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Gender Mainstreaming: Productive Tensions in Theory and Practice

Introduction

Gender mainstreaming is an essentially contested concept and practice. It involves the reinvention, restructuring, and rebranding of a key part of feminism in the contemporary era. It is both a new form of gendered political and policy practice and a new gendered strategy for theory development. As a practice, gender mainstreaming is a process to promote gender equality. It is also intended to improve the effectivity of mainline policies by making visible the gendered nature of assumptions, processes, and outcomes. However, there are many different definitions of gender mainstreaming as well as considerable variations in practice. As a form of theory, gender mainstreaming is a process of revision of key concepts to grasp more adequately a world that is gendered, rather than the establishment of a separatist gender theory. Gender mainstreaming encapsulates many of the tensions and dilemmas in feminist theory and practice over the past decade and provides a new focus for debates on how to move them on (Behning and Pascual 2001; Beveridge et al. 2000; Mazey 2000; Verloo 2001; Walby 2001; Woodward 2003).

There are at least six major issues in the analysis of gender mainstreaming. First is how to address the tension between "gender equality" and the "mainstream" and the attempts to reposition these two configurations. Second is whether the vision of gender equality invoked by the mainstreaming process draws on notions of "sameness," "difference,"

or "transformation"; or, in a parallel typology, inclusion, reversal, or displacement. Third is whether the vision of gender equality can be distinguished from the strategy to get there, or whether these are two dimensions of the same process. Fourth is the relationship of gender mainstreaming with other complex inequalities, especially those associated with ethnicity and class, but also disability, faith, sexual orientation, and age. Fifth is the relationship between "expertise" and "democracy," and the rethinking of the concept and practice of democracy to include gender relations. Sixth are the implications of the transnational nature of the development of gender mainstreaming, including the influence of international regimes, the development of human rights discourse, and the development of the European Union in the context of global processes.

The articles in this special issue of *Social Politics* take these debates forward in many significant ways. Most of the articles contributed to and drew from a series of seminars funded by the U.K. Economic and Social Research Council on gender mainstreaming. They address the meaning of gender equality as well as the project of gender mainstreaming (Verloo), engage with diverse inequalities and their intersectionality and their implications for theories of democracy (Squires), consider the implications of the wider economic and political context for the potential of gender mainstreaming to create change (Perrons), address the tension between the agenda-setting potential of the strategy and integration into the mainstream (Lombardo), and investigate the relationship between theory and practice in diverse European settings (Daly).

Gender Equality and the Mainstream

Gender mainstreaming involves at least two different frames of reference: "gender equality" and the "mainstream." Thus gender mainstreaming is inevitably and essentially a contested process. Although there are attempts to bridge the gap between these two positions, it is important to note the frequent opposition to gender mainstreaming to understand the dualism between gender equality and mainstream agendas. Elgström (2000) argues that new gender norms have to "fight their way into institutional thinking" in competition with traditional norms, because established goals may compete with the prioritization of gender equality even if they are not directly opposed. This means that the process is contested and can involve "negotiation" rather than simple adoption of new policies. Perrons (this volume) provides a different perspective on the origin and nature of opposition to gender mainstreaming. She argues that, at least in the United Kingdom and perhaps more widely, the goal of

the competitiveness of the economy takes precedence over equality considerations, thereby endorsing rather than tackling the low-paid work so frequently found among women. The issue is not articulated as opposition to the goal of gender equality, but rather the prioritisation of some other goal. In this instance, the prioritization of improving the competitiveness of the U.K. economy is seen to have indirect detrimental consequences for gender equality.

The conceptualization of this dualism between gender equality and the mainstream is central to many of the debates about gender mainstreaming. There are a variety of ways that this mix of contestation and compromise can be analyzed and outcomes assessed in multiple registers in several different theoretical vocabularies. These include the frames of social movement theory (Ferree 2004; Verloo 2004), the discourses of cultural studies/poststructuralism/Foucauldian analysis, the epistemologies of Harding (1986), and the paradigms of Kuhn (1979). The postulated end point of the process of mainstreaming can also be described using different theoretical vocabularies. One vision of gender mainstreaming is that it offers "transformation" (Rees 1998), that is, neither the assimilation of women into men's ways, nor the maintenance of a dualism between women and men, but rather something new, a positive form of melding, in which the outsiders, feminists, changed the mainstream. There are other ways to characterize the outcome. Jahan (1995) contrasts two possible outcomes as either "agenda setting" or "integration," as do Lombardo (this volume) and Squires (2005), whereas Shaw (2002) makes a similar contrast between "embedded" as compared with "marginalized." Verloo (this volume) and Ferree (2004) refer to possibilities of "frame extension" or "frame bridging." There are further parallel concepts in the field of ethnic politics, where some concepts represent asymmetrical processes, such as assimilation, whereas others imply a more mutual accommodation, such as "hybridization" (Gilroy 1993). These analogies may be illuminating for the gender context.

