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achieving meaningful change for
women?

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How effective are gender quotas in achieving meaningful change for women?

A case study of Argentina

Katharina Jemima Hopp

Statistics show that it is reasonable to argue that an increasing number of people worldwide are convinced of the importance of gender equality, in other words the idea that women and men should have equal rights and receive the same respect in society.¹ However, although these numbers represent an achievement, it does not mean that people agree on what exactly gender equality means in a specific situation or how to realise gender equality in a particular society.

Since 1991, when Argentina implemented a legislated candidate gender quota — the *Ley de Cupos* — as the first state worldwide, gender quotas have increasingly come to be seen as an excellent remedy to eliminate the disease of patriarchy in politics and achieve representational equality between the sexes.² In this regard, the discourse on gender quotas is part of a wider discourse of representation and the question how the concerns of oppressed groups in society can be represented in national policy-making.³ Interestingly, while “equality of presence” regarding the right to vote has been achieved in most countries, the same cannot be said for “equality of presence” regarding political representation.⁴ Until 2006, approximately 40 states had established gender quotas in elections to national parliaments and

¹ PewResearchCenter, *Gender Equality Universally Embraced But Inequalities Acknowledged*. Available from: <http://www.pewglobal.org/2010/07/01/gender-equality/> [Accessed 19th March 2015].

² Franceschet and Piscopo. ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, *Politics & Gender*, 4 (2008) p. 393-394; Americas Quarterly, *Gender Quotas: Female Legislative Representation*. Available from: <http://www.americasquarterly.org/node/544> [Accessed 19th March 2015].

³ Rai, S. M. ‘Democratic Institutions, Political Representation and Women’s Empowerment: the Quota Debate in India’, *Democratization*, 6 (1999) p. 89-93; Quota Project, *Quotas – A Key To Equality?*. Available from: http://www.quotaproject.org/about_research.cfm [Accessed 19th April 2015].

⁴ Phillips, A. *The Politics of Presence* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995) p. 31; International Business Times, *Which Countries still do not allow Women’s Suffrage?* Available from: <http://www.ibtimes.com/saudi-women-vote-which-countries-still-dont-allow-womens-suffrage-318260> [Accessed 19th March 2015].

political parties in more than 50 countries had introduced party quotas.⁵ Despite the fact that the number of countries having some set of gender quotas is steadily rising, in 2011 on average women still accounted for only 19.5 % of members of national parliaments worldwide.⁶ At the same time though, the implementation of gender quotas remains a highly contested issue for various reasons, critics particularly question whether being in a place of power is sufficient on its own to empower and achieve meaningful equality.⁷

Consequently, it is highly important to find out how effective gender quotas are in achieving meaningful change for women. Generally speaking, I argue that gender quotas are an insufficient, but a necessary concept to realise gender equality in society: despite the drawbacks, having a gender quota is definitely an improvement and brings women closer to true gender equality.⁸

The following text will first analyse and contrast theories and analytical frameworks in favour of and opposed to the gender quota, using Argentina as a case study. Afterwards, the essay will present a number of policy recommendations on how to mitigate the negative effects of gender quotas before giving a conclusion.

⁵ QuotaProject: Global Database of Quotas for Women. *How many countries have introduced gender quotas?*. Available from: <http://www.quotaproject.org/faq.cfm> [Accessed 19th March 2015].

⁶ The Guardian, *International Women's Day 2012: women's representation in politics*. Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2012/mar/07/women-representation-in-politics-worldwide> [Accessed 19th March 2015].

⁷ Phillips, A. *The Politics of Presence*, p. 70-72; International IDEA, 'Comparative Studies of Electoral Gender Quotas', (Lima, Drude Dahlerup, 2003) p. 4.

⁸ International IDEA, 'Pioneering Quotas: The Argentine Experience and Beyond' (Lima, Maria Jose Lubertino, 2003) p. 2.

Generally speaking, when arguing in support of gender quotas, one can approach the concept from two different angles. On the one hand, it can be argued that gender quotas are important in terms of social justice, emphasising the notion that they help to realise the right of women to be represented in national parliaments.⁹ On the other hand, focusing on a democratic perspective, it can be argued that gender quotas are needed to increase a democracy's quality because the more representative a parliament is of its citizens, the higher its legitimacy is among its population.¹⁰ In spite of the fact that both points of view are significant and mutually reinforce each other, the essay will, for the most part, emanate from the first perspective and analyse how effective gender quotas are in achieving women's right of representation in national parliaments.

In order to understand the significance of gender quotas, it is important to emphasise the idea that a more representative parliament produces more prudent policy outcomes given that a parliament which is predominantly composed of a particular citizen body making decisions for, rather than with, a different group of citizens is very unlikely to cover all the relevant issues regarding a specific policy.¹¹ This notion is highly important given that it acknowledges the fact that every human being has different experiences in life that lead to different perspectives which, in turn, can enrich political discussions in order to ensure that a future policy is scrutinised from all possible angles. Notably, as Phillips has argued, it also "... reflects a more humbling recognition that no one group has a monopoly of virtue".¹² In this way, a gender quota is a useful means to increase a parliament's diversity and to raise the quality of its policy outcomes.¹³

⁹ Fawcett Society, *Women and Power*. Available from: <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/women-power/> [Accessed 19th March 2015].

¹⁰ Kittilson, M. C. ,In Support of Gender Quotas: Setting New Standards, Bringing Visible Gains', *Politics & Gender*, 1 (2005) p. 638; Gray, T. 'Electoral Gender Quotas: Lessons from Argentina and Chile', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 22 (2003) p. 55.

¹¹ Phillips, A. *The Politics of Presence*, p. 13.

¹² Phillips, A. *The Politics of Presence*, p. 17.

¹³ Phillips, A. *The Politics of Presence*, p. 62-63.

Furthermore, gender quotas increase women's symbolic representation which can be seen as an aim in itself.¹⁴ The significance of symbolic representation must not be underestimated: fulfilling symbolic representation means fulfilling women's right to be represented by female bodies in parliament to which they might relate much better regarding certain issues such as childcare, maternity leave and exposure to sexual harassment.¹⁵ This is essential because symbolic representation of female bodies leads to a process of questioning as to why a specific type of body, the male, is highly dominant in a political institution which allows for the de-normalisation, not de-valuing, of male bodies and hence starts a process of normalisation of female bodies in parliament.¹⁶ This normalisation process is very powerful since it challenges the widespread idea of women as subordinate and powerless human beings which potentially has a positive impact on women's empowerment and gender equality in society in general.¹⁷ Accordingly, in Argentina and Latin America generally, symbolic representation as a result of gender quotas can help to challenge the widespread culture of Marianismo and therefore open new ways of being for women: it can lead to the creation of identities that deviate from the concept of Marianismo, namely being an apolitical and powerless mother.¹⁸

Notwithstanding the importance of symbolic representation, emphasising the distinct female experience and voice in advocating for gender quotas occupies a danger of essentialism.¹⁹ Essentialism takes effect when gender quotas generate an over-emphasis on sex, on femaleness, thereby decreasing the significance of other vectors of power influencing a person's identity

¹⁴ Phillips, A. *The Politics of Presence*, p. 62-63

¹⁵ Phillips, A. *The Politics of Presence*, p. 43-44, 62-63, 67-68.

¹⁶ Kittilson, 'In Support of Gender Quotas: Setting New Standards, Bringing Visible Gains', p. 643.

¹⁷ Pande, and Ford. *Gender Quotas and Female Leadership: A Review*. Background Paper for the World Development Report on Gender (2011) p. 7.

¹⁸ Hall, L. B. *Mary, Mother and Warrior: The Virgin in Spain and the Americas* (Austin, The University of Texas Press, 2004) p. 19-26.

¹⁹ Mansbridge, J. 'Quota Problems: Combatting the Dangers of Essentialism', *Politics & Gender*, 1 (2005) p. 623.

such as race, class and sexuality.²⁰ This tendency might result in the use of stereotypes and often serves to minimise the differences within the female group to the advantage of the dominant in-group within the group.²¹ Consequently, the danger of essentialism is the underlying notion that “any woman can represent all women”.²² This danger is revealed to be a very real one when examining the identities of female legislators in Argentina: indeed the implementation of a gender quota has led to an increase in the number of female parliamentarians, this progressive change has predominantly been made due to the sex of the women and the legal requirements.²³ Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that they are not only united by their sex, but also by other similarities such as having an excellent education and a lower number of children.²⁴ This suggests that most female legislators in Argentina have a middle or upper class background which might lead them to overlook particularly the perspectives of, for instance, working-class women regarding women’s policies.²⁵ This is not to say that all female legislators represent the same points of view since having a shared identity does not necessarily mean shared beliefs or opinions, however, focusing on one identity bears the risk of essentialism that might result in disregard for the perspectives of non-elite women in society.²⁶

Although it is evidently necessary to take account of essentialism as a possible drawback of the implementation of gender quotas, it is equally important to recognise the shared female identity of all women. This shared identity, irrespective of class or race, means that all women do share common issues to a certain extent, for instance all matters related to

²⁰ Mansbridge, ‘Quota Problems: Combatting the Dangers of Essentialism’, p. 623.

²¹ Mansbridge, ‘Quota Problems: Combatting the Dangers of Essentialism’, p. 623.

²² Mansbridge, ‘Quota Problems: Combatting the Dangers of Essentialism’, p. 623.

²³ Franceschet and Piscopo. ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, p. 395.

