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The Genders of Citizenship

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One important legacy of republicanism is the ideal of good citizenship; a related legacy of republicanism is the equation of citizenship and masculinity. These legacies are at once strange and familiar: today, masculinity and citizenship are often conceptualized as discrete and distinctive identities, and some critics, most notably feminists, suggest that in modern democracies good *citizenship and masculinity may even be contradictory ideals. The source of these conceptual paradoxes is the transformation of gender and civic discourse in the early modern period, particularly the "long eighteenth century." Understanding the implications of these changes helps us better grasp both the relationship of gender and citizenship today, and how a more effectively engaged and meaningfully egalitarian form of democratic citizenship, for men and women, might be realized.*

Feminism and republicanism are two of the most influential traditions critical of citizenship and civic life in liberal democratic polities today. Most notably, both share common cause in opposition to individualist theories and practices, and in the promotion of a vibrant democratic civic life. Nonetheless, the respective concerns of republicanism and feminism are in many respects sufficiently distinctive as to discourage theoretical or political collaboration between their partisans, and on some matters—especially those concerning gender—they even appear incompatible (Phillips 2000). This lacuna is not surprising because feminists are highly suspicious of the masculinist origins of civic republicanism, and republicanism has had a long history of disdain for "femininity" in politics. Even when the potential of a feminist-republican rapprochement has attracted scholars to puzzle through the conceptual and theoretical questions raised by various figures, movements, or developments that touch on concerns relevant to both republicanism and feminism (e.g., Kay 1986; Landes 1988; Pitkin 1984; Snyder 1999; Wingrove 2005), gender remains a crucial, and crucially divisive, issue.

Our intent in this essay is to suggest that this need not be so. Although citizenship and democratic civic life will be in significant respects shaped by gender differences, there may be ways of understanding the genders of citizenship that do not necessitate opposition between feminism and republicanism (see, e.g., Snyder 1999), and these may well promote the democratic hopes that feminists, proponents of civic commitment, and many others share.

Clearing the ground for a more effectively engaged and meaningfully egalitarian form of citizenship for men and women requires understanding how some of the problematic gender constructs of contemporary democratic discourse developed. Much of our thesis turns on a critical reconstruction of gender discourse in (what scholars have come to call) "the long eighteenth century,"[1] when concerns about the nature of citizenship generated a rich and complex debate informed by competing models of how people ought to act, and about what was properly "masculine" and "feminine" in the behavior of men and women. If we read this history using the common (and anachronistic) binary sex/gender constructs that are ascendant today, we may miss seeing how those constructs were themselves an effect or outcome of earlier contestations in which beliefs about the kinds of citizens men and women might become were inseparable from beliefs about the kinds of men and women citizens were supposed to be. And in this, we may also miss important opportunities for usefully addressing the complex ways in which conceptions of gender continue to shape the prospects for equal citizenship today.

At the center of these eighteenth-century disputes were distinctively different analyses of how the achievements of modern commercial society could be best secured. Many observers worried that the more commerce engaged citizens in private pursuits, the less willing they were to think about their duties as citizens. Eighteenth-century republicans used a gendered language to decry this change, and proponents of privatism responded in kind. In their efforts to craft a civic identity for the modern commercial republic, some attacked republican accounts of citizenship—and masculinity—as barbarous and uncivilized, whereas republicans advanced their arguments by drawing on traditional distinctions between "effeminacy" and "manliness." Similarly, when some partisans suggested that fashion, politeness, and other supposedly "feminine" interests might moderate politics and public relations, as well as promote women's equality in the public sphere, others drew their inspiration from republican ideals, advancing a discourse of "republican motherhood" that grounded women's political inclusion in their responsibility for cultivating proper republican virtues in their husbands, sons, and daughters (see, e.g., Kerber 1980; Landes 1988; Norton 1980; Ryan, 1983).

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[1] The concept of the long eighteenth century has become a staple of gender studies; its parameters mark the period in which modern binary/sexual gender discourses became ascendant. Most accounts mark its beginnings in the last decades of the seventeenth century, and its terminus in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

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Thus, the discursive changes in gender roles were partly a consequence of an attempt to advance a new conception of citizenship on the one hand, and to recraft and shore up an older one on the other.

Once we understand these eighteenth-century arguments, some current issues about the relationship of gender and political life appear in a different light. Perhaps the most important lesson that we can learn here is not so new, but well illustrated in this case: gender itself has a history. What we add to this, though, is that gender has a *political* history: because changing configurations of gender are used to persuade citizens to see their political roles differently, gender change cannot be understood outside of the larger political context that shapes its meaning.

To illustrate how this can illuminate the importance of gender to citizenship and civic life, in the latter part of the essay we consider some criticisms of how contemporary constructions of masculinity and femininity bear on our public lives, drawing out the parallels between the "ornamental" conceptions of gender pervasive today, and the "effeminacy" that republicans once feared. In our conclusion, we offer some brief remarks on what all of this might mean for contemporary civic discourse—and civic life.

COMMERCIAL SOCIETY AND THE MANY GENDERS OF CITIZENSHIP

By the late eighteenth century it had become clear that the ideal modern polity would be a commercial republic. J. G. A. Pocock suggested that "[a]ll serious thinkers in the eighteenth century accepted commerce" (Pocock 2000), and for good reason: there was widespread hope that the spreading influence of commercial activity would usher in a whole range of positive political and social changes. For example, it was believed that commerce would mitigate the long-standing threat of enslavement resulting from conquest in war, as the bellicose character of interpolity relations was displaced by the peaceable ways of mutually beneficial trade. In addition, commerce promised to augment civic well-being in concrete, material terms. It was widely agreed that commerce could, among many other benefits, ease the struggle for subsistence, increase the availability of material comforts, promote the advancement of knowledge, encourage technological innovation, and by all this improve the provision of social and national security.

The *political* challenge was to constitute the foundations and boundaries of a polity that could advance these ideals. This task was imperative because chief among the various effects of the growth of commerce was the erosion of systems of ascribed status, and the concomitant rise of new opportunities for social mobility. This precipitated the conditions for a broad public debate—and a public constituted by that debate—about the basis of political authority, and the status of those who would have influence in its determination. And as political authority had historically been the province of "men," opening up that authority to new claims of standing—including those made by "women"—necessitated a reexamination of the identity of "public persons" participating in the exercise of political power. As Helene Moglen put it, "society became a more ambiguously charted territory, which men and women had to negotiate at risk" (Moglen 2001, 4). It should come as no surprise, then, that over the course of the "long eighteenth century," *gender* became one of the most critical conceptual terrains on which ideals of civic identity were contested.

As the end of the century approached, the sharpening crisis of political authority left by the evisceration of ascribed status systems was matched by an increasingly polarized gender discourse. The pacing and particularities of the relevant contestations varied from place to place (see Gelderen and Skinner 1995), and the polyvalent quality of gender discourse over the course of the eighteenth century makes it difficult for us to link specific gender claims and particular expressions of political ideology that make sense using our anachronistic categories. But if we bracket our contemporary gender and ideological reference points, we can perhaps better recognize the developing patterns of argument that emerged from efforts to draw out the political lessons suggested by the gains and losses of commercial development. What we will see is that these political lessons were fleshed out in competing models of gender identity; what we will also see is that the foundations for the constructions of gender and citizenship with which we are more familiar today were settled, albeit ironically, in a form that was quite unintended by the antagonists.

