State Feminism and Political Representation

How can women maximise their political influence? Does state feminism enhance the political representation of women? Should feminism be established in state institutions to treat women’s concerns? Written by experts in the field, this book uses an innovative model of political influence to construct answers to these and other questions in the long-running debate over the political representation of women. The book assesses how states respond to women’s demands for political representation in terms of both their inclusion as actors and the consideration of their interests in the decision-making process. Debates on the issue vary from country to country, depending on institutional structures, women’s movements and other factors, and this book offers the first comparative account of the subject. The authors analyse eleven democracies in Europe and North America and present comprehensive research from the 1960s to the present.

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State Feminism and Political Representation

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with
Claudie Baudino
Marila Guadagnini
Petra Meier and
Diane Sainsbury
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Europa (Edizioni Fondazione Olivetti, 1999) and editor of Da elettrici a elette. Riforme istituzionali e rappresentanza delle donne in Italia, in Europa e negli Stati Uniti (Celid, 2003). She has published numerous chapters and articles on gender and politics, and wrote the chapters on Italy in Comparative State Feminism, edited by D. McBride Stetson and A. Mazur (Sage, 1995) and State Feminism, Women’s Movements and Job Training: Making Democracies Work in the Global Economy, edited by A. Mazur (Routledge, 2001).

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This book is the result of almost ten years of collaboration by its authors. Although at first glance it appears to be an edited collection, it is in fact co-written on the basis of a collaboratively designed research project. The contributors are all members of the Research Network on Gender Politics and the State. In the project as a whole some forty scholars from the USA, Canada and Europe have met over a period of ten years, sustaining a cross-national, longitudinal research project on gender and public policy. Since 1995 this network has met to design, conduct and write up research on state feminism in advanced industrial democracies. As chapter 1 describes, we decided to assess the impact of state feminism on women’s representation by examining the part played by women’s policy agencies in key policy debates since their establishment. In this volume we assess the impact of those agencies on the issue of political representation itself to offer a systematically comparative account of how and to what effect women’s movements have engaged the important issue of women’s political representation.

This volume is jointly edited by a team of five. Each member of the team took responsibility for some country chapters and for assessing and analysing parts of the model. Each supplied feedback to authors, prepared text that was incorporated into the concluding chapters and supplied feedback on drafts of the concluding analysis. The final manuscript was prepared by Joni Lovenduski who was responsible for drafting the introduction and conclusions and preparing the manuscript for publication.

We accumulated many debts along the way. Our project depended upon finding time, places and resources to meet, to solve problems and to share research. A number of individuals and organisations have assisted us. The American Political Science Association annual conference organisers welcomed us to convene workshops around the annual meetings. Many early findings were presented at the European Consortium for Political Research Joint Sessions of Workshops. The American National Science Foundation International Programmes Grant (#9411142)
funded the first meeting in Leiden in 1995. CREDEP of the University of Paris hosted our meeting in 1998. The European Science Foundation funded a meeting at Chilworth in Southampton in 1999. Professor Ed Page made funds available from the ESRC Future Governance Programme for a meeting on this volume at Belfast in 2000. He also commented extensively on draft versions of the introduction and conclusions, as did Amy Mazur, Dorothy Stetson and Alan Ware. Both the American National Science Foundation and the European Science Foundation supported the group with further grants. The ESF and the NSF supported the RNGS Network meetings at which the chapters in this book were reviewed and discussed in Turin in 2002 and Leiden in 2003. The final manuscript benefited from Rainbow Murray’s help with proofreading and data checking. We are all grateful for the support, skill and patience of an editor, John Haslam, and copy-editor, Carol Fellingham Webb, at Cambridge University Press who guided us through the production of this volume.

Our project would not have been possible without electronic communication. It owes much to the support we have been given. Most of all it has depended on the continuing commitment, good will, intellectual liveliness and curiosity of its members and the sheer will power of its conveners, Amy Mazur and Dorothy Stetson.
Abbreviations

QWPA  quasi-women’s policy agency
RNGS  Research Network on Gender Politics and the State
WMA   women’s movement actor
WPA   women’s policy agency

Austria
FPÖ   Austrian Freedom Party
ÖVP   Austrian People’s Party
SPÖ   Social Democratic Party

Finland
SKDL  Finnish People’s Democratic League
SNDL  Finnish Women’s Democratic League

France
RPR   Rassemblement pour la république

Germany
ASF   Arbeitsgemeinschaft Sozialdemokratischer Frauen
BMFJ  Ministry for Women and Youth
CDU   Christian Democratic Union
CSU   Christian Social Union
FDP   Free Democratic Party
PDS   Party of Democratic Socialism
SPD   Social Democratic Party
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Italy

AN  National Alliance Party (Alleanza Nazionale)
CC  Central Committee (Comitato centrale)
CNELD National Commission for Women’s Emancipation and Liberation (Commissione nazionale per l’emancipazione e la liberazione delle donne)
CNPPO National Commission for Equality and Equal Opportunities between Men and Women (Commissione nazionale per la parità e le pari opportunità tra uomini e donne)
COREL Committee for Electoral Reforms (Comitato per le riforme elettorali)
DS  Democrats of the Left (Democratici di sinistra)
MSI  Italian Social Movement (Movimento sociale italiano)
PCI  Communist Party of Italy (Partito Comunista italiano)
PDS  Democratic Party of the Left (Partito democratico della sinistra)
RC  Communist Refoundation (Rifondazione Comunista)

The Netherlands

CPN  Communistische Partij Nederland
DCE  Directie Coördinatie Emancipatiebeleid
ER  Emancipation Council
MVM  Man-Vrouw-Maatschappij (Man-Woman-Society)
NVR  National Women’s Council
PS  Pacifist Socialist Party
PvdA  Social Democratic Party
SGP  Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij
TECENA Tijdelijke Expertise Commissie voor Emancipatie in het nieuwe Adviescollege

Spain

CC  Constitutional Court (Tribunal Constitucional)
ETA  Euskadi Ta Askatasun
IU  United Left (Izquierda Unida)
PP  People’s Party (Partido Popular)
PSOE  Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party (Partido Socialista Obrero Español)
WI  Women’s Institute (Instituto de la Mujer)
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<td>Sweden</td>
<td>SSKF</td>
<td>Social Democratic Women’s Federation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>VPK</td>
<td>Left Party-Communist</td>
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<td>UK</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>CCWI</td>
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<td>NOW</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NVRA</td>
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