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# Policy, Politics, Gender. Bringing Gender to the Analysis of Welfare States

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# Policy, Politics, Gender

## Bringing Gender to the Analysis of Welfare States

by Ann Shola Orloff

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Are welfare states – or at least some aspects of these complex systems – resources in the struggle for gender equality? Feminist scholars investigate this question and the broader set of issues around the mutually constitutive relationship between systems of social provision and regulation and gender, and highlight the creative potential of gendered analyses. The comparative study of gender and welfare states has, since about 1990, been favored by the occurrence of two intellectual “big bangs” – gender studies and regime analysis. It has been powered by the engagement of the two constituencies created by these explosions of innovation and the partial integration of their respective insights in scholarship on gender, politics and policy.<sup>1</sup>

First, many feminist scholars served as ambassadors of gender studies who deployed the term “gender,” as Donna Haraway [1991, 131] said “to contest the naturalization of sexual difference in multiple arenas of struggle. Feminist theory and practice around gender seek to explain and change [...] systems of sexual difference whereby ‘men’ and ‘women’ are socially constituted and positioned in relations of

*This is a revised version of a longer essay, “Gendering the Comparative Analysis of Welfare States: An Unfinished Agenda” [Orloff 2009a].*

<sup>1</sup> By “feminist” scholarship, I mean studies of gender that contest gendered hierarchies. “Mainstream” scholarship refers to research that does not thematize gender and accepts masculinist premises about actors, politics and work; this term should not be taken to imply that the work falling under this rubric is in other ways unified.

hierarchy.” Gender is not an attribute of individuals but a social relationship, historically varying, and encompassing elements of labor, power, emotion and language; it crosses individual subjectivities, institutions, culture and language [see, e.g., Connell 2002]. To achieve recognition that “gender matters,” feminists have had to engage in a multi-faceted critique, including not only analytic concepts and theories specific to the study of social policy but also the social theories, methodologies, and epistemological presumptions underpinning this and other areas of political study [see, e.g., Orloff 2005].

Path-breaking work in the 1970s and 1980s established that gender is (in part) constituted by systems of social provision and regulation, and in turn, shapes them [for reviews, see O’Connor 1996; Orloff 1996]. In the 1990s and 2000s, conceptual innovations and reconceptualizations of foundational terms have been especially prominent in the comparative scholarship on welfare states, starting with gender, and including care, autonomy, citizenship, (in)dependence, political agency, and equality. It is impossible to see – much less to describe and understand – the mutually constitutive relation between gender and welfare states without these conceptual and theoretical innovations.

Second, studies of systems of social provision and regulation moved from essentially linear analytic modes – where welfare states more or less generous, for example – to configurational analyses of “regime types” or “worlds of welfare capitalism” in which variation was conceptualized as qualitative and multi-dimensional, resulting in clusters of countries with similar characteristics [Esping-Andersen *et al.* 2002; Orloff 2005]. Falsely universalizing (implicitly masculinist) analytic frames undergirded almost all comparative studies of welfare states, including Esping-Andersen’s. This work stimulated gender scholars’s creative reappropriations of the regime concept, expansions of notions of social citizenship rights and investigations of care services and shifting post-industrial employment patterns, leading to a revisioning of welfare states as core institutions of the gender order [see, e.g., Lewis 1992; O’Connor, Orloff, and Shaver 1999; Orloff 1993]. Mainstream analysts of social policy increasingly attend to certain aspects of gender relations, spurred by earlier waves of feminist scholarship and by obvious gendered changes across workplaces, families, and politics. Most focus on women’s individual “differences” from men, in preferences, lifetime labor patterns and associated social rights [e.g., Esping-Andersen *et al.* 2002, ch.3]. Yet there has rarely been full “gender mainstreaming,” for the mainstream still resists the deeper implications of feminist work, and has difficulties assimilating concepts of care, gendered power, dependency, and interdependency. Thus, the agenda of gendering comparative welfare state studies remains unfinished.

## **Gender and Welfare States: Evidence for Mutual Influence**

In this section, I will focus on two clusters of empirical research which illustrate the mutual influence of gender relations and systems of social provision and regulation: first, work on welfare states and the gendered division of labor, employment, and caring labor (paid and unpaid), and second, work on the politics of gendered welfare states, including regimes, partisanship, political agency, and citizenship.