²⁴ Franceschet and Piscopo. ‘Gender and Political Backgrounds in Argentina’ in *The Impact Of Gender Quotas*, edited by Susan Franceschet, Mona Lena Krook, and Jennifer M. Piscopo (Oxford University Press, New York, 2012) p. 47-54.

²⁵ Franceschet and Piscopo. ‘Gender and Political Backgrounds in Argentina’, p. 47-54.

²⁶ Phillips, A. *The Politics of Presence* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995) p. 53.

pregnancy.²⁷ Notably, Phillips rightly stresses that although “... some women do not bear children does not make pregnancy a gender-neutral event; that women disagree on abortion does not make its legal availability a matter of equal concern to both women and men”.²⁸ Therefore, it can be argued that women’s symbolic representation in parliament matters and is likely to represent the start of meaningful change for women because the presence of female bodies in politics can lead to the increased presence of so-called female issues in politics such as childcare in the related discourse.²⁹ It is certainly accurate to bring forward the argument that women have very diverse opinions on matters related to pregnancy, however, the mere presence of female issues in politics has the potential to relegate social issues, often regarded as women’s problems, to the sphere of importance and thus can, at least, enable a discussion.³⁰ Indeed, gender quotas and hence women’s symbolic representation in parliament might, in the long-term, result in the formation of a society which takes female topics more seriously and engages in a profound debate which might lead to meaningful policy outcomes in the long run.³¹

After having considered how symbolic representation might lead to positive development for women, it is highly significant to differentiate between symbolic and substantive representation.³² Substantive representation is relevant because symbolic representation alone, the mere presence of women in parliament, is a first step that can have a positive impact but is

²⁷ Phillips, *The Politics of Presence*, p. 68-69.

²⁸ Phillips, *The Politics of Presence*, p. 68-69.

²⁹ Kittilson, ‘In Support of Gender Quotas: Setting New Standards, Bringing Visible Gains’, p. 641.

³⁰ Kittilson, ‘In Support of Gender Quotas: Setting New Standards, Bringing Visible Gains’, p. 642.

³¹ Kittilson, ‘In Support of Gender Quotas: Setting New Standards, Bringing Visible Gains’, p. 642.

³² Franceschet and Piscopo, ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, p. 396.

unlikely to result in meaningful change directly.³³ In this sense, it is important to distinguish between two techniques, namely when female legislators “stand for” women as a group (symbolic representation) and when they “act for” women as a group (substantive representation).³⁴ Regarding substantive representation, it makes sense to use Franceschet’s framework of process-oriented and outcome-oriented representation.³⁵ Process-oriented representation occurs when a woman legislator performs activities on behalf of women and outcome-oriented representation refers to the kind of representation which effectively results in specific outcomes, like women-friendly policies.³⁶ In Argentina, the introduction of a legislated candidate gender quota has resulted in the improvement of process-oriented representation because there has been a rise of proposed women’s rights bills in the Argentine Congress, most of them being launched by female legislators.³⁷ Indeed, looking at reproductive laws, 80 % of the bills to legalise abortion between 1989 and 2007 were presented by females.³⁸ In fact, it has been argued elsewhere that this increase happened not only due to the gender quota itself, but also thanks to the fact that a domestic constituency had mobilised in favour of the gender quota.³⁹ This is of importance because when a group undertakes activities to support the implementation of a gender quota as part of a bottom-up approach, female legislators elected under the quota are likely to experience the ‘mandate

³³ Franceschet and Piscopo, ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, p. 396.

³⁴ Franceschet and Piscopo, ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, p. 396.

³⁵ Franceschet and Piscopo, ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, p. 397-399.

³⁶ Franceschet and Piscopo, ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, p. 397-399.

³⁷ Franceschet and Piscopo, ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, p. 396.

³⁸ Franceschet and Piscopo, ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, p. 410.

³⁹ Franceschet and Piscopo, ‘Gender Quotas and Women’s Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina’, p. 404.

effect', namely a greater responsibility to substantively represent women as a group.⁴⁰

Although female legislators have successfully gendered the legislative agenda in Argentina and hence process-oriented representation has been achieved, it has not led to a strong outcome-oriented representation.⁴¹ Despite the fact that women parliamentarians' efforts have resulted in the passage of three significant women's rights bills since the introduction of the gender quota law in 1991, these numbers are relatively low and legislators still struggle to ensure the passing of women's rights laws.⁴²

For that reason, it should be highlighted that in the case of Argentina, the gender quota has helped to accomplish a change of parliament's agenda for the benefit of women's issues, however, it has not led to a higher number of women-friendly policies.⁴³ While it is necessary to acknowledge that every situation regarding the passage of a women-friendly policy was presumably different and that there are other factors or actors which might hamper the processes—such as the influence of the Catholic Church, institutional rules above all work against the passing of women's rights bills in Argentina.⁴⁴ Institutional rules, referring to specific procedures and business practices such as party discipline and party leaders' agenda control, represent huge obstacles to female legislators' substantive representation.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 402-404.

⁴¹ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 406, 413.

⁴² Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 415-417.

⁴³ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 415-417.

⁴⁴ Human Rights Watch, 'Women's Access to Contraceptives and Abortion in Argentina' (2005, Vol. 17) p.17-19. Available from: <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/argentina0605.pdf> [Accessed 20th March 2015]; Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 421.

⁴⁵ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 415-421.

The evidence from the case study thus suggests that the gender quota itself will not be directly translated into meaningful change for women, if 'change' refers to actual outcomes in terms of policies.⁴⁶ Gender quotas will not directly alter institutional rules, however, one might argue that they could help to induce institutional change in the long-term.⁴⁷ For instance, if party leaders' agenda control represents an obstacle, it could surely be argued that gender quotas and thus the increased presence of women and women's issues in parliament are likely to, at least, modify politicians' perception regarding these topics and make the passage of women's rights bills more likely in the future.⁴⁸ Obviously, changing societal attitudes of politicians and people is always a very long-term process. Consequently, it is important to acknowledge the limited potential of gender quotas while taking account of the positive change they generally induce and have induced in Argentina. It is useful to consider the interdependency between political norms and societal norms: political norms can alter the perception of females and female issues in society, while societal attitudes do affect legislators and political norms, therefore gender quotas can play a small but significant role in a general process towards women's empowerment and gender equality.⁴⁹

After having examined the connection between gender quotas and substantive representation, one should give consideration to a significant argument against the effectiveness of gender quotas, namely its inherent elitism.⁵⁰ It can generally be argued that female legislators, in Argentina as well as elsewhere, are likely to be middle or upper class and well-educated

⁴⁶ Gray, T. 'Electoral Gender Quotas: Lessons from Argentina and Chile', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 22 (2003) p. 63.

⁴⁷ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 415-421.

⁴⁸ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 401.

⁴⁹ Kittilson, 'In Support of Gender Quotas: Setting New Standards, Bringing Visible Gains', p. 643.

⁵⁰ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender and Political Backgrounds in Argentina', p. 43-45.

which might limit their perspectives and therefore their ability to represent a wide variety of women.⁵¹ It is important to note, however, that female legislators in Argentina do explore ways how to include different points of view.⁵² For instance, one legislator established weekly office hours during which women leaders from shantytowns can discuss their concerns with her and thereby ensure that the parliamentarian becomes aware of working-class perspectives.⁵³ Besides, a number of parliamentarians also consult with various women's groups working on different women's issues such as reproductive rights.⁵⁴ Although one should appreciate their efforts to learn about other women's problems, these options are very limited indeed and do not ensure that working-class women's concerns are effectively included in future policy-making processes since decisions still depend on the judgement of the individual legislator.⁵⁵

Criticizing the implementation of gender quotas, one could perhaps propose the introduction of the 'representation of discourses' by John S. Dryzek and Simon Niemeyer as a better way to ensure the inclusion of different kinds of knowledge.⁵⁶ In their theoretical framework of 'discursive representation', Dryzek and Niemeyer argue that politics at the national level of a democracy should be transformed in the sense that instead of trying to represent a large number of citizens, it is wiser to put the focal point on the representation of diverse discourses.⁵⁷ According to their proposal,

⁵¹ Franceschet, S., Krook, M. L., Piscopo, J.M. 'Conceptualizing the Impact of Gender Quotas' in *The Impact Of Gender Quotas*, edited by Susan Franceschet, Mona Lena Krook, and Jennifer M. Piscopo (Oxford University Press, New York, 2012) p. 14; Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender and Political Backgrounds in Argentina', p. 47.

⁵² Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 415.

⁵³ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 415.

⁵⁴ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', *Politics & Gender*, 4 (2008) p. 49.

⁵⁵ Phillips, A. *The Politics of Presence*, p. 40-45.

⁵⁶ Taylor, 'Chapter 15: Representation' (2015, forthcoming) p. 3.

⁵⁷ Taylor, 'Chapter 15: Representation' p. 3.

discourses are “a set of categories and concepts embodying specific assumptions, judgements, contentions, dispositions and capabilities”.⁵⁸ Besides, they argue that representatives can be appointed by using a variety of social science techniques.⁵⁹ Certainly, this approach appears to present a very logical way to further the representation of different discourses in politics and the possibility should not be completely rejected. However, despite the positive points, there are at least two disadvantages. First, such an approach suffers from a similar problem as gender quotas, namely elitism. Chosen representatives would most likely come from the upper echelons of society as is the case with most politics-related professions.⁶⁰ Second, above all, an approach such as the ‘representation of discourses’ appears to create an artificial and non-existent disruption between a human-being’s life experiences and a human-being’s ability to represent a variety of different discourses. It could indeed be argued that it seems to be unrealistic to assume a clear separation between one’s private life (life experiences) and one’s public life (profession). For this reason, the discursive representation theory can be used to emphasise the possible effectiveness of gender quotas.

