

The Impact of Feminist Scholarship on Australian Political Science

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The discipline of political science has remained male dominated in most parts of the world. Women have organised within political science associations both to raise the status of women in the profession and to try to transform the discipline. This article is a personal account of the 25-year history of the Women's Caucus of the Australasian Political Studies Association and its successes and failures. While the status of women in the profession has improved and the journal has become more gender inclusive, the impact of feminist scholarship on political science curriculum remains patchy. Space has been made for gender scholarship and a chapter added to textbooks and disciplinary histories, but the approach is additive rather than transformative. One contributing factor may be increased fragmentation of the discipline.

The discipline of political science, to a much greater extent than cognate disciplines such as history or sociology, has remained male dominated in most parts of the world. And, as feminist critics have observed, there are likely to be oversights when a male-dominated discipline investigates a male-dominated political system. Such oversights include taking male politics as the norm, or failing to see gendered relations of power as barriers to equal citizenship.

In 1979 the Women's Caucus of the Australasian Political Studies Association (APSA) was established with the twin aims of improving the status of women in the profession and rendering women visible in the political system. An early achievement was to obtain the commitment of APSA to a gender-inclusive curriculum. In this article I provide a personal view, based on participant observation, of the organised presence of women within the profession and the impact, if any, of feminist scholarship on the discipline. The use of the subjective voice is itself a form of rebellion against the kind of discipline to which I was introduced in the 1960s.

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The Role of Carole Pateman

The arrival of the women's liberation movement in Australia brought an eruption of challenging political analyses of women's subordination. For example, Professor Henry Mayer at the Department of Government, University of Sydney, supervised and helped shape the doctoral work of Anne Summers, resulting in the best-selling *Damned Whores and God's Police* (Summers 1975, 1994, 2002) as well as her degree. Despite the enthusiasm of mavericks such as Mayer, analyses of gender subordination were not really regarded as political science and *Damned Whores* did not receive a review in *Politics*, although it has never been out of print. The problem was partly that this new research was multidisciplinary or transgressed disciplinary boundaries in the search for holistic explanations. In declaring 'the personal is the political', feminist research was also moving into uncomfortable areas outside the purview of traditional political science.

Carole Pateman, on the other hand, was already an established figure in political science when she arrived in Australia. Her *Participation and Democratic Theory* (Pateman 1970) had earned her an international reputation and she was to be a moving force in the introduction of feminist critique into Australian political science. She delivered a landmark APSA Presidential Address in 1981, drawing attention to the failure of the discipline to construct the status of women as a political problem. She finished on a rousing note: 'Since the days when I first became a student in political studies, "scientific communications" have been carried on by men talking to one another about themselves. Those days may now, I hope, be numbered' (Pateman 1982, 6).

Through books such as *The Sexual Contract* (Pateman 1988), Pateman was presenting a major challenge to the masculinist tradition of political theory; she was identifying how contractarian ideas and the associated public/private divide rendered invisible the political subordination of women. Perhaps her work was too challenging; she was consistently unsuccessful in her applications for chairs of political science in this country. Responding to this, James Jupp (1983) undertook a study of the citation impact of Australian academics in political science and closely related areas, using the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI). The SSCI is not a perfect index of scholarly impact, and is biased against Australianists, but it does give some indication of the reasons for concern.

Jupp found that, over the period 1971–82, Pateman was by far the most widely cited of political scientists working in Australia. I reproduce in Table 1 his top rankings. Edited out are 27 holders of Australian chairs of political science, public administration or international relations who had fewer than one hundred citations. One holder of a chair of political science at a major metropolitan university had no citations of his work during this whole period.

Not surprisingly, Pateman decided to leave Australia and accepted a chair at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1990. In 1991 she was elected the first woman President of the International Political Science Association. Her departure was a significant setback in terms of mainstreaming gender perspectives in Australian political science.

