

**Gendering Institutions: The Political Recruitment of  
Women in Post-Devolution Scotland**

**Meryl Kenny**

# Contents

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>CONTENTS .....</b>  | <b>I</b>   |
| <b>LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES .....</b>  | <b>VI</b>  |
| <b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>  | <b>VII</b> |
| <b>ABSTRACT .....</b>  | <b>IX</b>  |
| <b>DECLARATION.....</b>  | <b>XI</b>  |
| <b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS .....</b>                                    | <b>XII</b> |
| <b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....</b>   | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>Gender, Politics and Institutions: New Approaches and Directions .....</b>      | <b>4</b>   |
| <b>Why Political Recruitment? .....</b>  | <b>6</b>   |
| <b>Why Scotland? .....</b>   | <b>7</b>   |
| <b>Structure of Text.....</b>  | <b>9</b>   |
| <b>CHAPTER TWO: GENDER AND THE INSTITUTIONS OF POLITICAL<br/>RECRUITMENT .....</b> | <b>13</b>  |
| <b>I: The Comparative Literature on Political Recruitment .....</b>                | <b>14</b>  |
| <b>II: The Supply and Demand Model.....</b>  | <b>16</b>  |
| The Dynamics of Supply and Demand.....   | 19         |
| A Critique of Supply-Side Explanations.....  | 21         |
| The Limiting Power of Demand .....   | 25         |
| Theorizing Institutional Interconnections.....                                     | 26         |
| <b>III: Taking the Model Forward: An Institutionalist Approach.....</b>            | <b>28</b>  |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Conclusion .....   | 34        |
| <b>CHAPTER THREE: TOWARDS A FEMINIST INSTITUTIONALISM .....</b>                              | <b>35</b> |
| <b>I: Feminist Political Science: An Institutional ‘Turn’ .....</b>                          | <b>35</b> |
| From ‘Sex’ to ‘Gender’ .....   | 36        |
| Patriarchy, Gender Regimes, and the Gender Order.....  | 37        |
| Theorizing Gendered Institutions .....   | 39        |
| Moving Beyond the Numbers? .....   | 42        |
| <b>II: The New Institutionalism: One or Many?.....</b>                                       | <b>44</b> |
| Rational Choice Institutionalism .....   | 45        |
| Sociological Institutionalism .....  | 49        |
| Historical Institutionalism .....  | 52        |
| <b>III: New Institutionalism and Feminist Political Science: Creating a dialogue .....</b>   | <b>57</b> |
| Conclusion .....   | 61        |
| <b>CHAPTER FOUR: CONNECTING GENDER, POWER, AND CHANGE ....</b>                               | <b>63</b> |
| <b>I: Defining Institutions .....</b>  | <b>63</b> |
| <b>II: Gender .....</b>  | <b>67</b> |
| <b>III: Power.....</b>   | <b>70</b> |
| <b>IV: Change.....</b>   | <b>75</b> |
| Conclusion .....   | 81        |
| <b>CHAPTER FIVE: A FEMINIST INSTITUTIONALIST APPROACH -<br/>METHODOLOGY AND METHOD .....</b> | <b>83</b> |
| <b>I: A Feminist Institutional Methodology? .....</b>  | <b>83</b> |
| A Feminist Discursive Approach.....  | 87        |
| <b>II: Research Strategy, Methods and Sources .....</b>                                      | <b>92</b> |
| Process Tracing .....  | 96        |
| Documents.....   | 99        |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Interviews .....  | 100        |
| <b>III: Issues of Validity, Reliability and Generalizability.....</b>   | <b>101</b> |
| <b>IV: Ethical Considerations.....</b>  | <b>104</b> |
| <b>Conclusion .....</b>   | <b>104</b> |
| <br>  |            |
| <b>CHAPTER SIX: CANDIDATE SELECTION IN POST-DEVOLUTION<br/>SCOTLAND.....</b>                                    | <b>106</b> |
| <b>I: Women and the Scottish Parliament.....</b>  | <b>107</b> |
| Reforming Candidate Selection and Recruitment.....  | 109        |
| Scottish Parliament Elections: 1999-2007 .....  | 112        |
| <b>II: Gender and Political Recruitment: Trends Over Time .....</b>   | <b>119</b> |
| Candidate Selection: 1999-2007 .....  | 121        |
| Party Measures to Improve Women’s Representation .....  | 125        |
| Gender and Incumbency Trends.....   | 132        |
| <b>Conclusion .....</b>   | <b>140</b> |
| <br>  |            |
| <b>CHAPTER SEVEN: BREAKING WITH THE PAST? PATHS OF<br/>INSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN THE LABOUR PARTY .....</b>       | <b>142</b> |
| <b>I: The Modernization and Feminization of the Labour Party.....</b>   | <b>143</b> |
| Setting the Context for Reform: Party Organization Before New Labour.....                                       | 144        |
| Modernizing Candidate and Leadership Selection .....  | 146        |
| Feminizing the Labour Party .....   | 149        |
| <b>II: Creating a ‘New Politics’ in Scotland: Interconnected Trajectories of Institutional<br/>Reform .....</b> | <b>157</b> |
| The Autonomy and Organization of the Scottish Labour Party.....   | 158        |
| Candidate Selection in Scottish Labour Post-Devolution .....  | 159        |
| Candidate Selection After 1999.....   | 165        |
| <b>Conclusion .....</b>   | <b>166</b> |
| <br>  |            |
| <b>CHAPTER EIGHT: THE STORY OF A SELECTION.....</b>   | <b>168</b> |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>I: Introducing the Key Players .....</b>                                  | <b>168</b> |
| The Central Players.....   | 169        |
| The Regional Players.....  | 169        |
| The Local Players .....  | 170        |
| <b>II: A Micro-Level Case Study.....</b>                                     | <b>172</b> |
| Mapping City North and Greenside.....  | 173        |
| <b>III: Tracing the Process.....</b>   | <b>176</b> |
| Stage One: Declaration of Interest and Application Process .....             | 178        |
| Stage Two: Branch and Union Nominations.....                                 | 185        |
| Stage Three: Shortlisting .....  | 187        |
| Stage Four: Canvassing and Campaigning .....                                 | 191        |
| Stage Five: Final Hustings .....   | 196        |
| Stage Six: Election .....  | 200        |
| <b>Conclusion .....</b>  | <b>204</b> |
| <br><b>CHAPTER NINE: ASSESSING THE CASE STUDY - BEYOND</b>                   |            |
| <b>MAINSTREAM EXPLANATIONS.....</b>  | <b>206</b> |
| <b>I: Revealing the Tensions .....</b>                                       | <b>206</b> |
| From Centralization to Decentralization .....                                | 207        |
| From Formalization to Informalization .....                                  | 209        |
| Rule-Making and Rule-Breaking.....   | 211        |
| Something Old, Something New .....   | 212        |
| <b>II: The Gendered Politics of Erosion.....</b>                             | <b>214</b> |
| Direct and Indirect Discrimination.....                                      | 215        |
| Positive Action and Equality Guarantees .....                                | 216        |
| Women Organizing and Women's Voice .....                                     | 218        |
| <b>III: The Tensions Revisited: Applying a Gendered Lens .....</b>           | <b>221</b> |
| From Centralization to Decentralization: gendered and racialized Others..... | 222        |
| From Formalization to Informalization: gendering the 'ideal candidate' ..... | 225        |
| Rule-Making and Rule-Breaking: gendered bodies in male space .....           | 228        |
| Something Old, Something New: 'new men' and 'favourite sons' .....           | 231        |
| <b>Conclusion .....</b>  | <b>234</b> |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION - RETHINKING POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS .....</b>    | <b>236</b> |
| <b>I: Gender, Politics, and Institutions: Restating the ‘Problem’ .....</b> | <b>237</b> |
| Supply and Demand Revisited .....   | 237        |
| Towards a Theory of Gendered Institutions.....                              | 239        |
| Winners, Losers, and the Politics of Institutional Reform .....             | 241        |
| ‘Nested’ Institutions and the Gendered Limits of Change .....               | 244        |
| <b>II: Theoretical and Empirical Contributions .....</b>                    | <b>249</b> |
| <b>III: Towards a Feminist Institutionalism?.....</b>                       | <b>258</b> |
| <b>APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE .....</b>                                 | <b>260</b> |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>   | <b>261</b> |

## List of Tables and Figures

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Figure 2.1: Comparative model of the political recruitment process, from Norris and Lovenduski (1995, p. 184)</b> | <b>18</b>  |
| <b>Figure 2.2: The supply and demand model of recruitment, from Norris and Lovenduski (1995, p. 144)</b>             | <b>20</b>  |
| <b>Figure 5.1: Linking and Differentiation, from Hansen (2006, p. 20)</b>  | <b>88</b>  |
| <b>Table 6.1: Scottish Parliament 1999 by party, gender and type of seat</b>   | <b>113</b> |
| <b>Table 6.2: Scottish Parliament 2003 by party, gender and type of seat</b>   | <b>114</b> |
| <b>Table 6.3: Scottish Parliament 2007 by party and type of seat</b>   | <b>117</b> |
| <b>Table 6.4: Scottish Parliament 2007 by party, gender, and type of seat</b>  | <b>118</b> |
| <b>Figure 6.1: Proportion of women among MSPs, by party, 1999-2007</b>   | <b>121</b> |
| <b>Table 6.5: Scottish Parliament 2007 candidates by party, gender and type of seat</b>                              | <b>122</b> |
| <b>Figure 6.2: Proportion of women constituency candidates, by party, 1999-2007</b>                                  | <b>123</b> |
| <b>Figure 6.3: Proportion of women list candidates, by party, 1999-2007</b>  | <b>124</b> |
| <b>Table 6.6: Scottish Parliament 2007 list candidates by gender, party, and list placement</b>                      | <b>129</b> |
| <b>Figure 7.1: Labour Party Organizational Structure (1918)</b>  | <b>144</b> |
| <b>Figure 8.1: The Structure of Political Recruitment in the Scottish Labour Party</b>                               | <b>171</b> |
| <b>Figure 8.2: City North and Greenside Scottish Parliament Constituency Boundaries</b>                              | <b>174</b> |
| <b>Table 8.1: Selection Timetable for City North and Greenside</b>   | <b>176</b> |
| <b>Figure 8.3: City North and Greenside Constituency Boundaries (General Committee Shortlisting Meeting)</b>         | <b>189</b> |
| <b>Table 8.2: Voting Figures for City North and Greenside Final Hustings</b>   | <b>196</b> |

# Acknowledgements

First, and most importantly, I would like to thank my primary supervisor, Dr. Fiona Mackay, who has been an invaluable source of encouragement, enthusiasm and advice throughout the writing of this thesis. I am also extremely grateful to my second supervisor, Professor Charlie Jeffery, for his incisive guidance and constant support.

This project could not have been completed without the generous financial support of the College of Humanities and Social Science at the University of Edinburgh, the Overseas Research Student Awards Scheme, and the University of Edinburgh USA Development Trust. I also wish to thank my interviewees within the Scottish Labour Party who were extremely generous with both their time and their insights.

I have been fortunate to be a part of the Politics and International Relations Department at the University of Edinburgh. I am particularly grateful for my involvement with the Gender and Politics Research Group, as well as the Gender Reading Group, which have hosted many stimulating and thought-provoking conversations over tea and cake. A very special thank you goes out to Caroline Bouchard, Tom Moore, Hope Murray and Amanda Wittman, who have been incredible sources of support - both intellectual and emotional - throughout. Thanks are also due to Elizabeth Bomberg, Audrey Cash, Claire Duncanson, Toni Haastrup, Alistair Hunter, John Peterson, Elena Pollot, Michal Rozynek, and Betsy Super for their support and encouragement.

Early versions of many of the ideas of the thesis have been presented at several conferences and workshops over the past four years, and I am grateful for the feedback that I received at these. Versions of some of the arguments of the thesis have also appeared in Kenny, M. (2007) 'Gender, Institutions, and Power: A Critical Review', *Politics*, 27 (2), pp. 91-100; Mackay, F. and M. Kenny (2007) 'Women's Representation in the 2007 Scottish Parliament: Temporary Setback or Return to the Norm?', *Scottish Affairs*, 60, pp. 25-38; and Kenny, M. and F. Mackay (2009, forthcoming) 'Already Doin' it for Ourselves? Skeptical notes on feminism and institutionalism', *Politics & Gender*. In preparing these articles, I received helpful feedback from editors and anonymous reviewers.



Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank my friends and family. Lindsey Whitehead has been incredibly encouraging, while Lesley and Ryan Anderson and Connie and Jeremy Berger have kept me fully stocked with love, support, and, more importantly, Twizzlers. My sister Derin Kenny and her partner Dan Ellman have been fantastic throughout and have kept me entertained with things that have nothing at all to do with political science. And my partner Josh Makaruk has displayed endless amounts of patience with my many PhD-related neuroses, particularly during the final stretch.

The biggest thanks of all goes to my parents, who have always been my number one supporters: my mother Linda, for whom feminism has always been a daily practice rather than just a word, and my father Will, who always makes the time to read my work. This thesis is dedicated to them.

## Abstract

Both feminist and mainstream political science has taken an institutional ‘turn’, opening up possibilities for dialogue between the two fields. Yet, despite sharing a number of common interests and preoccupations, there has been little interplay between mainstream new institutionalist scholars and feminist political scientists working on institutions. This thesis attempts to fill this gap and evaluates the potential for theoretical synthesis between feminist gender analysis and new institutional theory. It argues that there is potential for mutual benefit from a synthesis of these two approaches, and that a ‘feminist institutionalism’ offers a promising theoretical approach for the study of gender and institutions.

The thesis evaluates the potential of a feminist institutionalist approach in the context of the comparative literature on gender and political recruitment. It critically evaluates the supply and demand model (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995), one of the only models that attempts to systematically integrate gender into the dynamics of the recruitment process. The thesis contends that a feminist institutionalist approach offers a way to take the supply and demand forward, developing the theoretical interconnections that are present implicitly in Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski’s work on political recruitment and reintegrating and reformulating the key features of the model into a feminist and institutionalist framework.

The thesis develops this theory-building project through an illustrative case study – the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland. Using a multi-method approach – including discourse analysis, process tracing, and political interviewing – the thesis combines a macro-level analysis of gendered patterns of selection and recruitment in Scottish political parties over time with a micro-level case study of a Scottish Labour Party constituency seat selection contest in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections. The case study finds some evidence of institutional innovation and reform in the candidate selection process, but also highlights underlying continuities in the institutions of political recruitment. The case study illustrates the specific and gendered difficulties of institutionalizing a ‘new’ more gender-balanced politics within a pre-existing institutional context. Findings from the case study suggest that the ‘success’ of institutional innovation in candidate selection is a complex and contingent question, and that elements of the ‘old’ continue to co-exist with elements of the ‘new’, constraining and shaping each other.

The Scottish case, then, underscores the need to rethink conventional models of political recruitment, illustrating the difficulties of reforming and redesigning the institutions of political recruitment in the face of powerful institutional and gendered legacies. As such, the thesis generates new theoretical and empirical insights into the gendered dynamics of institutional power, continuity and change that contribute to the growing body of research on gender and institutions and inform the wider literature on both new institutional theory and feminist political science.

## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that, except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is entirely my own work, and that no part of it has been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

|      |                                      |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| AMS  | Additional Member System             |
| AWS  | All-Women Shortlist                  |
| BLP  | Branch Labour Party                  |
| CLP  | Constituency Labour Party            |
| CPLD | Campaign for Labour Party Democracy  |
| CSP  | Campaign for the Scottish Parliament |
| EC   | Executive Committee                  |
| FPTP | First Past the Post                  |
| GC   | General Committee                    |
| ILP  | Independent Labour Party             |
| LCC  | Labour Co-ordinating Committee       |
| MP   | Member of Parliament                 |
| MSP  | Member of the Scottish Parliament    |
| NEC  | National Executive Committee         |
| NPF  | National Policy Forum                |
| OMOV | One Member One Vote                  |
| PLP  | Parliamentary Labour Party           |
| PR   | Proportional Representation          |
| SCC  | Scottish Constitutional Convention   |
| SDP  | Social Democratic Party              |
| SEC  | Scottish Executive Committee         |
| SLA  | Scottish Labour Action               |
| SLP  | Scottish Labour Party                |

|      |                               |
|------|-------------------------------|
| SNP  | Scottish National Party       |
| SPF  | Scottish Policy Forum         |
| SSP  | Scottish Socialist Party      |
| STUC | Scottish Trade Union Congress |
| STV  | Single Transferable Vote      |
| WAC  | Women's Action Committee      |

## Introduction

There are few political phenomena as universal as the political under-representation of women. While women today make up over half of the world's population, only 18.4 % of parliamentarians worldwide are female (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009), an average that has remained fairly stable since the 1960s. The percentage of women in national parliaments diverges sharply from country to country. As of 2008, Rwanda tops the scale with 56.3% women, unexpectedly surpassing the Nordic countries, which have had the highest percentages of women in parliament for decades<sup>1</sup>. Yet, while women are entering politics in higher numbers, they continue to be disproportionately concentrated at the lower end of the political hierarchy. As of 2003, only one in ten cabinet ministers and one in twenty heads of state or government worldwide were female (Inglehart and Norris, 2003, p. 127). The more powerful a political position, the less likely it is to be filled by a woman.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the universal under-representation of women in politics was reframed as an important issue for democracy and justice. Campaigns aimed at increasing women's political presence put growing pressure on governments and political parties to take action, and mechanisms such as candidate gender quotas have now become prominent and popular solutions to women's under-representation worldwide. Nearly every country in the world has promised to promote gender-balanced decision-making<sup>2</sup>, and gender quotas have been debated or adopted in more than one hundred countries, most within the last decade.

---

<sup>1</sup> These are the figures for the lower house of the Rwandan Parliament, the Chamber of Deputies. In the upper house, the Senate, 34.6% of members are women.

<sup>2</sup> In September 1995, the 189 member states of the United Nations signed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women. The Beijing Platform is referred to frequently in the quota debate, and explicitly addresses the exclusion of women from political decision-making, sets 'gender balance' as a key goal, and suggests that governments and political parties take action in order to achieve equal participation in political decision-making (although the term 'quotas' is not used) (Dahlerup, 2006b).

The emergence of women's representation as an important political issue is matched by a rapidly growing body of work in the sub-field of feminist political science. The extensive literature on women and political representation generally focuses on three key research areas: first, the causal variables that explain women's under-representation in politics; second, the link between women's descriptive representation and substantive representation; and third, strategies to increase women's political presence, including candidate gender quotas. While research in each of these areas has yielded important insights into women's political under-representation, a number of recent trends in each of these fields have challenged previous assumptions and pointed to new research directions (Mackay, 2004a; see also Lovenduski, 1998; Randall, 2002).

The first main research area focuses on the political, socio-economic, and cultural variables that explain variations in levels of female politicians. While there is a general consensus among women and politics scholars as to what these factors are, recent empirical developments cast some doubt on the causal importance of these contextual variables. For example, electoral systems are generally considered to be one of the most important political factors affecting levels of women's representation. In general, studies confirm that more women are elected under proportional representation (PR) systems rather than first-past-the-post (FPTP) systems (Caul, 1999; Darcy, Welch and Clark, 1994; Matland, 1995; Matland and Taylor, 1997; Rule, 1987, 1994). Yet, while political variables such as electoral systems continue to be important, recent research demonstrates that these are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for increased levels of women's representation. While evidence has shown that more women are elected under PR systems, many countries with PR systems have lower levels of female parliamentary representation than countries with FPTP systems<sup>3</sup>. Individual case studies have shown that in some instances of electoral reform, women's representation has remained relatively stable, while in other cases, women's representation has increased without any electoral changes (see for example Beck, 2003; Matland, 2003). And in several cases of countries with mixed electoral systems, a combination of FPTP and PR, women have done better in single-member districts elected by FPTP than in multi-member districts (Mackay, 2004a; Matland, 2003). Therefore, although there has been a

---

<sup>3</sup> As an example, Israel, which uses a PR list system has fewer female representatives (14.2%) than Canada (22.1%) which uses an FPTP system (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009).



‘strong and consistent association’ between PR electoral systems and higher levels of women’s representation, the evidence suggests that a proportional electoral system is not a sufficient condition in itself (Norris, 2004, p. 188). This is not to imply that these factors are not important, but rather to clarify that while they set the ‘rules of the game,’ effectively documenting potential barriers and obstacles to increasing women’s representation, they cannot explain the universal nature of women’s political under-representation or the persistence of inequality in political institutions.

The second main research area in the sub-field of women and politics focuses on what happens when women are actually elected to office, focusing on *descriptive* and *substantive* representation. Arguments for descriptive representation propose that women and other marginalized groups should be represented in proportion to their actual numbers in the population. Substantive representation relates to the expectations that once women are present in sufficient numbers, the political process, institutions and policy process will be transformed. These women will not only ‘act like’ women, bringing different skills, experience, and knowledge to the political arena, but they will also ‘act for’ women, representing women’s interests in the policy process. Much of the women and politics literature is primarily concerned with the link between descriptive and substantive representation, suggesting that there is a link between women’s gender identity and their political behavior. Yet, there is a general acknowledgement in the literature that the link between descriptive and substantive representation is more complicated than it initially appears<sup>4</sup>. Several studies have demonstrated that the effect of women’s political presence is mediated by party affiliation (Brown et al, 1999; Childs, 2004; Lovenduski and Norris, 1989; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995), institutional norms (Kathlene, 1995; Kenney, 1996; Mackay, 2001), lack of political experience (Beckwith, 2007; Cowley and Childs, 2003; Jeydel and Taylor, 2003), and the extent of backlash and resistance, which generally intensifies as the percentage of women in politics grows (Kathelene, 1995; Puwar, 2004; Ross, 2002). Work in this area increasingly suggests that the ability of women politicians to ‘act for’ women is complex and contingent, mediated by gender, party identity, and the surrounding political and institutional context (see in particular Childs, 2004; Lovenduski, 2005).

---

<sup>4</sup> See especially the recent 2008 special journal issue on ‘The Substantive Representation of Women’, *Representation*, 44 (2).

The third, and rapidly growing, research area in the field of women and politics focuses on strategies to increase women's representation. Research in this area has increasingly focused on candidate gender quotas as they have become visible and popular mechanisms to increase women's political presence worldwide. As quotas are a relatively recent political phenomenon, most research on candidate gender quotas focuses on quota adoption (see for example Kittilson, 2006; Krook, 2004, 2007, 2009 forthcoming; Meier, 2004). Other scholars have begun to look at quota implementation, offering a number of contradictory findings as to the relative 'success' of gender quotas (Benavides, 2003; Caul, 2001; Dahlerup, 2006a; Matland and Studlar, 1996; McAllister and Studlar, 2002). Recent work has also begun to address the impact of quotas on the effectiveness of women's political representation once they have successfully won office (Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Goetz and Hassim, 2003; Raman, 2002). There is now a growing body of literature on quotas, and research in this field demonstrates that there is considerable diversity among quotas in terms of form and effectiveness (see Krook, 2009 forthcoming). Similar measures have achieved quite different results across national and party contexts. At the same time, different measures have achieved quite similar results across national and party contexts. These variations imply that quotas are institutionally constrained, and research on gender quotas increasingly suggests that the form and effectiveness of quotas are dependent on the surrounding institutional and cultural context (see for example Dahlerup, 2006a; Inhetveen, 1999; Krook, 2009 forthcoming).

### ***Gender, Politics and Institutions: New Approaches and Directions***

Ongoing work in each of these areas has raised important questions, provoking a reconsideration of appropriate methods, frameworks, and research directions. How do gender effects interact with institutional effects? How and why does change happen? Why does positive gender change occur in some contexts but not in others? In seeking to answer these questions, work in the field has taken an 'institutional turn', shifting the focus from '*women in to the gendering of political institutions*' (Kenney, 1996, p. 455; emphasis in original). This institutional turn is accompanied by a growing dissatisfaction with the analytical concept of sex – understood as a dichotomous variable separating the biological differences

between male and female bodies – and an increased interest in more complex and relational understandings of gender (Lovenduski, 1998, p. 335; see also Childs and Krook, 2006a; Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995; Lovenduski, 2005; Mackay, 2004a). The shift in emphasis from sex to gender, and from an individual to an institutional-level analysis, points to the need to employ gendered frameworks that can contextualize gendered behavior, capture the relational dynamics between men and women as institutional actors, and explore the complex ways in which gender plays out in political institutions.

The shift from ‘women *in* politics’ to ‘gender *and* politics’ is a significant one. However, the potential of the institutional ‘turn’ in feminist political science has not been fully realized, as feminist political scientists continue to struggle with the implications of adopting more complex understandings of gender. Theoretical and empirical work on gender and institutions – ranging from work on political representation, political opportunity structures, the welfare state, constitutional change, and so on - has begun to map the complexities of institutional gender dynamics, highlighting the ways in which gendered institutional power relations and inequality are constructed, shaped, and maintained through institutional practices, processes, rules and regulations (see for example Chappell, 2002; Halford, 1992; Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995; Katzenstein, 1998; Mackay, 2006; Puwar, 2004). Yet, there have been few attempts to integrate these rich insights in a more systematic way, and work in this area is both eclectic and, at times, uneven. There is a growing recognition in the field that innovative approaches are needed in order to better understand the gendered nature of political institutions and to explore the complex dynamics of power, continuity, and change (Childs and Krook, 2006a; Lovenduski, 1998, 2005; Mackay, 2004a).

This thesis sets out to fill this gap, pointing to new directions for feminist research on gendered political institutions. The institutional ‘turn’ in feminist research is paralleled by broader institutional trends in mainstream political science, opening up possibilities for interchange between mainstream new institutionalist approaches and feminist work on gender and institutions (Kenny, 2007; Lovenduski, 1998, 2005; Mackay, 2004a; Mackay and Meier, 2003). The central argument of the thesis is that a ‘feminist institutionalism’ - that is, a theoretical synthesis of feminist political science and new institutional theory – can take the work on gender and institutions forward, ‘bridging the gap’ in existing conceptual and empirical work in the field. It asks the questions: why do feminist political scientists need the new institutionalism? What do new institutionalist approaches contribute to feminist

scholarship on political institutions? What does a gendered approach contribute to new institutional theory? What scope is there to ‘gender’ the new institutionalism?

The focus, then, is not only on what the new institutionalism can contribute to feminist political science, but also how a gendered approach can enrich and, potentially, transform new institutional theory. While the new institutionalism can offer a range of mid-level conceptual tools to feminist political science, a gendered approach can also contribute to new institutional analysis, establishing gender as a crucial dimension of political institutions and putting a central emphasis on institutional power relations. In particular, the combined insights of these two approaches can provide key insights into the gendered dynamics of institutional change, continuity, and innovation, allowing for a better understanding of the ‘big questions’ of how positive gender change can come about.

### ***Why Political Recruitment?***

The political recruitment process provides an interesting context in which to explore the complex dynamics of gender, power, and change. The candidate selection process is a crucial intermediary stage for prospective female candidates: in order to stand for office, women must not only select themselves to run, but must also be selected. Work in the field provides considerable evidence that aspiring women candidates face significant obstacles in the recruitment process, for example highlighting widespread incidences of direct and indirect discrimination by party ‘gatekeepers’ (see for example Lovenduski and Norris, 1993; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995; Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski, 2002). These gendered interactions take place within a wider framework of formal and informal party rules and practices, which are shaped and structured by masculinist gender norms, favouring the ‘ideal type’ of the white, male, middle-class professional candidate (Chapman, 1993; Lovenduski and Norris, 1989). Research in the field also points to wider structural and systematic barriers— such as the public/private divide and the sexual segregation of the work force – which create significant resource constraints for prospective female candidates (Duerst-Lahti, 1998; Fowler and McClure, 1989; Fox and Lawless, 2004).

Ground-breaking work in the field – led by Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski – set out to systematically explore these complex dynamics, combining an analysis of the broader institutional and political context of the recruitment process with a micro-level analysis of candidate and selector attitudes. Norris and Lovenduski's (1995) supply and demand model represents a significant intervention into the literature on political recruitment, in that it is one of the first and only attempts to systematically theorize both the gendered and institutional dimensions of the political recruitment process. The thesis revisits this pioneering work, in light of the wider institutional 'turn' in feminist political science, and makes the case for building on Norris and Lovenduski's gender-sensitive and institutionally-focused approach to the study of political recruitment. In critically evaluating the supply and demand model, the thesis also points to the ways in which this approach is problematic. While these gendered and institutional trends are present in Norris and Lovenduski's framework, as well as subsequent reformulations of the model, they are not fully developed. The literature on gender and political recruitment, then, offers a way to work through wider tensions and debates in feminist political science more generally, demonstrating both the possibilities for but also the difficulties of 'translating' the complexities of gendered institutional dynamics into workable concepts and analytical frameworks for empirical research.

A further reason to focus on political recruitment is the fact that the 'secret garden' of the candidate selection process is generally under-researched. While the importance of the candidate selection process is increasingly recognized, there have been few in-depth studies of the 'shadowy pathways prior to election' in either the feminist or mainstream literature (Norris, 1997, p. 8; for notable exceptions see Gallagher and Marsh, 1988; Norris 1997; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995). As such, the thesis makes an important contribution to the literature on gender and political recruitment, in the form of a new empirical case study of the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland.

## ***Why Scotland?***

Devolution in Scotland brought with it new and unprecedented opportunities for gendered institutional innovation in the candidate selection process. The intersection of multiple paths

of reform in the 1980s and 1990s opened up new institutional, political, and discursive spaces for women activists to ‘engender’ mainstream debates and to play a significant role in shaping wider reform processes (Mackay et al, 2003; Mackay, 2006). In the run-up to the first elections to the Scottish Parliament, a broad coalition of women’s activists put increased internal and external pressure on Scottish political parties to ensure gender balance in representation, pushing for far-reaching reforms in established selection procedures. Of the 129 MSPs elected to the Parliament for the first time in 1999, 48 were women (37.2 per cent) – a ‘gender coup’ that was all the more dramatic given that both Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom have had a relatively poor record with regards to women’s representation (Mackay et al, 2003, p. 84).

Yet, while evidence from post-devolution Scotland highlights significant opportunities for institutional innovation in the candidate selection process, it also points to underlying continuities as well as general patterns of erosion and decline. Both academic and media commentators increasingly view the new politics as a ‘spent force’, highlighting the extent to which post-devolution political practices resemble those of Westminster and critiquing the ‘unrealistic’ hopes and expectations of devolution campaigners (Arter, 2004; McGarvey, 2001; Mitchell, 2004). Meanwhile, the recent 2007 Scottish Parliament elections resulted in a significant decrease in women MSPs – the first drop since the establishment of the parliament in 1999 - raising questions as to the sustainability of gender equality reforms in the candidate selection process post-devolution.

The thesis sets out to explore these dynamics of continuity and change in more depth, combining a ‘macro-level’ analysis of gendered patterns of selection and recruitment in Scottish political parties over time with an innovative ‘micro-level’ case study of a Scottish Labour constituency seat selection contest in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections. Drawing on the insights of both feminist and new institutional theory, the thesis points to the general and gendered difficulties of institutionalizing innovation in a pre-existing context. It argues that the ‘success’ of institutional innovation in post-devolution Scotland is a complex and contingent question, highlighting the ways in which elements of the ‘old’ continue to uncomfortably co-exist with elements of the ‘new’, constraining and shaping each other. Moreover, it suggests that gender relations and norms are particularly ‘sticky’ institutional legacies with which to contend, drawing attention to the gendered dynamics of institutional resistance and reproduction that underpin the institutions of

political recruitment and limit possibilities for change. These empirical insights, combined with the theoretical work of the thesis, establish the initial foundations for a ‘feminist institutionalism’, a radical research agenda that explicitly challenges the boundaries between mainstream and feminist political science.

## ***Structure of Text***

The thesis is organized into three main parts: the following four chapters focus on theory-building, dealing with theoretical and methodological issues relevant to the research; the subsequent three provide the empirical data of the case study – the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland; and the final two chapters focus on analysis and conclusions, drawing out the implications of the Scottish case for the wider theory-building project of the thesis.

The next chapter, *Gender and the Institutions of Political Recruitment*, introduces the comparative literature on gender and political recruitment. It begins with a theoretical critique of Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski’s (1995) supply and demand model, one of the only frameworks that integrates gender into the dynamics of candidate selection and recruitment. The chapter argues that the supply and demand model represents a key turning point in the field – in that it attempts to systematically theorize both the gendered and institutional dimensions of the political recruitment process - but ultimately concludes that it has not fully realized its potential. The chapter goes on to evaluate subsequent efforts to rework Norris and Lovenduski’s framework, focusing in particular on Mona Lena Krook’s (2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming) reformulation of the model. The chapter argues that Krook’s work represents a significant step forward for work on gender and political recruitment, building on and refining the gendered and institutional dimensions of the supply and demand model. Yet, it also points to the ways in which Krook’s reformulation of the model is still problematic, arguing that the model continues to underplay the complex ways in which gender ‘plays out’ in the political recruitment process.

The tensions apparent in the literature on gender and political recruitment point to wider trends and ongoing debates in feminist political science more generally. Chapter three,

*Towards a Feminist Institutionalism*, moves from a specific focus on gender and political recruitment to a broader discussion of the institutional ‘turn’ in feminist political science, critically evaluating the shift in emphasis from ‘women *in* politics’ to ‘gender *and* politics’. While feminist research on political institutions has yielded rich insights, there is a growing recognition in the field that new approaches, conceptual tools and methods are needed in order to explore and understand gendered modes of interaction and to expose the ways in which seemingly neutral institutional processes and practices are in fact gendered (Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a). The chapter points to new directions for feminist work on gender and institutions, highlighting the potential for dialogue with mainstream institutionally-focused scholars, particularly in the broad field of the new institutionalism. After providing a brief overview of the institutional ‘turn’ in both mainstream and feminist political science, it outlines some initial possibilities for dialogue between the two fields which the thesis expands upon in the subsequent chapter.

Having laid the foundations in chapter three, the fourth chapter, *Connecting Gender, Power and Change*, makes the case for a ‘feminist institutionalism’, focusing in particular on the connections between gender, power, continuity and change. It contends that a feminist institutionalism offers a way forward for research on gender and institutions, contributing a range of mid-level neo-institutionalist conceptual tools and ideas to feminist research, establishing gender as a crucial dimension of political institutions, and yielding key insights into the institutional dynamics of power, continuity and change.

Chapter five, *A Feminist Institutional Approach: Methodology and Method* assesses the methodological issues involved in ‘translating’ the feminist institutionalist theoretical project into empirical research. It introduces the discursive methodology of the thesis, which builds primarily on Lene Hansen’s poststructuralist discourse theory (Hansen, 2006) as well as the wider discursive turn in feminist analysis (see for example Bacchi, 1999). The chapter then turns to a more specific discussion of the methods used, including process tracing, interviews, and document analysis. It concludes by addressing ethical considerations as well as the issues of validity, reliability and generalizability in relation to the thesis.

The sixth chapter, *Candidate Selection in Post-Devolution Scotland* introduces the Scottish case and provides the necessary background to understand and explain change and



innovation in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution. It reviews the ‘story’ of women’s mobilization in the devolution campaign, focusing in particular on processes of reform in the candidate selection process. It then provides an overview of the Scottish Parliament elections 1999-2007 from the perspective of women’s representation, and revisits the question as to why the numbers of female representatives ‘matter’. The chapter concludes with an in-depth assessment of macro-level trends in the selection and recruitment of female candidates by Scottish political parties post-devolution, highlighting underlying trends of erosion and decline post-1999.

Chapter seven, *Breaking with The Past? Paths of Institutional Reform in the Labour Party* turns from a focus on macro-level trends of candidate recruitment and selection over time to an in-depth analysis of the candidate selection process within the Scottish Labour Party. The chapter assesses and evaluates paths of institutional reform in the Labour Party, situating the specific case of institutional innovation and (re)design of the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland within a wider historical background of party reform processes at the UK level. It argues that the reform of the candidate selection process in Scottish Labour post-devolution is an open-ended and ongoing process, one that is subject to frequent renegotiation, conflict and contestation, and that is shaped and constrained by past decisions and institutional legacies as well as the interplay and interaction between different, and sometimes competing, paths of reform.

Having set the context in the previous chapter, chapter eight, *The Story of a Selection*, presents the findings of an illustrative micro-level case study, tracing the candidate selection process through a detailed and fine-grained reconstruction of the temporal sequence of events in a Scottish Labour constituency seat selection contest in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections.

The focus of chapter nine, *Assessing the Case Study: Beyond Mainstream Explanations*, is on interpretation and analysis of the case study. Drawing on the insights of feminist and new institutional theory, it suggests that the candidate selection process remains a tense battleground post-1999 despite declarations to the contrary within the mainstream literature. The chapter highlights ongoing tensions and contradictions in the political recruitment process in the Scottish Labour Party, while also drawing attention to an increasing gap

between the formal rules of candidate selection and the implementation, enactment, and enforcement of these rules on the ground. The chapter interprets these areas of conflict and contestation through a gendered lens, providing brief illustrations of particular gendered mechanisms of institutional resistance and reproduction, while also highlighting some of the gendered dynamics and institutional interconnections that underpin the institutions of political recruitment.

The final chapter, *Conclusion: Rethinking Political Institutions* revisits these conclusions in more depth, summarizing the key findings of the thesis, outlining areas for future research, and expanding on the potential implications of the thesis for future work on gender and institutions.

## Gender and the Institutions of Political Recruitment

Current research in the field of women and politics has focused increasingly on political recruitment, pointing to the candidate selection process as a critical area in need of further investigation and research (see for example Krook 2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming; Niven, 1998; Sanbonmatsu, 2006; Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski, 2002). Yet, while the importance of candidate selection and recruitment is widely recognized, there have been few systematic studies ‘into the shadowy pathways prior to election’ (Norris, 1997, p. 8) in either the feminist or mainstream literature (for exceptions see Gallagher and Marsh, 1988; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995; Norris, 1997).

The aim of this chapter is to critically evaluate the literature on gender and political recruitment. It begins with a brief review of the comparative literature on political recruitment, focusing particularly on the British context. It then moves on to a theoretical critique of the dominant framework used in the field - Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski’s (1995) supply and demand model - which proposes that the number of women elected to political office ultimately depends on both the supply of prospective female candidates willing to stand for office and the demands of party ‘gatekeepers’ who select the candidates. The chapter argues that the supply and demand model represents a key turning point in the literature, in that it attempts to systematically theorize both the gendered and institutional dimensions of the political recruitment process. However, it ultimately concludes that the model has not fully realized its potential. While these trends are present in Norris and Lovenduski’s work on political recruitment, they are not fully developed.

The chapter goes on to evaluate subsequent efforts to rework Norris and Lovenduski’s framework, focusing in particular on Mona Lena Krook’s (2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming) reformulation of the model. The chapter argues that Krook’s work represents a significant step forward for work on gender and political recruitment, building on and refining the

gendered and institutional dimensions of the supply and demand model. Yet, it also points to the ways in which Krook's reformulation of the model is still problematic, drawing attention to the difficulties of 'translating' the complexities of gendered institutional dynamics into workable concepts and analytical frameworks for empirical research.

## ***I: The Comparative Literature on Political Recruitment***

Work on political recruitment explores 'how and why people become politicians', studying the critical stages through which individuals move into political careers (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 1). Candidate selection is the main activity of any political party, where political access is traditionally controlled by party selectors:

'Access to any political elite is controlled by a series of 'gatekeepers', and the narrowest gate of all is that guarded by the candidate selectors' (Gallagher, 1988, p. 2).

The most notable exception to this statement is the case of the United States, which has a more open 'candidate-centered' campaign process in which candidates are nominated in primaries by voters (Herrnson, 1997; Norris, 1997). However, in most European countries, political parties have exclusive control of the candidate selection process; selection and recruitment procedures, rules, and regulations are 'made, amended, interpreted, and enforced' entirely by the parties themselves (Ranney, 1965, p. 81). As such, political parties serve 'vital functions linking citizens with government', determining the overall composition of the legislature and structuring electoral choice (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 2). While it is the voters that ultimately elect candidates, political parties have effectively already limited the options.

This is particularly the case for Britain, where there is a 'vertical ladder of recruitment' into political office: 'from party to local government office, to Westminster backbenches, and finally into ministerial office' (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 23). British politicians, then, can rarely 'miss or by-pass a step in the established hierarchy' (Norris, 1997, p. 4). There are almost no horizontal or lateral career options: they must either move up the ladder or stay put (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 23). In addition, as the majority of British constituency

seats are ‘safe’ for one party or another, with majorities greater than 10 per cent, when a candidate is selected, they are usually assured of being elected (Denver, 1988; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995). In the majority of cases, then, it is the selectorate rather than the electorate that determine who will be Members of Parliament (MPs), and, ultimately, the pool of those eligible for party leadership and ministerial posts (Denver, 1988, p. 48).

The main approach to studying recruitment in Britain has focused on the distribution of power within the party, seeking to identify *who* has control over selection and *how* they select the candidates (see Ranney, 1965; Rush, 1969; Schattschneider, 1942). Debates in this literature often revolve around the question of internal party democracy, particularly the appropriate division of power between national and local organizations<sup>5</sup> (Norris, 1997; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995). The question, then, is not only who has, but who *should* have control over selection (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 3). Candidate selection is a key arena for intra-party power struggles, and conflicts over the control of the selection procedure are for ‘nothing less than control of the core of what the party stands for and does’ (Ranney, 1965, p. 103). As Schattschneider (1942) states:

‘The nominating process...has become the crucial process of the party. The nature of the nominating procedure determines the nature of the party; he who can make nominations is the owner of the party’ (p. 64).

Norris and Lovenduski (1995) identify four main types of selection process, structured along these two main dimensions (see also Lovenduski and Norris, 1993):

- In *informal-centralized* systems, party members do not play a large role in the recruitment process. Rules and regulations are largely symbolic, and central elites exert considerable control over the selection of candidates.
- In *informal-localized* systems, selection decisions are taken largely at the constituency level, although regional bodies may also play a part. There are few

---

<sup>5</sup> Beginning with Moisey Ostrogorski’s (1902) classic work at the turn of the century.

explicit guidelines, and practices may vary widely between different constituencies and between elections.

- By contrast, in *formal-centralized* systems, national party leaders, national executives, or national faction leaders have constitutional authority over selection decisions and can impose their choice on local constituencies.
- Finally, in *formal-localized* systems, there are formal rules and national guidelines established to standardize the process throughout the party. Within this framework, the selection of candidates takes place at the local constituency level. This is the practice of most European parties.

This body of work is supplemented by another long tradition in the literature which has focused on political elites, providing further insights into questions as to *why* some candidates are selected over others (see for example Burch and Moran, 1985; Kavanagh, 1992; Scott, 1991). These studies of legislative elites established the extent of social bias in elite positions, demonstrating that ‘legislatures worldwide include more of the affluent than the less well-off, more men than women, more middle-aged than young, and more white-collar professionals than blue-collar workers’ (Norris, 1997, p. 6; see also Aberbach et al, 1981; Lowenberg and Patterson, 1979; Mellors, 1978; Putnam, 1976). However, empirical work on political elites, particularly in Britain, has traditionally been concerned with documenting, rather than explaining, trends in recruitment, focusing more on ‘*who* got into positions of power rather than *how* they got there’ (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 9-10; emphasis in original).

## ***II: The Supply and Demand Model***

The work of Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski (1995) represents a significant intervention into this literature, seeking to overcome the key limitations of previous work in the field. On the one hand, conventional studies of political recruitment focus on the formal dimensions of the recruitment process, emphasizing the importance of party structure and formal processes

in determining selection outcomes (Ranney, 1965; Rush, 1969). These approaches have a tendency to over-emphasize the role of the formal, ignoring the role of informal practices, while also paying little attention to the outcome of the process or to the attitudes, behavior, and experiences of party selectors and potential candidates. In contrast, behavioral approaches to the study of political recruitment have focused exclusively on the attitudes of political elites, ignoring the implications of the broader institutional and political context (Bochel and Denver, 1983; Gallagher and Marsh, 1988).

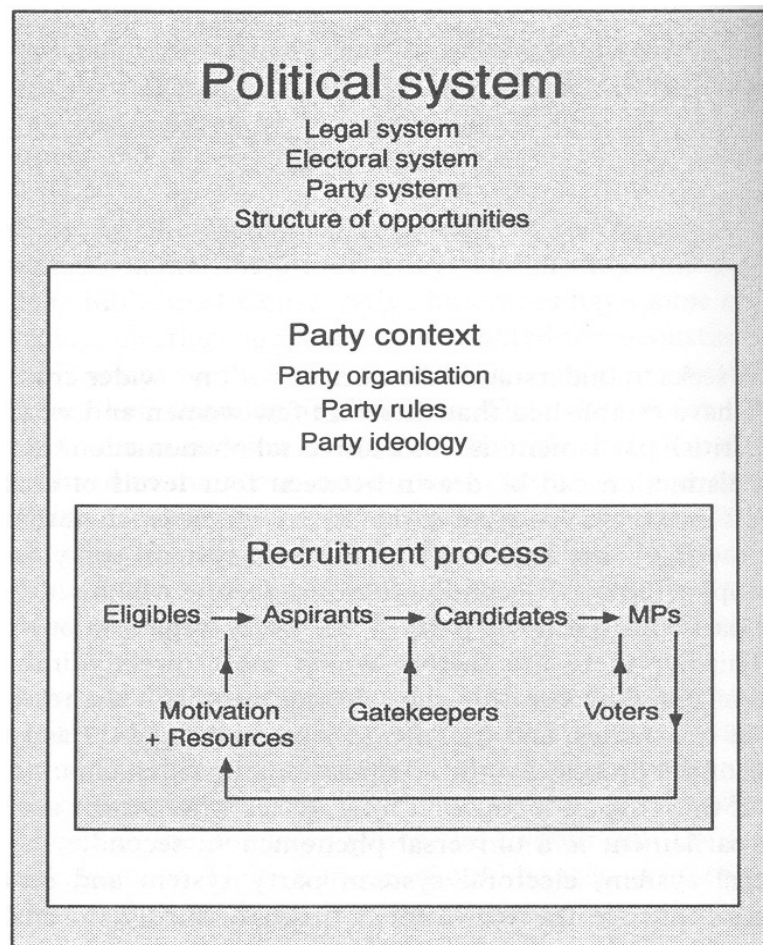
Norris and Lovenduski (1995) take a broadly *institutionalist* approach, attempting to combine an analysis of the broader institutional and political context of the recruitment process with a micro-level analysis of candidate and selector attitudes. Their framework systematically integrates the insights of the existing literature on political recruitment, ultimately seeking to understand not only ‘*who* are members of the legislative elite, but, more importantly, *why* and *how* they got there’ (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 11; emphasis in original). Norris and Lovenduski identify three broad levels of analysis of the political recruitment process (see Figure 2.1):

- the *political system*, incorporating the legal system, electoral system, and party system
- the *party context*, which includes party organization, rules, and ideology
- the *recruitment process*, which incorporates the factors that influence both the *supply* of prospective candidates willing to stand for office as well as the *demands* of gatekeepers who select candidates

The political system sets the general ‘rules of the games’, structuring candidate opportunities. However, while the political system structures the overall context of recruitment, ‘parties are the main gatekeepers...[and] decisions by gatekeepers take place within the context of formal party rules, and informal norms and practices, which limit their choice’ (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 198). Operating within these broader political and party contextual settings are the factors which ‘most directly influence’ the political recruitment of individuals – the resources and motivation of prospective candidates as well

as the attitudes of gatekeepers (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 183). These factors interact to determine the ultimate outcome of the process for the composition of parliaments. In her later work on political recruitment, Norris (1997, p. 1) argues that these levels are ‘nested’ in a ‘funnel of causality’, meaning that supply and demand operates in a framework of party recruitment processes, which are then shaped and structured by the broader political system.

**Figure 2.1: Comparative model of the political recruitment process, from Norris and Lovenduski (1995, p. 184)**

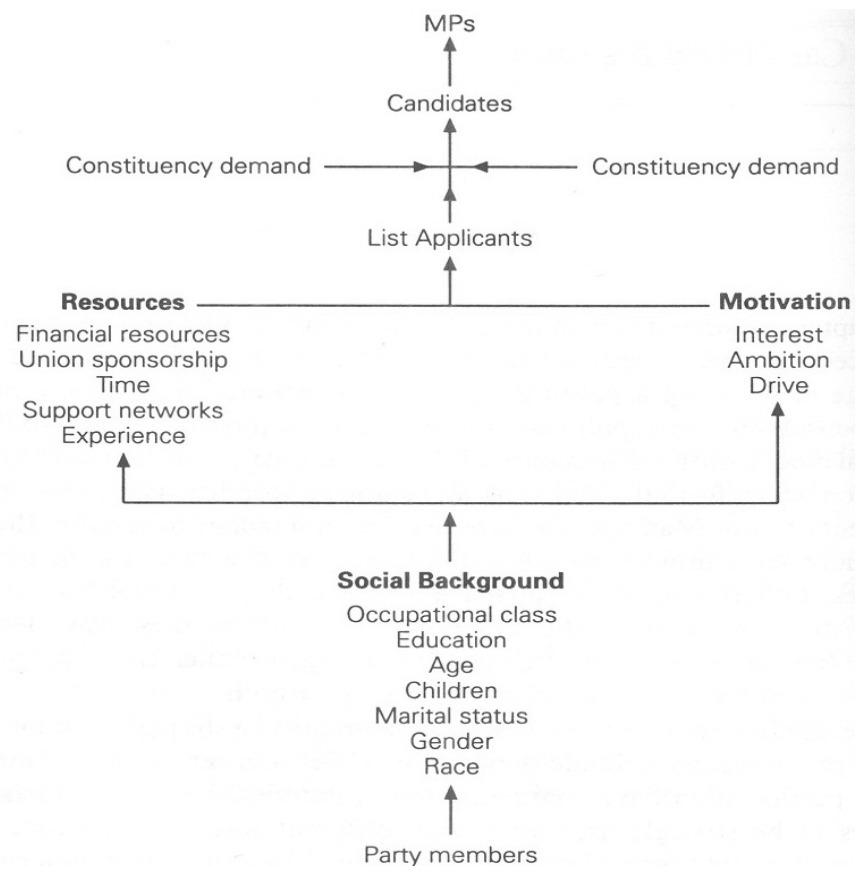




## The Dynamics of Supply and Demand

The central concern of Norris and Lovenduski's work on political recruitment is 'why some politicians succeed in moving through the "eye of the needle" into the highest offices of state' (1995, p. 1). Their intention, then, is to link an understanding of the process of candidate selection with the outcome for the social composition of parliamentary elites. Building on previous work in the field as well as new empirical research on political recruitment in Britain, Norris and Lovenduski set out an analytical framework for understanding the selection process – the *supply and demand model* (see also Norris and Lovenduski, 1993; Randall, 1987). Supply-side explanations suggest that the outcome of the selection process reflects the supply of applicants aspiring to a political career. Factors such as resources – time, money, experience – and motivational factors – ambition, interest, confidence – influence who decides to run for office. Meanwhile, demand-side explanations suggest that the social bias in parliament reflects the direct and indirect prejudice of party selectors. Party gatekeepers evaluate applicants in accordance with a wide range of factors, including both formal and informal selection criteria, and choose candidates depending upon judgements about these applicants. Supply-side and demand-side factors interact at each stage of the political recruitment process; for example, potential applicants may decide not to come forward because of anticipated failure or perceived discrimination in the selection process. However, while supply and demand factors do interact, Norris and Lovenduski argue that they are analytically distinct, clearly differentiating between supply-side factors which inhibit individuals from applying to be a candidate, and demand-side factors, which affect whether or not individuals are accepted by selectors after they decide to run for office (1995, p. 108). Norris and Lovenduski's supply and demand model is outlined in Figure 2.2.