I argue that the presence of ideas cannot be completely separated from the presence of experience because, as Phillips rightly emphasizes, what one “... cannot really expect is the degree of vigorous advocacy that people bring to their own concerns”.⁶¹ Moreover, despite binding mandates and party discipline in politics, legislators do generally have autonomy over setting their priorities and voting behaviour, and for this reason it does matter whether a legislator is male or female when it comes to women’s rights bills since experience can impact on one’s political concerns.⁶² This argument is supported by the fact that between 1989 and 2007, 69% of all violence-against-women bills and 73% of all sexual harassment bills in the

⁵⁸ Taylor, ‘Chapter 15: Representation’ p. 3.

⁵⁹ Dryzek, J. S., Niemeyer, S., ‘Discursive Representation’, *American Political Science Review*, 102 (2008) p. 486-487.

⁶⁰ Taylor, ‘Chapter 15: Representation’ p. 3.

⁶¹ Phillips, *The Politics of Presence*, p. 69.

⁶² Phillips, *The Politics of Presence*, p. 40-45.

Argentinian Congress were introduced by female legislators.⁶³ What is more, women parliamentarians are more likely to introduce women's rights bills irrespective of party membership.⁶⁴ In spite of the fact that these numbers can be used to criticise the ineffectiveness of gender quotas for substantive outcome-representation, it does show that gender quotas allow for substantive representation concerning the process which shows that this mechanism helps to achieve meaningful change for women to a certain extent.

Nevertheless it is highly significant to try and find ways to mitigate the negative effects of having a legislated candidate gender quota, that is to say its elitism. I propose two options in particular. Firstly, as is already done by some legislators in Argentina, it might be useful to establish regular communication between all legislators, particularly so-called 'quota-women', and a wide variety of women's organisations which work and produce information on different women-related topics.⁶⁵ The communication should be an integral part of the policy-making process and could take place in the form of regular roundtables. For instance, women's rights organisations could participate in the agenda-setting and draft-writing part of the process. Importantly, both male and female legislators should attend meetings in order to reduce the probability of essentialism and to ensure that both men and women develop a sense of responsibility towards female issues such as reproductive rights and the eradication of sexual harassment. By getting women's groups involved in the entire policy-development process, their impact would increase considerably compared to the current situation in Argentina where only a few female legislators make the effort of communicating with local groups.⁶⁶

⁶³ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 409-412.

⁶⁴ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 411.

⁶⁵ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 415.

⁶⁶ Franceschet and Piscopo, 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', p. 415.

Furthermore, it might be reasonable to conduct referendums on women's rights bills to ensure the representation of non-legislators' women's voices which could further the inclusion of, in Foucault's term, "subjugated knowledge" and thereby help to diminish the influence of elitism.⁶⁷ In fact, referendums can effectively represent another source of representation leading to the inclusion of more diverse perspectives.⁶⁸

In conclusion, it can be said that the topic of gender quotas is certainly and rightly a much contested concept. As can be seen from the analysis, there are arguments against as well as in favour of it. On the one hand, there is the danger of essentialism and elitism, two drawbacks which might result in the election of female legislators who fail to consider perspectives that are not their own. In addition, when it comes to outcome-related representation, the case study on Argentina shows that gender quotas are ineffective, at least in the short-term, in achieving actual policies to enhance women's empowerment in society given repressive institutional rules. However, on the other hand, the case study does point out the effectiveness of gender quotas on process-related representation. Generally speaking, it must be stated that the mere increase of elected women in parliament does not necessarily lead to an increase in the number of introduced women's rights bills since it is also dependent on the individual legislator and her priorities. Although the success also depends on specific factors such as the electoral system, the example of Argentina shows that thanks to the bottom-up approach in advocating for gender quotas, female legislators seem to feel a responsibility towards women's issues, a fact very much proven by the number of bills they have introduced in Congress.⁶⁹ This serves to support the argument in favour of gender quotas and shows that a human being's sex

⁶⁷ Foucault, M. *Selected Interviews and Other Writings: 1972-1977*, Michel Foucault Two Lectures 1976. Available from: <http://www.rlwclarke.net/courses/LITS3304/2007-2008/04AFoucaultTwoLectures.pdf> [Accessed 22 March 2015].

⁶⁸ Weldon, S. L. Beyond Bodies: Institutional Sources of Representation for Women in Democratic Policymaking', *The Journal of Politics*, 64 (2002) p. 1154.

⁶⁹ Franceschet, et al. 'Conceptualizing the Impact of Gender Quotas' in *The Impact Of Gender Quotas*, edited by Susan Franceschet, Mona Lena Krook, and Jennifer M. Piscopo (Oxford University Press, New York, 2012) p. 7.

and personal experiences of being a female person in society do matter in determining an individual woman's political priorities.

In summary, it appears logical to argue that gender quotas alone are insufficient, but highly necessary to generate meaningful change for women. If combined with the policy recommendations, the negative effects can be alleviated to a certain extent and thus, the implementation of a gender quota in parliamentary elections has huge potential to contribute to the effective empowerment of women in the long-term.

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Sexual relationships shaped by the political agenda A case study of Chile

Holly Williams

IT is a generally accepted fact that there are both public and private spheres of action, and that as set out in Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; “no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy”.¹ One may then conclude that actions conducted in the private sphere, such as a sexual relationship between two consenting adults should not be interfered with by external actors like the state. Furthermore, it can be argued that the state and other external factors such as political agenda are exerting an influence over such private matters as sexual relationships. This essay intends to explore this phenomenon, by examining the way in which the political agendas’ control over and attitudes towards abortion, shapes and influences sexual relationships. The text will accomplish this by looking at the case of Chile; which is one of only four countries worldwide who have a legal and constitutional ban on all forms of abortion.² The essay will begin by demonstrate why the ability to have an abortion is central to sexual relationships. It will then explore how such an anti-abortion stance as that which exists in Chile, both in the political realm and in social constructs like Marianismo and machismo, heavily influence the political agenda. The text will also look at how such issues disproportionately affect certain sections of the Chilean population, for example women and those of lower income backgrounds. One must recognise that there are many contributing factors in both the construction of political agendas and in the limitation of access to services such as abortion; nor is abortion the only way in which the political agenda is able to shape sexual relationships. However, for the purpose of this essay and to focus the argument, the above factors will be those with which the argument is made.

¹ *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Available from:
<https://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>
[Accessed 04 November 2014].

² ‘World abortion map’, Available from:
<http://worldabortionlaws.com/about.html>
[Accessed 05 November 2014].

In order to explore the way in which sexual relationships are shaped by the political agenda, one must first define what elements of it can be influenced. There are a number of rights associated with being a participant in a sexual relationship; such as being able to do so safely, consensually, and without the prejudice or discrimination of others.³ The right upon which this essays argument shall focus, is the right for individuals in a sexual relationship; ‘to reproduce, and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so.’⁴ Thus an essential part of a sexual relationship is the ability for the participants of the sexual relationship to choose if and when they wish the relationship to result in pregnancy. Furthermore it is their right to have the means to make that choice, through family planning services, contraception or as some controversially argue, abortion.⁵ Jansen puts forward the idea of ‘sexual self-determination,’ this is the idea that it is the right of a woman specifically to decide if, and when to reproduce.⁶ Whilst further establishing the right to abortion in a sexual relationship, this disproportionately places responsibility for reproductive choices, including abortion, on women. This also highlights that any violation of the rights of reproductive choice, as in the case of restrictive abortion laws, will affect female participants more than it will male participants of sexual relationships. One may argue therefore that those who are able to control access to such means and such rights, in particular abortion, will also be able to influence and shape sexual relationships. There are a large number of factors which influence and control this access; varying from culture and race to social norms, however for the purpose of this argument there focus will be limited to the legal control of abortion by political institutions and individuals who are able to shape the political agenda. It is also important to highlight that there are numerous sources which form a part of the political agenda and that

³ UN Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995, Available from: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html> [Accessed 05 November 2014].

⁴ United Nations, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development*, 1994, Available from: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html> [Accessed 01 November 2014].

⁵ Shepard, B. ‘The "Double Discourse" on Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Latin America: the Chasm Between Public Policy and Private Actions’, *Health and Human Rights*, 4:2 (2000) p.121.

⁶ Jansen, Y. ‘Right to Freely Have Sex-Beyond Biology: Reproductive Rights and Sexual Self-Determination’, *The Akron L. Rev.*, 40:311 (2007) p. 323.

consequently shape law, for the purpose of the argument the political agenda shall be taken to be comprised of politicians and their main influences, for example social constructs like Marianismo.

