 1996; Katznelson and Milner, 2002). Yet, at the same time,

the way in which gender and feminist analyses have contributed to the study of the state and citizenship remains at best only partially recognized and minimally integrated into work in the discipline. Moreover, within much Canadian and international political science literature, discussions of nation and nationalism have tended to be separated from those pertaining to the state and citizenship. Additionally, much theorizing on nation, nationalism, public policy, and citizenship has ignored gender relations, with the consequence that gender is treated as marginal or even irrelevant. This collection, however, brings together political scientists who engage with the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary study of gender in relation to the traditional concepts of the state, citizenship, and nation. The overt focus on the nation-state is used to reinforce both the challenge and the contribution feminist scholarship poses to what arguably remains the central organizing unit within the discipline of political science.

In addition, though much work has crossed disciplines in the areas of gender and electoral politics, gender and citizenship, gender and public policy, and gender and nationalism, with some notable exceptions (e.g., Yuval-Davis, 1997), these areas are treated in separate volumes. This book takes up all these areas, with the intent of interrogating and integrating the theoretical and empirical importance of addressing both “nation” and “state.” This provides a unique window into the dynamism and diversity that gender analysis engages in terms of methodology, theory, and foci; in addition, it shows the distinct contribution that feminist analysis brings to the study of what, in different ways, remains a key unit of analysis across contemporary social science – the nation-state.

Keeping the traditional core of the discipline of political science and its disciplinary interstices in mind, the following sections will frame the insights that gender analysis brings to the concepts of state, citizenship, and nation.

## **The Contribution of Feminist Scholarship**

### **Gendering the State**

The development of modern social sciences in the nineteenth century introduced the concepts of “state” and “society” into the shared lexicon, though these have been utilized differently across time and disciplines. Within political science, the 1950s and 1960s were characterized by a retreat from the concept of the state, a result of both the popularity of pluralist approaches to understanding power and the development of “systems theory,” explicitly designed by David Easton to replace the state concept (Easton, 1957; Almond, 1997).

The 1960s and 1970s saw a revived interest in the study of the state, initially among scholars working in the Marxist tradition, particularly in Europe (Miliband, 1969; Althusser, 1971; and see Blackburn, 1972: 238-62, for

the debate between Ralph Miliband and Nicos Poulantzas). The state also came to be studied, mainly by American scholars, in relation to Max Weber's understanding of it as an organization. The cry to "bring the state back in" was a call to view the state as capable of pursuing goals – either in periods of crisis or even more generally – independent of the pressures of classes and/or social groups (Skocpol, 1979, 1985; Nordlinger, 1981). The type of abstract theorizing found in the Marxist and neo-institutionalist debates around state autonomy in the 1970s and 1980s no longer characterizes contemporary research, but the insights generated by feminist scholarship beginning in this same period cannot be ignored in any adequate account of the state today (Jessop, 2001). It is in relation to both the Marxist and the Weberian traditions that feminist scholarship has posed key challenges and opened new avenues of theory and research.

Weber posited the state as an organization that has a monopoly over the "legitimate" use of force in a given territory. However, feminist scholarship has drawn attention to a number of issues that show the limitations of Weber's perspective. Consider, for example, violence, its expression in both public and private spheres, and by non-state actors. As Catherine MacKinnon (1989: 169) has bluntly put it, Weber's monopoly over coercion "actually describes the power of men over women in the home, in the bedroom, on the job, in the street, through social life." Attention to the expression of militarized violence and, relatedly, the international system, has also shown the value of attending to gender in relation to war (Elshtain, 1987; Goldstein, 2001) and in international relations theory (Enloe, 1989; Peterson and Runyan, 1993; Whitworth, 1994; Pettman, 1996). As well, Weber's state as an organization has been unpacked, leading to the development of a feminist case – attuned to the experience of many women who undertake caring work – against hierarchically administered societies (Ferguson, 1984) as well as debate about the possibilities of state feminism (Chappell, 2002). More broadly, a focus on the state as an organization has given rise to a healthy women-in-politics literature dealing not only with the civil service but also with political parties, legislatures, and courts. In fact, the creation of an on-line "women in politics bibliographic database" by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Development Programme is a testimony to the proliferation of literature on these topics pertaining to countries across the globe (see <http://www.ipu.org>).