**Figure 2.2: The supply and demand model of recruitment, from Norris and Lovenduski (1995, p. 144)**



In seeking to explain the social bias evident in most legislatures, Norris and Lovenduski (1995) explicitly integrate gender into the dynamics of supply and demand. The effect of gender on political recruitment can be seen as both a supply-side and demand-side effect. Due to wider systemic factors such as the public/private divide, the sexual segregation of the work force, and patterns of gender socialization, we would expect women to have less time, money, ambition, and confidence than their male counterparts. Alternatively, the effect of gender on the selection process can be seen as a product of demand, either through *direct* or *indirect discrimination* (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, pp. 106-108). In cases of *direct discrimination*, party selectors make positive or negative judgments of potential candidates on the basis of characteristics seen as common to their social group, rather than as individuals. In cases of *indirect* or *imputed discrimination*, party selectors make positive or

negative judgments of potential candidates on the basis of the anticipated reaction of the electorate to a particular social group. As such, parties may be reluctant to select women either because ‘selectors are directly prejudiced against women candidates’ or because ‘imputedly, they fear women may lose votes’ (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 115).

Norris and Lovenduski (1995) evaluate the supply and demand model in the context of the 1992 general elections in the United Kingdom, providing one of the most comprehensive accounts of legislative recruitment in Britain thus far. Drawing on the findings from the 1992 British Candidate Survey (BCS)<sup>6</sup>, Norris and Lovenduski conclude that the supply-side factors offer the most plausible explanation for the social bias of the House of Commons. While they acknowledge that the selection process demonstrates social bias towards younger, white, well-educated, male professionals, they conclude that this bias reflects the pool of eligible applicants for political office (1995, p. 247). In terms of the effect of gender, they argue that supply-side factors are more persuasive than demand-side factors in explaining women’s political under-representation, suggesting that if more women came forward, more would be selected.

## **A Critique of Supply-Side Explanations**

Norris and Lovenduski’s supply and demand model represents a key turning point in the literature on political recruitment, in that it attempts to systematically theorize both the gendered and institutional dimensions of the candidate selection process. However, while the supply and demand model offers a compelling framework for the study of gender and political recruitment, it is also problematic. First, while the supply and demand model represents a significant improvement of previous work on political recruitment, highlighting the role that gender norms play in the selection process, Norris and Lovenduski (1995) view gender as only one of many factors influencing the dynamics of supply and demand. This perspective sits at odds with both previous and later work on political recruitment, including their own, which highlights the structural barriers constraining potential female candidates

---

<sup>6</sup> The BCS collected data at different stages of the candidate selection from 1990-1992. It included surveys of Labour and Conservative members, MPs, prospective parliamentary candidates, and candidates who failed to be adopted. This information was also supplemented by interviews,

and the discriminatory effect of masculinist norms which pervade the candidate selection process (see for example Chapman, 1993; Lovenduski and Norris, 1989; Randall, 1987; Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski, 2002; Lovenduski, 2005). For example, in their earlier work, Lovenduski and Norris (1989) are generally skeptical of supply-side explanations for women's political under-representation, stressing the extent to which gender norms shape the candidate selection process, favoring the stereotype of a middle-class, white, male, professional candidate:

‘Arguably, both the way in which the role of candidate is defined and the candidate qualities sought tend to penalise many women. The system has been designed to select a standard model candidate who is articulate, well educated, and typically employed in a professional career’ (Lovenduski and Norris, 1989, p. 559)

Lovenduski and Norris (1989) critique the existing assumptions underlying supply-side explanations, challenging the assumption that demand-side criteria are gender-neutral, simply distinguishing between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ candidates on the basis of ‘merit’. Instead, they call for a critical interrogation of the seemingly gender-neutral model of the ‘ideal candidate’:

‘For women to achieve representation at Westminster the parties need to go further than procedural changes in the selection process itself, and they need also to go further than the programmes of affirmative action so far considered. What is needed is a thoroughgoing reconsideration of the criteria for choosing candidates’ (Lovenduski and Norris, 1989, pp. 560-561).

In addition, Lovenduski and Norris (1989) are highly critical of existing assumptions in the literature about the lack of direct or imputed discrimination in the selection process. Much of the early literature on gender and political recruitment in the United Kingdom stresses the importance of supply-side factors in explaining women's political under-representation, relying in large part on selectorate self-perceptions (see for example Bochel and Denver, 1983; Bristow, 1980; Hills, 1981, 1983; Rush, 1969). For example, John Bochel and David Denver's (1983) study of Labour Party selectorates in the United Kingdom found that a majority of the selectors interviewed were supportive of the idea that more women should be

---

documents, and participant observation of range of selection meetings at different stages of the

selected as candidates. From these findings, they conclude that there was little evidence of prejudice or discrimination against women in the selection process, and that if more women came forward, more would be selected. Stephen Bristow's (1980) study of local councillors resulted in similar findings:

'The evidence seems to suggest that the underrepresentation derives more from a failure of women to present themselves for election in proportion to their numbers amongst the general population, than to any overt bias amongst party selection committees or the general electorate' (p. 85).

The assumption, then, is that 'the real problem lies elsewhere' (Lovenduski and Norris, 1989, p. 537), that women are reluctant to come forward not because of anticipated or perceived discrimination in the selection process, but because of wider societal or cultural factors, such as traditional patterns of gender socialization (see in particular Hills, 1981, 1983). However, despite the prevalence of supply-side explanations in the wider literature, there is limited evidence for these sorts of claims. To date, there has been little survey research on the candidate emergence phase in Britain, and as a result, there is little evidence on the critical stages in which women decide to run for office<sup>7</sup>. Evidence from elsewhere suggests that gender norms pervade the supply side, shaping the eligibility pool for public office. In particular, American research on candidate emergence indicates that while more women have entered the pipeline processions to political office, and while women who do run for office are just as likely to win as men, women are substantially less likely than men to emerge from the eligibility pool and put themselves forward as candidates (Fox and Lawless, 2004; see also Rule, 1981; Welch, 1978). These findings suggest that gender plays a crucial role in the initial decision to run for office. Numerous studies find that women are less likely to perceive themselves to be 'qualified' to run for political office, despite sharing the same qualifications and experiences as their male counterparts (Black and Erickson, 2000; Black and Erickson, 2003; Fowler and McClure, 1989; Lawless and Fox, 2005; Swers, 2002). Prospective female candidates are also significantly less likely than male candidates to receive outside encouragement, either from a political actor or a non-political source, to run for office (Fox and Lawless, 2004).

---

process (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, pp. 16-17).

<sup>7</sup> In contrast, there is a growing body of literature in the United States on gender and the candidate emergence phase (see for example, Fox and Lawless, 2004; Lawless and Fox, 2005).

Norris and Lovenduski's (1995) findings, then, sit in tension with their own critiques of supply-side explanations, as well as work on gender and political recruitment more broadly. In asserting that supply side factors are more persuasive in explaining women's political underrepresentation, they underplay the extent to which the eligibility pool is already shaped and distorted by gender norms, as highlighted above. In addition, they continue to rely in large part on selectorate self-perceptions of the absence of gender discrimination in the candidate selection process. They acknowledge that there are problems in relying overly on the self-perceptions of party selectors:

'Perhaps members *say* they would like more women in office, but in practice when they evaluate interviewees they may see women in a slightly more negative light, as less effective campaigners' (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 141; emphasis in original).

As a result, they also incorporate interviews with prospective women candidates on their direct experiences of direct or imputed discrimination in the selection process. However, they conclude that there is generally 'mixed evidence' of either direct or imputed gender discrimination in the process. For example, they find that women candidates tend to be ranked lower by party selectors than their male counterparts on 'critical campaigning qualities', such as public speaking ability (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 139-141). Yet, they conclude that 'the difference is not great', and find that in final selection interviews, women were generally ranked the same, or slightly higher than their male counterparts (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, pp. 141-142). They also find that gender stereotypes about candidates are widespread in the selection process, although they argue that these stereotypes do not necessarily disadvantage women:

'[W]omen were more likely than men to be seen as caring, approachable, practical, honest and principled. In contrast, men were more likely to be seen as ruthless, ambitious, and tough... This confirms that gender stereotypes remain common, but it is not clear that these necessarily disadvantage women. If selectors place a high priority on the case-work aspect of an MP's job, dealing with the practical problems of individual constituents, as many do, then stereotypes about women may be a positive advantage' (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 135).

Ultimately, they conclude that there is limited evidence of pervasive discrimination against women applicants in the selection process, arguing that supply-side factors are more persuasive in explaining women's political under-representation than gatekeeper attitudes: 'members say they support the idea of having more women in parliament; there is no evidence that gender stereotypes necessarily disadvantage women candidates; and members believe nowadays women are vote winners' (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 141).

## **The Limiting Power of Demand**

Norris and Lovenduski's (1995) supply and demand model, then, runs the risk of significantly underestimating the powerful role of gender norms in shaping the candidate selection process. In particular, the model sits at odds with Joni Lovenduski's work elsewhere, in which she explicitly problematizes the complex and pervasive ways in which gender 'plays out' in seemingly neutral political institutions. Lovenduski conceptualizes gender as not just a factor that affects institutional processes, practices, rules, and regulations, but rather as an integral part of social and political institutions, shaping 'rules, values, norms, structures, and outputs' (Lovenduski, 1998, p. 347; see also Lovenduski, 2005). In her later theoretical work on political recruitment and representation, she emphasizes the extent to which the political recruitment process is embedded in a wider institutional context, which is generally coded as 'masculine':

'Barriers to the feminization of politics are institutionalized into the political organizations in which representation takes place. These barriers can be summarized as amounting to institutional sexism and racism which support particular kinds of white masculinity in political organizations, manifested in its personnel, procedures and policies' (Lovenduski, 2005, p. 80).

In addition, Lovenduski's ongoing empirical work on political recruitment increasingly highlights the limiting power of demand, despite increases in the supply of female candidates. Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski's (2002) Fawcett Society report following the 2001 General Election found that British political parties were 'institutionally sexist', meaning that gender bias was entrenched and well-established in the parties in terms of 'personnel, outcome, and practices' (Lovenduski, 2005, p. 53). The report found that the key factor explaining low levels of women's political representation was a lack of demand on the

part of candidate selectors and that both incidences of direct discrimination, such as posing gender and discriminatory questions during the selection process, and indirect discrimination, for example, in which gendered assumptions of what is an 'ideal candidate' hinder potential women candidates, were widespread in all of the parties. Women candidates reported that they were judged on a different basis than men and also reported numerous examples of overt discrimination, ranging from gendered assumptions regarding women's traditional roles to explicit sexual harassment (Lovenduski, 2005; Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski, 2002).

Other studies go beyond direct and imputed discrimination at the individual selector level, highlighting the extent to which seemingly neutral recruitment and selection procedures are, in fact, gendered. For example, Jenny Chapman's (1993) analysis of selection practices for local government candidates found that in each of the main political parties, the typical profile of female candidates resembled that of 'losing men'. Women candidates, as a group, were less likely to possess the attributes associated with 'winning' candidates. Others find that male and female party elites typically list stereotypically masculine characteristics when asked to describe a 'good candidate' (Niven, 1998; Tremblay and Pelletier, 2001). Moreover, recent findings suggest that women are additionally disadvantaged by the fact that most candidate selectors are male. In a study of elite recruiter attitudes in the United States, David Niven (1998) finds that male party elites recruit fewer women than men because of an out-group effect<sup>8</sup>. While the out-group effect is at work, elites perceive female candidates as an out-group, basing their candidate evaluations on stereotypes about women as a whole, and, as a result, generally perceiving female candidates to be less competent than their male counterparts. In contrast, male candidates are seen as an in-group and are assumed to be politically competent. These research findings demonstrate the extent to which gender shapes the demands of candidate selectors, suggesting that elites are more likely to select male candidates, even as women enter politics in higher numbers.

## **Theorizing Institutional Interconnections**

---

<sup>8</sup> Tremblay and Pelletier (2001) apply Niven's arguments to female party gatekeepers in Canada, but find only weak support for the reverse argument: that female elites are more likely to select women than men.



In addition, while the supply and demand model attempts to systematically theorize the interconnections between the institutions of political recruitment, applications of the framework frequently oversimplify the dynamics of the selection process. As already highlighted, Norris and Lovenduski (1995) stress the institutional complexities of the model, highlighting the ways in which the dynamics of supply and demand interact with wider systemic and political factors. For example, Norris and Lovenduski (1995) identify the electoral system as a key systemic factor shaping patterns of female selection and recruitment. Yet, they also argue that it ‘would be misleading to see this factor in isolation from its broader context’ (p. 194):

‘A party list system is perhaps a necessary, but certainly not a sufficient, condition for high levels of female representation...It is therefore necessary to understand the interaction of the political system in a comprehensive model, rather than relying upon simple deterministic and monocausal explanations’ (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 194).

However, these nuances are often lost in subsequent applications of the model, which generally assume a linear and logical relationship between the institutions of political recruitment. For example, in her later work, Norris (1997) conceptualizes supply and demand as a straightforward interaction model:

‘The political system sets the general context, the recruitment process sets the steps from aspiration to nomination, while selector demand and candidate supply determine the outcome’ (Norris, 1997, p. 14).

In this view, the four levels of political recruitment are assumed to work together relatively straightforwardly in cases of institutional reform (Norris, 1997, p. 14). Changes in the political system – for example – changes to the electoral system – impact the selection process within political parties. The resulting changes in the recruitment process, then, impact on the dynamics of candidate supply and selector demand. However, studies of political recruitment reveal multiple directions of causality (Krook, 2003, p. 11; see also Krook 2009 forthcoming). As already highlighted, the demands of gatekeepers predominantly shape the supply of available candidates, as candidates often self-select themselves out of the recruitment process on the basis of anticipated failure or perceived discrimination in the selection process (see for example Fox and Lawless, 2004). In

addition, while the model gives supply and demand side factors equal weight in the selection process, research on gender and political recruitment demonstrates the limiting power of demand despite increases in the supply of women candidates. For example, attempts to reform the institutions of political recruitment – through innovations such as candidate gender quotas – can result in an increase in the numbers of female candidates, but the impact of gender quotas ultimately depends on the willingness of political elites to implement and enforce these policies (Htun, 2002; Jones, 2004; Murray, 2004). Finally, as already highlighted a number of these factors – including electoral systems and party systems – demonstrate a complex, non-linear relationship with patterns of female recruitment. While these institutional interconnections are present implicitly in Norris and Lovenduski's (1995) supply and demand model, it remains unclear as to how supply and demand factors as well as the different levels of the political recruitment process systematically relate to and interact with each other.

Norris and Lovenduski's formulation of the supply and demand model is a significant intervention into the literature on political recruitment, representing one of the first and only attempts to systematically theorize both the gendered and institutional dimensions of the selection process. However, while these gendered and institutional trends are present, they are not fully developed. As a result, the supply and demand model is problematic in two key ways. First, while the model attempts to integrate gender into the dynamics of recruitment and selection, it does not fully engage with the underlying gender norms and relations that structure the institutions of political recruitment, for example, shaping selection criteria and party practices. And second, while the model explicitly attempts to theorize the interconnections between the institutions of political recruitment, applications of the framework often oversimplify the complex and interactive dynamics of the political recruitment process. In the following section, the chapter evaluates subsequent efforts to rework Norris and Lovenduski's framework, focusing in particular on the reformulation of the model proposed by Mona Lena Krook (2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming).

### ***III: Taking the Model Forward: An Institutionalist Approach***

Recent efforts to redesign the supply and demand model have explicitly attempted to develop the theoretical interconnections present in Norris and Lovenduski's work. In particular, the work of Mona Lena Krook (2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming) has attempted to build on both the gender-sensitive and institutionally-focused aspects of Norris and Lovenduski's framework. Krook attempts to reintegrate and reformulate the key features of the supply and demand model into a feminist and institutionalist framework, employing new institutionalist tools to theorize the institutional configurations that shape access to political office and putting a renewed focus on 'gender' as a central organizing principle in candidate selection (2006, p. 3). She begins by arranging the factors that influence political recruitment into 'more precise causal categories' (2006, p. 7), distinguishing between the *systemic*, *practical*, and *normative* institutions that affect patterns of candidate recruitment and selection. *Systemic institutions* refer to the formal features of the political system, including electoral rules, ballot structures, district sizes, and number of political parties. *Practical institutions* include formal and informal party practices of political recruitment, encompassing both *de jure* (formal) and *de facto* (informal) requirements for candidacy. And finally, *normative institutions* are the formal and informal principles that define the means and goals of recruitment, incorporating formal definitions of equality and representation in the constitution, legal codes, electoral laws, and party statutes, as well as more informally in public speeches, party platforms, political ideologies, and public opinion and values.

While applications of the supply and demand model tend to assume that the political recruitment process works fairly straightforwardly, Krook argues that the institutions of political recruitment interact in complex and interlocking ways (2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming). Krook reviews the women and politics literature, and finds that, while it does not explicitly use this language, existing research on women and politics yields important insights into the interaction of systemic, practical, and normative institutions. While many studies focus on the causal importance of individual institutions in shaping patterns of female political recruitment, Krook finds that most studies often implicitly acknowledge the role of the other two types of institutions, suggesting that more attention should be given to the causal role of these institutional configurations in determining particular political outcomes. For example, accounts that focus on party selection practices and candidate selection criteria – the *practical* institutions of political recruitment – often address both 'characteristics of political parties and underlying popular beliefs about the popular qualifications of women'

(Krook, 2006, p. 10) – implicitly addressing the *systemic* and *normative* institutions of political recruitment (see for example Lovenduski, 1993).

Krook explores the effect of these institutional configurations by analyzing *iterated sequences of reforms* to increase women's parliamentary representation. Focusing primarily on candidate gender quotas, Krook traces multiple efforts at reform over time, assessing how individual quota policies interact in different ways with the institutions of political recruitment and intersect with the 'reform and non-reform of other institutions' (2006, p. 14). As such, Krook puts a central emphasis on issues of timing, sequence, and context, analyzing how the impact of a particular configuration of institutions shifts as one or more institutions in the configuration are 'reinforced, partially reformed, or fully transformed' in the course of a reform campaign (Krook, 2003, p. 25). Attempts to reform one of the institutions of political recruitment can be helped or hindered by the other two institutions of political recruitment, and, as a result, similar institutional reforms can produce radically different outcomes across cases, while different institutional reforms can produce relatively similar outcomes (Krook, 2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming). For example, Krook argues that political party quotas, which seek to alter practical institutions by establishing new standards for candidate selection, can also touch on systemic, practical, and normative institutions in ways that both facilitate and hinder changes in women's representation. In Norway, for example, campaigns for practical reforms intersected with reforms of normative institutions. In the late 1960s and 1970s, women's activists framed demands for gender quotas within existing normative traditions of 'group representation' in Norwegian politics, leading to substantial reform in party candidate selection procedures (see also Valen, 1988).

Krook also emphasizes the importance of 'gender' as a central organizing principle in the institutions of political recruitment. While the supply and demand model focuses largely on the formal rules and party practices that affect the recruitment of female candidates, Krook puts a greater emphasis on the pivotal role of norms and ideas in shaping the candidate selection process. The institutions of political recruitment, then, are neither objective nor neutral, but are instead embedded in norms and values, reflecting and reinforcing existing power inequalities and 'privileging men over women as candidates to political office' (Krook, 2006, p. 2). While there are no standard or universally recognized qualifications to be selected to run for office, formal and informal candidate requirements such as party service, resources, and experience strongly influence who decides to run for office and shape

the supply of candidates along gendered lines (Krook, 2003). Prospective female candidates, then, face what Jenny Chapman (1993) refers to as the ‘scissors problem’: they are less likely to possess the appropriate ‘qualifications’ for office, and in turn, concerns over the appropriateness of their qualifications may prevent them from running for office altogether (see also Lovenduski, 1993).

As such, Krook’s model of political recruitment (2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming) builds on Norris and Lovenduski’s (1995) supply and demand model in several key ways. To begin with, it refines the institutional dimension of Norris and Lovenduski’s framework, systematically reordering the elements of the supply and demand model into new causal categories and situating the effects of the institutions of political recruitment within the context of broader institutional configurations. In focusing on institutional configurations, Krook’s work provides explicit insights into how the institutions of political recruitment interact with each other in dynamic and contradictory ways, allowing for a more nuanced approach to theorizing institutional interconnections that moves beyond conceptions of supply and demand as a straightforward interaction model. In addition, Krook adds a temporal and historical dimension to work on gender and political recruitment, drawing attention to the importance of timing, sequence and context in efforts at institutional reform in the political recruitment process. By tracing multiple sequences of reform, Krook’s framework provides greater analytical leverage in explaining why reforms such as candidate gender quotas succeed in some contexts yet fail in others, highlighting the ways in which the inter-connected institutions of political recruitment alternately support or block efforts at reform as they shift over time. Finally, Krook’s model puts a renewed emphasis on the normative and gendered dimensions of the institutions of political recruitment, moving beyond gender as a ‘factor’ that influences the dynamics of supply and demand and highlighting the norms and ideas that underpin selection rules and practices.

Yet, while Krook’s framework represents a significant step forward for work on gender and political recruitment, aspects of Krook’s reformulation of the supply and demand model are still problematic. Krook’s analytical distinction between systemic, practical, and normative institutions offers a useful starting point for theorizing the institutional configurations that shape the pathways to political office. Yet, there is also a significant amount of overlap between these categories which require further consideration. For example, in her discussion of practical institutions, Krook makes the distinction between *formal* candidate qualifications

set down in law, such as age, citizenship, country of birth, or political party membership and *informal* qualifications, such as education, party service, legislative experience or speaking abilities. However, many of these subjective informal selection criteria are ‘formalized’ to a certain degree by political parties, while other informal criteria are not explicitly formalized<sup>9</sup>. In addition, Krook highlights the powerful role that norms and ideas play in the selection process, shaping both systemic and practical and institutions of political recruitment and underpinning both ‘the possibility and the scope for systemic and practical change to increase women’s political representation’ (2006, p. 14). This raises the question as to whether one can understand the systemic or the practical without the normative, and whether the normative should be given a greater weight in the institutions of political recruitment. For example, while systemic institutions – the formal features of the political system – provide the basic framework for political recruitment, normative institutions provide the justifications for choosing certain electoral systems, rules, ballot structures, district sizes, and so on. Recent systemic reforms have often been framed in terms of the norm of gender equality, for example, in the case of electoral system reform in countries such as New Zealand and the United Kingdom and the adoption and implementation of candidate gender quotas in countries around the world. More consideration should also be given to the difficulties in defining and categorizing the normative institutions of political recruitment. Krook adopts a somewhat limited definition of these normative institutions, focusing primarily on the power of legal norms:

‘Normative institutions...constitute the formal and informal principles that set forth the values informing the means and goals of politics, namely the definitions of equality and representation enshrined formally in constitutions, legal codes, electoral laws, and party statutes, and more informally in public speeches, political ideologies, and voter opinions and values’ (2006, p. 12).

Furthermore, while Krook argues that ‘gender is a central organizing principle’ in candidate selection processes (Krook, 2006, p. 3), she does not systematically address the gendered dynamics of the institutions of political recruitment. On the one hand, Krook highlights the

---

<sup>9</sup> For example, in the candidate selection process for Scottish Labour in the run up to the 1999 Scottish Parliament elections, candidates who made it to the interview stage were assessed on a range of subjective, yet ‘formalized’ assessment criteria. These included: communication skills, knowledge of Scottish issues, ability to demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to Labour Party policy, and past achievements and/or special skills or interests. Scores from 1 to 3 were awarded on each criterion, and candidates scoring 40 or above were successful (Bradbury et al, 2000a; 2000b).

gendered dimensions of systemic, practical, and normative institutions. For example, systemic institutions - such as electoral or party systems - have differential effects on women and men as institutional actors, potentially facilitating or inhibiting women's access to political office (Krook, 2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming). Meanwhile, as already highlighted, practical institutions – including formal and informal requirements for candidacy – ‘strongly shape the “supply” of potential candidates, particularly along the lines of gender’ (Krook, 2003, p. 17). Finally, normative institutions – embodying hegemonic interpretations of equality and representation – can promote or undermine the selection of women in a number of ways, providing the ‘theoretical motivations and justifications’ for choosing certain systemic institutions while also drawing ‘limits around the ways in which recruitment criteria can be conceived and redefined’ (Krook, 2003, p. 24; Krook, 2006, p. 14).

Yet, on the other hand, gender is not fully integrated into Krook's framework in a systematic way. For example, although Krook addresses both the normative foundations and the power relationships underpinning the institutions of political recruitment, she presents these dynamics in gender-neutral terms. As outlined above, gender is not explicitly incorporated into Krook's understanding of normative institutions, which are understood as ‘the formal and informal principles that set forth the values informing the means and goals of politics’ (2006, p. 12). In addition, while Krook highlights the ways in which candidate selection practices privilege ‘certain categories’ of candidates over others, she does not explicitly address how these ‘inequalities in political recruitment’ (Krook, 2006, p. 10-11) are gendered nor does she explicitly theorize the underlying gendered norm of ‘merit’ which has been repeatedly problematized in other studies of gender and political recruitment (see in particular Chapman, 1993; Lovenduski and Norris, 1989). As already highlighted, work on gender and political recruitment has repeatedly challenged the assumption that candidate selection criteria are gender neutral – simply distinguishing between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ candidates on the basis of ‘merit’ - and draws attention to the ways in which formal selection criteria are also shaped by gendered norms, conventions, and practices (see for example Chapman, 1993; Lovenduski, 2005; Lovenduski and Norris, 1989; Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski, 2002). As a result, candidate selection criteria carry with them a set of gendered assumptions, for example, with regards to experience, training, resources, and domestic responsibilities, that often result in male candidates seeming more ‘qualified’ or ‘suitable’ for the job (see for example Chapman, 1993; Niven, 1998). Therefore, while Krook's framework takes the supply and demand model forward, developing and building upon

existing gendered and institutional trends in Norris and Lovenduski's work, it continues to be problematic in that it underplays the complex and far-reaching ways in which gender plays out in the political recruitment process.

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter set out to evaluate the comparative literature on gender and political recruitment. It began with a theoretical critique of Norris and Lovenduski's (1995) supply and demand model, one of the only frameworks that attempts to integrate gender into the dynamics of supply and demand. The chapter argues that the supply and demand model represents a key turning point in the literature – in that it attempts to systematically theorize both the gendered and institutional dimensions of the political recruitment process – but ultimately concludes that the model has not fully realized its potential.

While these gendered and institutional trends are underdeveloped in Norris and Lovenduski's model, subsequent efforts to redesign the model have explicitly attempted to develop these theoretical interconnections. The chapter evaluates recent efforts to rework Norris and Lovenduski's framework, focusing on Mona Lena Krook's (2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming) reformulation of the model. It argues that Krook's work represents a significant step forward for work on gender and political recruitment, building on and refining Norris and Lovenduski's gender-sensitive and institutionally-focused approach. Yet, the chapter also points to the ways in which Krook's revised model is still problematic, highlighting the ways in which gender continues to be underplayed in the model. In critically evaluating the supply and demand model – as well as Krook's reformulation of the model – the chapter draws attention to the particular difficulties of 'translating' the complexities of gendered institutional dynamics into analytical frameworks for empirical research, tensions which are reflected in wider trends in feminist political science. The following chapter addresses these trends and tensions in feminist work on gender and institutions more generally, shifting from a specific focus on gender and political recruitment to a broader discussion of the institutional 'turn' in feminist political science.



## Towards a Feminist Institutionalism

The tensions apparent in the literature on gender and political recruitment point to wider trends and ongoing debates in feminist political science more generally. Feminist political science has taken a decidedly institutional ‘turn’, moving gradually from ‘women *in* politics’ to ‘gender *and* politics’. A gendered focus shifts the emphasis from ‘women *in* to the *gendering of* political institutions’, highlighting the ways in which institutions reflect, structure and reinforce gendered patterns of power (Kenney, 1996, p. 455). Yet, while feminist research on political institutions has yielded rich insights, there is a growing recognition that new approaches, conceptual tools and methods are needed in order to better understand gendered modes of interaction and to expose the ways in which seemingly neutral institutional processes and practices are in fact gendered (Lovenduski, 1998, 2005; Mackay, 2004a).

This chapter points to new directions for feminist work on gender and political institutions. The institutional ‘turn’ in feminist political science is paralleled by broader institutional trends in mainstream political science, particularly in the field of ‘new institutionalism’, opening up possibilities for dialogue between the two fields. Yet despite sharing a number of common interests and preoccupations, there has been little interplay between mainstream new institutional scholars and feminist political scientists working on institutions. This chapter critically evaluates the institutional ‘turn’ in both feminist and mainstream political science. It goes on to outline some initial possibilities for dialogue and synthesis between the two fields, which the thesis expands upon in the subsequent chapter.

### ***I: Feminist Political Science: An Institutional ‘Turn’***

The institutional 'turn' in feminist political science has generally been noted (Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a; Randall, 2002) and is accompanied by a 'growing dissatisfaction' with the analytical concept of sex – understood as a dichotomous variable separating the biological differences between male and female bodies – and an increased interest in the concept of gender (Lovenduski, 1998, p. 335). Studies have moved from 'measuring' gender as a discrete and dichotomous variable to understanding gender as a complex frame of reference. In this view, gender is not something we *have*, it is something we *do* – a 'routine, methodical, and recurring accomplishment' (West and Zimmerman, 1987, p. 126). An understanding of gender as something we 'do' – as 'practice' or 'performance' – shifts the analytical focus from the individual to social and political institutions, practices, and processes, opening up the field for theoretical and empirical work in the area of gender and institutions.

### **From 'Sex' to 'Gender'**

While the term 'gender' is widely used in the social sciences, feminist scholars have employed and understood the term in distinctly different ways. In its earlier usage, gender was defined as the social construction of sex. There was an implicit causal link between sex and gender; gender was understood to rest upon an existing 'natural' division, and biological sex was left largely untheorized, treated as given. In its more recent usage, gender is seen as a 'feature that emerges from social settings' rather than a personal property of the individual (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995, p. 16-17). While gender, in this view, is a process rather than a role or identity, the assignment of bodies to gender categories is an active and integral part of this process (Acker, 1992; Beckwith, 2005; Connell, 1987, 2002; West and Zimmerman, 1987). Although gender is constantly enacted, it is also powerfully constrained, limited in part by bodies and the surrounding context.

This dynamic conception of gender as a 'process' or 'practice' - as something that is 'done' - offers a relational and contextual approach, suggesting that meanings of masculinity and femininity are constantly renegotiated and redefined through social interaction and with reference to each other. In doing so, it calls the presumed causal link between sex and gender into question. If we accept a relational and contextual definition of gender, then the category 'woman' is no longer defined by an essential biological foundation, but is instead

understood in terms of her otherness to the category 'man': 'man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him...He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other' (de Beauvoir, 1953, p. 15-16). If there is no causal relationship between sex and gender, then there is no explicit link between constructions of masculinity and male bodies or constructions of femininity and female bodies (Squires, 1999, p. 61). This understanding of gender, then, exposes the givenness of biological sex to scrutiny. For example, R.W. Connell contends that sex and the body can only be made comprehensible through social practices and processes – through gender. These social practices construct sexual difference by 'converting an average difference into a categorical difference' (Connell, 1987, p. 80). Others have gone so far as to suggest that 'sex' itself is a social construction, constituted through the linguistic effect of gendered discursive practices (Butler, 1993).

Rethinking gender in this way requires a considerable conceptual shift, allowing us to see that gender is not necessarily tied to a sexed body and highlighting social processes that lie beyond the individual. As R.W. Connell writes:

'In common-sense understanding gender is a property of individual people. When biological determinism is abandoned, gender is still seen in terms of socially produced individual character. It is a considerable leap to think of gender as being also a property of collectivities, institutions, and historical processes. This view...is required by evidence and experience...There are gender phenomena of major importance which simply cannot be grasped as properties of individuals, however much properties of individuals are implicated in them' (1987, p. 139).

## **Patriarchy, Gender Regimes, and the Gender Order**

The move from 'sex' to 'gender' has profound implications for feminist political science, pointing to the need for a more systematic investigation of the complex ways in which masculinities and femininities 'interact in organizations, institutions, and processes' (Lovenduski, 1998, p. 339; see also Lovenduski, 2005; Mackay, 2004a; Randall, 2002). However, early work on gender and institutions generally overlooked the role of institutional structures and practices in reinforcing and reproducing gender inequality (Witz and Savage, 1992, p. 6). The causes of gender inequality were at the macro level, rooted in a stratifying system, that of 'patriarchy' (e.g. Walby, 1990), or the 'gender order' (Connell, 1987). Institutions and organizations, therefore, were not the direct cause of inequality themselves,

and were interesting only insofar as they illustrated a ‘more general set of patriarchal practices’ (Witz and Savage, 1992, p. 7).

Subsequent work has turned from a focus on universal patriarchal structures to the structuring of gender relations. For example, in *Theorizing Patriarchy* (1990), Sylvia Walby improves upon single-structure theories of patriarchy, defining it as a ‘system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women’ (p. 20). The use of the term social structure is important in this instance, in that it implies a rejection of biological determinism, or the ‘notion that every individual man is in a dominant position and every woman in a subordinate one’ (Walby, 1990, p. 20). Walby’s work on patriarchy emphasizes the dynamic nature of both public and private patriarchal structures, in which gender relations are continually re-constituted through social practice. Walby also addresses contemporary changes in gender relations, and finds that there have been changes in both the degree and form of patriarchy in contemporary Britain, which has seen a movement from a private to a public form of patriarchy. This shift has not led to an elimination of gender inequality, but rather indicates that patriarchy has simply ‘changed in form, incorporating some of the hard-won changes into new traps for women’ (Walby, 1990, p. 201).

In many ways parallel to (although independent from) Walby’s work is the work of R.W. Connell (1987, 2002). Like Walby, Connell argues for a multi-dimensional model of gender relations. However, Connell argues that while Walby’s (1990) model is useful, it only considers patterns of ‘institutionalized inequality’ (Connell, 2002, p. 59). Connell argues that a different formulation is needed, one that also considers gender patterns that are not inherently unequal. Connell defines the pattern of gender relations within a particular institution as its *gender regime*<sup>10</sup>. The gender regimes of these particular institutions are then part of wider patterns, known as the *gender order* of a society. The gender regimes of institutions generally correspond to the overall gender order, but may depart from it, which may open up possibilities for change. Connell defines gender as a ‘configuration of practice’, conceptualizing gender as something that is ‘done’ rather than a personal property of the individual. The emphasis, then, is on multiple masculinities and femininities – gender

---

<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that Connell frequently uses the terms ‘organizations’ and ‘institutions’ interchangeably, alongside the broader concept of ‘social structure’ (e.g. Connell, 2002). This can be in part explained by Connell’s reliance on organizational studies within the field of education.

practice takes place within different historical and cultural contexts, and is enacted by different agents. These masculinities and femininities exist within a relationship of hierarchy – and the power relationships between genders and within genders are centered around the global dominance of men over women (Connell, 2002).

Connell's understanding of gender as something we 'do' – as practice – then allows us to view institutions in a more dynamic way, rather than as abstract structures, and puts a renewed focus on the importance of institutional processes and practices. Within these institutions and social structures, gender is dynamic, complex, constantly negotiated, and powerfully constrained. While institutions constrain gender practice, defining possibilities for action, they have 'no existence outside the practices through which people and groups conduct those relations' (Connell, 2002, p. 55). In other words, institutions are reconstituted from moment to moment by these very practices. This insight runs parallel to similar developments in other fields and disciplines, in particular post-modern and post-structuralist theory. For example, Foucauldian perspectives on power see it not as a 'single, all-encompassing strategy' (Foucault, 1984, p. 103), but rather as a set of discourses operating in particular institutional contexts. Institutions, then, are not simply conduits for power existing outside a specific institution. Power is institutionally grounded and any understanding of gender inequality must therefore consider how institutional forms 'structure and are themselves structured by gender' (Witz and Savage, 1992, p. 8).

## **Theorizing Gendered Institutions**

Both Walby's and Connell's work offers a useful starting point for theorizing gendered institutions. Yet, while institutions are arguably everywhere in feminist political science - ranging from work on political opportunity structures, political recruitment, political representation, and the welfare state, among other areas - there has been little systematic theoretical work on gender and political institutions. There are, of course, exceptions<sup>11</sup>, but attempts to build a theory of gendered institutions have been led primarily by feminist sociologists in the field of gender and organizations (see for example Acker, 1990, 1992; Cockburn, 1991; Savage and Witz, 1992; Steinberg, 1992).

---

<sup>11</sup> See for example Duerst-Lahti and Kelly (1995); Kenney, 1996; Lovenduski, 1998.

Research on gender and organizations demonstrates how organizational and institutional practices play a crucial role in constructing and reinforcing gendered hierarchies, symbols, and identities (see for example Acker, 1990, 1992; Cockburn, 1991; Savage and Witz, 1992; Steinberg, 1992). Acker (1992) argues that these gendered processes play out in organizations in four key ways. First, are the ‘overt decisions and procedures’ of control, segregation, and exclusion that construct gendered power hierarchies. A second gendered process is ‘the construction of images, symbols, and ideologies that justify, explain, and give legitimacy to institutions’ (Acker, 1992, p. 568). This gendered reality is often presented in gender-neutral terms. Third are the gendered processes of interaction between men and women (as well as women and women, and men and men). It is here that people ‘do’ gender (West and Zimmerman, 1987), as they carry out the day-to-day work of an institution. Fourth are the internal processes in which individuals engage as they construct ‘properly gendered personas’ that are appropriate for particular institutional settings (Acker, 1992, p. 568). To say that an organization is gendered, then, means that:

‘advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. Gender is not an addition to ongoing processes, conceived as gender neutral. Rather, it is an integral part of those processes, which cannot be properly understood without an analysis of gender’ (Acker, 1990, p. 146).

A key contribution of this research has been to ‘undo the taken-for-grantedness’ of organizations (Stivers, 1993, p. 5), to expose the extent to which seemingly neutral processes and practices are in fact gendered. For example, Joan Acker (1990) argues that the gendered nature of organizations is partly hidden by obscuring the embodied nature of work. Mainstream organization theories assume a ‘disembodied and universal worker’, although in actuality organizational processes are deeply gendered and ‘bodied’ (1990, p. 139). Acker highlights the ways in which men’s bodies and masculinist ideologies pervade organizational processes, marginalizing and excluding women and reinforcing gender segregation in organizations. Similarly, feminist work on gender and bureaucracy has exposed the gendered assumptions that structure the bureaucratic norm of neutrality, namely that civil servants can act with ‘dispassionate objectivity’ and ‘rise above their own beliefs and the political fray’ (Stivers, 1993, p. 38-40). While traditional masculine attributes such as objectivity, detachment, and rationality are valued, traditional ‘feminine’ values – such as

emotion or passion – are de-valued, and considered to be overly biased (Stivers, 1993, p. 41). An additional key contribution of the literature on gender and organizations concerns the ‘historical specificity’ of organizational forms, which are seen to be constantly changing in a fluid and dynamic way (Witz and Savage, 1992, p. 57). The processes creating and maintaining gendered difference are complex and contingent - varying across different sites and over time – and are subject to ongoing renegotiation and contestation (Acker, 1992; Cockburn, 1985, 1991; Witz and Savage, 1992).

In feminist political science, work on gender and institutions is decidedly eclectic, drawing on the literature on gender and organizations, as well as insights from other disciplines (Mackay, 2004a; Randall, 2002). Research in this area has begun to map the ways in which gendered institutional power relations and inequality are constructed, shaped, and maintained through institutional practices, processes, rules and regulations. Feminist scholars have identified and problematized institutional gender norms in a range of political arenas, including bureaucracies, federal systems, parliaments, and constitutions (Banaszak, 1996; Chappell, 2002; Childs, 2004; Dobrowolsky and Hart, 2003; Hawkesworth, 2003; Irving, 2008; Mackay, 2006; Vickers, 1994). They have also demonstrated how these norms can be challenged and contested, for example through strategies such as candidate gender quotas, gender mainstreaming and women’s policy machinery (see for example Dahlerup, 2006a; Franzway et al, 1989; Krook, 2009 forthcoming; Mazur, 2002; Rai, 2003; Squires, 2007; Stetson and Mazur, 1995). For example, Louise Chappell (2002) compares the operation of gendered norms of neutrality in two Westminster-style bureaucracies – Australia and Canada. In Canada, where the civil service is marked by strong neutrality norms, possibilities for feminist activists hoping to engage with the civil service are decidedly limited. In contrast, in Australia, there is a greater tolerance for internal advocacy of sectional interests within the bureaucracy. As a result, Australian feminists were able to successfully campaign for the creation of women’s policy agencies in which they could serve as ‘femocrats’, meaning that a political commitment to feminism was considered to be an important criterion for the job (see also Chappell, 2006).

In addition, feminist research on gender and political institutions draws attention to the gendered dynamics of resistance and backlash, exposing the active and ongoing institutional processes and practices involved in constructing and maintaining gendered political institutions (e.g. Childs, 2004; Halford, 1992; Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995;

Lovenduski, 2005; Puwar, 2004; Ross, 2002). For example, Susan Halford (1992) identifies the specific gendered structures and relations within local government organizations which limit the potential success of women's initiatives. While Halford concludes that women's initiatives have been relatively successful at creating a 'feminist space' within male-dominated local authority bureaucracies, they have been substantially less successful at challenging broader gendered dynamics, such as the masculinist discourse of bureaucratic rationality.

This work provides rich insights into the complex ways in which gender plays out in political institutions. As Joni Lovenduski observes:

'The successful application of the concept of gender to the investigation of political institutions must acknowledge not only the complexity of gender but also the nature of the particular institution, and the kinds of masculinities and femininities that are performed' (1998, p. 350).

For example, comparative work in the field highlights the ways in which gender relations vary across similar institutions in different settings and different institutions in similar settings, both promising and limiting opportunities for change (e.g. Banaszak et al, 2003; Chappell, 2002; Gelb, 2003; Teghtsoonian and Chappell, 2008). Gender relations and gendered experiences also vary between women and between men, across cultures and over time, and historical studies have highlighted the 'diversity and historical-cultural specificity of women's experiences and gender relations' (Acker, 1992, p. 566; see also Burns, 2005). These findings suggest that gendered behavior does not simply map on to bodies, but is instead produced through gendered interactions that are situation and context-specific. As such, gendered differences cannot simply be 'read off', but must instead be reconceptualized through a relational, contextual, and gendered frame of reference (Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a).

## **Moving Beyond the Numbers?**

While the shift from sex to gender and from an individual to an institutional-level focus is a significant one, it has also not been fully realized. Feminist political scientists continue to



grapple with the implications of incorporating 'slippery' and complex understandings of gender into their frameworks and analyses and are generally reluctant to give up on 'biologically determined categories of man and woman' (Lovenduski, 1998, p. 351; see also Childs and Krook, 2006a; Mackay, 2004a), although they continue to question the coherency of these categories (see for example Childs, 2004).

As highlighted previously, the shift from 'sex' to 'gender' has been particularly problematic in the feminist literature on the substantive representation of women, where research continues to focus on female bodies as the 'main vehicles' for institutional change and transformation (Mackay, 2004a, p. 101). Work in this area highlights existing tensions in the women and politics field. An understanding of gender as 'practice' or 'process' puts the focus on social and political institutions, allowing us to see that gender is not necessarily tied to a sexed body. Yet, at the same time, feminist research on political institutions indicates that bodies still 'matter'. In particular, the rapidly growing literature on women and political representation in the United Kingdom suggests that women do 'make a difference', finding noticeable gender differences in attitudes and political priorities among British politicians, while also highlighting the complex and contingent effect of women's political presence, mediated by factors such as party identity and the surrounding institutional environment (see, for example, Childs, 2004; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Mackay et al, 2003). There is a growing recognition in the field that a more systematic approach is needed in order to bridge the gap between complex theories of gender and workable frameworks for empirical research (Mackay, 2004a; see also Childs, 2004; Childs and Krook, 2006a; Lovenduski, 1998). New conceptual tools and innovative approaches are required in order to address the 'questions that need to be asked and answered: what differences are we looking for? Under what conditions does change happen? How do institutional effects interact with gender effects? When we discern differences, what do they mean?' (Mackay, 2004a, p. 110; see also Childs and Krook, 2006a; Lovenduski, 2005).

As several feminist political scientists have noted, there is clear potential for exchange here with mainstream institutionally-focused scholars, particularly the broad field of 'new institutionalism' (see for example Lovenduski, 1998, 2005; Mackay, 2004a; Mackay and Meier, 2003). Both the new institutionalism and feminist political science share a number of common preoccupations. Both are interested in the interplay between social actors and institutions, broadly defined, as well as the interaction between formal rules and informal

practices and norms. Both take a 'value-critical' approach, sharing an understanding that seemingly neutral institutional processes and practices are in fact embedded in hidden norms and values, privileging certain groups over others. Both are centrally concerned with explanations of institutional creation, continuity, resistance, and change. The following section provides an overview of the new institutionalist literature, focusing in particular on these key areas of overlap: institutions, power, and change.

## ***II: The New Institutionalism: One or Many?***

The basic premise of the new institutionalism is that institutions 'matter', an 'argument that the organization of political life makes a difference' (March and Olsen, 1984, p. 747). Yet while the term 'new institutionalism' is widely used in political science, there is considerable debate over 'just what the "new institutionalism" is' (Hall and Taylor, 1996, p. 936). The new institutionalism is by no means a coherent approach, and there has been much debate within the field as to how to define and distinguish between different branches or 'schools' of new institutionalism. For example, James G. March and Johan P. Olsen (1984) speak of the 'new institutionalism' in the singular, while Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor, in a seminal article, distinguish between three main types of new institutionalism: *rational choice*, *sociological*, and *historical* institutionalism. While Hall and Taylor's typology is widely used in the new institutionalist literature, recent work in the field has suggested that there may be an additional 'fourth' school of new institutionalism, alternately referred to as *discursive* institutionalism (Schmidt, 2002, 2006), *ideational* institutionalism (Hay, 2001), or *constructivist* institutionalism (Hay, 2006). Other authors have distinguished between at least seven different types of new institutionalism, often defined on rather arbitrary criteria (e.g. Peters, 1999).

The proliferation of different 'schools' of new institutionalism has been increasingly criticized. Colin Crouch, for example, suggests that recent work in the new institutionalist field has been more focused on being the 'first to label' a particular sub-branch of study, rather than on developing political theory:

‘A few years ago we were content to identify institutionalism, or neoinstitutionalism. Will the next evolutionary stage be one of further fragmentation, so that...we shall have books on, for example, three different forms of historical institutionalism?’ (Crouch, 2003, p. 202).

The chapter adopts the distinction used by Hall and Taylor (1996) between three schools of new institutionalism, distinguishing between rational choice, sociological, and historical variants. While Hall and Taylor clearly differentiate between the different strands of institutional analysis, arguing that a ‘crude synthesis’ of all three schools might not be ‘immediately practicable or even necessarily desirable’ (p. 957), they ultimately suggest that a dialogue between them is both ‘necessary and crucial’ (Hay and Wincott, 1998a, p. 951):

‘[A]fter some years in which these schools of thought have incubated in relative isolation from each other, the time has come for a more open and extensive interchange among them. There is ample evidence that we can learn from all of these schools of thought and that each has something to learn from the others’ (Hall and Taylor, 1996, p. 957).

Yet, while there are areas of agreement and, sometimes, overlap, between different schools of new institutional analysis, there are also important differences between them, limiting possibilities for dialogue. While all three variants incorporate a broad and internally diverse body of literature, each school – rational choice, sociological, and historical - offers a distinctive approach to institutional analysis. The following section elaborates on the distinctions between the three schools of new institutionalism, focusing particularly on conceptions of institutions, power and change within each institutionalist tradition.

## **Rational Choice Institutionalism**

Hall and Taylor contend that the new institutionalism is structured by two main logics: the logic of *calculus* and the logic of *culture*. Rational choice institutionalism broadly corresponds with the logic of calculus, in which individuals are seen to be utility-maximizers, behaving strategically in an effort to maximize the attainment of specific goals. Rational choice institutionalists draw on insights from economic traditions, viewing institutions as structures of voluntary cooperation – sets of rules, incentives, and sanctions –

created, agreed upon, and used strategically by groups of institutional actors seeking to solve collective action problems<sup>12</sup>.

As such, rational choice institutionalists adopt a much more narrow definition of institutions than either historical or sociological institutionalists. Institutions are ‘thin’ at most, seen to be exogenous constraints on the behavior of self-interested actors. For example, Douglass North’s often-cited definition conceptualizes institutions as ‘the rules of the game in a society’ (North, 1990, p. 3). Other rational choice institutionalists see institutions as internally provided by the players themselves: ‘they are simply the ways in which the players want to play’ (Shepsle, 2006, p. 25). As Randall Calvert puts it:

‘[T]here is, strictly speaking, no separate animal that we can identify as an institution. There is only rational behaviour, conditioned on expectations about the behaviour and reactions of others. When these expectations about others’ behaviour take on a particularly clear and concrete form across individuals, when they apply to situations that recur over a long period of time, and especially when they involve highly variegated and specific expectations about the different roles of different actors in determining what actions others should take, we often collect these expectations and strategies under the heading *institution*’ (Calvert, 1995, pp. 73-4).

Rational choice institutionalists, then, are committed to the precepts of methodological individualism. While they do not necessarily reject the ‘social qualities of human agents’, institutional actors are seen to be relatively (or at least more) independent of context than in the other institutionalist schools (Aspinwall and Schneider, 2000, p. 10). While institutions set the parameters within which individual decisions are made, the emphasis is always on the ‘individual rather than context’ (Aspinwall and Schneider, 2000, p. 11). Therefore, while institutions are viewed as a product of human agency, they merely establish a set of parameters for action, rather than influencing or shaping preferences. In this view, preferences are seen to be *exogenous*. Preferences are fixed and rest on the assumption that political actors are rational and act to maximize their self-interest.

---

<sup>12</sup> For more detailed reviews of the wider literature on rational choice institutionalism, see Shepsle (2006) and Weingast (1996, 2002).

As such, rational choice institutionalism has little to say on the subject of power. Institutions are seen to be neutral, and, as a result, rational choice institutionalism generally fails to recognize power relations and structural imbalances. At its analytic core, rational choice institutionalism is ultimately concerned with ‘voluntary exchange among rational individuals’ (Moe, 2006, p. 32). Due to the focus on political institutions as structures of voluntary cooperation that resolve collective action problems: ‘institutions emerge as good things, and it is their goodness that ultimately explains them. They exist and take the forms they do because they make people better off’ (Moe, 2006, p. 34-35). The fundamental starting point of rational choice theory – institutions as voluntary structures of cooperation – therefore ignores what Moe (2006) refers to as the ‘dark side’ of political institutions. While institutions may be structures of cooperation, they may also be structures of coercion and power (Knight, 1992; Moe, 2006).