### *Gendered Labor, Care, and Welfare States*

Care is central to many feminist understandings of gender and welfare [see, e.g., Daly and Lewis 2000; Folbre 2008; Glenn 1992]. Mainstream researchers address care principally as a question of women's differences from men (understood as the norm), and as a barrier to employment. In contrast, gender analysts consider care as a socially necessary activity, which is predominantly women's work, not a "naturally" feminine emanation of familial love, and usually linked with other forms of domestic labor [England 2005; Himmelweit 1995]. Providing care is the source of many of women's economic and political disadvantages in a wage economy and it underlines the centrality of "private" matters for women's disadvantages in political and economic life, but also offers as well distinctive gendered identifications, resources and ethical commitments.

Gender analysts of welfare states have stressed the linkages among specific gendered divisions of labor, models of family life, and social policy. For much of the post-World War II era, the dominant model supported by policy has been the nuclear family with breadwinning man and his wife, who performed the domestic and care labor, even if she was also employed. This arrangement is often called "traditional" although its full realization – particularly with widespread housewifery even among the working classes – was limited to the period between World War II and the early 1970s [Goldin 1990]. Welfare states also sustained men's advantaged position in labor markets, and did not ameliorate fully the economic and other vulnerabilities that attached to women's caregiving. We are now witnessing an ongoing "farewell to maternalism" [Orloff 2006] and shift to policies that support the "adult worker family," with both men and women expected to be in paid employment [Lewis 2001], yet significant gender differences around care remain [Daly 2011]. The increasing labor force participation of women and decline of the breadwinner household has transformed the organization of care across households, markets and welfare states. Non-familial care services, both marketized and public, have developed, but women still do a disproportionate amount of unpaid care and domestic labor. This leaves

the heart of the gendered division of labor undisturbed, particularly among heterosexual couples. Taking time to care imposes significant costs on caregivers unless social policy reduces them. “Crises of care” have emerged, as rising demands for care outstrip the supply of familial caregivers; the twin problems of care – for caregivers and for those who are cared for – present demands for social policy makers [Knijn and Kremer 1997]. Allowing for (paid) workers to have time to care is one challenge, while finding new supplies of care workers is another, to which some states have responded by encouraging immigration.

Women have entered employment for many reasons, and governments, particularly within the EU, are more interested in women’s activation, partly to offset problems associated with an aging labor force and declining fertility among non-immigrant populations (the “racial” underpinnings of which can only be here noted). Across the developed world, mothers’s participation rates are lower than fathers’s, unless there are state or market-provided care services and/or other means of “reconciling” employment and family work. Even when mothers’s participation rates equal fathers’s, as in Norden, employment patterns differ, with women taking more parental leaves and working reduced hours [Leira 2002]. Women in many countries use part-time work or other means of reducing the intensity of standard employment as means for reconciling paid work with family responsibilities. Social and employment policies affect gendered employment patterns, as women are drawn into the labor force by differing combinations of service-sector employment (private or public), flexible labor markets, anti-discrimination laws, and/or part-time work; these explain women’s relatively high employment rates in the Nordic countries, North America, the UK, and Australia, relatively lower rates in much of continental Europe and Japan, and increasing levels where policy has shifted, as in the Netherlands [Daly 2000; Estévez-Abe 2005; Gottfried and O’Reilly 2002; Lewis, Knijn, Martin and Ostner 2008; O’Connor *et al.* 1999].

The availability of public child care services is significant for mothers’ employment, and is related to gendered divides between public and private and to gendered ideologies about mothering and its potential compatibility with paid employment, which may differ across groups of women [see, e.g., Orloff 2006; Roberts 1995]. The Nordic countries have defined the provision of care as a public activity, linked to children’s well-being and gender equality, both understood to imply mothers’s employment. In contrast, until very recently, the care of children has been understood to be the province of the family in the UK, most of the continental European countries, and Japan, while in North America, care is considered best left to private “choice,” reflecting politically-dominant liberalism [Michel and Mahon 2002; O’Connor *et al.* 1999]. In the US, state provision has been all but ruled out, yet mothers have been

able to find private care services, albeit of uneven quality [Morgan 2005; Orloff 2006]. Elder care has also been examined vis-a-vis the private/public rubric, but patterns differ somewhat from child care; the Nordics are consistent in offering public services for both, the US for neither, while other countries have a varying mix [see, e.g., Anttonen and Sipila 1996]. Care services and policies, in Europe especially, have been changing rapidly in the 2000s, with the expansion of elder and child care services, payments for informal care, and paid leaves [Lewis 2006; Michel and Mahon 2002; Ungerson 2004]. These shifts reveal the construction and transformation of public-private divides as a critical moment in the gendering of welfare, fixing (temporarily) which needs may be addressed through public social policy, and which are to be left to the family, charity or the market [see, e.g., O'Connor *et al.* 1999].

