



Book Reviews

Gender Equality, Intersectionality, and Diversity in Europe.
By Lise Rolandsen Agustín. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 220 pp. \$85 (Hardcover).

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Why is it so challenging for institutional and noninstitutional actors to establish an intersectional approach to gender equality policy when operating in a transnational sphere like the European Union? According to Lise Rolandsen Agustín, the key issues for institutionalizing intersectionality are competing policy frames, the interface between political institutions and civil society organizations, and, finally, the institutional setting of the EU itself. She anchors her analysis of gender equality and intersectionality in the EU by focusing on “ideas in transnational, European politics and their institutionalization as frames, taking into account the dimension of agency as well as the particular opportunity structures, which may be available in the immediate institutional context” (13). Rolandsen Agustín not only covers recent developments in European gender policies, she also examines historical roots, legislative changes, and the institutional context. Her approach is similar to that of Van der Vleuten (2007) and Kantola (2010), who both acknowledge the specific institutional dynamics of the EU — not a nation-state, though a state-like institutional setting with distinctive opportunities and challenges for policy making.

In the first part of her study, Rolandsen Agustín develops a sound theoretical and methodological framework that draws on several prominent and state-of-the-art approaches. She links gendered discursive institutionalism, critical frame analysis, and political opportunity structures in a model that relies on three key dimensions: ideas (policy frames), agency (policy-making actors), and context (transnational

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space). Since these three dimensions are interrelated, Rolandsen Agustín argues that empirical studies of intersectionality need to focus also on the “space-in-between” (39) ideas, agency, and context.

The two following chapters zoom in on the policy-making interface between EU institutions and civil society organizations in gender equality matters. Here, Rolandsen Agustín scrutinizes, in particular, the dimensions of agency and context. Her analysis reveals that one of the main obstacles to institutionalizing intersectionality lies in the preference of EU institutions to interact with only *one* large umbrella organization in each area of discrimination, whereas civil society organizations often attempt to address intersectionality. As a result of exclusionary practices by EU institutions, civil society organizations in different gender equality arenas tend to compete rather than cooperate with each other. Rolandsen Agustín’s thorough analysis of EU institutional practices and transnational women’s organizations methodically dissects the complexities of EU policy making, highlighting its constantly changing legal scope as well as the different arenas for participation and institutional policy response, thus generating for the reader well-lit “space-in-between” ideas, agency, and context in EU gender policies.

A compelling finding of Rolandsen Agustín’s study is that the interface between EU institutions and civil society organizations not only generates competition among civil society organizations, but can also lead to processes of degendering. Tracing the history of EU policies on gender-based violence since the 1980s, in the next three chapters she examines how discursive practices changed from a human rights frame to a public health frame and more recently back to a human rights frame. She ties these shifting frames to the struggles over the distribution of competences between transnational and national level political actors on the one hand, and to the EU-level institutional misfit between addressing this policy issue and legal constraints on the other hand.

Rolandsen shows that fights over the distribution of rights and competences are not the exception but rather the rule in EU policy making. Competency struggles in gender-based violence policy not only occur between supranational and national political actors; they also take place among and within EU institutions, in particular between Directorates-General of the Commission. When Rolandsen Agustín addresses the reasons for specific EU institutions in particular historical contexts choosing one dominant frame over another, she underlines that this by no means implies that other frames disappear. In fact, different frames coexist over time. One question that emerges from this finding is

what role women's organizations play in keeping alternative frames in play. Here, Rolandsen Agustín seems to undercut her initial hypothesis about the interaction of EU institutions and women's organizations. In the narrative she presents on gender-based violence frames, the discussions and frame shifts take place among only EU institutions, while civil society organizations are relegated to a passive audience. Future research might produce more insights into the actual role of civil society organizations in developing and institutionalizing dominant and alternative frames of gender-based violence, particularly at the intersection of gender and ethnicity.

Another puzzle that remains underexplored in Rolandsen Agustín's study is why women's organizations as well as EU institutions fail to protect the frame of gender equality as a crosscutting issue considering the prominent position of gender equality advocates in EU institutions and civil society. On the contrary, the attempt to address multiple discriminations seems to have almost automatically triggered a process of degendering gender equality policies rather than the reverse, namely the engendering of other fields of discrimination.

In sum, Rolandsen Agustín's study provides an excellent analysis of the interface between EU institutions and civil society as well as of the institutionalization of intersectionality. Reaching far beyond the policy issue of gender-based violence, it contributes valuable insights into the practices of EU policy making more generally. Her detailed account unveils how the struggles over framing and competences between and among supranational and national level institutional and civil society actors lead to policy frames that are often neither expected nor intended. Beyond providing us with a thick policy process analysis, Rolandsen Agustín contributes to several crucial research debates. She develops a thorough theoretical conceptualization of gendered discursive institutionalism. Her study also enhances the method of critical frame analysis by complementing the essential textual analysis of documents with elite interviews and thus highlighting how policy frames are employed in day-to-day policy practice. She reminds us that the choice of policy frames not only depends on which ideas are being pursued, but to a great extent on the institutional and legal contexts available to politicians, bureaucrats, and civil society actors.

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From Global to Grassroots: The European Union, Transnational Advocacy, and Combating Violence against Women. By Celeste Montoya. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. 272 pp. \$65.

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In *From Global to Grassroots: The European Union, Transnational Advocacy, and Combatting Violence against Women*, Celeste Montoya endeavors to explore the European Union's impact on improving local opportunities to end violence against women. Attentive to policy rhetoric, she maintains that the international community's higher standards are often imperiled on the ground. Her research thus seeks to explain the gaps between global rhetoric and local practices by mapping out the jurisdictional divide that advocates must cross to increase the responsiveness of authorities to abused women.

After a valuable review of the general literature pertaining to political opportunity structures, international organizations, and advocacy networks, Montoya moves to a European terrain of the 27 (currently 28) EU member states and several candidate countries. Her cartography of multilevel governance covers the EU's recent treaties, central institutions, and multiple strategies with attention to their potential to address violence against women. Throughout she recognizes their disparate impact on particular groups of women and various states. With the exception of her occasional reference to candidate countries as member states (e.g., Montenegro and Turkey, 212), her mapping skills provide the book with its greatest asset.

Montoya's diagrams and her concise user-friendly guide to the EU's central institutions offer an antidote to confusion surrounding the