

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER AND POLITICS

Critical Perspectives on Men and Masculinities in Politics: Introduction

Elin Bjarnegård, Uppsala University, Sweden

Rainbow Murray, Queen Mary University of London

doi:10.1017/S1743923X18000132

The purpose of these *Critical Perspectives* is to consider gender gaps in politics with a specific focus on men, as opposed to the traditional focus on women. The study of gender and politics implies the gendered study of both sexes, yet very little scholarship within this large body of research has men as its primary object of study. We argue that a critical focus on men is necessary to understand the nature of male dominance, the way that male power is wielded and perpetuated, and the negative effects this has for politicians and citizens of both sexes. Reframing the question of gender and representation permits the identification of new research agendas focusing explicitly on men's dominance in politics rather than women's marginalization or underrepresentation. New questions and research areas within the field of gender and politics are invoked, and these essays will demonstrate that the study of men, masculinities, and politics is fertile ground for research, requiring much greater exploration.

The critical nature of this research distinguishes it from the many existing studies of men that accept the norm of male dominance without considering its gendered origins and repercussions. The essays in this section are deeply rooted in the norms and goals of feminist scholarship on gender and politics while proposing that the focus of this scholarship be expanded in exciting new directions that cast important new light on work within the discipline. A focus on men is a necessary complement to, rather than a substitute for, existing scholarship on women; both theoretically and empirically, researching both sexes in tandem has the potential greatly to enrich our knowledge and understanding of gender in politics.

Published by Cambridge University Press 1743-923X/18 \$30.00 for The Women and Politics Research Section of the American Political Science Association.

© The Women and Politics Research Section of the American Political Science Association, 2018.

These essays demonstrate some of the ways in which a focus on men *as men* can take concepts developed within the literature on women and politics and offer new and important insights that have not yet been explored. Themes that we explore include feminist institutionalism; political recruitment; descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation; and intersectionality. Alongside our illustration of the theoretical contributions that a focus on men can offer in all these areas, we include an essay highlighting the distinctive methodological challenges presented by critically studying men and masculinities, especially for women.

Collectively, these essays illuminate a burgeoning new research agenda on men and masculinities in politics, illustrating some of the many ways in which the current emphasis on women within gender and politics research could be expanded fruitfully to include critical research on men.

Revisiting Forms of Representation by Critically Examining Men

Elin Bjarnegård, Uppsala University, Sweden

Rainbow Murray, Queen Mary University of London

doi:10.1017/S1743923X18000144

Research on gender and politics has made use of Pitkin's (1967) distinction between descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation to conceptualize and understand the different facets of women's underrepresentation and misrepresentation. The corresponding overrepresentation of men has seldom been explicitly recognized in this literature. We explore what the critical study of men and masculinities could contribute to the study of different forms of representation. Researching the descriptive overrepresentation of men implies recognizing male dominance and turning our attention from the factors that constrain women from entering politics to the factors that enable and reproduce men's presence. Researching the substantive representation of men also implies investigating *how* men represent men and identifying whether hegemonic masculinities privilege the representation of some men while neglecting others. Finally, a study of