Feminist theorizing has also drawn from Marxism and the critical questions that emerge from key themes raised by Marx, including power, class, exploitation, ideology, and praxis. These themes in particular raise critical questions in relation to the supposed neutrality of the liberal state, and have inspired and continue to inspire much feminist theoretical scholarship sensitive to the uneven outcomes experienced by subordinate classes and groups (Barrett, 1980; MacKinnon, 1989; Brown, 1995; Bannerji, 1995).

Yet it must be noted that feminist state theorizing has also grappled with Marxism, revealing tensions between Marxist and feminist thought. Given the centrality of Marxism in the post-Second World War revival of interest in the state, it is perhaps not surprising that in the 1970s much feminist work on the state engaged with and adopted methods of theory construction similar to those in Marxist writings of the same period (Jessop, 2001: 157). A key example might be Mary McIntosh's (1978: 259) intervention arguing that class domination (and the capitalist nature of the state) is more "fundamental" than gender domination.

By the late 1980s, new responses were being formed. On the one hand, attempts were made to further modify state theory in light of the complex and variable role played by women as carers and wage earners, as well as the complex and variable role played by different states (historically and cross-nationally) in reproducing gender inequality (as the development of "state feminism" might suggest) (Sassoon, 1987: 15-42). As Anne Showstack Sassoon's introduction to her important anthology *Women and the State* maintains in explaining the inspiration of the collection, "What became obvious was that the actual situation of the mass of women had gone beyond the terms of the domestic labour debate ... Yet this debate and most Marxist analysis tried to move directly from the theoretical category of mode of production to the socially and historically constructed family. The questions posed became narrowed to how the family helps reproduce the capitalist mode of production, and in particular, how it physically reproduces the working class. Women's role was reduced to their role in the family" (17). On the other hand, some feminists warned against even attempting to develop a theory of the state insofar as it involved engagement on political terrain – whether liberalism or Marxism – that differed from feminism. In the view of Judith Allen (1990: 21, 22), "the state" was not an "indigenous" concept of feminist theory: "'The state' is a category of abstraction that is too aggregative, too unitary, and too unspecific to be of much use in addressing the disaggregated, diverse and specific (or local) sites that must be of most pressing concern to feminists." Allen urged that empirical and theoretical attention be given not to "the state" but to concepts such as policing, law, medical culture, the body, sexuality, violence, and masculinity (22).

In the ensuing years, certain of the concepts identified by Allen have proven to be important and fruitful loci for feminist theory, one major example being the body (see Carson, 2001). Yet the call to completely abandon the state as a concept was never wholly accepted, in large part because it ran counter to evident developments including, as Wendy Brown (1995: 194) notes, the growing number of women who were dependent on the late capitalist state. As she puts it, "While the state is neither hegemonic nor monolithic, it mediates or deploys almost all the powers shaping women's lives – physical, economic, sexual, reproductive and political – powers

wielded in previous epochs directly by men.” Moreover, as Jacqueline Stevens (1999: 52) has observed, though it may be that “it is the marked ‘feminist’ political scientist, i.e., the professional other, who is taking up serious work on dynamics of the family,” whereas “the unmarked political scientist writes about the state,” it should not be forgotten that the state is a membership organization. As Stevens’s rich account demonstrates, the state has rules of inclusion and exclusion based on (variable) kinship practices and kinship anxieties that in turn reveal a sex/gender system (267-80).