Further to this, there are two different ways in which sexual relationships are shaped by the political agendas' influence over abortion access. The first is the removal of choice altogether, for example if pregnancy occurs the participants have no option but to continue and raise the child or seek other options like adoption. The second is that choice is made unsafe, making only 'backstreet' abortions available, often at high cost and with dubious practices prevalent.⁷ This has the potential to further remove choice as such practices often have negative consequences, like causing infertility or other reproductive health issues.⁸ Once again one can identify inequalities, as women of higher income backgrounds are more likely to have the economic means to access safer and more discreet services run by trained doctors, this is highlighted by the disproportionate number of lower income women in Chile who are reported to the police by physicians as a result of their need to seek treatment for abortion related complications.⁹ One may argue that in such cases the rule of law is not being adequately practiced for all social groups and thus lower income individuals are affected more and are having their rights infringed upon; demonstrating deep inequality. This is reinforced by the fact that such individuals have very little protection of their reproductive rights under the constitution and often have no other option but to be represented under Chile's legal aid system which often provides poorly trained lawyers.¹⁰ It is clear to see that the illegality of abortion, especially when the law is as absolute as it is in Chile will have a large impact not only on the reproductive rights of couples but also on the rights of women to sexual self-autonomy, whilst disproportionately affecting particular parts of society for whom the influence of the political agenda is more keenly felt.

⁷ Shepard and Casas-Becerra, 'Abortion policies and practices in Chile: ambiguities and dilemmas', *Reproductive health matters*, 15:30 (2007) p. 202.

⁸ Díaz et al. 'Acceptability of emergency contraception in Brazil, Chile, and Mexico: Perceptions of emergency oral contraceptives', *Cadernos de Saúde Pública*, 19:5 (2003) p. 1508.

⁹ Casas-Becerra, L. 'Women prosecuted and imprisoned for abortion in Chile', *Reproductive Health Matters*, 5:9 (1997) p. 29.

¹⁰ Casas-Becerra, 'Women prosecuted and imprisoned for abortion in Chile', p. 29.

In order to understand how the political agenda shapes sexual relationships one must explore the reasons for which the political agenda takes its stance. There are multiple factors which may be considered here, however, this essay considers the most important to be the influence of the social concepts of Marianismo and machismo, two ideas which deeply influence Latin America and Chile; socially, culturally and politically.¹¹ Marianismo is, as the name suggests a concept based on the Virgin Mary. It highlights the characteristics of the ideal Latin American woman, empowering women through their ability to be mothers, which is viewed as an essential part of womanhood, and consequently of Marianismo.¹² Here one may already identify features of the concept which by their nature are anti-abortion, and therefore may influence those who control the political agenda. An example of this is motherhood, aborting an unborn child is when simplified a rejection of the idea of motherhood. Marianismo is also exemplified by the self-sacrificial woman who would do anything for her family and for her children.¹³ One may extend this concept to pregnancy; in being self-sacrificial, a woman should be willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, to die for the sake of her unborn child. Once again anti-abortion logic may be identified, no matter how ill a mother is she should not sacrifice her child for the sake of herself, a view echoed by a key influencer on the Pinochet regime, Jaime Guzman who believed martyrdom, such as death during pregnancy should always be chosen over 'moral fault' or abortion to save the mother's life.¹⁴ As such, even a therapeutic abortion would contradict this ideal of Marianismo.

¹¹ Stevens, E. 'Machismo and marianismo', *Society*, 10:6 (1973) p. 59.

¹² Craske, N. *Women and politics in Latin America*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).

¹³ Kaelber, L, *Latinas and Abortion: The Role of Acculturation, Religion, Reproductive History and Familism* (2012). Open Access Dissertations. Paper 787. p. 49

¹⁴ Casas-Becerra, 'Women prosecuted and imprisoned for abortion in Chile', p. 29.

It is essential also to consider that Marianismo is often seen as a social construct used to discipline and disempower women,¹⁵ this may seem paradoxical as motherhood is viewed by Marianismo as the core of women's empowerment, however within this concept women are empowered in a the limited private sphere. The concept of machismo establishes that machista men have their power in the public or political realm, where they must appear strong and significantly, must not lose face by backing down from their viewpoint.¹⁶ Thus the suppression of women's political agency through Marianismo and the political empowerment of men through machismo forms the basis for the dominance of men in politics and their influence over the political agenda. Consequently, one may conclude that it is not in their interests to pursue an agenda which would empower women and undermine the foundations of their power. Abortion, as an issue which goes against the very idea of Marianismo, would certainly do so. Once again, inequality may be identified in that the 'political disenfranchisement' of the sections of society who are most affected by restrictive abortion laws¹⁷ means that among political elites there is a reinforced lack of political will to challenge the Marianismo status quo and thus abortion laws, which largely do not affect those in positions of power as they usually are of adequate economic status to seek alternate and safe solutions to unwanted pregnancy.¹⁸ Therefore, one may argue that one of the largest influencing factors on the political agenda's anti-abortion stance are the concepts of Marianismo and machismo.

As aforementioned there are two primary ways in which the political agenda shapes sexual relationships; however there are certainly questions of the extent to which this shaping occurs or indeed is successful in achieving the desired level of restriction. For example at present under the constitution in Chile it is illegal for any kind of abortion to be carried out, no matter what

¹⁵ Barrientos, J. 'Sexual initiation for heterosexual individuals in Northern Chile', *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 7:1 (2010) p. 38.

¹⁶ Stevens, 'Machismo and marianismo', p. 59.

¹⁷ Shepard, 'The "Double Discourse" on Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Latin America: the Chasm Between Public Policy and Private Actions', p. 115.

¹⁸ Casas-Becerra, 'Women prosecuted and imprisoned for abortion in Chile', p. 35.

the circumstances.¹⁹ Despite this, there are some factors which limit the effectiveness of this law. Firstly, sentencing for the crime tends to be relatively rare in Chile, despite the absolute nature of the laws;²⁰ serious inequalities are drawn out in the cases of those women and accomplices who are convicted. In this case especially, female participants of sexual relationships are affected far more. Though one would hope that in the situation of an unwanted pregnancy both participants, male and female would make choices regarding the continuation of the pregnancy, this is often not the case.²¹ Whilst a man can simply walk away from such a scenario a woman cannot, and is obligated to deal with the decisions and consequences, like conviction for having the abortion. Another factor is that there exists a legal loophole which allows abortion in a sense. After 22 weeks if the health of the mother is at risk an 'interruption of pregnancy is' is allowed.²² This can potentially cause the death of the unborn baby but nevertheless remains legal. This was the case in Chile in 2003 when a woman with a molar pregnancy was denied an abortion despite public outcry, at 22 weeks an interruption was undertaken after she developed serious health problems, showing that though she was forced to wait eventually the pregnancy was ended.²³ Here one may draw on another way in which sexual relationships are shaped by the political agenda against legalising abortion. With such loopholes available, there is a blurring of the legal and illegal, there have been many cases in which physicians have refused to carry out an interruption of pregnancy, despite the mother being at serious risk of death due to complications. A reason often cited in these cases is the fear both on the side of the physician and the mother that the action would be misconstrued as an attempt to abort the foetus as opposed to

¹⁹ 'World abortion map', Available from: <http://worldabortionlaws.com/about.html> [Accessed 05 November 2014].

²⁰ Casas-Becerra, 'Women prosecuted and imprisoned for abortion in Chile', p. 29.

²¹ Díaz et al., 'Acceptability of emergency contraception in Brazil, Chile, and Mexico: Perceptions of emergency oral contraceptives', p. 1513.

²² Shepard, and Casas-Becerra, 'Abortion policies and practices in Chile: ambiguities and dilemmas', p. 208.

²³ Shepard, and Casas-Becerra, 'Abortion policies and practices in Chile: ambiguities and dilemmas' p. 208.

being a legal interruption, thus resulting in conviction for both parties.²⁴ Such incidences have the potential to permanently affect the mother's reproductive health,²⁵ and as such leads to their sexual relationship being indirectly shaped by the political agenda. Shepard presents a different viewpoint, putting forward the concept that a 'double discourse on sexual and reproductive rights' exists in Chile.²⁶ This is the idea that the political agenda and its actions demonstrate a very different view of the issue of abortion than that of the majority of the public, 75% of which when asked said they would advocate the legalisation of abortion in the case of risk to mother's life.²⁷ This further verifies the idea that despite the restrictiveness of current laws in Chile, this does not always translate into public opinion and complete prevention of abortions and thus into the shaping of sexual relationships through this means. Finally it is essential to highlight that the political agenda is an entity that contains many varying view points and thus it is the case that there is a section of the political agenda which in fact wish to liberalise Chile's abortion laws and thus limit the extent to which the political agenda is able to shape sexual relationships.²⁸ At present in Chile this is led by President Michelle Bachelet who has openly admitted her support for the liberalisation of Chile's abortion law²⁹ and in 2011 who supported the case for an 11 year old rape victim to be allowed an abortion³⁰ One could certainly argue from this, that the political agenda may be

²⁴ Shepard and Casas-Becerra, 'Abortion policies and practices in Chile: ambiguities and dilemmas' p. 208.

²⁵ Díaz et al. 'Acceptability of emergency contraception in Brazil, Chile, and Mexico: Perceptions of emergency oral contraceptives', p. 1508.

²⁶ Shepard, 'The "Double Discourse" on Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Latin America: the Chasm Between Public Policy and Private Actions', p. 110-143.

²⁷ Shepard, and Casas-Becerra, 'Abortion policies and practices in Chile: ambiguities and dilemmas' p. 208.

²⁸ Casas and Herrera, 'Maternity protection vs. maternity rights for working women in Chile: a historical review', *Reproductive health matters*, 20:40 (2012) p.144.

²⁹ Fraser, B. 'Tide begins to turn on abortion access in South America', *The Lancet*, 383:9935 (2014) p. 2113.