Jahan (1995) contrasts agenda setting and integrationist approaches to gender mainstreaming. This distinction is applied and developed further by several writers (Daly this volume; Lombardo this volume; Shaw 2002; Squires 2005). Agenda setting implies the transformation and reorientation of existing policy paradigms, changing decision-making processes, prioritizing gender equality objectives, and rethinking policy ends. In this approach it is the mainstream that changes. Integrationist approaches are those that introduce a gender perspective without challenging the existing policy paradigm, instead "selling" gender mainstreaming as a way of more effectively achieving existing policy goals. Although this

approach means that gender mainstreaming is less likely to be rejected, its impact is likely to be less substantial. Lombardo (this volume) applies this distinction to events in the European Convention aimed at developing a European Constitution. although most of the feminists who sought to adopt a gender mainstreaming strategy preferred to be agenda setting, there was drift toward one that was merely integrationist. The strategic framing of gender mainstreaming is an ongoing dilemma. Shaw (2002) addresses the relationship between gender equality and the mainstream in relation to the proposed new EU Constitution asking in a parallel manner whether gender mainstreaming is "constitutionally embedded" or "comprehensively marginalised." She finds that although gender concerns are embedded in the treaty framework, especially the Treaty of Amsterdam, they are less prominent in the politics of the convention that was established to develop the constitution (for example, there were few women present in senior positions) and its ensuing white paper.

Frame theory is used by Verloo (this volume) and Ferree (2004) to capture variations in the relationship between gender equality projects and the mainstream. Originating in the work of Goffman, and influentially articulated by Snow et al. (1986), frame theory has become a key influence in the theorisation of social movements in general (della Porta and Diani 1999; Diani 1996); and gender mainstreaming in particular (Pollack and Hafner-Burton 2000). Frame theory provides a fluid vocabulary to engage with the contestations over and shifts in meaning that are key to the understanding of social movements and related civil society activities. Two terms in particular have been much used, those of "frame extension" and "frame bridging," which capture some of the ways in which social movements either modify and extend the dominant frame so as to include their own projects or find a way to link or bridge their project to the dominant frame. Ferree (2004) and Verloo (2004) are critical of some features of frame theory, in particular, that it does not carefully enough distinguish among the available discursive structures and resources, the actors' strategic choices in this context, and the outcomes attained. As they develop it in their work, they include national structures of opportunity as well as the voices and activities of a range of actors as they rework frames in complex ways. Furthermore, Ferree (2004) links frame theory with comparative institutional histories to provide greater depth to the account of the resources on which feminist social movements draw.

In assessing the outcomes of gender mainstreaming, there is an issue as to how "success" is to be defined (Gamson 1975; Mazur 2002; Stetson and Mazur 1995). The definition of success is complicated by

the possible change in the nature of the goal during the process of negotiation (Elgström 2000), because these are ongoing socially constructions in a changing context of what is perceived as possible. The implementation of the policy can be open to varying interpretations with different implications. For example, policies to support the reconciliation of work and family life have the potential to constitute a transformation of gender relations, generating equality in the domains of both care and employment, but some interpretations of these policies may merely integrate women into the paid economy without many changes elsewhere. Indeed, Stratigaki (2004) argues that this policy has become less about sharing family responsibilities between women and men, and more about encouraging flexible forms of employment.

In this context of contestation and negotiation between gender equality and the mainstream, both are likely to be changing simultaneously, in response to each other as well as to other changes. It is important to be able to capture the continuously evolving nature of the interaction between feminist and mainstream conceptions. The conceptualization developed by complexity theorists, of such processes being ones between "complex adaptive systems" that are "coevolving" within "changing fitness landscapes" (environments that privilege some groups and systems over others) captures these dynamics more adequately than simple one-way conceptions of "impact" (Kauffman 1995; Mitleton-Kelly 2001; Walby forthcoming). This complexity theory informed approach goes beyond the more static concepts of agenda setting and integration, which tend to imply more stability in the alternative projects of gender equality and the mainstream than might be warranted (Walby forthcoming).