Rather than abandoning the state as too abstract a category, many recent attempts to theorize it reflect greater historical and cross-cultural sensitivity – a feature also evident in more recent accounts criticizing patriarchy as a concept or theory when it is used ahistorically to speak of a universal and homogeneous social system (Dahlerup, 1987; Pilcher and Whelehan, 2004: 94-96). Thus, more recent articulations addressing gender and the state view gender relations as dynamic and suggest that the state plays a key role in regulating, generating, and even – especially in periods of crisis – transforming the gender order (Connell, 1990). Additionally, since the 1990s increased attention has been given to complexity and multiplicity – in part an outcome of the insights of postmodernism (Flax, 1990). This has led to more focus on the articulation of social relations around gender, race, and class in specific state structures and policies (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993; Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis, 1995; Abu-Laban and Gabriel, 2002), as well as to an interest in how specific constructions of masculinity and femininity come to be privileged in state discourses, state institutions, and state practices (Jessop, 2001: 159). As increasing attention in the 1990s and 2000s has been paid to themes of globalization, neoliberalism (with its stress on markets as efficient allocators of goods and services, cuts to social spending, and individual self-reliance), and regionalism (as seen, for example, in the widening and deepening of the European Union, or the North American Free Trade Agreement), it is also feminist literature that has drawn attention to their gendered impact (Bakker, 1994; Gabriel and Macdonald, 1994; Kelly, Bayes, and Young, 2001; Bayes et al., 2006).

### **Gendering Citizenship**

Like the state, citizenship has been a major focus in modern social science research, political science, and especially the field of political philosophy. Indeed, in its connection to themes of community, belonging, and participation, it is also a concept that animated the writings of the classical philosophers of the Western canon such as Aristotle (Pocock, 1992: 38). It has continued to inspire philosophers into the present. Additionally, citizenship has been approached from the vantage point of rights, especially in the post-Second World War period with the development of the welfare state in advanced capitalist countries. When one considers the concept of

citizenship from the perspective of belonging and participation as well as from the perspective of rights, it is clear that feminist theorizing has drawn systematic attention to the manner in which women have been excluded from citizenship. Increasingly since the 1990s, feminist theorists have also examined the implications of gender and other forms of difference at both national and global levels, revealing in turn the ongoing tension around treating “woman” as a unified subject versus addressing differences arising from identity/culture or from membership in marginalized or privileged groups based on class, race, ability, heteronormativity, and so on.

One of the most thoroughgoing critiques of the exclusion of women from the participatory promise of citizenship comes from Carole Pateman (1988b), who argues that membership in the “public sphere” is based on fraternity, which serves to both exclude and subordinate women in the “private sphere.” In this way, Pateman challenges the rights and freedoms that supposedly derive from the social contract as envisioned by modern theorists such as Locke, Hobbes, and Rousseau, who neglected to consider a prior sexual contract. However, it is the sexual contract, argues Pateman, that allows for the patriarchal control of men over women; its contemporary iterations are to be found in contracts concerning marriage, prostitution, and surrogate mothering. Pateman’s attention to women’s differential treatment and exclusion from citizenship has also been central to work that took as its focus the development of rights, including in relation to the welfare state.

The pathbreaking post-war account of citizenship was provided by T.H. Marshall (1964). Marshall’s evolutionary account of the development of rights in Britain argued that civic rights (relating to the rule of law) developed in the eighteenth century, to be followed in the nineteenth century by political rights (voting) and subsequently, with the advent of the welfare state in the twentieth century, by social rights. Much of the debate about Marshall’s work in the 1960s, 1970s, and even the 1980s concerned the implications of the welfare state for understanding class-based conflict and consciousness (see Barbalet, 1988). However, the development of feminist scholarship, with its attention to the private sphere, the sexual division of labour, history, and cultural variability, served to illuminate new avenues of research and theory.

Feminist theorists have also demonstrated how women, precisely because of their relegation to the private sphere, have experienced rights acquisition that differs from that described by Marshall. Thus, for example, even in addressing the history of Britain itself – the focus Marshall took in his work – Sylvia Walby (1994) finds that women’s entrance into rights not only occurred later but also followed a very different trajectory, with political rights actually preceding civil rights. As well, standard definitions of political rights, with their emphasis on voting, fail to capture some of the distinct ways in which women participate in politics (Vickers, 1997: 48).

