



## Book Reviews

***Women and Politics in Chile.*** By Susan Franceschet. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner. 2005. 203 pp. \$49.95.

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This is a well-researched, well-written, and conceptually precise contribution to a thick field of books on the topic of women and politics in Chile. Susan Franceschet frames her book as an analysis of gendered citizenship in Chile from the 1930s to the present. In the individual chapters, she employs concepts and theories drawn from literature on social movements and women and the state. Specifically, she addresses four main areas of debate in the field of women and politics: the employment of a “politics of difference” as a movement frame, the tensions between “autonomous” or “double militant” activist positions, the factors that impede or facilitate women’s access to electoral politics, and relations between women and women’s state machineries.

Chapters 3 and 4 rely on secondary materials to analyze the strategies and political context of the first-wave Chilean women’s movement, the women’s movement under the Pinochet dictatorship, and the role of women in Chile’s democratic transition. Franceschet’s historical comparison of Chilean women’s movements allows her to address the first two debates: the politics-of-difference strategy and autonomy versus double militancy. She argues that the use of a maternalist discourse of difference as a collective action frame by first-wave feminists set the stage for subsequent feminist movements also to employ this frame—although later movements succeeded in changing the meaning of motherhood over time, from an apolitical to a political concept. Thus, she argues, a maternal frame is not inherently conservative. The historical review also allows the author to trace the tensions between the feminist positions of autonomy (maintaining political distance from the state) and double militancy (being simultaneously a movement member and working with the state)

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back to the first-wave feminist movement. The tension between the autonomous and double-militant positions, argues Franceschet, has been ongoing and is one that particularly divides the contemporary movement.

The second two debates, on women and electoral politics and women and states, are addressed directly in Chapters 5 and 6. In these chapters, the author situates the Chilean case in the major women and politics literature to explain, for example, the institutional and cultural barriers to women's entry into electoral politics and why Chile, unlike many of its Latin American neighbors, does not have a quotas law and why it likely will not have one in the near or distant future. She also discusses the strengths and weaknesses of SERNAM, Chile's National Women's Service, in the context of the broader literature on women and the state.

For experts on Chile or women and politics in Latin America, this book will mainly serve as a thorough and knowledgeable overview. The historical chapters do not add new information, nor does the book make a novel theoretical contribution. Portions, however, will be of interest to the expert audience, specifically Franceschet's detailed account of the relations between the Chilean women's movement and SERNAM (Chapters 6 and 7) and her discussion of relations between working-class women in popular women's organizations and middle-class professionals in feminist nongovernmental organizations (Chapter 7). Chapter 7 also provides an up-to-date discussion of the state of the women's movement in contemporary, post-transition Chile. Both of these chapters are based on primary interview material, and add detail and insights that cannot be obtained elsewhere (except from the author's prior publications upon which some of these chapters are based).

In terms of its contribution to the field of women and politics, the book is largely theory confirming. It confirms, for example, prior findings on the variables necessary for effective women's policy machineries, and confirms that there is a place for both autonomous and double-militant feminist activists, depending on the time and place. Although theory confirmation is important, this reviewer would have liked Franceschet to take a stronger position on how and why the Chilean case contributes to theoretical debates in women and politics. Along the same vein, social movement theories could have been used more rigorously to explain the cycling-down of feminist activism in Chile during the post-transition period.

In summary, Franceschet's book provides a thorough overview of both contemporary and historical issues in women and politics in Chile and squarely addresses a number of major debates in the field of women and

politics. Because it highlights these debates within an accessibly written and thorough case study, the book would be an excellent selection for undergraduate courses in this field.

***The Gender of Constitutional Jurisprudence.*** Edited by Beverly Baines and Ruth Rubio-Marin. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2005. 342 pp. \$34.99. Paperback.

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Beverly Baines and Ruth Rubio-Marin have gathered together a group of lawyers, mostly law faculty, with expertise in constitutional law, women's rights, civil and human rights, and gender equality. The result is an edited collection on constitutional sex equality litigation, with chapters covering a wide array of issues, including reproductive rights, employment discrimination, sexual harassment, family law, pornography, social welfare policy, and voting rights. By using gender as a "focal point" (p. 1) of constitutional jurisprudence, the authors assess the success of a feminist constitutional agenda.