Contested Visions of and Routes to Gender Equality

Underlying the variety of definitions of gender mainstreaming are different models of gender equality, of which three major types are usually distinguished. These models include some elements that are visions of the nature of a gender equal world as well as other elements that concern the strategies and tactics to get there. Often these visions and strategies are conflated, but it may be more appropriate to treat them as analytically separable. One typology of models of gender equality distinguishes between models based on sameness (equal opportunities or equal treatment), on difference (special programmes) and on transformation (Rees 1998). A parallel typology distinguishes between models of inclusion, reversal and displacement (Squires 1999b, 2005). Embedded within these debates are implicit theories of gender relations and their connections

within a gender regime, in particular, the extent to which the different policy domains are seen as closely interconnected or as relatively independent, because this affects the extent to which "sameness" may be held as a standard in one domain simultaneously with "difference" in another (Walby 2004). These models (Rees 1998; Squires 1999a) contain elements of both vision and strategy. An alternative approach separates the elements of vision and strategy (Booth and Bennett 2002). Booth and Bennett (2002) interpret the trilogy of models of "equal treatment perspective," the "women's perspective," and the "gender perspective" as strategies rather than as end visions. They argue that the three approaches are complementary rather than mutually exclusive, challenging the compartmentalization of different types of equality strategies, suggesting that they are better conceptualized as components of a "three-legged stool," in that they are interconnected and each needs the other. Such a separation of vision and strategy enables a variety of strategies to be seen as potentially complementary rather than necessarily as alternatives.

These discussions contain important aspects of the "sameness/difference" debate that has taken place within feminist theory. This key analytic distinction, indeed often dichotomy, has been subject to much debate within feminist theory (Felski 1997; Folbre 2001; Fraser 1997; Holli 1997; Lorber 2000; Nussbaum 2000; Scott 1988; Sevenhuijsen 1998; Tronto 1994). This is a multifaceted debate that is simultaneously normative, philosophical, theoretical, substantive, empirical, and policy-relevant. Thus within an analysis of gender mainstreaming are the classical arguments within feminist theory about difference, universalism, and particularism. Gender can be an example of difference, which has become a major issue in social theory (Calhoun 1995; Felski 1997). In particular, there are dilemmas in how to recognize difference, while avoiding the trap of essentialism (Ferree and Gamson 2003; Fraser 1997) and taking account of the global horizon (Benhabib 2000). Postmodern ambivalence and the prioritization of situatedness and fluidity (Braidotti 1994) may be contrasted with a new assertion of universal standards (Nussbaum 2000; Sen 1999). Included within this is the question of whose standards and from or for which constituency (Squires 1999a)?

It has often been argued that traditional equal opportunity policies are inherently limited because they mean that women can only gain equality with men if they are able to perform to the standards set by men (Guerrina 2002; Rossilli 1997). Can there be an effective route to gender justice in which existing separate gender norms/standards are retained and become equally valued, or is it never really possible to be different but equal because the differences are too entwined with power and resources? Some standards, such as equal pay for

women and men, may already constitute standards that are already held by women as well as by men. Some policy interventions, such as legislation on equal pay and government policy to improve child care, may be better conceived as contributions to gender mainstreaming rather than mere equal treatment or special programs, because they have the potential to transform the association of women with domesticated care. Is gender mainstreaming introducing new hybrid standards of gender justice for human beings, replacing the ostensibly more male-oriented standard of the old equal opportunity policies, for instance, by beginning to transform the workplace so that it is organized around standards suitable for those who combine care work and paid work? Although the elimination of gender inequality is the goal of the gender mainstreaming strategy, the extent to which this can mean accepting and valuing existing gendered differences is a key source of disagreement within gender mainstreaming theory and practice. This has been a debate within gender theory more generally. Though all the definitions of gender equality include equality within each social domain, they vary as to whether a change in the balance of the domains and the equalization of any differential representation of women and men in each domain constitute legitimate areas for intervention.