Addressing the sexual division of paid and unpaid labour suggests that women have experienced citizenship rights and obligations differently. As Ruth Lister (1993: 4) puts it, by and large, men “are free to be full-time wage-earning citizens, and, if they so choose, active political citizens” because they are unencumbered by obligations of care for children and/or adults that characterize the experience of many women. Such insights have raised questions about the gendered nature of the welfare state itself, with its foundational assumptions about male breadwinners (Pateman, 1988a), and spawned new theorizing regarding how care can be better valued in relation to citizenship and social policy (Fraser, 1994; Hankivsky, 2004). As well, cuts and reformulations in state spending are being examined for their distinct impact on men and women (Bakker, 1994; Dobrowolsky and Jenson, 2004).

The attention feminist theorists have given to gendering citizenship feeds, in distinct ways, into a larger ongoing and unresolved debate in political philosophy about whether equality is best achieved through the same treatment or differential treatment (Taylor, 1992b). There is, however, no clear unanimity on this issue among feminist scholars, an issue that has become increasingly complicated when one considers the gender implications of calls for a multicultural citizenship by theorists such as Will Kymlicka (1995). Thus, for example, though the late Iris Marion Young (1989: 251) argued for a differentiated citizenship for women, as well as minorities and other historically disadvantaged groups, “since the inclusion and participation of everyone in public discussion and decision-making requires mechanisms for group representation,” other feminist philosophers, such as the late Susan Moller Okin (1998), have argued that a multicultural citizenship will undermine the rights of female minorities. This has generated its own forms of criticism about the nature of the evidence used by Okin and others in presenting their claims (Phillips, 1997; Honig, 1999). Attempting to escape the “cul de sac” of the debate over same and differentiated citizenship, Ruth Lister (1993, 1997) has united the two forms; her approach recognizes that women are not a monolithic group and that their experience as citizens is mediated by such factors as race, ethnicity, class, age, and sexual orientation. This formulation bears some resemblance to Chantal Mouffe’s (1992) call to abandon a focus on the unitary subject and to consider a fuller multiplicity of relations.

Not least, in attending to gender and other forms of difference, progressively more feminist theorists of citizenship have considered the possibilities and limits of discussions of global citizenship (Archibugi, Held, and Köhler, 1998) as well as forms of regional citizenship such as European Union citizenship (Meehan, 1993). Insights into levels beyond the national state have been aided by addressing gender and other forms of difference in global migration and the negotiation of national borders. Thus,

such work also considers citizenship in its most formal sense as a status that allows the right of entry into a state (Yuval-Davis, 1991; Dobrowolsky and Tastsoglou, 2006), serving to highlight again how the state is a membership organization.

### **Gendering Nation**

As with that regarding citizenship and the state, feminist work on nationalism has challenged the long-standing failure of much existing literature to consider gender. Indeed, from the early post-Second World War work of Karl Deutsch (1953), who attempted to use the scientific method to predict and control nationalism, to the idealist account of Elie Kedourie (1960), and to Michael Ignatieff's post-Cold War era international bestseller *Blood and Belonging* (1993), there has been a weighty silence about gender and nation. At its most basic level, therefore, feminist work on nationalism draws attention to this silence. Additionally, feminist theorizing on nationalism challenges existing findings that have traditionally animated debates over nationalism, with the consequence that the very evidence used to support competing claims in the literature is brought into question.

One major area of debate within mainstream work on nationalism has been whether nationalism is a primordial force or a product of modernity (Anthony D. Smith, 1998). Those who find the roots of nationalism in modernism variously attribute its rise and spread to the role of intellectuals and ideas (Kedourie, 1960), the uneven development caused by capitalism (Nairn, 1977), industrialization and the system of mass education (Gellner, 1983), and the advent of the printing press (Anderson, 1991). However, attention to gender has served to challenge the foci of these debates, showcasing the important role played by women as "bearers of the nation." As Deniz Kandiyoti (1994: 376-77) puts it, "Women bear the burden of being 'mothers of the nation' (a duty that gets ideologically defined to suit official priorities) as well as those who reproduce the boundaries of ethnic/national groups, who transmit the culture and who are the privileged signifiers [in terms of dress and behaviour] of national difference." In particular, feminist accounts have underscored that it is women (rather than schools or intellectuals, for example) who are central in the intergenerational transmission of cultural traditions and customs (Yuval-Davis, 1998). Moreover, there are dialectical relations between state, nation, and family that rest on distinctions between sex and gender (Stevens, 1999). In this sense, whether nationalism is viewed as a primordial force, a modern force, or some combination of the two, attention to gender brings with it a very different explanation for the persistence and/or rise of nationalism.