The most important of these alternatives were more or less distinctive "discourses of political sensibility" organized around either "participatory republican," or "privatist," ideals of civic identity.[2] These discourses were in large measure crafted in critical engagement with, and typically in opposition to, political arrangements grounded in systems of ascribed status, but for our purposes their shared opposition is far less important than the sharpening divisions between them. In this, the struggle over the identity of gender, what Barbara Harris called "a continual contest between women and men—even more, between different groups of women and different groups of men—about what femininity and masculinity mean, how women and men ought to behave, and how they actually do behave" (1998), was not just a "political struggle" about the relative power of men and women—it was rooted in a struggle over what politics—and the men and women who practiced politics—in the commercial republic *should be*.

The best place to begin accounting for these contestations is with the fundamental point of interpretation to which nearly all opponents of ascribed standing agreed, namely, that commercial activity made the authority of ascription untenable. The most famous account of this effect may be Adam Smith's explanation of how "the silent and insensible operation of foreign

[2] We are deeply indebted to one of the *APSR* reviewers for this construction.

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commerce and manufactures gradually brought about" the conditions by which the "great proprietors" of ascribed standing "gradually bartered their whole power and authority . . . For a pair of diamond buckles perhaps, or for something as frivolous and useless" (Smith [1776] 1976, 418–19).

Smith's argument was by no means new or idiosyncratic; this was a widely circulating thesis with a substantial historical pedigree (see, e.g., Hirschman 1981, Part Two). What was also not new or idiosyncratic was a fundamental disagreement about what this change might mean for the future. Ridding the modern polity of the unearned and potentially arbitrary authority of undeserving elites was one thing; how to develop the new opportunities for reordering politics was quite another.

Many took to heart—and to theorizing about—what they thought were the positive political implications of the distractions from public preoccupations that acquiring "frivolous and useless" items like "diamond belt buckles" promoted. "At the start of this period," Robert Shoemaker noted, the scuttle to establish standing in the context of increasing opportunities for mobility—and enjoyment of increasing opportunities for material pleasures—created conditions in which "the definition of a gentleman was rapidly changing, from one based on birth to one based on wealth and lifestyle" (Shoemaker 1997). For some, this was a development to be embraced. Twenty years before Adam Smith, William Hazeland argued that "the Great . . . pleased with those refinements and elegancies of fashionable life, introduced by Trade, and enriched by it in their turn," would willingly "encourage and support the friend of Liberty, which in the end must prove fatal to their power" (Hazeland [1756] 2003, 406). Others, however, were less sanguine about these developments. John Brown, for example, warned that even if "in its first stages" commerce "supplies mutual Necessities, prevents mutual Wants, extends mutual Knowledge, eradicates mutual Prejudice, and spreads mutual Humanity," when "the Luxuries of Life become Necessaries among the Great," that should be taken as evidence that "Manners and Principles are lost," and if profligate demands cannot be satisfied, the consequence may be a "general Discontent and Disaffection to the Government" (Brown [1757] 2003, 441).

This was much more than a quibble about how the well-to-do would behave, for in conditions of social mobility, what could be said of elites could be said of anyone. This was a dispute about the identity of *citizens,* in the present and the future. For Hazeland and others of like mind, it was the public consequences of pursuing the *private interests* wealth and lifestyle entailed that undermined the power of the "haughty lord" and "lifts the humble vassal within sight" of his social superiors. The resulting effects, it was argued, served as a "natural poize against arbitrary power in the state," regardless of who might rule (Hazeland [1756] 2003, 406). Indeed, as we shall see, the argument was equally applicable to *citizens* whose zeal for the "public good" might lead them, like "the Ancients" who similarly "knew how to value" an "Established liberty," to have "but imperfect views of Trade" (Hazeland, 404). On this account, the future of the commercial republic depended on the continued and widespread pursuit of the "private interests" embodied in the material wealth and comforts commerce could supply. For Brown and others who were more sympathetic to republican arguments and ideals, by contrast, foremost among the public consequences of a universal preoccupation with such private interests would be the "Extinction of public spirit," the promotion of dispositions that would generate "national Disunion," and the consequent unraveling of all those political gains, especially the realization of *liberty*, that the commercial republic could promote (Brown [1757] 2003, 433, 436).

These perspectives obviously implied very different interpretations of the past, how the present reflected the past, and what these lessons meant for the future. For their part, partisans of privatism worried that republican sympathies might bring about the return of a benighted age. Benjamin Constant clearly articulated the sentiments of many of his predecessors and contemporaries when he argued in his famous 1819 essay on "the liberty of the ancients and the moderns" that "we can no longer enjoy the liberty of the ancients, which consisted in an active and constant participation in collective power"; "our freedom," Constant maintained, "must consist of peaceful enjoyment and private independence" (Constant [1819] 1988, 316).

The historiographical underpinning for this claim was nothing less than a revisionist account of the polities and practices republicans often cited as exemplars of a robust civic life. What had been, for both Renaissance and early modern republicans, the great achievements of the classical polities, were increasingly portrayed as examples of reprehensible forms of political society. Alexander Hamilton's warnings in Federalist 9 are a case in point:

> It is impossible to read the history of the petty republics of Greece and Italy without feeling sensations of horror and disgust at the distractions with which they were continually agitated, and at the rapid succession of revolutions by which they were kept in a state of perpetual vibration between the extremes of tyranny and anarchy. If they exhibit occasional calms, these only serve as short-lived contrast to the furious storms that are to succeed. If now and then intervals of felicity open to view, we behold them with a mixture of regret, arising from the reflection that the pleasing scenes before us are soon to be overwhelmed by the tempestuous waves of sedition and party rage. (Hamilton [1788] 1961, 71)

Central to the new history embodied in Hamilton's rhetorical exploitation of disorder and instability in the classical polities was a constitutive link between these "disgusting" practices, and the form of identity that made them possible. Republican civic ideals presupposed a kind of citizenship that should not exist in the modern commercial republic. By the turn of the nineteenth century, it was becoming a widely accepted thesis—verified for some, like Constant, in the excesses of the various modern (and especially the French) revolutions—that attempts to establish a form of citizenship informed by classical republican ideals of an

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active and committed citizenry would be "the cause of many an evil" (Constant [1819] 1988, 309).

The problem, it seems, was the public object itself. As long as aspiration was directed toward the realization or maintenance of public freedom, argued Jean Louis de Lolme, "the only proper employment for a free Citizen is, *to be either incessantly assembled in the forum or preparing for war.—Being valiant, inured to hardships, inflamed with an ardent love of one's country . . . and with an ardent love of glory*" (1781, quoted in Rahe 1994, v. 2 p. 88). Such commitment, fortitude, and patriotism may have (and may still) elicit admiration, but it was also the source of that "horror and disgust" Hamilton cited, and the potential for the "many an evil" Constant had in mind. When Montesquieu, perhaps the most influential political analyst and advocate of a pacific politics in his day, described the classical republican citizen, preoccupied with his public position and ready to enslave others to maintain it, as "proud, curt, harsh, angry, voluptuous, and cruel" (Montesquieu [1748] 1989, 246), and others echoed the point, claiming (as d'Holbach did) that public concerns made men "ferocious, cruel, unjust, unruly," their intention was to indict the "morality" of "treacherous and inhuman ambition" (d'Holbach 1820, quoted in Spitz 2002, 108–109). Such attributes, they argued, made life in the classical republics insecure, unstable, and miserable for too many people. Love of country, enthusiasm for independence, and the jealous passion of striving to maintain equality with one's fellow citizens—these and other defining aspirations were reconceptualized as the causes of rudeness, incivility, and want of humanity.