Women more than men shape their employment behavior around the requisites of caregiving (and, to a lesser extent, domestic work). However, taking time out of the labor force to do unpaid care and cleaning work in families – even when it does not add up to full-time and lifelong housewifery – imposes costs on caregivers, notably lifelong lower incomes and pension entitlements, economic dependency and vulnerability to poverty [see, e.g., England 2005; Hobson 1990]. Employment reduces women's vulnerability and dependency but does not eliminate it: mothers suffer a “motherhood wage penalty” and a “long-term gender earnings gap” in most countries [see, e.g., Misra, Budig, and Moller 2007; Waldfogel 1997]. Some of these economic disadvantages occur due to women's time spent out of the labor force or working part-time, but there is still a residual [wage] penalty for being a mother due to effects of motherhood on productivity and discrimination by employers against mothers in hiring and promotion [England 2005]. Moreover, *paid* care work – disproportionately done by women, is worse paid, all else equal, than other types of work. Continental European women report the highest gaps, North American women report intermediate levels and Nordic mothers's wages are closest to men's wages, at least partly due to policies supporting mothers' employment [see, e.g., Misra *et al.* 2007].

The relatively higher poverty rates of lone mothers (even if employed) and elderly widows in most rich democracies attests to the continuing vulnerability of caregivers if they find themselves without access to men's incomes. As Barbara Hobson [1990] points out in her ingenious application of Hirschmann's “exit, voice, loyalty” framework to women's situation in marriage, the conditions of lone mothers – importantly shaped by citizenship rights – affect married mothers as well, for they reflect something of what their “exit options” would be; the better the situation for solo mothers, she argues, the more power partnered women have. Solo mothers have served as a “test case” of the extent to which welfare states address women's economic vulnerabilities; their poverty is alleviated – to a limited extent – only by generous

welfare programs (e.g., in the Netherlands prior to mid-1990s welfare reforms) or employment supported by care services (e.g., in France), and in best-case scenarios, a combination of these (e.g., in the Nordic countries) [Christopher 2002; Kilkey and Bradshaw 1999]. Thus, where welfare is not generous and employment support is left to market sources, solo mothers's relative poverty remains high.

The social organization of care affects also the quality of women's employment as reflected in women's access to positions of authority and other traditionally masculine occupations (which are advantaged relative to feminine ones [Charles and Grusky 2004]). Gendered occupational segregation, both horizontal and vertical, occurs across the developed countries, but varies in extent and character. Notably, countries identified as "gender-egalitarian" in terms of lower gender gaps in wages and poverty feature higher-than-average levels of occupational segregation. Mandel and Semyonov [2006] identify a "welfare state paradox," in which well-developed welfare states increase women's labor force participation – by offering extensive services and leaves – but simultaneously may hinder women's access to desirable (masculine) jobs. They argue that employers will rationally discriminate against hiring women for "masculine" jobs, since women are far more likely to take leaves and short hours provisions than are men. Defenders of the Nordic model argue that critics ignore the gender-equalizing effects of drawing most women into the workforce, the relatively good conditions of female-dominated public-sector employment and relatively low gender wage gaps [see, e.g., Korpi 2000]. They note that horizontal segregation of jobs – that is, gender differentiation of labor – seems to be acceptable to democratic publics [Charles and Grusky 2004]; here is an instance of "preferences" shaped by the gendered division of labor and social policies. The Nordic model is defended for its beneficial effects on working-class women, but gendered inequalities do remain: women's access to elite positions, especially in the private sector, is limited, and occupational segregation is associated with some wage penalty. Care and some income equalizing, then, do not erase gendered disadvantages. In contrast, in the US, where wage gaps and solo mothers's poverty are relatively high, there are few policies geared to employed mothers's care needs, but sex segregation of occupations has been declining since the 1960s and "gendered authority gaps" are lower than in Scandinavia [Tomaskovic-Devey *et al.* 2006]. The relative gender-neutrality of liberal regimes or market economies seems to be favorable to women with high skills who are willing to pursue a masculinized employment pattern [Estévez-Abe 2005; Orloff 2006]. But what, then, happens to care? To ask is to undermine any notion that liberalism has the answers to gender equality, either.