Additionally, analytic consideration of gender has brought with it new ways of answering another question that has influenced non-feminist theorizing – whether nationalism is best viewed as a progressive or reactionary

force (Apter, 1989). This question became especially pertinent in moving beyond the universalizing focus of many early post-Second World War accounts that considered only European experiences and tended to homogenize these experiences. For instance, the focus on gender in the work of Kandiyoti (1994) and McClintock (1995), among others, raises questions about the extent to which specific social and political structures and belief systems can keep women in subordinate positions in both colonial and post-colonial contexts.

Not least, in attending to difference, feminist accounts have shown that in fact nations are complex and internally differentiated. In this way, different nations and expressions of nationalism can produce diverse constructions of femininity and masculinity; women and men of different races, classes, religions, and sexualities are privileged differentially within any nation; and, moreover, those with relative privilege may act to preserve it (see Blom, Hagemann, and Hall, 2000; Dhruvarajan and Vickers 2002; Bhattacharya, Gabriel, and Small, 2002). The importance of these findings can hardly be overestimated, given that nationalism remains a potent force in the twenty-first century.

### **Gendering the Nation-State: This Volume**

The chapters in this volume draw from, engage with, and build upon a number of themes, debates, and recent developments found in the feminist contributions to gendering the nation, state, and citizenship described above. As such, they frequently employ insights that cut across a number of theoretical concerns. These chapters are also in conversation with each other, as some authors offer contrasting perspectives and alternative ways of viewing the contemporary period and engaging with theory. This book is organized into three parts followed by an afterword.

In Part 1, the contributors examine gender and nation, using aspects of the comparative method to address several distinct contexts for the formation of the nation-state and the playing out of nationalism. These include countries of the global North, anti- and post-colonialism in the global South, communist and post-communist Russia, and the current context of global migration, which has ensured that countries of both North America and Europe are “immigrant-receiving nations,” even though their responses to this reality may differ due to different welfare state practices. This effort to uncover both similarities and differences across space and time is in keeping with much current scholarship on nationalism, which has shied away from the early post-war attempt to generate a universal theory of nationalism. The comparative approach employed throughout Part 1 also highlights certain themes identified in feminist theorizations of nation. These include the roles played by women in state-formation and national movements, the manner in which various national expressions reflect distinct

constructions of masculinity and femininity, and the dialectical relationship between state and nation, which has much to do with socially constructed difference (gender, race, class).

In Chapter 1, Jill Vickers notes that discussions of gender and the formation of modern nation-states remain rare. She calls for gendering the hyphen in “nation-state” to account for the diversity of women’s experiences and women’s participation both in the formation of core Western nation-states and in modernizing anti-colonial national movements. In explicating some of the differences between these two contexts, Vickers’ historical analysis shows that as the core nation-states formed, women were denied political and civil rights in them, whereas in anti- and post-colonial contexts women and men typically achieved these citizenship rights simultaneously. Vickers’ account is sensitive to variability in a number of ways. She notes that the public-private divide may have less pertinence in many countries of the South where, for instance, the family has a distinct political role recognized in many constitutions. As well, she points out that the performative nature of gender and the biological markers of sex take on different meaning depending on time and space. This leads her to address how sex/gender regimes affect nation-state processes and vice versa. Ultimately, Vickers finds that though outcomes do differ, one area that appears constant in the making and remaking of nation-states is the duality of women’s roles as citizens (when achieved) and their family roles as structured by marriage laws.