It should be noted, however, that several theorists, most of them political scientists rather than economists, have attempted to integrate power into rational choice institutionalism, with varying degrees of success (see especially Knight, 1992; Moe, 2006; see also Bates, 1989; Levi, 1981, 1990; Moe, 1990; Olson, 1993, 2000). Yet, those rational choice institutionalists who do emphasize the importance of power relations in institutional analysis remain the exception rather than the norm in the field. In addition, these accounts continue to rely on distributional models of power, emphasizing how powerful institutional actors design institutions to anchor their privileged position. To be *powerful* is to be in a position of institutional privilege. Those actors who are institutionally privileged are then able to have an impact on the direction of institutional change, further entrenching their institutional position and their access to resources and knowledge.

Institutions, then, are not cooperative or mutually beneficial for all institutional actors. Where there are ‘winners’, there are also ‘losers’, and whoever loses is required - either by legal or other types of sanctions - to abide by the decisions of the winners. As Terry Moe points out:

‘In the voluntaristic framework of the new economics... people who expect to lose from any proposed institutional arrangement *can simply walk away*. This is what guarantees (in theory) that such structures will be mutually beneficial. The losers don’t have to participate. But in democratic politics, *they can’t leave*, at least not unless they are

prepared to leave the country, which is typically not a practical option. So when they lose under the democratic rules of the game, they have to suffer the consequences – and the winners are well aware of this’ (Moe, 2006, pp. 38-39, emphasis in original).

However, these power-distributional perspectives have a strong tendency to ‘work *backwards*’ from existing institutional arrangements, implicitly assuming that there is a connection between the current effects and functions of the institutions with the original intentions of its institutional creators (Pierson, 2004, p. 104) Contemporary institutions may currently reflect a particular balance of power, but these institutions were not necessarily created by the same actors and groups that now benefit from these institutional arrangements.

When it comes to explaining change, rational choice institutionalism is rather straightforward, taking a calculus-based approach to institutional change that perceives change as ‘risky’. Again, due to the starting point of rational choice institutionalism – that institutions are structures of voluntary cooperation – the rational choice perspective on institutional change is highly *intentionalist*, in that it assumes that institutional design is a highly purposive process, largely controlled by individual actors. Institutions survive, therefore, only as long as they satisfy actors’ interests. Change occurs in the context of a cost-benefit rationale: if the calculated gains and benefits of a particular institutional reform or change are higher than the projected ‘costs’ of adjustment to new institutional processes and practices.

Institutions, then, are seen to exist in a state of equilibrium; once actors have coordinated to ‘select’ or design an institution, they have no incentive to alter their behavior. Change, then, is usually seen to be instigated by some exogenous shock, ignoring the possibility of internally-generated institutional change. Indeed, much of the rational choice literature continues to focus on the dynamics of environmental changes – that is, changes exogenous to the particular institutions under examination (Grief and Laitin, 2004). While a few scholars (Grief and Laitin, 2004; Weingast, 2002) have pointed to endogenous institutional change as an area in need of further study, the focus of their analysis is still on *institutional reproduction* or *institutional breakdown*, rather than institutional change (Thelen, 2004).

## Sociological Institutionalism

Sociological institutionalism broadly follows what Hall and Taylor call the logic of *culture*, in which individual behavior is not seen as fully strategic, but is instead ‘deeply embedded in a world of institutions, composed of symbols, scripts and routines, which provide the filters for interpretation’ (Hall and Taylor, 1996, p. 939). Sociological institutionalists use the term institution in very different ways than rational choice scholars or historical institutionalists, emphasizing the social and cognitive features of institutions rather than structural and constraining ones (Finnemore, 1996). Institutions include not only formal rules and procedures, but also the ‘symbol systems, cognitive scripts, and moral templates that provide the “frames of meaning” guiding human action’ (Hall and Taylor, 1996, p. 947). Unlike other approaches to institutional analysis, organizational forms do not necessarily reflect the distribution of power in a particular society or solutions to collective action dilemmas, but rather, reflect ‘shared cultural understandings... of the way the world works<sup>13</sup>’ (Thelen, 1999, p. 386; see also Meyer and Rowan, 1991; Scott, 1995).

Sociological institutionalists, then see institutions as ‘thick’. Unlike rational choice institutionalism, institutions do not merely affect the strategic calculations of self-interested individuals, but actually constitute actors themselves, shaping their basic preferences, choices, and identity. Individuals can still take ‘rational action’, but that action is ‘itself socially constituted’ (Hall and Taylor, 1996, p. 949). Therefore, unlike rational choice institutionalism which treats preferences as if they were fixed and exogenous, sociological institutionalists see preference formation as *endogenous*, that is, that preferences are socially and politically constructed. Institutions provide ‘frames of meaning’, defining appropriate behavior for their members, and members of the institution participate on the basis of the acceptance of these norms. The relationship between actors and institutions is co-constitutive, which means that not only do actors shape institutions, but that in turn they themselves are also shaped through their participation in these institutions.

---

<sup>13</sup> As Kathleen Thelen (2003) notes, sociological institutionalists generally see institutions (scripts) as analytically distinct from organizations, just as, for example, Douglass North (1990), a rational choice institutionalist, sees a strict separation of institutions (the rules of the game) and organizations (the players). However, it should be noted that sociological institutionalists frequently interchange the

Political scientists have often criticized sociological institutionalism for its ‘bloodless’ conception of institutional power and change (Hall and Taylor, 1996; Hay and Wincott, 1998a). The sociological understanding of institutions as shared ‘scripts’ and cultural understandings frequently ignores or overlooks power clashes and contestations (Hall and Taylor, 1996; Thelen, 1999). The cognitive dimension of institutions is often given more weight than the political and strategic elements of individual action, although the political dimension may play a more important role in certain situations (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, p. 27, 31; Thelen, 1999, p. 387). Finally, the emphasis on *shared* scripts seems to imply a sort of ‘unspoken consensus’ among institutional actors, potentially ignoring or overlooking institutional power relations (Thelen, 2004, p. 32). For example, sociological institutionalist Victor Nee argues that:

‘Norms are implicit or explicit rules of expected behaviour that embody the interests and preferences of members of a close-knit group or community. The institution of modern marriage, for example, encompasses social norms...Insofar as norms help solve the problem of coordination and collective action, they enable actors to capture the gains from cooperation, which, in the case of marriage, entails the sharing and thus lessening the burden of bearing and raising children’ (1998, p. 8).

However, many sociological institutionalists do emphasize that while institutions ‘bring order and minimize uncertainty’, institutional arrangements are also ‘rife with conflict, contradiction, and ambiguity’ (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, p. 28). While institutions are powerful constraints on human agency, they are also products of human agency, constructed through processes of negotiation, conflict, and contestation<sup>14</sup>.

For sociological institutionalists, institutional change occurs in a ‘world’ of other institutions, and is therefore constrained by existing forms and practices, frequently ‘borrowing’ from existing institutional templates. Processes of change are driven by wider social forces. The concept of *institutional isomorphism* for example, links to the idea of changing norms or the presence of alternative societal discourses on appropriate behavior. Isomorphism begins from the idea that institutions feel pressured to be in line with other institutions in their

---

terms ‘institution’ and ‘organization’, and have at times been criticized for this lack of conceptual clarity (e.g. Peters, 1999).



environment. Whenever they deviate too much from this environment – for example, when there is a large difference between social norms and values and the actual practices of the institution itself - change is likely to occur. Institutional change is adopted because it enhances the social legitimacy of the institution, not because it advances the means-ends efficiency of the institution, in contrast to rational choice perspectives:

‘Organizations tend to model themselves after similar organizations in their field that they perceive to be more legitimate or successful. The ubiquity of certain kinds of structural arrangements can more likely be credited to the universality of mimetic processes than to any concrete evidence that the adopted models enhanced efficiency’ (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, p. 70).

This, in part, explains inefficiencies and contradictions in existing institutions, as this ‘logic of social appropriateness’, which leads institutions to adopt specific institutional practices that are valued in the wider social context, may actually contradict the institution’s formal goals (Hall and Taylor, 1996, p. 949; see also Campbell, 1989). In Meyer and Rowan’s words, formal structures ‘dramatically reflect the myths of their institutional environments instead of the demands of their work activities’ (Meyer and Rowan, 1991, p. 41).

However, this conception of change does not fully answer the question of how exactly such processes of change can develop. For example, it does not answer the question of how or why the initial change (in the surrounding institutional environment) occurred. In addition, sociological institutionalism’s emphasis on social construction makes it very difficult to see the possibility of institutional change. If institutions shape the very basic desires, preferences, and identities of institutional actors, then how can institutional change occur? In other words, if institutional behavior relies on shared ‘short cuts’ – norms of appropriateness – how do we explain changes in these norms and routines? As Immergut (2006) asks: ‘Why does routine behavior stop being routine?’ (p. 241). A potential (and partial) answer to this question for sociological institutionalists is the possibility of *institutional contradiction* (e.g. Jepperson, 1991). As institutions are deeply embedded in a world of other institutions, interactions between these institutions may create contradiction

---

<sup>14</sup> Particularly the early work in sociological institutionalism (see for example, Zucker (1991)). Powell and DiMaggio’s (1991) edited collection serves as a partial response to some of these criticisms (especially the introduction; see also Powell and Jones, 1999).

and tension between different institutional orders, opening up the possibility of institutional development and change (although this change may be unintentional). In addition, the inter-relationship of agency and interpretation also opens up the possibility for change. If individuals respond to social situations by drawing on available institutional templates, then there is the possibility that these individuals can rework or subvert these 'scripts' when devising a course of action.

## **Historical Institutionalism**

Hall and Taylor (1996) see historical institutionalism as a broad and eclectic field, forming a middle-ground between calculus and culture-based approaches to institutions. As such, they see historical institutionalism as being in a 'pivotal position' to encourage future dialogue among the three schools of new institutionalism, bridging the gap between rational choice and sociological approaches to institutional analysis (Hall and Taylor, 1996, p. 957).

However, as Colin Hay and Daniel Wincott argue, this conception of historical institutionalism in fact neglects the 'potentially distinctive social ontology' of this approach (1998a, p. 951). By placing both the logic of calculus (broadly corresponding to rational choice approaches) and the logic of culture (broadly corresponding to sociological approaches) at the core of historical institutionalism, Hall and Taylor imply that historical institutionalism, rather than being a distinctive approach, simply incorporates or 'borrows' elements from either rational choice or sociological institutionalism. This conception is deeply problematic. While the three schools of new institutionalism can perhaps be seen as 'points along a continuum' (Aspinwall and Schneider, 2000, p. 3), the approaches at either end of the spectrum – rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism – are based on mutually incompatible foundations. The calculus/cultural distinction, then, which Hall and Taylor place at the heart of historical institutionalism, in fact 'represents an intractable divide between two contending and incompatible approaches to institutional analysis' (Hay and Wincott, 1998a, p. 953).

Historical institutionalism, then, does not necessarily offer a 'bridge' between rational choice and sociological institutionalism, but instead offers its own distinctive approach that shares some of the insights of the other two schools, while (to some extent) avoiding the extremes of both. While the historical institutionalist literature is decidedly eclectic, and at times

uneven, foundational work in the field outlines a different approach to institutional analysis that is distinct from (and, in many cases, at odds with) both rational choice and sociological institutionalism (see in particular Thelen and Steinmo, 1992, but see also Hall, 1986; Rothstein, 1992).

In general, historical institutionalists work with a definition of institutions that includes both formal and informal rules, procedures, and practices (Hall, 1986; Hall and Taylor, 1996; Thelen and Steinmo, 1992). The focus of historical institutionalism is firmly on the ‘mid-level’ of institutional analysis, centering on intermediate-level institutions that mediate relations between institutional actors. Historical institutionalists explicitly reject the view of the rational actor associated with rational choice institutionalism<sup>15</sup>, and begin by problematizing preferences, rather than taking preference formation as given:

‘[H]istorical institutionalists would not have trouble with the rational choice idea that political actors are acting strategically to achieve their ends. But clearly it is not very useful simply to leave it at that. We need a historically based analysis to tell us what they are trying to maximize and why they emphasize certain goals over others’ (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992, p. 9).

As Thelen and Steinmo note, rational choice and historical institutionalism are ‘premised on different assumptions that in fact reflect quite different approaches to the study of politics’ (1992, p. 7). At the same time, however, historical institutionalism does not go so far as sociological institutionalism, which runs the risk of structural determinism, turning into ‘action without agents’ (Hall and Taylor, 1996, p. 954). While both historical and sociological institutionalism emphasize the interactive relationship between institutions and actors, historical institutionalism injects both strategy and agency, conceptualizing institutional actors as ‘strategic, seeking to realize complex, contingent and often changing goals’ (Hay and Wincott, 1998a, p. 954). As Thelen and Steinmo argue:

‘[I]nstitutional analysis...allows us to examine the relationship between political actors as objects and as agents of history. The institutions that are at the center of historical

---

<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that there are several rational choice institutionalists who have ‘relaxed’ these rationality assumptions. But, as Sven Steinmo (2008) points out, ‘the more they do so, the more they sound like historical institutionalists’. See for example Bates et al, 1998; Ostrom, 1998; Weingast, 1996.

institutionalist analysis...can shape and constrain political strategies in important ways, *but they are themselves also the outcome (conscious or unintended) of deliberate political strategies, of political conflict, and of choice*' (1992, p. 10, emphasis added).

However, while historical institutionalism potentially offers a distinctive approach to conceptualizing the relationship between institutions and actors, 'that potential is not as yet fully realized' (Hay and Wincott, 1998a, p. 954), and conceptions of power and change remain problematic in the literature. Unlike rational choice institutionalists, historical institutionalists take a *value-critical* approach, paying particular attention to the ways in which institutions distribute power unevenly across groups. Once an institution is created, it is reinforced through asymmetrical power relations, privileging certain groups at the expense of others. In moments of institutional change, the privileged group uses its resources to reinforce and entrench its own position of power. Yet, because these events are historically contingent, institutions can also provide unintended opportunities for marginal groups to exercise power (e.g. Skocpol, 1992). This conception of the relationship between power and change is often criticized for its broadly structuralist view of institutions that focuses more on institutional continuity and stability than institutional change (e.g. Peters, 1999). Structure figures heavily in 'settled' times in an institution's 'life', when those in positions of power maintain and reinforce their own positions of institutional privilege, while agency triumphs in 'critical junctures', moments of institutional change. The concept of *path dependence*, then, is frequently employed to explain the continuity of the power of the powerful, while the emphasis on unintended consequences is then used to explain the failure of the powerful (Hay and Wincott, 1998b).

In its broadest sense, path dependence is simply the argument that 'past events influence future events' (Mahoney, 2000a, p. 510). Path dependence is closely linked with two key concepts: *critical junctures*, crucial moments in an institution's development that send it along a particular developmental path and *feedback effects*<sup>16</sup>, the idea that once institutions are selected, they use specific institutional mechanisms to reproduce themselves (see Thelen 1999). Path dependence theorists emphasize the historicist and temporal dimensions of institutional development and change. Rather than look for 'constant causes' through time and space (Stinchcombe, 1968; see also Collier and Collier, 1991), path dependence perspectives suggest that the forces that sustain an institution over time may be very different

from the original founding coalitions behind the institution's original creation (Mahoney, 2000a, p. 515). In practice, usage of the concept ranges from a very broad to a much narrower conception of path dependency. For example, William Sewell (1996) adopts a loose definition that essentially asserts that 'history matters': 'that what happened at an earlier point in time will affect the possible outcomes of a sequence of events occurring at a later point in time' (pp. 262-263). Others advocate a narrower and more restrictive definition of path dependence (e.g. Mahoney, 2000a; Pierson, 2000a, 2004)<sup>17</sup>. For instance, James Mahoney (2000a) provides a much more precise definition of path dependence – 'specifically those historical sequences in which contingent events set into motion institutional patterns or event chains that have deterministic properties' – and, as a result, sees path dependence as something that is relatively rare in politics (pp. 507-508).

Historical institutionalism is, therefore, often criticized for being a conservative strand of new institutionalism, as it emphasizes the power that past decisions hold for future developments. Much of the work on path dependence continues to lean towards a strong *punctuated equilibrium* model<sup>18</sup>, emphasizing moments of 'openness' marked by abrupt and rapid institutional innovation that are followed by longer periods of institutional stasis (e.g. Krasner, 1984 and 1988). Yet while the punctuated equilibrium model perhaps captures certain modes of change in politics, it is not particularly useful at explaining, for example, situations in which change occurs beneath the surface of an apparently stable institution, or periods in which institutions persist through critical junctures (cf. Thelen 1999, 2003 and 2004).

The majority of the historical institutionalist literature does not offer the conceptual tools to address these sorts of issues. Recent work on path dependence and increasing return effects has explored the dynamic processes that sustain political institutions over time (e.g. Pierson, 2000a, 2000b). But, as Kathleen Thelen argues, increasing returns 'tell only part of the story' (2003, p. 211; see also Thelen, 2004). While increasing returns arguments provide a potential starting point for research on institutional change, the focus of such arguments is on mechanisms of institutional reproduction after a particular institution has been 'selected'.

---

<sup>16</sup> 'Feedback effects' have also been described in the language of *increasing returns* (Pierson 2000a).

<sup>17</sup> Pierson's usage of path dependence is arguably less restrictive than Mahoney's.

<sup>18</sup> Stephen Krasner borrows this term from evolutionary theorists in biology.

Increasing returns and positive feedback arguments, then, have been more useful in explaining institutional persistence and resiliency than institutional evolution and change, and generally obscure ‘ongoing political contestation over the form and functions of institutions forged at (often distant and receding) critical junctures’ (Thelen, 2003, p. 231).

Recent work in the historical institutionalist field, particularly the work of Kathleen Thelen (1999, 2003, 2004), highlights the need to examine power, stability, and change in a more dynamic way, viewing institutions as sites of ongoing political struggle and putting a central emphasis on political conflicts and coalitions. In contrast to traditional power-distributional perspectives which see institutions as straightforward reflections of the interests and preferences of the powerful, Thelen argues that institutional creation and change occur in specific historical contexts marked by multiple shifting interests and alliances. As a result, institutions designed to serve a particular set of interests often end up ‘carrying’ other interests. Institutions frequently outlive their founding coalitions and can be transformed through political reconfigurations and realignments, as well as through the incorporation of new groups whose inclusion was unanticipated at the time of institutional creation. Increasing returns and positive feedback arguments, then, obscure the extent to which institutional stability is intertwined with elements of institutional *transformation*, as institutions adapt to changes in the surrounding political, economic, and social context as well as to the incorporation and accommodation of new actors and groups (Thelen, 2003).

Thelen introduces two modes of institutional transformation to the debate: *institutional layering*<sup>19</sup>, in which certain elements of an institution are partially renegotiated while leaving other existing elements in place, and *institutional conversion*, in which existing institutions are redirected to fulfil new purposes. Conceptions of institutional change and transformation through layering and conversion build upon the insights of increasing returns arguments and the path dependence literature, but also ‘embed these elements in an analysis of ongoing political contestation over institutional outcomes’ (Thelen, 2003, p. 213). These processes are still path-dependent, in that opportunities for institutional change and innovation are constrained by prior choices. However, these modes of analysis move beyond the traditional path dependence dichotomy of institutional stasis and institutional innovation, seeking instead to identify ‘*which specific elements* of a given institutional arrangement are (or are

not) renegotiable and why some aspects are more amenable to change than others' (Thelen, 2004, p. 36, emphasis in original).

### ***III: New Institutionalism and Feminist Political Science: Creating a dialogue***

It is clear that both mainstream and feminist political science have taken an institutional 'turn' and that the two approaches share a number of common preoccupations. Yet, while several scholars have noted the possibility for interchange between the new institutionalism and feminist political science<sup>20</sup>, there has been little dialogue between the two fields. Only a small number of new institutionalists study – or even mention – issues related to gender or women (e.g. Berkovitch, 1999; Clemens, 1997; Mettler, 1998; Pierson, 1996; Skocpol, 1992; Thelen, 2003). In addition, while there is a wide range of feminist literature that is primarily concerned with political institutions, it is rarely referenced in the new institutionalist literature. Meanwhile, the majority of feminist political science is broadly institutional in focus, yet draws upon neither the language nor the theoretical frameworks of the new institutionalism. While there are several feminist political scientists who do draw on new institutionalist tools and insights (see in particular Krook, 2009 forthcoming; Waylen, 2007, 2009 forthcoming), their work often adopts a new institutionalist framework to analyze gender issues, rather than explicitly developing a 'feminist institutionalist' approach that integrates both feminist and institutional theory.

Why does feminist political science need the new institutionalism? In the few attempts to synthesize gender analysis with new institutional theory, it is often argued that the new institutionalism offers a number of useful conceptual tools to feminist political science (Mackay and Meier, 2003; see also Mackay, 2004a; Lovenduski, 2005). This initial review highlights a number of useful new institutionalist tools and concepts which may provide

---

<sup>19</sup> Featuring prominently in Eric Schickler's work on the U.S. Congress (2001).

<sup>20</sup> In their recent reviews of the women and politics field, both Mackay (2004a) and Lovenduski (1998, 2005) highlight the potential for dialogue between feminist and mainstream political science, without explicitly developing a 'feminist institutionalism.' Mackay and Meier (2003) represents the first attempt to interrogate the feminist potential of new institutionalism (see also Kenny, 2007).

sharper analytical leverage for feminist work on gender and institutions, particularly with regards to the key questions of institutional continuity and change. Tools such as path dependency can assist in explaining and understanding the gendered difficulties of institutional reform and redesign, potentially providing insights into the ways in which gendered legacies from the past are carried over into new institutions in unpredictable ways. Concepts such as ‘standard operating procedures’ or the ‘logic of appropriateness’ – the institutionalized repertoire of routine responses that suggest what is ‘appropriate’ or ‘proper’ for a specific individual in a particular setting – are particularly helpful in explaining institutional inertia and resistance to change. Finally, recent institutionalist work (e.g. Schickler, 2001; Thelen, 2003, 2004; Pierson, 2004) has introduced new and more dynamic conceptions of change to the debate such as institutional layering, which may prove useful for feminist research, where gender relations are seen to be dynamic, fluid, and constantly renegotiated.

Different strands of the new institutionalism may be more useful than others. To begin with, it is difficult to envisage a ‘feminist rational choice institutionalism’, as this strand of institutionalism holds highly gender biased views on human agency, views institutions as neutral entities, and generally fails to recognize the structural imbalances that characterize gender relations. Feminist political scientists are generally skeptical of the uses of rational choice approaches for feminist research, although a small number have addressed the possibility of engaging with rational choice frameworks (Campbell, 2006; Harvey, 1998; Krook and Squires, 2006; Murray, 2004)<sup>21</sup>. In addition, as the chapter highlights, rational choice institutionalism has little to say on the subject of power, and has a relatively simplistic view of institutional change. Power is still a neglected issue in the field, and those who emphasize the importance of power relations in institutional analysis arguably remain the exception rather than the norm in the field (e.g. Knight, 1992; Moe, 2006). Meanwhile, change is often seen as exogenous to rational choice frameworks, as rational choice institutionalists are primarily interested in explaining outcomes resulting from particular institutional arrangements already in place (Peters, 1999).

---

<sup>21</sup> For further discussion of the potential for engagement between rational choice institutionalism and feminist political science, see Driscoll and Krook (2009 forthcoming).



Sociological institutionalism has arguably more potential, as its focus on norms, values, and the social construction of institutions could be particularly useful for feminist research. However, sociological institutionalism is often critiqued for its 'tendential structuralism' (Hay and Wincott, 1998a, p. 952; see also Hall and Taylor, 1996). It should be noted that many sociological institutionalists do highlight the 'highly-interactive and mutually-constitutive character' of interactions between institutions and individual actors (Hall and Taylor, 1996, p. 948; see also Fligstein, 1997). Action and agency are closely intertwined with interpretation; individual actors must find a way of recognizing and responding to a particular situation, working with available institutional 'scripts' or templates in order to take action (Hall and Taylor, 1996, pp. 948-949; see also DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Jepperson, 1991; Zucker, 1991). This emphasis on the 'mutually-constitutive' relationship between individual actors and institutions allows us to view institutions as dynamic constructions that structure and are themselves structured by gender practice. Yet, as Hall and Taylor argue, this 'approach as a whole might benefit from more attention to the way in which frames of meaning, scripts and symbols emerge not only from processes of interpretation but also from processes of contestation' (1996, p. 954). As the previous section noted, much of sociological institutionalism continues to adhere to a 'bloodless' conception of political institutions, overemphasizing the role of norms and shared understandings while underemphasizing or ignoring the power inequalities that characterize gender relations (see also Mackay et al, 2009 forthcoming).

Historical institutionalism has also been criticized for its structuralist tendencies, and is often critiqued for focusing more on institutional continuity and stability than institutional change (e.g. Peters, 1999). In addition, power relations are often underplayed in the literature; historical institutionalists rarely use the language of power, relying on the language of 'actors' and 'interests' instead (Thelen, 2004). However, recent work in the field points to a more dynamic and nuanced understanding of the relationship between institutions and the individuals and groups who comprise them, highlighting the complex nature of institutional change marked by a dynamic interplay of diverse coalitions promoting multiple interests (see in particular Schickler, 2001; Thelen, 2004). Accompanying this more dynamic conception of institutions is a renewed central emphasis on power. In this view, ongoing political contestation is a key driver of institutional evolution and change, as ongoing power struggles over the form and functions of particular institutions can result in significant transformations over time (Thelen, 2004; see also Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming). The remainder

of the thesis focuses primarily on historical institutionalism, particularly these more dynamic trends in institutional analysis (see for example Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Pierson, 2004; Schickler, 2001; Thelen, 2003, 2004). It does, however, incorporate relevant insights from other approaches, particularly sociological institutionalism.

While the new institutionalism potentially offers useful conceptual tools for feminist research, a gendered approach can also enrich new institutionalist analysis. As the opening section of the chapter highlighted, feminist scholarship provides rich insights into the interconnections between gender and institutions; and furthermore, has developed sophisticated understandings of gender and power – two concepts that are underdeveloped – if not virtually absent – in the majority of the new institutionalist literature. Not only are gender relations seen to be ‘institutional’, but these relations are ‘institutionalized’, embedded in particular political institutions, constraining and shaping social interaction. In other words, they are part of the ‘logic’ of institutions (Chappell, 2006). While institutionalized gender relations are not fixed – they are dynamic, fluid, and dependent on situation and context – institutions in general are marked as ‘masculine’, shaping institutional structures, practices and processes (Chappell, 2002; Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995; Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a). For example, Mary Katzenstein (1998), in her study of feminist activists in the military and Roman Catholic Church, highlights the importance of the interaction between social actors, institutions, and gender norms. In her analysis, she demonstrates how the law plays a normative role in male-dominated institutions, providing and withholding opportunities for feminist protest while also shaping the way feminist activists see themselves and prioritize their agenda (1998, p. 165). Analyzing institutions through a gendered lens, then, provides important insights into the complex ways in which gender operates within institutions, and, therefore, offers a greater understanding of the interaction between institutions and institutional actors.

Feminist research on gender and institutions also provides important insights into institutional power dynamics. As previously highlighted, power relations are often underplayed in new institutionalist research, and it is still a relatively ‘slippery’ concept in the literature (Lowndes, 2002). While new institutionalists acknowledge that some groups are privileged over others, little attention is paid to major social divisions such as gender, race, or class. Finally, while recent work in the field offers a more dynamic and complex understanding of institutional power relations, it is unclear to what extent new

institutionalists have incorporated post-structuralist conceptions of power into their theoretical frameworks. In contrast, feminist political science has as a central feature a transformative agenda. That is to say that feminist political science is explicitly concerned not only with recognizing how institutions reproduce gendered power distributions, but also with how these institutions can be changed. Feminist work on gender and institutions has provided rich insights into the institutional dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, highlighting the ways in which power is produced and reproduced through gender. For example, Mary Hawkesworth's (2003) analysis of legislative practices in the 103<sup>rd</sup> and 104<sup>th</sup> Congress demonstrates the ways in which institutional mechanisms of 'racing-gendering' – for example, stereotyping, exclusion, and marginalization – construct and reinforce power hierarchies on the basis of gender and race. Feminist work on gender and institutions, then, has explicitly stated what the new institutionalist literature has kept implicit, keeping power as a central analytical focus and exposing the active and ongoing processes and practices through which institutions structure gendered power relations.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter set out to critically assess recent institutional trends in both feminist and mainstream political science. It began with an overview of the institutional 'turn' in feminist political science, evaluating the shift in emphasis from 'women *in* politics' to 'gender *and* politics.' The chapter argues that while this shift is a significant one, it has not been fully realized, as feminist political scientists continue to grapple with the implications of understanding gender as a complex frame of reference. Research in the field provides compelling evidence that there are important gendered dynamics at work within political institutions. Yet, while this work has yielded rich insights, it is also accompanied by a growing recognition that a more systematic analysis is needed in order to better understand the gendered nature of political institutions and the complex dynamics of continuity and change (Lovenduski, 1998, 2005; Mackay, 2004a).

The chapter points to a potential way forward for feminist work on gender and political institutions, arguing that the institutional 'turn' in feminist political science has opened up possibilities for dialogue with mainstream institutionally-focused scholars, particularly in the

broad field of the new institutionalism. It reviews the new institutionalist literature and proceeds to outline some initial possibilities for interchange between the new institutionalism and feminist gender analysis, focusing particularly on the key questions of gender, power, continuity, and change. The following chapter explores these themes in more depth, evaluating the potential for theoretical synthesis between feminist and new institutional theory and setting out the initial foundations of a 'feminist institutionalism'.

# 4

---

## Connecting Gender, Power, and Change

The previous chapter pointed to a number of shared preoccupations between feminist political science and the new institutionalism, highlighting possibilities for dialogue and interchange between the two fields. Building on these foundations, this chapter evaluates the potential for synthesis between feminist gender analysis and new institutional theory. It asks the questions: is a theoretical synthesis of new institutionalism and feminist political science possible? What can new institutionalist approaches add to feminist work on political institutions? What does a gendered approach contribute to new institutional theory? The chapter argues that there is potential for mutual benefit from a synthesis of these two approaches, focusing in particular on the key themes of gender, power, continuity and change. It contends that these combined insights offer a way to take the existing work on gender and institutions forward, potentially ‘bridging the gap’ in existing theoretical and empirical work in the field.

### ***I: Defining Institutions***

In exploring the potential for dialogue between feminist gender analysis and new institutional theory, we have to begin with the question: what are institutions? While institutions are a central organizing concept in both the new institutionalist and feminist research, there is considerable contestation in both literatures as to how to define them. However, several points of commonality can be identified between the two fields. Both adopt a relatively broad definition that incorporates both formal and informal institutions. For new institutionalists, the most commonly used definition is that institutions are the *rules of the game* in a society (North, 1990; see also Steinmo, 2008). Political institutions are ‘collections of interrelated rules and routines that define appropriate actions’ (March and Olsen, 1989, p. 160). While different schools of new institutionalism understand institutions

in different ways, in general, new institutional theory opens up the definition of an ‘institution’ to include not only *formal* rules and regulations, but also the *informal* practices, norms, conventions, and routines that define appropriate action in a particular institutional setting. For example, Kathleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo begin with a definition of institutions that ‘includes both formal organizations and informal rules and procedures that structure conduct’ (1992, p. 2). Margaret Levi argues that ‘the most effective institutional arrangements incorporate a normative system of informal and internalized rules’ (1990, p. 409). Meanwhile, Douglass North, highlights the importance of informal conventions and codes of behavior in shaping institutional interactions<sup>22</sup>:

‘In our daily interaction with others, whether within the family, in external social relations, or in business activities, the governing structure is overwhelmingly defined by codes of conduct, norms of behaviour and conventions. Underlying these informal constraints are formal rules, but these are seldom the obvious and immediate source of choice in daily interactions’ (1990, p. 36).

With regards to the feminist literature on political institutions, the task of defining ‘institutions’ is a complex one. As chapter three argued, there have been few attempts to develop a systematic theory of gendered political institutions. Attempts to build a theory of gendered institutions have been led primarily by feminist sociologists in the field of gender and organizations, who frequently use the terms ‘organization’ and ‘institution’ interchangeably (e.g. Acker, 1990, 1992; Cockburn, 1991; Savage and Witz, 1992; Steinberg, 1992). Despite these inconsistencies, feminist scholars working in this field tend to adopt a very broad definition of institutions and organizations that is generally consistent with the new institutionalist literature. For example, Joan Acker defines gendered organizations to mean that ‘advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine’ (1990, p. 146). In her later work, Acker adopts the term ‘gendered institutions’ rather than organizations, but uses a similarly broad definition, taking the term to mean that ‘gender is present in the processes, practices, images

---

<sup>22</sup> At an abstract level, the definition adopted by many historical institutionalists (e.g. Thelen and Steinmo, 1992) is not all that different from the definitions used by some rational choice institutionalists (e.g. North, 1990). However, as discussed in the previous chapter, historical and rational choice institutionalism diverge more dramatically on questions of how institutions affect individual behavior, institutional formation, and institutional change (see Thelen and Steinmo, 1992).

and ideologies, and distributions of power in the various sectors of social life'<sup>23</sup> (1992, p. 567). Joni Lovenduski, who has frequently highlighted the potential for dialogue between feminist research and new institutional theory, adopts a similarly broad definition:

‘Political institutions are the... formal and informal rules, processes and procedures through which politics is done. Political institutions are also gender regimes with distinctive ideologies of how women and men should act, think and feel. They control access to resources and affect the availability of alternatives to their gendered ideologies’ (2005, p. 26).

Both fields also highlight the interplay between these formal and informal institutions, broadly defined. New institutionalists point to the ways in which informal institutions reinforce formal institutions, but may also prove particularly resistant to change. For example, Steve Leach and Vivien Lowndes (2007) assess the interaction between formal institutions and informal conventions governing the leader-chief executive relationship in British local government. They highlight the ways in which informal rules continue to persist despite changes in the formal institutional framework, often undermining formal rules and expectations. Yet despite the emphasis in the new institutionalist literature on the importance of both formal and informal institutions, the importance of informal institutions is somewhat under-theorized in new institutionalist research (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004). Much of the work by historical institutionalists continues to focus primarily on formal institutions<sup>24</sup> (e.g. Pierson, 2000b; Streeck and Thelen, 2005; Thelen, 2003 and 2004). For example, Peter Hall’s widely used definition focuses on institutions as ‘the formal rules, compliance procedures, and standard operating practices that structure the relationship between individuals in various units of the polity and economy’ (Hall, 1986, p. 19). Similarly, Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen (2005) explicitly restrict their focus to formalized rules and regulations that are agreed upon by institutional actors, and that ‘may be enforced by calling upon a third party’ (p. 10). This continuing emphasis on the importance of formal institutions can be explained in part by disagreements within the new institutionalist literature as to ‘where to draw the line on what counts as an institution’ (Thelen and Steinmo,

---

<sup>23</sup> Acker does not directly address either the change in conceptual terms, or the potential implications of a conceptual shift from ‘organizations’ to ‘institutions’ (Acker, 1992).

<sup>24</sup> Rational choice institutionalists have also been criticized for an ‘excessive attention to formal rules’, with little attention paid to ‘firmly established informal practices and “institutions”’ (Weyland, 2002, p. 67; see also Helmke and Levitsky, 2004, p. 725). North (1990) stands as a notable exception to this critique.

1992, p. 2). Many new institutionalists are careful to disassociate themselves from broad conceptual constructions of institutions, defining institutions in relatively narrow terms and explicitly rejecting, for example, sociological institutionalist conceptions of institutions as shared cognitive templates (e.g. Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Streeck and Thelen, 2005; Thelen, 1999). In doing so, they reject definitions that are ‘too broad to be meaningful’, stretching to incorporate everything that influences the behavior of institutional actors (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 11; see also Peters, 1999). Therefore, while new institutionalists are theoretically interested in both formal and informal institutions, in practice, both the role of informal institutions and the interplay between formal and informal institutions is often underplayed in empirical research.

While much of the work on gender and institutions has focused primarily on formal institutions, feminist political scientists are careful to highlight the interconnections between formal and informal, social and political, and public and private. Feminist political scientists have extensively critiqued the mainstream’s traditional concentration on formal public institutions, raising fundamental questions as to the scope and nature of the ‘political’ (Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a; Phillips, 1998; Randall, 2002). Yet at the same time, they have increasingly focused on providing a gendered analysis of these very same institutions, exposing the ways in which these institutions are ‘designed to accommodate activity according to the codes of masculinity’ (Lovenduski, 1998, p. 339; see also Connell, 1995; Phillips, 1998; Randall, 2002). This ‘calling back to politics’ (Phillips, 1998, p. 5) stresses the insights that a gendered lens can bring to the study of political institutions and public power, challenging mainstream understandings of political processes and political life and linking ‘public and private and formal and informal spheres’ (Mackay, 2004a, p. 100; see also Burau, 2007; Lovenduski, 1998; Sapiro, 1998; Randall, 2002). In seeking to ‘gender’ political institutions, many feminist scholars discuss gendered practices, discourses and norms in a similar sense to new institutionalist conceptions of informal institutions. In this view, gender constitutes a way of ‘doing’ politics, operating as a normative system in its own right (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995, p. 17; see also Brown, 1988; Chappell, 2006). Gendered norms and expectations shape formal institutions – laws, policies, regulations – but may also contradict or undermine formal rules. For example, Lynn Kathlene (1995) highlights the ways in which male legislators draw upon informal gendered verbal practices to circumvent formal increases in women’s political presence in political institutions. As female legislators obtain greater formal ‘position power’, becoming committee chairs and



bill sponsors, male verbal activity increases and gendered interpersonal interactions intensify, as men continue to dominate policy discussions and outcomes in legislative committees.

## ***II: Gender***

While there are points of commonality between feminist and new institutionalist conceptions of institutions, there is one key point on which the two fields differ: namely, feminist political scientists conceptualize institutions as *gendered*. What does it mean to say that an institution is gendered? Joni Lovenduski (1998, p. 348) argues that several kinds of knowledge are needed in order to answer this question. First, everyone in an institution has a sex and performs gender. In carrying out the daily ‘work’ of an institution, individuals continually enact particular masculinities and femininities in different ways (Acker, 1990, 1992; Kenney, 1996; Lovenduski, 1998, 2005). Second, the experience of individuals varies by both sex and gender. Sex and gender also interact with other components of identity – for example race, ethnicity, nationality – that have additional implications for models of masculinity and femininity (see in particular Hawkesworth, 2003; Puwar, 2004). Thus, it is important to pay attention not only to how individuals act, but also what these actions mean; performing gender often has a different meaning for women than for men as institutional actors (Lovenduski, 1998; 349). As an example, Nirmal Puwar (2004) draws attention to the ways in which women MPs in the House of Commons are expected to both ‘do’ the performance of an MP – which is coded as masculine – while also ‘managing’ their femininity (see also Childs, 2004; King, 1995). Finally, institutions have distinctively gendered cultures and are involved in processes of producing and reproducing gender (see also Beckwith, 2005; Chappell, 2006; Kenney, 1996). To say that an institution is gendered, then, means that constructions of masculinity and femininity are intertwined in the daily culture or ‘logic’ of political institutions, rather than ‘existing out in society or fixed within individuals which they then bring whole to the institution’ (Kenney, 1996, p. 456). This is not to say that institutions are inherently patriarchal. Rather, institutions are generally marked as ‘masculine’. While constructions of femininity and masculinity are both present in political institutions, the masculine ideal underpins institutional structures, practices, and norms, shaping ‘ways of valuing things, ways of behaving and ways of being’ (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995, p. 20).

In contrast, gender is generally neglected in the new institutionalist literature. As the previous chapter highlighted, there is little to no mention of gender as an analytic category or women as institutional actors in new institutional research. For example, Guy Peters (1999) refers to gender only twice in his detailed review of the new institutionalist literature, both times in the footnotes (Mackay and Meier, 2003, p. 3). There are exceptions: Paul Pierson (1996) demonstrates how women's groups were able to successfully use latent institutions – specifically Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome – to achieve gains at the EU level. Theda Skocpol (1992) provides a detailed historical analysis of the role that women's organizations played in the construction of early twentieth century social welfare policy in America. However, while gender is sometimes given surface attention in the new institutionalist literature, it is rarely developed, and is often relegated to the status of a background variable (Mackay and Meier, 2003). For example, Lane and Ersson (2000) directly refer to gender relations, evaluating the effects of various democratic institutions on outcomes such as affluence, GDP growth, income distribution, gender equality and quality of life. Yet, 'gender equality' is reduced to a measurement of female representation in parliament, and a gendered dimension is absent from all other performance variables in their study, including variables such as income distribution.

While the majority of new institutionalist research is gender-blind, several feminist scholars highlight the new institutionalism's 'normative turn', which opens up possibilities for the introduction of a gendered perspective (see in particular Chappell, 2002, 2006). The new institutionalism – particularly the historical and sociological schools – puts a central emphasis on the powerful role of norms in shaping institutions. Institutions are seen to be 'collections of interrelated rules and routines that define appropriate actions in terms of relations between roles and situations', and these institutional norms both prescribe and proscribe certain types of behavior (March and Olsen, 1989, p. 61). While institutional norms are not fixed, they are difficult to change particularly because they are perpetuated by institutional actors who 'embody and enact' institutional logics and norms (McAdam and Scott, 2005, p. 15). However, the new institutionalist literature gives little attention to the gendered foundations of these institutional norms, generally failing to recognize that institutional norms also prescribe and proscribe "acceptable" masculine and feminine forms of behaviour, rules, and values for men and women with institutions' (Chappell, 2006, p. 226). As a result, new institutional research also fails to consider the ways in which political

institutions produce outcomes that are shaped by gender norms and that, in turn, ‘help to re/produce broader social and political gender expectations’ (Chappell, 2006, p. 226; see also Kenney, 1996; Scott, 1988). Therefore, while the new institutionalism may be open to the introduction of a gendered perspective, it has, as of yet, failed to develop an account of the ‘gender processes’ that operate within political institutions (see Beckwith, 2005, pp. 132-133; see also Chappell, 2006).

What can a gendered perspective add to the new institutionalism? Feminist political scientists contend that by adding gender into the picture, we can gain a better and more fully developed understanding of the ‘practices, ideas, goals and outcomes of politics’ (Mackay, 2004a, p. 112; see also Beckwith, 2005; Chappell, 2002, 2006; Hawkesworth, 2003, 2005; Lovenduski, 1998, 2005). These scholars argue that gender provides a central structuring dynamic of institutions; there is no specific set of ‘gender institutions’ – gender relations are present in all institutions and, therefore, all institutions are gendered to varying degrees (Connell, 1987). As chapter three highlighted, a key contribution of this literature has been to undo the ‘taken-for-grantedness’ of political institutions, demonstrating the extent to which seemingly neutral institutional processes, practices, rules and regulations in fact reflect a deeply ‘gendered reality’ (Acker, 1992, p. 568). Feminist political scientists have drawn attention to the gendered normative foundations of a range of political institutions, including bureaucracies (Chappell, 2002, 2006; Savage and Witz, 1992; Stivers, 1992), legislatures (Childs, 2004; Hawkesworth, 2003; Lovenduski, 2005; Rosenthal, 2000), and federal structures (Banaszak, 1996; Chappell, 2002; Gray, 2006; Vickers, 1994), among others. They have also highlighted the ways in which gender plays out differently in different institutions and at different times, shaping institutional behavior, institutional outcomes, and opportunities for institutional engagement (see for example Banaszak et al, 2003; Bashevkin, 1998; Chappell, 2002, 2006; Dobrowolsky, 2003; Katzenstein, 1998; Lovenduski, 1998, 2005; Mackay, 2006). Theoretical and empirical work in the field suggests that gender relations are cross-cutting, that they play out in different types of institutions, as well as different institutional levels. In particular, as the previous chapter highlighted, feminist research highlights the importance of the ‘seemingly trivial’ level of interpersonal interaction, where the continuous performance of gender takes place (Kenney, 1996, p. 458; see also Acker, 1990, 1992; Connell, 1987, 2002).

A similar emphasis can be detected in recent scholarship in the historical institutionalist field. For example, Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen (2005) propose a ‘realistic’ conception of institutions, emphasizing the ways in which these institutions are ‘continuously created and recreated by a great number of actors with divergent interests, varying normative commitments, different powers, and limited cognitions’ (p. 16; see also Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming). In this view, institutions are perpetually enacted through day-to-day practice, defined through the ‘continuous interaction between rule makers and rule takers during which ever new interpretations of the rule will be discovered, invented, suggested, rejected, or for the time being, adopted’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 16; see also Sheingate, 2009 forthcoming). There are clear parallels here with the feminist literature on gender and institutions, which, as already highlighted, draws attention to the complex interplay between the meso- and micro-level (see for example Acker, 1992; Connell, 1987, 2002; Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995; Kenney, 1996). For example, Candace West and Don Zimmerman (1987, pp. 146-147) argue that the recurring and routine act of ‘doing’ gender both actively constructs gender difference and legitimizes existing gender arrangements. Similarly, R.W. Connell (2002, p. 4) contends that as individuals, we actively ‘claim a place in the gender order – or respond to the place we have been given – by the way we conduct ourselves in everyday life.’ While institutions constrain practice, defining possibilities for action, institutions are themselves constituted from moment to moment by these embodied practices of ‘doing gender’ (Connell, 1987, 2002). Again, the new institutionalist literature fails to consider the gendered dimensions of the practical enactment of political institutions. However, the mutual focus in both feminist gender analysis and new institutional theory on the importance of the ‘inner life’ of institutions and the micro-processes that take place ‘under the radar’ (Mackay, 2008, p. 130) points to additional possibilities for interchange between the two fields and suggests that the new institutionalism might be amenable to the introduction of a gendered perspective.

### ***III: Power***

Both new institutionalists and feminist political scientists also share a mutual focus on power, recognizing that institutions reflect and reinforce asymmetrical power relations and privilege certain groups over others. Recent work in both fields has taken a more dynamic approach to conceptualizing institutional power relations. While institutions are powerful

constraints on human agency, they are also products of human agency, constructed through processes of negotiation, contestation and conflict. As chapter three highlighted, current work in the historical institutionalist field has put a renewed central emphasis on power, arguing that institutional development and change is driven by political contestation, as ‘actors struggle over the form that these institutions should take and the functions they should perform’ (Thelen, 2004, p. 32; see also Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Schickler, 2001; Streeck and Thelen, 2005; Thelen, 1999, 2003). These ongoing tensions and conflicts among competing interests result in ‘untidy compromises’, building institutions that are full of tensions and contradictions and that are ‘rarely optimally tailored to meet any specific goal’ (Schickler, 2001, p. 3; see also Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Palier, 2005). As a result:

‘[I]nstitutional development is an ongoing, open-ended process. The interplay of coalitions promoting contradictory objectives produces institutions that are tense battlegrounds rather than stable, coherent solutions’ (Schickler, 2001, p. 18).

Even when institutions are formally codified, then, they remain ambiguous and are always subject to debate and contestation (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Skowronek and Glassman, 2008; Sheingate, 2009 forthcoming). As such, there is a great deal of ‘play’ in both the interpreted meaning of particular rules and in the way that institutions are continually enacted in everyday practice (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Sheingate, 2009 forthcoming; Streeck and Thelen, 2005). These ‘gaps’ and ‘soft spots’ that exist between institutions and their actual interpretation, enactment, and enforcement on the ground provide spaces for institutional actors to disrupt and challenge institutional power relationships. Strategic actors will often try to interpret formal rules in their own interest, or will attempt to circumvent or subvert institutional arrangements that clash with their interests (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 27; see also Clemens, 1997; Clemens and Cook, 1999; Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Schneiberg and Clemens, 2006; Sheingate, 2009 forthcoming). For example, Elisabeth Clemens’ (1997) work on the rise of interest group politics in the United States draws attention to processes through which past institutional scripts and repertoires were redeployed by institutional ‘losers’ – marginal actors who had been blocked out of the system - in ways that subverted and undermined existing logics of action (see also Schickler, 2001; Schneiberg and Clemens, 2006; Weir, 1992b).

Again, feminist research on gender and institutions demonstrates that there is an important gendered dimension to these institutional power dynamics, which is generally ignored in new institutional analysis. In particular, feminist research puts a central focus on the embodiment of institutional norms, values, and practices, highlighting the ways in which gendered bodies can disrupt and challenge institutional power hierarchies (see for example Childs, 2004; Gatens and Mackinnon, 1998; Halcli and Reger, 1997; Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995; Puwar, 2004; Ross, 2002). This is not to essentialize the roles of bodies in institutional interaction. As previously argued, institutions do not exist separately from embodied institutional actors; rather they are implemented and enacted through everyday gender practice: ‘bodies are both objects of social practice and agents in social practice’ (Connell, 2002, p. 47; see also Acker, 1990, 1992; Connell, 1987; Kenney, 1996). Yet, the entrance of female and other ‘non-standard’ actors into masculinist political spaces can cause disruption, an embodied challenge which ‘may extend beyond the discomfort caused by the sex-gendered presence of traditionally marginalized women to a dynamic process in which gender logics may be unsettled’ (Mackay, 2008, p. 130). For example, Fiona Mackay points to the possibility that ‘the gendered coding of political norms as paradigmatically masculine may be rewritten’ (2008, p. 130), highlighting the ways in which female bodies have become a normalized and routine feature of post-devolution Scottish politics (Mackay, 2006; Mackay et al, 2003). While women politicians at Westminster are still treated as ‘space invaders’<sup>25</sup> – their bodies marked out as subordinate and threatening ‘Others’ – the presence of women in the Scottish Parliament is seen as ‘normal and unremarkable’: ‘women and men are equally “at home” in the Scottish Parliament and are seen as equally equipped to exercise political authority and power’ (Mackay, 2006, p. 11; see also Mackay et al, 2003).

Yet, while both fields draw attention to opportunities for disrupting power dynamics, they also highlight the difficulties of challenging institutional power hierarchies. For historical institutionalists, institutions are seen as ‘distributional instruments’ that are laden with power implications<sup>26</sup> (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; see also Pierson, 2004; Skocpol, 1995). Actors in positions of power can use their authority to change the ‘rules of the game’, increasing their own capacities for political action while diminishing the power and authority

---

<sup>25</sup> A term used by Nirmal Puwar (2004).

<sup>26</sup> As chapter three noted, this power-distributional view of institutions is consistent with some of the rational choice institutionalist ‘dissenters’ who are critical of voluntarist accounts of political institutions (see especially Knight, 1992; Moe, 2006).

of their institutional rivals (Pierson, 2004, p. 36). These changes may result in further adaptations which reinforce these trends, as ‘undecided, weakly committed or vulnerable actors join the winners or desert the losers’ (Pierson, 2004, p. 36; see also Schickler, 2001). The employment of power, then, can be self-reinforcing, as power inequalities become amplified and more entrenched over time (see especially Pierson, 2000a; Pierson, 2004). As Paul Pierson (2004) notes, positive feedback processes may ‘simultaneously increase asymmetries of power and, paradoxically, render power relations less visible’ over time (p. 37), as power inequalities become ‘deeply embedded in organizations and dominant modes of political action and understanding, as well as in institutional arrangements’<sup>27</sup> (p. 11).