Social policies recognize and offer institutionalized support to some models of caregiving and family organization while sanctioning others, complementing the role

of culture in shaping care practices [Kremer 2007; Pfau-Effinger 2004]. Given the changing landscape of gender across families, markets and states – including the decline of the male breadwinner and full-time maternal care as ideal and reality, and new demands for care, it is not surprising that significant debate has arisen around which models or ideals of gender, family, and care will be promoted by social policies. Mothers's employment is widely accepted, but many of the models in play simply modify the gendered division of labor to accommodate paid work with women's continuing responsibility for care work, as in "reconciliation" measures – part-time work and/or long maternity leaves – that produce something like a "one and a half" worker model, as in the Netherlands [see, e.g., Mutari and Figart 2001]. The ideal of the caregiving woman is also upheld in models of surrogate mothers's care (e.g., by nannies) and intergenerational care [Kremer 2007]; these have been important across continental Europe (with the partial exception of France, where this combines with professional children's education and care services [Fagnani 2006; Morgan 2006]). Feminists, but few others, address the continuing power imbalances these arrangements encourage.

Models inspired by gender egalitarianism, such as dual-earner/dual carer, focus on professional care and parental sharing, which allow mothers's employment but pose a challenge to ideologies of gender difference [Crompton 1999; Gornick and Meyers 2009; Kremer 2007]. Sweden, Finland, Iceland, and Norway have adopted the ideal of parental sharing alongside professional care services, and feature policy initiatives to increase men's caregiving work, such as parental leaves designed to encourage their participation, at best only partially successful – Denmark alone of the Nordics has reversed the trend toward "daddy leaves" although public services are prominent [Ellingsæter and Leira 2006; Hobson 2002]. Models emphasizing "choice," often linked to women's equality projects in contexts dominated by liberalism, might allow for pluralism among heterogeneous populations as to which models of care and gender they prefer [Orloff 2009b]. In these cases, the extent of marketization and public subsidization determines whether choices are realizable, and how care quality and gender equality will fare [Orloff 2009b].

Some women's care sector jobs are professionalized, or at least unionized and relatively well-paid, but others are classic "bad jobs," and "racial" and ethnic dimensions of care work are foregrounded in many studies of paid care [see, e.g., Glenn 1992; Lutz 2008]. Moreover, caregivers from developing countries or poorer regions within the developed world migrate to the global North or its better-off regions to work for pay providing care to the households of employed women (and men) – in their homes or in service sector jobs; such migrants delegate their care responsibilities to kin [see, e.g., Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007]. Significant empirical and normative de-



bate concerns the use of immigrant labor for tasks that used to be carried out largely by housewives, focusing on whether such arrangements are inherently exploitative or if paid care work, at least potentially, can be made into “good jobs” [Meagher 2002; Williams and Gavanoas 2008].

In most discussions of welfare states and care, men are simply absent [but see Kershaw 2006] – their capacity to take up employment and their lack of serious care responsibilities are assumed. Yet men increasingly do take up care, particularly of disabled spouses, but also of children. In the Nordic countries and the Netherlands, the share of fathers taking leave has been increasing even as the overall proportion of leave days taken by men remains rather small as compared to women [Ellingsæter and Leira 2006]. Some men would take up more caregiving if they could, yet employers’s gendered assumptions about their lack of encumbrances or demands for extremely long hours get in the way [see, e.g., Gornick and Meyers 2003]. Encouraging men’s care – the parental sharing ideal – is critical for those who argue that future progress toward gender equality will come only by “making men more like what most women are now” – encumbered workers [Fraser 1994; Gornick and Meyers 2009; Orloff 2009b]. Many find this an attractive vision, but note the problems presented by nonmarital childbearing and marital instability (not all households have two adults to share work) and by employers’s unwillingness to reshape employment around the needs of “encumbered” workers.

Gendered care and employment arrangements have implications for the quality and quantity of care. The principal care crisis in most of continental Europe stems from a lack of public or market services. Analysts agree that in the Nordic countries the quality of public care services is high and the working conditions of care workers are good; the only critique stems from questions of fiscal sustainability, since costs are also high – yet it is basically a political question as to whether subsidizing care is desirable. In the US, the provision of care is plentiful – but mainly marketized and unregulated, leading to stratification in the quality and costs of care. The choice, then, is a high level of public subsidy to overcome the problems, or tolerating inadequate or poor-quality care services. This is a question of politics.