In Chapter 2, Maya Eichler seeks to rectify the way that scholars, examining the post-communist transformation of Russia, overlook the gendered character of economic, political, and social changes. Taking this fundamental transition as a temporal marker, she addresses the intersections between nation and gender in the making of the Soviet/Russian transformation. Eichler overviews how the 1970s were characterized by increased academic and scholarly debate about the Soviet gender order. She notes that the transition begun during perestroika involved economic reforms and the legitimization of market ideology, as well as the promise to revert to a more “natural” Western gender order in which women returned to the private sphere and men “regained their masculinity.” Yet, with the global spread of neoliberalism, in practice the retreat of women from employment has proved possible only for Russia’s new capitalist class, provoking new criticisms of capitalism and the West in some quarters. As well, the re-traditionalization of gender roles, in the form of militarized masculinity, has proven to be contested when it comes to the Chechen wars.

In Chapter 3, Shauna Wilton draws from the literature on gender and nation, as well as debates over multiculturalism, to address how both the Canadian and Swedish states are involved in projecting an image of the nation to immigrants. In both countries, national state agencies engage in

producing literature, in various languages, for potential new members of the national political community. Underscoring the manner in which the state is a membership organization, this socialization literature presents an image of a “good citizen,” a process that Wilton argues is gendered and that interacts with race and class, just like immigration policy itself. Her analysis of the images and text of the English-language versions of this literature in Sweden and Canada suggests that the welfare state and women’s equality are most emphasized in Sweden, whereas Canada lays greater emphasis on ethnic and racial diversity and individual self-reliance. In both cases, however, the discussions of gender and/or gender equality are framed within the private sphere of the family, while other spheres (such as the workplace) are ignored.

Part 2 of the book is devoted to gender and state processes. Here, contributors take as their focus various state institutions and processes (the legislature and the bureaucracy) as well as institutions and processes that involve the interface between state and society (political parties) and the state and the global community (the International Criminal Court). Along with the foci, the specific method employed by individual authors varies (from content analysis to qualitative interviews), as does the specific theory engaged (from critical mass to transnational activism). However, despite these differences, analysts in Part 2 speak collectively to the relevance of specific structures and/or specific ideas in accounting for outcomes. These include the significance of differing legislative systems for understanding the impact of female and male elected officials, the constraints imposed by bureaucratic culture on feminist policy researchers, the negative impact of the “new populism” on equity-seeking groups, and the important, though understudied, impact of the agendas pursued by official state delegations at the international level. The state does not emerge as neutral in any of these accounts, but in keeping with the move away from abstract theorizing around state autonomy that characterized much work of the 1970s and 1980s, these chapters explicate how specific institutions and processes shape, and may sustain or transform, social relations.

In Chapter 4, Linda Trimble focuses on women in politics – that is, on their presence in legislatures and their impact on policy formation. She notes the continuing numerical under-representation of women in legislative assemblies across the globe, as compared to their numbers in the population. However, Trimble departs from the assumptions of such number-based theories as “critical mass” (which posits that incorporating a certain threshold number of women will transform a policy-making environment), choosing instead to interrogate the extent to which a direct relationship exists between descriptive (or numerical) representation and active (or substantive) representation. In keeping with much recent feminist theorizing that

highlights the complex and intersecting nature of identity, Trimble questions the extent to which there is actually a coherent set of “women’s interests” that can be represented. Additionally, she reminds us of the variable impact of legislative systems on elected officials, stressing that parliamentary governance itself, with its strict party discipline, poses constraints on all of them.

The emphasis on the constraints that organizational structures and cultures pose is continued in Chapter 5 by Francesca Scala. This examines the bureaucratic demands for objective and impartial policy advice in Canada. Taking as its focus the contentious issue of reproductive technologies, Scala’s chapter addresses the tension between feminist analysis and mainstream policy analysis as the work of Canada’s Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies, created in 1989, evolved. She argues that the commission’s inherent quantitative research bias and the dichotomization of policy analysis versus policy advice proved incompatible with the vision of feminist policy researchers. As a result, this particular commission failed to seize the opportunity to move beyond the scientific and medical realm of reproductive technologies to address their social impact on women, including minority women and women with disabilities.