Table 1. Rankings of Australian political scientists by SSCI citations, January 1971–August 1982

Author	No. of citations
Carole Pateman	343
Bob Connell (Sociology)	272
Sol Encel (Political Science and Sociology)	235
T.H. Rigby	189
R.S. Parker	139
J.D.B. Miller	120
Roger Wettenhall	107
Geoff Sawyer (Law)	106
T.B. Millar	105
A.F. Davies	104
Herb Feith	100

The Role of the Women's Caucus of APSA

In the context of the political science profession, as in politics generally, the existence of structures with a mandate to focus on gender issues can play an important role in promoting change. When Carole Pateman and I founded the Women's Caucus at the APSA Conference in Hobart in 1979, we were inspired by the Women's Caucus of the American Political Science Association, already in existence for 10 years, but also by our own experiences within the profession.

The appearance of the Women's Caucus had immediate effects. The usual all-male slate for the new APSA Executive was hastily revised to make room for Pateman as Vice-President. Preliminary surveys of where women were in the profession and how they were represented in the lead journal also served a significant consciousness-raising function (Sawyer 1980, 1981). These issues became part of the ongoing agenda of the Women's Caucus. From 1992, the Women's Caucus had its own position on the APSA Executive, filled annually, to ensure adequate attention to such questions.

The 1979 survey of women in the profession attracted 19 departmental responses, with six of those departments having no women in tenured or tenurable posts. The most common pattern (eight departments) was one tenured woman. The attitude of the time was very much that if there was already a woman in a department then why would one need another? Pateman and I also compiled a directory of women in the profession, to show that they did indeed exist, although they were often overlooked (Sawyer and Pateman 1980, 1981). Rushing home to families often meant academic women were cut off from professional networks, while female secretaries, research assistants and tutors found it difficult to break through the caste system which denied them a career structure. Senior academics were less likely to identify with women as younger versions of themselves or provide the patronage so important in academic careers (Cole 1980, 7).

We seemed to be very busy in these early years of the Women's Caucus, judging by my bulging files. There was a lot of follow-up to the 1979 APSA Annual General Meeting (AGM) resolution that, given the existing gender profiles of departments, heads should actively seek out women as applicants for jobs. For example, we wrote to the convenor of the APSA Parliamentary Fellowship

Committee, pointing out that there had been no women among the first nine Fellows appointed under this scheme, which might give rise to perceptions that they were only for fellows! Almost 20 years later the Department of Government at the University of Sydney was given a similar nudge, after the appointment of nine men in a row to fill academic vacancies.

I established the Women and Politics Prize in 1981 (annual at first, later biennial) to help raise the profile of feminist scholarship. We raised seed money for the prize with fundraising dinners, very much in the 'lamington drive' tradition of women's fundraising. The first judging panel included Dame Beryl Beaurepaire and Senator Susan Ryan (for partisan balance), Anne Summers, Jenny Hutchison, Jocelyne Scutt, Elaine Thompson and me. Scutt and Thompson were representing the Australian Institute of Political Science (AIPS), our first sponsor, which provided the \$500 prize in 1982.

One of the criteria was usefulness to women involved in political practice and it was quite practitioner oriented at first. Out of 22 entries, the unanimous choice of the panel was a landmark essay by pioneering femocrat Sara Dowse, 'The Women's Movement's Fandango with the State', subsequently republished a number of times. The prize was presented at the 50th anniversary dinner of AIPS by the British Social Democrat MP David Owen (now Lord Owen).

By 1993 we were able to raise the prize to \$1000, thanks to joint sponsorship by APSA and the Institute of Public Administration Australia (ACT Division). Every second year volunteers are sought for the prize's judging panel, which has moved between a number of universities including Adelaide, Queensland, Melbourne, the Australian National University, the University of Canberra and the University of Sydney. The prize is open to both sexes and has been won by a man on one occasion (Tony Smith). Other winners have included Clare Burton, Desley Deacon, Helen Irving and Susan Blackburn. From 1997 we restricted eligibility to undergraduate and postgraduate students to ease the problem of competing with such established 'stars'.