## **Gender, Politics, and Social Policies**

Comparative studies of welfare states have taken for granted that “politics matters” since the 1970s. Since 1990, the concept of policy regime has dominated the study of social politics and welfare states, including gendered politics and policies. The policy regime approach offers a way to simplify descriptions of the complicated

patterns of variation through focusing on more or less coherent clusters of countries, “gendered welfare regimes,” characterized by the logic of the male breadwinner, models of motherhood or extent to which the personal autonomy of women as well as men is supported [see, e.g., Bergqvist 1999; Lewis 1992; Lewis 2001; Orloff 1993]. The regime concept, whatever one thinks of specific analyses using this rubric, has some attractive qualities: it brings together a number of dimensions: class coalitions expressed through enduring partisan alliances, state formation, structure and administrative capacities; and the organization of welfare across major arenas of collective life – states, markets, families, civil society. The advantage of simplification is perhaps now lost with the relentless profusion of typologies – including quite a few focusing on gender.

Regime analyses have been important for understanding the topography of variation in welfare states, yet the typology-based analyses these have often spawned have probably reached the point of diminishing returns. Deepening knowledge of the relations between politics and gender, we might pursue somewhat different strategies: continue to work with the regime concept, with a focus on the articulation of policies and shorn of typologizing as a principal concern, as O’Connor, Orloff and Shaver [1999] suggest. Regime types can be seen as distinctive political-institutional opportunity structures, producing historically- and nationally-specific sets of interests, goals, identities, coalitions, administrative capacities, and definitions of problems and categories that influence social politics in path-dependent ways – policy creates politics. By examining the *articulation* of different policies, more accurate pictures of the effects of systems of social provision emerge. Single logics, or multiple and possibly competing logics are institutionalized in different parts or levels of states. Alternatively, one might disaggregate the regime concept – into driving forces, mediating institutions, and outcomes – to investigate specific components in a causal analysis [Korpi and Palme 1998].

Korpi [2000] links the predominance of different political parties in the post-war years with different “family policy models” that reflect ideals about care arrangements, family types (dual-earner or “traditional”), and preferred institutions for delivering support – states, families, or markets. Social-democratic parties, sometimes helped along by affiliated women’s movements, have embraced the model of dual-earner families, and women’s equality via employment (especially public jobs) and public care services [see also Huber and Stephens 2000]. Left partisan predominance is consistently associated with high spending welfare states and large state sectors, public services, generous and decommodifying benefits. In countries dominated by social-democratic parties, universal coverage, individual entitlement to benefits and redistributive structures are particularly advantageous for many women.

Korpi, Ferrarini, and Englund [2010] develop an historic account of partisan differences that led to differentiation in gender policies from relatively similar starting-points, with low levels of support to either traditional families or to dual earning and caring, in the 1950s. They argue that, since about 1970, driven by partisan politics as well as by women's movements, most countries have moved in one of these two directions, generating three relatively clear-cut clusters of countries. With high values on traditional-family support but relatively low values on dual-earner and dual-carer support, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, and The Netherlands form a cluster. During the postwar period, these six countries have all had influential Christian-Democratic parties. Distinguished by the highest values on dual-earner support as well as relatively well developed dual-carer support, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden share what can be described as a dual-earner/dual-carer model. As is well known, left parties were very influential, and women's movements were quite strong as well. With low degrees of policy support for either type of family, they find eight countries: Australia, Canada, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and United States. They note that this otherwise heterogeneous group has in common that they abstained from developing claim rights associated with either traditional-family policies and dual-earner policies; non-decisions leading to abstention from change can result from combinations of many different factors.

Many welfare-state researchers indeed assume that the left is more favorable to gender equality measures than is the right, but this depends partly on how "equality" is defined. Is it tied to combating poverty and supporting a large public sector, which provides services allowing women more easily to enter employment and jobs for women? This definition sticks with an essentially socialist perspective on "the woman question," linking women's emancipation to class struggle. Left-right partisan cleavages do map onto gender politics, but there are more diverse and expansive definitions of gender equality or women's emancipation, stressing participation and political freedom, equal opportunity and entrepreneurship, or the creation of autonomous women's spaces. Feminist social policy researchers, too, have been more willing to grant the advantages of the social-democratic model, perhaps leading to an underappreciation of the pathways by which liberalism is connected to gender equality, as with equal-opportunity legal and regulatory frameworks [O'Connor *et al.* 1999; Orloff 2006; Orloff 2009b].