³⁰ Huffington Post, *Chile's President Sebastian Pinera praises 11- year old pregnant girl for keeping baby after rape*, Available from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/10/chile-president-11-year-old-pregnant_n_3572539.html [Accessed 03 November 2014].

changing and indeed the way in which it shapes sexual relationships through abortion law may also change.

It is the conclusion of this essay that the political agenda in Chile, defined as those in positions of political power or with influence over the law and policy making process, does shape sexual relationships. This in particular is highlighted in the way the political agenda chooses not to address increasing demands by the Chilean people and some elements of government for the liberalisation of abortion laws³¹ which, despite arguments to suggest that such restrictions violate a number of human rights, remain some of the most restrictive abortion laws on the planet. The essay found that the political agenda was influenced largely by the social concepts of machismo and Marianismo which formed the basis for the disempowerment and disenfranchisement of women and the basis for the domination and empowerment of men in the political sphere. This produced an interests-led agenda in which the liberalisation of laws such as on abortion, which might empower women and thus undermine the basis of the power of those in political positions, was not something that would logically be pursued. Whilst this is clearly not the only reason for which the political agenda chose this stance, the essay found it to be a dominant factor. Finally the essay argued that the restrictiveness of abortion law in Chile, despite its heavy impact, did not necessarily correlate to enforcement as alternative sources of abortion and indeed loopholes in the law were available. Nevertheless, these loopholes were implemented disproportionately, they were either unavailable or led to negative impacts for low income individuals and women by comparison to those of wealthier backgrounds. In conclusion it is clear that the political agenda shapes sexual relationships through its restriction of abortion, though there are some limitations to the extent to which these laws are effectively carried out and therefore the extent on which they then shape sexual relationships in Chile.

³¹ Shepard and Casas-Becerra, 'Abortion policies and practices in Chile: ambiguities and dilemmas', p. 206.

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"How important are masculinity and femininity in the culture of militaries?"

Ciaran Kovach

IN 1999, The *New York Times Magazine* ran a cover story which asked: Does "being a good soldier [depend] on being an aggressive male?" "Is there something uniquely male about the warrior? Can the warrior survive the feminisation of the military, or are we sacrificing military effectiveness on the altar of political correctness?"¹ These questions epitomise the modern debate on the effects of increased gender diversity in the military (most notably the US military) and specifically, the effects of increasing numbers of women amongst the ranks of militaries. This debate raises a further question, just how important a role does sexuality and gender play within modern military culture? In this essay, the roles of masculinity and femininity, particularly in the context of the modern US military culture, shall be examined through a series of issues in military culture related to gender. An issue that will see particular scrutiny is the role and impact of gender roles and gendered behaviour within militaries. The role of debates on biology and sexual orientation, as well as scrutiny from civilian society of military culture will also be used to explore masculinity and femininity within military cultures.

The following text will begin by exploring questions of biology, masculinity and the issue of homosexual inclusion within the military. The text will continue by exploring the role of gender in appearance, training, peacekeeping, perception of war and military suicides. The text will then continue further by analyzing military culture and feminism, followed by gender and military culture outside the USA before reaching a conclusion.

¹ Snyder, C. *Citizen-soldiers and manly warriors: military service and gender in the civic republican tradition* (Lanham, Md; Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), p. 1.

Biology, masculinity and the issue of homosexual inclusion

To begin, with regards to masculinity in military culture, one can argue from an essentialist point of view that masculine culture in the military stems from biological causes. Manhood and masculinity is closely associated with aggression, violence, war and intense competition for dominance, with these behaviours arguably rooted in biology. If one subscribes to this association with male biology, soldiering becomes a natural activity for males which will draw them in instinctively. Furthermore, encouraged into it by older men and women in society, as a way to channel their natural proclivity for violent and disruptive behaviour in the defence of their community and state.² Such an argument suggests a strong connection between military service and masculinity.

If one is to look at recent gender politics in the US military, it becomes quite clear that masculinity and particularly the public image of masculinity, is deeply ingrained in its military culture. Lesbians and gays had long been banned from the US military, and 1993 debates on homosexual inclusion revealed many gender related concerns over their addition. The military feared that allowing people who were openly homosexual to serve would dishonour the US military's image in the eyes of socially conservative Americans and allies. In particular, it was feared that allowing homosexuals to serve would impact negatively on overall recruitment figures. The presence of openly gay men would discourage potential recruits who currently believed the military to be a place which would recognise and reward 'real men'.³

Until recently, openly homosexual service people were banned from the US military under the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy. It demanded that, in return for the privilege of being allowed to enlist in the military, LGB individuals had to remain 'in the closet' while serving within the military. This law, whilst more progressive than the previous complete ban on LGB individuals enlisting, still served to demean LGB individuals' identities and sense of value; implicating that non-heterosexual orientation was wrong and that

² Whitworth, S. *Men, militarism, and UN peacekeeping: a gendered analysis* (Boulder, Colo.; London: Lynne Rienner Pub, 2004), p. 153.

³ Herbert, M. *Camouflage isn't only for combat: gender, sexuality and women in the military* (New York; London: New York University Press, 2003), p. 42-43.

LGB individuals are inferior to their heterosexual counterparts.⁴ This kind of sexual prejudice is grounded in the enforcement of traditional gender norms. Most prominently, sexual violence is utilised (often by more high-ranking service people) against servicemen who are perceived as feminine, and servicewomen who are viewed as masculine, in order to 'emasculate' gay servicemen and 'feminise' lesbian servicewomen.⁵

The gendered issues of appearance and military training

The increasing prevalence of women in the US military has provoked a number of debates within the US military culture regarding new female personnel. The conundrum over finding a middle ground between the masculinity that military culture demands, the femininity that women bring with them and which conservative society wishes to see maintained defined the outcome of the debate.

A significant longstanding issue had prevailed; the appearance of female personnel. Uniformity is highly valued in military culture, but women's bodies and the deviant sexuality associated with them has historically presented problems regarding military apparel. In the 1940s, uniforms given to women were modified in order to remove the breast pockets. This was done to prevent unwanted emphasis of the female personnel's breasts. In the 1970s and 80s, women's work uniforms were phased out in favour of uniformity. This provoked a debate as to whether female personnel should copy men by tucking their shirts into their pants, or wear their shirt outside to mirror their old uniform which covered their waists, hips and buttocks.⁶

Hairstyles also became a point of issue; US military regulations outlaw long 'feminine' hairstyles, but also outlaw women having very short 'masculine' hairstyles. This creates many difficulties in practise due to the subjectivity

⁴ Burks, D. 'Lesbian, gay, and bisexual victimization in the military: an unintended consequence of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," *The American Psychologist*, 66:7 (2011) p. 605.

⁵ Burks, D. 'Lesbian, gay, and bisexual victimization in the military: an unintended consequence of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," p. 606.

⁶ Herbert, M. *Camouflage isn't only for combat: gender, sexuality and women in the military*, p. 43-44.

of these regulations. Officers may differ on what hair lengths constitute excessive masculinity or femininity for women.⁷

These debates over how a female soldier should look is indicative of a longstanding conflict within US military culture as to how femininity should be treated. The contradiction between women filling occupational roles whose defining characteristics are inexorably linked with masculinity, while also maintaining a degree of femininity that is demanded of them by wider society.⁸

One area in military culture where masculine practises seemingly stand out, is in the process of military training and indoctrination. If one were to define femininity as 'nurturing' and 'caring', the training of a modern soldier can be anything but feminine. The brutal training process that turns an ordinary man or woman into a dehumanised killing machine generally involves verbal, physical and mental abuse from superiors and fellow trainees, to break down new recruits. This aggressive, masculine process plays a crucial role in ensuring that soldiers taken away from civilian life are fully integrated into military culture and practises.⁹ However, if one looks at later stages of training, a feminine aspect begins to emerge. Gradually, the insults and complaints from superiors are replaced with occasional praise and encouragement. The instructors, previously figures feared and resented transform into a nurturing parent that the trainee wishes to please. Masculine competition and hostility towards each other also gives way to intense bonding between soldiers; seeing each other as a family.¹⁰ If the process of military training and indoctrination is examined through the medium of gender, it becomes clear that a combination of masculine and feminine behaviour is key to the process.

However, it would be untrue to characterise the nurturing relationship between recruits and their trainers as being the only feminine aspect of life in a modern military. Alongside the great demands the military makes of its

⁷ Herbert, M. *Camouflage isn't only for combat: gender, sexuality and women in the military*, p. 44-45.

⁸ Herbert, M. *Camouflage isn't only for combat: gender, sexuality and women in the military*, p. 45-46.

⁹ Whitworth, S. *Men, militarism, and UN peacekeeping: a gendered analysis*, p. 155-156.