Comparable (but annual rather than biennial) prizes have also been established in the United States, where the Victoria Schuck award for the best book on women and politics published in the previous year has been awarded since 1988. Winners have included Carole Pateman for *The Sexual Contract* (Pateman 1988) and Louise Chappell for *Gendering Government: Feminist Engagement with the State in Australia and Canada* (Chappell 2003). A prize for the best paper on women and politics presented at the American Political Science Association annual conference has been awarded since 1990 when it went to Susan Welch and Donley Studlar for their paper on 'Multimember Districts and the Representation of Women'. In Canada the first Jill Vickers Prize (\$750) for the best paper on gender and politics presented at the Canadian Political Science Association conference will be awarded in 2004 for a paper presented at the previous year's conference.

In Australia, the Women's Caucus streams (later called gender politics) at APSA Conferences also attracted high-quality and groundbreaking papers, a number of which were published in a special symposium put together by Marian Simms in *Politics* (vol. 17, no. 2), and in a collection that she edited, *Australian Women and the Political System* (Simms 1984). I note from my files that the Women's Caucus stream I organised for the 1981 Conference offered a free crèche and had a good mix of practitioners and political scientists. Papers included Senator Susan Ryan on women's voting behaviour; Meredith Edwards on control of family finances and

public policy implications; Ann Richards on a survey of 1980 federal women candidates; Lyndsay Connors on the politics of the National Women's Advisory Council; Eva Cox on women and the state; Desley Deacon on women and elite careers; Kate White on women and the ALP; Bettina Cass on family policy and recession; Kathryn Cole on women on committees; and Cora Baldock on public policy and women's work.

Discussants for the 1981 Women's Caucus stream included Anne Summers (then Associate Editor of the *Australian Financial Review*), Gail Radford (head of the EEO Bureau of the Australian Public Service), sociologist Dorothy Darroch (Broom) and political economist Margaret Power, while chairs included Anna Yeatman and Sara Dowse. Elsewhere in the conference Rebecca Albury gave a fine paper on the attempt to integrate feminist perspectives into introductory politics teaching at Macquarie University. The Women's Caucus papers received good media coverage in the *Canberra Times* on 28 and 30 August. One month later Thelma Hunter published a feature article about Women's Caucus activism within the discipline, including the new APSA policy on gender-inclusive curriculum, Carole Pateman's presidential address, and Susan Ryan's plea for the study of women's voting behaviour (Hunter 1981).

Women's Caucus meetings have taken place at every APSA Conference since 1979. Although it became customary for light lunches to be provided for the business meetings, they were far from the 'Girls' Piss-up' suggested by one APSA member in 1992 (*APSA Newsletter* 61: 2). Ensuing correspondence in the *APSA Newsletter* earned the indignant member the sobriquet 'Ironbar'. In 1994–95 the Women's Caucus had its own electronic newsletter, *WAPSA News*, edited by PhD student Elizabeth Shannon and then briefly by Jocelyn Clarke. Elizabeth Shannon went on to create the moderated e-mail discussion list *Ausfem-Polnet*. The first message was posted on *Ausfem-Polnet* on 1 February 1996 and it quickly took off as a forum for feminist debate on the public policy issues of the day. It was an important means for those staffing women's units in government to tune in to feminist analysis of policy. The femocrats on the list sometimes posted information, but rarely felt free to participate directly in debates given the constraints of being part of government. In its seventh year in 2003 *Ausfem-Polnet* had some nine hundred subscribers.

The APSA Women's Caucus never achieved a hard-copy newsletter like that of the *Aotearoa/New Zealand Women and Politics Network*, which had a circulation of over three hundred copies in 1995 thanks to hardworking editors Heather Devere and later Jane Scott. In 1999 the newsletter shifted from Auckland to Victoria University of Wellington and was renamed *Women Talking Politics: Newsletter of the Aotearoa/New Zealand Women and Politics Network*. It has provided excellent coverage of gender issues in New Zealand politics, most recently moving to Massey University (2002) and to the University of Otago (2004).