Conversely, the dominance of the political right has been associated with policies less encouraging for gender equality. The distinctions between secular and religious right parties, or liberal and conservative regimes, have emerged as quite significant for gender. Religious parties have been the principal exponents of subsidiarity and "traditional" gender ideology in the form of "familism," which is compatible

with state spending, but supports families in forms that reinforce breadwinner/care-giver models and block autonomy-enhancing provision [see, e.g., Korpi 2000; Saraceno 1994]. Morgan [2006] argues that the way in which religion was incorporated into modern politics in the Nineteenth century is key to explaining later support for maternal employment policies, potentially significant for feminist politics. In Sweden and France, religious forces were early subordinated to secular ones and played less of a role in shaping family and social policy than in continental Europe; an activist role for the state in welfare and education was accepted. Religious forces, unsubordinated to the state, were stronger in the Netherlands, leading to institutionalized support for welfare provision by the religious pillars, and in the US, where private welfare provision prevailed.

Secular right parties are mainly concerned to restrict state spending and public services. Neo- and “traditional” liberals are not necessarily hostile to women’s employment, and have been uninterested in offering alternatives to commodification; they do not favor social spending and state services to support women’s employment, but prefer tax breaks for two-earner families. Yet leaving family support largely to the market has undercut “traditional” families as women are drawn into employment and men’s prerogatives are unprotected by states, as in the US [Orloff 2006]. Regulatory measures, such as anti-discrimination legislation, have had more contradictory fates under secular right parties’s dominance.

In the 1990s, innovative analyses of the development of modern social policy revealed the role of women, and, less often, men, as political actors pursuing specifically gendered goals, such as mothers’s pensions or child care services, or men’s “honorable” pension provision or family wages [see, e.g., Koven and Michel 1993; Orloff 1993; Pedersen 1993; Skocpol 1992]. Social policy concerns far more than questions of class, and varies by much more than relative generosity or extent of decommo-dification. Instead, gender joins class, nation, “race,” religion, and other dimensions of power, difference and inequality to shape politics, in historically contingent and variable ways. For example, we see state officials’s stakes in the production and regulation of nations or “races,” citizens and soldiers; mens’s concerns to gain or maintain family-supporting wages; women’s interests in combating the economic dependency and poverty linked to their caregiving. Gendered actors may be identified with social movements – women’s equality movements, “maternalists,” or anti-feminist groups, or with political parties and state administrations, such as “femocrats,” women in specialized gender equality units. With the expansion of supranational organizations, feminist and other groups have made strategic and tactical use of openings – such as the mandate for gender mainstreaming – at different levels of policy-making to press their demands [see, e.g., Lewis 2006; Walby 2004].

Citizenship has long been understood in exclusively masculine terms, linked to a particular conception of political subjects: as rational, autonomous, unburdened by care, impervious to invasions of bodily integrity. Rational-actor models of behavior might predict that women will eschew caregiving so that they might avoid associated vulnerabilities, and one might interpret declining fertility levels in this light. Yet most women continue to have babies and to be invested in care, despite these costs – perhaps displaying an alternative “ethic of care,” or an “amor fati” resulting from blocked opportunities.

If, as gender scholars contend, the need for care is inevitable, given humans’s dependence in infancy and old age, and often in between, we must reassess conceptions of citizens and of political action. Women gained social rights before enfranchised men conceded the suffrage, and rights related to women’s bodily self-determination are still contested. Women have also often differed from men in the kinds of citizenship rights they have demanded from welfare states; while working-class men may indeed aspire to “decommodification” – at least when unemployment is not a threat, many women have found that the right to formal, paid work may provide new resources and organizational capacities. Men’s citizenship rights have been linked historically to military service and paid employment, and social citizenship rights are often complemented by special benefits – a “military welfare state,” for soldiers and veterans, mostly men [Mettler 2005; Skocpol 1992]. Women citizens and feminist scholars have tried to expand the notion of social and political participation that undergirds citizenship rights to include mothering and care work, whether or not it is paid [Knijn and Kremer 1997; Lister 2003]. Drawing on the experiences of women’s political action and an understanding of interdependency as the basic human condition, new citizenship rights essential to emancipation have been enunciated by gender scholars: capacities to form autonomous households [Orloff 1993]; “body rights” [Shaver 1994]; or rights to time to care, to be cared for, and a right *not* to provide care, which means that people must have rights to public services [Knijn and Kremer 1997].