¹⁰ Whitworth, S. *Men, militarism, and UN peacekeeping: a gendered analysis*, p. 157-158.

members, there is a commitment from the military to support and care for its members and their families. This is both material in the form of medical, housing and educational services and emotional support.¹¹

Gender in peacekeeping

Most prominently, the effects of masculine attitudes and practises in modern militaries is exemplified in the conduct of Canadian UN peacekeeping troops in the 1990s. The ratio of violent crime amongst Canadian Airborne troops was disproportionately higher than general Canadian society. This is believed to be a result of masculine competition between airborne soldiers and the local male populace over local women. An unusual dichotomy is also present amongst the Canadian Airborne in the 1990s with regards to other attitudes and behaviour relating to women. Canadian Airborne troops in Somalia self-identified as 'warrior princes', however they were required as UN peacekeepers to protect the women and children of Somalia. Once in Somalia, perceptions of Somali men as lazy chauvinists who had their women and children do everything for them, bred hostility. This hostility would be exacerbated by racist tendencies amongst the Airborne, and the perception of Somali men being homosexual due to their 'feminine' social practises, provoking outrage from masculine homophobes. The dichotomy emerges when figures show that rates of sexual violence (over 50% of which being against women) amongst the airborne is disproportionately higher than in wider society, moreover the report revealing this disturbing evidence was not pursued.¹² This case study shows how masculine attitudes can create a culture wherein beliefs on the importance of helping and protecting women can coexist with inclinations and apathy toward sexual violence against women by soldiers.

¹¹ Whitworth, S. *Men, militarism, and UN peacekeeping: a gendered analysis*, p. 158-159.

¹² Whitworth, S. "Militarized Masculinities and the Politics of Peacekeeping." In *Critical security studies and world politics*, edited by Ken Booth. (Boulder, Colo.; London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), p. 98-102.

Gender and perception of war

It has been observed that feminine women in the military may, on average, perceive certain wartime events and activities differently to their masculine male counterparts. A 2009 study of mixed male and female American students were presented with a vignette where an American soldier (whose gender was varied between participants) tortures and ultimately kills a prisoner (whose gender was also varied). The participants were then asked questions about their opinions towards the case. The study found that female participants were on average, more shocked by the guard's actions, and held both the main guard and the ancillary guards more responsible for the incident than the male participants.¹³ This study suggests that women in the military on average are less likely to carry out or condone such unethical behaviour in war. It could be argued that greater inclusion of women into the military could reduce the number of such incidents. The inspiration for the study was images of US servicewomen at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq abusing prisoners, creating a debate of how women were capable of such actions.¹⁴ While the study shows that such behaviour is perceived as less acceptable by women, at least some women in the military, possibly due to their immersion in gendered military culture, are accepting of such behaviour. One final finding of the study should also be mentioned with relevance to the role of gender in the US military. The study found no distinction between participant's opinions whether the abusive guard was male or female.¹⁵ This could suggest at least in US public opinion, the US military is becoming less gender-specific in nature.

¹³ Fallahi, C et al., 'Gender Differences in the Perception of Prisoner Abuse', *Sex Roles*, 60 (2009) p. 261-265.

¹⁴ Fallahi, C et al., 'Gender Differences in the Perception of Prisoner Abuse', p. 262.

¹⁵ Fallahi, C et al., 'Gender Differences in the Perception of Prisoner Abuse', p. 266.

The role of gender in military suicides

One aspect of military culture which garners a great deal of public attention and controversy, is the issue of high suicide rates amongst serving or ex-service people believed to be connected to masculine military culture. A key underlying factor in the suicides of service people is the notion of expendability within the context of a larger group. This notion is considered fundamental in the formation of social cohesive groups where individuals can resist the natural urge to not take risks with their lives. This form of emotional control creates disregard for one's life and is considered a masculine characteristic. A major direct cause of suicides within the military, that of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD), is exacerbated by the denial and stigmatisation often directed towards the issue by the US military. To be traumatised is to deny the culture of masculine emotional control.¹⁶ Joshua Goldstein explained how due to emotional suppression, many service people find themselves in a situation where they must pay the price of the warrior mentality in the forms of anxiety and PTSD, and therefore the price of failing to be properly masculine and being branded a failure and a coward.¹⁷ Ultimately, this emotional shutdown, combined with the masculine character of military society towards aggression which is sometimes internalised, leads to soldiers whose culture emphasises subordination to the group, to chastise themselves for failing the group and possibly commit suicide. Continued exclusion of servicewomen from masculine military culture reinforces the common perception that suicides rates in the military are connected to masculine military culture. While servicewomen make up 15% of the US military, 97.5% of suicides are of servicemen.¹⁸

¹⁶ Braswell, H and Kushner, H. 'Suicide, social integration, and masculinity in the US military', *Social Science & Medicine*, 74:4 (2012) p. 530-533.

¹⁷ Goldstein, J. *War and gender: How gender shapes the war system and vice versa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 269.

¹⁸ Braswell, H and Kushner, H. 'Suicide, social integration, and masculinity in the US military', p. 534.

Military culture and feminism

A valuable perspective on the role of gender in the military can be found in the writings and commentary of feminist scholars. Feminist antimilitary analysis strongly emphasises the nature of the military as a deeply masculine organisation and argues that the role militaries play are motivated by masculine modalities of economic and political domination and sexual conquest.¹⁹ This antimilitarist feminist perspective on military culture is challenged by egalitarian militarist feminists. These feminists choose to focus on the social dynamic of levels of citizenship, arguing that the culture of the military is not one that fundamentally oppresses women and propagates other social ills such as racism as antimilitarist feminists argue. Egalitarian militarist feminists argue that the military (namely the martial citizenship that comes with military service) constitutes a path to 'first-class citizenship' and equal rights with men.²⁰

Gender and military culture outside the US

In examining the role of gender the military, this essay has so far largely focused on the US military, in part due to the wealth of academic material on gender issues in the US military. In order to gain a comprehensive a picture as possible however, it is necessary to contrast US gendered military culture with that of other nations. The first contrast is that between the US and Israeli military. Unlike the USA, Israel's historically precarious military situation has made the inclusion of women into the military through conscription a necessity. It should be noted however that while the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) is willing to include greater numbers of women than other militaries, in comparison to nations such as the US, they have been more reluctant allow women to carry out 'masculine' role in the IDF. Female IDF members are limited to reserve and auxiliary roles such as drivers, instructors (a lack of respect making them less effective than men) and secretaries. Few of them receive combat training and those that do are

¹⁹ Feinman, I. *Citizenship rites: feminist soldiers and feminist antimilitarists* (New York ; London: New York University Press, 2000), p. 2.

²⁰ Feinman, I. *Citizenship rites: feminist soldiers and feminist antimilitarists*, p. 31-32.

primarily used as guards, not frontline soldiers. Female IDF soldiers are not even allowed to fly combat aircraft or be stationed on combat vessels.²¹

US policy towards inclusion of women also differs in regards to many of their NATO partners. Two examples provide sufficient contrasting attitudes; the Netherlands employs women on submarines (unlike the US) but excludes them from other forms of combat, and Italy, who until recently banned women from joining the military.²² In light of these comparisons, the US military remains an excellent focus for an analysis of the role of gender in military culture due to its high percentage of female military personnel and the well-known public debate about the role of women in the US military. However, comparisons with other militaries reveal that there exist differing viewpoints on if and how women are to be utilised in the military.

²¹ Zeigler, S and Gunderson, G. *Moving beyond G.I. Jane: women and the U.S. military* (Lanham, Md.; Oxford: University Press of America, 2005), p. 80-82.

²² Zeigler, S and Gunderson, G. *Moving beyond G.I. Jane: women and the U.S. military*, p. 83.

Conclusion

To conclude, the issues and case studies explored in this essay strongly suggest that gender does play a very influential role in all facets of military culture, from training to active service and beyond into lives of veterans. Military culture is firmly grounded in masculinity and issues we currently see exemplified by the treatment of female and openly gay members of the US military. This is indicative of an ongoing crisis within its culture on how to balance increasing inclusiveness demanded by modern society while maintaining the masculine practises that in many respects underpin the effectiveness of a military. At the same time however, it must be acknowledged that militaries are not purely masculine institutions. The roles that militaries play in providing for and nurturing its personnel and their families show that militaries also have an important feminine side. As it stands, it is really quite impossible to give a definitive answer to the New York Times questions posed at the beginning of this essay, of whether the warrior is uniquely masculine in nature and whether militaries as we know them can survive 'feminization'.

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Why are gender relations important to include in the study of politics and society?

Michael Rose

POLITICS has been given many different definitions, ranging from something as solid as “the activities associated with the governance of a country”, to a more abstract designation such as “the principles relating to or inherent in a sphere or activity”.¹ For the sake of this essay the study of politics will be related to the study of the latter definition. This essay will deconstruct the idea of political and societal study in order to assess the reason why gender relations are important aspect of it. Politics covers a vast range of notions, however this essay will first focus on the study of ideology and define the distinction between the public and private spheres as these aspects are used to construct the foundation of political and societal study. The essay will then turn to a discussion of religion, poverty, and then finally war in order to demonstrate the importance of gender relations in the study of politics and society. These three notions will be considered primarily as they represent aspects of politics that affect all nations and therefore every political populace.

