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Conclusion and Rejoinders

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At a time when both the value of gender mainstreaming as well as of higher education itself is being debated, this collection of essays on gender mainstreaming in the discipline of political science is an important rejoinder regarding the necessity of both. First, implicit in these essays is a reminder that the value of a college education resides as much in its contribution to the maintenance of democratic life in the United States as it does in the possibility of earning a good salary. Indeed, entwined with the advocacy of gender mainstreaming in the discipline of political science is a belief that the discipline itself contributes to the development of empowered democratic citizens and the cultivation of a

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robust political culture.[1] The study and teaching of politics is part of how we learn to participate in political life: political science is a form of civic education. Including women — all women as well as all men — in the curriculum of political science ensures the vitality of our democracy. Further, including women in the discipline both as faculty and as students ensures that the agenda of the discipline itself will be transformed. After a decade of gender mainstreaming, the goal remains not only to ensure that women become part of the mainstream, but also that they transform the mainstream.

Gender mainstreaming is not about quotas. Sometimes there is a mistaken perception that gender mainstreaming in political science will have been achieved when there are equal numbers of male and female faculty or even equal numbers of male and female political science majors. But this is decidedly not the goal. In fact, gender mainstreaming may not even ultimately be about achieving a specific goal. Rather, the aim of gender mainstreaming is more radical. It is about processes — about the compilation of textbooks and the education of faculty, about the resources available to students and the creativity and imagination of progressive pedagogies, about adaptive institutions and thoughtful, equitable hiring, about fairly funded research that reflects complicated, lived realities, as well as conceptions of democracy that ensure a flourishing civic life. As Marsha Lyle-Gonga details, the political science classroom is a microcosm of the process by which the challenges of democracy can be taught not only by reading material, but also through thoughtfully staged pedagogical exercises and techniques.

Gender mainstreaming is a process of transformation that is both modest and bold. On the side of modesty is Angela Bos and Erin Cassese's simple but significant recommendation that political science textbooks reflect and engage historical and contemporary realities. Women's political history, stretching back to the Western tradition's first civil disobedient, Antigone, must be included in our understanding of the history of politics. Gender mainstreaming is a demand, too, that women not be sequestered into a single chapter, consolidated into an ossified *other* without race, class, or ethnicity. It's an old claim from second-wave feminism — answer the question, where were the women? Or more pointedly, which women were doing what when? How did they shape political life? What issues were most germane to them during various periods in American political history?

1. Among the surfeit of books on this subject, see, most recently, Martha Nussbaum (2010).

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Continuing this thread that gender mainstreaming cannot be confined to a brightly colored marginal box in a college textbook, Leanne Doherty's essay makes another modest but influential demand that gender mainstreaming entails offering female undergraduates in political science opportunities to participate in a wide range of political activities. These service learning projects not only create the possibility of more women running and winning political office (although that remains an important feature of gender mainstreaming), but also ensure that women and the issues important to them will more regularly set the agenda, that women will control more of the economic and political resources, and that women will have the knowledge and access to the networks that ensure their participation in all facets of political life.

But gender mainstreaming also makes newer, bolder demands, including the demand that political science must recognize that, without gender analysis, we cannot understand political realities. Because gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power, without a gender analytic we cannot understand contemporary American presidential politics — not Sarah Palin, not Rick Santorum, not the "man-cession of 2009" (Scott 1986). As a recent issue of this journal noted, one cannot understand international realities "without recognition of the profoundly gendered nature of international politics, particularly issues of national security, where identities and policies associated with a militarized form of masculinity are so very evident and where women are usually absent."[2] We certainly cannot understand the Arab Spring in Egypt without attention to how women, both positively (the massive grassroots organizing provoked by the blue bra episode) and negatively (by elite women's continued allegiance to the Mubarak regime) are shaping the emerging Egyptian state. And surely there is no political scientist left who, after the Beijing Conference of 1995, does not know that we cannot understand poverty and development without attention to gender (see, for example, Kristof and WuDunn 2010).

Gender mainstreaming in the discipline of political science means recognizing, too, that the boundaries of the discipline itself are configured by gender. What counts as politics has a gendered history, as the 1970s mantra, "the personal is political," made clear. Understanding how the border between the political and the personal, between the public and private, has been historically negotiated through

2. See Critical Perspectives on Gender and Politics in the December 2011 issue of *Politics & Gender*, "The State of Feminist Security Studies: A Conversation," pp. 551–604.

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constructions of gender as well as race, class, and ethnicity is the contemporary work of gender mainstreaming. Amy Atchison's "virtuous feedback loop" is a contemporary instantiation of the insight that reexamining and, in some cases, exposing the limits of the assumptions embedded in the construction of the discipline itself may be one of the most productive ways to ensure more gender equity in our political culture. Gender is not optional in political science. One cannot even begin the work of our discipline without it.

Ultimately, gender mainstreaming in political science is about both what happens inside the discipline (number of faculty, textbooks, and research agendas) and how our discipline reaches into the world to ensure gender empowerment — economic, sociocultural, familial, legal, political, and psychological in American life. Political science is not a field with the luxury of answering only to the career demands of the Ivory Tower; it is a discipline with a history and obligation of addressing the pressing injustices of our democracy. And gender mainstreaming remains one very good way to continue that tradition.

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