The feminist literature on gender and institutions highlights similar institutional power dynamics, but again points to the ways in which these power asymmetries are explicitly gendered. Institutions are ‘in a very real sense constructed on the basis of women’s exclusion’ (Kenney, 1996, p. 462). The ‘invisible by-product’ of men’s domination of political institutions has been their ability to set the ‘rules of the game’, enabling them to ‘structure institutions, create laws, legitimize particular knowledge, establish moral codes, and shape culture in ways that perpetuate their power over women’ (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995, p. 20; see also Hearn, 1989, 1991; Lovenduski, 1998, 2005; Savage and Witz, 1992). This is not to argue that institutions only represent male interests and always operate to oppress women<sup>28</sup>, or that ‘every individual man is in a dominant position and every woman in a subordinate one’ (Walby, 1990, p. 20). As Franzway, Court and Connell (1989, p. 29) warn: ‘this approaches a conspiracy theory. One is left searching for Patriarchal Headquarters to explain what goes on’ (see also Chappell, 2002; Savage and Witz, 1992). Rather, the historic exclusion of women from political institutions and political life has ‘permitted a set of male-centred institutional practices to evolve without comment or protest’ (Lovenduski, 2005, p. 27). As argued previously, these masculinist practices and ideologies are ‘central to the workings of public institutions’ (Lovenduski, 1998, p. 340; see also Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995). Yet, they are also deeply embedded and invisible, presented as common-sense - ostensibly gender-neutral and disembodied – conventions, norms and practices (Mackay, 2004a, p. 111; see also Acker, 1990, 1992; Kenney, 1996; Savage and Witz, 1992). What women and other non-standard actors are confronted with, then, is

---

<sup>27</sup> As Pierson notes, there are parallels here with the community power debate of the 1960s and 1970s (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962; Lukes, 1974; see also Gaventa, 1980).

<sup>28</sup> As some argue (see for example Ferguson, 1986).

‘government conducted as if men’s interests are the only ones that exist’ (Pringle and Watson, 1990, p. 234).

At the same time, however, both historical institutionalists and feminist political scientists stress that there is ‘nothing automatic’ about institutional power arrangements, viewing institutional reproduction and resistance as dynamic processes that are actively cultivated by institutional actors over time (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming, p. 11; see also Chappell, 2002; Halford, 1992; Hawkesworth, 2003; Streeck and Thelen, 2005; Thelen, 1999). Institutional ‘winners’ may want to maintain their privileged positions, but ‘institutions do not survive by standing still’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 24). Rather, they require active maintenance as well as the ongoing mobilization of political support: ‘to remain what they are they need to be reset and refocused, or sometimes more fundamentally recalibrated and renegotiated, in response to changes in the political and economic environment in which they are embedded’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 24; see also Hacker, 2005; Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Thelen, 2004; Slater, 2009 forthcoming).

Again, the feminist literature adds a gendered dimension to the dynamics of institutional reproduction and resistance, exposing the active and ongoing institutional processes and structures involved in constructing and maintaining gendered political institutions. For example, research on gender and institutions draws attention to the specific ways in which institutions and institutional actors ‘accommodate changes in membership while simultaneously disadvantaging the newcomers’<sup>29</sup> (Kenney, 1996, p. 462). Sarah Childs (2004) describes the pattern of media criticism and political backlash following the election of 101 Labour Party women to the House of Commons in 1997: ‘the dominant representation of [these Labour Party women] has been one of loyalty, timidity and tears’ (p. 195; see also Lovenduski, 2005). Meanwhile, Lyn Kathlene (1995) demonstrates the ways in which male U.S. state legislators dominate verbal communication as a means of countering changes in women’s political presence and positional power: ‘sex discrimination and patriarchal control have only become more subtle and insidious, rather than reformed or eliminated...the “givenness” of these gender power assumptions run deep, out of conscious awareness’ (p. 185). Cynthia Cockburn (1991) highlights similar dynamics in her study of four British organizations:



‘Male power is not dying out the retirement of the old traditionalist men. It is being reproduced in new, one might say literally “virulent”, forms that are appropriate and effective for the late twentieth century’ (p. 158).

Feminist work on gender and institutions, then, demonstrates that the gendering and regendering of political institutions are active and ongoing processes, highlighting the dynamic role of institutional actors, processes, and structures in constructing gendered political hierarchies within institutions (see for example Chappell, 2002; Halford, 1992; Hawkesworth, 2003, 2005).

#### ***IV: Change***

Both feminist work on gender and institutions and the new institutionalist literature are centrally concerned with questions of change. How and why does change occur? When is change successful? Work in both fields provides rich insights into the complexity and contingency of institutional design and innovation, highlighting the ways in which the dual dynamics of institutional change and continuity are inextricably linked. For historical institutionalists, institutions are difficult to change; yet, periods of institutional (re)design and restructuring can open up spaces for innovation and contestation. Timing, then, is crucial, as once institutions are created they tend toward ‘path dependency’, limiting what can be achieved and when it can be achieved (Pierson, 2004, p. 44-45). The key implication of path dependence arguments is that ‘early stages in a sequence can place particular aspects of political systems onto distinct tracks, which are then reinforced through time’ (Pierson, 2000c, p. 75; see also Mahoney, 2000a; Pierson, 2000a). As such, ‘arriving early’ may confer advantages onto particular institutional actors and groups (Pierson, 2000c; see also Crouch, 1986; Skocpol, 1992). This is not to say that arriving first is a guarantee of institutional ‘success’ (see Thelen, 1999). Rather, as discussed in the previous section, it suggests that actors and groups arriving early may be able to set the ‘rules of the game’, consolidating early advantages into lasting ones (Pierson, 2000a, 2000c, 2004). Meanwhile,

---

<sup>29</sup> There are parallels here in the critical race literature (see for example Bell, 1992).

actors arriving later may find particular institutional resources – such as potential supporters – ‘already committed to other patterns of mobilization’ (Pierson, 2000c, p. 81).

A similar emphasis can be detected in the feminist literature on gender and institutions, which also implicitly addresses the institutional penalties of being ‘late entrants’. Periods of institutional restructuring can create opportunities to be in ‘at the start’ of an institution, opening up possibilities for gender concerns to be integrated into processes of institutional reform and (re)design (see Mackay, 2006). For example, Louise Chappell (2008) argues that the creation of the International Criminal Court gave gender advocates a ‘new’ arena in which to state their claims, an arena ‘free from the biases and vested interests, or the “congealment” of norms that can be found in existing institutions’ (p. 179). Meanwhile, Georgina Waylen (2008) makes a similar argument - focusing particularly on examples of constitutional design in South Africa, Scotland, Wales, and the European Union – stating that there is ‘some evidence to support the belief that the creation of new institutions can offer opportunities for gender concerns to be incorporated more easily and fundamentally at the outset of an institution’s life than it is to “add them in” at a later stage’ (2008, p. 273; see also Waylen, 2006).

Yet, at the same time, both historical institutionalists and feminist political scientists stress the difficulties of institutional design and change. ‘New’ or reformed institutions are not ‘blank slates’; rather, they are shaped by ‘hangovers from the past’ as well as their surrounding institutional environment (Riker, 1995, p. 121; see also Goodin, 1996; Lowndes and Wilson, 2001). As such, the options available to institutional reformers depend on both prior choices and existing institutional templates (Riker, 1995; Schickler, 2001). In general, then, institutional design and reform can best be understood as bounded innovation within an existing system (see Weir, 1992a). Again, feminist research adds a gendered dimension to these insights, highlighting the ways in which gender norms and practices are carried forward in both the design and operation of political institutions. For example, in her work on post-devolution Scottish politics, Mackay (2006) demonstrates that the institutions of the Scottish Parliament are profoundly shaped by gendered legacies of the past as well as ongoing interactions with already existing institutions. These ‘new’ institutions are ‘nested’ within a wider institutional environment including ‘the legacies of Westminster and local government politics, national-UK contexts, gendered party political cultures and traditional patterns of gender relations’ (Mackay, 2006, p. 21). While arguing that feminist engagement

with these institutions has contributed to a more ‘feminized’ politics with concrete policy outcomes, she also draws attention to the fact that many key elements of the Westminster parliamentary model have survived post-devolution, such as ‘the strong party parliament, political partisanship and party loyalty...and adversarial rather than collaborative political styles’ (Mackay, 2006, p. 20).

Institutions, then, are carriers of diverse interests and ideas – including those from the past – which can conflict with and contradict the goals of institutional designers. Because institutional reform and (re)design are ‘embedded and contested’ processes, they are also particularly difficult for designers and reformers to control (Lowndes and Wilson, 2001, p. 643; see also Goodin, 1996). Historical institutionalists, in particular, put a central emphasis on the unintended consequences of institutional design, highlighting the ways in which ‘significant divergences, or gaps...emerge over time between the preferences of designers and the functioning of political institutions’ (Pierson, 2004, p. 109). Institutions are rarely produced because a ‘single function’ motivates designers (Pierson, 2004, p. 109; see also Schickler, 2001). Instead, institutional innovations constitute ‘common carriers’ for *coalitions* of reformers driven by multiple, and often competing, interests, motivations, and power differentials (Schickler, 2001). As the previous section highlighted, these processes of contestation build institutions that are full of ambiguities and contradictions, which are in turn contested by changing coalitions of actors over time (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Sheingate, 2009 forthcoming; Streeck and Thelen, 2005).

This more dynamic conception of continuity and change suggests that institutions are not only periodically challenged; they are subject to ongoing skirmishing and contestation (Clemens, 1997; Clemens and Cook, 1999; Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Schickler, 2001; Sheingate, 2009 forthcoming; Streeck and Thelen, 2005; Thelen, 2004). Strategic actors will continually attempt to interpret and redirect institutions in pursuit of their own goals, circumventing or subverting rules that clash with their interests. Both the new institutionalism and feminist political science emphasize the importance of strategic agency in processes of institutional change, highlighting the ways in which institutional actors cultivate change ‘from within the context of existing opportunities and constraints – working around elements they cannot change while attempting to harness and utilize others in novel ways’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 19; see also Deeg, 2005). While new institutionalists highlight the role of institutional ‘entrepreneurs’ (Schickler, 2001) in

initiating institutional change, feminist political scientists similarly emphasize the importance of ‘gender equity entrepreneurs’<sup>30</sup> as sources of institutional innovation and political and policy change (see for example Chappell, 2002, 2006; Dobrowolsky, 2003; Gelb, 2003; Katzenstein, 1998; Mackay, 2006; Mackay et al, 2003). As highlighted previously, institutional reforms are often ‘common carriers’ for multiple interests, therefore, entrepreneurs are often needed to construct and frame reform proposals so as to motivate different actors, groups, and coalitions to work together (see Schickler, 2001).

This shared preoccupation with strategic agency puts the focus on internal processes and endogenous pressures for change, highlighting the ways in which institutions operate not just as constraints but also as strategic resources for institutional actors (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Thelen, 2003, 2004). As discussed previously, recent work in both fields emphasizes the importance of the ‘inner life’ and daily enactment of political institutions, drawing attention to processes of incremental endogenous change that take place ‘under the radar’. For historical institutionalists, the inherent ambiguities, contradictions, and ‘gaps’ that emerge over time between institutions and their actual implementation or enforcement provide spaces for ongoing contestation and creative agency. Similarly, feminist scholars draw attention to the ways in which institutions are constantly enacted through everyday gender practice (see for example Acker, 1992; Connell, 1987, 2002; Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995; Kenney, 1996). This, in turn, opens up possibilities for agency and change – if these institutions are gendered, then they can also be ‘re-gendered’ (Beckwith, 2005). As Mackay (2008, p. 130) notes: ‘the everyday acting out of gender relations in institutions, coupled with institutional innovation and strategic action by actors such as feminist norm entrepreneurs *may* lead to the regendering of politics to one degree or another’. For example, Mary Katzenstein (1998) draws attention to the ways in which institutional change is generated through the daily ‘protests’ of feminist activists inside the traditionally male-dominated institutions of the military and the Roman Catholic Church: ‘less lawbreaking than norm-breaking, these feminists have challenged, discomfited, and provoked, unleashing a wholesale disturbance of long-settled assumptions, norms, and practices’ (p. 7).

The basic properties of institutions, then, carry within them possibilities for change (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009, p. 18; see also Streeck and Thelen, 2005). While these

---

<sup>30</sup> I take this term from Louise Chappell (2006).

processes are often subtle and gradual, they can amount to significant and transformative change over time. As chapter three highlighted, recent work in the historical institutionalist field has introduced new and more dynamic conceptions of change to the debate which may be useful for work on gender and institutions, including processes such as *layering*, in which new institutional elements, amendments, and revisions are added to existing institutions, eventually crowding out or supplanting the old system (Palier, 2005; Schickler, 2001; Thelen, 2003, 2004); *displacement*, where existing rules are discredited or pushed to the side in favour of new institutions or logics (Crouch and Keune, 2005); *drift*, in which institutional arrangements are actively neglected or co-opted (Hacker, 2005); and *conversion*, in which existing institutions are redirected to new goals, functions, or purposes (Thelen, 2003, 2004)<sup>31</sup>. These modes of analysis represent a significant improvement upon models in which change is seen as abrupt and discontinuous, dividing institutional development into sequential periods where structure matters and agency doesn't (and vice versa).<sup>32</sup> As such, they are more useful in explaining and assessing the kinds of incremental and bounded change that 'constitute the more common way that things "work" in politics' (Thelen, 2004, p. 36; see also Weir, 1992a). As Thelen notes:

'[These] mechanisms of institutional change...open the door for a more nuanced analysis of *which specific elements* of a given institutional arrangement are (or are not) renegotiable, and why some aspects are more amenable to change than others. As such, these conceptualizations provide a way of thinking about institutional reproduction and change that steers a course between deterministic "lock-in" models on the one hand, and overly fluid "one damn thing after another" models on the other hand' (2004, p. 36; emphasis in original).

Yet, if institutions are sites of ongoing negotiation and contestation, then when is change successful? In much of the new institutionalist literature, there is an implicit assumption that numbers are important in both initiating and embedding institutional innovation and change. Streeck and Thelen (2005, p. 18), for example, argue that fundamental change occurs once a 'multitude of actors switch from one logic of action to another.' Similarly, others use the language of 'threshold effects' or 'tipping points', whereby social processes have little

---

<sup>31</sup> For a more general discussion of these modes of gradual change, see Streeck and Thelen (2005). Mahoney and Thelen (2009 forthcoming) also discuss these different types of institutional change, but reformulate them to focus specifically on formal rules.

<sup>32</sup> As highlighted in the previous chapter, some historical institutionalists rely on a strong punctuated equilibrium model of change (Krasner, 1984, 1988; Mahoney, 2000a). Similarly, others draw a distinction between 'settled' and 'unsettled' times (Swidler, 1986; Katznelson, 2003).

significance until they attain a ‘critical mass’, which may then trigger major change (Pierson, 2004; Pierson and Skocpol, 2002; see also Baumgartner and Jones, 1993; Goldstone, 1991; McAdam, 1982). A similar emphasis on the importance of numbers can be detected in the feminist literature on gender and institutions. As chapter three highlighted, research in the women and politics field – particularly work on political representation – continues to focus on female bodies as the ‘main vehicles’ for institutional change and transformation (Mackay, 2004a). The concept of ‘critical mass’ is used frequently in feminist empirical research on political representation, referring to the theory that the capacity for women politicians to ‘act for’ women is affected by the relative numbers of women in office. However, as previously noted, a growing body research is building up on the effects of women’s presence in political institutions and there is a growing consensus that the effect of numbers in initiating and institutionalizing change is both complex and contingent (see for example Childs, 2004, 2006; Childs and Krook, 2006b; Grey, 2002; Lovenduski, 2005; Mackay, 2006). While there is evidence that numbers and bodies still ‘matter’, work in the field points to the need for a more nuanced analysis, arguing that critical mass theory ‘hides more than it reveals’ (Childs, 2004, p. 196).

In addition, both historical institutionalists and feminist political scientists point to the importance of ‘what follows afterwards’ (Mackay, 2006, p. 2). On the one hand - as path dependence arguments in the historical institutionalist field suggest - moments of reform and innovation may be followed by ‘lock-in’, generating self-reinforcing dynamics that are entrenched over time (Pierson, 2000a, 2004). On the other hand, the mechanisms behind path dependence arguments – increasing returns and feedback effects – only tell part of the story (Thelen, 2004, p. 34; see also Thelen, 1999, 2003). As highlighted previously, institutional reproduction is far from automatic (see Hacker, 2005; Streeck and Thelen, 2005; Thelen, 2004). Rather, institutions require active tending and ongoing adaptation and adjustment, for example, in response to changes in the surrounding environment. The failure, then, to actively maintain an institution – to implement, enact, or enforce particular reforms, rules, conventions, or practices – can essentially ‘amount to actively allowing it to decay’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 25). In addition, processes of institutional change and innovation are also limited by the fact that political institutions ‘express patterns of distributional advantage’ (Knight, 1992, p. 9), privileging certain strategies and paths over others and including certain actors and groups while excluding others. Moments of institutional reform and redesign invariably destabilize these existing ‘settlements’, often generating reactions of

backlash and resistance rather than self-reinforcement (Lowndes and Wilson, 2001, p. 643; see also Clemens and Cook, 1999; Schickler, 2001). This can result in a pattern of ‘innovation and response’ (Schickler, 2001, p. 17), as losers from previous rounds of institutional innovation ‘lie low, waiting for an opportunity to pursue their own institutional agenda’ (Pierson, 2004, p. 154; see also Alexander, 2001; Clemens and Cook, 1999; Schickler, 2001; Thelen, 2003). Similarly, work on gender and institutions highlights the ways in which gender equity entrepreneurs have been able to ‘regender’ political institutions with varying degrees of success, opening up opportunities for further engagement (see for example Banaszak et al, 2003; Chappell, 2002, 2006; Dobrowolsky, 2003; Katzenstein, 1998; Sawyer, 1990). Yet, at the same time, feminist accounts of political institutions demonstrate that there is ‘no guarantee that shifts within institutions are ever permanent’ (Chappell, 2006, p. 231), highlighting constant possibilities for norm erosion, drift, and reversal. As Mackay (2006, p. 19) writes: ‘resistance is entrenched, and without vigilance, gender equality issues can slip off the agenda.’ While institutions are generally resistant to change, feminist research on gender and institutions draws attention to the gendered dimensions of institutional reproduction and resistance, documenting the particular difficulties of institutionalizing gender equality reforms and providing ‘clear evidence of powerful, pervasive, and *specific* resistance to positive policies for women’ (Halford, 1992, p. 160; emphasis in original).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter lays the initial foundations for a ‘feminist institutionalist’ research agenda, exploring the potential for theoretical synthesis between feminist gender analysis and new institutional theory. The central contention of this chapter is that the combined insights of feminist and new institutional theory can take existing research on gender and institutions forward, providing critical insights into key issues of gender, power, continuity, and change. The relationship between the new institutionalism and feminist political science, then, can be seen as one of mutual benefit. For example, the chapter highlights a number of useful new institutionalist tools and conceptual frameworks which may provide sharper analytical leverage for feminist work on gender and institutions, such as the mechanisms of increasing returns and positive feedback associated with path dependence arguments. At the same time, it demonstrates the ways in which a gendered approach can also contribute to new

institutional analysis, drawing attention to the complex ways in which gender plays out in political institutions and pointing to the need to take gender into account in order to understand processes of institutional evolution and design. A gendered lens also puts a central focus on institutional power relations, exposing the institutional processes, rules, and structures involved in constructing and maintaining gendered political hierarchies and highlighting the gendered dimensions of powerful processes of institutional reproduction and resistance. In addition, the combined insights of these two approaches provide key insights into the dynamics of institutional innovation and change. Recent work in both fields emphasizes the importance of endogenous pressures for change, drawing attention to processes of contestation that take place ‘under the radar’ and highlighting the importance of the day-to-day enactment of political institutions. At the same, work in both fields provides insights into institutional stability and continuity, for instance, highlighting the bounded nature and contradictory outcomes of processes of institutional innovation and reform within existing systems. As the previous chapter noted, these questions are critically important to feminist political science, which is explicitly concerned not only with recognizing how institutions reproduce gendered power relations, but also with how these institutions can be challenged and transformed.

Before going on to explore the ‘promise’ of a feminist institutionalist approach in the context of the case study – the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland - the methodology of the research needs clarification. The following chapter addresses the methodological issues involved in ‘translating’ the feminist institutionalist theoretical approach into empirical research.



## **A Feminist Institutional Approach: Methodology and Method**

This chapter addresses the methodological issues involved in this research. The first section discusses and justifies the methodological perspective of the thesis, while the second section introduces the research methods and sources used in the project. The final section addresses ethical considerations as well as the issues of reliability, validity and generalizability.

### ***I: A Feminist Institutional Methodology?***

Having made the case for a ‘feminist institutionalism’ in chapters three and four, this chapter assesses the methodological issues involved in ‘translating’ the feminist institutionalist theoretical project into empirical research. The chapter broadly agrees with the argument that ‘there is no distinctive feminist methodology’ (Krook and Squires, 2006, p. 45). While textbooks on research methods often include feminism as ‘an approach’ (e.g. Marsh and Stoker, 2002), there is no ‘simple and single feminist perspective within political science’ (Randall, 2002, p. 109). Rather, feminism can be more accurately viewed as ‘a kind of developing dialogue around a common but evolving agenda’ (Randall, 2002, p. 109), one that incorporates a range of diverse perspectives, or ‘feminisms’ (Bryson, 1992; Phillips, 1998). Therefore, there is no single shared feminist methodology or epistemological position (Krook and Squires, 2006; Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002; Randall, 2002; Reinharz, 1992; Squires, 1999).

Yet, while there is no distinctive ‘feminist methodology’, there is arguably a ‘distinctive feminist approach to methodology and methods’ (Krook and Squires, 2006, p. 45; emphasis in original). Research in feminist political science tends to take a ‘problem-driven’ approach

rather than a method-driven one, employing a broad range of theoretical and methodological frames and synthesizing different types of methods in innovative ways in order to answer specific questions (Childs and Krook, 2006a; Krook and Squires, 2006; Mackay, 2004a; Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002; Randall, 2002; Reinhartz, 1992). As such, feminist political scientists are generally open to combining interpretive methods with more traditional positivist methods and tools, often for strategic reasons<sup>33</sup> (Childs and Krook, 2006a; Krook and Squires, 2006; Mazur, 2004). They are also more open to ‘borrowing’ from other disciplines (Kenney, 1996; Krook and Squires, 2006; Mackay, 2004a; Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002; Randall, 2002; Tickner, 2005). Feminist political science, then, is generally characterized by methodological pluralism, taking ‘an eclectic and open-minded approach to methodological questions’ (Childs and Krook, 2006a, p. 23).

However, the institutional ‘turn’ in feminist political science has raised new questions and pointed to new research directions, provoking a reconsideration of appropriate methods and frameworks (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995; Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a; Randall, 2002). As highlighted in chapter three, this institutional turn is accompanied by a ‘growing dissatisfaction’ with the analytical concept of sex and an increased interest in complex and relational understandings of gender (Lovenduski, 1998, p. 335; see also Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995; Kenney, 1996; Mackay, 2004a; Randall, 2002). The general move in the field from sex to gender, as well as from an individual-level to an institutional-level analysis, has important methodological implications. Recent debates in the field have highlighted the perceived shortcomings of standard methods and frameworks, for example, arguing that behavioral measures are ‘particularly ill-equipped to deal with “messy” and “complex” issues of gender’ (Mackay, 2004a, p. 110; see also Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995; Lovenduski, 1998; Randall, 2002). Quantitative methods are often seen to be particularly problematic, conflating or confusing ‘gender’ with ‘sex’ and frequently reporting findings as ‘gender’ when in fact they have only obtained information about sex (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995). This does not necessarily imply that conventional methodological frameworks or quantitative methods should be discarded, rather it suggests that these should be re-conceptualized through a gendered frame of reference and used with a ‘clearer understanding of the assumptions undergirding our analyses’ (Kelly and Duerst-Lahti, 1995, p. 266; see

---

<sup>33</sup> Particularly compared to their counterparts in feminist international relations (IR) who generally ‘fall into methodological frameworks that have variously been described as post-positivist, reflectivist, or interpretivist’ (Tickner, 2005, p. 2; see also Squires, 2002).

also Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a). Qualitative methods have better captured ‘meanings and interactions,’ providing in-depth accounts of women’s experiences and perceptions of gender differences (Mackay, 2004a, p. 110). Work on gender and organizations, for example, generally uses qualitative and historical studies, relying heavily on ‘intensive case studies of well-selected organizations to uncover systematic patterns of social behavior’ (Steinberg, 1992, p. 580; see also Acker, 1990, 1992; Savage and Witz, 1992). Similarly, Childs and Krook (2006a) argue that work on gender and political representation needs to draw on methods and approaches that facilitate in-depth case study, such as interviews, participant observation and process tracing (see also Dodson and Carroll, 1991). Yet while qualitative approaches provide rich and detailed findings, they tend to focus on women as institutional actors, often failing to include comparable accounts from male institutional actors and, therefore, missing a key dimension of relational gender dynamics. For example, in her recent study of New Labour women MPs, Sarah Childs (2004) makes the distinction between ‘women’s bodies’ and ‘feminist minds’. Yet, her work is still ultimately rooted in female bodies and her study does not include comparable accounts from male politicians.

Like feminist political science, the new institutionalism – particularly historical institutionalism - could also be described as ‘problem-driven’, rather than method-driven (Steinmo, 2008). Historical institutionalism is generally marked by ‘theoretical eclecticism’ and ‘multiple analytic techniques’ (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 698; see also Amenta, 2003; Pierson, 2000d). Some historical institutionalists draw on primary sources (Clemens, 1997; Skocpol, 1979, 1992; see also Amenta et al, 2001), while others rely primarily on secondary publications (e.g. Thelen, 2004). Some historical institutionalist research is explicitly comparative (Collier and Collier, 1991; Skocpol, 1979; Streeck, 2001; Thelen, 2004), while others focus on single cases (Schickler, 2001; Sheingate, 2009 forthcoming). Yet, while many historical institutionalist scholars ‘blend styles of research in highly creative ways’<sup>34</sup> (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 695), there are several distinctive features of a historical institutionalist approach. First, for historical institutionalists, the focus is on tackling ‘big’, real world questions and puzzles in political science:

---

<sup>34</sup> See for example Campbell, 2005; Luong, 2002; Schickler, 2001. Pierson and Skocpol (2002) refer to these scholars as ‘boundary crossers’ (see also Thelen, 1999).

‘A historical-institutionalist scholar usually starts by asking about varied, historically situated outcomes of broad interest – perhaps posing a puzzle about why something important happened, or did not happen, or asking why certain structures or patterns take shape in some times and places but not others. Why have revolutions occurred in some times and places but not others? How did the U.S. state develop its specific pattern of institutional features? Why have welfare states emerged and developed along various paths? Why have some countries become stable democracies, while others have not? The focus is on explaining variations in important or surprising patterns, events, or arrangements – rather than on accounting for human behavior without regard to context or modeling very general processes presumed to apply at all times and places’ (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 696-697).

Second, and perhaps most obviously, historical institutionalists take history seriously. Historical institutionalists attempt to ‘place politics in time’ (Pierson, 2004), investigating how processes unfold over an extended temporal period (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002; Skocpol, 1992; Thelen, 2000). In this view, history is not seen as a simple reference point for analysis. Rather than simply asserting that ‘history matters’, historical institutionalists are centrally concerned with *how* history matters, exploring the specific ways in which ‘time and temporality figure in political outcomes’ (Thelen, 2000, p. 102; see also Pierson, 2000a, 2000c, 2004; Skocpol, 1992). Third, historical institutionalists analyze institutions in context. In contrast to rational choice institutionalists, who tend to focus on one set of rules at a time, historical institutionalists typically ‘examine multiple institutions in interaction, operating in, and influenced by, broader contexts’ (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 706; see also Hall and Soskice, 2001; Huber and Stephens, 2001; Skocpol, 1992; Weir 1992b). The attention to history and the investigation of institutional configurations are ‘highly complementary strategies of analysis’ (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 709). For example, historical institutionalists draw attention to the ways in which particular configurations of institutions and organizations are often mutually reinforcing, developing through a kind of ‘coevolutionary process’ over an extended period of time<sup>35</sup>.

The combined insights of feminist political science and new institutional theory, then, point to the need for a flexible multi-method approach, one that is sensitive to ‘cultural, spatial, and temporal specificities’ (Childs and Krook, 2006a, p. 25; see also Siim, 2004). This approach must also be sensitive to the complexities of gender. As argued previously, there is an increasing recognition in feminist political science that approaches and methods are

---

<sup>35</sup> See in particular the literature focusing on varieties of capitalism (e.g. Hall and Soskice, 2001).

needed that can contextualize gendered meanings and interactions, capture the relational dynamics between men and women as institutional actors, and expose the gendered foundations of seemingly neutral institutional processes, practices, and norms (Childs and Krook, 2006a; Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995; Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a). In response to these calls, this chapter suggests that feminist discourse analysis is a particularly suitable approach for work on gender and institutions. The following section expands on this point, demonstrating how discourse theory provides an appropriate methodology to ‘translate’ the theoretical perspective of the thesis into empirical analysis.

## **A Feminist Discursive Approach**

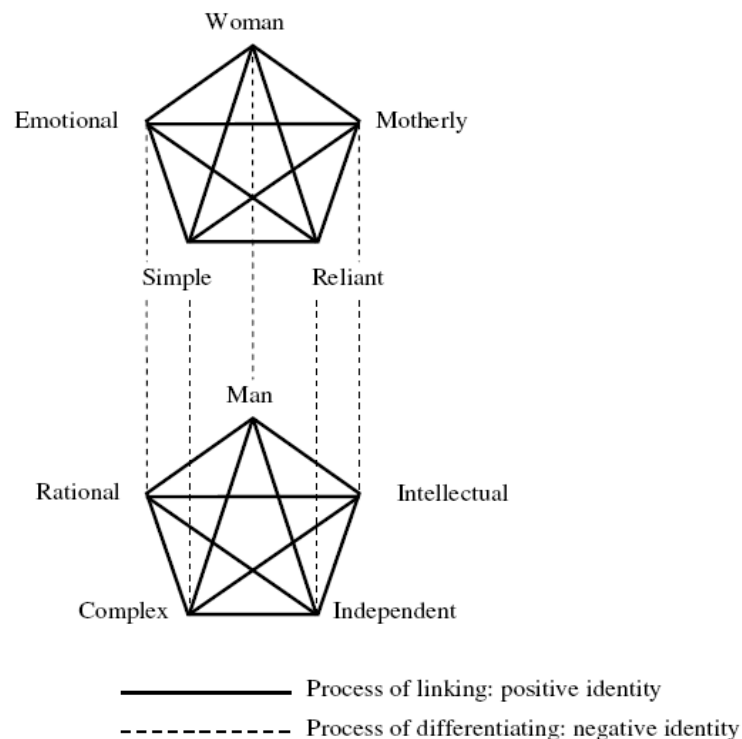
The starting point of feminist discourse analysis is that language is not a ‘transparent tool’, reflecting an existing and established social reality (Hansen, 2006, p. 18; see also Bacchi, 1999; Zalewski, 2000). Rather, this reality is constructed and assigned meaning through language: ‘truth, outside the individual, independent of language, is impossible’ (Rosenau, 1992, p. 134). Language can be understood as a system of differential signs in which meaning is established not by the ‘true’ essence of a thing itself, but through a series of juxtapositions, where one element is valued over its opposite (Hansen, 2006, p. 19; see also Derrida, 1976, 1978). As highlighted in chapter three, feminists point to the specifically gendered nature of this linguistic structure, demonstrating, for example, the ways in which the category ‘woman’ is defined in relational terms, understood in terms of her otherness to the category ‘man’. As masculinity is valued, femininity is positioned as ‘Other’ and is devalued:

‘To be a woman...is to be different from – and inferior to – being a man, it is to be emotional rather than rational, to be motherly rather than intellectual, to be reliant rather than independent, and to be focused on the simple rather than the complex’ (Hansen, 2006, p. 19).

There are, of course, different types of discourse theory and analysis used in feminist political research, as well as political science more broadly. While the thesis draws on the discursive ‘turn’ in feminist political science more generally (e.g. Bacchi, 1999), it specifically adopts the theoretical concept of *chains of equivalence*, first introduced by discourse theorists Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe and subsequently developed by

feminist international relations scholar Lene Hansen (2006). Theoretical work on chains and equivalence highlights that meaning is not simply assigned through juxtapositions or dichotomies, but is instead established through a more complex process of *linking* and *differentiation*. For example, while the category ‘man’ is constructed as different, and therefore superior to, the category ‘woman’, these terms are linked to a whole range of signs. These chains of equivalence are stabilized by what Laclau and Mouffe call ‘nodal points’, signifiers around which other points are gathered and comprehended (1985, p. 142; see also Connell, 1995; Hansen, 2006). The linking of these signs and terms is accompanied by a negative process of differentiation, as linked signifiers are constructed and understood in relation to what it is described as being the opposite, the ‘constituted outside’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). Lene Hansen illustrates the process by demonstrating how the term ‘woman’ is defined and constructed through a positive process of linking ‘emotional’, ‘motherly’, ‘reliant’ and ‘simple’, while at the same time juxtaposed to the male series of links – ‘rational’, ‘intellectual’, ‘independent’, ‘complex’ - through a negative process of differentiation (see Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1: Linking and Differentiation, from Hansen (2006, p. 20)**



A focus on linking and differentiation puts a central emphasis on the power and pervasiveness of gendered discourses. At the same time, however, it also draws attention to the fact that these linguistic structures are inherently unstable. As Hansen argues:

‘Seeing identity as built through processes of linking and differentiation shows the possibility for destabilization: the link between some of the positive signs might become unstable; or a negatively valued term of one discourse might be constructed as positive within another discourse, making the clear attribution of inferior or superior value to signs more complicated (2006, p. 21).

The emphasis on discursive instability points to the need for strategies of deconstruction in order to de-naturalize hegemonic discursive constructions of gender (Zalewski, 2000; see also Butler, 1992). It also provides a starting point for empirical research. Hansen recommends a reading strategy in which researchers begin by identifying terms which indicate a clear construction of the Other. This often requires a degree of interpretation; although identities are relationally constructed, texts are not always explicit about the Self<sup>36</sup> (Hansen, 2006, p. 44). In addition, as Hansen notes, identity construction is not accomplished solely through designation of clear and obvious gendered dichotomies, but rather is articulated through a series of signs within a larger system. The emphasis, then, should be on ‘degrees of difference and Otherness’ (Hansen, 2006, p. 35; emphasis added). For example, while ‘women’ and ‘femininity’ are perhaps obvious Others to look for, masculinities can also be constructed in relation to the masculinities of other men. In addition, identity is not always constructed through radical Otherness – that is, in opposition to Others who are radically different or threatening (Hansen, 2006, pp. 37-41). Analytically, then, empirical research needs to be attentive to the complexity and ambiguity of identity construction, incorporating ‘a careful investigation of which signs are articulated by a particular discourse or text, how they are coupled to achieve discursive stability, where instabilities and slips between these constructions might occur, and how competing discourses construct the same sign to different effects’ (Hansen, 2006, p. 42).

---

<sup>36</sup> In pointing to the need to pay attention to textual ‘silences’, Hansen uses the example of George W. Bush talking about Saddam Hussein: ‘When Bush constructs Saddam Hussein as “evil”, he does not explicitly say that he, himself, is “not evil”; when the “Iraqi people” are defined as “oppressed”, he does not immediately declare that “the American people are not oppressed”’ (2006, p. 44).

While the thesis incorporates these post-modernist and post-structuralist insights<sup>37</sup>, it puts a central emphasis on the need for constructive as well as deconstructive analyses of the political. It therefore adopts a broadly interpretive approach. An interpretive approach ‘takes what Positivism...ignore[s] – the meanings and interpretations, the motives and intentions, that people use in their everyday lives and that direct their behaviour – and it elevates them to the central place in social theory and research’ (Blaikie, 2000, p. 115). As such, it ‘requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action’ (Bryman, 2008, p. 16), putting a central focus on the intersubjective knowledge, meanings and institutions that shape and structure social interaction (Blaikie, 2000, p. 115). As argued in chapters three and four, an understanding of gender as socially and discursively constructed avoids the dangers of biological determinism and essentialism, allowing us to see that gender is not necessarily tied to a sexed body. Yet, while the thesis adopts a relational and contextual understanding of gender, it does not argue, as some feminist post-modernists or post-structuralists do, that ‘there is no gender identity behind [these] expressions of gender’ (Butler, 1990, p. 25). Rather, it highlights the material effects of gendered discourses, pointing to the need to go beyond textual meanings and linguistic structures and drawing attention to the gendered embodiment of institutional norms, processes, and practices. As R.W. Connell argues: ‘Bodies are addressed by social processes and drawn into history without ceasing to be bodies. They do not turn into signs or positions in discourse. Their materiality continues to matter’ (2002, p. 48).

In attempting to bridge the gap between ‘the material and the ideational’ (Squires, 2004), the thesis responds to calls in the field for methodological pluralism. Feminist discursive analytic approaches increasingly employ linguistic and poststructuralist methodological tools alongside more conventional political science methods, drawing attention to the dynamic interplay between institutions, agency, and discourse (Liebert, 2003; Krook and Squires, 2006; Mottier, 2004; Siim, 2004). For example, Veronique Mottier (2004) calls for the use of post-structuralist discourse analysis, while at the same time emphasizing the importance of interrogating the institutions of the state (see also Kantola, 2006). Meanwhile, the Research Network on Gender, Politics and the State (RNGS) project draws on traditional political

---

<sup>37</sup> While some distinguish between post-structuralism and post-modernism, I use the two terms interchangeably, referring to a loosely affiliated body of thought that draws on interconnected ideas around language, knowledge, subjectivity, power and representation (for further discussion see Zalewski, 2000).



science methodologies, but is sensitive to contextual discursive constructions of gendered identities (Mazur, 2004).

This particular approach has a number of methodological advantages for the feminist institutionalist theoretical project, explicitly addressing the broad themes of gender, power, and change highlighted in chapters three and four. Unlike recent ideational and discursive trends in the new institutionalist literature (Blyth, 1997; Hay, 2001; Lieberman, 2002; Schmidt, 2002, 2006), feminist discursive analysis has gender at its core – that is to say, it is centrally concerned with problematizing hegemonic discursive constructions of gender. It is also explicitly concerned with power, moving beyond power-distributional perspectives and emphasizing the complex interplay of discursive struggles over the interpretation and representation of needs, problems, and identities (see for example Bacchi, 1999, 2000, 2004; Lombardo et al 2009, forthcoming; Verloo, 2007; Weedon, 1987). Feminist discursive analytical approaches are also centrally preoccupied with continuity and change. As highlighted above, while these approaches often incorporate insights from post-structuralist and post-modernist perspectives, they are ultimately committed to emancipatory programmes of political change<sup>38</sup>. As such, applications of feminist discursive approaches generally emphasize the agency of institutional actors, for example, assessing processes of strategic framing (Lombardo et al, 2009 forthcoming; Verloo, 2007). At the same time, these approaches emphasize the constitutive power of gendered discourses, drawing attention to the difficulties of ‘stepping outside’ discourse. This tension is reflected in ongoing debates in the literature surrounding ‘the extent to which we are “in” discourses and the extent to which we “use” discourses’ (Bacchi, 2004, p. 129). As Carol Lee Bacchi notes:

‘The tightrope we walk here is a familiar one – insisting that indeed social actors can use language in the service of particular goals while recognizing the embeddedness of actors in discursive systems constituted by tradition, religion and political institutions’ (1999, p. 45).

As highlighted above, feminist discourse analytic approaches also draw attention to the need to go beyond textual meanings and look at ‘extra-discursive factors’ (Bacchi, 1999), emphasizing the importance of institutional context. As Chris Weedon notes: ‘it is only by

---

<sup>38</sup> Avoiding what Bacchi refers to as the post-modernist ‘gospel of despair’ (1999, p. 43).

looking at a discourse *in operation*, in a specific historical context, that it is possible to see whose interests it serves at a particular moment' (1987, p. 111; emphasis in original). The relationship between discourses and institutions is a co-constitutive one; gendered discourses are 'firmly rooted in and oriented to real, material social structures' (Fairclough, 1992, p. 91) and are enacted through institutional norms and practices. Understanding this relationship, then, is critically important in order to understand how gendered discourses can be identified and, ultimately, challenged (Bacchi, 1999; Mottier, 2004; Nicholson and Seidman, 1995; Siim, 2004):

'In order to develop strategies to contest hegemonic assumptions and the social practices which they guarantee, we need to understand the intricate network of discourses, the sites where they are articulated and the institutionally legitimized forms of knowledge to which they look for their justification' (Weedon, 1987, p. 126).

## ***II: Research Strategy, Methods and Sources***

By positioning itself within a broadly discursive and interpretive methodological perspective, the thesis directly responds to calls within feminist political science for gender-sensitive and contextual approaches to empirical research, putting the emphasis on 'meaning, process, and context' (Devine, 2002, p. 199; see also Childs and Krook, 2006a; Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a; Mottier, 2004; Siim, 2004). As outlined previously, the central aim of the thesis is to explore and understand the gendered dynamics of institutional continuity, change and innovation. It is particularly concerned with exploring and understanding the complex ways in which gender equity reforms – in this case, reforms and innovation in the institutions of political recruitment – are institutionalized, implemented, and enacted in political institutions. In this thesis, the case is the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland. Using a flexible multi-method approach that is both qualitative and historical – including process tracing, interviewing, and document analysis – the thesis combines a 'macro-level' analysis of gendered patterns of selection and recruitment in Scottish political parties over time with a 'micro-level' case study of a Scottish Labour Party constituency seat selection contest.

Both historical institutionalists and feminist political scientists have frequently argued that in-depth single case studies and small- to medium-n comparisons are an optimal research strategy (see for example Chappell, 2002, 2006; Childs and Krook, 2006a; Collier, 1993; Lovenduski, 1998; Mahoney, 2000b; Rueschemeyer and Stephens, 1997; Pierson and Skocpol, 2002; Siim, 2004; Steinmo, 2008). As argued in chapters three and four, while institutions have distinctly gendered cultures and are involved in processes of producing and reproducing gender, no institution does this in the same way (Lovenduski, 1998; pp. 348-350; see also Chappell, 2002, 2006; Kenney, 1996; Mackay, 2004a). In-depth case studies are needed, then, to capture the complex ways in which gender ‘plays out’ at different times and in different institutional sites (Childs and Krook, 2006a). Similarly, historical institutionalists advocate a highly contextualized approach to empirical research. As highlighted previously, historical institutionalists work at the level of mid-range theory (Thelen, 1999; Thelen and Steinmo, 1992). Rather than attempting to generate a ‘general theory of politics’ (Pierson, 2000c, p. 73), they generally focus on a limited range of cases in an effort to ‘do justice’ to the important issues of context, temporality, and sequencing (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, 2003; Pierson and Skocpol, 2002; Thelen, 1999; Steinmo, 2008).

Yet, case study research also faces significant methodological criticisms. One of the most common criticisms of case study methods is that they are particularly prone to ‘selection bias’ (Achen and Snidal, 1989). Historical institutionalists, in particular, are often accused of ‘selecting on the dependent variable’, that is, choosing cases where a development of interest has occurred, while ignoring instances where it hasn’t occurred (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002; Pierson, 2004; Steinmo, 2008). Additional criticisms focus on the contingency and lack of representativeness of case study findings (Geddes, 1990). Others ask how studies can be designed to take history, temporality, and institutional configurations seriously, yet still be committed to the ‘generation of usable knowledge’ in other contexts (Pierson, 2004, p. 174; see also Abbott, 2001; Hall, 2003; Mahoney, 1999). Many of the above critiques converge into a particular skepticism of the value of single-case studies (see in particular King et al, 1994). These critiques often rest on the argument that a single case denotes a single observation, a viewpoint associated primarily with King, Keohane, and Verba’s (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. In criticizing ‘single observation’ research designs, the authors contend that:

‘(1) very few explanations depend upon only one causal variable; to evaluate the impact of more than one explanatory variable, the investigator needs more than one implication observed; (2) measurement is difficult and not perfectly reliable; and (3) social reality is not reasonably treated as being produced by deterministic processes, so random error would appear even if measurement were perfect’ (King et al, 1994, p. 210).

While there are certainly trade-offs to case studies, it is important not to misinterpret these limitations through ‘the prism of statistical methods’ (George and Bennett, 2005, p. 22). Case studies do not represent a single observation, rather single case studies generally involve multiple observations. This is particularly the case for historical institutionalist approaches which, as noted previously, are specifically interested in examining patterns over time. By extending the time frame of social inquiry, one expands the ‘empirical terrain’ (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 698) and can compensate for the ‘small-n’ problem associated with case study research. As such, rather than simply providing a ‘snapshot’ of the candidate selection process in the Scottish Labour Party, the thesis situates the micro-level case study within a larger temporal framework of party reform processes in the British Labour Party over time. In doing so, it allows for a more nuanced assessment of the complex dynamics of innovation and change in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution, highlighting the ways in which current outcomes in the candidate selection process are shaped by past decisions and institutional legacies as well as the intersection and interaction between multiple processes and different reform trajectories over time. As Paul Pierson notes, these types of insights are generally missed by standard variable-centered analyses in which contemporary events and outcomes are often ‘ripped’ from their temporal context (2000c, p. 72).

With regards to issues of representativeness and selection bias, again it is not necessarily appropriate to apply the logic of statistical inference to case study research. Statistical methods require large samples of cases that are representative of and allow inferences about a larger population from which the sample is drawn. While necessary in statistical studies, these practices are ‘inappropriate and sometimes counterproductive’ when extended to case study methods (George and Bennett, 2005, p. 31; see also Flyvbjerg, 2006; Gerring, 2004, 2007; Mahoney, 2000b; Mitchell, 1983; Yin, 1994). When the objective is to achieve information on a given problem or phenomenon, a representative case or random sample is not necessarily an appropriate strategy (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 229). As Bent Flyvbjerg argues:

‘[T]he typical or average case is often not the richest in information. Atypical or extreme cases often reveal more information because they activate more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation studied. In addition, from both an understanding-oriented and an action-oriented perspective, it is often more important to clarify the deeper causes behind a given problem and its consequences than to describe the symptoms of the problem and how frequently they occur. Random samples emphasizing representativeness will seldom be able to produce this kind of insight’ (2006, p. 229).

In keeping with this perspective, the Scottish case can be seen as an ‘extreme’ or ‘unique’ case rather than a typical or representative one (Bryman, 2008; Yin, 1994; see also Mitchell, 1983). The logic of an extreme or unusual case is based on the notion that it has an intrinsic value (Bryman, 2008), in this instance, enhancing our understanding of the gendered dynamics of institutional continuity, change, and innovation. The Scottish case provides an unusual and unprecedented example of gendered innovation in the institutions of political recruitment, in which a ‘clean slate’ of candidacies with no incumbents as well as a more proportional electoral system opened up new possibilities for far-reaching change and reform in established selection procedures. Yet, evidence from the Scottish case also draws attention to underlying continuities as well as trends of erosion and decline in the institutions of political recruitment over time, for example, highlighting an overall pattern of stasis and decline in the selection and recruitment of female candidates in Scottish political parties post-devolution (see Mackay and Kenny, 2007). Therefore, while the Scottish case can produce insights into the dynamics of institutional innovation and change, it can also provide insights into institutional continuity and resistance to change.

Again, this ‘problem-driven’ small-n approach - shared in both feminist political science and the new institutionalism - can be criticized for selecting on the dependent variable. Yet, as Sven Steinmo argues: ‘there are also serious dangers of *not* looking at the big historically interesting puzzles – because they are too rare, or they are not randomly distributed...without [these] accounts, important outcomes will go unobserved, causal relationships will be incorrectly inferred, and finally, significant hypotheses may never be noticed, even less tested’ (2008, p. 18). As Steinmo notes, if we were to strictly follow the logic of inquiry promoted by King, Keohane and Verba (1994) and others, then many classic political science texts would simply not have been written (including for example Skocpol,

1979)<sup>39</sup>. These issues are discussed in more depth at the end of the chapter, in which questions of reliability, validity and generalizability are addressed. The following section elaborates on the research methods and sources used in the project.

## Process Tracing

Political science has recently witnessed a ‘renaissance’ in qualitative methods, a shift which is reflected in a recent surge of new scholarship on qualitative approaches and relevant methodological issues<sup>40</sup>. As highlighted above, one of this literature’s main contributions has been to reinforce and develop the idea that robust social science research can be carried out through within-case analysis as well as cross-case analysis (Tansey, 2007, p. 765). One form of within-case analysis that has received increasing recognition and attention is ‘process-tracing’. While the process-tracing method has a long history in the social sciences (Falleti, 2006), different scholars have employed the term in different ways. It is sometimes incorrectly equated with ‘story-telling’, or atheoretical historical narratives: ‘a detailed narrative or story presented in the form of a chronicle that purports to throw light on how an event came about’ (George and Bennett, 2005, p. 210). There is usually an element of historical narrative to the process-tracing method; however, it can better be understood as a method of within-case analysis used to evaluate causal processes (see for example Collier et al, 2004; George and Bennett, 2005; Hall, 2003; Strahan, 2007). For example, Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2005) define process-tracing as the ‘method [that] attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable’ (p. 206). In adopting this definition, George and Bennett distinguish between process-tracing and statistical analysis, arguing that statistical analysis attempts to define causal effects, while the process-tracing method attempts to identify the *causal mechanisms* that connect causes and effects (see also Mahoney, 2001). For George and Bennett, then, the focus is on *theory-testing*, searching for corroborating evidence for a particular causal argument. As the authors state:

---

<sup>39</sup> James Mahoney (2003) makes a similar argument regarding the literature on democracy and authoritarianism.

<sup>40</sup> For recent reviews of this literature see Bennett and Elman (2006, 2007).

‘In process tracing, the researcher examines histories, archival documents, interview transcripts, and other sources to see whether the causal process a theory hypothesizes or implies in a case is in fact evident in the sequence and values of the intervening variables in that case’ (2005, p. 6).

This thesis does not dispute George and Bennett’s argument that the identification of causal chains is an important task for political science. Yet, as John Gerring (2004) notes, ‘social science research involves a quest for new theories as well as a testing of existing theories...regrettably, social science methodology has focused almost exclusively on the latter’ (p. 347). The focus of the thesis is on *theory-building* rather than theory-testing. The case study, then, is not intended to play a ‘confirmatory role’ (Gerring, 2004, p. 350). Rather the case study is an exploratory one. The intention is to explore and understand the gendered dynamics of institutional innovation in the Scottish political recruitment process post-devolution and to evaluate the implications of these findings for the wider feminist institutionalist theory-building project of the thesis. As such, the thesis largely rejects the variable oriented language used by George and Bennett (2005) and others, adopting a flexible understanding of process-tracing that is more compatible with the discursive and interpretive approach of the project.

The approach used in the thesis can broadly be categorized as ‘theory-guided process tracing’ (see Falletti, 2006). In applying this method, the task for the researcher is to provide ‘theoretically explicit narratives that carefully trace...the sequence of events constituting the process’ of interest (Aminzade, 1993, p. 108; see also Büthe, 2002). The aim is to *connect* the stages of a particular process, enabling the researcher to identify the reasons for the emergence of a particular outcome through the dynamic of events over time (Falletti, 2006; see also George and McKeown, 1985; Tarrow, 2004). The emphasis, then, is both on timing but also, crucially, on sequence: ‘*when* things happen within a sequence affects *how* they happen’ (Tilly, 1984, p. 14; see also Pierson, 2000c, 2004). ‘Small’ events in early stages may have a significant impact on overall outcomes, while ‘large’ events at later stages may be less consequential (Pierson, 2004, p. 45). In particular, decisions taken early on in a particular sequence are crucial as they begin to set up the ‘path’ that an institution will follow, placing ‘particular aspects of political systems onto distinct tracks, which are then reinforced through time’ (Pierson, 2004, p. 45). In line with current work in the historical institutionalist field, as well as historical approaches more broadly, the emphasis is also on the ways in which *multiple* temporal sequences intersect and interact with each other (see in

particular Aminzade, 1992; Orren and Skowronek, 1994, 2004; Pierson, 2000c). As historical sociologist Ronald Aminzade notes:

‘[A]ttempts to explain particular outcomes or patterns of development typically involve the study of multiple rather than single trajectories. Most historical sociologists reject the notion of a single master process, acknowledging multiple processes that overlap and intersect one another...[T]he focus is not on the presence or absence of certain variables or on the trajectory of a single process. It is on the temporal intersection of distinctive trajectories of different, but connected, long-term processes’ (1992, pp. 466-467).