¹ Oxford Dictionaries, ‘Politics’ Available at: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/politics> [Accessed on: 17/02/2015]

Gender and sexuality

It must first be explained what is meant by the term ‘gender’ and how it differs from ‘sex’. Although often viewed as synonymous, the World Health Organisation defines sex as the biological and physical differences between males and females; females menstruate and males have testicles for example.² However “gender” is defined through the terms male and female. These socially constructed labels prescribed with particular characteristics, which although assumed to be universal, require more nuance. Alternatively, gender refers to the manner in which individuals define themselves, based on a scale of feminine to masculine. The title ‘man’ has been socially constructed to describe the masculine end of the spectrum, just as the term ‘woman’ has been to describe the feminine. Throughout history, the two titles have been seen as tantamount to sex. From birth what is called a male is then dubbed a man (or boy) and what is called female is called a woman (or girl). Not only is the notion of gender enforced from birth, but the true gender of the child, which most likely is not at the extreme end of the spectrum, is also suppressed. The simplest examples can be used to show how children are exposed to gender socialisation. From the moment they’re brought into their bedrooms for the first time, children encounter a room decorated blue if they are a ‘boy’ and pink if they are a ‘girl’. Another obvious example would be that of a clothing store in which ‘men’s’ fashion

² World Health Organisation, ‘What do we mean by "sex" and "gender"?’ *Gender, women and health*, (2015) Available at: <http://www.who.int/gender/whatisgender/en/> [Accessed on: 17/02/2015]

and then 'women's' fashion are separated clearly within the shop, meaning that individuals are forced to accept the gender description assigned to them through a uniform. This thinking has evolved however, and now the term trans-gendered is used to describe those whose self-identity does not conform to the gender assigned to them at birth. This is as opposed to cys-gendered, where the individual feels they do conform to their gender assignment.³ Although this marks some distancing between sex and gender, it is again attempted through socially constructed titles, and does not accept the fact that an infinite number of unlabelled genders exist. With this distinction between sex and gender clear, it is possible to understand and assess the relevance of gender relations in the study of politics and society.

Ideologies and feminism

Politics in its basic philosophical sense is studied through the scrutiny of ideologies. With the somewhat recent prominence of Feminism, gender relations have become an extremely important aspect of this scrutiny. Each ideology has therefore taken its own stance on the notion of gender, thus the Feminist debate is a crucial aspect to the understanding of different ideological lenses. Each perception of what gender is and its importance stems from the foundations of each lens. Conservatives for example emphasise the importance of traditional gender divisions as they "imply that

³ Steinmetz, K. 'This is what 'Cisgender' Means' (23.12.2014) Available at: <http://time.com/3636430/cisgender-definition/> [Accessed on: 13.04.2015]

the sexual division of labour between women and men is natural and inevitable”.⁴ Conservatives encourage the hierarchy in gender relations deeming it to be a consequence of the organic nature of society. Ecologists on the other hand, such as Françoise d'Eaubonne, believe the patriarchal hierarchy to be the unnatural order. Ecologists believe that the patriarchy dominates nature and women in the same way. There is a notion within Ecology that suggests that there is an intrinsic link between women and nature, due to what is accepted by some ecologists as the “traditional ‘female’ values...reciprocity, cooperation and nurturing”.⁵⁶ Socialists, such as Friedrich Engels, believe that gender divisions are relevant in terms of the class struggle, and that therefore the patriarchy is an inevitable result of Capitalism.⁷ Liberals however, specifically the more classical faction, believe each person to be an individual, and are therefore gender blind; they regard all individuals to be entitled to political and legal rights. Gender differences are believed by liberals to be an entirely private matter, and therefore further than the granting of public rights, the state plays no role.⁸

⁴ Heywood, A, ‘Feminism’, in *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 235.

⁵ Heywood, A, ‘Ecologism’, in *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 274.

⁶ d'Eaubonne, F. ‘Le féminisme ou la mort.’ (Vol. 2. P. Horay, 1974.)

⁷ Smith, S. ‘Engels and the Origin of Women's Oppression’ *International Socialist Review Issue 2* (1997) Available at: http://www.isreview.org/issues/02/engles_family.shtml [Accessed on: 09/04/2015]

⁸ Heywood, A, ‘Feminism’, in *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 235

Private and Public Women

The notion of the public man, private woman is a stereotype and therefore be seen as an irrelevant supposition. However it is relevant to acknowledge the arguments of those who propose these ideals merely for the sake of rebuttal. The notion of the private woman is derived from the females' reproductive capacities and an idea therefore that a female's purpose is to become a mother. Women have been expected to stay at home for the purpose of child rearing, whilst the man 'supports society' (as though raising a child does not fulfil this characteristic). These are stereotypes constructed by society and in no way reflect the gender of all males and females. However whilst society still distinguishes between the public man and the private woman, all ideologies make some consideration as to where the private sphere ends and the public begins. Typically the private sphere is seen as a-political, and this is due to liberal ideology. Liberalism, especially classical liberalism, proposes that the state remains solely as an aspect of the public sphere, acting, as Robert Nozick suggests in his 'Anarchy, State, and Utopia', as a 'night-watchman state'.⁹ Initially this meant that gender relations were only relevant to the state in terms of formal legal rights – such as suffrage. However, as liberalism has developed in the Western world, generating more socialist tendencies through theorists such as John Rawls, the public sphere has slowly engulfed much of the private sphere,

⁹ Duignan, B. 'Robert Nozick' *Encyclopædia Britannica Online* (2015) Available at: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/421354/Robert-Nozick> [Accessed on: 09/04/2015]

with the introduction of laws regarding the private lives of the individual.¹⁰ Including the criminalisation of rape within a marriage in 1991. However, there remains a large sector of society within the private sphere, and this helps to maintain the patriarchal culture. Whilst the state refuses to acknowledge 'the bedroom' as political, women are forced to remain, in a large part, a-political. The inability, for example, for females to get an abortion in much of the world, forces the female into the private sphere as a mother. Furthermore with the absence of 'paternal leave' the female is forced into the gender role assigned by society. The distinction between the public and private spheres is an issue in all ideologies, and as second wave feminism campaigned, 'the personal is political'.¹¹

¹⁰ Rawls, J, 'A Theory of Justice' (Harvard University Press, 1971)

¹¹ Hanisch, C. 'The Personal is Political' (1969) Available at: <http://www.carolhanisch.org/CHwritings/PIP.html> [Accessed on: 13.04.2015]

Religion and Feminism

Religion and politics are intertwined throughout society and policy; interconnected to create cultures and the definition of man as a mechanism of progress. Even in Western societies where religion has become much more secular, religious traditions remain in political structures. Gender relations are prevalent throughout most aspects of all religions, from the use of the pronoun 'he' to describe 'Gods', to the separation of genders in places of worship. Religion consistently maintains the hierarchic relation between genders; with the masculine being dominant; with the most obvious examples being those from the Abrahamic religions, where Eve (the first woman) was created by God using one of Adam's (the first man) ribs.¹² If religion is accepted as a key aspect of political study then the prevalence of gender hierarchy within religion exacerbates the importance of gender relations. In the United States, where the first amendment decrees that separation between church and state is a fundamental factor of their politics, Christianity seeps into the policies of their government. Abortion in the United States is not illegal federally, however each state has the ability to create its own laws on the issue. Much of the pro-life support is founded on Christian values, and owing to the fact that since the last two elections Republicans have taken over more state legislatures, there has been an

¹²Bible Hub, Available at: <http://biblehub.com/genesis/2-22.htm> [Accessed on: 13.04.2015]

increase in state-by-state abortion bans.¹³¹⁴ The legal status of abortion is inherent in gender relations; if a female is forced to have to child it affects all economic, professional and social prospects. The female is forced into the socially constructed role of the woman as mother. The religious association is much more obvious in Ireland, and although the law has been updated to permit abortion in life-threatening cases, its general illegalization is founded in the “cozy relationship” between the Catholic Church and the Dáil.¹⁵ Remnants of Christianity are not only found in the Political institutions of Ireland and the United States, but also in the United Kingdom where 26 bishops sit in the House of Lords, and also in the European Parliament, where the Christian Democrats are the largest party with 214 seats.¹⁶ Religion plays an even larger role in the Political commentary of the non-secular nations of the Middle East. In the Arab nations where Sharia law exists, “Islamic jurisprudential texts—which define the terms of the sharia—treat women as second-class citizens and place them under men’s

¹³ Welch, Susan; Gruhl, John; Rigdon, Susan; Comer, John, ‘Understanding American Government’ (Cengage Learning, 2009) pg.150

¹⁴ Good, C. ‘Why Have So Many States Banned Abortions?’ (ABC news, 2013) [Online] Available at: <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/OTUS/states-banned-abortions/story?id=18703520> [Accessed on: 09/04/2015]

¹⁵ Harrison, S. ‘Abortion in Ireland: divorcing Church from State?’ (BBC News, 2013) [Online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-23061276> [Accessed on: 09/04/2015]

¹⁶ European Parliament, ‘Election Results’ (2014) Available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/election-results-2014.html> [Accessed on: 13.04.2015]

domination”.¹⁷ Religion and politics intertwine throughout the world. Since gender relations plays such a dominant role in the laws and traditions of so many religions, it is clearly as key to the study of politics as religion itself is.