The most frequently cited definition of gender mainstreaming in the European literature is that devised by Mieke Verloo as chair of the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Gender Mainstreaming: "Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making" (Council of Europe 1998: 15). In contrast to Rees (1998), the Council of Europe definition of gender equality implies that differences between women and men are not an essential obstacle to equality:

> Gender equality means an equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. . . . Gender equality is not synonymous with sameness, with establishing men, their life style and conditions as the norm. . . . Gender equality means accepting and valuing equally the differences between women and men and the diverse roles they play in society/ (Council of Europe, 1998: 7–8)

The Council of Europe (1998) specifies the need for the "equal participation of women and men in political and public life" and the need for "the individual's economic independence," and that "education is a key target for gender equality." This defines equal participation in political and public life, education, and the achievement of

economic independence as universal goals, whereas other spheres (notably the family and care-work) remain sites of difference. An underlying question here is that of the assumed degree of connection among the gender practices in different domains. The Council of Europe (1998) text suggests that it is possible for there to be a model of gender equality based on sameness in some domains, at the same time as the equal valuation of different activities in other domains. However, if domains are coupled tightly, it may not be possible to have equality through sameness in one domain and equality with difference in another. It is only if the links are looser that this may be theoretically and practically possible. This debate depends on an implied theory of gender relations that needs to be made explicit to understand the nature and degree of the postulated connections between different gendered domains and the implications of changes in one of them for the others (Walby 1997, 2004, forthcoming). Mieke Verloo, who chaired the Council of Europe expert group that produced the early and influential guidelines, reflects on the development of the concept and practice of gender mainstreaming in her article in this volume in the light of current theoretical and policy developments.

Employment is perhaps the field where the development of similar standards, such as equal pay, is the most developed, whereas other areas, such as the care of children, are more likely to contain at least some elements that value differences between average men and women. Rather than generalizing across all gendered domains within a country, it is important to consider the specificities of each domain, and the nature of its links to other domains to understand to development of gender mainstreaming. Each domain is likely to have its own institutional history and have been subject to different types of gender equality policy and politics. It is important both to distinguish between different domains and also to examine the nature of the connections between them so as to be able to understand whether changes in one domain are likely, ultimately, to have implications for other domains.

Booth and Bennett (2002) suggest that the three models of equal treatment, women's perspective and gender perspective can coexist. Their interpretation of these models prioritizes the strategy used to reach gender equality rather than the end vision of the type of gender equality. Is this an appropriate interpretation? An examination of documents from the European Commission and Council about gender equality finds that the European Commission recommends the use of all three gender equality strategies simultaneously. The European Commission (2000: 5) in its "Community strategy on gender equality" states first that the "principle of equal treatment for women and

men" is a fundamental principle of Community law. Second, it notes that action should be continued "combining integration of the gender dimension with specific action." This approach, which appears to combine equal treatment, gender-specific actions and a wider gender dimension, is developed in the European Employment Strategy, the guidelines for the employment policies of member states put forward by the European Commission and Council (2003). The Employment Strategy notes two routes for gender equality, both "gender mainstreaming" and "specific policy actions," whereas the formulation of the policy implies a single standard for equality for women and men. The council announces that "Member States will, through an integrated approach combining gender mainstreaming and specific policy actions, encourage female labour market participation and achieve a substantial reduction in gender gaps in employment rates, unemployment rates, and pay by 2010" (European Council 2003). Thus in practice, the European Commission and Council recommend all three strategies for gender equality. First, they posit a single standard of equality for women and men in employment that is based on minimizing gaps, that is, achieving the same level of participation in employment, the same level of unemployment, and the same level of pay. This would appear to have significant similarities to the sameness approach to gender equality. Second, there is reference to specific policy actions and the naming of policy domains that are focused on women's activities, which emphasizes difference. These include targets for increased child care, agreed at the Barcelona European Council, so that this is available by 2010 to at least 90% of children over three years and at least 33% of children less than three years of age. Third, this is combined with a vision of transformed relations between care and employment: "particular attention will be given to reconciling work and family life, notably through the provision of care services for children and other dependants, encouraging the sharing of family and professional responsibilities and facilitating return to work after a period of leave" (European Council 2003). At least in the programs of the EU, the three approaches to gender equality coexist. This suggests that it is useful to make a distinction between the vision of what is meant by gender equality and the strategy of moving toward gender equality.

Diverse Inequalities

The category "woman" is internally divided by many other forms of difference and inequality, with which there are complex intersections. Gender mainstreaming takes place in a context of multiple diverse forms of social inequality. Within the EU there has been a

recent increase in the number of grounds on which it is possible to make legal complaints of discrimination, so these are no longer confined to gender, ethnicity, and disability but additionally include faith, sexual orientation, and age. This is a result of the slow implementation of Article 13 of the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam in the Employment Directive coming into force in 2006. This has raised the question of the practical intersection of diverse forms of equality politics in relation to gender mainstreaming in an increasingly insistent manner (DTI 2004; Walby 2004; Woodward 2005).