The emphasis on the relevance of ideas is continued in Chapter 6 by Marian Sawyer. This chapter also draws attention to the role of political parties as important carriers of ideas in their distinct interface between state and societal actors. Sawyer engages in a systematic comparative examination of both Canada and Australia since the 1990s, focusing on the manner in which the policy-making arena has been transformed by the impact of populism on party and electoral politics at the national level in both countries. Unlike the rural populism of the past that targeted the financial elites of large cities, the new populism of today constructs a divide between taxpayers and a welfare state elite. Thus, in both Canada and Australia, the public discourse has shifted with negative consequence for feminists, femocrats, and other equality-seeking groups who have been increasingly delegitimized in the policy-making arena.

In Chapter 7, Louise Chappell addresses what has been an important site for the engagement of transnational feminist activists. Specifically, in the context of developing the International Criminal Court, these activists attempted to establish an international definition of gender, urged the inclusion of forced pregnancy as a new crime in international law, and sought to address sexual violence in the family. This agenda, however, was contested by another transnational grouping consisting of Vatican representatives, political elites of certain Islamic states, and representatives of North American “pro-life” organizations. Chappell’s analysis of the mixed outcome of this struggle highlights the need for the literature on transnational activism

to consider more closely the role played by official state delegations in pursuing normative agendas at the international level, as well as the fact that what constitutes success for some actors may be the preservation of the status quo. Her analysis also draws attention to how the argument about a “clash of civilizations” is contradicted by the fact that conservatives in the West and the “Muslim world” share a desire to maintain control over women’s bodies, and that, in contrast, there are both Muslims and Catholics who supported the goals articulated by the transnational women’s movement.

Part 3 of the book more explicitly considers the connection between gender and citizenship, with specific, though not exclusive, attention to the Canadian context. In keeping with much recent feminist citizenship literature that discusses citizenship at levels other than simply the national, the analysts address multiple levels: from the personal to the local to the national and even the global. Reflecting on the long-standing tradition of addressing citizenship in relation to the welfare state, contributors in Part 3 are particularly concerned with understanding policy outcomes over time. However, far from presenting an evolutionary and teleological account in the tradition of Marshall, these assessments are concerned with understanding change; indeed, throughout the chapters there emerges a sense that the rights and participation attached to citizenship are not static, especially when it comes to the ideal of gender equity. Nonetheless, the nature of the theory used by the authors in Part 3 varies, giving rise to a lively debate over neoliberalism (and whether this is an adequate way of understanding social policy in Canada today) and bringing into sharper relief how citizenship (whether differentiated or not) shapes and is shaped by social relations.

Taken together, Chapters 8 and 9 present a debate around neoliberalism versus post-neoliberalism. Chapter 8, by Janine Brodie, echoes Marian Sawer’s Chapter 6 assessment of Canada and Australia, agreeing that since the 1990s virtually all equality claims have been erased from the policy discourses and practices of the Canadian state. However, her chapter traces the reason for this primarily to the ascendancy of neoliberalism, which she suggests has created a state governing project that is markedly different from the post-war Keynesian welfare state. Reflecting directly on the Canadian context, and drawing on the comparative welfare state and citizenship literature, Brodie emphasizes that neoliberalism is both anti-statist and anti-social. The erasure of gender from the policy agenda in favour of a focus on individuals sits uneasily with what Brodie identifies as the increased feminization of poverty, growing stress levels among women who combine unpaid care work with paid labour, and a commodification of the work of caring that has intensified racial and class disparities between women. In light of the dominance of neoliberalism, Brodie issues a call for feminists to bring both the state and gender back in.