Feminism and Poverty

Previously, Sharia law banned the education of women, and although that has changed to some extent, an education gender gap remains throughout the world. The education gender gap is a severe problem and is not helped by the encouraged premature evacuation by many women from the education system. As well as this education is divided by gender. Male education traditionally differs dramatically from female education, with male education involving preparation for the public sphere through the teaching of science and maths, whilst the female educational services involve preparation for life in the domestic sphere. An example was set in a study from 2007 that showed that at A-level in the UK, girls’ most popular subject was English, while boys’ was Maths.¹⁸ Psychology, Art and Design, Sociology and Media/Film/Television Studies were amongst the 10 most popular choices for girls (but not boys), while Physics, Business Studies, Geography and Physical Education were in the top 10 for boys (but not

¹⁷ Mir-Hosseini, Z. ‘Muslim Women’s Quest for Equality: Between Islamic Law and Feminism’ (University of Chicago, 2006) Available at: <https://www.amherst.edu/system/files/media/0207/MirHosseini%2520Muslim%2520Women%2527s%2520Quest.pdf> [Accessed on: 09/04/2015]

girls).”¹⁹ This inequality in education is one of the disastrous causes of the feminisation of poverty and the masculinisation of wealth. The study of society involves an examination of the distribution of wealth and the global wealth gap. To this extent the question of poverty is vital, yet its feminisation is ignored. It is true that “worldwide, women are more likely to be poor, employed in precarious, low-paid labour, and less likely to have access to land, credit and education”.²⁰ Although the gender pay gap is maintained as an unjustifiable notion in society, the connective between poverty and gender relations is not purely a case of wage disparities. By this it is meant that equalising wage between the genders would not stop the feminisation of poverty, it may merely reduce the masculinisation of wealth. Gender relations play a role in poverty through a variety of manners other than wage disparity, for instance, through the sexualisation of women in the professional sphere. This not only makes it more difficult for women to progress on the professional ladder, but in much of the world it has forced women into sexual labour; a profession that not only has the patriarchy made illegal, but one which in this setting encourages subservience, and possesses extreme health risks, such as the contraction of the HIV/AIDS

¹⁹Department for Education and Skills, ‘Gender and Education: the evidence on pupils in England’ (the Department for Education and Skills, Nottingham, 2007, pg.3) [Online] Available at: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/00389-2007BKT-EN.pdf> Accessed on: 08/04/2015]

²⁰ Donald, K. ‘The feminisation of poverty and the myth of the ‘welfare queen’ 50.50. *Inclusive Democracy* [Online] (06/03/2012) Available at: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/kate-donald/feminisation-of-poverty-and-myth-of-welfare-queen> [Accessed on: 20/03/2015]

virus.²¹ But further than this, the power relations between genders within the domestic sphere have meant that domestic economics has been and remains masculinised, resulting in feminine dependence upon men. The man is still seen as the 'bread winner', which means that many women possess no independent wealth. Additionally, the expected role of the feminised gender as the 'domestic servant' has resulted in many women leaving education early to undertake their domestic duties. This is evident by the fact that illiteracy rates are still highest amongst women worldwide.²² The expected role of the woman includes child-care, which results in 'time poverty'. The general exclusion of paternal leave as an option for parents means that women are forced to leave the public sphere by society to raise their child. This means that there is a disparity in the relation between the genders and the amount of time available for women to earn as much as the masculinised gender. One of the worst aspects of the feminisation of poverty is the dependency created upon men, which means that sexuality becomes a vital aspect within this issue. A family is nearly forced, in much of the world, to include at least one male due to an economic dependency. Gender relations are therefore a required aspect of the study of politics, for if they are ignored, poverty will continue to be feminised.

²¹ Chant, S. 'RE-VISITING THE 'FEMINISATION OF POVERTY' AND THE UNDP GENDER INDICES: WHAT CASE FOR A GENDERED POVERTY INDEX?' (March, 2006, pg.28-29) Available at: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/genderInstitute/pdf/fempov.pdf> [Accessed on: 20/03/2015]

²² UNESCO, 'adult and youth literacy: global trends in gender parity' (2010) Available at: http://www.unesco.org/education/ild2010/FactSheet2010_Lit_EN.pdf [Accessed on: 09/04/2015]

Women in War

Throughout history and still throughout much of the world, the only time that women are relied upon in terms of economics and the maintenance of the public sphere is during wartime. War plays a fundamental role in the study of politics; for Clausewitz, war was merely ‘the continuation of politics by other means’.²³ However within all aspects of the concept, the importance of gender relations cannot be understated, from the agreement of peace to the strategy of victory. The conception of the private woman and public man has conceded predestined roles for the two socially accepted genders. Stereotypically, wars revolve around men; the gender starts, fights, and ends them. Women therefore act as support, stabilising society in the absence of men. These gender-based roles within warfare have had numerous repercussions for refugees, for the process of peace, and on the manner in which the individual is affected by war.

Gender relations are inherent in the notion of the refugee; a man must face pressure from his society, which coerces him to fight in its war, whereas a woman must protect her children. There are three stages for a refugee, and gender relations play a role in each of them. The first being the evacuation of the war zone, which is where ‘man’ faces difficulty, for violence is directed at this gender in the public role it possesses. Instead the woman must retain her private role and protect her children. Women and children are often, in this scenario, described as a single entity – ‘womenandchildren’

²³ Clausewitz, C ‘On War’ (New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1984). p. 87.

– portraying the woman, like the children, as an apolitical victim of war, with no other role to play.²⁴ This role encourages her to escape the warzone, whilst the man must stay and fight. The second and third stages involve the transition from the war zone to either a refugee camp or by way of immigration to a safer nation. Gender relations are again relevant, for in the first instance it is not believed to be ‘right’ for a woman to be travelling alone without a child and it can therefore be more difficult for a woman to find asylum. ‘Women with children are more likely to be granted asylum in France as they are seen as fulfilling their motherly duties’.²⁵ During this stage it is also certainly easier for a man due to the stereotyped vision of the ‘beneficial-for-society’ public gender.²⁶

Gender relations also influence the manner in which the individual is affected by conflict. Gender roles in war stereotypically prescribe physical violence and possibly death to a man during conflict, whilst a woman may face sexual violence. During the Rwandan genocide 75% of women experienced some form of sexual violence.²⁷ The term ‘comfort women’ is used to refer women and girls forced into sexual slavery by the Imperial

²⁴ Enloe, C., ‘The Gendered Gulf’ *Collateral Damage: the new world order at home and abroad* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), p. 96

²⁵ Freedman, J., ‘Protecting Women Asylum Seekers and Refugees: From International Norms to National Protection?’ *International Migration* (2009) Accessed by: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2009.00549.x/pdf> [Accessed on: 20/03/2015]

²⁶ Kannan, S. ‘The relevance of gender to our understanding of war refugees’ (2011) Available at: <http://www.e-ir.info/2011/05/12/the-relevance-of-gender-to-our-understanding-of-war-refugees/> [Accessed on: 21/03/2015]

²⁷ Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding United States Institute of Peace, ‘GENDER, WAR & PEACEBUILDING’ (pg.5) Available at: <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/files/NPECSG12.pdf> [Accessed on: 21/03/2015]

Japanese Army before and during World War II.²⁸ Sexual violence is an institutionalised aspect of war and due to gender stereotypes, is an aspect that society expects only to affect women, just as society expects physical combat to only affect men. Both these assumptions are obviously false. Not only do these assumptions of gender relations in war mean that those affected in a manner unexpected are hardly recognised, but it also means that those affected cannot feel confident enough to tell of it. Throughout the world men have been directly affected by sexual violence in war – ‘a study of 6,000 concentration-camp inmates in Sarajevo found that 80% of men reported having been raped’. It is also noticeable from the same study that of 4,076 NGOs that have addressed wartime sexual violence only 3% of them mentioned the experience of men.²⁹

Finally in terms of war, gender relations are also relevant in the process of peace. In October 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that “the only way to...reduce the number of conflicts around the world, to build sustainable peace – is to draw on the full contributions of both women and men in every aspect of peace-making, peacekeeping, and peace building.”³⁰

The needs and wishes of all genders must be recognised in the process of

²⁸ Asian Woman’s Fund, ‘Who were the Comfort Women? -The Establishment of Comfort Stations’ Available at: <http://www.awf.or.jp/e1/facts-01.html> [Accessed on: 23/03/2015]

²⁹ Storr, W. ‘The rape of men: the darkest secret of war’ *The Guardian* [Online] (17th July 2011) Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/jul/17/the-rape-of-men> [Accessed on: 23/03/2015]

³⁰ Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding United States Institute of Peace, ‘GENDER, WAR & PEACEBUILDING’ (pg.3) Available at: <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/files/NPECSG12.pdf> [Accessed on: 21/03/2015]

peace and not merely that which represents men. It is noticeable however that the UN itself has never appointed a woman as Chief or Lead Mediator in the peace talks it has sponsored. The lack of representation of women in these roles can unfortunately be considered as the sole reason that it was not until June 2008 that the UN recognised sexual violence as a tactic of war.³¹ This has had a negative side effect in that much of the aid received by a nation in the aftermath of a war is used for ‘disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs’, whilst those aspects of the community which played no role in combat are ignored. This leads directly to gender preferences purely out of the roles enforced by society.³²

³¹ Academy for International Conflict Management and Peace building United States Institute of Peace, ‘GENDER, WAR & PEACEBUILDING’ (pg.12) Available at: <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/files/NPECSG12.pdf> [Accessed on: 21/03/2015]

³² Academy for International Conflict Management and Peace building United States Institute of Peace, ‘GENDER, WAR & PEACEBUILDING’ (pg.3-4) Available at: <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/files/NPECSG12.pdf> [Accessed on: 21/03/2015]

Conclusion

It is clear that gender relations play a vibrant role in each aspect of political and societal study discussed in this essay. From the preservation of feminised poverty, to the gendered hierarchy prevalent in religion, gender relations can be seen everywhere in politics. This essay has deconstructed the study of politics and society, finding the importance of gender relations in the debate over what is the public sphere, as well as recognising the importance of an analysis of education and exhibiting the gender education gap that appears in society. Finally this essay dissected the processes of war and it has shown the effects that unequal gender relations have had in the processes of war, and therefore the importance of its consideration. It is only by recognising the importance of gender relations that there can be any hope of equality.

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