If ambition for political standing was the cause of these pernicious effects, a society full of individuals whose aspirations were defined by such "public interests" would hardly be better (and could well be worse) than tyranny or oligarchy, where monarchs and aristocrats terrorized subjects in order to keep them subordinated. Exchanging one or a few tyrants for thousands was hardly a bargain. Yet arguing that republican civic identity would produce a politics defined by "horror and disgust," "evil," cruelty, and inhumanity, was only part of the story; encouraging *better* behavior was the other. The upshot, as Albert Hirschman aptly put it, was promoting a sociological arrangement that "would activate some benign human proclivities at the expense of some malignant ones" (Hirschman 1981, 66). If "public freedom" was the problem, perhaps "private freedom" was the solution. And here the pacifying effects of increased material desire witnessed in the decline of ascribed standing, and in the behavior of the "new" elite, served as empirical benchmarks from which the argument for *doux commerce* was advanced.

This argument highlights what was perhaps the most original—and as we shall see, most problematic—conceptual innovation offered up by partisans of privatism. The critique of classical republicanism and the promotion of private interests were two sides of what was, essentially, an ontological thesis with political intent. What partisans of privatism assumed was that the behavior of individuals was an effect of the dispositions generated by the objects of their aspirations. Preoccupation with the public object produced overbearing, uncompromising dispositions and, perhaps inevitably, "curt, harsh, angry, voluptuous, and cruel" behavior. "They are persuaded," republican Adam Ferguson said of the advocates of privatism, "that the celebrated ardour, generosity, and fortitude, of former ages, bordered on frenzy, or were the mere effects of necessity, on men who had not the means of enjoying their ease, or their pleasure" (Ferguson [1767] 1995, 242–43). Preoccupation with material well-being, comfort, luxury, and other forms of self-indulgence, by contrast, smoothed out the rough edges of human behavior by making men accommodating and polite—"civil"—in their public behavior. "The contest for gain is as warm as for glory" argued William Hazeland ([1756] 2003, 408), but the difference between gain and glory was that gain would turn men into placid, cooperative, considerate persons by necessity, whereas glory made them brutish and violent in the pursuit of distinction. Montesquieu was, as in other respects, arguably the authority on this point: "Commerce cures destructive prejudices," he said, "it polishes and softens barbarous mores," and while it "does not unite individuals" because even "the smallest things, [including] those required by humanity, are done or given for money," it is nonetheless the case that "everywhere there is commerce, there are gentle mores" (Montesquieu [1748] 1989, 338–39; our insertion).

These arguments were constitutive of a political discourse that was in significant measure advanced by way of a radical destabilization of gender discourse. First and foremost, they worked against the assumption that citizenship required a form of *masculinity* that was central to classical republicanism. Quentin Skinner notes that as the eighteenth century proceeded, the modern, idealized version of the classical citizen "began to look irrelevant and even inimical to a polite and commercial age." The virtues of being "plain hearted" now seemed "rude and boorish," commitment to integrity was viewed "not as upright but as obstinate and quarrelsome," and the once valued character trait of "fortitude" now seemed like "mere insensibility" (Skinner 1998, 97). What was now sought was a mode of masculinity that was sensitive, sensible, even sentimental in its expression, attentive to the needs of others, humane, polite, *civilized*—the adjectives can be (as the "sensibility studies" literature suggests see, inter alia, Barker-Benfield 1992; Ellison 1999; Hitchcock and Cohen 1999; Johnson 1995) multiplied at length—but the main point is that it was a general 'reformation of manners' that was sought.

This brings us to a second source of destabilization in gender discourse that the privatist critique of classical citizenship raised. It is now generally acknowledged that the rise of the ideal of civility or *politesse*, which was part of the gradual displacement of inherited status by achieved status, was also marked by a "shift in elite cultural practices from 'homosociality' to 'heterosociality.'" Heterosociality promoted civility by means of both practical and discursive changes. "Essentially," according to Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen, "civility required the participation of females in a way

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that a community of honor [characteristic of ascribed systems] did not," and at the same time, it "implied the adoption by men of what could be seen as 'female characteristics"' (Hitchcock and Cohen 1999, 15; our insertion).

For many partisans of privatism, the promise of heterosociality was linked to dispositions and character traits that women brought to the public sphere, traits that readily complemented the emerging ideal of politesse. In a sense, these were ideally typical of those who were preoccupied with private interests. By their participation and by their example, then, women—or rather, certain kinds of women—could be important contributors to the pacification of civic ardor.

John Millar, for example, explicitly linked the pacification of politics with the influence of "Women of condition [who] come to be more universally admired and courted upon account of the agreeable qualities which they possess, and upon account of the amusement which their conversation affords." He continued, "As they are introduced more into public life, they are led to cultivate those talents which are adapted to the intercourse of the world, and to distinguish themselves by polite accomplishments" (Millar [1771] 2003, 626). By this sort of influence and by the example women would set for men, David Hume suggested, whenever "Both sexes meet in an easy and sociable manner . . . the tempers of men, as well as their behaviour, refine apace" (Hume [1777] 1987, 271). Thus did the behavior of *real* women, and *real* men, striving "to form [themselves] upon those models, which are most acceptable to people of condition and education," advance the ideal of "politeness of manners" ([1777] 1987, 127, our insertion). What's more, such behavior promised some real relief for women: as they would now have "the free disposal of themselves" in social relations by virtue of their public standing, an impolite or uncivil assertion of superordination would render "the sovereignty of the male . . . a real usurpation" ([1777] 1987, 184).

This was a very different understanding of the gender of citizenship than was characteristic of the republican tradition, and participatory republicans espied in this new ideal a whole host of troubling implications. The privatist critique of classical citizenship, the privatist characterization of the effects of commercial interests, the privatist promotion of a new model of citizenship, a new definition of masculinity, and a particular model of femininity: for republicans these were deficient, distorted, myopic and misleading because they were grounded in a ideal of civic identity that was, in the last analysis, *effeminate*. The participatory republican critique of effeminacy was, then, more than an argument about what citizenship in the modern commercial republic should be; it was, rather, an argument about what citizenship in the modern commercial republic *would become* if effeminacy defined the genders of citizenship.

Given the ways in which dominant forms of gender discourse today assume a sexually engendered differentiation that sustains the boundary between "men" and "women," it may be tempting to interpret republican opposition to privatist arguments as a reaction to the increasing "heterosociality" of modern life, a reaction in which many "marked their apprehensions over relinquishing the older male ideals associated with classical warriors and farmers at a boundary they named 'effeminacy"' (Barker-Benfield 1992, xxv). But this "assumes that the main problems masculinity engages with are sexual and patriarchal in nature" (Hitchcock and Cohen 1999, 21), and that the boundaries of gender were primarily defined by the boundaries of heterosexual differentiation. The reality, however, was far more complicated. In context, masculinity marked the line where citizenship ended and the condition of civil emasculation—effeminacy—began. In this respect, effeminacy was at once the antithesis of both good citizenship and a well-ordered gender identity; "effeminacy" was not originally framed in the contrast between men and women, but in the contrast between publicly minded men and those for whom the object of their ardor had turned from public life to private. Throughout most of the eighteenth century, to be effeminate was to be concerned with one's private interests, and the term could be intelligibly applied to males and females, and indeed any who indulged their passions—including their sexual passions[3]—to the detriment of their public responsibilities.