Despite the raised profile of feminist scholarship within APSA Conferences, it was clear that much of the important primary research on gender topics in Australia remained invisible, in common with other graduate research in political science. I began collecting the details of research theses completed on women, politics and public policy in Australia, to make them more widely known. Although this list has no claims to being exhaustive (and I soon gave up on Honours theses), there were 165 entries on the thesis list by the end of 2003, encompassing a wide range of

feminist research. This list has been published on the APSA Website in the past, and is again available via the new Website established in 2003.

Over its 25 years of existence the Women's Caucus has taken the initiative in ensuring that women regularly hold the position of APSA President;¹ increasing the representation of women on the APSA Executive; inspiring a more gender-inclusive journal; initiating and sustaining the Women and Politics Prize; making the Annual Conferences more woman-friendly in nature; instigating regular audits of the status of women in the profession; monitoring the gender inclusiveness of curriculum and textbooks; and recording the completion of thesis research with a gender focus.

Mainstreaming Gender in the Political Science Curriculum

As we have seen, the Women's Caucus sponsored a resolution at the 1981 APSA AGM that 'the study of women should be incorporated in all politics courses'. It had unsuccessfully moved such a motion the previous year (lost 19 votes to 25), but in 1981, thanks to the persuasiveness of Merle Thornton, Rebecca Albury and Lenore Coltheart, there was little difficulty in getting it through (45 votes to 7). A similar motion at the Australian Historical Association AGM in 1986 initially called for all history departments to integrate women's history into their courses, was successfully amended to substitute 'consideration of gender' for women's history, and then passed unanimously.

Subsequently Gillian O'Loughlin, as APSA Secretary, undertook a review of the implementation of the APSA curriculum policy. She asked departmental heads to report on any curriculum change and wrote up the results in the *APSA Newsletter* in May 1984. The O'Loughlin survey raised the awareness of political-science heads concerning the new APSA policy. There were also some very encouraging responses, including one from the University of New England, where all first-year reading lists had been revised to include women's studies material (O'Loughlin 1984).

The next review of the curriculum policy, undertaken by Merle and Neil Thornton, adopted a different methodology. Merle Thornton reported at a 'state of the discipline' session at the 1986 APSA Conference on the failure of the profession to take on board the new feminist scholarship, citing the evidence of first-year politics texts. She was asked by the Women's Caucus to prepare a follow-up report for the *APSA Newsletter*. The Thorntons reviewed seven popular introductory texts and their title summarised their findings: 'Written Out of Politics: Neglect of Gender in Introductory Texts in Australian Politics' (Thornton and Thornton 1986).

At the 1990 APSA Women's Caucus meeting, Felicity Grace, Barbara Sullivan and Gillian Whitehouse volunteered to do a follow-up survey of texts published since 1986. They found that the situation warranted a title very similar to that used by the Thorntons. This time it was 'Written Out of Politics: Gender and Australian Politics Textbooks' (Grace, Sullivan and Whitehouse 1991). The review was replete with ratings such as: 'the analytical tasks the authors set themselves would

¹ Those who have held the position of President since 1979 are Carole Pateman (1980–81); Elaine Thompson (1982–83); Marian Sawyer (1985–86); Marian Simms (1992–93); Carol Johnson (1998–99); Helena Catt (2000–01); Verity Burgmann (2002–03); and Judith Brett (2004–05).

Table 2. Texts most commonly used in Australian and New Zealand politics courses, 1997

Texts (author(s))	No. of institutions
<i>Government, Politics, Power and Policy in Australia</i> , 5th ed. (Parkin, Summers and Woodward 1994)	10
<i>The Australian Political System</i> (Lovell et al 1995)	8
<i>Australian Politics: Realities in Conflict</i> , 2nd ed. (Emy and Hughes 1991)	7
<i>Public Policy in Australia</i> , 2nd ed. (Davis et al 1993)	6
<i>Power Politics: Australia's Party System</i> , 3rd ed. (Jaensch 1994)	4
<i>Politics One</i> , 2nd ed. (Stewart and Ward 1996)	4
<i>Politics in Australia</i> , 3rd ed. (Smith 1997)	4
<i>Australian Democracy in Theory and Practice</i> , 3rd ed. (Maddox 1996)	3
<i>The Politics of Australia</i> (Jaensch 1992)	3
<i>New Zealand Politics in Perspective</i> , 3rd ed. (Gold 1992)	3
<i>Politics in New Zealand</i> (Mulgan 1994)	3

have been greatly enhanced by the inclusion of feminist critiques' or 'this treatment of women was poor in 1980, appalling in 1983 and is unforgivable in 1989'.