In applying the process-tracing method, the thesis provides a detailed reconstruction of the temporal sequence of events in a Scottish Labour constituency seat selection contest in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections. At the same time, as already highlighted, it situates the micro-level case study within a longer time frame of party reform processes, assessing and evaluating multiple paths of institutional reform in the Scottish and British Labour Party over time. In doing so, the thesis remains sensitive to issues of temporal process and temporal ordering, highlighting the ways in which contemporary outcomes in the institutions of political recruitment are shaped by legacies from the past. It also draws attention to the ways in which temporal sequences interact and intersect with each other, both opening up but also limiting possibilities for change (Pierson, 2000c, 2004; Orren and Skowronek, 1994, 2004).

This particular approach has a number of methodological advantages. First, by ‘placing politics in time’ (Pierson, 2000c, 2004) – systematically situating particular moments in the context of a longer temporal framework – we can improve our understanding of complex institutional dynamics and causal relationships, such as those characterized by multiple points of causality, feedback loops, path dependencies, and interaction effects<sup>41</sup> (Falletti, 2006; George and Bennett, 2005; Hall, 2003; Pierson and Skocpol, 2002; Steinmo, 2008; Thelen, 2003, 2004). This approach, in turn, is well-suited to capturing the empirical complexities of gendered institutions, highlighting the dynamic and changing nature of the relationship between gender and institutions over time – for example, in terms of feminist

---

<sup>41</sup> There are parallels here in the growing literature on ‘analytic narratives’ in rational choice institutionalism (see for example Bates et al, 1998). However, as Pierson and Skocpol (2002) point out, these accounts are limited by their theory-driven agenda: ‘the tools of game theory turn out to be poorly suited to analyzing conjunctures or exploring slow-moving macroprocesses’ (p. 705).



engagement or institutional outcomes (Burns, 2005; Chappell, 2002, 2006; Waylen, 2007, 2009 forthcoming). Finally, in adopting a micro-level perspective, the thesis puts a central focus on the 'inner life' and day-to-day enactment of the institutions of political recruitment, building on existing insights in both the feminist and new institutionalist literature (see for example Acker, 1990, 1992; Connell, 1987, 2002; Kenney, 1996; Lovenduski, 1998; Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming; Streeck and Thelen, 2005).

Process tracing is time intensive and requires large amounts of information (Checkel, 2006; George and Bennett, 2005). In the micro-level case study, data was collected through a number of tools, including interviews and document analysis. One advantage of using a multi-method approach is that it allows the researcher to corroborate and check the consistency of accounts and interpretations gained through different forms of data collection. Multiple methods and accounts can also be useful for elaboration; for example, when particular descriptions or accounts from documents are followed up on in interviews (Blaikie, 2000, p. 267). However, in keeping with the discursive and interpretive approach of the thesis, the goal was not to arrive at some sort of original 'truth' or consistent interpretation about particular processes, events, and meanings. Certainly, data may converge, but it may also diverge, generating useful insights and new interpretations (Blaikie 2000: 267; Patton, 2002, p. 559). These multiple conflicting accounts and interpretations are in themselves a part of the 'process', shedding light into the ways in which particular events and meanings are discursively constructed at different times and in different institutional sites.

## **Documents**

Documents are an important source of data in qualitative research. With regards to the Scottish case, a range of formal and informal documents related to the selection process were collected and analysed. These documents were used in two main ways. First, they were used as a source for thick description, setting the context and providing a 'paper trail' of the sequence of events in the candidate selection process. Second, these documents were interpreted and analysed as temporally and historically situated accounts (Atkinson and Coffey, 1997; Hodder, 2002; Prior, 2004). Documents are not simply 'containers of content', they are 'receptacles' of particular norms, meanings, and values and are subject to

ongoing contestation, negotiation, and manipulation (Prior, 2004, pp. 75-76). For example, official party documents such as the Candidates Code of Conduct set out a framework of rules and regulations, providing insights into shared understandings as to how the process *should* be carried out. Meanwhile, candidate job descriptions, applications and person specification forms shed light into the underlying assumptions that shape candidate selection criteria. As the majority of these documents are not in the public domain, access to these documents was negotiated with participants in the selection process. Despite requests, the Scottish Labour Party would not release the official Scottish Executive Committee (SEC) guidelines for parliamentary selections. They did, however, provide the official Candidates Code of Conduct for Scottish parliamentary selections. In addition, the party released the National Executive Committee (NEC) guidelines which outline candidate selection procedures for Westminster elections. Other formal and informal documents – including the selection timetable, candidate applications, candidate campaign materials, minutes of selection meetings, and internal party correspondence – were provided by local party officials, candidate applicants, and party members. In some cases, particular newspaper articles and relevant media accounts were also provided by participants in the process; additional media coverage was collected by the author.

## **Interviews**

While scholars who employ the process-tracing method generally focus primarily on documentary research, interviewing is a particularly useful way of uncovering ‘hidden’ meanings and interpretations (Tansay, 2007). Interviews provide a way to corroborate events or reports gained through document collection. At the same time, interviews can also compensate for both the lack of and limitations of documentary sources. For example, the informal ‘rules of the game’ are unlikely to be written down in official documents (George and Bennett, 2005, pp. 102-103). As Vivien Lowndes (2005, p. 306) argues:

“To unearth the “real” rules that shape...political behaviour (informal as well as formal, invisible as well as visible) we need to talk to...actors themselves. We need to ask them: “how are things done around here?” and “why do you do X but not Y?”

Fifteen interviews were conducted during the course of research, from the period of January 2007 to May 2008 in Edinburgh, Scotland. A snowball sampling approach was employed. Given the closed nature of the candidate selection process, initial contact was made via one of the selection participants, who contacted additional participants to determine whether they would be willing to take part in the study. Once these individuals had agreed to be contacted, an email or letter was sent giving more information about the project as well as a list of broad questions to be raised in the interview. Most contacts were receptive to the project and were willing to be interviewed, although several declined to participate. Most interviews lasted between sixty and ninety minutes, although some were significantly longer. A digital recorder was used for the majority of the interviews; this was checked with all interviewees. Recordings were backed up with hand-written notes. The interview sample included a range of both male and female respondents, consisting of candidate applicants, central and local party officials, party activists, and local party members. All primary data in the thesis is referenced in footnotes, and interviews are identified by number, type of participant, and date.

Interviews were semi-structured; while an interview schedule was used as a reminder of relevant points and topics to bring up during the interview, there was no standard set of questions. The template schedule can be found in Appendix A. The emphasis was on eliciting a narrative from interviewees of their experiences and perceptions of the candidate selection process. As such, the interviews departed from these questions where appropriate, for example, to follow up on particular comments made by the interviewee or to allow the interviewee to raise additional issues not included in the schedule. All recorded interviews were fully transcribed. In the cases where participants declined to be recorded, detailed notes were taken during the interviews.

### ***III: Issues of Validity, Reliability and Generalizability***

The methodological choices of the thesis raise issues of reliability, validity, and generalizability. There is significant debate within the social sciences as to what extent positivist concepts such as validity and reliability can or should be used to assess research conducted with an interpretive approach. While some continue to use positivist terminology,

others often adopt different terms (see for example Bryman, 2008; Erlandson et al, 1993; Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). For example, the concept of internal validity – whether a researcher is measuring what he or she claims to be measuring – is strongly associated with positivist approaches and quantitative methods, presupposing a single and stable account of an objective social reality which can be ‘revealed’ by social scientists (Blaikie, 2000, pp. 247-248; Bryman, 2008, p. 377). This has limited applicability for interpretive approaches which view the social world as constructed in multiple ways. As already highlighted, the intent in the thesis is not to produce some sort of objective ‘truth’ about particular events, processes, or meanings. Rather, the focus is on multiple accounts and interpretations; essentially, the work of a discursive approach is the systematic interpretation of interpretations. As the previous section argued, these interpretations are themselves a part of the ‘process’ and can shed insight into the ways in which particular meanings and events were constructed at particular times and in particular sites.

In keeping with this perspective, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that the emphasis should be on ‘credibility’ rather than validity; in other words, through data collection, analysis and interpretation, the research should remain ‘credible’ or close to the multiple realities and accounts of the phenomenon under study. As the chapter has already outlined, credibility can be achieved through triangulation – in this case, through the use of multiple methods of data collection such as document analysis and interviews. It can also be achieved through what Bryman (2008) calls ‘respondent validation’, submitting research findings to members of the social world under study for confirmation. Throughout the course of the research, I shared results and ideas with key participants, although often in an informal way over email or in person. While more informal than Bryman’s conception of respondent validation, engaging with participants in this way allows the researcher to discuss the research in a more understandable and accessible way.

Meanwhile, the positivist concept of reliability is concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are repeatable. Again, this assumes an objective and unchanging social world in which social research can be replicated in an unproblematic way. Many argue that this assumption is inappropriate for qualitative approaches (Blaikie, 2000, p. 250). However, while replication is difficult to achieve, advocates of qualitative methods point to the need for ‘transparency’ and ‘dependability’ (Bryman, 2008; Erlandson et al, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). All aspects of the research process should be carefully documented – including

problem formulation, selection of research participants, data collection and analysis, and so on - allowing other researchers to judge whether good practice was followed and whether theoretical inferences can be justified (Bryman, 2008).

Finally, there is the question of generalizability. Again, statistical generalization – in which inferences are made about a population on the basis of empirical data collected about a sample – is not necessarily appropriate for case study research (Yin, 1994). Certainly, there are limits to which findings from case studies can be related to other settings. Yet, this does not mean that it is impossible to generalize from a single case study. Rather, case studies make different claims to generalizability. As the aims of the thesis are primarily concerned with theory-building and theory generation, inferences can be made at the theoretical level (see George and Bennett, 2005; Mitchell, 1983; Yin, 1994). As Robert Yin notes:

‘Case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a ‘sample,’ and the investigator’s goal is to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)’ (1994, p. 10).

While many advocates of case study methods are skeptical about the prospects of generating a sort of ‘general theory of politics’, they remain interested in developing at least limited generalizations, arguments that ‘may travel well across different settings’ (Pierson, 2000c, pp. 73-74). As the chapter has already noted, causal processes are often most visible at the level of single case studies (George and Bennett, 2005). The goal of within-case analysis, then, is to identify frequently recurring causal mechanisms: ‘plausible, frequently observed ways in which things happen’ (Elster, 1989, p. viii). These mechanisms, in turn, may have at least ‘limited portability’ in other contexts (Pierson, 2000c, p. 73-74; see also Checkel, 2006; George and Bennett, 2005; Mahoney, 2001). As Jon Elster argues:

‘[T]he social sciences are light years away from the stage at which it will be possible to formulate general-law-like regularities about human behavior. Instead, we should concentrate on specifying small and medium-sized mechanisms for human action and interaction’ (1989, viii).

## ***IV: Ethical Considerations***

Throughout the research process, three factors, in particular, raised ethical issues: my research methods, the focus of the project, and the small scale of the research area. As highlighted above, my research methods are aimed at thick description, seeking to uncover detailed information regarding individual perceptions, interpretations and opinions. These perceptions may touch upon sensitive issues, particularly given the closed and private nature of the candidate selection process. In addition, there are a limited number of Scottish Labour constituency seats, which makes it particularly important to respect the privacy of the individuals in the case study.

As discussed previously, in the case of interviews, information was given to participants in the form of a coversheet (sent either via email or post) introducing myself (as the researcher) and outlining the research project. From an ethical perspective, giving this information is necessary in order to ensure that research participants are aware of any factors that might affect their decision to participate (Kent, 2000). It was agreed with all interviewees that they would not be identified personally and that they should inform me if they did not want a particular comment or piece of information to be used. The guarantee of confidentiality was a key feature for building trust and rapport with my interviewees. Given the small number of Scottish Labour constituency seats, I also anonymized the research location itself, adopting 'City North and Greenside' as the name of the constituency seat. Additional names and locations – such as relevant local authorities, branch Labour parties, or Westminster constituencies - were changed throughout.

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter has introduced the methodology and methods involved in this research. It discussed the methodological implications of integrating feminist gender analysis and new institutional theory and suggested that a discursive methodology provides a useful way to translate the feminist institutional theoretical project into empirical research. It then outlined the methods used, including process tracing, interview, and document analysis. Finally, the

chapter discussed issues of reliability and validity – which it reframed as issues of credibility, transparency, and dependability – as well as issues of generalizability. The chapter concluded with a brief discussion of ethical considerations. The following chapter turns to the empirical work of the thesis, providing a preliminary introduction to the case study – the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland.

## Candidate Selection in Post-Devolution Scotland

The aim of this chapter is to ‘set the scene’, introducing the Scottish case and providing the necessary background needed in order to explain and understand change and reform in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution. Devolution in Scotland brought with it new and unprecedented opportunities for gendered institutional innovation in the candidate selection process. For all of the Scottish political parties, a ‘clean slate’ of candidacies with no incumbents as well as a new, more proportional electoral system opened up possibilities for far-reaching change and reform in selection and recruitment procedures. Yet, while the Scottish Parliament is generally considered to be a success story in terms of levels of women’s representation and the promotion of a new, more gender-balanced politics, the outcome of the recent 2007 Scottish Parliament elections – which resulted in the first drop in the number of women MSPs since the creation of the parliament – suggests that the reality is more complex and points to underlying trends of erosion and decline in the institutions of political recruitment.

The chapter is divided into two sections. First, the chapter reviews the ‘story’ of women’s mobilization in the devolution campaign, focusing in particular on processes of reform in the candidate selection process. It then provides an overview of the Scottish Parliament elections 1999-2007 from the perspective of women’s representation, and revisits the question as to why the numbers of female MSPs ‘matter’. The second section of the chapter provides an analysis of macro-level trends over time in candidate selection and recruitment in Scottish political parties post-devolution. While it is difficult to make strong claims on the basis of three elections, the chapter points to underlying trends of decline in the recruitment and election of female candidates, raising questions as to the success and sustainability of institutional innovation in the political recruitment process post-devolution.



## ***I: Women and the Scottish Parliament***

The establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 offered women unprecedented political opportunity, voice, and access. Of the 129 MSPs elected to the Parliament for the first time in 1999, 48 were women (37.2 per cent) – one of the highest proportions of women parliamentarians in the world<sup>42</sup>. This ‘gender coup’ is all the more dramatic given that both Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom have had a relatively poor record with regards to women’s representation (Mackay et al, 2003, p. 84). To put the results in context, on 6 May 1999, the Scottish Parliament elected more women in one day than had been elected to represent Scotland in the House of Commons since 1918, when women were first eligible to stand for public office (Brown, 2001c, p. 241).

The election of a significant number of women MSPs did not happen by accident, but was instead the result of sustained struggle by a diverse coalition of women’s organizations, grassroots activists, female trade unionists, party women, and gender experts<sup>43</sup> (Brown, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c; Mackay et al, 2003; Mackay, 2006; McDonald et al, 2001). The breakthrough of the ‘electoral project’ by party women and women’s movement activists was enabled by the intersection of multiple paths of reform in the 1980s and 1990s, including party and political modernization, feminization, and broader processes of devolution in Scotland (Mackay, 2006; see also Mackay, 2004b). These reform trajectories were, in turn, set within wider contexts, namely a growing dissatisfaction and frustration with Westminster politics and neo-liberal Thatcherite social and economic policies (Brown, 2001a; Brown et al, 1996; Mackay, 2006; Mackay et al, 2003). The increasing divergence in Scottish and English voting patterns under successive Conservative governments over this period led to a sense of alienation and removal from the Westminster political arena, provoking claims of a ‘democratic deficit’ (Brown, 2001a, p. 205). This ‘Westminster critique’ provided new opportunities for women to integrate gender concerns into wider reform processes – opportunities that had been absent in the earlier constitutional debates of the 1970s (see for example Breitenbach, 1990; Levy, 1992). These women argued that they

---

<sup>42</sup> See Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009. It should, however, be acknowledged that there are differences between ‘national’ and devolved legislatures, making a direct comparison difficult.

faced a 'double democratic deficit': not only where they governed by a party that they did not support and that was staunchly anti-devolution, but, as women, they were excluded from decision-making positions in both Scottish and British political parties and were poorly represented in elected office (Brown, 2001a; Brown et al, 2002; Mackay et al, 2003).

Together, these contexts opened up new institutional, political, and discursive opportunities for women activists to 'engender' mainstream debates and to play a significant role in shaping new political institutions (Mackay et al, 2003, p. 84). Women activists working inside and outside the parties were able to frame their demands within these wider reform trajectories, successfully introducing a gendered perspective to the prospect of a 'new' and distinct Scottish politics. These women also worked through generic reform groups such as the Campaign for a Scottish Parliament (CSP) and the Scottish Constitutional Convention (SCC)<sup>44</sup> and its Women's Issues Group. Much of the debate within the SCC centered on plans for a more proportional electoral system and the need for mechanisms to increase the representation of women; concerns that were reflected in the convention's first report published in 1990, *Towards Scotland's Parliament* and that were ultimately integrated into the incoming Labour government's White Paper on devolution (Brown, 2001b, p. 217). In the report, the Convention noted 'the failure of the British political system to face the issue of women's representation' and committed itself to the 'principle of equal representation' (Scottish Constitutional Convention, 1990, p. 12).

Following the 1992 General Election, the Convention established a Scottish Constitutional Commission. The Commission delivered its report to the SCC in 1994, recommending that MSPs be elected by the Additional Member System (AMS). Under the AMS electoral system, 73 MSPs are elected in constituency seats by first past the post, as in Westminster, and 56 MSPs are elected via regional party lists (seven seats in each of eight regions). While the Commission rejected the adoption of a statutory commitment to gender equality, it recommended a voluntary scheme in which Scottish political parties would be asked to achieve a target of 40% women in the parliament within the first five years, taking into

---

<sup>43</sup> This chapter does not claim to provide an exhaustive account of women's mobilization in the devolution campaign. This 'story' has been extensively detailed elsewhere (see in particular Breitenbach and Mackay, 2001; Brown, 2001a, 2000b).

account both constituency and list seats under the AMS electoral system (Brown, 2001a, 2001b). It also made recommendations for the 'removal of social, economic and other barriers to women's participation' (Brown, 2001b, p. 220).

The Commission's proposals were strongly criticized by 50:50 campaigners who had campaigned long and hard for a 'firm and statutory commitment' to gender equality for the first Scottish Parliament and who correspondingly saw the 40 per cent voluntary target as a 'weak substitute' (Brown, 2001b, p. 220). Following the Commission's report, the Scottish Women's Co-ordination Group – a loose alliance of women's activists - facilitated talks between women within the political parties included in the SCC<sup>45</sup> in an attempt to find an alternative solution to ensuring gender-balanced representation. In the resulting cross-party Electoral Agreement of 1995, both the Scottish Labour Party and the Scottish Liberal Democrats recognized the importance of gender equality and committed to field equal numbers of male and female candidates, although the actual mechanisms for ensuring equal representation were left up to the discretion of each individual party (Brown, 2001a, 2001b).

## **Reforming Candidate Selection and Recruitment**

As highlighted above, devolution brought with it new expectations, opportunities, and problems with regards to the candidate selection process. The AMS electoral system itself required a new approach, opening up possibilities for innovation and change in established selection procedures. Devolution also increased the pressure on Scottish political parties to democratize and decentralize the selection process. The rhetoric of a 'new politics', a more inclusive politics that was distinct from that of Westminster, put 'at least some pressure on all parties to increase the openness of candidacy, to allow greater membership participation in selection and to ensure fairness' (Bradbury et al, 2000a, p. 52). This was particularly important given that there were no incumbents.

---

<sup>44</sup> The Scottish Constitutional Convention was an unofficial body that included representatives from Scottish civic organizations, local government, trade unions, churches, and both the Scottish Labour Party and the Scottish Liberal Democrats (Brown, 2001a, 2000b).

In the run-up to the first elections to the Scottish Parliament in 1999, internal and external pressure was applied to all of the main Scottish political parties with regards to women's representation. All of the parties stated their concern to see more women in politics and their intention to encourage women to come forward for selection (Brown, 2001c; Mackay, 2003, 2004b). In addition, all of the parties improved their recruitment and selection procedures, for example, incorporating equal opportunities considerations in the process (Mackay, 2003, 2004b; Russell et al, 2002). In terms of specific mechanisms to ensure gender-balanced representation, political parties can use a range of measures to increase women's political presence. Joni Lovenduski (2005) separates these strategies into three categories. *Equality rhetoric* is the 'public acceptance of women's claims' (Lovenduski, 2005, p. 90). Equality rhetoric can be found in party platforms and manifestos, speeches, writing, and party political discourse, but stops short of actual policies for change. *Equality promotion*, or positive action, focuses mainly on the supply of women candidates, attempting to bring more women into politics through measures such as special training, financial assistance, setting targets, and other initiatives. *Equality guarantees*, or positive discrimination, address the demand for women politicians, using strategies such as gender quotas to secure places for potential women candidates. These strategies may be voluntary, compulsory, or permissive. Evidence suggests that strong equality guarantee measures are the most likely to result in substantial improvements in women's representation (see for example Caul, 1999, 2001; Dahlerup, 2006a; Russell, 2000), and also that the adoption of quota-type measures by one political party may lead to a 'contagion' effect in which other political parties respond by actively promoting women as well, either through formal or informal measures (Matland and Studlar, 1996).

Of the four main political parties – Scottish Labour, the Scottish National Party (SNP), Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party, and the Scottish Liberal Democrats – only Labour used strong equality guarantees prior to the 1999 elections<sup>45</sup>. Recognizing that, under an AMS electoral system, most of its seats would be obtained through constituencies rather than regional lists, the party instituted a quota-type mechanism called 'twinning' in which constituencies are paired on the basis of 'winnability' and geography. Under this scheme,

---

<sup>45</sup> The Scottish National Party (SNP) did not join the SCC, advocating instead for an independent parliament within Europe. The Conservative Party also did not participate due to its declared opposition to constitutional change.

<sup>46</sup> For additional detail on the specific selection procedures used by each of the main Scottish political parties in the run-up to the 1999 elections, see Bradbury, 2000a, 2000b; Russell et al, 2002.

the female applicant with the highest number of votes would be selected for one of the constituency seats, while the male applicant with the highest number of votes would be selected for the other seat (Brown, 2001c; Bradbury, 2000b; Russell et al, 2002). The party also offered preparation courses for women, which included assertiveness training and public speaking, as well as financial support from the (UK) Emily's List (Brown, 2001c).

Labour's main electoral rival, the SNP, had also debated using strong equality measures in the 1999 elections. A statement of principle supporting gender balance was approved by Party Conference in 1995, and the party leadership had publicly pledged to deliver gender balance at a 50:50 campaign rally in 1996 (McDonald et al, 2001). The gender balance mechanism of 'zipping' – whereby women and men are alternated on party lists – was brought before a Special Conference in 1998, but was ultimately defeated, by a narrow margin of 257 votes for and 282 against (Russell et al, 2002, p. 62). Yet, despite its decision not to use any strong equality measures, the SNP did implement proactive unofficial measures encouraging women to stand for election, for example, holding a women's training day for prospective parliamentary candidates, and also placed women at the upper end of their regional party lists (Brown, 2001c). In addition, like Labour, the SNP used an approved panel of candidates and employed equal opportunities procedures (Bradbury, 2000a; Russell et al, 2002).

While the Scottish Liberal Democrats had signed the Electoral Agreement of 1995, it did not adopt strong equality measures in either constituency or list selections in the run-up to the 1999 elections. It did adopt a 'softer' measure of gender-balanced shortlists, requiring that two men and two women be included on the shortlist in each constituency – a system which, unlike twinning, 'would not guarantee that women were actually selected' (Russell et al, 2002, p. 63). Similar to the other parties, it also adopted a system that included a panel of approved candidates and the application of equal opportunities procedures (Bradbury, 2000a; Russell et al, 2002). However, gender-balanced shortlists were not always achieved, due to the shortage of women applicants in several constituencies (Bradbury, 2000a). A proposal for gender-balanced mechanisms for list selections was put before the Scottish Liberal Democrat party conference in 1998, recommending that in regions where there was an imbalance amongst constituency candidates, a woman would be placed at the top of the regional list. However, the motion was eventually withdrawn in order to avoid a leadership defeat due to insufficient support (Russell et al, 2002, p. 64).

Meanwhile, the Scottish Conservative Party made few changes with regards to their selection process, and did not adopt any mechanisms, either formal or informal, to ensure gender balance. The party did implement panels of approved candidates, which it was already accustomed to doing for Westminster selections (Bradbury et al, 2000a). However, the party remained firmly opposed to the use of positive action mechanisms, on the grounds that their selection process would award positions based on merit rather than special consideration for certain groups<sup>47</sup> (Mackay, 2003). Although some female Conservatives were involved in ‘round table talks’ with other Scottish women’s activists, there is little evidence of ‘any serious internal party debate or lobbying’ on the issue of women’s representation in the run-up to devolution (Russell et al, 2002, p. 65).

### **Scottish Parliament Elections: 1999-2007**

The first elections for the Scottish Parliament were held on 6 May 1999, and, as already highlighted, a record number of female MSPs were elected, 48 out of 129 total MSPs or 37.2 per cent. The majority of the female MSPs elected came through the first-past-the post constituency contests, while the remainder came through the proportional regional list seats, due in large part to Scottish Labour’s implementation of strong equality guarantees in constituency seats as well as the SNP’s use of unofficial measures to promote gender balance. The results of the 1999 Scottish Parliament elections can be seen in Table 6.1.

---

<sup>47</sup> According to a report by Scottish women’s organization Engender, when asked what they were doing to encourage women to come forward as candidates, the Scottish Conservative Party stated ‘we’re waiting for it to evolve and it’s evolving nicely’ (Engender, 1999 cited in Brown, 2001c, p. 242).

**Table 6.1: Scottish Parliament 1999 by party, gender and type of seat**

| Party         | Constituency |           | Total seats constituency<br>(%women) | List      |           | Total Seats List<br>(%women) | Total MSPs | Total women | Total men | % women      |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
|               | female       | male      |                                      | female    | male      |                              |            |             |           |              |
| Labour        | 26           | 27        | 53<br>(49%)                          | 2         | 1         | 3<br>(66.7%)                 | 56         | 28          | 28        | 50%          |
| SNP           | 2            | 5         | 7<br>(28.6%)                         | 13        | 15        | 28<br>(46.4%)                | 35         | 15          | 20        | 42.9%        |
| Cons          | 0            | 0         | 0<br>(0.0%)                          | 3         | 15        | 18<br>(16.7%)                | 18         | 3           | 15        | 16.7%        |
| Lib Dems      | 2            | 10        | 12<br>(16.7%)                        | 0         | 5         | 5<br>(0.0%)                  | 17         | 2           | 15        | 11.8%        |
| Greens        | 0            | 0         | 0<br>(0.0%)                          | 0         | 1         | 1<br>(0.0%)                  | 1          | 0           | 1         | 0.0%         |
| SSP           | 0            | 0         | 0<br>(0.0%)                          | 0         | 1         | 1<br>(0.0%)                  | 1          | 0           | 1         | 0.0%         |
| Independent   | 0            | 1         | 1<br>(0.0%)                          | 0         | 0         | 0<br>(0.0%)                  | 1          | 0           | 1         | 0.0%         |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>29</b>    | <b>44</b> | <b>73<br/>(39.7%)</b>                | <b>18</b> | <b>38</b> | <b>56<br/>(32.1%)</b>        | <b>129</b> | <b>48</b>   | <b>81</b> | <b>37.2%</b> |

*The 2003 Scottish Parliament Elections*

In 2003, contrary to many expectations, a record and higher number of female MSPs were returned to the second parliament. The number of women MSPs rose from 48 (37.2 per cent) in 1999 to 52 (39.5 per cent) in 2003. As in 1999, more women came through the constituency seats rather than through the regional list seats. The results of the 2003 Scottish Parliament elections can be seen in Table 6.2.

**Table 6.2: Scottish Parliament 2003 by party, gender and type of seat**

| Party         | Constituency |           | Total seats constituency<br>(%women) | List      |           | Total Seats List<br>(%women) | Total MSPs | Total women | Total men | % women<br>(%women 1999) |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------|
|               | female       | male      |                                      | female    | male      |                              |            |             |           |                          |
| Labour        | 26           | 20        | 46<br>(56.5%)                        | 2         | 2         | 4<br>(50.0%)                 | 50         | 28          | 22        | 56% (50%)                |
| SNP           | 3            | 6         | 9<br>(33.3%)                         | 6         | 12        | 18<br>(33.3%)                | 27         | 9           | 18        | 33.3% (42.9%)            |
| Cons          | 0            | 3         | 3<br>(0.0%)                          | 4         | 11        | 15<br>(26.7%)                | 18         | 4           | 14        | 22.2% (16.7%)            |
| Lib Dems      | 2            | 11        | 13<br>(18.2%)                        | 0         | 4         | 4<br>(0.0%)                  | 17         | 2           | 15        | 11.8% (11.8%)            |
| Greens        | 0            | 0         | 0<br>(0.0%)                          | 2         | 5         | 7<br>(28.6%)                 | 7          | 2           | 5         | 28.6% (0.00%)            |
| SSP           | 0            | 0         | 0<br>(0.0%)                          | 4         | 2         | 6<br>(66.7%)                 | 6          | 4           | 2         | 66.7% (0.00%)            |
| SSCU          | 0            | 0         | 0<br>(0.0%)                          | 0         | 1         | 1<br>(0.0%)                  | 1          | 0           | 1         | 00.0% (n/a)              |
| Indep         | 1            | 1         | 2<br>(50.0%)                         | 1         | 0         | 1<br>(100%)                  | 3          | 2           | 1         | 66.7% (0.00%)            |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>32</b>    | <b>41</b> | <b>73<br/>(43.8%)</b>                | <b>19</b> | <b>37</b> | <b>56<br/>(33.9%)</b>        | <b>129</b> | <b>51</b>   | <b>78</b> | <b>39.5%<br/>(37.2%)</b> |

Despite the recent passing of UK legislation enabling political parties to use positive mechanisms to increase levels of women’s political representation<sup>48</sup>, only two of the six main political parties used specific equality measures in the 2003 elections, the Scottish Labour Party and the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP). Scottish Labour opted not to re-use the ‘twinning’ system in the 2003 elections, relying instead on the power of incumbency. However, the party intentionally selected women to fill the most winnable places on its candidate lists.

In general, the number of women MSPs had been predicted to fall in the 2003 elections (Mackay, 2003). This was in large part due to the SNP, who did not implement any official or unofficial measures leading up the 2003 elections, nor did it proactively encourage female candidates to run, as it had in 1999. As a result, the SNP was the only Scottish political party to experience a decrease in the number of women MSPs elected, dropping from 43 per

<sup>48</sup> The Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act 2002 allows political parties to take positive measures to increase the numbers of female candidates they select.



cent in 1999 to 33 per cent in 2003<sup>49</sup>. Several other Scottish parties also opted not to use positive action measures. Both the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives took no measures to promote women candidates, and while the Green Party had operated gender balancing mechanisms in the past, it opted not to use any such measures before the 2003 elections (Mackay, 2003). Ultimately, Green Party women headed only two out of the eight regional lists.

Had the 2003 results mirrored those of 1999, there would have been an overall decrease of women MSPs (Mackay, 2003). However, a number of factors led to a slight increase in women MSPs. First, the main parties lost seats overall, with small parties and Independents gaining many of these seats. In particular, Labour's losses primarily affected male incumbents, meaning that the percentage of Labour women MSPs did not decrease overall. Second, the strong performance of small parties benefited women, particularly the SSP, which implemented a policy of gender balance on its lists, resulting in four of the six SSP seats going to women. Finally, two of the three Independent MSPs were women: Jean Turner in the constituency of Strathkelvin and Bearsden, and Margo MacDonald, a former SNP MSP, who won a List seat in the Lothians. Rather than reflecting a systematic or system-wide improvement, then, the gains made in 2003 were achieved 'more by accident than design' (Mackay, 2003, p. 75).

### *The 2007 Scottish Parliament Elections*

There were a number of uncertainties in the lead-up to the 2007 elections. First, opinion polls generally predicted a loss in seats for Scottish Labour, with a predicted gain in seats for the SNP and the Liberal Democrats (e.g. Ipsos MORI, 2006). Second, the fate of one of the key small parties, the SSP, which had performed extremely well in 2003, was uncertain. The SSP won six seats in 2003, four of which went to women, but a party rift in 2006 disrupted the selection process and left all seats vulnerable in the forthcoming election. Two MSPs, including the party's former leader, left the party to form the Solidarity Party, which would

---

<sup>49</sup> All other Scottish political parties had either maintained or increased their percentage of women MSPs between 1999 and 2003 (see Tables 6.1 and 6.2).

also stand candidates for the 2007 elections. It was unclear as to which party, if any, would benefit from the potential fall in the SSP vote.

The results were historic, with the victorious SNP ending over fifty years of Labour dominance of Scottish politics. The SNP made the largest gains from the previous election out of all the Scottish parties, winning 20 seats more than in 2003, successfully taking several of Scottish Labour's 'safe' seats<sup>50</sup>, and ultimately overtaking Scottish Labour (if only by a small margin) on seats (47 to Labour's 46), constituency votes (32.9 per cent to Labour's 32.1 per cent), and list votes (31 per cent to Labour's 29.2 per cent) (Lynch, 2007, p. 51). The SNP's electoral success – due in large part to a significant regional list surge, as well as a strong performance in constituency seats – came at the expense of the small parties, whose support on the regional list virtually collapsed in the 2007 elections. The six SSP/Solidarity MSPs all lost their seats in the Parliament, and neither party received a sufficient share of the regional vote to elect a list candidate. The Scottish Greens performed only slightly better, experiencing a significant drop in their overall vote share (from 7 per cent in 2003 to 4 per cent), losing five of its MSPs elected in 2003, and holding on to just two of its list seats in Edinburgh and Glasgow (Hepburn, 2008; Lynch, 2007). The only independent candidate to be elected was Margo MacDonald, on the Lothians regional list. Table 6.3 provides a breakdown of the 2007 election results by party and type of seat.

---

<sup>50</sup> Including Cunnigham North, Edinburgh East & Musselburgh, Stirling, and Govan.

**Table 6.3: Scottish Parliament 2007 by party and type of seat**

| <b>Party</b>       | <b>Total Seats<br/>Constituency</b> | <b>Total Seats<br/>List</b> | <b>Total MSPs</b> |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Labour</b>      | 37                                  | 9                           | 46                |
| <b>SNP</b>         | 21                                  | 26                          | 47                |
| <b>Cons</b>        | 4                                   | 13                          | 17                |
| <b>Lib Dems</b>    | 11                                  | 5                           | 16                |
| <b>Greens</b>      | 0                                   | 2                           | 2                 |
| <b>Independent</b> | 0                                   | 1                           | 1                 |
| <b>Totals</b>      | <b>73</b>                           | <b>56</b>                   | <b>129</b>        |

While the 2007 elections were remarkable, they also resulted in the first drop in the number of female MSPs since the creation of the parliament in 1999. In the third elections, women took 43 out of 129 seats in Holyrood (33.3 per cent)<sup>51</sup>, compared with 39.5 per cent in the 2003 elections and 37.2 per cent in 1999. Overall the number of female MSPs has dropped from 51 in 2003 to 43, a reduction of eight. Table 6.4 provides a breakdown of the 2007 election results by party, gender, and type of seat.

---

<sup>51</sup> The number of female MSPs has subsequently increased to 45 out of 129 MSPs (34.8 per cent). Shirley-Anne Somerville (SNP) became regional member for the Lothians on 31 August 2007, following the resignation of Stefan Tymkewycz. Meanwhile, Anne McLaughlin became regional member for Glasgow on 9 February 2009, replacing Bashir Ahmad. All figures in this chapter are based on initial election results.

**Table 6.4: Scottish Parliament 2007 by party, gender, and type of seat**

| Party         | Constituency |           | Total seats constituency<br>(%women) | List      |           | Total seats List<br>(%women) | Total MSPs | Total women | Total men | % women<br>(%women 2003) |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------|
|               | female       | male      |                                      | female    | male      |                              |            |             |           |                          |
| <b>Labour</b> | 20           | 17        | 37<br>(54.1%)                        | 3         | 6         | 9<br>(33.3%)                 | 46         | 23          | 23        | <b>50%</b> (56%)         |
| SNP           | 5            | 16        | 21<br>(31.3%)                        | 7         | 19        | 26<br>(26.9%)                | 47         | 12          | 35        | <b>25.5%</b> (33.3%)     |
| Cons          | 0            | 4         | 4<br>(0.0%)                          | 5         | 8         | 13<br>(38.5%)                | 17         | 5           | 12        | <b>29.4%</b> (22.2%)     |
| Lib Dems      | 1            | 10        | 11<br>(9.1%)                         | 1         | 4         | 5<br>(20%)                   | 16         | 2           | 14        | <b>12.5%</b> (11.8%)     |
| Greens        | 0            | 0         | 0<br>(0.0%)                          | 0         | 2         | 2<br>(0.0%)                  | 2          | 0           | 2         | <b>0.0%</b> (28.6%)      |
| Independent   | 0            | 0         | 0<br>(0.0%)                          | 1         | 0         | 1<br>(100%)                  | 1          | 1           | 0         | <b>100%</b> (66.7%)      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>26</b>    | <b>47</b> | <b>73</b><br><b>(35.6%)</b>          | <b>17</b> | <b>39</b> | <b>56</b><br><b>(30.4%)</b>  | <b>129</b> | <b>43</b>   | <b>86</b> | <b>33.3%</b> (39.5%)     |

While this decline is significant, it has received little comment in either the Scottish media or in the corresponding academic literature<sup>52</sup>. This stands in stark contrast to 1999, when, as discussed above, women's representation formed a 'defining theme' of the first elections to the Scottish Parliament (Mackay, 2003, p. 74). Why does the reduction in the number of women MSPs 'matter'? As previous chapters highlighted, increases in women's political presence often bring with them a set of expectations, namely that these women politicians will both 'stand for' and 'act for' women, resulting in institutional change and transformation (see for example Childs, 2004; Lovenduski, 2005; Mackay, 2006, 2008; Mackay et al, 2003). The arguments for gender parity in 'descriptive representation' were well-rehearsed in the run-up to devolution and the belief that female politicians would 'make a difference' was instrumental in mobilizing women in the devolution campaign (Brown, 2001a, 2000b; Mackay et al, 2003; Mackay, 2003, 2006; Mackay and Kenny, 2007). The Scottish Parliament was perceived by many women activists to offer the opportunity for a different political culture, one that would be 'less adversarial and male-dominated and would

<sup>52</sup> While some recent analyses of the election results briefly address the decline in women's representation (e.g. Herbert et al, 2007), others make no mention of the issue (see for example, Denver, 2007; Hepburn, 2008).

incorporate the values and concerns of women' (Mackay et al, 2003; see also Brown, 2001b).

Although by no means straightforward, studies of the first years of the Scottish Parliament have demonstrated that the high numbers of women MSPs has shaped both political priorities and 'ways of working' (see Mackay et al, 2003; Mackay, 2006). In particular, there has been substantial progress on action to tackle domestic violence, an agenda that was driven largely by women politicians and women's organizations (Mackay et al, 2003; Mackay, 2006). It is important not to overplay these developments - legacies from Westminster such as partisan politics and adversarial political styles continue to exert a substantial 'pull' on the Scottish Parliament (Mackay, 2006). However, there is evidence that the increased and visible presence of women MSPs has contributed to a more 'feminized' politics, with some concrete policy outcomes (Mackay et al, 2003; Mackay, 2006).

As such, the significant drop in women MSPs has potentially far-reaching implications. The question, then, is whether this fall signals a temporary setback or whether it points to a return to 'politics as usual', signalling an 'inexorable drift back to the pre-devolution norm of male dominance and female marginalization in Scottish politics' (Mackay and Kenny, 2007, p. 81). The following section offers some initial insights into this question, providing an analysis of political recruitment trends in Scottish political parties over time. It suggests that the elections of 1999 and 2003 may come to be seen as the 'high tide'<sup>53</sup> of women's representation in post-devolution Scotland, highlighting underlying gendered patterns of political recruitment that point in the direction of further decline.

## ***II: Gender and Political Recruitment: Trends Over Time***

As Table 6.4 shows, 43 women and 86 men make up the 2007 Scottish Parliament. Women comprise 12 of 47 SNP MSPs (25.5 per cent), 23 of 46 Labour MSPs (50 per cent), five out of 17 Conservatives (29.4 per cent), and two out of 16 Liberal Democrats (12.5 per cent).

---

<sup>53</sup> See Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998.

The two Green MSPs elected are both male and the one Independent returned is a woman. For the first time, a minority ethnic MSP was elected, a male<sup>54</sup>. As in 1999 and 2003, a higher proportion of women MSPs was elected in constituency seats (26 women or 35.6 per cent) than on the regional lists (17 women or 30.5 per cent). This has now been a consistent trend across three elections<sup>55</sup> and can be explained as a continuing effect of Scottish Labour's 'twinning' scheme used in 1999 (Mackay and Kenny, 2007). Over half of the total female MSPs elected in 2007 belong to Scottish Labour (23 of 43 women, or 53.5 per cent), the majority of who were first elected in 1999 under the twinning scheme.

To put each respective party's performance on women's representation in context, the percentage of Labour and SNP women MSPs both fell in 2007 (by six per cent and 7.8 per cent respectively), while the percentage of Conservative and Liberal Democrat women MSPs rose (by 7.2 per cent and 0.7 respectively). Figure 6.1 charts the performance of the four main political parties on women's representation over time. The high point in women's representation to date has been Scottish Labour at 56 per cent (in 2003), while the worst record on women's representation has consistently been the Liberal Democrats at 11.8 per cent (in 1999 and 2003, rising to just 12.5 per cent in 2007). When compared to its primary rival, the SNP, Scottish Labour party performance on women's representation was closely matched by the SNP in 1999 (50 per cent to 42.9 per cent), but, since then, Labour has been at least 20 points ahead of its main competitor. The decline in SNP women MSPs over time is particularly dramatic, and establishes the SNP as the only major Scottish political party to experience an overall decrease in the percentage of women MSPs over two subsequent elections, dropping from 42.9 per cent women MSPs in 1999 to 33.3 per cent in 2003, and finally to 25.5 per cent in 2007. While the general trend among Scottish political parties seems to be one of stasis or decline in the number of women elected, both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats have experienced small increases in the percentage of women overall. However, in numerical terms, the increase in Conservative women MSPs has been relatively small, moving from three women (in 1999), to four women (in 2003)<sup>56</sup>,

---

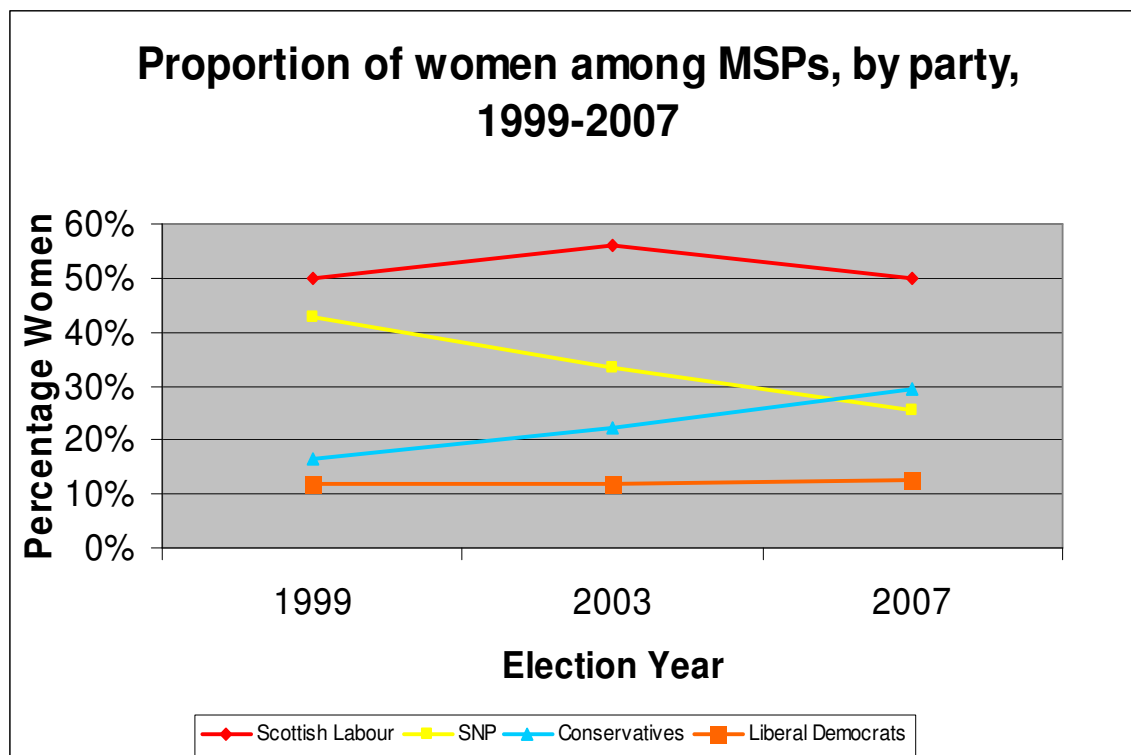
<sup>54</sup> Bashir Ahmad MSP (SNP) died in February 2009, and was replaced by Anne McLaughlin.

<sup>55</sup> Although it should be noted that fewer women were returned to constituency seats in 2007 than in either 1999 or 2003.

<sup>56</sup> This number dropped back to three women by the end of the 2003-2007 Scottish Parliament, as Mary Scanlon, the Conservative list MSP for the Highlands and Islands, resigned in 2006 to contest the Moray by-election (which she lost to Richard Lochhead of the SNP). She was replaced by David Petrie.

and finally to five women (in 2007). The Liberal Democrats have maintained the same number of women MSPs as in 1999 and 2003, but lost a seat overall in 2007.

**Figure 6.1: Proportion of women among MSPs, by party, 1999-2007**



### Candidate Selection: 1999-2007

Turning to candidate selection, in the run up to the 2007 elections, women comprised 32.7 per cent of candidates standing for constituency contests and 38.6 per cent of list candidates. In total, women were 36.1 per cent of candidates overall (including Labour, SNP, Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, Greens and SSP/Solidarity). This translated into 33.3 per cent of seats, meaning that women candidates were slightly less likely to be elected than their male counterparts. The percentage of women candidates in 2007 represents a slight increase from previous elections, but has translated into fewer seats for women overall. In 1999, women were 30.1 per cent of candidates overall, which translated into 37.2 per cent of seats. And in 2003, women were 31.7 per cent of candidates, which translated into 39.5 per

cent per cent of seats. Table 6.5 provides breakdowns of candidate selection figures for 2007 by gender, type of seat, and party.

**Table 6.5: Scottish Parliament 2007 candidates by party, gender and type of seat**

| Party         | Constituency |            | Total Candidates<br>Constituency<br>(% women) | List       |            | Total Seats<br>List<br>(% women) |
|---------------|--------------|------------|---|------------|------------|----------------------------------|
|               | Female       | Male       |   | Female     | Male       |                                  |
| Labour        | 32           | 41         | 73 (43.8%)                                    | 25         | 30         | 55 (45.5%)                       |
| SNP           | 24           | 49         | 73 (32.9%)                                    | 21         | 49         | 70 (30%)                         |
| Conservatives | 18           | 55         | 73 (24.6%)                                    | 16         | 44         | 60 (26.6%)                       |
| Lib Dems      | 22           | 51         | 73 (30.1%)                                    | 23         | 35         | 58 (39.7%)                       |
| Green Party   | 0            | 1          | 1 (0.0%)                                      | 22         | 28         | 50 (44%)                         |
| SSP           | 0            | 1          | 1 (0.0%)                                      | 25         | 28         | 53 (47.2%)                       |
| Solidarity    | 0            | 0          | 0 (0.0%)                                      | 24         | 34         | 58 (41.4%)                       |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>96</b>    | <b>198</b> | <b>294 (32.7%)</b>                            | <b>156</b> | <b>248</b> | <b>404 (38.6%)</b>               |

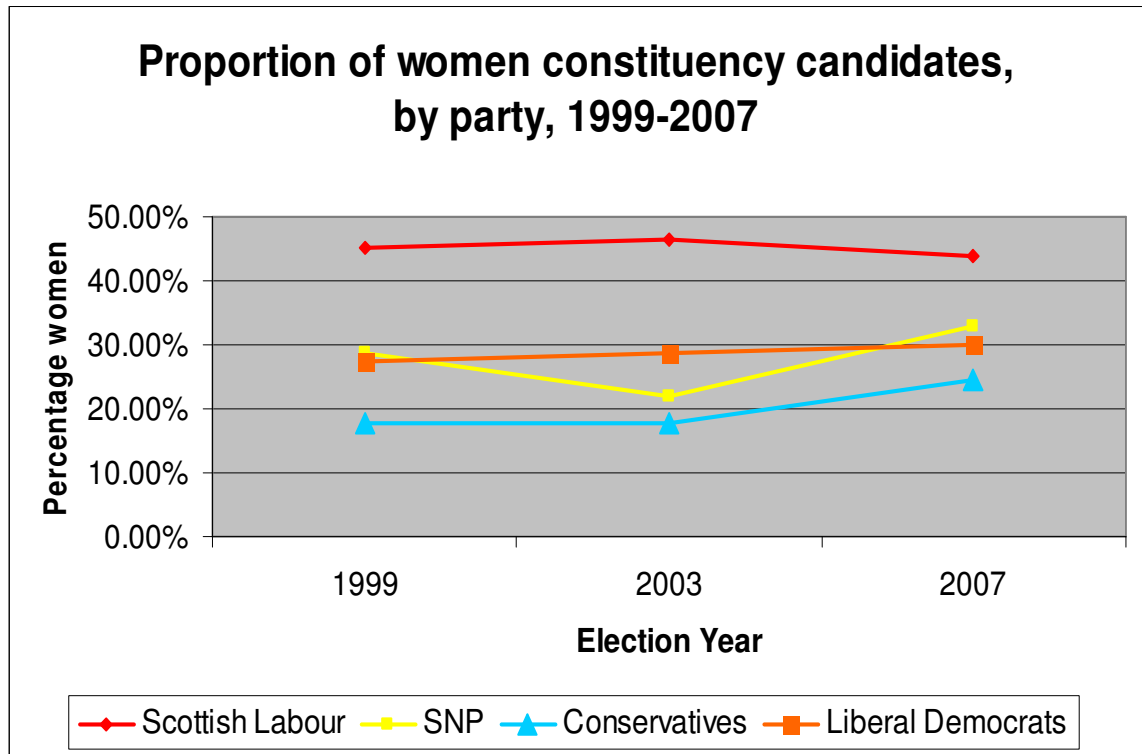
Looking first at constituency seats: Scottish Labour ran 32 women and 41 men in the 73 constituency contests in 2007 (43.8 per cent), as compared to 34 women constituency candidates in 2003 (46.6 per cent) and 33 women constituency candidates in 1999 (45.2 per cent). The SNP ran 24 women constituency candidates in 2007 (32.9 per cent), as compared to 16 women constituency candidates in 2003 (21.9 per cent) and 21 women constituency candidates in 1999 (28.8 per cent). The Conservatives ran 18 women constituency candidates in 2007 (24.6 per cent), as compared to 13 women constituency candidates in both 1999 and 2003 (17.8 per cent). And the Liberal Democrats ran 22 women constituency candidates in 2007 (30.1 per cent), as compared to 21 women constituency candidates in 2003 (28.8 per cent) and 20 women constituency candidates in 1999 (27.4 per cent). Figure 6.2 charts the performance of the four major parties<sup>57</sup> on numbers of women constituency candidates over time.