The diverse forms of inequality and their intersection have implications for the theory and practice of gender mainstreaming (Ferree 2004; Hankivsky 2004; Squires 2005; Woodward 2004). A range of strengths and weaknesses has been identified with the repositioning of gender equality projects within a diversity framing (Barmes and Ashtiany 2003; Squires 2005; Woodward 2005). On one hand, attention to other inequalities may dilute the effort spent on gender mainstreaming if resources are allocated elsewhere, if there is loss of focus, if there is loss of appreciation of the specific structural causes of inequality, or if there is competition over the priority accorded to different forms of inequalities (Woodward 2005). On the other hand, the outcome of gender mainstreaming may be strengthened if there were concerted actions of previously separate communities and initiatives on agreed priorities for intervention and if it were to lead to a strengthening of procedures for deliberative democracy (DTI 2004; Hankivsky 2004; Squires 2005).

Underlying the issues raised by the practical interconnection of gender mainstreaming with other forms of equality and diversity policies and politics is the question of the theorisation of difference and complex inequalities. Much debate in social theory has concerned these issues (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992; Braidotti 1994; Felski 1997; Kymlicka 1995; Nussbaum 2000; Scott 1988; Spellman 1988; Walby 2001). Although early concerns focused on the cross-cutting of gender inequalities by ethnicity and class, the inequalities and differences now considered extend at least to include sexuality, disability, faith, and age. However, class is now more often treated implicitly, embedded within concepts of poverty (Kabeer 2003), social exclusion, and pay than as a focus of theoretical debate. Much current interest lies in the understanding of the intersectionality of the various forms of inequality, rather than treating them as merely additive (Collins 1998; Crenshaw 1991).

There are at least two major analytic strategies to address the concept of gender within debates on difference (Holmwood 2000; Sayer 2000). The first has been to disperse gender as a category, so that it is understood always together with other complex inequalities rather

than a category in its own right. Gender is always embedded within other social forms (Holmwood 2000). Intersectionality with other complex inequalities is always present. In this approach the utilization of the category of woman is criticized as problematically essentializing and homogenizing. The second approach is to retain the concept of gender while always noting that this is an abstraction because any practical category is always socially constructed. This approach has been supported by the revitalization of realism as an approach in social theory, an approach that argues for greater depth in ontology, which can be better achieved by abstraction of specific categories that by their dispersal (Sayer 2000).

Squires (2005) suggests that in constructively addressing the diversity agenda, groups that are currently isolated from each other should be brought into dialogue. Such dialogue could help resolve the tension between individual egalitarianism and the politics of group recognition that hold back the development of gender mainstreaming. Such dialogue could be understood to be a form of deliberative democracy that could develop new political projects that transcend old barriers.

Expertise or Democratization?

Expertise and democracy are often treated as rival forms of governance. Democracy is usually contrasted favorably with expertise, which is regarded as associated with and contaminated by the dominant order. However, a different kind of contrast draws on the connotation that expertise is scientific and thereby politically neutral and above mere sectional interest. Gender mainstreaming sits in the middle of such debates. Sometimes it is represented as if it were primarily a technical process and at others as primarily a political process. On the one hand, it has been understood as a process of developing a more inclusive democracy, by improving gendered democratic practices. On the other hand, the process is represented as one of efficiency and expertise carried out by the normal policy actors with a specially developed toolkit. This issue raises larger questions about the changing nature of democracy in a gender-unequal context and about the positioning of expertise in debates on democracy. There is a question as to whether it is appropriate to polarize expertise and democracy as alternative models or interpretations of gender mainstreaming at all.

Beveridge et al. (2000) make a distinction between the expert bureaucratic model, involving primarily experts and specialists, and the participatory democratic model involving a range of individuals and organizations. They suggest that these constitute real differences

in the ways gender mainstreaming is implemented, not just perceptions of such processes. They consider that only the participatory democratic process can accomplish gender mainstreaming as agenda setting rather than integration (see Jahan 1995).

Rai (2003) conceptualizes gender mainstreaming as a process of gender democratization, of including women and their own perceptions of their political interests and political projects into policy-making processes. A range of different processes and practices are identified as involved, with a particular focus on the national gender machineries in the state and their relationship with civil society women's groups. The accountability of the national machineries to a wider context that includes nongovernmental organizations and women's groups is seen as essential to their effective operation. Gender mainstreaming is seen as a process by which various actors, previously outsidethe privileged policy arenas, get to have voice within them. This view appears to runs counter to the view that gender mainstreaming is done by the "normal policy actors" (e.g. Council of Europe 1998).