In Chapter 9, Jane Jenson continues the conversation around accounting for the disappearance of gender from the social policy sphere in Canada. Jenson introduces the idea of a “citizenship regime” both to describe the designated beneficiary of social policy and to underscore the relevance of accounting for change, in this case the change in Canada’s social-spending patterns. Although social spending of the 1930s to the 1960s focused on the male worker, that from the 1960s to the 1980s concentrated on women and other marginalized groups, such as ethnic minorities. For Jenson, neo-liberalism has been a more momentary state response, with the period from the late 1990s effectively represents a post-neoliberal period characterized by new social spending and a new target. Specifically, in Canada the influence of a social investment perspective has provided a new rationale and logic encouraging directing monies to poor children. However, as Jenson notes, a citizenship regime with a child-centred definition of equality has as a consequence hidden the need for adult citizens to make claims on the state and to contest inequality.

In Chapter 10, Paul Kershaw draws on the logic of much of the feminist welfare state and citizenship literature, which has stressed how women experience citizenship differently precisely because of the sexual division of labour. Simultaneously, he turns on its head the logic of a citizenship duty to work that is advocated by conservative commentators. Noting that a central theme in feminist and welfare research is the need to transform the behaviour of men in relation to primary care work, his chapter outlines what Canadians might learn from the experiences of other countries, and how the state may utilize its power to encourage a more equitable distribution of child care work as one duty of citizenship.

Chapter 11, by Jackie F. Steele, takes up the continued existence of the institution of marriage to address the implications for citizenship of different marital naming policies in Quebec and the rest of Canada. She addresses how the liberal rhetoric of “choice” serves today to mask the old idea that women and their offspring are the property of male household heads, fragments of which remain in the marital naming laws in Canada outside Quebec. Drawing from mainstream philosophical discussions of liberty in liberalism and republicanism, Steele argues that, of the two, the republican tradition is more likely to promote laws that are in keeping with many feminist goals.

Part 3 concludes with Chapter 12, by Caroline Andrew, which is situated within a growing body of work, in response to globalization, that examines scales of political action. These scales of political action can operate at different levels – from the body, to the household, to the local, to the national, to the regional, and even to the global. Andrew therefore advocates the relevance of gendering the city-state as both part of and separate from

gendering the nation-state. The gendering of the city-state in Canada illustrates the importance of women's urban citizenship. Using a case study of urban decision making and women's access to municipal services in Ottawa, Andrew underscores the potential that exists at the urban level for diverse groups of women to effect change. In a way not necessarily replicated at other levels, urban citizenship allows some greater possibilities for addressing equity issues stemming from the intersections of gender, ethnocultural diversity, immigration status, class, and age.

In examining the theoretical and empirical understandings advanced by gender analysis in the areas of the nation, the state, and citizenship, this work has clearly been invigorated by the work of feminist activists. Canadian scholars commonly see three different waves of feminist mobilization: the first, running from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, focused on formal political equality; the second, beginning in the 1960s, concentrated on eliminating sex discrimination and implementing equity in areas relating to employment; the third, emerging in the 1980s, concerned itself with multiple identities. In the Afterword to this volume, Judy Rebick addresses the recent history and trajectory of feminism, suggesting the ongoing need to engage with the state, but noting, as implied in the expression "the personal is political," that the sites of resistance are manifold. Rebick outlines struggles of the past and looks at the future of gender equality in light of the challenges, many described by authors in this volume, as well as the opportunities for resisting domination at personal, state, and global levels.

Rebick's contribution reminds us of the continuing reality of gender inequality in the family, the workplace, the street, and through the dominant culture. Given the reality of persisting gender inequities, it is critical that political science better attune itself to gender analysis and redress the disciplinary insufficiency. Although, admittedly, not all change necessarily requires engagement with the state, at the same time the state cannot be ignored. By examining the gendered and gendering nature of the nation-state, a concept so central to the discipline's core, political scientists, as this volume shows, can enrich our understanding of how many inequities are created, perpetuated, augmented, and even potentially undermined. There is a synergy between political science, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary gender studies, and feminist praxis that has yet to be fully potentiated. This volume (re)affirms the relevance of mobilizing this synergy for political change and for the analysis, critique, and understanding of politics in the twenty-first century.