For example, Mark Kann writes of early American discourse that "not all uses of *effeminacy* conveyed gender opposition or misogyny. John Adams hinted at gender similarity when criticizing both 'my own sex and American ladies' for 'luxury, dissipations, and effeminacy"' (Kann 1998, 19). Or consider Mary Wollstonecraft's criticisms of the "*finesse* and effeminacy" of the "modern soldier and civilized woman," whose character traits suggested that "Women are, in common with men, [in danger of being] rendered weak and luxurious by the relaxing pleasures which wealth procures" (Wollstonecraft [1792] 1975, 145; our insertion).

Such dangers were not, then, reducible to sexually grounded gender "confusions" introduced by the practices of politeness and heterosociality, nor were the practices of politeness and heterosociality necessarily antithetical to a well ordered civic identity. Even Adam Ferguson, the "Scottish Cato" (Oz-Salzburger, in Ferguson [1767] 1995, xxiv), recognized that "We may, with good reason, congratulate our species on their having escaped from a state of barbarous disorder and violence, into a state of domestic peace and regular policy . . . when the weapons with which they contend are the reasonings of the wise, and the tongue of the eloquent" (Ferguson, 214). Indeed, the critique of effeminacy was fully compatible with the ongoing redefinition of "polite" society and men's and women's roles in it (Foyster 2001). Matters of deportment, dress,

[3] Men and women who were "effeminate" could be homosexual or "rampantly heterosexual" (Hitchcock and Cohen 1995, 5). Until the triumph of compulsory heterosexuality, it was still possible to define effeminate behavior in terms of its implications for civic commitment, irrespective of considerations about the sex of one's intimate partners.

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with whom one dined, and so forth, occupied many writers in this period, and perhaps contrary to our expectations, many dimensions of gender identity, including incorporating into the understanding of masculinity traits that had previously been understood to be feminine, and even defining womanhood as requiring masculine characteristics, proceeded without apparent conceptual contradiction. It was not uncommon to see arguments encouraging men to be "sentimental," but not in an effeminate way (Carter 2001), while at the same time women were being encouraged in "the imitation of manly virtues . . . the exercise of which ennobles the human character" without being required to adopt martial dispositions typically associated with antiquated conceptions of masculinity (Wollstonecraft [1792] 1975, 8, 38).

None of this is meant to suggest that republican critiques of effeminacy did not systematically privilege "men," and denigrate "women," but it does suggest that it was as *citizens* that "men" were privileged, and that as *citizens* women might avoid perpetuating (and men might avoid assuming) forms of gender identity that republicans loathed. Most important, however, is what it suggests about the peculiar dangers of corruption in the modern commercial republic. In grounding their arguments, partisans of privatism warned that making classical citizenship the model for moderns would raise the dangers of old-time civic enthusiasm. For republicans, the dangers inherent in "effeminate" citizenship were no less familiar, and perhaps more immediate. Deploying the tropes of autocratic rulers and monarchical sycophants, republicans offered up a darker account of the changes that aspirations for wealth and luxury would promote. By equating the corruptions characteristic of exclusive regimes with the potential corruptions characteristic of "democratical states" where "a species of monarchical subordination" is introduced by "drawing respect towards mere wealth" (Ferguson [1767] 1995, 241), republicans turned the classical critique of monarchy into an analytical framework for criticizing the claims for civic privatism.

Until the end of "the long eighteenth century," "effeminacy" continued to serve as the term applied to those unwilling to face the strenuous demands of proving "by words and deeds" their commitment to the public, as opposed to a personal interest. And an effeminate society was the antithesis of a self-ruling republic, where elites ruled by enslaving their countrymen, minions secured their privilege by flattery and dissimulation, and subjects proved their servility by submitting to the indignities of dependence and unjustified subordination. In other words, these were men who might have been *citizens*, but whose gender belonged to the same genus that defined those civilly emasculated in self-ruling republics: women, slaves, and children. Worse still was that the effeminacy of such "men" was particularly repulsive in that their emasculation was one of choice, not necessity. Thus, effeminacy denoted a political weakness, an unwillingness to assume the proper public, manly, role.

Here, then, was a well-established model of the most pernicious form of corruption known in the civic tradition: a condition of *voluntary* moral and ethical failure. But what made effeminacy particularly dangerous in commercial republics was that its corruptions would be not only voluntary but widespread because it was *popular,* even arguably *democratic.* Following their leaders, who now "speak only of commerce and money" (Rousseau [1750] 1987, 12), and "speak to us only of manufacturing, commerce, finance, wealth, and even luxury" (Montesquieu [1748] 1989, 22–23), citizens could turn modern democracy into a form of (what might be called) an *effeminate republic*, where a "popular profligacy" reigned. As Machiavelli some years earlier warned in his *Discourses*, this was perhaps the worst of all possible polities, defined by a corruption rendered intractable because of its popular support (Machiavelli [1517] 1994, 124–29). Small wonder that defenders of the classical ideal commonly, frequently, and vigorously charged that modern commercial society, and with it, its great promise, was in danger of unraveling because of the effeminacy of modern citizens.

The charge of effeminacy thus sharpened the gender debate by setting the privatist critique of classical citizenship against republican warnings about the dangers of democratic corruption. For the harbingers of the privatist ideal, modern citizens could not be uncivil, and the gender of citizenship had to be changed in order to secure the promise of the commercial republic. For participatory republicans, modern citizens could not be effeminate, and the gender of citizenship had to be sustained in order to secure the promise of the commercial republic. In context, both sides understood the stakes in this debate. Across the political spectrum efforts were made to establish arguments suggesting (*contra* republicans) that commerce and individual liberty did not of necessity promote effeminacy, or (*contra* privatists) that public commitment was not antithetical to comity and good manners. But the success of these various efforts to determine the gender of modern citizenship was less a matter of their desirability than it was a matter of *ontological necessity.*

In the last analysis, the defensibility of these ideals rested on whether they would work. If Montesquieu and similar thinkers were right, the ascendancy of private interests would make citizens civil, polite, accommodating, and cooperative; but if republicans were right, the decline of public commitment would make citizens "rapacious, deceitful, and violent, ready to trespass on the rights of others; or servile, mercenary, and base, prepared to relinquish their own" (Ferguson [1767] 1995, 226–27). The character and content of gender, it seems, rode on the question of what kind of citizenship would define men and women in the modern commercial republic.

THE TRIUMPH OF EFFEMINACY, THE SEXUALIZATION OF GENDER, AND THE POLITICS OF HIERARCHY

A clear understanding of the republican critique of effeminacy is to some extent obscured by *gender* concepts and categories at odds with our own. The source of

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this obfuscation can be located in the transformations of gender discourse that were given impetus in the debates about citizenship in the "long eighteenth century." Consider just how different that discourse, and ours, can be: Republicans would—and did—say that those who were overbearing, deceitful, servile, mercenary, or base, in the pursuit of private interests did not merit the title "citizen," and could not therefore claim the title of "men." By contrast, we have no difficulty identifying such persons as men (as many feminist gender critiques today attest), even while we have no difficulty agreeing (as civic reformers today would insist) that such persons hardly serve as exemplars of citizenship. What we have today, then, is masculinity without citizenship, citizenship without civic commitment, and the triumph of private interests without the triumph of *politesse:* clearly we live in an age where the gender of citizenship has changed, and in ways quite unintended by our predecessors. Neither the "manly citizen" of the republican ideal, nor the "well mannered man" of the privatist ideal, is the norm for citizenship in the contemporary commercial republic. And, of course, one might reasonably ask, what happened to women in all this?