The next survey of textbooks was the largest to date. It was initiated in 1996 with a survey conducted by Elizabeth Harman (now Vice-Chancellor of Victoria University of Technology) and Janice Dudley of the texts used for introductory politics courses in both Australian and New Zealand universities. They received responses from 24 institutions. Their ranking of texts by extent of adoption for teaching purposes was itself of considerable interest to members of the profession and I reproduce it here in Table 2.

Analysis of the gender content of the 11 most widely used texts was then conducted by a large team of political scientists, including Ann Capling, Louise Chappell, Jennifer Curtin, Janice Dudley, Elizabeth Harman, Julie Petersen-Gray, Marian Sawyer, Jane Scott, Rae Wear and Gillian Whitehouse. The final version of the report was prepared by Janice Dudley and Sonia Palmieri (1999). They noted the tendency of editors to add a feminism chapter (particularly to later editions of an existing text), perhaps in response to earlier criticism. However, there was still a common tendency for material about women or feminist perspectives to be isolated in one specific section or chapter, rather than for gender analysis to be mainstreamed. Men were rarely considered as gendered; gender was a characteristic reserved for women and not considered as part of the overall construction of political life. There were some high points, and the authors singled out the integration of gender in the introductory chapters on power and the nature of politics in Rodney Smith's *Politics in Australia* (Smith 1997).

Australia was not the only country in which chapters on women or gender were being added to textbooks, while the rest of the chapters blissfully ignored the issues raised by feminist scholarship. Nancy Hartsock reported to a recent American Political Science Association roundtable that, despite decades of feminist scholarship, there had been no significant change to the discipline's epistemology, ontology or methodology (CSWPS 2001, 322). In Canada, Linda Trimble (2002) noted the lack of any text on Canadian politics that integrated gender into discussion of all aspects of politics, rather than including a chapter on 'women and ...'. She concluded that the Canadian discipline tolerates gender analysis but on the basis of an additive rather than transformative approach.

A survey of the impact of feminism on political science commissioned by the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* found a similar story. While space had been found for feminist scholarship, it was separated from the central concerns of the discipline. One of the most notable contributions of recent Canadian scholarship has been the theorising of citizenship by figures such as Charles Taylor, Will Kymlicka and James Tully. Gender, however, is virtually absent from such accounts of citizenship. And where it is present it is a homogenising category that ignores, for example, the sovereignist direction taken by francophone feminism in contrast to the federalism of anglophone feminism (Arscott and Tremblay 1999).

One thing that was clearly evident from the initial Harman and Dudley survey of Australian texts was that all 20 editors/authors of introductory texts used in Australian and New Zealand politics courses were male. One short-cut to mainstreaming gender might be for women to take over the preparation of introductory politics texts—yet another task on top of those already carried.

A different approach to developing gender-inclusive curriculum in another of the social sciences was announced by the Keating government in 1994 in the aftermath of extensive publicity concerning gender bias in the law. The occasion of this publicity had been remarks by Justice Bollen in a rape-in-marriage case in the South Australian Supreme Court. The Australian Law Reform Commission was given a reference on equality before the law and recommended improvements in legal education as well as training for judges and magistrates. The Federal Department of Employment, Education and Training provided \$300,000 for the preparation of gender-inclusive materials to be used in core curriculum law courses. Two teams of feminist legal scholars were commissioned to prepare materials that were subsequently sent to all law schools and made available on the internet (Thornton 2003, 8).