---

<sup>57</sup> Neither the Scottish Green Party or SSP/Solidarity stood candidates in constituency seats in 2007.



**Figure 6.2: Proportion of women constituency candidates, by party, 1999-2007**

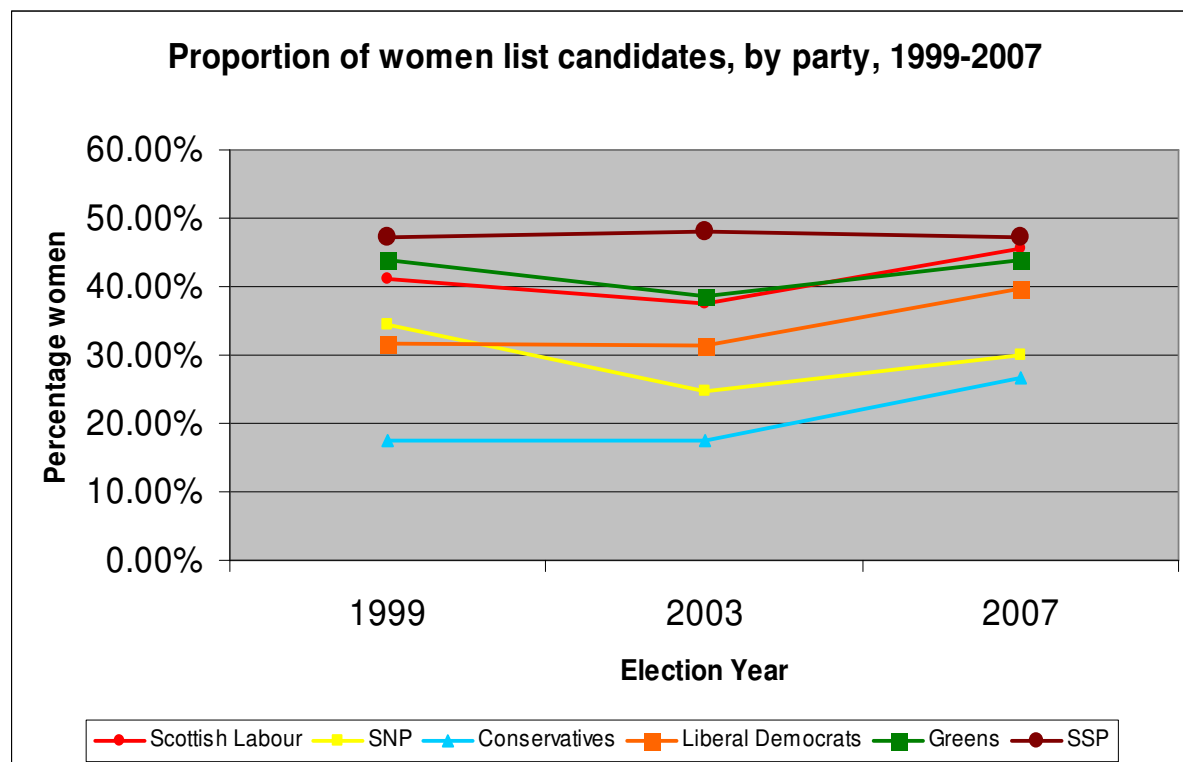


Moving on to the List contests: Scottish Labour ran 25 women and 30 men on the regional lists in 2007 (45.5 per cent), as compared to 21 women in 2003 (37.5 per cent) and 23 women in 1999 (41.1 per cent)<sup>58</sup>. The SNP stood 21 women and 49 men (30 per cent), as compared to 19 women in 2003 (24.7 per cent) and 33 candidates in 1999 (34.4 per cent). The Conservatives ran 16 women and 44 men (26.6 per cent), as compared to 12 women in 2003 (17.4 per cent) and 13 women in 1999 (17.6 per cent). The Liberal Democrats lists comprised 23 women and 35 men (39.7 per cent), as compared to 21 women in 2003 (31.3 per cent) and 26 women in 1999 (31.7 per cent). The Scottish Green Party ran 22 women and 28 men in 2007 (44 per cent). It also ran 22 women in 1999 and 2003, but ran larger numbers of male candidates in the 2003 elections (in which women were 38.6 of Green party list candidates). The SSP stood 25 women and 28 men in 2007 (47.2 per cent). It ran the same numbers of male and female candidates in 1999, and in 2003, the SSP ran 37 women and 40 men (48.1 per cent). The Solidarity Party, a new party in 2007, ran 24 women and 34

<sup>58</sup> The overall number of candidates on a party's regional lists often varies by election. For example, the SNP ran 96 candidates on the regional lists in 1999, but only 77 candidates on the regional lists in 2003.

men on the regional lists (41.4 per cent). Figure 6.3 charts the performance of the six main parties<sup>59</sup> on numbers of women candidates on the regional lists over time.

**Figure 6.3: Proportion of women list candidates, by party, 1999-2007**



Figures 6.2 and 6.3 highlight a wide range of performance amongst the different parties in the period 1999 to 2007. Scottish Labour has repeatedly selected a large proportion of female candidates, and at least 40 per cent of its candidate places in both constituency seats and on the regional list have been consistently filled by women. The Scottish Green Party has also maintained high numbers of women on the regional list, while the SSP has overtaken Scottish Labour on gender balance, nearly reaching parity on the lists (48.1 per cent in 2003). The SNP is the only party to see a major decrease in the number of women candidates in an election cycle, dropping from 21 women constituency candidates in 1999 to 16 in 2003 (from 28.8 per cent to 21.9 per cent) and dropping from 33 women list candidates to 19 women in 2003 (from 34.4 per cent to 24.7 per cent). In 2007, the SNP saw a substantial increase in the number of its women candidates overall - from 23.3 per cent

<sup>59</sup> The Solidarity Party is not included, as it split off from the SSP prior to the 2007 elections.

women candidates overall in 2003 to 31.5 per cent women candidates in 2007 – which marks a return to its 1999 levels of women candidates. However, this has not translated into an increased number of seats for women candidates. Similarly, the Liberal Democrats continue to perform relatively well on numbers of women constituency and list candidates, ranging around 30 per cent, but have the worst record of any of the parties on women’s representation with only two women MSPs overall, a number that they have consistently maintained over three elections. Finally, the Conservatives have seen a modest increase in 2007 in the number and percentage of women candidates, jumping from 13 women constituency candidates in 1999 and 2003 to 18 women in 2007 (from 17.8 per cent to 24.6 per cent), and from 12 women list candidates in 1999 to 16 in 2007 (from 17.4 per cent to 26.6 per cent).

Therefore, while women were perhaps slightly less successful as candidates overall in the 2007 elections, the evidence once this is disaggregated by party suggests that this may have less to do with women as candidates, and more to do with the seats or positions on the list in which women candidates are placed. Studies of women candidates in the United Kingdom repeatedly demonstrate that women do not receive an electoral penalty when running for office<sup>60</sup> and that the selection process for parliamentary candidates is still the major factor explaining why so few women prospective candidates are elected (see for example Norris et al, 1992; Rasmussen, 1983; Studlar and Welch, 1993; Welch and Studlar, 1996). The success of prospective women candidates then, depends not just on being selected, but on being selected for ‘winnable’ seats – in the Scottish case, winnable positions either in constituencies or on the regional list. The issue of winnability will be discussed further in the following section.

## **Party Measures to Improve Women’s Representation**

Research evidence in Scotland and elsewhere highlights the structural barriers that constrain prospective women candidates (Brown, 2001a, 2001b; Chapman, 1993; Lovenduski and Norris, 1989; Randall, 1987; Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski, 2002). As the previous

---

<sup>60</sup> As do studies elsewhere, for example in the United States (Burrell, 1994; Darcy et al, 1994; Fox and Oxley, 2001; Palmer and Simon, 2001; Seltzer et al, 1997).

section highlighted, political parties can use a range of measures to counter these barriers and to increase women's political presence, including equality rhetoric, equality promotion, and equality guarantees (see Lovenduski, 2005). In terms of equality rhetoric, none of the main Scottish parties, apart from the Greens, explicitly stated in their campaign material that women's representation was an issue that they were addressing in their candidate procedures in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections. In a press release distributed on International Women's Day, Shiona Baird MSP, the Green Party's co-leader and speaker on equality representation, explicitly challenged the lack of attention to women's representation by the main parties:

'Greens are the only one of the top five parties in Scotland to guarantee equality in our ranks...let's hear what the other parties are doing to get more women into Scottish politics – I hope they are offering more than just rhetoric'<sup>61</sup>.

The issue of women's representation does not appear to have retained high salience for Scottish political parties post-1999, nor has it remained a prominent feature of inter-party competition. In the 2007 elections, party manifestos rarely referred to either women or gender equality<sup>62</sup>. Explicit references to women were generally confined to health policy issues, where the focus was predominantly on 'mothers'. Scottish Labour also mentioned women in their manifesto section on 'Building Safer Communities', pledging to review and strengthen current enforcement measures to tackle violence against women. Both the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party also made reference to issues of women and employment, while Scottish Labour and the Greens pledged to address the long standing gender pay gap in public sector organizations. All of the parties – with the exception of the Scottish Conservatives – included an equality section in their manifestos. The Liberal Democrat manifesto had a distinct section on gender equality, while the Greens referred to gender equality repeatedly in the 'Equality and Diversity' section of their manifesto. The SNP manifesto referred to gender equality only once, while the Scottish Labour manifesto made

---

<sup>61</sup> Scottish Green Party (2007) 'Women's Day: Greens Challenge Other Parties on Gender Equality', Press Release, 8 March 2007.

<sup>62</sup> Scottish Labour Party (2007) *Building Scotland*. Glasgow: Scottish Labour Party; Scottish Liberal Democrats (2007) *We Think Scotland Has a Bright Future*. Edinburgh: Scottish Liberal Democrats; Scottish National Party (2007) *Manifesto 2007*. Edinburgh: Scottish National Party; Scottish Conservatives (2007) *Scottish Conservative Manifesto: Scottish Parliament Election 2007*. Edinburgh: Scottish Conservatives; Scottish Green Party (2007) *2007 Manifesto: A Manifesto for Green Government*. Edinburgh: Scottish Green Party.

no mention of gender equality (but did make reference to equality and race, disability, sexual orientation, and religion).

In the wider press coverage of the election, almost all of the parties – again with the exception of the Conservatives – publicly unveiled specific policy plans directed at women<sup>63</sup>. In most cases, the press releases coincided with International Women’s Day. However, as mentioned earlier, only the Green Party made explicit reference to women’s representation. There was also significant press coverage of the importance of women’s votes in the election, particularly for the SNP, as polling analysis indicated that support for the SNP among women was significantly lower than their support among men<sup>64</sup>. The SNP made direct efforts to specifically target voters, toning down the independence rhetoric in favour of more ‘female-friendly’ words (tested in focus groups) such as ‘progress’<sup>65</sup>. The SNP also promoted a higher profile for Nicola Sturgeon, the deputy Scottish party leader, in an effort to appeal to women. For example, Sturgeon and former SNP MSP Winnie Ewing, along with other female SNP candidates, made a direct and public appeal to female voters a month before the election, pledging to introduce affordable childcare and flexible working patterns for parents<sup>66</sup>. In addition, the Scottish Liberal Democrats also specifically targeted women voters, highlighting the fact that the Liberal Democrats poll higher among women and young people than the other parties<sup>67</sup>. However, even in cases where women voters were specifically targeted, there was no appeal by any of the parties - with the exception of the Greens - in terms of women’s representation.

---

<sup>63</sup> Scottish National Party (2007) ‘It’s Time to Make a Real Difference for Women’, Press Release, 7 April 2007; Scottish Liberal Democrats (2007) ‘Stephen launches key policies for women’, Press Release, 9 March 2007; Scottish Labour Party (2007) ‘Scottish Labour commits to offering free vaccination against cervical cancer to all young women’, Press Release, 8 March 2007; Scottish Green Party (2007) ‘Women’s Day: Greens Challenge Other Parties on Gender Equality’, Press Release, 8 March 2007.

<sup>64</sup> For relevant news coverage, see for example Barnes, D. (2007) ‘Mrs Labour Lite’, *Scotland on Sunday*, 8 April; Barnes, D. and M. MacLeod (2007) ‘Women voters key to Holyrood Victory’, *Scotland on Sunday*, 27 April.

<sup>65</sup> Barnes, D. and M. MacLeod (2007) ‘Women voters key to Holyrood Victory’, *Scotland on Sunday*, 27 April.

<sup>66</sup> Scottish National Party (2007) ‘It’s Time to Make a Real Difference for Women’, Press Release, 7 April 2007.

<sup>67</sup> Nicol Stephen (2007) Conference Speech to Scottish Liberal Democrat Conference, February 17 2007.

In terms of equality promotion and equality guarantees, most of the parties did little to actively promote women's representation, and none of the parties implemented strong equality guarantees. While both Scottish Labour and the Greens implemented quota-type mechanisms on the regional lists, these mechanisms did not prevent women candidates from being placed in unfavourable positions. In addition, both Scottish Labour and the Liberal Democrats used 'softer measures' in the form of gender-balanced shortlists in constituency selections.

### *Constituency seats*

None of the parties used strong equality measures such as all women shortlists or twinning in the selection of constituency candidates in 2007. Both Scottish Labour and the Liberal Democrats have 'softer' mechanisms in place, in the form of official short listing policies to promote gender balance. For the Liberal Democrats, shortlists should include at least one male and one female. For Scottish Labour, shortlists must include an equal number of men and women. These policies do not appear to be strictly or uniformly enforced by either party in the 2007 elections, nor do these types of measures guarantee equality of outcome (Mackay and Kenny, 2007).

Overall, women candidates were also generally less likely to 'inherit' constituency seats – that is, to be selected to stand in constituency seats held by their own party in the previous election. Evidence suggests that inheritors generally have a good chance of being elected (see Norris and Lovenduski, 1995). In the 2003 Scottish Parliament elections, for example, two inheritors were selected, both of whom were successfully elected. In the Labour party in 2007, four sitting MSPs stood down before the 2007 elections – three women and one man. In the resulting Labour Party selection contests for these seats, one woman and three men were selected. For the Liberal Democrats, the former party leader, Jim Wallace stood down and was replaced by another man, Liam McArthur. And for the SNP, the former Presiding Officer George Reid stood down and was replaced by another man, Keith Brown.

Women were also less likely to be selected to fight 'winnable' constituency seats. Thirteen constituency seats were considered to be 'very marginal' in the 2007 elections – that is, they

were held by a vote percentage majority of less than 5 per cent - and seven of those thirteen marginal seats were held by women (53.8 per cent). In the majority of these seats, the 'runner-up party' – the party with the second highest tally of votes in the constituency in the 2003 elections – selected a male candidate to contest the election (in nine out of thirteen seats, or 69.2 per cent). When this is disaggregated by party, the disparity between male and women candidates is even clearer. In each of the four main Scottish parties – Labour, SNP, Conservatives, and the Liberal Democrats – only four seats total out of each party's top five most winnable ('target') seats were contested by women (four out of 20 seats overall, or 20 per cent).

### *Regional List seats*

In the selection of regional list candidates, women were again generally placed in poor positions. In a typical election, it is often the first and second place on each list that are most likely to be won. This has to do with the relationship between district magnitude, the number of seats per district, and party magnitude, the number of seats that a party expects to win in a given election (see for example Matland, 1993; Matland and Studlar, 1996). As the Scottish AMS electoral system employs closed regional lists – seven seats in each of eight regions for a total of 56 regional list seats - parties can only expect to win a limited number of list seats in a given region. In this type of election scenario, intra-party competition for slots at the top of the list can become 'zero-sum games', similar to those fought in single-member districts (Matland, 1993; see also Matland, 2006). Table 6.6 offers a breakdown of the 'top two' list places in 2007 by gender and party.

**Table 6.6: Scottish Parliament 2007 list candidates by gender, party, and list placement**

| Party         | List       |            | Total Seats List<br>(% women) | Candidates in 'Top Two' List Places |           | Total 'Top Two' List Places<br>(% women) |
|---------------|------------|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--|
|               | Female     | Male       |                               | Female                              | Male      |  |
| Labour        | 25         | 30         | 55 (45.5%)                    | 8                                   | 8         | 16 (50.0%)                               |
| SNP           | 21         | 49         | 70 (30%)                      | 3                                   | 13        | 16 (18.8%)                               |
| Conservatives | 16         | 44         | 60 (26.6%)                    | 6                                   | 10        | 16 (37.5%)                               |
| Lib Dems      | 23         | 35         | 58 (39.7%)                    | 2                                   | 14        | 16 (12.5%)                               |
| Green Party   | 22         | 28         | 50 (44%)                      | 7                                   | 9         | 16 (43.8%)                               |
| SSP           | 25         | 28         | 53 (47.2%)                    | 8                                   | 8         | 16 (50.0%)                               |
| Solidarity    | 24         | 34         | 58 (41.4%)                    | 6                                   | 10        | 16 (37.5%)                               |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>156</b> | <b>248</b> | <b>404 (38.6%)</b>            | <b>40</b>                           | <b>72</b> | <b>112 (35.7%)</b>                       |

Only two parties applied gender balance mechanisms to the lists, increasing the possibility that women would be placed in winnable positions. Scottish Labour implemented an official policy of 'zipping', alternating between men and women candidates. However, in 2007, only the South of Scotland regional list was topped by a woman. Labour men were ranked first in seven of the eight regional lists, with women ranked in second place in seven of the eight regional lists. It should also be noted that relatively few Labour members are returned by the list and, in most cases, the first placed candidate is the only one likely to be selected. Meanwhile, the Greens operated a 'gender template', allocating 40 per cent of list places overall to female candidates. The Party stated that these places would be distributed so as to ensure that female candidates occupied 50 per cent of 'winnable' seats<sup>68</sup>. However, five of the eight regional lists were topped by men, and four of the regional lists had men in second place. Ultimately, after the collapse of the small party vote on the regional lists, only two Green MSPs were elected, both of them men.

The remaining parties implemented no gender equality measures on the lists in the run-up to the 2007 elections. Around a third of all places on the SNP regional list went to women, and women made up nearly a third of the top three places on the regional list. Again, however, it is the first and second place on each list that are most likely to be won. In the case of the

---

<sup>68</sup> Scottish Green Party (2006) 'Greens Unveil Top Candidates for Holyrood Election', Press Release, 4 September 2006.



SNP: six of the eight regional lists were topped by men, and seven of the eight regional lists also had men in second place. Only three of the top 16 (first and second) slots were allotted to women (18.7 per cent). The Liberal Democrats, as mentioned previously, generally placed women in poor positions: only two of their top 16 places were given to women (12.5 per cent). The Scottish Conservatives also took no positive action measures in the lead-up to the 2007 elections. It should be noted, however, that the party at the UK level under the leadership of David Cameron has strongly encouraged reform of party recruitment processes to increase the number of women and ethnic minority MPs<sup>69</sup>. Overall, the Conservatives fared slightly better, with six of the top 16 list places going to women (37.5 per cent). All five of the successful female Conservative candidates came from the lists: Annabel Goldie, Margaret Mitchell and Mary Scanlon were all placed first on their respective lists while the remaining two women were placed second.

### *Scottish Labour: A Class Apart?*

Both the 2003 and 2007 election results demonstrate the continuing effects of Scottish Labour's use of equality guarantees in 1999. Labour has consistently maintained a strong gender balance, ranging from 50 per cent women in 1999, to 56 per cent women in 2003, and finally back to 50 per cent women in 2007. Over half of the female MSPs returned to the Scottish Parliament in 2007 belong to the Labour party, the majority of whom were first elected in constituency seats in 1999 under the since-abandoned 'twinning' scheme. Labour is the only party with a higher proportion of women representing constituencies than elected from regional lists: of the twenty-three Labour women returned to office in 2007, twenty are constituency women MSPs.

Despite the success of the 'twinning' mechanisms in 1999, Labour has been increasingly reluctant to implement any further equality guarantees, relying instead on the power of

---

<sup>69</sup> While Holyrood selections for the Conservative party are distinct from those of Westminster, Cameron has informally promoted women's representation in Scotland. For example, Cameron attended a women's event at the Scottish Conservative Conference in March 2007, hosted by the women2win campaign, which was aimed at encouraging more Scottish women into Conservative politics.

incumbency to retain gender balance in constituency seats<sup>70</sup>. Most Labour women incumbents have successfully defended their seats election-upon-election, rather than having to compete for a place on the party lists, as do most of their counterparts. However, while Labour continues to perform well on gender balance, patterns of turn-over within the party suggest that there has been a re-masculinization of Labour candidacies (Mackay and Kenny, 2007). For example, of the seven Labour MSPs elected for the first time in 2007, only one was a woman. If we then include those Labour MSPs returning to the Parliament after a term away, only two out of nine new Labour MSPs were female. The following section evaluates trends of both incumbency and legislative turnover from 1999-2007.

## Gender and Incumbency Trends

Low turnover rates and male incumbency advantage have long been recognized as one of the main barriers to increasing numbers of women in politics (see for example Burrell, 1994; Carroll, 1994; Darcy et al, 1994; Duerst-Lahti, 1998; Palmer and Simon, 2001; Studlar and McAllister, 1991). The majority of the literature on incumbency effects and legislative turnover has been largely confined to the United States<sup>71</sup>, where increases in incumbency advantage and consequent decreases in legislative turnover are well documented, and where return rates for incumbents are consistently above 90 per cent, significantly limiting the political opportunities for formerly excluded groups (see for example Ansolabehere and Snyder, 2002; Swain et al, 2000). The assumption in the literature on gender and incumbency is that women have a difficult time winning seats not necessarily because they are women, but because of incumbency, and most incumbents are men. Once elected, politicians acquire a number of advantages – for example, name recognition or wider access to campaign funds – and as a result, are virtually assured of re-election (Herrnson, 1998; Jacobson, 1997). For this reason, much of the attention in the American literature has focused on ‘open seats’ as a key opportunity for increasing the number of women in

---

<sup>70</sup> Although they have implemented gender-balance mechanisms on the regional list, as discussed previously.

<sup>71</sup> Perhaps the only other country where legislative turnover is a major topic of academic research is Canada, where, unlike the United States, the focus has been on explaining relatively high levels of turnover at both the national and provincial level (e.g. Laponce, 1994; Moncrief, 1998).

politics<sup>72</sup> (Bernstein, 1997; Burrell, 1992; Gaddie and Bullock, 1995; Green, 1998; Herrick, 1995; Hoffman et al, 2001).

The British literature has understood incumbency in a different sense. As elections are dominated by parties and party leaders, the impact of individual candidates is seen to be negligible<sup>73</sup>. However, in a party-dominated system where the overwhelming majority of constituency seats are 'safe' for one party or another, incumbent MPs stand a very good chance of being re-elected. For example, 92 per cent of incumbents were re-elected in the 1992 UK General Election (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995). As such, the incumbency advantage in the United Kingdom works against prospective female candidates in two ways: they are less likely to be incumbents (as the majority of incumbents are male), and even if seats fall vacant, these will not necessarily go to women candidates, as women are often less likely to be placed in 'winnable' or formerly 'safe' seats (see for example Campbell and Lovenduski, 2005; Evans, 2008; Lovenduski, 2005).

The Scottish case, then, offers an interesting perspective on incumbency and legislative turnover. As the previous section highlighted, Scottish election results point to the lasting power of female incumbency – particularly with regards to the Scottish Labour Party - in maintaining the Scottish Parliament's high levels of female representation (Mackay and Kenny, 2007). The Scottish case also provides an opportunity to look systematically at the performance of female incumbents, an area which has been somewhat overlooked in the literature on gender and incumbency (see Palmer and Simon, 2005). The following section provides an analysis of turnover and incumbency trends from 1999-2007 in both constituency seats and also on the regional lists.

### *Incumbency and Legislative Turnover in Constituency Seats*

---

<sup>72</sup> In particular, much has been written on 1992 US Congressional elections – referred to as the 'Year of the Woman' - the results of which have been attributed to the large number of open seats in that election (see for example Burrell, 1994; Carroll, 1994; Duerst-Lahti, 1998).

<sup>73</sup> While there is some evidence of a 'personal vote' in British elections, suggesting that constituency-oriented MPs can enhance their vote, producing a 'personal' incumbency effect in the American sense (Cain et al, 1987; Carey and Shugart, 1995; Norris, 2004; Norton, 1994a, 1994b; Norton and Wood, 1990, 1993), others find decidedly mixed evidence of whether such a personal incumbency advantage exists (see for example Gaines, 1998; Searing, 1994).

Norris and Lovenduski (1995) distinguish between three different types of constituency seat candidacies which can be applied to the Scottish case:

- *Incumbents* are MSPs elected in the previous election who are standing for the same seat, and for the same party, in the subsequent election.
- *Inheritors* are candidates selected for an open seat previously held by their own party, where the previous MSP has retired.
- *Challengers* are candidates fighting a seat held by another party. This group can be sub-divided into: *high prospect challengers*, who are fighting marginal seats (with a majority of less than 10 per cent) in which their party was in second place in the previous election; and *low prospect challengers*, who are fighting non-marginal seats.

Each type of candidate faces different chances of winning. Incumbents are extremely likely to be returned to office, and the results of the 2003 and the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections confirm this general trend. 90 per cent of constituency seat incumbents were returned to the Scottish Parliament in 2003 (the first elections to deal with incumbency) and 82 per cent of these incumbents were returned in 2007. Inheritors also have a good chance of winning. In 2003, both of the inheritors who stood for office were elected, while in 2007, four of the six inheritors were elected (66.7 per cent).

In the 2007 elections, women made up 96 of the 292 constituency candidates put forward by the four main political parties (32.9 per cent)<sup>74</sup>. Female MSPs were 28 of the 67 constituency seat incumbents<sup>75</sup> (41.8 per cent). Female incumbent MSPs were slightly more likely to hold on to their seats than male incumbent MSPs; 23 of the 28 female incumbent MSPs were elected (82.1 per cent), while 31 of the 29 male incumbent MSPs were elected (79.5 per cent). This compares to the 2003 elections, in which female MSPs were 30 of the 71 constituency seat incumbents (42.3 per cent). In the May 2003 elections, 29 of the 30

---

<sup>74</sup> This figure does not include the two Independent MSPs.

<sup>75</sup> This figure includes Jean Turner, the Independent MSP for Strathkelvin and Bearsden, first elected in 2003.

female incumbent MSPs were re-elected (96.7 per cent), while 35 of the 41 male incumbent MSPs<sup>76</sup> were re-elected (85.4 per cent).

Analysis of gendered patterns of incumbency in the 2003 and 2007 elections continues to demonstrate the continuing effect of Scottish Labour's use of equality guarantees in the initial elections to the Scottish Parliament in 1999. As already mentioned, in both the 2003 and 2007 elections, a higher proportion of women MSPs were elected in constituency seats, rather than the regional lists. Of the 32 women elected in constituency seats in 2003, 26 were Labour women MSPs. 25 of these 26 Labour women were incumbents from the previous election (the remaining MSP inherited a seat from a retiring male MSP). Of the 26 women elected in constituency seats in 2007, 20 were Labour women MSPs, all of whom were first selected in 1999 under Labour's twinning scheme. Analysis also suggests a 'gender dividend' for women incumbents, as Labour women incumbents have been slightly more likely to hold on to their constituency seats than male incumbents, a trend that has been consistent over two elections (see Mackay and Kenny, 2007).

Recent research on gender and political participation in both the United Kingdom (Norris et al, 2004) and the United States (Burns et al, 2001; Palmer and Simon, 2005) suggests that there may be gendered differences between male and female incumbent campaigns. Norris, Lovenduski, and Campbell (2004) find that women's turnout was higher (by approximately 4 per cent) than men's turnout in seats where a woman MP was elected<sup>77</sup>. Women were also more active in campaigns and volunteer work in seats where a female MP was elected. Similarly, Burns, Schlozman, and Verba (2001) find that women seeking or holding elected office in American politics have an impact upon the political participation of women at the mass level, boosting women's political interest, knowledge of candidates, and sense of political efficacy. Meanwhile, Palmer and Simon (2005) find that female incumbents in the United States have a 'hidden influence', in that they increase the participation of female candidates in their own party as well as the opposition party. More work needs to be done, then, to investigate the link between gender and incumbency in Scottish constituency contests.

---

<sup>76</sup> This figure includes Dennis Canavan, the Independent MSP for Falkirk West, first elected in 1999.

However, while incumbency in constituency seats continues to have a significant impact on the number of women MSPs in the Scottish Parliament, the underlying pattern trend in the selection and recruitment of female candidates is one of erosion and decline. In 2007, women were less likely to 'inherit' constituency seats previously held by their own party. While inheritors typically have a very good chance of winning their seats, only one of the six inheritors selected in 2007 was female. Of these six inheritors, four were successfully elected, all of whom were men. This compares to the 2003 elections, when two inheritors were selected, both of whom were successful in winning their seats, and one of whom was a woman. Women were also less likely to be high-prospect challengers in 2007, in other words, to be selected to challenge marginal seats. Where parties have done better than expected on numbers of women elected, then, it has generally been the case that a strong party performance has meant that low-prospect female challengers have been successful, rather than that parties have actively promoted female candidates.

Over half of the women selected in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections were low-prospect challengers (58 women or 59.8 per cent of female constituency candidates overall). In terms of high-prospect challengers, ten of 24 high-prospect challengers were female (41.7 per cent). Of these 24 high-prospect challengers, five were successfully elected, one of which was a woman. This distribution is similar to the 2003 elections, in which women made up 84 of the 292 constituency candidates put forward by the four main political parties (28.8 per cent). Over half of these women were low-prospect challengers, that is, candidates selected to challenge non-marginal seats (48 women or 57.1 per cent of female constituency candidates overall). While low-prospect challengers are generally unsuccessful, high-prospect challengers have a higher chance of being elected, as they are selected to challenge marginal seats (that is, seats with a majority of less than 10 per cent). In 2003, six of 19 high-prospect challengers were female (31.6 per cent). Of these 19 high-prospect challengers, five were successfully elected, one of which was a woman.

In the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections, fifteen constituency seats changed party hands. Of those fifteen seats, nine of the original incumbents/inheritors were men, while six were women (40 per cent). Of the fifteen successful challengers for those seats (the majority of whom were low-prospect challengers from the SNP), only three were women (20 per cent).

---

<sup>77</sup> There was no significant gender gap for seats where a male MP was elected.

To compare this to the previous election, seven seats changed party hands in 2003. Of these seven seats, six of the original incumbents/inheritors were men, while one was a woman. Of the seven successful challengers for those seats (the majority of whom were high-prospect challengers from the SNP and the Conservatives), two were women.

### *Incumbency and Legislative Turnover on the Regional Lists*

Numerous studies find that proportional representation systems tend to have lower levels of incumbency and higher levels of legislative turnover than majoritarian systems, increasing the likelihood that more women will be elected (Darcy et al, 1994; Matland and Studlar, 2004; Norris, 2004; Welch and Studlar, 1996). However, incumbency can also have a strong influence on list selection (see for example Boston et al, 1998). Top list places are often dominated by sitting parliamentarians, meaning that an increase in the number of female parliamentarians elected through the list depends both on their placement on the list and on the number of list parliamentarians elected overall for their party.

In the SNP, who gain more seats through the lists than through constituency seats, sitting MSPs dominate the top list places. Of the SNP's top twenty-four list places in the 2003 Scottish Parliament elections – that is, the top three places on each of the eight regional lists - eighteen were held by sitting MSPs (75 per cent). Six of these eighteen sitting MSPs were female (33.3 per cent). The remaining six non-incumbent SNP candidates – that is, candidates who had never been elected to the Scottish Parliament - on the top twenty-four places on the regional lists were all male<sup>78</sup>. In 2007, eighteen of the top twenty-four list places were held by sitting MSPs (75 per cent), and again six of these eighteen sitting MSPs were female (33.3 per cent). If we include those candidates returning to the list after a term away from the Scottish Parliament, twenty-one of the top twenty-four list places in 2007 were held by former MSPs (87.5 per cent). Again, only six of these former MSPs were women (28.6 per cent). The three non-incumbent SNP candidates on the top twenty-four places on the regional lists were all male.

In the Conservative Party, who also win most of their seats through the regional lists, approximately half of their top twenty-four list places are taken by sitting MSPs. In 2003, thirteen of the top twenty-four list places were held by sitting MSPs (54.2 per cent), and two of these thirteen sitting MSPs were women (15.4 per cent). Of the eleven non-incumbent Conservative MSPs on the top twenty-four list places in 2003, four were women (36.4 per cent). In 2007, twelve of the top twenty-four list places were held by sitting MSPs, and four of these twelve sitting MSPs were women<sup>79</sup> (33.3 per cent). Of the twelve non-incumbent Conservative candidates in the top twenty-four places on the regional lists, four were women (33.3 per cent).

Incumbents also dominate the majority of regional list MSPs elected for the Conservatives and the SNP. In 2003, eleven of the fifteen Conservative regional list MSPs elected were sitting MSPs from the previous election (73.3 per cent). Of the four regional list MSPs elected for the first time to the Scottish Parliament, two were women. In 2007, nine of the thirteen Conservative regional list MSPs elected were sitting MSPs from the previous election (69.2 per cent). Of these nine sitting MSPs, four were women (44.4 per cent). Of the four regional list MSPs elected for the first time to the Scottish Parliament in 2007, one was a woman. For the SNP in 2003, thirteen of the eighteen regional list MSPs elected were sitting MSPs from the previous election (72.2 per cent). Six of these sitting MSPs were women (46.2 per cent). Of the SNP regional list MSPs elected for the first time in 2003, all five were men. In 2007, only nine of the twenty-six regional list MSPs elected were sitting MSPs from the previous election (34.6 per cent). Five of these nine sitting MSPs were women (55.5 per cent). If we include those candidates returning to the list after a term away from the Scottish Parliament, eleven of the twenty-six regional list MSPs elected were former MSPs (42.6 per cent). Again, five of these former MSPs were women (45.5 per cent). Of the fifteen regional list MSPs elected for the first time in 2007, two were women (13.3 per cent).

Scottish Labour and the Liberal Democrats, who receive the majority of their seats through constituencies, have considerably less of an incumbency dominance on list selection overall.

---

<sup>78</sup> While these candidates were not incumbents in the sense that they were not sitting MSPs, this does not mean that they had not stood on the list in a previous election.



However, incumbents continue to make up a majority of the regional list MSPs elected for both of these parties. In 2003, two of the four Labour list MSPs elected were sitting MSPs from the previous election, one of which was a woman. Of the two 'Labour regional list MSPs elected for the first time in 2003, one was a woman. In 2007, three of the eight Labour list MSPs elected were sitting MSPs from the previous election (37.5 per cent). If we include those candidates returning to the list after a term away from the Scottish Parliament, five of the eight Labour list MSPs elected were former MSPs (62.5 per cent) and two of these former MSPs were women. Of the three 'new' Labour regional list MSPs elected for the first time in 2007, one was a woman. For the Liberal Democrats in 2003, all four of the list MSPs elected were sitting MSPs from the previous election and all four were men. In 2007, two out of five list MSPs elected were sitting MSPs from the previous election, both of which were men. Of the three Liberal Democrat regional list MSPs elected to the Scottish Parliament for the first time in 2007, one was a woman.

This analysis of incumbency and turnover patterns on the regional lists reflects, to some degree, similar trends of incumbency and turnover in constituency seats. Incumbency has a strong influence on list selection for the Scottish Parliament, particular for those parties such as the SNP and the Conservatives who gain more seats through the lists than through constituency seats. For all of the parties, incumbents continue to make up a majority of the regional list MSPs elected. However, incumbency dominance on the list obscures underlying patterns of gendered turnover on the list. This trend is particularly pronounced in the case of the SNP. While around a third of the sitting MSPs placed in the SNP's top list places in 2003 and 2007 were women, the non-incumbent candidates in the top places on the list have all been men. In terms of SNP regional list MSPs elected for the first time to the Scottish Parliament, all five of the 'new' SNP list MSPs elected in 2003 were men. In 2007, of the fifteen regional list SNP MSPs elected for the first time to the Scottish Parliament, only two were women.

While this trend is less pronounced for the other parties, this gendered pattern of turnover can also be discerned as a wider trend for Scottish Parliament candidates as a whole. Overall, when combining both constituency and list results for all of the Scottish parties, the 'new'

---

<sup>79</sup> This number includes Mary Scanlon, who was elected as a list MSP to the Scottish Parliament in 2003, but stood down to contest the Moray by-election in 2006.

MSPs elected in both the 2003 and 2007 elections – that is, constituency and list MSPs who had been elected for the first time to the Scottish Parliament – were predominantly male. In 2003, ten out of the 26 MSPs elected for the first time to the Scottish Parliament were female (38.4 per cent). In 2007, this number dropped to six new female MSPs, out of a total of 35 new MSPs elected for the first time to the Scottish Parliament (17.1 per cent). When these numbers are expanded to include those MSPs returning to the Scottish Parliament in 2007 after a term away, only eight of the 43 ‘new’ MSPs were female (18.6 per cent).

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter set out to introduce the Scottish case. It began with a brief overview of the ‘story’ of women’s mobilization in the devolution campaign, focusing in particular on processes of reform and innovation in the candidate selection process in the run-up to the first elections to the Scottish Parliament 1999. It then reviewed the results of the Scottish Parliament elections 1999-2007. The chapter suggested that the significant drop in the number of female MSPs following the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections has potentially far-reaching implications, raising questions as to the success and sustainability of reform and innovation in the candidate selection process post-devolution.

The second section of the chapter provided an analysis of gendered patterns of political recruitment in Scottish political parties over time, examining several factors which have contributed to the overall downturn in women’s representation. While it is difficult to make strong claims on the basis of three elections, the chapter argued that these underlying trends point to further decline in the recruitment and election of female candidates. The general pattern among Scottish political parties has been one of either stasis or decrease in the number of women candidates – as in the case of the Liberal Democrats and the SNP respectively – or significant percentage increases on the basis of small numerical increases, as in the case of the Conservatives. The chapter also reveals clear gendered patterns of candidate recruitment and placement in the 2007 elections, as well as underlying patterns of gendered turnover. Certainly, the results of the 2007 elections reinforce claims made elsewhere that progress since 1999 has been brought about more through luck than

intentional design, and that gender parity has been poorly institutionalized within parties (Mackay, 2003; Mackay, 2006; Mackay and Kenny, 2007).

It remains to be seen as to whether the results of the 2007 elections represent a temporary drop in the number of women in the Scottish Parliament, or whether they in fact mark the failure of efforts to promote a more gender-balanced politics and a return to 'politics as usual', as the one-off effects of positive action and equality guarantees in the first parliament continue to wane in the absence of continuing reforms (Mackay and Kenny, 2007, p. 81). Labour's use of the twinning scheme in 1999 continues to have a significant impact on headline figures. However, it is incumbency rather than the institutionalization of gender balance that accounts for Labour's consistently strong performance, whilst the underlying pattern of turn-over suggests a re-masculinization of Labour candidacies. The following three chapters explore these patterns in more detail, providing an in-depth analysis of the candidate selection process within the Scottish Labour Party.

## Breaking With the Past? Paths of Institutional Reform in the Labour Party

This chapter turns from a focus on macro-level trends of candidate recruitment and selection over time to an in-depth analysis of the candidate selection process within the Scottish Labour Party. As discussed in the previous chapter, Labour has consistently maintained a strong gender balance in its parliamentary group, ranging from 50 per cent women in 1999, to 56 per cent women in 2003, and finally back to 50 per cent in 2007. Following the 2007 elections, the party elected its first female party leader<sup>80</sup>. As of 2003, women were 42 per cent of party members, a record number<sup>81</sup> (Mackay, 2004b). And as of 2008, over half of the members of the Scottish Executive Committee are women (nineteen out of thirty-four seats, or 55.8 per cent).

The female face of Scottish Labour continues to serve as a powerful and visible symbol of a ‘remarkable process of transformation’ within the Labour Party over several decades (Mackay, 2004b, p. 104). The changes that have taken place within the Labour Party at both the UK and Scottish level from the early 1980s onwards represent a ‘significant break with the past’ (Russell, 2005, p. 10). Yet, one of the striking features of the Labour Party is the resiliency of core institutional elements even in the face of far-reaching reforms. With regards to candidate recruitment and selection, evidence from the Scottish case suggests that substantial innovations have been made in the candidate selection process, but also highlights significant continuities as well as underlying trends of erosion and decline within

---

<sup>80</sup> Scottish Labour leader Wendy Alexander announced her resignation on June 28, 2008 following a decision from the Scottish Parliament’s standards committee that she had broken donation rules during her leadership campaign. The current leader of the Scottish Labour Party is Iain Gray MSP.

<sup>81</sup> Current membership figures are difficult to gauge as the party no longer releases a total membership figure in its annual report to the Scottish conference, possibly due to an overall decline in Labour party membership.

the Labour Party. While in many ways, then, the party has been transformed, in other respects, it is little changed.

The aim of the chapter is to assess and evaluate paths of institutional reform in the Labour Party over time, situating the specific case of institutional innovation and (re) design of the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland within a historical background of party reform processes at the UK level. The Scottish Labour Party has limited autonomy from the center, and therefore, reform at the Scottish level cannot be separated from related trajectories within the British-wide party<sup>82</sup>. At the same time, developments surrounding women's representation in Scotland cannot be separated from the wider devolution campaign (Mackay, 2004b). The chapter argues that while the Scottish case offers a distinctive example of innovation in the institutions of political recruitment, it is situated within multiple interlocking 'paths' of reform, opening up some possibilities for change while closing off others. It suggests that the reform of the candidate selection process in Scottish Labour post-devolution is an open-ended and ongoing process, one that is subject to frequent renegotiation, conflict and contestation and that is shaped and constrained by past decisions and institutional legacies as well as the interplay and interaction between different, and sometimes competing, paths of reform.

### ***I: The Modernization and Feminization of the Labour Party***

In the case of the Labour Party, there are a 'number of stories to tell, all closely interconnected' (Mackay, 2004b, p. 110). The following section traces two interlinked paths of reform in the British Labour Party over time – identifying twin trajectories of modernization and feminization - and argues that reform in the Labour Party has been a lengthy process of negotiation, conflict, and contestation. As Meg Russell (2005) notes: 'Most of the reforms, like so much else about "new" Labour, had enjoyed a long gestation. Some had been discussed ever since the first decades of the party's existence' (p. 3).

---

<sup>82</sup> Following Hassan (2002), I make the distinction between 'Scottish Labour' and 'British Labour'. While I acknowledge that the latter term is perhaps a contested one, I use it to describe the 'over-arching sense of the party to which Scottish and Welsh Labour, as well as Labour in England, contribute' (Hassan, 2002, p. 157).

Understanding the significance of these institutional reforms, then, requires a longer time frame. In the case of the Labour Party, strategic choices made in the early years of the party set the scene for future coalitions, conflicts, and dynamics that would begin to consolidate different reform trajectories.

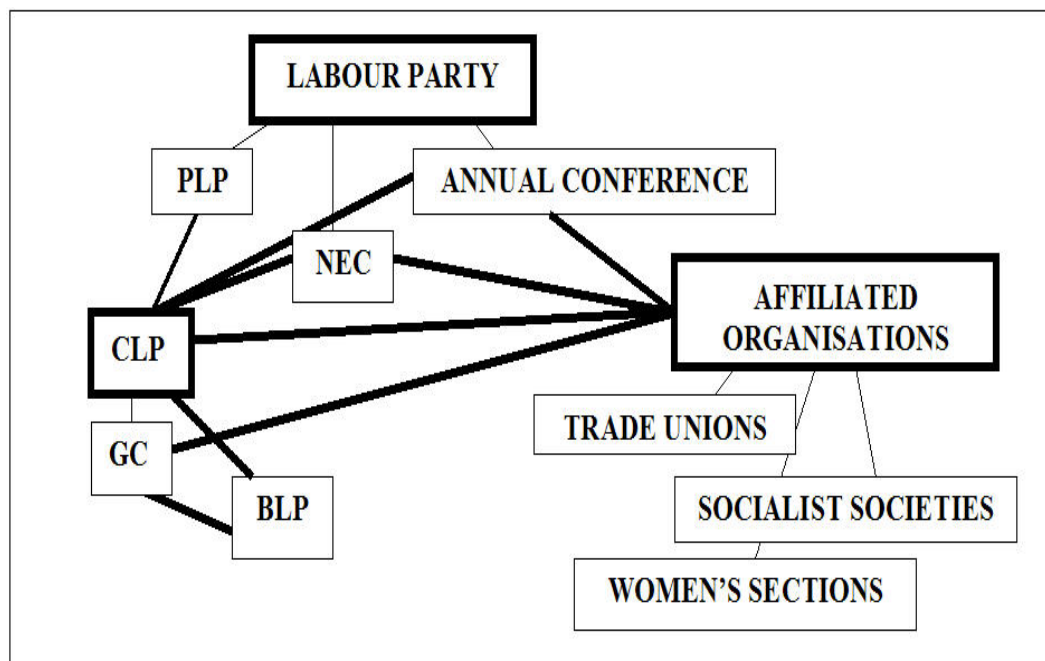
## **Setting the Context for Reform: Party Organization Before New Labour**

For the Labour Party, the crucial starting point on the path to reform was the 1918 party constitution, which allowed individuals to join the party for the first time, and also established formal representation for local Labour parties. Unlike the Conservative and Liberal parties, the British Labour Party began as an extra-parliamentary body. Prior to 1918, the party had no individual membership, consisting instead of a partnership between affiliated organizations – such as trade unions, the Independent Labour Party (ILP) or the Fabian Society - with each group represented via seats at an annual conference and on an executive committee (Russell, 2005).

Following the 1918 reforms, local Labour parties were organized at both the constituency level, referred to as Constituency Labour Party (CLPs), and through smaller Branch Labour Parties (BLPs), both of which had elected officers and regular meetings. The central unit of decision-making for local parties was to be the CLP General Committee (GC), which was made up of elected delegates from branches, local women's sections, and affiliated organizations, including trade unions and socialist societies<sup>83</sup>. While the CLP GC was given decision-making power over a number of key areas - including, most importantly, candidate selection - these decisions were made within the framework of rules set down by the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Central Party. CLPs were represented through a small number of seats on the NEC, and were also represented at the Central Party's core decision-making body, the annual conference, through elected delegates. From the beginning, the MPs making up the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) were directly responsible for electing the party leader. However, on policy matters, the PLP was subordinate to the annual conference, thus theoretically leaving primary control in the hands

of the extra-parliamentary party (Russell, 2005). The party organizational structure of the Labour Party as set out in the 1918 constitution can be seen in Figure 7.1.

**Figure 7.1: Labour Party Organizational Structure (1918)**



Despite the establishment of new representational channels for local parties as well as the formal subordination of the PLP within the party structure, the 1918 changes in Labour’s organization ‘did little to empower ordinary members’ (Russell, 2005, p. 12). Instead, the 1918 constitution helped to consolidate and strengthen the powerful positions of key actors and groups within the party. Organizational affiliates continued to dominate party decision-making post-1918, excluding both party activists and local Labour parties. Trade unions played a particularly dominant role, providing the majority of party funds, holding up to 90 per cent of the votes at the annual conference, controlling most of the seats on the NEC, and dominating many local party GCs. The 1918 constitution, then, served in part as a way to strengthen an existing political coalition between the trade unions and the party leadership, in which there was a general understanding that ‘the former would set the terms on industrial

<sup>83</sup> Until the 1980s, these structures were referred to as General Management Committees (GMCs), and still are referred to as such in several CLPs (Russell, 2005).

policy, giving the latter significant freedom on other matters' (Russell, 2005, p. 13; see also Minkin 1980, 1992; Reid, 2000).

The 1918 constitution also functioned as a way to minimize the influence of 'extremist' grassroots party members, 'apparently creating a full party democracy whilst excluding them from effective power' (Crossman, 1963, pp. 41-42). Therefore, while the 1918 constitution presented the appearance of reform, in reality, little had changed:

'Whatever the role granted in theory to the extra-parliamentary wings of the parties, in practice final authority rests...with the parliamentary party and its leadership. In this fundamental respect the distribution of power within the two major parties is the same' (McKenzie, 1963, p. 635).

This balance of power frustrated those party actors who had been relegated to the periphery, particularly left-wing party activists, whose strength in local Labour parties was not reflected on the party's primary decision-making bodies (Russell, 2005). These actors became important sources of pressure for institutional change within the Labour Party, playing a key role in internal debates over party democracy and organizational reform. Central to these debates was the question of how candidates and leaders should be selected.

## **Modernizing Candidate and Leadership Selection**

Pressure for reform of candidate and leadership selection came from numerous individual and institutional actors on both the left and right wings of the party. While all sides shared a common goal – greater democracy within the party – there was considerable contestation over how to achieve this goal. Initial efforts at reform from the late 1970s onwards were led by activists on the party's left, co-ordinated by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CPLD). The CPLD was an 'emphatically grassroots organization', in contrast to other left-wing groups such as the Tribune Group, which organized amongst MPs<sup>84</sup> (Russell 2005, p. 16). For the CPLD, the objective was to gain greater power for activists in the constituencies and the trade unions, giving the extra-parliamentary party the '*defacto* authority' over the

---

<sup>84</sup> For a detailed account of the CPLD's early years, see Kogan and Kogan (1982).



PLP that, in theory, it already had (Russell, 2005, p. 14; emphasis in original). The key to achieving this objective, then, was to increase local party control over the selection process.

While the CPLD generally supported a radical policy agenda, it strategically framed its demands in a non-ideological way, arguing that ‘policy demands reached by annual conference should be binding on the Parliamentary Labour Party’ (CLPD newsletter, cited in Russell, 2005, p. 17). Given the current distribution of power in the party, however, this reform ultimately benefited the party’s left, which had gradually taken control of the NEC. Crucially, the CLPD was able to mobilise not only local constituency parties, but also left-wing trade union activists, which was essential for success given the balance of power in the party. With the support of the increasingly left-leaning NEC and the backing of key trade unions, the CPLD was able to push through several initial reforms between 1979 and 1981, including the adoption of mandatory re-selection of MPs and the establishment of a new ‘electoral college’ system for choosing the party leader. Both reforms were intended to increase the accountability of the PLP and its leader to the wider party, particularly the CLPs. In doing so, they conferred additional power to the trade unions through the electoral college system and handed greater control over both constituency and leadership selections to constituency activists.