This question may be the key for understanding how the triumph of effeminacy, the sexualization of gender, and the politics of hierarchy are related moments in the development of modern gender discourse. It may also help us understand how those developments have constituted a discursive regime that is in many ways conceptually incommensurable with both privatism and republicanism, yet at the same time compatible with political discourses, like forms of feminism, that are critical of both. Interestingly, by considering the efforts of women to craft a workable account of women's citizenship in the context of early modern political disputes, we can begin to grasp the source of these disjunctions—and their implications for us.

Although many writers struggled to conceptualize how male citizens could remain manly and become more "sensible" without becoming effeminate, women's appropriate gender roles were also coming under political scrutiny, though not necessarily as prominently in public debate since the idea of women as citizens was still not widely accepted. On the face of it, privatism seemed to hold out the most promising ideal for promoting political equality for women. As we have seen, partisans of privatism both complimented the contributions that women could make to the pacification of politics, and argued that those contributions would open new opportunities for women by redefining "the sovereignty of the male" as "a real usurpation." This case may be strengthened by the fact of republican emphases on the importance of masculinity and disdain for effeminacy—which, however much it might cut across sexual differences, was still closely tied by etymology and analysis to *femininity.* What's more, for many (and perhaps most) republicans, from the fact that gender was not exclusively or primarily a category of sexual differentiation, it did not follow that social and political equality for women was any more realistic in the eighteenth century than it had been in the ancient polities. For example, Abigail Adams' admonishment to her (republican) husband John that the creators of the new republic "remember the ladies" incited his laughter about this new "tribe" who "were grown discontented" (Shuffelton 2004, 148, 154; cf. Gelles 2002).

Yet here as elsewhere, we may be misled by the conceptual legacy of the gender constructs we have inherited, and we may miss critical features of our predecessors' self-understandings. It may appear to us that the principles and norms of privatism would have been more attractive to women than republican ideals, but among the most influential "discontents" women expressed about their status and standing—including many we now recognize as ostensibly feminist—it was republican ideals of engaged citizenship, and disdain for the limitations of civic privatism, that most frequently informed arguments for women's citizenship (see, e.g., Faure 2002; Larrère 2002; Vega 2002).

This makes sense given the substance of republican warnings about the pernicious implications of effeminacy. In fact, if republicans were right, there was good reason to expect that the promotion of effeminacy would issue in hierarchical modes of gender identity having a very specific, and not very appealing, character. This possibility derived from republican analyses of how the pursuit of private interests would not only erode commitment to the public good, but the foundations of *politesse* as well. Earlier, we noted that partisans of privatism advanced their claims by grounding them in an ontological thesis that assumed men's behavior could be changed by changing the objects of their aspiration. This was perhaps all well and good—if it could work. But (as we are all too well aware) it didn't work. As the long tradition of feminism has attested, the ascendancy of a politics of privatism did not produce the pacification of masculinity, the hope for some meaningful achievement of equality was dashed as (what Hume [1987] called) the "sovereignty of the male" was reasserted, and many found, and continue to find today, that these developments are indeed "a real usurpation." The growing triumph of effeminacy, as it turned out, was problematic in a number of ways, not the least of which had serious implications for women.

Republicans predicted that making private interests the objects of aspiration would not diminish the drive for public distinction; it merely shifted the basis of status competition from public to private goods. Republicans did not deny that the drive for distinction was responsible for the reprehensible behavior that partisans of privatism abhorred. At the same time, however, neither did they ignore the fact that the drive for distinction made possible many of the greatest, most laudable achievements and characteristics of human existence.[4]

[4] In the eighteenth century, the drive for distinction was widely cited as a fundamental, if not the most important of all human dispositions. Indeed, the differences between privatists and republicans presupposed different analyses of how commercial and political objectives would alter the expressions of the drive for distinction. Thus did Adam Smith argue that the challenge of moral economy is to find ways to "effectually gratify" what he called called "that love of distinction so natural to man" (Smith [1759] 1982, 182). Compare, similarly, Rousseau, who noted "the universal desire for reputation, honors, and preferences" that "devours us all, trains and compares

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What was in question was whether harnessing the "love of distinction so natural to man" (Smith 1759/1982, 182) to privatism, or civic commitment, was more likely to produce a preponderance of behavior favorable to promoting the promise of the commercial republic. And on this score, republicans argued, status competition that focused on the acquisition of wealth, comfort, and luxury, would—like monarchies—produce a social hierarchy in which norms of politeness and sentimentality would be crowded out

> by fixing the Desire of Applause, and the Fear of Shame, on improper and ridiculous objects. [In this,] Instead of the Good of others, or the Happiness of the Public, the Object of Pursuit naturally sinks into some unmanly and trifling Circumstance: The Vanity of Dress, Entertainments, Equipage, Furniture, of course takes Possession of the Heart. (Brown [1757] 2003, 432, our insertion)

As Brown and other partisans of participatory republicanism warned, in a more open and mobile competition for distinction, where status was based on the possession or display of material goods, fortune would favor citizens who were, as republicans argued, alternatively "rapacious, deceitful, and violent, ready to trespass on the rights of others; or servile, mercenary, and base, prepared to relinquish their own" (Ferguson [1767] 1995, 226–27). In this, the triumph of effeminacy did not mean that politeness and pacific behavior would necessarily follow, and between this fact, and the fact that many in the public at large appeared to embrace the conception of womanhood that privatists encouraged, and republicans ridiculed, it may have been a matter of conceptual necessity that the "effeminacy" of women would become a gender ideal in which servility, not equality, was the norm, and the "effeminacy" of men would become a gender ideal in which rapaciousness, not mutual respect, defined what it meant to be a man.

Mary Wollstonecraft linked these developments by suggesting that the emerging ideal of "women," emphasizing "soft phrases, susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste" is actually "almost synonymous with epithets of weakness, and that those beings who are only the objects of pity and that kind of love, which has been termed its sister, will soon become objects of contempt" (Wollstonecraft [1792] 1975, 9). In this, the belief that "With respect to the culture of the heart, it is unanimously allowed that sex is out of the question" ([1792] 1975, 52), and that men and women alike would be equal and equally polite, would be crowded out as "society, academic treatises on instruction, and philosophy have given 'a sex to mind,' 'a sex to virtue,' to souls, as well as to body" (Vega 2002, 168; Wollstonecraft passages at [1792] 1975, 36, 42). In short, when gendered categories lost their *political* moorings in ideals of civic engagement, the effect would be "preposterous distinctions of rank, which renders civilization a curse, by dividing the world between voluptuous tyrants, and cunning envious dependence, [which] corrupt[s], almost equally, every class of people" ([1792] 1975, 144, our insertion), including, not least, the 'men' and 'women' who would be *citizens*.