Such generous government support was not forthcoming for the development of a less gender-biased political-science curriculum, which was not seen as having such immediate consequences as gender bias in the courtroom. There has not been a direct survey of course content in politics courses since 1983 and our knowledge derives only from the textbooks used. Outside the bread-and-butter courses covered by the 1997 survey, there are a number of gender-focused courses which all appear to be offered by women. With rare exceptions, male political scientists do not seem to have followed their colleagues in sociology or cultural studies in developing an interest in gender.

In connection with course offerings, it should be noted that international relations has been the major growth area in Australian political science in recent years, as can be seen by the renaming of many departments. Judging from entries to the Women and Politics Prize, recent graduate work, and some of the course offerings shown in Table 3, feminist international relations is also on the rise. Jindy Pettman of the Australian National University has provided leadership in this area and was the founding editor of the *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. There has not, however, been a survey of introductory international relations texts comparable to that of introductory politics texts, so the extent of impact is difficult to assess.

Gender and Political Science Research

From as early as the 1970s, Australians were contributing important critiques of the gender bias of behaviourist political science. *Women and Voting Studies: Mindless*

Table 3. Gender-focused courses offered in Australian political science departments, 2002^a

Department	Name of course
Australian National University: Political Science and International Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Gendered Politics of War' • 'Gender, Globalisation and Development' • 'Globalisation and Politics of Identity' • 'Women and Australian Public Policy' (not all offered every year) • 'Women, Men and Power' (Honours)
Griffith University: School of Politics and Public Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Sex, Gender and Politics' • 'The Politics of Media: Film' • 'Citizenship in an International Context'
University of Adelaide: Politics Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Women and Organisations' • 'Identity Politics and Public Policy' • 'Sexual Politics' • 'International Gender Politics' • 'Politics of Sexual Reform Movements' • 'International Feminist Theory' (Honours)
University of Canberra: School of Management and Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Gender, Power and Politics in Australia' • 'Politics of Pleasure'
University of Melbourne: Department of Political Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'World Women' • 'Gender and the State' • 'Women and Policy' (Postgraduate)
University of Queensland: School of Political Science and International Relations	
University of Sydney: Department of Government and International Relations ^b	

Notes:

^a Information provided by Gwen Gray, Liz van Acker, Chris Beasley, Mary Walsh, Sheila Jeffreys, Barbara Sullivan and Louise Chappell, October 2002.

^b Louise Chappell has pointed out that gender was also a major component in undergraduate and postgraduate courses on human rights at the University of Sydney, in a course on the Australian welfare state and one on social movements.

Matrons or Sexist Scientism?, by Murray Goot and Elizabeth Reid (1975), became an international classic, still cited today. Studies of the gender gap in voting were to become a significant thread in Australian voting studies. In the area of political theory, I have already noted the influence of Carole Pateman from the 1970s.

The first major textbook to appear on women and politics in Australia examined the impact on the 'public/private divide' of the increased presence of women in public life (Sawer and Simms 1984, 1993). It was overtaken in 1999 by a new general textbook, moving into areas such as media mediations of women's politics (van Acker 1999). In a sign of the times, the word 'gender' was replacing 'women'—indicating both an appreciation of the diversifying forms of gender identification and the widening gap between academic scholarship and political practice. While the women's movement had formed a political base for early feminist critiques of political science, 'gender' did not constitute such a political base. On the other hand, it was argued that the use of the term 'woman' both in political mobilisation and political analysis lent itself to homogenising or 'totalising' tendencies that understated the variety of political identity and perspective.

Meanwhile, important public policy studies appeared for the first time on subjects such as childcare (Brennan 1994, 1998) and prostitution (Sullivan 1998). Still in the policy area, analyses were being made of the meaning and significance

of the distinctive Australian phenomenon of ‘femocrats’—the attempt to mainstream gender audit in government (Sawer 1990). As we have seen, Louise Chappell (2003) was awarded the Victoria Schuck Prize for her *Gendering Government: Feminist Engagement with the State in Australia and Canada*. Young women political scientists were also beginning to extend governmentality analysis to the institution of marriage and the regulation of sexual conduct (Brook 1999).