Women’s presence in politics has revolutionized policy. In the early Twentieth century, “maternalists” entered politics on the basis of “difference,” made claims to citizenship based on their capacities to mother, and idealized a maternalist state that could care for its citizens, especially mothers and their children [Koven and Michel 1993; Skocpol 1992]. Many “maternalist” claims hewed closely to family wage ideologies (which imply women’s economic dependence), while others showed linkages to nationalist projects of promoting the health of specific “races” or nations through attention to maternal and infant health [see, e.g., Bock and Thane 1991]. The different fates of maternal and infant protection programs across the developed world reflect as well their entanglements with the politics of reproduction, and thus to pro-

natalism or anti-natalism (including who has a “right to a family”), and to questions of social closure, citizenship and the regulation of women’s bodies (e.g., through legislation allowing or forbidding access to contraception and abortion). But some women reformers made claims for a “motherhood allowance” to be available to all mothers (not just widows), showing the potential radicality of maternalism, as activists aspired to economic independence and familial autonomy [see, e.g., Skocpol 1992]. (Men also organized in this era for policies that would support their preferred familial role as breadwinner, although this was usually done in the name of their status as workers [see, e.g., Pedersen 1993].)

Today, women’s movements for gender equality press for policies to support women’s employment, particularly anti-discrimination and affirmative action, parental leave, and child-care services [Michel and Mahon 2002; O’Connor *et al.* 1999, ch. 3], and higher proportions of women “holding key positions in governmental and political organizations” positively influences social spending and adoption of equality policies [Bolzendahl 2009; O’Regan 2000]. However, claims based on motherhood have not been abandoned but modified to accommodate women’s wage-earning activities – many interpret the Swedish story as an essentially maternalist one of allowing working-class employed women to be mothers, which has since been expanded. Anti-feminist groups promote ideals of “traditional” gender institutions in marriage, sexuality and reproduction as more congruent with women’s “need” to be protected. When women’s groups and voting blocs are divided, as in Italy between socialist/secular and Catholic orientations, or anti-feminist movements are well-mobilized, the adoption of policies seen as promoting or supporting women’s employment and public care provision, key planks of women’s equality movements’s programs, has been blocked. Yet as full-time housewifery declines, one may question how long anti-feminist traditionalism will last, especially as it runs afoul of neo-liberal mandates for women’s activation or instrumentalist concerns with declining fertility. Even as feminism may have declined as a set of organized movements, many tenets of gender equality have been institutionalized, and new forms of feminist mobilization, linked to the continuing dilemmas of care and domestic work, and economic and political participation, and aimed at restructuring systems of social provision and regulation, have emerged.

## Conclusion

The transformation of mainstream scholarship by the full integration of gender analysis is necessary to understand the development of welfare states and capitalism

as well as gender. Gender has been at the center of transformations of welfare states, families and capitalist economies. Social politics increasingly features issues related to gender: fertility, immigration, labor supply, the supply of care workers and services, taxes and mothers' employment; gender equality in households, employment and polity. Women's citizenship, political standing, and capacity to claim social benefits are increasingly based on employment or employment plus parenthood, and this implies that feminist politics is also being transformed, perhaps by bidding "farewell to maternalism" [Orloff 2009b]. Gendered insights – particularly around power and politics – radicalize and transform the comparative study of welfare states, and in the process remake theory, a necessary component of projects to ensure that systems of social provision promote equality and care – in other words, welfare, broadly understood.

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## **Policy, Politics, Gender**

### Bringing Gender to the Analysis of Welfare States

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Abstract: The transformation of mainstream scholarship by the full integration of gender analysis is necessary to understand the development of welfare states and capitalism as well as gender. Gender has been at the center of transformations of welfare states, families and capitalist economies. Social politics increasingly features issues related to gender: fertility, immigration, labor supply, the supply of care workers and services, taxes and mothers' employment; gender equality in households, employment and polity. Gendered insights radicalize and transform the comparative study of welfare states, and in the process remake theory, a necessary component of projects to ensure that systems of social provision promote equality and care.

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*Keywords: Gender, welfare state, citizenship, employment.*

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