These republican predictions about the effects of the triumph of effeminacy, and Wollstonecraft's intimation that the evisceration of the civic dimension of gender identity was being filled by sexually grounded gender differentiations, appear to have been borne out in the insights of recent scholarship on the history of gender. Articulating an increasingly widely accepted interpretive thesis, Helene Moglen argues that in course of the eighteenth century, "at the same time that permeable boundaries of class were replacing inflexible differentiations of inherited position, the boundary that separated male from female was increasingly experienced as too formidable to be crossed" (Moglen 2001, 2). Assumptions about continuities between men and women—for example in their emotional constitution (e.g., Ellison 1999), in their desires and wants (e.g., Barker-Benfield 1992, xxvi–xxvii), and even in their sexual identities (e.g., Moglen, 3)—were undermined as many of the "uneasy alliances between so-called 'natural' distinctions between the sexes, and gender practices and roles" sharpened, and "an oppositional 'two-sex model"' began to solidify, especially in the later decades of the century, producing "the more fixed and essential notions of gender difference that inaugurated the 'modern' regime of compulsory heterosexuality" (Wilson 2003, 23). The result, as Mary Poovey put it, was a discourse of gender predicated on the "model of a binary opposition between the sexes, which . . . underwrote an entire system of institutional practices and conventions . . . , ranging from a sexual division of labor to a sexual division of economic and political rights" (Poovey 1988, 8).

Defining an appropriate gender of *engaged* citizenship for women in this context required navigating the shoals of a deferential delicacy, the debilitations of a sexualized identity, and accusations of gender transgression that increasingly hemmed in efforts to develop an account of 'republican womanhood' that was also clear of charges of effeminacy. In attempting to work around the femininity of privatism, which it seems most "discontented" women believed would make them—like the effeminate women who populated the courts of the nobility and the salons of the well-to-do—objects of ridicule, many women tried to define their civic duties as promoting a 'sensibility' that went well beyond the pacification of civic ardor, to encouraging men to rein-in their propensities for self-indulgence.

Mary Wollstonecraft described this role politically in the "Dedication" to her *Vindication of the Rights of Women:*

> The personal reserve, and sacred respect for cleanliness and delicacy in domestic life, which French women almost

our talents and strengths," and to which "we owe what is best and worst among men, our virtues and vices" ([1750] 1987, 78). Or Adam Ferguson, who believed that "Ambition, the love of personal eminence, and the desire of fame, is the principle object of pursuit" in society, so much so that "any diminution of their prevalence or force" can have a "fatal effect in the state." ([1767] 1995, 244–45). Or, finally, consider Tocqueville, who said, "ambition is the universal feeling" ([1835] 1961, 299).

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> despise, are the graceful pillars of modesty; but, far from despising them, if the pure flame of patriotism have reached their bosoms, they should labour to improve the morals of their fellow-citizens, by teaching men, not only to respect modesty in women, but to acquire it themselves, as the only way to merit their esteem. (Wollstonecraft [1792] 1975, 4)

Such "patriotism" of course required an account of an appropriate and effective political sociology, and like many early modern (proto)feminists, Wollstonecraft recruited the otherwise "traditional" roles of motherhood and familial relations to advance the cause of women's citizenship. This served as a response to republican prejudices that assumed women's roles in the private sphere did not have public bearing or import, as well as a challenge to the emerging discourse of gender as a sexually defined identity. As Wollstonecraft argued, the civic commitments required of women in the family were necessary to breaking the schizophrenic treatment of women as long-suffering servants or objects of physical desire, and helping men develop the familial commitments that were integral to good citizenship:

> Let there be then no coercion *established* in society, and the common law of gravity prevailing, the sexes will fall into their proper places. And, now that more equitable laws are forming your citizens, marriage may become more sacred: your young men may choose wives from motives of affection, and your maidens allow love to root out vanity.
>
> The father of a family will not then weaken his constitution and debase his sentiments, by visiting the harlot, nor forget, in obeying the call of appetite, the purpose for which it was implanted. And, the mother will not neglect her children to practise the arts of coquetry, when sense and modesty secure her the friendship of her husband. (Wollstonecraft [1792] 1975, 6)

What may be most important in these constructions, however, is that grounding women's identities in their *partnership* with men offered a footing for claims of equality *in the public duties and responsibilities of citizenship.* Compared to this, the supposed equality of privatism paled. At best, privatism promised an equality that reduced "men" and "women" to effeminate roles; it offered an equality of opportunity in which men and women alike were set free to indulge in ostentatious display and conspicuous consumption. Given the drive for distinction, however, the real effect of these pursuits would be the establishment of a status regime based on invidious comparison, and one in which women were systematically disadvantaged. What Wollstonecraft also, perhaps tragically, makes apparent, is that the challenge of defining gender by the demands of citizenship, was an ideal that was already on the wane. This is clearly evident in her effort to contend with the charge that her ideal of female gender identity was of "masculine women":

> I am aware of an obvious inference:—from every quarter have I heard exclamations against masculine women; but where are they to be found? If by this appellation men mean to inveigh against their ardour in hunting, shooting, and gaming, I shall most cordially join in the cry; but if it be against the imitation of manly virtues, or, more properly speaking, the attainment of those talents and virtues, the exercise of which ennobles the human character, and which raises females in the scale of animal being, when they are comprehensively termed mankind;—all those who view them with a philosophical eye must, I should think, wish with me, that they may every day grow more and more masculine. (Wollstonecraft [1792] 1975, 8)

Wollstonecraft's ([1792] 1975) hope was that if women were going to be criticized for trying to be like men, it would be because they were trying to live up to an ideal of citizenship to which, in her day, too many men had themselves fallen short. It was in this sense that she wished that women, and men themselves, would "grow more and more masculine," and when reading her appeals, we ought not allow our proclivities for anachronism to prompt attributions of confusion in her arguments (Wingrove 2005). The alternatives were, for Wollstonecraft and other women who sought the standing of *citizen*, clear: On one side, there was the choice of citizenship and the gendered—in context, masculine—characteristics that made civic commitment *for males and females* meaningful. On the other side, the choice was effeminacy, and the gendered characteristics—in context, those ideally-typically identified with the femininity of "women of condition"—that promised little more than a form of life in which "the disparities of rank and fortune which are necessary to the pursuit or enjoyment of luxury" made some citizens (sic!) "mercenary and servile," others "imperious and arrogant," and where "the manners of a society changed for the worse" and forms of gender developed in which both *men and women* "cease to act on principles of equality, independence, or freedom" (Ferguson [1767] 1995, 237).

In her path breaking analysis of gender in political theory, Hannah Pitkin noted that "'effeminate' is not the same as 'feminine,' and in principle one might condemn effeminate men without disparaging women" (1999, 110). As Pitkin's analysis shows, this conceptual distinction may not have been critical to pre-modern thinkers, like Machiavelli, for whom women, womanly conduct, femininity, and effeminacy formed a constellation of identities and behaviors antithetical to manly citizenship. But for later thinkers, who were trying to craft new modes and orders for modern commercial society, the "principled" separation of gender and sex Pitkin intimates emerges—perhaps of necessity—as a critical matter of conceptual and political dispute. In a context where some "men" *publicly embraced* and others *publicly disavowed* the demands of civic commitment, and where some women *publicly embraced* the ideals of effeminacy and others *publicly disavowed* their pernicious effects, the effeminate, the feminine, masculinity, and citizenship were not—even if they later became—attributes reducible to sexual differentiation. What made a 'man' and a 'woman' was still a question the answer to which might require "condemning effeminate men without disparaging women," and it might, just as importantly, require condemning effeminate women without disparaging females.