### *Alternative Coalitions for Reform*

The success of the CPLD triggered new tensions and political contests within the Labour party, particularly around the issue of candidate and leadership selection. Following the CPLD reforms of 1979-81, new voices and actors – particularly moderates and right-wingers – fundamentally recast the debate over party reform, in part as an effort to ‘rebalance the gains of the left’ (Russell, 2005, p. 15). Like the CPLD, then, the aim was to pursue ‘organizational objectives in order to secure political advantage’ (Russell, 2005, p. 20). Central to these objectives was the campaign for ‘one member one vote’ (OMOV), which was seen as a way to limit the influence of left-wing party activists, extending voting rights to all local members who were generally more moderate (Driver and Martell, 1998; Scarrow, 1996).

While the primary objective for moderates and right wingers within the party was to stabilise the balance of power within the party, the results of the 1983 general election – in which Labour hit its ‘electoral low point’, winning just 28 per cent of the vote – shifted the priorities of key party actors and groups (Russell, 2005, p. 23). From this point onwards, the number one priority for the party leadership, moderates, right-wingers, and those on the ‘soft left’ was to regain the party’s electoral popularity. Organizational reform and modernisation were seen as central to achieving this objective, restoring the balance between parliamentary and extra-parliamentary bodies and providing a means of demonstrating to voters that ‘the party had changed’ (Russell, 2005, p. 23; see also Gould, 1998). Party reform, then, had become a central priority not just for internal party pressure groups, but also for the party leadership for the first time.

Again, the issue of candidate and leadership selection was absolutely central to debates over party reform. Reform of the selection process would ultimately culminate in the adoption of OMOV in 1993, a symbolic turning point on the path to ‘New’ Labour which was presented by party modernizers as a ‘fundamental shift in the party’s democracy’ (Russell, 2005, p. 34). The long and drawn-out campaign for OMOV centered around two key objectives: first, to reduce the power of party activists and, second, to renegotiate the relationship with trade unions. The ultimate outcome of this trajectory of modernization within the party, then, was to shift power away from both party activists and trade unions, ‘simultaneously downwards towards party members and upwards towards the national leadership’ (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, p. 53).

As discussed above, Labour activists were generally perceived to be ‘out of step’ with the wider electorate, and were seen to be more left-wing in their political views than ordinary party members (Russell, 2005, p. 24; see also Gould, 1998; Seyd and Whiteley, 1992). Yet while many factions within the party were prepared to support the leadership in the move to disempower party activists, the introduction of OMOV would also curb trade union influence in local selection decisions. Reforming the trade union relationship was seen by party modernizers as a visible symbol that the party had changed, and an important step towards regaining the trust and support of the electorate. However, the trade unions remained one of the most important power blocks in negotiating reforms, and, as such, were a formidable obstacle to the introduction of OMOV. Ultimately, the party leadership was able to overcome this significant obstacle by strategically linking OMOV with a set of other reform

proposals, most notably the introduction of all-women shortlists (AWS), which were generally supported by the trade unions. The coupling of these two proposals into a combined package represented a key turning point in the overall trajectory of reform within the Labour Party. The chapter returns to this issue in the next section.

## **Feminizing the Labour Party**

One of the most significant changes to Labour's organization has been the transformation in levels of women's representation within the party over time. This transformation is all the more remarkable given the traditional inhospitability of the British Labour Party to feminist concerns (Lovenduski, 2005). While women have historically played an active role in the Labour movement, the Labour Party is traditionally male-dominated, structured around the model of the Labour activist, the 'male unionised industrial worker' (Perrigo, 1995, p. 408; see also Lovenduski, 1996). As discussed previously, while the original 1918 rule changes provided women with a constitutional position in the party, the party structure continued to be dominated by trade unions, which were overwhelmingly male. In addition, despite the establishment of women's sections in 1918, these sections essentially functioned as 'institutionalized separate spheres' (Lovenduski, 2005, p. 108). They did not have direct powers of decision-making, nor were they directly represented on the party's decision-making bodies (Perrigo, 1996).

As with party modernization, the initial push for change came from the party's left. The constitutional reforms of 1979-81 had left the party in crisis, and several prominent members of the party had left to establish a new party, the Social Democratic Party (SDP). The traditional coalition between the parliamentary leadership and the trade unions was beginning to deteriorate, and the party was increasingly characterized by 'organizational instability and ideological polarisation' (Perrigo, 1996, p. 120). Yet, at the same time, the party's shift to the left attracted feminist and socialist women to join the party in increasing numbers<sup>85</sup> (Lovenduski, 2005; Perrigo, 1996; Russell, 2005; Wainwright, 1987). Alarmed by the policies of a Thatcher government, these women saw possibilities for the

---

<sup>85</sup> This internal crisis also opened up new spaces for race equality activists who, like women's activists, were motivated to join the party in growing numbers from the early eighties onwards 'because change was in the air' (Wainwright, 1987, p. 188).

‘development of a party which would take feminism seriously’ (Perrigo, 1996, p. 120). The Labour Party’s internal crisis, then, opened up new spaces in which to achieve these goals.

In 1980, the CPLD established a Women’s Action Committee (WAC) which quickly became a ‘magnet’ for feminist women in the party (Russell, 2005, p. 97). The increased activity of WAC and other internal party women’s organizations had some tangible initial results, most notably in the draft programme ‘Labour’s Programme 1982’, which contained a number of pledges and commitments aimed directly at women (Perrigo 1996). Yet despite the apparent opportunities created by ongoing reform campaigns in the party, women were actually disadvantaged by the constitutional reforms of 1979-1981 (Lovenduski, 2005, p. 110; Perrigo 1996). In terms of the mandatory reselection of MPs, only eight MPs had been deselected between 1979 and 1983, and only one woman, Clare Short, had been selected as a replacement. Meanwhile the new electoral college system for selecting party leaders strengthened the power of the trade unions, which were, at the time, ‘opposed to the demands of women’ (Perrigo, 1996, p. 122).

While the CPLD had relied on important sections of the trade unions for support, this ‘fragile left coalition’ was rapidly disintegrating (Perrigo, 1996, p. 122). Following the controversy of the 1979-1981 constitutional reforms, and the subsequent establishment of the SDP, both the trade unions and the parliamentary leadership were increasingly resistant to any further reforms. In particular, the trade unions were reluctant to support increased representation for women, as this would reduce their own position of power in the party. WAC’s initial demands included a proposal that the women’s section of the NEC should be ‘reclaimed by women’ and elected at the annual women’s conference (Russell, 2005, p. 98). Until this point, these NEC seats had been elected by the annual conference as a whole, and the trade unions were reluctant to give up their rights to vote for these seats, particularly as surrendering control of women’s seats would largely benefit the left. As such, these seats were central to the ‘fightback’ by the moderate and the right wings of the party against left-wing dominance on the NEC (Russell, 2005, p. 98). Thus, while WAC was successful in getting its proposals onto the annual conference agenda, these demands were consistently opposed by the NEC and the party leadership, and defeated by the votes of the trade union majority.

### *Shifting Coalitional Foundations: 1983-1987*

While the party leadership and trade unions were initially resistant to women's demands, changing political and economic circumstances from the mid 1980s onwards challenged the traditional party-union relationship, opening up new opportunities for women to press their claims. Following the disastrous election defeat of 1983, Neil Kinnock became party leader, inheriting a party 'badly demoralised and in disarray' (Perrigo, 1996, p. 123). As leader, his central priority was to re-establish party stability, dismantle the 'hard left', and restore the party's electoral popularity (Russell, 2005, p. 40). As the Labour leadership increasingly focused on the party's electoral image, the attention began to turn to women voters, who consistently voted Conservative in greater numbers than men (Radice, 1985; see also Norris, 1996; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995; Short, 1996). Labour also faced party competition from the SDP, which made active attempts to appeal to women members and voters, introducing a gender quota at the short-listing stage of parliamentary candidate selections (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995; Perrigo, 1996).

Meanwhile, the trade unions were adjusting to wider economic changes in the labour market. The Thatcher years had seen an overall decline in manufacturing jobs, which had largely been held by men, and a growth in service sector jobs, which were overwhelmingly held by women (Wrigley, 1997). As a result, the trade unions began to re-evaluate existing practices in order to appeal to women workers, instituting programmes of internal reforms to make themselves more 'women-friendly'. The public sector union NUPE led the way, introducing reserved seats for women on its executive, and by the early 1980s, other unions began taking similar action (Russell, 2005; Short, 1996). This shift resulted in significant changes in both the 'makeup and the attitudes' of trade unions in the Labour Party, who were increasingly supportive of demands for increased women's representation (Russell, 2005, p. 103). At the same time, party women began to work closely with union women to coordinate their campaigns (Perrigo, 1996).

Finally, similar campaigns were being conducted in social democratic parties around the world, many of which were beginning to implement quotas for women. The Socialist International Women – the women's section of the worldwide alliance of socialist, social democratic and labour parties – circulated these details and actively encouraged its member

parties to use quotas to increase women's representation (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998; Russell, 2005; Short, 1996). Yet while these changing circumstances forced Labour to pay more attention to women members and voters, the party's focus was still on disempowering the hard left, rather than increasing women's representation (Perrigo, 1996). The party adopted the policy of 'one woman on a shortlist' for the 1987 general election, requiring the compulsory short-listing of a woman in any constituency to which at least one woman had applied. And in 1984, the NEC appointed Jo Richardson MP as Shadow Spokesperson for Women, and issued a charter for equality for women in the party (Lovenduski, 2005, p. 112). At the same time, however, the party leadership attempted to 'drive a wedge' between what they saw as leftist extremists and more moderate women trade union activists, reforming the structure of voting at the women's conference to reduce the influence of left-wing constituency delegates (Perrigo, 1996; Russell, 2005). Ultimately, however, this reform served to legitimate the women's conference, which had previously been dismissed as unrepresentative, and 'made its decisions more difficult for the leadership to ignore' (Russell, 2005, p. 102).

### *Changing Strategies: 1987-1992*

The election defeats of 1987 and 1992 led to an 'acceleration' of party modernization processes, which were increasingly linked to calls for gender-balanced representation (Perrigo, 1996; see also Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998; Lovenduski, 2005; Russell, 2005). As the party's electoral fortunes continued to decline, greater attention was paid to opinion polls and advertising consultants, and the evidence increasingly suggested that Labour was seen as 'insular, backward-looking and in the pocket of the unions' (Perrigo, 1996, p. 125). Women's activists within the party were able to take advantage of these developments, publishing a series of Fabian pamphlets from the mid-1980s onwards that strategically linked Labour's electoral failures to the gender gap in Labour's electoral support (e.g. Radice, 1985; Hewitt and Mattinson, 1989). Following the 1987 electoral defeat, the party's Shadow Communications Agency carried out an influential research study which found that voters – in particular, female voters – found 'masculine party images' to be old-fashioned and unappealing, and perceived the Labour Party to be the most masculine of all the parties (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998; Short, 1996). The research also demonstrated that both male and female voters had positive perceptions of women politicians (Hewitt and Mattinson,

1989). This evidence was reinforced after the 1992 election, when polling data indicated that the gender gap in Labour's electoral support had opened up again (Norris, 1996). The perception within the party, then, was that party modernization and reform would involve not only restoring the Labour Party's electoral popularity, but would also involve the 'adoption of new images' (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998, p. 4). Women were seen to be crucial to both objectives, and senior male party officials became increasingly 'willing to concede greater women's representation as part of a strategy to win the next election' (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998, p. 4). As Meg Russell states: 'there was nothing to lose and everything to gain from changing Labour's image to give women a more prominent role' (2005, p. 104).

The first major programme of reform for women was a package of internal party quotas, crafted by a broader coalition of women in the trade unions and in senior office in the party. The campaign for internal party quotas marked a strategic shift on the part of women's activists in response to the 'increased receptiveness of party leaders', moving away from the factional agenda and radical demands of left-wing organizations such as WAC, which had focused more on increasing the power of women's organizations within the party (Perrigo, 1996, p. 126; Russell, 2005; Short, 1996). The issue was taken forward by key women in positions of power in the party and the trade unions, and a small group of women who were women's officers of their respective unions began to have regular 'behind the scenes' meetings with the Labour Party women's officer, Vicky Phillips, in a concerted effort to build union support for change (Russell, 2005, p. 104). For the party leadership, internal party quotas were seen as a way to create a new party image and appeal to women voters, and were seen to be a more practical set of proposals that were 'clearly more congruent with the party's modernisation strategy' (Perrigo, 1996, p. 126; Russell, 2005). At the same time, fair representation for CLPs and conference delegates would assist in disempowering the hard left, bringing 'new and less active members into positions of influence' (Russell, 2005, p. 105).

While several senior party men, including Neil Kinnock, remained wary of positive action, the party leadership took the first step towards internal party quotas in 1989, supporting a proposal from the Tribune group of MPs to introduce a quota in the Shadow Cabinet elections (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998; Short, 1996). MPs were required to cast votes for three women in Shadow Cabinet elections, although the size of the cabinet was then increased by three (moving from 15 to 18 members) so that there would be no male 'losers'

under the new policy (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998, p. 5; Lovenduski, 2005). The 1989 Labour Party Conference accepted the principle of quotas to improve women's representation at every level of the party. Following this decision, the 1990 conference agreed on a quota of 40% women throughout the party, and called on the NEC to implement proposals to achieve this goal. In 1991, rule changes were introduced at Conference, implementing internal party quotas. It was agreed that quotas would be introduced under a rolling programme, with a 40 per cent quota for women on the NEC to be phased in by 1995. A quota was also introduced for local Labour parties, instituting a 40 per cent quota for officers at branch and constituency level and requiring that local parties send equal numbers of men and women to national and regional conferences.

### *The adoption of all-women shortlists: 1992-1997*

The campaign for gender quotas in parliamentary selections met with considerably more resistance, and activist women pressed these proposals repeatedly throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, only to have them rejected annually by the party conference. While the party supported equal political representation in principle, members generally opposed 'any action from the center' to enforce gender balance mechanisms in parliamentary selections (Short, 1996, p. 20). The policy of all-women shortlists (AWS) had a long history within the party (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998; Lovenduski, 2005; Russell, 2005). Given the obstacle of the British electoral system and the significant resistance of local parties to 'central interference', AWS was seen to be one of the only measures that could ensure that CLPs selected women candidates, requiring at least some of them to choose from 'women only' shortlists (Russell, 2005, p. 109). The measure was first proposed in the mid 1980s by women on the left of the party, and from 1985 onwards, the WAC actively encouraged local Labour parties to adopt AWS for their parliamentary selections (Russell, 2005). Yet, while WAC supported the policy of AWS, their primary focus was on their other organizational demands.

The number of women MPs more than doubled in the 1987 elections, but women's representation in the PLP remained at a dismal 9.2 per cent. As discussed previously, the NEC did adopt the policy of 'one woman on a shortlist' in 1988 and also actively encouraged CLPs to select women candidates. For example, General Secretary Larry Whitty



wrote to all constituencies recommending that they ‘consider’ implementing AWS, citing evidence that women candidates would be popular with potential voters (Russell, 2005, p. 111). In addition, the 1990 annual conference also introduced a goal of achieving 50% representation of women in the parliamentary within ten years or three elections, although the party did not formally outline any mechanisms by which this would be achieved. However, progress on this front moved very slowly, and while the number of women nominated for selection increased at every election, the majority of women candidates continued to be selected to fight marginal or unwinnable seats (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998; Lovenduski, 2005; Short, 1996).

By this point, it was clear that the ‘voluntary route’ to AWS had largely failed (Russell, 2005, p. 112). Senior party figures increasingly saw greater women’s representation as an essential step towards changing the party’s image and to winning women’s votes in the next general elections. Yet, it was clear that any central imposition of AWS would meet with significant resistance from the constituencies. Meanwhile, women activists were growing increasingly frustrated with the NEC’s lack of action. From 1990 onwards, the Labour Party Women’s Conference proposed that all Labour seats where the MP was retiring and all seats in by-elections should be required to implement AWS (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998; Russell, 2005). Again, however, these proposals were repeatedly voted down by Annual Conference.

In this setting, a compromise was reached, drawn up by the same group of trade union women who had campaigned for internal party quotas, and who now sat on the newly reformed NEC women’s committee (Russell, 2005; Short, 1996). The breakthrough in the campaign for quotas for parliamentary selections, then, came only after internal party quotas had been instituted. As women activists gained more powerful positions in Labour Party structures, they were better situated to lobby for reforms, linking arguments for greater numbers of women MPs with broader calls for party modernisation. Therefore, while internal party quotas were considered to be a more moderate package of reforms, allowing the party leadership to side-step the demands of left-wing groups such as WAC, the quota package ultimately had significantly radical effects, placing party women in positions of power from which they were able to push for further, far-reaching reforms.

Led by chair Clare Short, the committee proposed that AWS be applied in half of all winnable seats, and half of all seats where MPs were retiring. While the measure fell significantly short of the radical proposals originally advanced by the women's conference, the AWS compromise was still a controversial proposal (Lovenduski, 2005). However, the measure received the full backing of new party leader John Smith, who attended crucial meetings of the NEC Women's Committee to demonstrate his support (Lovenduski, 1997; Short, 1996). The AWS compromise was proposed to the Party Conference in 1993 as part of a larger package of modernization reforms, which included OMOV. The linking of these reform proposals proved to be crucial to the eventual outcome, ensuring that 'the keenest supporters of one could not oppose the other' (Russell, 2005, p. 113). While the trade unions were overwhelmingly opposed to OMOV, several unions – most notably the Manufacturing, Scientific and Finance Union (MSF) - decided to switch their votes to support OMOV or abstain from voting, largely due to their already stated commitment to increasing women's representation. Ultimately, the combined reform package narrowly passed into party rules, ensuring that the adoption of AWS would have 'historic consequences in more than one direction' (Short, 1996, p. 21).

Even though the AWS proposal had passed, the policy was continually challenged, both by party members as well as tabloid press<sup>86</sup>. However, by 1996, consensus meetings had run relatively smoothly in all of the regions, partly due to the fact that half of constituency officers attending these meetings were now women, as a result of earlier internal party quotas (Russell, 2005). The use of AWS came to a quick end when two male party members took the party to court, on the grounds that AWS contravened the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. In January of 1996, the Leeds Industrial Tribunal (*Jepson and Dyas-Elliott v The Labour Party and Others*) found against the party, stating that it had acted in a discriminatory way<sup>87</sup>. The NEC decided not to appeal the decision, as this could threaten the existing female candidates already selected under AWS (Lovenduski, 1997). While women candidates continued to be selected after the tribunal decision, their numbers were 'noticeably reduced' (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998, p. 7; see also Lovenduski, 1997). Ultimately, though, the implementation of AWS proved to be highly successful, and a record

---

<sup>86</sup> For example, the *Daily Mail* ran a 'quota watch' column, monitoring selections and ridiculing candidates who were chosen from AWS (Russell, 2005, p. 114).

<sup>87</sup> For a more detailed account of the Leeds Industrial Tribunal decision, see Russell (2000), Russell and O'Connell (2003).

101 Labour women were elected in 1997, almost three times the number elected in 1992. The real success of AWS, however, was not that it increased the number of women candidates selected overall, but rather that women candidates were selected for winnable seats (Eagle and Lovenduski, 1998).

## ***II: Creating a 'New Politics' in Scotland: Interconnected Trajectories of Institutional Reform***

The strategic linking of the twin trajectories of modernization and feminization within the Labour Party opened up opportunities for significant institutional reform and innovation, particularly in the area of candidate selection. Yet, this strategic coupling also set into motion new conflicts and new political contests, constraining possibilities for future change. The controversies and conflicts over the Labour Party's candidate selection process did not end with the 1993 package of reforms. Following New Labour's 1997 electoral victory, the issue of candidate selection came to the forefront of internal party debates yet again, not just for Westminster selections, but also for the soon to be established Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales. The establishment of the new Scottish Parliament created new challenges regarding the party's traditional approach to candidate selection, but at the same time opened up new opportunities for both party modernizers and women activists at both the UK and Scottish level to press for significant reforms. Yet while the Scottish case is often seen as a 'culmination' of these inter-connected trajectories within the British-wide party (Russell et al, 2002, p. 73), at the same time these processes of modernization and feminization were 'inextricably linked' with the wider devolution campaign and the engendering of mainstream debates surrounding issues of democracy and participation (Mackay, 2004b, p. 119).

Therefore, while the Scottish case offers a distinctive case of institutional innovation in candidate selection, it is 'nested' within multiple interlocking paths of institutional reform, opening up some possibilities for change while closing off others. The following section traces these paths of institutional reform, highlighting both the intersection of – but also the tensions between – these inter-connected trajectories in the Scottish Labour Party. It begins with a brief outline of the organizational structure of Scottish Labour, drawing attention to

the ongoing tensions between the party's 'sub-state national' status within a highly centralized party system. The chapter then goes on to trace changes in candidate selection and recruitment in Scottish Labour post-devolution, beginning with the highly centralized selection process in the run-up to the 1999 elections and ending with subsequent process of decentralization post-1999.

## **The Autonomy and Organization of the Scottish Labour Party**

The Scottish Labour Party is a 'strange creature' (Hassan, 2002, p. 144). While Scottish Labour has 'its own distinctive origins, history and culture', it exists within a highly centralized party system (Hassan, 2002, p. 144; see also Lynch and Birrell, 2004). Historically, Scottish Labour has had limited autonomy from the center. The Scottish Party's 'regional status' was officially formalized in the British-wide Labour Party's constitution in 1918 (Lynch and Birrell, 2004, p. 177; see also Hassan, 2002; Keating and Bleiman, 1979). Yet while the 1918 constitution formally recognized Scottish Labour's status as a regional party, in practice it had little formal autonomy:

'[T]he Scottish party was seen as...equivalent to the party in the English north-east: important to Labour in delivering MPs to Westminster but, while allowed some degree of differentiation, enjoying little formal autonomy over policy, finances or party bureaucracy' (Hassan, 2002, p. 147).

While the history of Labour in Scotland has been well-documented<sup>88</sup>, there has been a notable lack of contemporary analysis of the Scottish Labour Party (for exceptions, see Hassan, 2002, 2004a). It began as a separate Scottish Labour Party before merging with the British-wide party through the newly-established Scottish Advisory Council, a subordinate body set up in 1915 in an attempt to improve the British Labour Party's 'organizational weakness' north of the border (Keating and Bleiman, 1979, p. 56; Lynch and Birrell, 2004). The Advisory Council – later known as the Scottish Council of the Labour Party – was established as an 'organizational unit rather than anything political', and Scotland's 'undeveloped' status remained the reality throughout the second half of the twentieth century,

even with the emergence of devolution as a political issue in the late 1960s (Lynch and Birrell, 2004, p. 177).

Beginning in the late 1980s, the Scottish Conference became a ‘crucial site’ in the battle for greater party autonomy, led by the internal party pressure group Scottish Labour Action (SLA) group (Hassan, 2002, p. 147). In 1994, the party officially altered its name to the Scottish Labour Party at the annual Scottish Conference and instituted changes in party rules to prepare for devolution (Lynch and Birrell, 2004). While these changes allowed Scottish Labour to significantly increase its autonomy in several key areas, the devolution settlement has fallen somewhat short of the autonomous Scottish Labour Party envisaged by the SLA and others (Hassan, 2002; Lynch and Birrell, 2004). Despite a number of radical changes, most notably in the area of candidate and leadership selection, as well the party’s policy-making capacities, the British Labour party remains a largely centralized party that ‘effectively limits the level of autonomy available to the Scottish party’ (Lynch and Birrell, 2004, p. 189). Formally, the central organization of the British Labour Party continues to dominate, centrally controlling areas such as finance, staffing, membership, party rules, and discipline.

## **Candidate Selection in Scottish Labour Post-Devolution**

In the area of candidate selection, in particular, the British Labour party has demonstrated a continued ‘reluctance to formally devolve power to its regional organizations’ post-devolution (Laffin and Shaw, 2007, p. 63). In the run-up to the 1999 Scottish Parliament elections, questions were raised as to the devolution of decision-making within the Labour Party, as the Scottish Executive Committee (SEC) was keen to take over the traditional role of the NEC in overseeing the candidate selection process (Russell, 2005). However, reform of selection procedures was seen within the party as a ‘vehicle for modernization’ within the broader devolution campaign (Bradbury et al, 2000b, p. 151). The focus, then, was not on devolving selection procedures, but rather on attracting a wider pool of applicants to increase

---

<sup>88</sup> While this chapter does not claim to provide a comprehensive history of the Scottish Labour Party, the history of Labour in Scotland has been extensively detailed elsewhere (see for example Donnachie et al, 1989; Hassan, 2004a; Maclean, 1983; McKinlay and Morris, 1991).

the quality of candidates overall and to ensure that seats in the new Scottish Parliament would not simply go to the ‘usual suspects’ (Bradbury et al, 2000a, 2000b; Russell, 2005).

Questions about women’s representation were absolutely central to these debates. There had been a long-term commitment to ensuring women’s equal political representation in the newly devolved institutions at both the UK and Scottish level (Russell, 2005). Throughout the quota debates in the 1990s, repeated references were made to the need for gender-balanced representation in the devolved institutions. As early as 1990, Labour’s Scottish Conference had passed a resolution proposing that 50 per cent of all seats in the new Scottish Parliament should go to women, a policy that had originally been developed by the women’s committee of the Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) and proposed to the Scottish Constitutional Convention in 1989 (Brown, 2001b; Mackay, 2004b). Following the industrial tribunal decision in 1996, the NEC issued a statement promising equality in the devolved bodies as ‘compensation’ for the abandonment of AWS (Russell, 2005, p. 116).

In 1997, the NEC established a Women’s Representation Taskforce, which worked with the newly established Candidate Selection Taskforce. Its membership included the women’s officer, delegates and party officials from Scotland and Wales, and other experts. The taskforces proposed that the party implement a ‘twinning’ scheme – devised by Scottish Labour women activists and academics – a mechanism which was aimed at ensuring gender balance, and that required all constituencies to be paired on the basis of geographical proximity and winnability, with each pair having to select one male and one female candidate. The twinning scheme was agreed at the 1997 annual conference, with responsibility for implementation delegated to the NEC.

There were still substantial concerns within the party over potential legal challenges to the scheme (Russell, 2000). However, there were equally powerful factors ‘creating pressure in the opposite direction’ (Russell, 2005, p. 118). First, the success of women MPs in the 1997 general election became a powerful symbol of ‘new’ Labour, further reinforcing the links between modernization and women’s representation within the party. Gender balance in the new Scottish Parliament, then, would not only serve as a powerful symbol of a ‘new’ Scottish politics – distinct from that of Westminster – but would also reinforce the party’s ‘modern image’ at the national level (Russell, 2005, p. 118). In addition, fair representation

for women would inject ‘new blood’ into the system, breaking the hold of ‘unrepresentative’ constituency activists, who were largely male, over the selection process (Bradbury et al, 2000b, p. 151; see also Russell et al, 2002). Second, Labour had publicly committed to gender balance in the devolved institutions. As such, any backtracking on this promise would potentially have electoral consequences. And while Labour was expected to gain the most seats in the new Scottish Parliament, its main challenger, the SNP, was doing well in the polls and was expected to perform well under a new proportional electoral system. Finally, due to internal party quotas and the increase of women MPs after the 1997 elections, many women who were supporters of quotas had gained significant positional influence within the party at both the Scottish and UK level (Lovenduski, 2005; Russell, 2005).

### *Women and the Scottish Labour Party*

Scottish Labour women took advantage of the opportunities presented by party modernizers, and, throughout the 1990s, were able to gain influential positions in the party as a result of internal party quotas. They were also active in UK-wide debates and campaigns for candidate gender quotas (Mackay, 2004b). These party women – along with women’s groups and trade union women – played an active role in the devolution campaign, ensuring that equal political representation would become a key aim in the plans for a new Scottish Parliament. Like their counterparts at the UK level, they framed their demands within wider party debates over modernization and women’s votes, but also argued that gender balance would provide a visible symbol of a ‘modern, relevant, and democratic Scotland’ (Mackay 2004b, p. 113; see also Brown, 2001a, 2000b; Mackay et al, 2003).

The twin reform trajectories of modernization and feminization at the British-wide party level had been ‘slower and more contested’ in Scotland (Mackay, 2004b, p. 113). The Scottish party had not lost an election since 1959, and its electoral success had left it with a sense of complacency, avoiding the sort of ‘rethinking’ that was occurring south of the border (Hassan, 2004b, p. 14). Historically, Scottish Labour has been markedly less hospitable to women candidates and office-holders than the British-wide party. From the period of 1918 to 1995, only 24 women represented Scottish constituencies at Westminster (Brown, 2001a). The percentage of Scottish women MPs has also remained relatively static over time. At the UK General Election in 1992, five women MPs were elected from a total

of 72 Scottish MPs (6.9 per cent), the same number of women elected at both the 1959 and 1964 General Elections (Brown, 2001a). Therefore, while the devolution campaign opened up new opportunities for women activists to engender mainstream debates, Scottish Labour women had good reason to believe that ‘they would need to fight hard’ to ensure that their demands would be listened to (Mackay, 2004b, p. 113).

The ‘story’ of women’s mobilization in the 50:50 campaign in Scotland – described as ‘one of the most strategic campaigns for equality for women in Scotland’ (McDonald et al, 2001, p. 233) – has been extensively detailed elsewhere<sup>89</sup>. Labour women were key members of the campaign, along with female trade unionists, women’s organizations, grassroots activists, feminist academics, and women from the other Scottish political parties (Mackay, 2004b; Mackay et al, 2003). In the run-up to the first elections to the Scottish Parliament in 1999, increased internal and external pressure was put on the political parties to ensure gender balance in representation, particularly Scottish Labour. Early internal pressure groups formed in the 1980s including WAC, which operated at both the British and Scottish level, as well as the women’s network of the Scottish Labour Co-ordinating Committee (LCC) (Mackay, 2004b). Other pressure groups continued to form throughout the 1980s and 1990s, bringing together women on both the right and left of the party to campaign on the issue of women’s representation (Mackay, 2004b). For example, a British-wide support group, Labour Women’s Network, was launched in 1988. Several Scottish women activists were involved, including Rhona Brankin. In addition, the Scottish Labour Women’s Caucus was established in 1993 to promote ‘feminist analysis in our policy processes and greater representation for Labour Women at all levels of the Party’ (Scottish Labour Women’s Caucus quoted in Mackay, 2004b, p. 121).

Scottish Labour women were also active participants in wider structures, including the Scottish Constitutional Convention and its Women’s Issues Group, as well as the later Scottish Women’s Co-ordination Group (Brown 2001a, 2000b; Mackay, 2004b; Mackay et al, 2003). Labour women worked with Liberal Democrat women activists and the Women’s Co-ordination Group to broker the 1995 Electoral Agreement, committing both parties to field equal numbers of male and female candidates in winnable seats in the first elections,

---

<sup>89</sup> See in particular Breitenbach and Mackay (2001); Brown (2001a, 2000b). This is also discussed in more detail in chapter six.



and agreeing upon the proposals of an AMS electoral system and a 129-member Scottish Parliament (Brown 2001a, 2000b; Mackay, 2004b).

Inside the party, women were able to influence internal party politics and were important players in arguments over the use of equality guarantees, as well as the development of the ‘twinning’ scheme, to be used in constituency selections. These internal party debates were heavily influenced by wider agendas, most notably party modernization and centralization of candidate selection procedures (Bradbury et al, 2000b; Mackay, 2004b; Russell et al, 2002). As a result, the use of equality guarantees was also supported by key men in the party, most notably future First Minister Jack McConnell, who was the Scottish General Secretary at the time, and who played a key role in securing the endorsement for ‘twinning’ from the British Labour Party in 1997. In McConnell’s view, the issue of women’s representation was ‘inextricably linked with modernizing the party and creating “New Labour”’ (Mackay, 2004b, p. 115).

### *The 1999 Selections*

The new institutions created an opportunity to implement several modernizing principles, many of which had already been used in other contexts. First, the party implemented a central panel of pre-approved candidates, a selection system that had long been used in local government selections for Labour. Officially, the use of the pre-approved panel was intended to raise candidate calibre, while also helping to promote gender and ethnic balance, providing constituencies with a ‘balanced list’ from which to choose candidates (Laffin and Shaw, 2007). Second, the party attempted to professionalize the application process, as they had done for the 1999 European Elections, introducing a person specification, job description, and a standard application form. In part this measure was intended to create a ‘fair and open process’, introducing rigorous equal opportunities approaches (Russell, 2005, p. 70; see also Bradbury et al, 2000b). It was also a defensive move, given the recent experience of the Leeds industrial tribunal in 1996 in which candidate selection was ruled to be a form of job selection (Russell, 2005). Third, the party implemented the new centrally-enforced ‘twinning’ scheme, aimed at ensuring gender balance.

Overall, the broad principles of a new and more ‘modern’ approach to candidate selection were relatively uncontroversial within the party, and were well established by the time of the devolution referendum in 1997 (Bradbury et al, 2000b). Yet while there was broad agreement within the party of the need for a new approach to candidate selection, there was also considerable controversy within Scottish Labour over the ways in which these procedures were implemented. The ‘meaning’ of modernization was hotly contested within the party:

‘In one view it represented a desire to break free from traditional selection procedures, perceived as involving a relatively closed process of local nomination and selection by unrepresentative, largely male, constituency activists more on the basis of patronage than competence....To others, however, such rhetoric covered more pragmatic power-related concerns’ (Bradbury et al, 2000b, p. 151-152).

While different factions of the party were generally supportive of reforming candidate selection procedures, there were concerns that these changes were in fact an attempt to consolidate New Labour support within the Scottish party, selecting ‘candidates who would support the leadership and toe the party line’ (Bradbury et al, 2000b, p. 152). As discussed in chapter six, party officials were accused of implementing an ‘ideological test’ of the New Labour credentials of prospective candidates, rejecting several prominent party figures on the nationalist-left wing of the party (Bradbury et al, 2000a, 2000b, Shaw, 2001). The twinning scheme also generated controversy, with accusations that some candidates were ‘twinned out’ of the selection process through central party intervention (Bradbury et al, 2000a, 2000b).

The 1999 selections, then, highlight both the intersection of, but also the tensions between, these inter-connected trajectories of modernization and feminization within the Labour Party. On the one hand, devolution increased the pressure on Scottish Labour to democratise and decentralize the selection process (Bradbury et al, 2000a; Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004). Those who ‘lost out’ in the highly centralized selection process in 1999 frequently appealed to principles of decentralization, attacking the ‘centralisation of control’ in the process, which resulted in a ‘restriction rather than a broadening of democracy’ (Bradbury, 2000b, p. 158; see also Jones, 2001). Yet at the same time, there were also pressures for increased central control, in order to achieve democratic outcomes. This tension was not easily resolved in the Labour Party, where decentralized

constituency selection had long been the standard practice (Denver, 1988). As Mitchell and Bradbury (2004) note: ‘support for one member one vote (OMOV) constituency selectorates did not easily co-exist...with central insistence on gender balanced selections through the twinning mechanisms’ (p. 299).

## **Candidate Selection After 1999**

Evidence from the Scottish case suggests that candidate selection remains a tense battleground, highlighting ongoing tensions between competing, and sometimes contradictory, reform trajectories. Yet while there have been several in-depth studies of the Scottish political recruitment process post-devolution more generally, as well as candidate selection in Scottish Labour more specifically (e.g. Bradbury et al, 2000a, 2000b), there has been little written on the subject since the 1999 elections. Recent articles in the field have generally continued to focus on Scottish Labour’s contentious 1999 selection process (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Laffin and Shaw, 2007; Laffin et al, 2007). Some acknowledge the complexity of the 1999 selection controversy, arguing that while there were some ‘remarkable casualties’ in 1999, several prominent left-wing candidates were ultimately selected (Laffin and Shaw, 2007, p. 62). Most, however, continue to focus on the criticisms surrounding the 1999 selections, alternately describing the process as ‘control-freakery’ or as an ‘ideological cull’ seeking to consolidate support for New Labour within the Scottish party (e.g. Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Jones, 2001; Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004):

‘The façade of enlightened central approval panels and the democratization of selection was too thin to mask the machinations going on behind’ (Bradbury et al, 2000b, p. 171)

The general consensus in the mainstream literature is that the conflicts and contestation over candidate selection in Scottish Labour have largely been resolved post-1999. For example, James Mitchell and Jonathan Bradbury (2004) provide a brief overview of candidate selection in the run-up to the 2003 elections, and argue that, in the case of Scottish Labour, the conflicts apparent in 1999 have ‘evaporated’: ‘the necessary flak was sustained in 1999, and did not need to be repeated’ (pp. 299-300). While they acknowledge the inherent tension between OMOV constituency selectorates and centrally enforced equality

guarantees, they argue that these contradictions have been ‘clearly resolved by an acceptance of greater central party intervention in candidate selection’ (Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004, p. 300). Ultimately, they conclude that women’s representation ‘was not an issue’ in the 2003 elections, and that the Labour Party has ultimately come out of devolution ‘with a degree of stability after initial difficulties’ (Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004, pp. 299-300).

Other work on candidate selection makes no mention of women’s representation post-1999, focusing instead on a general trend of internal devolution within the British-wide party (e.g. Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Laffin and Shaw, 2007; Laffin et al, 2007). For example, Hopkin and Bradbury (2006) argue that internal party conflicts over candidate selection have ‘come to an end’ now that the devolution institutions have ‘bedded down’ (p. 142). After a ‘conflictual start’, the British Labour Party withdrew from any consistent overt intervention into the candidate selection process, in ‘light of the difficulties it had experienced in imposing its will’ (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006, p. 142). The controversy over the 1999 selections created significant pressure for internal party decision making to be devolved downward, leading to a distinct ‘change of tone’ as well as several ‘organizational concessions’ on the part of the Labour Party (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006, p. 142). In 2000, control over leadership selection was devolved to the Scottish and Welsh parties, while a year later, control over candidate selection was also devolved (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Laffin and Shaw, 2007). Ultimately, Hopkin and Bradbury conclude that Labour has largely adapted to a revised structure of power that increasingly recognizes the territorial autonomy of the Scottish and Welsh regional parties, while still maintaining the autonomy of the British leadership and the overall unity of the party (p. 149; see also Laffin and Shaw, 2007; Laffin et al, 2007).

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter has argued that institutional innovation in post-devolution Scotland is inextricably interlinked with wider reform processes at the UK level. The Scottish case is seen by some as the ‘culmination’ of inter-connected paths of institutional reform within the British-wide party, linking wider processes of modernization and feminization with the opportunities presented by the devolution campaign and the engendering of mainstream

debates surrounding issues of democracy and participation (Mackay, 2004b, pp. 118-119; see also Russell et al, 2002). Yet the changes that took place in the candidate selection process in Scottish Labour post-devolution were not the obvious outcome of a reform trajectory that began in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The chapter argues that reform with the Labour Party has been a gradual process over an extended period, marked by ongoing political contestation and renegotiation. By focusing on shifting political coalitions over an extended period of time, the chapter offers new insights into the complexity and contingency of institutional innovation in post-devolution Scotland, highlighting the power that past decisions have over future events, while also exploring the tensions and contradictions between inter-locking paths of institutional reform.

Evidence from the Scottish case suggests that the candidate selection process is an ongoing site of conflict and contestation within the Labour Party. Yet, this conclusion sits at odds with current work on candidate selection in the mainstream literature, which argues that the tensions apparent in 1999 have largely been resolved. The explanations offered for this resolution differ: some argue that there has been a general acceptance of central party control over candidate selection (Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004), while others highlight an increasing trend of internal party devolution in which matters are increasingly left up to the Scottish Party (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Laffin and Shaw, 2007, Laffin et al, 2007). The following chapter discusses the implications of these contradictory conclusions in more depth, presenting the findings from a micro-level case study of a Scottish Labour constituency contest in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections.

## The Story of a Selection

Having set the context in chapter seven, this chapter presents the findings of an illustrative micro-level case study of a Scottish Labour constituency seat selection contest in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections. It begins by briefly introducing the key ‘players,’ identifying the main central, regional, and local actors and institutions involved in the candidate selection process. The chapter then turns to the micro-level case study, tracing the process through a detailed and fine-grained reconstruction of the temporal sequence of events in the constituency seat selection contest. The chapter concludes with a brief and preliminary assessment of the case study, highlighting apparent processes of decentralization and informalization in the candidate selection process, which the thesis returns to in the subsequent chapter.

### *I: Introducing the Key Players*

As discussed in chapter seven, while the trend within the British-wide Labour Party since the late 1980s onwards has been one of greater centralisation, evidence from Scotland suggests that the party is now characterized by an increasing degree of territorial autonomy (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Laffin and Shaw, 2007, Laffin et al, 2007). In the area of candidate selection, however, the picture is mixed. While the British Labour Party has withdrawn from any consistent overt intervention in candidate selection decisions for the devolved institutions, it still retains final authority over the candidate selection process, through the National Executive Committee (NEC) (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006). The structure of candidate selection and recruitment in Scottish Labour, then, remains a complex one, involving multiple central, regional, and local ‘players’ (Laffin and Shaw, 2007).

## The Central Players

The *National Executive Committee (NEC)* functions as the highest authority within the British Labour Party between conferences, overseeing the direction of the party and the policy-making process. Party modernization has significantly changed the role of the NEC within the party structure, limiting the NEC's policy-making role through the creation of the National Policy Forum (NPF). However, the NEC retains formal control over rule making and interpretation, and is specifically responsible for upholding and enforcing the rules and regulations of the candidate selection process (Laffin and Shaw, 2007). While the power to amend Scottish and Welsh party rules is vested in their conferences, this is ultimately subject to NEC approval. In practice, Scottish Labour is able to draw up its own selection procedures without NEC intervention, but these decisions are taken within a wider framework of centrally prescribed principles (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Laffin and Shaw, 2007; Laffin et al, 2007). The British Labour Party can also play a role in Scottish parliamentary selections through the intervention of *local MPs*. While Labour Party rules specifically prohibit Westminster MPs from formally intervening in the selection process, local MPs often endorse and campaign with candidates once they have been selected.

## The Regional Players

In terms of the central Scottish party, the *Scottish Executive Committee (SEC)* is the central body responsible for drawing up and enforcing selection party rules, in consultation with the NEC. Primary responsibility for monitoring and overseeing selection procedures lies with the *Scottish Organizer*, who acts as the designated representative of the central Scottish Party in liaison with each Constituency Labour Party (CLP) and who serves as the first point of contact with the central Scottish Party for both CLP officers and prospective candidates. Primary responsibilities of the Scottish Organizer include meeting with CLP officers and the CLP Executive Committee (EC) to draw up a timetable for the selection, and acting as a representative to selection meetings to ensure that the rules are applied. Like the party at Westminster, the central Scottish Party can also potentially play a role in Scottish parliamentary selection contests through the intervention of *local MSPs*, in cases where the incumbent MSP is stepping down. Again, while Scottish Labour Party rules specifically

prohibit MSPs from formally intervening in the selection process, informally, outgoing MSPs sometimes support, encourage, or endorse particular candidates<sup>90</sup>.

## The Local Players

Local Labour parties are organized at both the constituency level, referred to as the *Constituency Labour Party (CLP)*, and through smaller *Branch Labour Parties (BLPs)*, both of which have elected officers and regular meetings. Since 1999, candidate selection decisions are made primarily by the CLP, although these decisions are made within the framework of rules set down by the SEC, in consultation with the NEC. Primary responsibility for monitoring and overseeing selection procedures within the CLP lies with the *Procedural Secretary*, who is appointed by the central Scottish Party, in agreement with the CLP. The Procedural Secretary is usually the CLP Secretary, although this responsibility can sometimes fall to another CLP officer.

Following modernizing reforms to candidate and leadership selection in the Labour Party, final selection decisions are left up to *party members* as a whole, who can vote either in person at a final hustings meeting or via postal vote. Despite these changes, most of the primary control over candidate selection continues to rest with the CLP *Executive Committee (EC)* and *General Committee (GC)*. The GC is constituted of delegates elected from the BLPs, local branches of affiliated *trade unions, socialist societies*<sup>91</sup>, local branches of the *Co-operative Party*<sup>92</sup>, constituency-wide *women's forums*, BLP secretaries, and CLP officers. The EC is generally constituted in the same manner as the GC, but with fewer delegates from each branch and affiliate. The EC is appointed by and reports to the GC and is primarily responsible for managing the CLP. In terms of candidate selection, the EC is primarily responsible for procedural arrangements, meeting with the Scottish Organizer and

---

<sup>90</sup> For example, in the run-up to the 2007 elections, it was widely speculated in the British media that retiring Labour MSP John Home Robertson was stepping down as part of an informal arrangement with his eventual successor, former MSP Iain Gray. See for example Linklater, M. (2006) 'A new lord of the manor in waiting', *The Sunday Times*, 12 November 2006; *The Guardian*, 15 November 2006.

<sup>91</sup> The most well-known Labour-affiliated socialist society is the Fabian Society. Others include, for example, Scottish Labour Students and the National Union of Labour and Socialist Clubs (NULSC).

<sup>92</sup> While the Co-operative Party's role in the candidate selection process is similar to that of the socialist societies, it is in fact a separate political party that has an electoral agreement with the Labour Party and that liaises with CLPs at the local level.

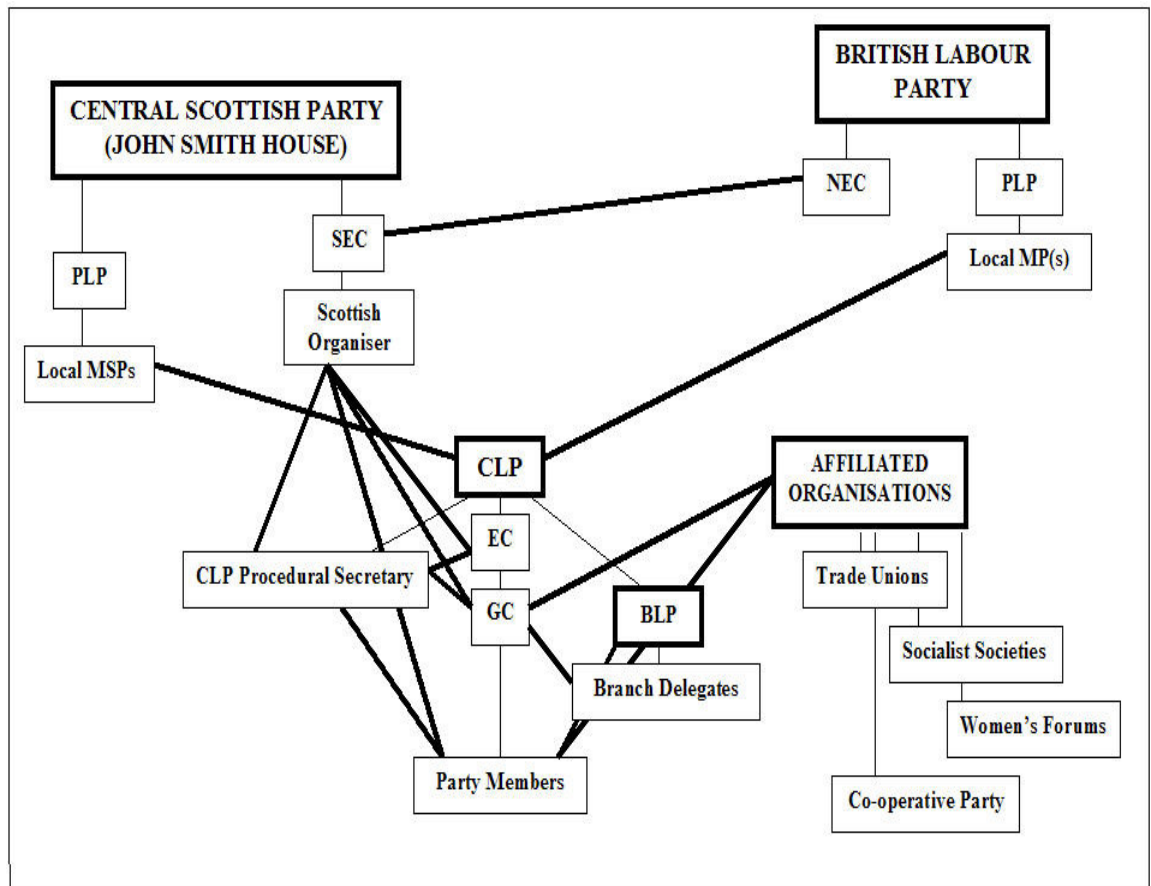


the CLP Procedural Secretary to draw up a timetable for the selection process and also deciding on the final arrangements and procedures for short-listing, hustings meetings and ballots.

The primary responsibility of the GC is to draw up a shortlist of candidates, taking into consideration nominations made by party units and affiliated organizations. Candidates are only allowed to proceed to the short-listing stage once they have been nominated by either a branch, trade union or by another organizational affiliate, who submit their nominations to the CLP for consideration. While women's forums, socialist societies, and the Co-op Party have a formal role in decision-making - in that they can nominate candidates, are represented via a small number of delegates at the GC and can take part in all-member ballots – their involvement in the candidate selection process depends on the particular local constituency. The Co-op Party, for example, does not have local branches in all Scottish constituencies, and affiliated socialist societies vary from constituency to constituency. With regards to the women's forums, women's structures within the party were extensively reorganized in 1998 at both the British and Scottish levels, resulting in the abolishment of women's sections at branch level and the creation of constituency-wide women's forums (Mackay, 2004b; Russell, 2005). Formally, party rules require that CLPs elect a Women's Officer who may then establish a women's forum. However, not every CLP has a women's forum, and the Scottish Labour Party does not keep any official figures as to how many women's forums have been set up since 1998 (Mackay, 2004b).

Figure 8.1 identifies the key actors and institutions involved in Scottish Labour's candidate selection process for the Scottish Parliament.

**Figure 8.1: The Structure of Political Recruitment in the Scottish Labour Party**



## ***II: A Micro-Level Case Study***

Having set the context, the following section carries out a micro-level ‘tracing’ of the candidate selection process in the Scottish Labour Party post-devolution, reconstructing the sequence of events in a Labour constituency selection contest in the run-up to the 2007 elections. The micro-level case study – in this case, the constituency seat of City North and Greenside<sup>93</sup> - was selected for a number of reasons. In the run-up to the 2007 elections, City North and Greenside was considered to be a very safe Labour seat, and had been held by Scottish Labour since the 1999 Scottish Parliament elections by a consistent margin of over

<sup>93</sup> As discussed in chapter five, names have been changed for reasons of anonymity.

6,000 votes. The seat was one of only four open Labour seats in the 2007 elections and, as a result, a large and relatively strong field of potential candidates declared interest in standing for selection. Finally, it was a seat in which a sitting Labour woman MSP – first selected under the ‘twinning’ scheme in 1999 – was standing down.

As discussed previously, data collection in the case study has primarily involved:

- *Interviews.* This includes approximately 15 semi-structured interviews with candidate applicants, Constituency Labour Party (CLP) members, central Scottish Party officials, and party activists.
- *Documents.* This includes a detailed review and analysis of official British and Scottish Labour Party documents outlining formal party selection rules and procedures, as well as other formal and informal documents related to the selection process including candidate applications, candidate campaign materials, minutes of selection meetings, internal party correspondence and relevant media coverage of the selection contest.

As argued in chapter five, the focus of the case study is on reconstructing a very specific set of events within a particular temporal context and spatial location, and is not intended to be representative of every candidate selection process within the Scottish Labour Party. The case study is an illustrative one, intended to contribute to theory development. The purpose of the case study, then, is not to carry out an exhaustive analysis of candidate selection and recruitment within Scottish Labour. Rather, the aim is to situate the specific findings of the micro-level case study within the theory-building project of the thesis, drawing out the implications of the case study for the wider feminist institutionalist theoretical project.