But what impact were women and feminist perspectives having on the stories that the discipline tells about itself—the narratives presented in histories or surveys of Australian political science and handbooks or companions to Australian politics? In New Zealand the absence of women’s perspectives from disciplinary narratives has been the subject of recent critique. Rae Nicholl and Margaret Cousins (1998) observed that there were no women’s perspectives included among the papers commissioned for either the jubilee of the Department of Politics at Victoria University or the 25th anniversary of the Department of Political Science at the University of Canterbury.

In Australia women were having some impact on the stories that the profession told about itself but this was a relatively new phenomenon. As recently as 1985, Don Aitkin’s *Surveys of Australian Political Science* (Aitkin 1985) had little to say about gender. With the exception of Murray Goot’s chapter, there was a tendency to generalise on the basis of male norms and assumptions. The chapter on radical political science reached the somewhat jaundiced conclusion that ‘Lady Political Scientists’ had leapt onto an unspecified bandwagon rather than revolutionising the discipline. There were no female authors.

By the end of the twentieth century, things were changing in terms of disciplinary history, if not in terms of the revolutionising of the discipline. Zetlin’s overview of political science for the Academy of Social Sciences integrated gender into the story that it told of the discipline and the profession, throwing in a few barbs along the way such as the belated recognition accorded to feminist theorists and the tendency to add gender rather than accept it as a fundamental structuring principle (Zetlin 1998, 194). The 2003 *Cambridge Handbook of Social Sciences in Australia* not only had a chapter on ‘Gender Politics’ but the author, Patty Renfrow, felt able to report that, by the 1990s ‘the field of gender politics within Australian political science was well established’ (Renfrow 2003, 319). The *Oxford Companion to Australian Politics* (in preparation in 2004) has also commissioned a major entry on gender.

The Status of Women in the Profession

The status of women in the profession is another ongoing concern. At the APSA AGM in 1997, the Women’s Caucus initiated a survey of the status of women to be conducted by the APSA President with the assistance of departmental heads. It covered the proportion of women at different levels and among PhD enrolments and submissions. The survey was developed in 1998 by Carol Johnson, as APSA President, and Louise Chappell, as Women’s Caucus representative on the APSA Executive. Twelve responses were received from Australian departments.

Chappell and Jennifer Curtin analysed the data provided. It showed that, of the 172 tenured positions in the responding departments, 29.7% were held by women—a significant improvement on the 11% found in 1979. On the other hand, women were still concentrated at the bottom of the academic hierarchy, best represented in

Level A positions, and with only one woman at Level E. Of the current doctoral students, 38.2% were women, as contrasted with 28% in 1979. Women were best represented as political-science undergraduates, where their numbers have increased more rapidly than at graduate levels. This means that the ratio of female staff to female undergraduate students continues to be an issue. APSA again urged departmental heads to seek a good field of women candidates for job vacancies.

In 2002 women constituted 43% of the 378 full-time and fractional full-time staff located by the Department of Education, Science and Technology (DEST) in teaching and research units designated under the disciplinary code for political science and policy studies (DEST 2002).² These figures must be treated with caution, owing to the manner in which they are compiled (the primary purpose being to locate fields of study of students rather than staff) but they are the only official figures currently available on the profession. It is notable that women are better represented in the new growth area of international relations than in the older areas of the discipline.

Monitoring of the representation of women in the journal was another iterative activity. In 1998 Jennifer Curtin, Louise Chappell and Lisa Hill volunteered to undertake an update of the 1979 survey of journal contents. They covered the period 1979–98 of the *Australian Journal of Political Science* and reported on their findings at the 1999 APSA Conference (Curtin, Chappell and Hill 1999). They found that although there had been an increase in material by and about women in the period 1982–86, this progress was short lived and subsequent patterns were variable. A study of the *Australian Journal of Public Administration* found little impact of feminism on public administration, with overall less than 1% of articles between 1970 and 1995 focused on gender issues (Althaus 1997, 143–4).