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In all this, there may be valuable lessons about gender and citizenship to be learned from participatory republican concerns about the dangers of effeminacy. And it may be, as it was for partisans of civic commitment in the eighteenth century, that these concerns should be as important for those who believe that they are 'real men' and 'real women' as it is for those who seek the promise of good citizenship and a robust democratic politics.

ORNAMENTAL MASCULINITY AND THE "DECLINE OF CITIZENSHIP"

The triumph of privatism in the commercial republic has had a profound impact on the gender of citizenship. Today, it seems, what early modern advocates of civic privatism wanted, and what early modern participatory republicans feared, has come to pass. American civic life has become a kind of 'natural experiment' for assessing whether privatists or participatory republicans were right about the effects of a civic identity in which we "rate our fellow citizens by the *figure* they are able to make; by their buildings, their equipage, and the train of their followers" (Ferguson [1767] 1995, 239).

The lessons of eighteenth-century republican arguments would lead us to conclude that the obsession with individual economic gain, and the accumulation of material possessions and their display, are not proper objects of "manly" concerns. Moreover, those arguments suggest that the particular configuration of the drive for distinction and privatism helps explain how "masculinity" and "femininity" today assume a binary, hierarchically arranged, sexually grounded, and behaviorally defined, form. Certainly many men no longer consider their duties as citizens to be the defining characteristics of their manliness, and many women no longer find any conceptual space in the discourse of citizenship where the concerns of gender are not constrained by the constructs of, to use the more contemporary parlance, compulsory heterosexuality.

According to the republican critique of effeminacy, those who are dominant *and* those who are subordinated, both men *and* women, are diminished by those conditions in which private interests and private concerns define the identities of citizens. In this light, contemporary accounts of "success" in America—"taking care of number one," acting on what eighteenth-century thinkers would have called the drive for distinction, the assumption that "nice guys finish last"—appear to confirm that the triumph of effeminacy has proceeded apace in American political culture. And at least one contemporary feminist has similarly argued that "[d]isconnecting it from meaningful social purpose" turns "power-striving" into a force that readily fits in a "society drained of context, saturated with a competitive individualism that has been robbed of craft or utility, and ruled by commercial values that revolve around who has the most, the best, the biggest, the fastest" (Faludi 1999, 599).

Susan Faludi's book *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man* (1999) provides a provocative opportunity for bringing together early modern republican concerns about effeminacy, contemporary discourses on civic engagement and citizenship, and feminist concerns about contemporary masculinity.[5] Faludi's original goal in writing *Stiffed* was to find out why men continue to resist feminism. In the end, what she concluded was that "the femininity that has hurt men the most is an artificial femininity manufactured and marketed by commercial interests," because it presupposed as its gendered complement an ersatz masculine identity, "ornamental masculinity." And the fundamental problem was that these mutually constitutive, and all-too-common, conceptions of femininity and masculinity were part and parcel of a postwar American "enslavement to glamour" (599).

Faludi's analysis of "ornamental masculinity" offers a contemporary view of what men (and women) have become that in many ways complements early modern republican analyses. At first sight, the historical plot of Faludi's argument suggests a narrative of decline not unlike that informing the received view in contemporary civic discourse: American masculinity and American citizenship were once better, and are now worse (e.g., American Political Science Association 2004; 5; Putnam 1996). But where she—and most feminists, and most participatory republicans—would differ from the received view is in explaining the so-called "decline of citizenship" as a moment in a long-developing pattern of change in which privatism has altered the meaning of gender and the conditions of its expression.

As recent histories of gender suggest, the doleful predictions of participatory republicans may have been overdetermined, even if the most severe expressions of those predictions have only recently come to pass. The first step in this process, the elevation of the private and domestic sphere over the public sphere, was well under way by the turn of the nineteenth century (Felski 1995, 19). The effect was that as the eighteenth century ended and the nineteenth century began, men became more uncertain about their political, economic, and social anchorage, and a new anxiety about the nature of masculinity came to the force. "Now," writes Michael Kimmel, "manhood had to be proved," and in the intervening years, the legacy this challenge left was that "the idea of testing and proving one's manhood became one of the defining experiences in American men's lives" (Kimmel 1996, 6, 2). It is the form that "proof" took that links republican criticisms of effeminacy, through the history of gender in America, with the "effeminate," "ornamental" masculinity Faludi describes.

A key development in this unfolding story followed from the new-found importance of private life (cf. Sennett 1978). Feminist scholars have long observed the growing importance of the "sentimental family" (Okin 1982), but among the most significant

[5] It should be noted here—as the preceding paragraphs suggest—that there is a very important part of the modern history of gender that we cannot consider here, namely, how gender identity is progressively renegotiated between the eighteenth century and the present. See, for example, Bederrman 1995; Fletcher 1995; Roper and Tosh 1991. Nor have we been able to include the ways in which the emergence of discourses about homosexuality affected these discourses on gender.

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consequences of the emphasis on family and domestic concerns was the rather ironic effect that men came to see escape from the domestic as a defining characteristic of their identities and their differences from women (Hitchcock and Cohen 1999, 15–17). What's more, these "fantasies of escape" (Kimmel 1996, 43) seemed to confirm republican predictions of how effeminacy would corrupt the characters of men. As Kimmel describes it, it was (as some like Wollstonecraft encouraged) "mothers' and wives' efforts to civilize men" against which (as Wollstonecraft feared) masculinity came to be defined (Kimmel, 60, 43). Clearly, being a man meant something quite other than fulfilling one's 'public' duties as husband and father, and Faludi's argument that "The man controlling his environment is today the prevailing American image of masculinity" is but a derivation of the escapist ideal established long ago. A "family man" is hardly the kind of man who "is expected to prove himself not by being part of society but by being untouched by it, soaring above it," or believes his manhood means that "He is to travel unfettered, beyond society's clutches, alone—making or breaking whatever or whoever crosses his path" (Faludi 1999, 10).

But if the "private" sphere of the domestic was no place of fulfillment, the "public" space where men sought the validation of their masculinity was in some ways even more corrosive to their civic identity. Not only was it the case that one influential model of American masculinity came to be the "Self-Made Man," but also being "self-made" itself came to mean "success in the market, individual achievement, mobility, wealth." As Kimmel put it, "America expressed political autonomy; the Self-Made Man embodied economic autonomy" (Kimmel 1996, 23). Yet, to the same extent that this model of American masculinity retained its influence, the conditions of its realization were eroded. In light of the march of industrialization, the centralization and concentration of economic power, and the changing frontiers of opportunity to realize manhood by means of "the market, mobility, and wealth," perhaps it was to be expected that there would be profound changes in the ways that the "self-made man" would try to "create" himself.

For Faludi, this is perhaps the most significant development in the history of American masculinity. As she says, "It's often been observed that the economic transition from industry to service, or from production to consumption, is symbolically a move from the traditional masculine to the traditional feminine. But in gender terms, the transition is far more than a simple sex change and, so, more traumatic for men than we realize." However reprehensible we may find "A society of utility, for all the indisputable ways that it exploited men's health and labor, and in an industrial context broke the backs and spirits of factory workers and destroyed the lungs of miners" it nonetheless "had one saving grace": it still allowed manhood to be in part defined "by character, by the inner qualities of stoicism, integrity, reliability, the ability to shoulder burdens, the willingness to put others first, the desire to protect and provide and sacrifice" (Faludi 1999, 38–39).