Although the editors present the chapters as independent analyses, clearly they are meant to be understood within a comparative framework. As the chapters indicate, there are many cross-national similarities in constitutional litigation for gender equality. Moreover, it appears from this volume that the similarities outweigh the differences—in both successes and failures. Taken as a whole, the contributors discuss how a gendered approach to constitutional litigation transcends national boundaries, doctrinal analysis, and legal traditions. Their purpose is to assess the value of such litigation in achieving women's equality goals over the last several decades. Women were, of course, delayed in entering the realm of constitutional litigation, in part because they were precluded from citizenship. By the 1980s and 1990s, however, women had gained sufficient power in a number of countries to be able to enshrine feminist goals in new constitutions or constitutional amendments; perhaps the most ambitions of these is France's provision for gender parity in elections.

The 12 nations comprising the study include Colombia, Germany, France, Australia, India, Israel, South Africa, Turkey, Costa Rica, the United States, Canada, and Spain. In general, these nations are all committed to democratic principles, albeit with varying degrees of gender equality. The countries differ along several dimensions: type of legal tra-

dition, type of government, type of economic system, and level of development, as well as degree of religiosity, majority religion, race, and culture. Unfortunately, the editors give no rationale for including these nations, and so we are left to speculate why these specific countries were chosen.

The book seeks to transform “a purportedly ‘gender-neutral’ constitutional law perspective” (p. 4) into an explicitly feminist, that is, woman-specific, set of orientations, formulating a new approach that encompasses both constitutional and feminist analysis. It brings together two trends in legal analysis: comparative constitutional analysis and constitutional feminist theory. The goal is to fill in the “gender gap” (p. 2) in a tradition of constitutional analysis that has heretofore been largely devoted to questions of federalism, judicial review, and economic development. The authors discover that to accomplish their aims, constitutional litigants have to learn to speak the same language with respect to equality, in other words, to “develop a feminist constitutional agenda” (p. 5) that strives to achieve women’s bodily integrity and reproductive autonomy, as well as sexual equality in social, political, and economic spheres.

According to the editors, the authors of these chapters independently concluded that constitutional sex equality litigation encompasses three meanings of sex equality, varying across nations. The first two, “formal equality” and “separate but equal” (p. 13), are mirror images of each other, based on the notion that equality is defined as equal treatment for those “similarly situated” (p. 14). The formal equality model strives to treat “alikes alike, and unalikes unlike . . . focus[ing] on identifying the relevant differences and similarities . . . between men and women as groups” (p. 13), regardless of individual need or qualification. Typically proceeding from the male model, this approach seeks to accord women the same treatment as men. The second approach, acknowledging that women differ from men, attempts to ensure that they are not subordinated to their male counterparts. The last, known as “substantive equality” (p. 13), also recognizes differences between the sexes and seeks to accommodate those differences by leveling the playing field. Here, disputes over issues of pregnancy policymaking and affirmative action play a crucial role in the struggle for equality between the sexes.

The chapters demonstrate both the universality and particularity of women’s equality claims: concern with bodily integrity and autonomy, eradication of discrimination, and an end to their subordinate social and economic status. The authors indicate that progress has not always been forthcoming in constitutional litigation, in part because gender-equality

claims often conflict with other constitutional principles, such as freedom of speech versus restrictions on pornography, concern for fetal rights versus reproductive autonomy, and due process protections versus enhancement of women's safety through rape, domestic violence, and sexual-assault prosecutions. Another difficulty is that in some nations, constitutional litigation cannot address concerns of inequality in the private realm, necessitating legislation to remedy inequities there.

Overall, the chapters suggest that constitutional litigation may be a necessary, but not a sufficient, means for achieving sexual equality and that ultimately it must be secured through political struggles outside the courtroom as well as inside.