In the Council of Europe (1998) text, the definition of gender mainstreaming incorporates the notion that it is implemented "by the actors normally involved in policy making." This might be understood to imply that once the political goal of mainstreaming gender equality has been set, the process can be effectively implemented by technocrats and bureaucrats within the policy and state machinery. This approach is further exemplified by that part of the discourse that prioritizes the use of "tools," such as those of gender disaggregated statistics, gender budgeting, and gender impact assessments (Rees 2005). Here the issue under discussion is focused on how (not whether) to mainstream gender equality. The focus then becomes the resources, such as expertise, that the technical experts have to do their jobs.

The relative significance of expertise or democracy may be an issue of context or one of interpretation (Verloo 2001; Woodward 2003). Woodward (2003) argues for the importance of contextual factors in determining the success or otherwise of gender mainstreaming initiatives. In particular, the level of sophistication of the gender equality awareness within the political environment affects whether state functionaries can effectively implement gender mainstreaming. Where this is high, as in the case of the Netherlands, where some of Verloo's examples are based, then the normal policy actors may be effective in implementing gender mainstreaming. Where this is low, as is the case in Flanders in Belgium, then the normal policy actors are unlikely to carry out this process effectively. Woodward also draws attention to significance of experts who are

outside of government. Verloo (this volume) makes clear that the political context, that is, whether there are political opportunities, strong mobilizing networks within and outside the bureaucracy, and appropriate frames available, make a difference to the process and outcome of gender mainstreaming, which is the issue of gender democracy to which expertise should be in service.

An alternative to polarizing expertise and democracy is to see them as complexly entwined in contemporary practice. An example of this may be seen in the practice of gender budgeting. This is conventionally represented as a process invoking expertise rather than one of "gendering democracy" (Budlender et al. 2002; Sharp 2003), but in practice the process usually involves both. Gender budgeting requires a specialized toolkit including gender disaggregated statistics, equality indicators, and gender impact assessments. The use of statistics and economic data utilizes an authoritative technical and abstracted mode of expressing the expertise. It is often presented as the efficient, neutral application of techniques to an already agreed agenda and set of policy goals. However, gender budgeting is often more complex that this (Sharp and Broomhill 2002; Women's Budget Group 2004a, 2004b). First, it can include explicit statements about the importance of improving women's lives, that is, it can be situated within a wider framework that is not politically neutral. Second, the representation of the intervention as one that is based on expertise may itself be a political strategy. For example, the U.K. Women's Budget Group holds meetings with elected politicians (both ministerial and backbench MPs), civil servants (both within and outside the specialized gender machinery of government), and wider civil society (both NGOs and individuals) and knowingly positions itself as expert and technical, even as it also simultaneously uses democratic accountability to create pressure for change. There is a duality of expertise and participatory democratic working in this gender mainstreaming that is complementary rather than in contradiction.

These issues insistently raise the issue of the nature of democracy, in particular the inclusiveness of formal elected representation as well as the processes by which political projects are developed and support mustered. The traditional view of liberal democracy has centered on the formal election of representatives to national parliaments, so the narrow conventional definition of democracy focuses on free elections and free political parties in the context of a free civil society (Potter et al. 1997). However, recent debates highlight the nature and meaning of representation as well as the relevance of participation in deliberation about political projects (Held 1996). Conventional liberal practices of electoral representation have not delivered equal numbers of women and men in elected positions,

nor proportionate members of minority communities. There has been much discussion of the role of different kinds of political mechanisms (e.g., quotas, different voting systems) in explaining variations in the representation of women (Lovenduski and Norris 1993). These discussions have given rise to a deeper consideration of what is meant by the representation of women in both Parliament and other political arenas (Squires 1999a, 1999b). Is the presence of women (their substantive representation) essential to their democratic representation (Childs 2002; Phillips 1995)? Do women have collective political interests that might be represented electorally, or are these either too individual or too diverse for this to be appropriate (Young 2000)? Does identity politics essentialize and stabilize the group at stake and underestimate the significance of differences within that group in a politically problematic way? Does the concept of women's interests too readily assume that political interests can be read off from social structural location?