But like republicans of the past, who found that the successes of modernity were made possible by virtues those same successes ultimately undermined (e.g., Ferguson [1767] 1995, 196), Faludi locates the corruption of American masculinity in the very achievements it made possible. The sacrifices and selflessness of American men, which helped lay the foundations for "The American century," also "elevated winning to the very apex of manhood while at the same time disconnecting it from meaningful social purpose" (1999, 598). Having created a society in which it seemed that the future was secure and happy, American culture was transformed from one "in which men in particular participated by being useful in public life," to one in which they were "surrounded by a culture that encourages people to play almost no functional public roles, only decorative or consumer ones" (Faludi 1999, 34).

The upshot was that although "being first seemed to be all that mattered" to many men (Faludi 1999, 598), for American society the bitter harvest of modern masculinity is that proving oneself 'as a man' now is more likely to take the form of the satisfying illusion of control through violence (37) or perhaps the imitation of celebrity (35). In an analysis akin to those we see in eighteenth century critiques of commercial society, Faludi's account targets the peculiar concatenation of the desire for social regard and recognition, and a status system that rewards behaviors that promote the self rather than society. Driven by aspirations to demonstrate their merit, yet living in a society where status norms often generate behavior that is at best vain and empty, and at worst socially destructive, Faludi draws attention to the stark evidence of how men in such contexts come to define themselves by being (as Adam Ferguson [1767/1995] said) "rapacious, deceitful, and violent, ready to trespass on the rights of others," or "servile, mercenary, and base, prepared to relinquish their own." The final irony, however, is that ornamental masculinity, in all of its selfish, self-centered, vain, posturing, profligate glory, has turned men into gendered creatures virtually indistinct from the kind of women whose femininity "has hurt men the most," namely, the "artificial femininity manufactured and marketed by commercial interests" (Faludi, 38).

Of course there is no denying that men and women "arrived at their ornamental imprisonment by different routes." Although "Women were relegated there as a sop for their exclusion from the realm of power-striving men" (Faludi 1999, 599), men came to it believing they might still inhabit "a world where men cared for each other" (Faludi, 602) only to discover that they were left, as Rousseau once predicted, with "no more sincere friendships, no more real esteem, no more well-founded confidence," and the "suspicions, offenses, coldness, reserve, hatred, [and] betrayal" that "hide under that uniform and deceitful veil of politeness, under that much vaunted urbanity" that we owe to modern "progress" (Rousseau [1750] 1987, 4–5). Nonetheless, both sexes have come to be defined by an "ornamental"—or "effeminate"—gender ideal, stripped of any civic dimension, albeit one that has taken on either "dominant" or "subordinated" forms

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and the corresponding behaviors appropriate to the "masculinity" and "femininity" they embody.

As Barbara Ehrenreich despairs, "in so much of our culture . . . masculinity has meant freedom, motion and adventure, while women stood for entrapment, stasis, and 'civilization"' (Ehrenreich 1995, 285). Today, however, it is the pernicious forms that "freedom, motion, adventure, entrapment, stasis, and civilization" share as expressions of gender without civic content that suggests just how difficult it may to *re-engender citizenship.* After the eighteenth century and the rise of civic privatism, after many long decades, even centuries, of continued—and stunting—struggle by men and women to "prove" their gender by appearances, possessions, and manners alone, perhaps we can learn something that republicans long ago, and feminists today, both recognized: the quality of our democracy will depend on which of the *genders* of citizenship we choose for ourselves, and expect of each other.

MEN, WOMEN, AND THE GENDERS OF CITIZENSHIP

Our thesis is grounded in a conceptual history of modern gender discourse. Several related points of analytical import follow from our account: An appreciation of the historicity of gender and the theoretical myopia that anachronism can generate; an understanding that masculinity (or "human nature" generally) was not always and need not be defined by the drive for self interest and domination; and the most fundamental point we would emphasize, namely, that running through ideals of citizenship are deep gender structures the inflections of which may influence our thinking in ways we should, but may not always, recognize.

Genders are about how people act and how people describe their *political* ideals. These ideals can be deployed politically in a number of ways. Genders involve multiple accounts of both masculinity and femininity, and they are neither fixed throughout time, nor is the sex-gender binary always the most salient feature of a particular set of gender categories. We have shown that, in eighteenth century thinking about republicanism, gender could be configured in a number of ways. The most important point is that it was a change in *political* circumstances, and in particular the decline of republican, and the rise of privatist, models of citizenship, that led to the most significant changes in arguments about appropriate gender roles. By the time masculinity could be attributed to a "self-made man," the distinction between manliness and "effeminacy" was blurred as men pursued private interests and no longer saw public virtue as a part of their gendered identities.

What are the implications of this finding for contemporary thinking about gender and politics? In the first instance, we have tried to complicate our usual understandings of "gender." In so doing, we have shown that assuming that gender, and the contrast between men and women, presuppose fixed political categories is likely to elicit overdrawn and often anachronistic analyses and interpretations. What this also suggests is that we should be increasingly suspicious of accounts of a simple and straightforward difference between "public" and "private," and the roles of men and women in these spheres.

Second, we have cast doubts on much of current ways of thinking about gender and politics. Insofar as political scientists assume that gender is a kind of fixed identity that is given, and grounded, outside of the political arena, they are likely to miss what is most interesting about the intersection of politics and gender. For constructions of gender are political in their very constitution. So, for example, when scholars interested in civic engagement distinguish men from women—as opposed to, say, *civic* and *privatist* conceptions of masculinity and femininity—they may have already prejudged, even distorted, critical distinctions necessary for developing robust explanations of gender and citizenship.

Third, the eighteenth-century thinkers whose ideas are vindicated by more recent histories of gender suggested this point to us: "effeminate" men and women cannot be lured back into being citizens. It is not yet clear whether or how we can transform current ways of conceiving gender in order to advance a "democratic masculinity" (Kimmel 1996), or "civic masculinity," or "robust femininity" (Snyder 1999), or any other form of actively involved genders of citizenship. One thing is certain, though: changing our conceptions of citizenship to create greater levels of citizen engagement will implicate our current ways of deploying and thinking about gender, and improving our civic life will require conceptions of gender clearly at odds with those that define masculinity and femininity in the modern commercial republic.

Our intention in this essay was to open a conceptual space in which republicanism and feminism can contribute to the development of a democratic discourse that can address, however modestly, the challenge of repairing our tattered civic life. Establishing the pernicious implications of effeminacy in the "ornamental masculinity" and "artificial femininity" of contemporary public life is an important step in that direction. Yet even when the received categories of gender are destabilized, there remain critical questions about the duties and privileges of citizenship, and how men and women might respond to those demands and opportunities. Those challenges, and trying to create new conceptualizations of civic identity equally available to men and women, will hinge in part, today as they did on the cusp of modernity, on which of the genders of citizenship we embrace. If nothing else, we hope to have suggested that a vibrant democratic civic life will require much more than 'real men' and 'real women' who define their identities in *effeminate* ways.

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