Taken as a whole, *The Gender of Constitutional Jurisprudence* is accessible to students and therefore suitable for the classroom, and is an excellent resource for scholars as well. Footnotes are helpful in this regard, as are the lists of suggested readings at the end of each chapter. Unfortunately, as with all edited collections, the quality of the chapters tends to be somewhat uneven; however, this is to be expected in such an endeavor. My only real criticism of the book is that it lacks a conclusion. The editors would have greatly contributed to the value of this work had they provided a concluding chapter that drew the readings together and discussed findings within and across nations, thereby making the book truly comparative.

***Women, Partisanship, and the Congress.* By Jocelyn Jones Evans.** New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2005. 161 pp. \$65.00.

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*In order to understand the implications of women's behavior within our Congress, we must account for the parameters created by partisanship and electoral circumstance. In the end, these party cultures determine the 'playing field' on which women succeed or fail.*

—Jocelyn Jones Evans, *Women, Partisanship, and the Congress*, p. 3

In *Women, Partisanship, and the Congress*, Jocelyn Jones Evans brings a fresh perspective to the women officeholder literature. Rather than emphasizing gendered impact on policy and political outcomes, she focuses on elements of the institutional impact on women's professional opportunities. The primary question underlying her analysis is not "What difference do women make?" but "What opportunities do they have for

career advancement given the cultures of the two major parties?" In this, the central premise of the book fits within recent scholarly inquiry into the effects of gendered institutions on the experiences and impact of women officeholders. Further, her work serves as a reminder that scholars have not placed sufficient emphasis on female legislators' ability to achieve career success—and that success possibilities differ in each of the two major parties.

The foundation of Evans's thesis is the disparate cultures of the Democratic and Republican congressional parties. She argues that Democrats reward ideological and descriptive diversity, constituent responsiveness, equalitarian organization and participation, and seniority rule. On the other hand, Republicans reward ideological homogeneity, party loyalty, internal competition, hierarchical organization, and elite participation. These cultures, combined with differential levels of electoral security of Democratic and Republican women (Democratic women tend to come from safe, liberal-learning districts; Republican women tend to represent the party's least-secure districts) constrain Republican women more deeply than Democratic women. Nevertheless, according to Evans, neither party offers women opportunities equal to men's for institutional career success.

Using quantitative measures of electoral security, ideological orientation, party unity, proportion of women in leadership, and party-building activity from the 103<sup>rd</sup> through the 107<sup>th</sup> Congresses (in which both Democrats and Republicans held the majority), and interview data with members of Congress, their staffs, and other party elites from the 107<sup>th</sup> Republican-controlled Congress, Evans assesses the experiences and behaviors of congressional women. The interaction of party culture with differences by party in electoral security of women results in the following: 1) Marginal Democratic women *and* marginal Republican women are *more* conservative than their secure counterparts; 2) even though women as a whole are more liberal than men across issues areas (with the biggest differences on social issues), Democratic women are more ideologically homogeneous than are Republicans; 3) female party unity is higher than male party unity, but Democratic women are more unified within their party than are Republican women; 4) women's party-building activities are generally equal to (or, for Republican women, greater than) men's; and 5) apart from the historically significant ascent of Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) to minority leader, neither party sufficiently rewards women's attentiveness and effort with committee chairwomanships or positions on the leadership ladder.

Focusing especially on women's status in the Republican Party, Evans asserts that, although they reside in the congressional majority, Republican women have less leeway than their Democratic counterparts to fulfill political and personal goals. The culprit is their need to be more attuned to electoral marginality than Democratic women. To achieve the greatest possible levels of security, vulnerable Republican women ingratiate themselves with the party by cultivating more conservative voting records than dictated by district ideology, and participating in more party-building activities than their male counterparts. Despite these efforts to fit into the mainstream of the party culture, Republican women are even less rewarded in the currency of institutional advancement than are Democratic women. That Republican women's representation in leadership positions (both as committee chairs and on the leadership ladder) has *declined* during these years is compelling evidence of this point. Further, interview data suggest that Republican women are well aware of their marginal status within the party; according to Evans, they are inclined to perceive their role within the party as underdeveloped and limited to supportive functions.