The investigations of associations between political preferences and location with the gender regime have found positive correlations, although these do not constitute a complete explanation of differences in political preferences (Huber and Stephens 2000; Manza and Brooks 1998). The development of feminist theories of the state and democratic representation drew attention to the plurality of arenas that are relevant to the representation of voices and political projects associated with perceived women's or gendered interests (Hobson 2000; O'Connor et al. 1999). These include not only the traditional focus on the elected representatives in parliaments and similar institutions but also consideration of the development of gender machinery and women's bureaus within the state as well as the articulation of political projects by social movements and other civil society actors (Mazur 2002; Stetson and Mazur 1995). The relationship between these three gendered constituencies—elected representatives, women's units in government and civil society—has been shown to be important in explaining variations in the impact of feminist projects (Halsaa 1998; Vargas and Wieringa 1998). There are additional sites where women's voices are being newly articulated, including corporate social responsibility agendas (Grosser and Moon 2004), and academia.

Woodward (2004) demonstrates the importance of the "velvet triangle" linking feminist bureaucrats, trusted academics, and organized voices in the women's movement for the development of gender mainstreaming in the EU. The trio of relevant female players is slightly from those of Vargas and Wieringa (1998), but the concept of alliances between differently positioned individuals and groups is common to both. In Woodward's trio of allies there are academics,

rather than elected representatives, suggesting the importance of expertise as a key component of these EU gender networks. The development of the analysis of gendered democracy has led to the consideration of the significance of alliances between those in different political arenas but engaged in complementary projects. The analysis of gender mainstreaming includes expertise, in the form of academics, as a key element.

The importance of expertise in the context of the gender machinery, elected politicians and academics for gender mainstreaming is argued by Veitch (2005) in relation to the United Kingdom. The absence of information, knowledge, and resources holds back gender mainstreaming by government officials. The acquisition and utilization of expertise is situated within the processes linking different parts of the gender machinery, other government departments, ministers, MPs, academic researchers, and the legal framework. In a related way, Zippel (2004) shows how governing bodies may have an interest in developing such expertise and working with such non-electoral networks, (using the development of sexual harassment policy in the EU as her example.

Accountability is a concept within the repertoire of democratic practices but is slightly off center. It has been used in several ways in relation to gender mainstreaming. Rai (2003) argues that national gender machineries should be accountable to civil society NGOs and women's groups. It is used by Grosser and Moon (2005) in their argument about the need for corporations to be accountable beyond their shareholders to a wider range of stakeholders, including women as employees, customers, community members, and investors, if they are to deliver value and genuine corporate social responsibility to society as a whole. Accountability implies flows of information into the public domain, including gender disaggregated data in, for example, company reports, and a willingness to engage in dialogue with those outside the organization's boundary. This process can also extend the concept of expert to stakeholders, identifying the benefits to the organization from having the input of a broad range of stakeholders as part of quality improvement and other processes. Transformative gender mainstreaming often requires information be made public and to require input from actors external to the organization because it is a practice that intrinsically goes beyond existing neatly bounded responsibilities.

Within democratic theory, an alternative focus to that on substantive representation is that of deliberative democracy, often drawing on the work of Habermas and his theories of communicative action (Habermas 1987, 1991), which is seen to offer the potential to address the resolution of initially conflicting priorities of diverse social groups and communities. Squires (2005) argues that it is

essential to address gender mainstreaming in the context of diversity. She argues that the debates on gender mainstreaming demand a resolution of the tension between liberal individual egalitarianism and the politics of group recognition. It is only when diverse groups bring to the public agenda their respective views and experiences and engage in democratic deliberation that gender mainstreaming can move forward. One of the limitations of deliberative democracy, she notes, is that it depends on the institutional design of debate to ensure the inclusion of all groups, and how this will happen tends to be underspecified in the theoretical literature. Thus she concludes that the debates on gender mainstreaming and deliberative democracy have much to learn from each other.

Deliberative democratic theory has also produced new interest in the significance of expertise and argumentation (Risse 1999). A conceptual vocabulary has developed that entwines expertise and democratic impulse. Those who have actively used expertise in pushing forward political projects have been variously conceptualized as "epistemic communities" (Haas 1992) and as "advocacy networks" (Keck and Sikkink 1998). An epistemic community is defined by Haas (1992: 3) as

> a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area . . . they have (1) a shared set of normative and principled beliefs . . . (2) shared causal beliefs, which are derived from their analysis of practices leading or contributing to a central set of problems in their domain . . . (3) shared notions of validity . . . (4) a common policy enterprise.

Here specific combinations of expertise and value commitment fuel new kinds of political interventions.

In sum, although expertise and democracy have sometimes been seen as rival sources of legitimacy in governance, the case of gender mainstreaming suggests a strong interrelationship. This may be conceptualized either as an alliance between individuals and groups or as a new integrated form of community or network in its own right. These alliances, communities, and networks often involve academics as well as more conventional political actors, such as elected politicians, civil servants, and social movements. The analysis of gender mainstreaming thus involves a reconsideration of the nature of democracy, to consider not only the gender of the elected representatives, institutionalization of gendered interests in the gender machinery of the state, and an active gendered civil society but also the incorporation of expertise, especially from academics.