Such reviews had salutary effects and indeed led to the current Editor of the *Australian Journal of Political Science*, Andrew Parkin, initiating a gender audit as part of his annual report to the APSA AGM. During the first term of his editorship (2000–02) the proportion of articles by women almost doubled, to over a third of those accepted.

Conclusion

The existence of the Women's Caucus of APSA has provided a mandate for paying attention to the treatment of women within the profession and within the discipline. Unfortunately, such activities have to be iterative. Each time it is noted, for example, that politics textbooks are still adding a chapter on gender without changing overall frames of reference, there are some positive effects. But they tend not to last. The existence of the Women's Caucus has at least ensured that these issues are raised.

But, in general, feminist scholarship remains additive rather than transformative of the discipline. This was already observed by Ann Curthoys some six years ago in a survey of gender in the social sciences commissioned by the Academy of Social Sciences. She argued that feminist scholarship had not succeeded in reconfiguring the political-science discipline as had happened in history and sociology (Curthoys 1998, 191). Why the perceived difference with cognate

² Cf American Political Science Association statistics published in 2003 showing that women constituted only 23.5% of full- and part-time faculty in 1999–2000 (AmPSA 2003).

disciplines? One answer, provided by Canadian political scientist Jill Vickers, is that these cognate disciplines have become more open to 'knowledge drawn from the less powerful or powerless' (Vickers 1997, 37).

Another answer might have to do with numbers; women constitute a smaller proportion of senior political science academics than is the case for history or sociology. The number of women professors of political science Australia-wide in 2003 (four) is equalled in the history discipline at one university alone (ANU). Perhaps it is do with new gender-blind disciplinary paradigms in political science competing with the insights of feminist scholarship. The rise of public choice (or rational choice) theory would be the most compelling example of this.³ It has not, however, had a significant impact on the Australian discipline, so the explanation must lie elsewhere.

Perhaps the kind of fragmentation of the discipline referred to by Zetlin (1998) may have something to do with it—the lack of any agreed common values into which gender perspectives might be inserted across, for example, quantitative, institutional and discursive approaches. There has been the development of specialist niches in the discipline and the occupants may take little account of what goes on elsewhere, particularly if they believe they represent the 'science' in political science. Women have been largely absent from quantitative political science in Australia, as in other countries, by contrast to their contribution to discursive analysis. Questions of how political realities and policy problems are framed and reframed (Bacchi 1999) and of how new collective meanings and identities are generated (Burgmann 1993, 2003) have had particular resonance for women in the profession whose own lives have been transformed by such reframing.

Another form of division has occurred between the concerns of political science and those of the burgeoning field of international relations. For the first time in the history of the discipline, international relations courses are attracting more students than Australian politics, long the bread and butter of the discipline. This disciplinary fragmentation comes together with professional fragmentation. International relations specialists are more likely to have an overseas orientation and to be members of the International Studies Association rather than the Australasian Political Studies Association. The latter remains relatively small with its 280 members (March 2004), compared with either the American Political Science Association with its 14,000 members, the Canadian Political Science Association with 1,150 members or even the Australian Historical Association with over 600 members.

There *are* some very positive examples of how feminist perspectives are being inserted into mainstream narratives in the discipline. Helen Irving's gendering of the federation story, *To Constitute a Nation* (Irving 1997) is one good example, while Carol Johnson's *Governing Change* (Johnson 2000) is another. I hope that my reinterpretation and gendering of the Australian political tradition, *The Ethical State?* (Sawer 2003), will be read in the same way. We need many more.

In the meantime, the survival and evolution of feminist scholarship within political science over the last three decades is itself remarkable. This scholarship has inspired a range of feminist interpretations of public policy, social movements

³ Interestingly, the lead journal, *Public Choice*, reported in its response to an American Political Science Association survey that there had been no women on its editorial board in the survey period (CSWPS 2001, 322).

and citizenship and a significant number of good Australian books. So both this self-standing scholarship and the attempt to mainstream it into dominant narratives in the discipline are important elements in the same enterprise—a more gender-inclusive political science.

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