The subtext of *Women, Partisanship, and the Congress* is that women and politics scholars have not paid sufficient attention to what might be called "the higher costs" theory of women's political involvement. That is, in gendered institutions, the playing field is not level; although women can achieve success (of all types, including electoral, policy, and leadership success), it comes at a higher cost. According to Evans, while this may be more true of Republican women in the U.S. Congress on the measures she employs, both parties across all levels of government can do a great deal more to support and promote their female members.

Although this study brings much-needed attention to the impact of one element of institutional gendering, there are important analyses that Evans elides. First, she does not meaningfully explore the connection between her thesis and the enduring findings of the impact of female women officeholders on agenda setting, legislative deliberation, and policy adoption—most importantly, that women representatives act for women. The consequences of these proclivities in terms of party standing and success warrant additional analysis. Additionally, she does not explore the implications for women, politics, and society of the higher costs for women's public service. In particular, to what extent are women's chances for representational parity affected by this price? Finally, although she gives a brief nod to the existence of gendered power dynamics in legislatures beyond those related to party culture,

the author does not substantively connect her work to the increasingly trenchant analyses of all the elements of gendered institutions and gendered societal roles—and their consequences.

Evans concludes by saying: “Whether a woman is a Democrat or Republican matters” (p. 137). *Women, Partisanship, and the Congress* makes this case with an original and provocative argument.

***The Global Political Economy of Sex: Desire, Violence and Insecurity in Mediterranean States.*** By Anna M. Agathangelou. New York and Houndmills Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 2004. 214 pp. \$59.95.

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This ambitious book attempts to map out a materialist theory of the global political economy of sex. It looks at one neglected aspect of the reproductive economy—the role played by migrant women in the provision of domestic and sexual labor—what Anna Agathangelou calls the “global political economy of desire.” She uses as her case studies three “peripheral economies” in the Eastern Mediterranean: Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey. She examines the roles played by two different groups of women in the construction of these processes. She looks first at the “white but not quite” women from East Central Europe and the ex-Soviet Union who have often been trafficked and now work as hostesses, prostitutes, and other kinds of sex workers in bars, clubs, and casinos. She also examines the roles of “black” women workers who come, for example, from the Philippines and Sri Lanka. It is these women who predominate among domestic servants and who often work long hours under appalling conditions to service the demands of their employers. Agathangelou therefore explores the workings of the racialized hierarchies within these groups of workers in terms of the ways in which they are seen by the local population and the discourses employed to describe them.

The author undertakes this study using detailed empirical research. She has conducted extensive interviews with different groups of women—both employees and employers—as well as a number of men, particularly the “impresarios” who often control the sex workers. She also held large numbers of focus groups with different groups of women. Through these methods, she supplies us with a detailed picture of different women’s



lives and the varying conditions under which they work and are exploited, thereby providing us with many valuable insights into this much underresearched area of study.

The book seeks to be both theoretically sophisticated and to make a significant contribution to the debates about gender and political economy. The underlying framework is one informed by the latest work on feminist international relations and international political economy (IPE). For example, the author uses Spike Peterson's attempt to integrate the productive and reproductive economies, and also draws extensively on postcolonial and Marxist scholarship. Agathangelou argues for the use of an alternative ontology to those that are common in the mainstream of IR—one that uses a Marxist feminist historical-materialist method. She ends by outlining some of the different transformative practices that some of the women have engaged in, as well as describing some of the nascent organizing that is emerging. She therefore wants her work also to contribute to the creation of "dialectical linkages between praxis and theory" (p. 175).

The author has made a good start on the very ambitious tasks that she has set herself, but it perhaps appears that this is too big an undertaking to be conducted in one book-length study, and as a result there is some overgeneralization. For example, it is debatable whether the category of peripheral economy can be meaningful for both Greece—which has been a member of the European Union for some time—and Turkey, which despite its aspirations to join will not gain entry anytime soon. A more narrowly focused analysis might have provided us with more nuanced theoretical insights. But overall, this book is a useful addition to the literature on the gendered global political economy of migration, work, and the reproductive economy by filling some important gaps in our knowledge of this hitherto rather neglected area.