The Papers

Verloo reflects on the Council of Europe approach to gender mainstreaming and gender equality, considering whether it can be conceptualized as being either integrationist or transformative in its impact and potential (following Jahan) or whether it is better to think of the alternative strategies as ones of inclusion, reversal, and displacement (following Squires). Following an analysis of the development and deployment of the Council of Europe approach, she concludes that the key issue is to ensure that the practice and theory of gender mainstreaming does not lose sight of the issue of power and the role of the feminist movement in taking forward such a strategy.

Squires locates gender mainstreaming within a typology of inclusion, reversal, and displacement, situating these within debates on diversity and democracy. She argues that if augmented by processes of deliberative democracy, such as citizens' forums, then gender mainstreaming has the potential to transform gender relations. This augmentation is necessary to prevent the limitation of gender mainstreaming to a mere technocratic tool. The increasingly important demands of diversity are best met by such a transformative model, which has the potential to become diversity mainstreaming.

Perrons raises questions about the gap between the rhetoric of gender mainstreaming and the experience of gender inequality. She notes the progress constituted by the higher profile of gender policies in the EU but cautions against assuming that this has significant implications for reducing actual gender inequality. She attributes much of this gap to the importance of wider economic issues and the reluctance to challenge the logic of the market. In particular the development of the new economy increases the pressures on combining work and care, which underpin key aspects of gender inequality.

Lombardo explores the tensions between integrationist and agenda-setting approaches to gender mainstreaming in the EU processes associated with the development of the EU Constitution and Charter of Fundamental Rights. She notes the double-edged implications of the weak specification of the model of gender equality that is to be mainstreamed, making it more attractive and less threatening to established administrators, as well as to feminists who are enthused by its potentially radical consequences. She shows how the underrepresentation of women during the EU processes contributed to a more integrative rather than agenda setting outcome.

Daly investigates the practice of gender mainstreaming in eight European countries and compares these with the emerging theory. Her research finds evidence of some gender mainstreaming in all these countries and a widening of responsibility for gender equality

policy to increasing numbers of ministries and policy actors as well as the development of new tools and techniques. However, she finds considerable tension between the goal of integrating gender into the mainstream and that of changing the mainstream. She argues that gender mainstreaming theorists and practitioners need to devote greater attention to the link between policies and societal change in gender inequality.

Conclusions

Potentially, gender mainstreaming is a powerful development in feminist theory and practice. Although most frequently understood as a specialized tool of the policy world, it is also a feminist strategy that draws on and can inform feminist theory. Gender mainstreaming is essentially contested because it is constituted in the tension between the mainstream and gender equality. There are many different forms of gender mainstreaming, not least because of the different visions of and theories of gender equality and of the social and political processes that might constitute routes toward such a goal. These theoretical issues include but are not confined to that of whether gender equality is conceptualized through sameness (or inclusion), equal valuation of different gendered practices (or reversal), or transformation.

Implicit within much of this analysis of gender mainstreaming is a theory of the state, the political, and democracy. The state is a contested arena, with a mix of coherence and contradiction among a set of core institutions and complex linkages to other political and nonpolitical domains. Gendered interests are socially constructed in complex ways rather than essentially related to simple conceptions of social structural location, even though differences in resources associated with social position remain a key contribution to the environment within which political projects are constructed. The range of relevant forms of power relevant include not only the representation of gendered interests through processes of formal democratic elections but also through the constitution of specialized state gender machinery, and the constitution and articulation of gendered interests in civil society, both within NGOs and the grass roots. Gender mainstreaming is constructed, articulated, and transformed through discourse that is clustered within frames that are extended and linked through struggle and argumentation. Expertise is a form of power, often neglected in conventional analysis, which is increasingly deployed by those representing gendered interests in and against the state, often articulated within epistemic communities that combine values, expertise, and politics to become advocacy networks, which

are increasingly international. Gender mainstreaming is situated within the development of transnational global politics, of multilateral forms of governance such as the United Nations and the transnational polity of the European Union, as well as the development of diverse global discourses of human rights that transcend country boundaries, each of which have disparate outcomes when in articulation with country differences. These gender mainstreaming debates position inequality and difference at the heart of social and political theory of the state and democracy, not as a separate field of study.

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