## **Mapping City North and Greenside**

The City North and Greenside Constituency Labour Party (CLP) is predominantly urban, with an electorate of approximately 60,000 registered voters. It is made up of five distinct branches (BLP), which are based on the ward boundaries for the election of local

councillors. City North and Greenside is generally considered to be a Labour safe seat. In Westminster elections, the seat has been held by Labour for over 70 years, providing Labour with its largest margin of victory in the wider City urban area. Results for City North and Greenside Scottish Parliament elections have been similarly strong for Labour, who won the seat in both 1999 and 2003 with a margin of well over 6,000 votes.

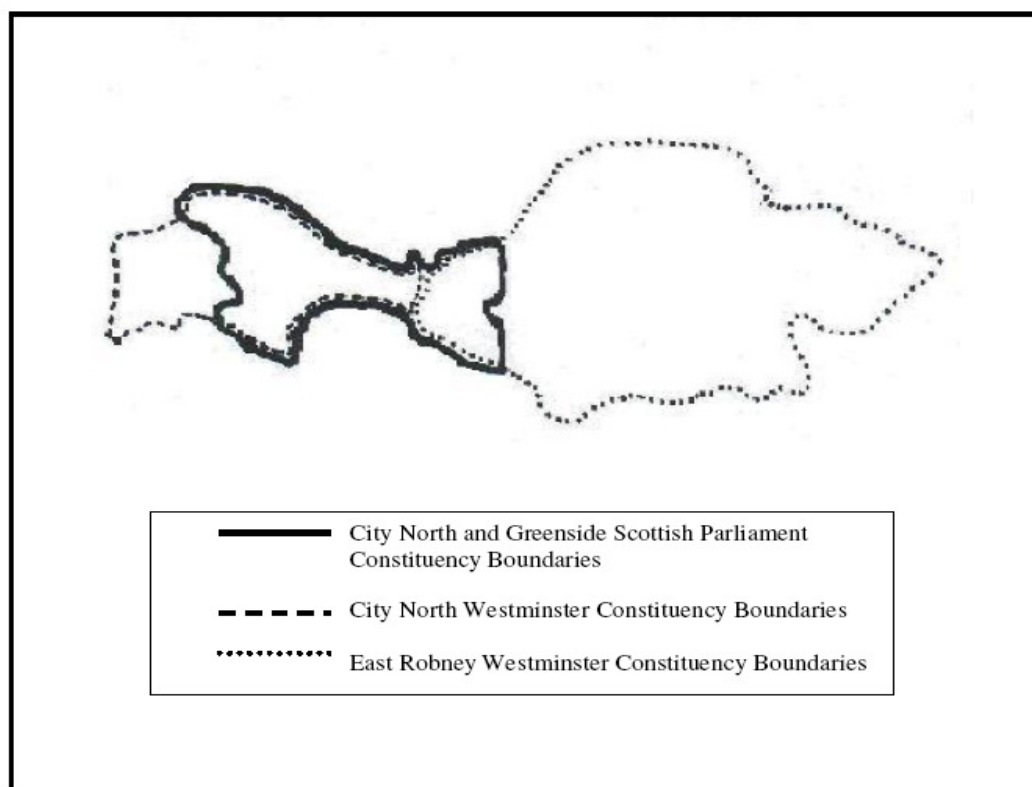
However, the constituency is in many ways a divided one. The seat encompasses two very distinct local authorities, combining a portion of the wider City council area (of which City North is only a small section) with the neighbouring town of Greenside, which falls within the wider East Robney council area. The boundaries of the City North and Greenside Scottish Parliament constituency also include parts of two distinct Westminster constituency seats – City North and East Robney. The town of Greenside was a part of the City North Westminster constituency until the early 1980s, when it was transferred to the East Robney Westminster constituency. It remained in the East Robney constituency until 1997, when it was returned to the newly created City North and Greenside Westminster constituency.

In the run-up to devolution, a City North and Greenside Scottish Parliament constituency was created, sharing the same name and boundaries as the corresponding Westminster constituency. This continued until 2005, at which point the number of Scottish Westminster constituencies was reduced from 72 to 59, and Westminster constituency boundaries were redrawn. The majority of the existing Westminster constituency was merged into a new City North Westminster constituency with different boundaries, while the town of Greenside was again incorporated into the East Robney Westminster constituency. The City North and Greenside Scottish Parliament constituency boundaries remained the same<sup>94</sup>. The current boundaries of the City North and Greenside Scottish Parliament constituency, as well as current boundaries of both the City North and East Robney Westminster constituencies can be seen in Figure 8.2.

---

<sup>94</sup> This ‘uncoupling’ of Holyrood and Westminster constituency boundaries is the direct result of the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004 which ended the linking of Westminster and Holyrood constituency boundaries in an effort to maintain the present size of the Scottish Parliament (amending the Scotland Act 1998). For more on Scottish Parliamentary constituency boundaries, see Boundary Commission for Scotland (2004).

**Figure 8.2: City North and Greenside Scottish Parliament Constituency Boundaries**



As such, City North and Greenside is a mixed seat, socially, economically, and politically. The seat includes a combination of some high quality housing, middle and working-class residential areas, and more run-down council housing, much of which has been torn down and radically redeveloped in recent years. The seat also incorporates a mixture of working- and middle-class residents, with some light industry nearer the City North side of the constituency, and non-manual workers and commuters living in the east.

The town of Greenside occupies somewhat of an uneasy place within the seat, in that it is included in City North and Greenside's Scottish Parliament boundaries, but is not included in either the City local authority or the City North Westminster constituency seat boundaries. Historically, Greenside has been a predominantly working-class Labour Party stronghold. In recent years, however, the town has undergone somewhat of a demographic shift, transitioning from its traditional economic base to an increasingly suburbanised, commuter community. As traditional working-class sources of employment in Greenside – heavy industry, mining, manufacturing, and so on – have collapsed, Greenside has become more

and more dependent on the neighbouring City economy. Despite a growing population, a large proportion of the Greenside local workforce are out-commuters, working in the City area.

### ***III: Tracing the Process***

The City North and Greenside constituency selection contest was triggered when the sitting female incumbent MSP decided to stand down before the 2007 elections, first personally notifying the CLP chair and then making a formal announcement at a CLP meeting. The announcement came very late in the election season – several months after the retiring MSP had already been re-selected – and as a result, the CLP had a limited period of time in which to select a candidate and then get the candidate in place to fight an election. In accordance with Labour party procedure, the central Scottish Party – based at John Smith House in Glasgow – set a formal timetable for the process of eleven weeks, a standard time-frame for constituency selections (see Table 8.1).

**Table 8.1: Selection Timetable for City North and Greenside<sup>95</sup>**

| <b>STAGE</b>  | <b>WEEK</b> |
|---|-------------|
| Executive Committee (EC) to draw up timetable and agree (subject to appeal) membership list based on freeze date set by Scottish Executive Committee (SEC)(6 months prior to planned Hustings Meeting in Week 11).        | 0           |
| Issue to Party units and affiliates of notice of procedure and timetable (based on list supplied by Scottish Party).  | 1           |
| Issue to members of notice of procedure and timetable.<br>Issue to members of invitation to apply for a Postal Vote.  | 2           |
| Closing date for individuals to declare as prospective nominee.   | 4           |
| ‘Meet the Candidates’ Meeting for all Scottish Parliamentary Forum (SPF) members (can be scheduled at the earliest 4 days after the closing date for declaration).  | 5           |
| Closing date for membership appeals to SEC Representative. City EC meets to agree procedures for ballots.   | 6           |
| Closing date for Postal Vote Applications.  | 7           |
| Nomination Meeting (Branches). This will be a single meeting of the SPF divided into (old) Branches for the purpose of the nominations. Each branch will be expected to nominate two candidates; one male and one female. | 7           |
| Closing date for nominations from Branches and affiliates.  | 7           |
| Meeting of Shortlist Committee (normal General Committee meeting).  | 8           |
| Notice to eligible members of Hustings Meeting.<br>Issue of ballot papers to Postal Voters.   | 9           |
| Hustings Meeting Candidate Selection.   | 11          |
| Count and submission of result to Scottish Party.   | 11          |

<sup>95</sup> Adapted from Scottish Labour Party (2006) ‘Scottish Parliamentary Elections 2007: Selection process timetable’.

Due to the fact that a female MSP was retiring, there was some discussion within the central Scottish Party as to whether steps should be taken to ensure that a woman candidate would be selected, through, for example, an all-women shortlist (AWS). The possibility of instituting an AWS in City North and Greenside was ultimately discounted, a decision that was framed in part as an issue of timing. As one of the CLP officers put it:

‘We got two messages pretty quickly from the Scottish Labour Party in Glasgow... One was that they wanted us to run the selection process very quickly. That came as no surprise to anybody. But secondly, they’d given it some thought, but they had no intention, unless there was a strong groundswell coming from the local party, to make it an all-women shortlist. One of the main reasons for that being, we couldn’t afford to end up in a long, drawn-out, contentious process when we had a small number of weeks to put a candidate in place.’<sup>96</sup>

## **Stage One: Declaration of Interest and Application Process**

Once the timetable was established, the central Scottish Party sent notice to party units, affiliates and party members of both the selection procedure and schedule. Aspiring candidates were then given a two to three week period in which to declare their interest in standing for selection. It became clear very early on into the selection process that the seat would attract substantial interest from a very broad range of applicants.

Following party rules, aspiring candidates are required to formally declare interest in standing for a seat by submitting a standard party application form (CV) to the CLP Procedural Secretary before the closing date for declaration as a prospective nominee. In practice, several prospective candidates had already expressed an interest in standing for the seat before the application process had even officially opened, generally through informal communication with CLP members, and, in some cases, with the CLP Chair. In addition, several prominent candidate applicants went directly to the local media to express an interest in standing, some only days after the sitting local MSP had announced that she was standing down. Several candidates from the City North side of the constituency went to the City

---

<sup>96</sup> Interview 3 with CLP Officer, 17.3.2008.



papers, informally expressing an interest in running for the seat in question before they had formally applied. As one prospective candidate stated to the City press:

‘I have provisionally put my name forward, but I’m now speaking to people in the constituency before finally making up my mind.’<sup>97</sup>

At the same time, prospective candidates from the Greenside part of the constituency made statements to the East Robney local papers. A week after the sitting local MSP had announced her retirement, a Greenside local councillor announced his interest in standing for the seat to the East Robney papers:

‘My own branch will be supporting me and that will be instrumental...What’s hugely important is that it’s somebody from the locality that gets in. The last thing we would want is somebody from the outside.’<sup>98</sup>

Formally, aspiring candidates were not allowed to speak directly to the press about the selection procedure. In accordance with Scottish Labour’s Candidates Code of Conduct, only CLP officers are directly authorized to issue statements to the media about the selection process, and then only after consultation with the Scottish General Secretary. In practice, this rule does not appear to have been enforced. However, several CLP members noted that candidates who went to the media were often perceived negatively within the CLP, and that by the time the selection process formally began, local party members were becoming ‘fed up’ with reading repeated candidate announcements in the papers.

Formally, there is little evidence of the central Scottish Party or the CLP taking active measures to recruit particular candidates within the constituency:

‘It was kind of left to, you know, to the extent that people just kind of touted their names in the paper or would speak to people to see whether they should stand or not.’<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>97</sup> Candidate Applicant quoted in City newspaper. For reasons of anonymity, specific details of Scottish media coverage cannot be provided.

<sup>98</sup> Candidate Applicant quoted in East Robney newspaper, 2006.

<sup>99</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant, 25.3.2008.

In contrast to the highly-centralized procedures used in 1999, the Scottish Party did not make an active effort to recruit women candidates for the seat in question, or to encourage them to run, although there is some evidence of active steps being taken to encourage certain ethnic minority candidates to stand. One of the ethnic minority candidates, a former member of the SEC, reported being directly approached and encouraged to stand by the then-First Minister, Jack McConnell.

Despite an overall lack of formal encouragement on the part of either the CLP or the central Scottish Party, most of the candidate applicants cited informal encouragement from individuals such as party activists, local party members, friends, and family as a key factor influencing their decision to stand for selection:

‘I started to get calls from party activists saying was I going to put my name forward as well. And initially I said no, that I wasn’t. But I was getting a little bit of arm-twisting from people, who for all sorts of different reasons, didn’t feel that the names of people that were putting their hands in there, were going to be the right calibre, electable enough, have enough broad support – a whole package of reasons. Quite a few people were, in the nicest possible way, putting a bit of pressure on me to stand.’<sup>100</sup>

The only formal requirement for candidate applicants was that they needed to have been a party member for at least 12 months previous. They were also required to fill out a standard party application form, set out in the SEC guidelines for parliamentary selections, which consisted of two pages organized into the following sections:

- Labour Party experience
- Other life experience
- Knowledge
- Communication skills
- Campaigning and Party development skills
- Representational and problem solving skills
- Interpersonal, teamwork and liaison skills
- Other skills

---

<sup>100</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant, 17.3.2008.

The standard application form used in the City North and Greenside selection contest is identical to the form used in Westminster Labour Party selections<sup>101</sup>, and differs from the original application form used for Scottish Parliament Labour Party selections in 1999. The original form was organized under six headings, including:

- Labour Party experience
- Other life experience
- Commitment to the principle of the Scottish Parliament
- Commitment to the principle of equal opportunities
- Knowledge
- Skills (including strategic thinking and action, advocacy, leadership and teamwork, communication and campaigning)

Following formal Scottish Labour selection rules, candidates are meant to receive not only the standard application form, but also a job description, as part of an ‘application pack.’ Yet while job descriptions are actively used in Scottish Labour party selection contests more generally, job descriptions were not distributed to the members of the City North and Greenside CLP. One of the candidate applicants contacted the central Party Scottish Organizer, specifically requesting that standardized job descriptions be circulated to CLP members ‘so that there was at least the chance of candidates matching themselves against some criteria’, but no job description was ever administered, and there was an implication that the candidate had ‘interfered’ with the process by requesting one<sup>102</sup>. Following this request, several members of the CLP GC also contacted the central Scottish Party to ask that job descriptions be circulated, but the party does not appear to have followed up on these requests.

Formally, candidate applicants are also required to have already been selected to be on the Scottish Labour central panel of approved candidates. In practice, this rule does not appear to be consistently enforced or rigorously applied. As a CLP officer noted:

---

<sup>101</sup> The Labour Party (2003) ‘Labour’s future: NEC guidelines for the selection of parliamentary candidates’.

<sup>102</sup> Personal correspondence with Candidate Applicant, 2008.

‘Strictly speaking, the Scottish Party...if you’re not already on the panel of candidates, they often adopt you as a candidate. But in most cases that’s pretty much a stamping exercise.’<sup>103</sup>

All in all, twelve Scottish Labour members formally declared an interest in standing for selection, four of which were women and two of which were ethnic minorities (both men). The aspiring candidates were from a range of different backgrounds: the majority with local government experience while others were activists, community leaders, or active in the local party organization. Most were local party members, although several prominent applicants were from outside the constituency.

While applications varied, overall the candidate applications converged around similar themes. All of the candidates put a central emphasis on the importance of representing local interests in their applications. Candidates who were members of the City North and Greenside CLP repeatedly emphasized their ‘localness’, highlighting their involvement in CLP activities and their knowledge of local politics:

‘I live in the community and am seen out and about at all hours as part of daily life...I also pop into the [local Community Centre] on a fair number of Saturday mornings for coffee and a biscuit – which gives me a chance to chat informally with local folk.’<sup>104</sup>

‘In the past few years, I have used my role as a [City North and Greenside CLP Officer] to build an active constituency party, whose members feel able to become involved in different ways and which encourages open and informed political debate. With excellent support from the CLP Executive, we have been successful at this; our membership is stable...and party activists are involved in a wide range of local issues.’<sup>105</sup>

Even candidate applicants from outside the constituency emphasized the importance of local politics, highlighting their experience in working with local constituencies and representing local issues:

---

<sup>103</sup> Interview 3 with CLP Officer.

<sup>104</sup> Candidate Application 9.

<sup>105</sup> Candidate Application 2.

‘Equal access to information, support on equality issues, and a willingness to encourage participation in any way – these are some of the ways in which I work at local Party level, with good results and an active local LP Branch.’<sup>106</sup>

While all of the applications highlighted the importance of local politics, several of the candidate applications directly addressed the tension between representing local interests and representing the Labour Party. Some of the candidate applicants stated that they ‘would put local first’<sup>107</sup>:

‘I have put local people’s concerns at the top of my agenda and have never been afraid to represent their views – even when unpopular with Party colleagues.’<sup>108</sup>

In contrast, several candidate applicants put a central emphasis on party loyalty. This was particularly the case for the ethnic minority candidate applicants, one of whom described himself as a ‘long serving soldier of the Labour Party’<sup>109</sup>, while the other ethnic minority candidate applicant stated that he had ‘placed Party loyalty above all else in [his] multilateral relationships.’<sup>110</sup> Other candidate applicants stressed the need to balance the tensions between local politics and party loyalty:

‘In the local community, I have played a leading role in several cross-party campaigns....In all of these activities, however, I have always understood the need to take a broader party-political perspective reflecting both my own core values and party policy.’<sup>111</sup>

In addition to highlighting the importance of local politics, all of the candidate applicants stressed the importance of ‘experience’. In most cases, the candidate applications centered on ‘traditional’ political experience, for example time spent in elected office, as a party member, or in trade unions:

---

<sup>106</sup> Candidate Application 5.

<sup>107</sup> Candidate Application 1.

<sup>108</sup> Candidate Application 8.

<sup>109</sup> Candidate Application 12.

<sup>110</sup> Candidate Application 10.

<sup>111</sup> Candidate Application 2.

‘I became involved in left-wing student politics at Edinburgh University and I first joined the Labour Party in [the 1980s] in Birmingham. Since then I have been active in all the branches and CLPs where I have lived and have held several offices.’<sup>112</sup>

Others emphasized a broader interpretation of the necessary ‘skills’ and ‘knowledge’ required for political office. Several candidates, both male and female, highlighted the skills that they had acquired as parents, citing their experiences as the ‘head of a family’<sup>113</sup>, ‘motivating kids’<sup>114</sup> and ‘balancing family life, work and political commitment.’<sup>115</sup> Others stressed the importance of ‘life experience’: ‘I believe the most useful knowledge is not formally acquired and my life experience has taught me most about human relationships, power and values.’<sup>116</sup>

When discussing their ‘experience’, most of the candidate applicants highlighted their knowledge of and experience with the Scottish Parliament, although the application form does not ask any specific questions about the Scottish Parliament or Scottish politics more generally. Many candidates highlighted their understanding of the ‘wide range of policy areas that are the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament.’<sup>117</sup> Others emphasized their ‘knowledge of the operation of the Scottish Parliament’<sup>118</sup>, as well as a more general ‘understanding of the political system in Scotland and its perception by ordinary Scots’<sup>119</sup>. Several candidate applicants cited their involvement in the devolution campaign, while others highlighted experiences of working in and with the Scottish Parliament. Others spoke directly as to what they could bring to the parliament if elected:

‘As it matures, the Scottish Parliament must lead and shape, and not just reflect, the political and economic environment in Scotland. I believe I have the political commitment, skills, and experience to contribute to that process.’<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Candidate Application 4.

<sup>113</sup> Candidate Application 12.

<sup>114</sup> Candidate Application 2.

<sup>115</sup> Candidate Application 5.

<sup>116</sup> Candidate Application 4.

<sup>117</sup> Candidate Application 7.

<sup>118</sup> Candidate Application 3.

<sup>119</sup> Candidate Application 9.

<sup>120</sup> Candidate Application 2.

## Stage Two: Branch and Union Nominations

After formally submitting an application form to the CLP Procedural Secretary, candidates were allowed to circulate their CV to affiliated organizations and branches of the CLP, accompanied by a one page letter asking for support. Candidates were able to obtain the list of relevant affiliates within the CLP from the Procedural Secretary. Candidates were also entitled to receive a list of eligible members in the CLP by sending a copy of their application form (CV) accompanied by an administration fee of £20 to the Scottish General Secretary. Formally, however, canvassing of individual party members was not officially sanctioned until after the shortlisting stage.

Once the application stage closed, the CLP held an informal ‘meet and greet’ event for the candidates open to all party members, combining both a brief five minute presentation for each candidate and an informal meeting in which candidates could circulate with members. Two weeks later, the party branches, trade unions, and relevant affiliates met to formally decide on candidate nominations<sup>121</sup>. In the case of City North and Greenside, there were five party branches involved in nominations as well as five trade union branches. In terms of organizational affiliates, the City North and Greenside CLP does have a local branch of the Co-operative Party, but does not have any affiliated socialist societies, or an affiliated women’s forum.

Per Labour party rules, local branches are required to put forward one man and one woman in their nominations. Organizational affiliates can also nominate one man and one woman if they wish, but are not required to do so. Of the twelve original candidate applicants, five received branch nominations, two of which were women. All but one of the five branch nominated candidates also received trade union nominations. The trade unions also nominated two additional applicants, one of which was an ethnic minority candidate applicant. The ethnic minority candidate applicant, a former member of the SEC, was also endorsed by the local party executive. As per Labour party rules, the local party executive has to endorse one ethnic minority candidate to go forward for shortlisting.

---

<sup>121</sup> This is not always standard practice. In some cases, the branch and union nomination stage takes place at the end of the informal ‘meet the candidates’ event.

While trade union nominations, like branch nominations, allow candidates to progress to the next stage of the process – shortlisting – most candidates emphasized the importance of branch nominations over union nominations:

‘The branches [were] more significant than the trade unions. Trade unions were a waste of time. I just wonder why they do it now, to be quite honest, because it hasn’t got influence. I know I’ve got a friend whose father’s very up in the trade union movement, and basically, years ago he got Gordon Brown his seat, and it was all done through trade unions. Nowadays, it’s not at all.’<sup>122</sup>

In part, the lack of emphasis on trade union support can be seen as a matter of numbers. In most CLPs, City North and Greenside included, the majority of the delegates are from the branches, rather than trade union delegates. And while trade union members have a vote in the shortlisting process, they vote as party members rather than trade union delegates, and so are not formally obligated to vote for the candidate supported by their trade union. Candidates who receive trade union nominations, then, are not guaranteed trade union votes in the actual shortlisting meeting. This situation is also true of the branch delegates. While their branch may have nominated a particular candidate, the branch delegates present at the meeting are not formally obligated to vote for that particular candidate. As one candidate described the situation:

‘Although I’d had the nominations from each of the trade unions that were affiliated, it doesn’t then guarantee that the person in the room who’s there from that trade union will vote for you...The local delegate...may just have been great pals with one of the other candidates who was nominated. And at the end of the day, wouldn’t vote for me. Some of them I think would take some notice and respect that there’d been a decision already. But it’s not a guaranteed vote in the room.’<sup>123</sup>

The decline in trade union influence in parliamentary selections can also be seen as one of the outcomes of wider trajectories of party modernization, as discussed in chapter seven, in which power has shifted away from constituency activists and trade unions to both party members and the party leadership. In addition, in the specific case of City North and

---

<sup>122</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>123</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant, 8.4.2008.



Greenside, it does not appear that the affiliated trade unions were particularly mobilized throughout the selection contest. Trade union officials noted the general difficulties of supporting and encouraging trade union candidates within the Scottish Labour Party membership. While the party database records trade union membership when members join the Labour Party, this is rarely updated and in most cases does not show union membership. While some unions traditionally provide support for union-sponsored candidates – for example, in the form of parliamentary panels offering coaching and advice from other elected members – these mechanisms were not actively used in the City North and Greenside case. Again, this was framed as an issue of timing:

‘The Committee decided not to establish [a parliamentary panel]...in this selection round as we understood very few MSPs were standing down. Obviously the numbers grew and I am sure we will revisit this after the 2007 elections.’<sup>124</sup>

### **Stage Three: Shortlisting**

Candidate applicants with branch and/or union nominations then went forward to a meeting of the CLP’s executive. At this stage of the selection process, the Executive Committee (EC) made several key decisions. First, it decided how many candidates it was going to shortlist, and second, it made recommendations as to whether the party should implement any equality measures to ensure that either female or ethnic minority candidates were included on the final shortlist. Labour Party rules require that the shortlist be ‘gender-balanced’, meaning that there must be the same number of male and female candidates on the list. As party rules state: ‘other than where an all woman shortlist has been agreed, there shall be an equal number of men and women on the shortlist.’<sup>125</sup> The EC can also make the decision as to whether to explicitly reserve a shortlist place for an ethnic minority candidate. In the case of City North and Greenside, the EC’s recommendation was to implement a shortlist of four. At the EC meeting, it had been suggested that a six-person shortlist be implemented, with three men and three women, but a majority of the members present voted

---

<sup>124</sup> Correspondence between Candidate Applicant and affiliated trade union, 2006.

<sup>125</sup> The Labour Party (2003) ‘Labour’s future: NEC guidelines for the selection of parliamentary candidates’. As discussed in chapter five, the Scottish Labour Party would not release the official SEC guidelines for parliamentary selections. However, in interviews, both CLP officers and central Scottish Party officials confirmed that the wording of the gender-balanced shortlist policy is the same in both NEC and SEC guidelines.

in favour of a four-person shortlist, as only two female candidates had received branch and union nominations<sup>126</sup>.

After the EC made their recommendation, it was put to the full General Committee (GC) of the CLP. The City North and Greenside GC includes approximately forty members, about thirty of whom were branch delegates, and the remainder of whom are either trade union or socialist society delegates. At the shortlisting meeting in question, there were 23 delegates present and eligible to vote. The GC decided first to take presentations from the nominated candidates<sup>127</sup>. Each nominated candidate was given ten minutes to answer three questions, which had been previously set by the CLP Procedural Secretary in consultation with the central Scottish Party at John Smith House. These included<sup>128</sup>:

- What do you see as the **big local issues affecting the constituency**? What **skills** would you bring to the role of the local Labour MSP in trying to **resolve** those issues?
- If selected and then elected what would be your **top three priorities** for **your work** in the Parliament?
- The 2007 election will be an incredibly challenging election for the Labour Party. If selected, what **campaigning experience** will you bring to the campaign in [City North and Greenside] and what **plans do you have** to ensure that we achieve an excellent result in [City North and Greenside]?

The candidates were then required to leave the room, at which point the Procedural Secretary outlined the voting procedure to those members eligible to vote and circulated a worked out example of how to apply Single Transferable Vote (STV). The General Committee then endorsed the EC's recommendation with regards to how the shortlist should be made up, and finally, voted on which of the nominated candidates it wanted to include in that shortlist.

---

<sup>126</sup> Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the City North and Greenside Constituency Labour Party, 2006.

<sup>127</sup> This is not always standard practice.

<sup>128</sup> Internal Party Correspondence, 2006 (bold emphasis in original).

Given the decision to implement a four-person gender-balanced shortlist, this left five male nominated candidate applicants competing for two spots on the final shortlist. As a result, there were mixed feelings within the CLP as to whether the ethnic minority candidate should be automatically shortlisted as well. As one of the male candidates put it:

‘Given that it had to be gender-balanced, the final shortlist kind of scuppered the rest of us, for pete’s sake. If one of the ethnic candidates had got through, there would only be one male left in the last four.’<sup>129</sup>

Several of the nominated male candidates were highly critical of the decision to limit the shortlist to four candidates total. Some perceived this as a sign of internal power negotiations within the CLP, aimed at keeping certain candidates off the shortlist:

‘Here was I who’d secured a branch...and who’d almost gotten another branch, and yet is actually, due to internal machinations, stopped short of getting on the shortlist. Is it beyond the wit and wisdom of the [City North and Greenside] party members to choose between four candidates or six candidates? Why not put the entire number of candidates who got a nomination, say from a branch or trade union, why not put that before the entire CLP?’<sup>130</sup>

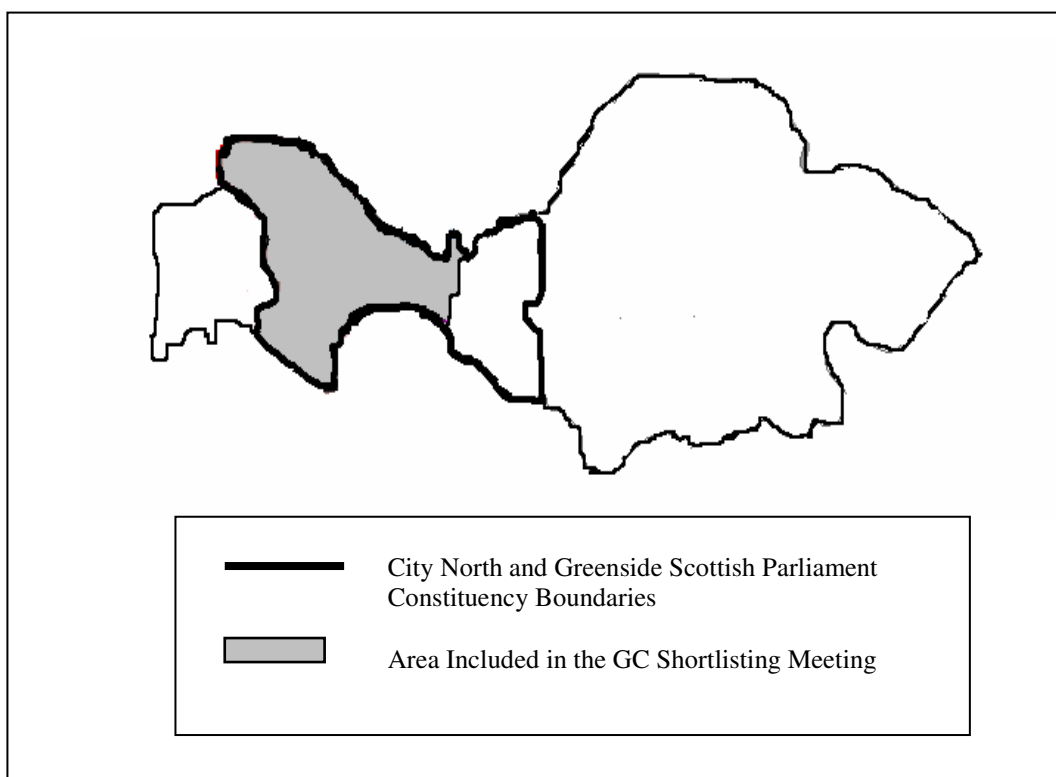
In addition, the short-listing stage was further complicated by the fact that delegates from the Greenside branch were not actually allowed to participate in the GC short-listing meeting. While shortlisting is decided by the GC of the CLP, the boundaries for the City North and Greenside Scottish Parliament seat do not coincide with the boundaries of the organizing CLP, which corresponds to the City North Westminster constituency boundaries. As discussed previously, the City North Westminster constituency includes parts of City North, but does not include Greenside. This disconnect meant that only those individuals who were members of the City North Westminster constituency, within the boundaries of the City North and Greenside Scottish Parliament constituency, could participate in the GC meeting. The section of the City North and Greenside constituency seat which could participate in the shortlisting meeting is depicted in Figure 8.3.

---

<sup>129</sup> Interview 4 with Candidate Applicant, 24.3.2008.

<sup>130</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant, 1.4.2008

**Figure 8.3: City North and Greenside Constituency Boundaries (General Committee Shortlisting Meeting)**



The delegates from Greenside, then, were only invited as observers, rather than full participants. This complication put additional pressure on the GC to shortlist a candidate from Greenside, in order to compensate for the exclusion of the Greenside branch delegates from the meeting:

‘I was certainly of the view that unless you included somebody from [Greenside], the whole thing would be a farce. You’re less likely to get [Greenside] people to work for a [City North] candidate, if a [City North] candidate was selected...I mean, just look at the bigger picture.’<sup>131</sup>

Two of the five male nominated candidates were from Greenside. One, a local Greenside councillor, had received a nomination from the Greenside branch as well as several trade

unions. The other, an ethnic minority candidate, had received trade union nominations. Ultimately, the GC decided not to automatically shortlist the ethnic minority candidate, and the meeting then went to a vote, using Single Transferable Vote (STV). As only two female candidates had received nominations, they were automatically short-listed and did not have to go through a ballot.

From the shortlist, two of the candidates stood out as front-runners, having received a majority of the branch nominations. The ‘front-running’ female candidate, a high-profile woman from outside the CLP with substantial political experience, had received the most branch nominations, while the ‘front-running’ male candidate, an active CLP officer, was seen to be popular within the local party. The remaining candidates had both received one branch nomination each. The ‘second-ranked’ male candidate was the former councillor from Greenside, while the ‘second-ranked’ female candidate was a trade union office-holder and women’s activist from a neighbouring CLP.

## **Stage Four: Canvassing and Campaigning**

Following the shortlisting, candidates were allowed to begin formally campaigning. Candidates were allowed to distribute a canvassing leaflet, which could be mailed to all local party members eligible to participate in the ballot and could also be accompanied by a single-page letter asking for support. Candidates could also approach members personally or by telephone to seek their support. Candidate campaign materials reflected many of the same themes as candidate applications. Again, a central emphasis was put on the importance of representing local interests:

‘The views of local people are of paramount importance and the Scottish Executive needs to be held to account if their concerns are not taken into account. I would ensure that by persuasion, lobbying and strength of character, the views of the people of [City North and Greenside] get a fair hearing in the corridors of Holyrood.’<sup>132</sup>

---

<sup>131</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>132</sup> Candidate Campaign Material 1.

All of the candidates referred to specific local issues in the City North and Greenside constituency, as well as more general concerns facing local constituents:

‘Local people are concerned about local economic development, affordable housing, access to health services, open spaces, anti-social behaviour, good education, jobs, clean and safe streets and good affordable public transport.’<sup>133</sup>

All of the short-listed candidates stressed the importance of ‘experience’, and campaign materials cited candidate experiences of working within the Labour Party, trade unions, local government, or the Scottish Parliament. Both of the female short-listed candidates also highlighted their experiences as parents, one citing her ‘life experience’ as a ‘qualified primary school Teacher with three children’<sup>134</sup>, while the other highlighted her ‘active role in the school community.’<sup>135</sup> In addition, in contrast to the candidate applications, all of the candidate campaign materials explicitly referred to the upcoming election, highlighting the ways in which they would run an election campaign:

‘Labour’s campaign to win in May 2007 must be open, positive, and based on wider labour movement and community involvement. We will organise public meetings and street canvassing, and seek to reach those to whom the political process seems remote and irrelevant.’<sup>136</sup>

‘Only effective leadership and a strong well-organised campaign team can achieve this, and I contend that my experience...will be an important element in delivering success.’<sup>137</sup>

‘With only just [a few] months until the election and acknowledging that no seat can be considered safe, you will want a candidate with proven campaigning and communications skills and someone who will hit the ground running.’<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>133</sup> Candidate Campaign Material 2.

<sup>134</sup> Candidate Campaign Material 3.

<sup>135</sup> Candidate Campaign Material 4.

<sup>136</sup> Candidate Campaign Material 4.

<sup>137</sup> Candidate Campaign Material 1.

<sup>138</sup> Candidate Campaign Material 3.

While party rules specifically prohibit formal campaigning until after short-listing, in reality, campaigning was already well underway from the very beginning of the selection contest, with many of the candidates already canvassing for votes informally throughout the CLP. As one candidate stated:

‘The rules were acknowledged and ignored. As long as you don’t do anything really blatant. You just had to be careful how you went about it. [One of the candidates] just went walking about...and just happened to pass the doors of party members and chat to say hello. I did most of mine by telephone.’<sup>139</sup>

In addition, despite the formal restrictions on campaigning prior to the short-listing stage, candidates are not technically prohibited from contacting members who they already know. As a result, candidates who were already active in the CLP had a distinct advantage over candidates from outside the constituency. In particular, one of the candidates, who was a CLP officer, had direct access to the membership lists before they were officially available, by virtue of his position within the CLP. As another candidate applicant noted:

‘One of the issues we had early on was that [he] started canvassing before the lists were officially available. Because he was [a CLP officer], he had the lists anyway. And I said to him that I thought that was an inappropriate use of the lists. And it is in breach of the rules, absolutely in breach of the rules, and he just laughed. ...and I said something to somebody at the Scottish Labour Party office and they’re just like, well, it’s a contest.’<sup>140</sup>

Several of the candidates highlighted the amount of resources, such as time and money, involved in canvassing for votes:

‘It felt like a long time, I have to say. The whole process felt far too long. It felt like an age, I tell you. And also the other thing is about how much it costs to actually go through that process...you know, putting leaflets together, posting, and all that kind of stuff. It’s a lot of money.’<sup>141</sup>

---

<sup>139</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>140</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>141</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

Other candidates - particularly the female candidates - noted the difficulties of balancing the demands of canvassing and campaigning with work and childcare responsibilities.

‘You’re not allowed to spend a huge amount of money, I don’t think. But even then, you think, where are you going to get 400 second class stamps from? Who’s going to look after your child if you go to [Greenside] three nights in a row? I mean, those are things that you would have to address if you were going to be the MSP candidate anyway as well, but to get initial access to the process, it’s quite off-putting.’<sup>142</sup>

While there was a general understanding amongst the candidates that there would be canvassing outside of the formal rules, several additional rule violations occurred throughout the selection process. A few days before the Greenside branch nomination meeting, the local East Robney MP distributed a constituency report in which they explicitly endorsed the ‘second-ranked’ male candidate, the former councillor from Greenside. Additionally, the head of the Greenside branch distributed a letter to all members of the Greenside BLP, on official headed paper, endorsing the same candidate immediately prior to the final selection meeting. Both interventions were in violation of the party’s formal rules, which explicitly state: ‘No candidate or members...shall interfere with or put under duress any member in regard to how they vote at any stage during the process.’<sup>143</sup> Both violations were reported to both the Procedural Secretary, as well as the Scottish Organizer. While no action was taken by the central Scottish Party on the violation by the local MP, the Scottish Organizer did issue a formal statement regarding the Greenside branch letter at the final selection meeting, instructing party members that they should not be ‘under the impression that they are mandated how to vote tonight and...should discard the contents of the letter.’<sup>144</sup>

There were mixed feelings within the CLP as to the role that key party figures should play in the selection process, particularly in the case of local MSPs and MPs. In the case of City North and Greenside, the retiring local MSP ‘kept right out of it’<sup>145</sup>, choosing neither to formally or informally intervene into the selection contest. Some CLP members attributed this decision to perceived personality conflicts between the MSP and certain candidate

---

<sup>142</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>143</sup> As outlined in the Candidate’s Code of Conduct.

<sup>144</sup> Internal Party Correspondence, 2006.

<sup>145</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.



applicants, particularly from the Greenside section of the constituency. Others highlighted the awkwardness of choosing a political ‘successor’:

‘I think...it’s difficult. You’ve just stood down from doing a job which you were very committed to. There’s something a bit weird about being involved in the selection of your successor.’<sup>146</sup>

However, several candidate applicants and party activists felt that the retiring local MSP should have played a greater role in the process by at least informally endorsing one of the candidates: ‘you still have a responsibility, I think, as an outgoing MSP to make sure the seat gets the best candidate that you think...is going to win the seat.’<sup>147</sup> Some felt that even if the retiring MSP chose not to endorse a particular candidate, she should have intervened in order to ensure that a female candidate took her place:

‘I think that was a mistake on her part. I think she should have given some kind of indication that she wished, for example, a woman. Because she’s very strong, or supposed to be, for women’s representation and to be honest, she wouldn’t have got that seat unless there was twinning seats at the beginning....And therefore, in some ways she should have kept out of it, but I think she should have perhaps had a role of at least saying, it should have been a woman.’<sup>148</sup>

The other local MP, representing the City North Westminster constituency, also does not appear to have intervened in the selection contest. Some saw this as a professional decision to stay out of the process:

‘[The City North MP], I think, took the view that it wasn’t appropriate for an elected member to intervene directly or be seen to be supporting somebody, when the party had its own process to go through.’<sup>149</sup>

This was also perceived to be a personal decision, as the City North MP had both personal and professional connections with many of the candidate applicants. One of the candidate

---

<sup>146</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>147</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>148</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>149</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

applicants, who'd previously worked with the City North MP, negotiated an informal arrangement to ensure that the MP wouldn't endorse or support another candidate: 'the main thing I did...was to get a personal agreement with [them] that [they] would stay out of it.'<sup>150</sup>

## Stage Five: Final Hustings

The final selection meeting was open to the full local party membership, which stands at approximately 230 members eligible to vote. At the final hustings, ninety-six members were present, and thirty-six additional postal votes were also counted. This was perceived to be an unusually high turnout for the CLP, due in large part to a strong showing from Greenside party members who turned up in several minibuses on the night. As one of the shortlisted candidates from the City North side of the constituency observed:

'I think there were around sixty-three members in [Greenside]. And I think either by being at the meeting or getting a postal vote in, I think about sixty of them voted. So in terms of turnout across the CLP, they just out-machined us.'<sup>151</sup>

The four short-listed candidates were given a last opportunity to present and answer questions before a final vote by party members. While the candidates were not allowed to hear each other speak, the general perception amongst the short-listed candidates was that the presentations themselves did not have a significant impact on the overall outcome, as, to some extent, party members had 'heard them all before anyways.'<sup>152</sup> Others felt that the question and answer session potentially swung a few votes in the room, citing a number of 'well-rehearsed questions'<sup>153</sup> asked by party members that centred on perceived weaknesses of particular candidates. As one of the short-listed candidates stated:

'I kind of got nailed on the night by a very deliberate question...did I have a problem with trade unions, since I wasn't a trade union member. I didn't answer it very well. I didn't have a pre-rehearsed answer. From what I got afterwards, I should have seen that coming. I should have had a line ready.'<sup>154</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>151</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>152</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>153</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>154</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

Party members at the meeting voted according to STV, ranking candidates in order of preference. In the first round of voting, the ‘front-running’ male and female candidates came in second and third respectively, while the other male candidate received the majority of the first round votes, a third of which were postal votes. The other female candidate received the lowest number of votes, and her votes were distributed according to second preferences to the other candidates. In the second round, the ‘front-running’ female candidate was also eliminated. Ultimately, the final vote was won by the male local councillor, who won more than half of the votes, while the ‘front-running’ male candidate came in second. The two female candidates came in at third and fourth place. Voting figures for the final hustings, including a breakdown of postal and personal votes, can be seen in Table 8.2.

**Table 8.2: Voting Figures for City North and Greenside Final Hustings**

|  | <b>Female Candidate (2)</b> | <b>Female Candidate (1)</b> | <b>Male Candidate (2)</b> | <b>Male Candidate (Winner)</b> |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Room Votes<br>(96 present)   | 13                          | 22                          | 29                        | 31                             |
| Postal Votes<br>(36 total)   | 5                           | 5                           | 11                        | 15                             |
| <b>Total First Round</b>   | <b>18</b>                   | <b>27</b>                   | <b>40</b>                 | <b>46</b>                      |
| Female Candidate (2) –<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Vote Distributed<br>(3 not used) |                             | 6                           | 3                         | 6                              |
| <b>Total Second Round</b>  |                             | <b>33</b>                   | <b>43</b>                 | <b>52</b>                      |
| Female Candidate (1) –<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Votes Distributed                |                             |                             | 9                         | 14                             |
| Female Candidate (2) –<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> Votes Distributed                |                             |                             | 2                         | 3                              |
| <b>Total Third Round</b>   |                             |                             | <b>54</b>                 | <b>69</b>                      |

Many of the candidates and party members were surprised by the results on the night. The City media had largely presented the contest as a ‘two-horse race’ between the front-running male and female candidates, depicting the contest as a choice between a high-profile versus a local candidate:

‘It will boil down to [the female candidate’s] high profile and her ability to appeal across a wide spectrum of voters against [the male candidate’s] knowledge and understanding of the politics of the area.’<sup>155</sup>

This perception of the ‘two-horse race’ was shared by factions of the local party, including the assumed male front-runner:

‘I can remember standing before the meeting, talking to [the female front-runner] and said “Whatever happens, either you or I are going to win this tonight”...and she said something similar. So our own mindset between the two of us was, this is between you and I. What we both totally underestimated was the amount of support the [Greenside] machine could get out of [Greenside]...In terms of turnout, they just out-gunned us.’<sup>156</sup>

Some members saw the selection result as reflecting a balance between being a local candidate and being an electable one:

‘[The front-running male candidate] was a local person, but had no experience. [The front-running female candidate] was high profile and experienced, but she was not local. She was an outsider. [The selected candidate] was not a favourite, but he’s experienced and a local person....This was why he was elected as the candidate.’<sup>157</sup>

In subsequent media coverage of the final results of the selection contest, the winning candidate repeatedly cited the importance of being a local and experienced candidate in his selection victory:

‘I just feel that the Parliament actually lacks a bit of experience – that’s across all parties and I think that was something that was important at the time of my selection.’<sup>158</sup>

---

<sup>155</sup> CLP Member quoted in City North newspaper, 2006.

<sup>156</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>157</sup> Interview 10 with CLP Member, 15.5.08.

<sup>158</sup> Selected Candidate quoted in City newspaper, 2006.

‘I worked very hard. I think being a local candidate was clearly an issue.’<sup>159</sup>

Others present throughout the selection process saw a slightly different picture highlighting the divisions between the two sides of the constituency and the ‘Greenside dynamic’ running through the selection contest. While the town of Greenside is a small part of the Scottish Parliament electorate, it has the biggest Labour Party membership in the constituency seat, and historically, has tended to dominate the selection process:

‘In some ways, whoever got support from [Greenside] was more than likely to have a better chance because of the numbers, the way it’s stacked up. [City North] people, even though they knew that, didn’t seem to get themselves organized well enough.’<sup>160</sup>

Greenside was seen within the constituency as a very traditional Labour Party, in which loyalty and local politics played a large role: ‘[Greenside’s] quite a traditional Labour Party in that key players pretty much say this is how we’re going to vote, we’re going to support our local man and everybody just gets on board and does it.’<sup>161</sup> While some factions of the CLP, then, saw the contest as a ‘two-horse race’ between the front-running male and front-running female candidates, others had always seen the second-ranked male candidate, the Greenside local councillor, as a key contender:

‘I always saw [the Greenside local councillor] – if he got to the last four – as being a threat. Of course he was, because [Greenside] had the most members, and it’s all about loyalty.’<sup>162</sup>

‘Certainly in the [City North] part, I think, yes, it would be [the front-running male and female candidates]. But that ignores a significant chunk of votes to come from [Greenside], and it was a sort of favourite son selection.’<sup>163</sup>

---

<sup>159</sup> Selected Candidate quoted in City newspaper, 2006.

<sup>160</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>161</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>162</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>163</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

## Stage Six: Election

While the male Greenside candidate was successfully selected, he ultimately lost the seat for Scottish Labour in the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections, in a 13.3% swing in favour of the SNP. To some, this was seen as an extension of a surprising selection in a divided constituency, in which party activists from the City North wing of the CLP were reluctant to support a candidate that the majority of them hadn't voted for. Activist turnout was extremely low in the elections, and party members expressed difficulty in 'getting the candidate known' on the City North side of the constituency<sup>164</sup>:

'There was a strong feeling among the [City North] activists....who felt, this is not our candidate. We don't know what happened here, but this is not the person we wanted. It's the first election I can remember where activist turnout was so low. So the people you rely on to come out and do the canvassing, deliver the leaflets, do the telephone voter ID, people just didn't turn out....The whole election was run with about ten of us.'<sup>165</sup>

While to some members, the selected candidate reflected a balance between being a 'local' candidate and an 'electable' one, others highlighted 'degrees' of locality, emphasizing that while the candidate was 'local' to Greenside, he wasn't necessarily known on the City North side of the constituency:

'He was very much the [Greenside] candidate. He wasn't known that much at all on the [City North] side, other than by his profile.'<sup>166</sup>

'People didn't know [him]. He was considered to be an outsider, even though he lives in the constituency. Because he was a councillor of the [East Robney] Council. So [he] was a new thing here, a new person.'<sup>167</sup>

'Getting the candidate known' was made more difficult by the lack of support from key party figures within the CLP, most importantly, the retiring MSP. Several CLP members and party activists expressed frustration with the retiring local MSP's lack of involvement in the

---

<sup>164</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>165</sup> Interview 3 with CLP Officer.

<sup>166</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>167</sup> Interview 2 with Candidate Applicant.

campaign: ‘right at the time when it would have been really nice to have had the retiring MSP endorsing the newly selected one, [she] went AWOL.’<sup>168</sup> This lack of support and active campaigning for the selected candidate on the City North side of the constituency was compounded by a dramatic collapse in the Greenside vote, partly as a result of a set of controversies involving the East Robney regional council, of which the selected male candidate was a member. As one CLP officer recalled:

‘With hindsight, what appeared to be strengths were actually quite significant weaknesses. [The selected candidate] certainly had a high profile in [Greenside]. We didn’t realize it was the wrong kind of profile. The electorate walked away in droves.’<sup>169</sup>

While several of the incidents had taken place before or during the selection process, they had been publicized largely in the East Robney local papers, rather than the City papers. The City media did not report on the controversies until the spring of 2007, only a few months before the elections. As one candidate applicant explained:

‘[Greenside] was a completely different political experience, dynamic, local authority. And only a small percentage of the Scottish Parliament electorate lived there. But it’s not just a thing about numbers. What it meant was that the bulk of the members of the Labour Party GC didn’t know really know what [Greenside’s] issues were. They didn’t know the record of the Council...And it was being reported in the local papers by then, but in the [Greenside] local papers, not in the [City] local papers. So there was a real underestimation ...amongst the [City North] Constituency Labour Party of what was actually going on in the neighbouring local authority. And the consequences for the local Labour Party membership.’<sup>170</sup>

The election results were also influenced by wider issues within the Scottish Labour Party, reflected in an increasing decline in Labour Party membership, an overall loss of Labour seats, and a rise in support for the ultimately victorious SNP. In particular, the election results highlight the tension between selectability and electability in the Scottish Labour candidate selection process. There is a distinct gap between the approximately 230 City North and Greenside Labour Party members who select the candidate and the 60,000 City North and Greenside constituents who elect the eventual MSP. Several of the candidate

---

<sup>168</sup> Interview 3 with CLP Officer.

<sup>169</sup> Interview 3 with CLP Officer.

<sup>170</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

applicants highlighted the tension between the repeated emphasis on selecting a ‘local’ candidate, versus the need to appeal to and also represent a wider electorate: ‘I think people forget that they’re selecting somebody who’s going to be part of a national parliament.’<sup>171</sup>

Throughout the selection contest, many of the candidates repeatedly highlighted the importance of selecting a high-profile candidate who would appeal to a wider electorate beyond the traditional Labour Party membership:

‘I don’t know how many times I said...you need someone that’s a high-profile candidate. So I suppose what I was saying was, I was a high-profile candidate. I’d got a good respect from people, and I genuinely believed that people in [City North and Greenside] who were not party members, but people who were going to vote would vote for me, because they knew you, they knew your reputation as a hard-working councillor...And I know people who said that they didn’t vote for Labour, but if I’d been a candidate, they would have.’<sup>172</sup>

The tension between selectability and electability in the candidate selection process is reflected in wider internal party debates within Scottish Labour. At the 2008 Scottish Labour Party Conference, then-party leader Wendy Alexander criticized the so-called ‘selectorate’ of local party office-bearers controlling candidate selection decisions, and suggested that Scottish Labour selection contests should operate as an American-style primary system, in which all local supporters would have a vote throughout the selection process<sup>173</sup>. In the case of City North and Greenside, several candidate applicants criticized the powerful role of party activists in the candidate selection process, and highlighted the difficulty of being selected by local party figures ‘when you’ve got a history with the party’:

‘When you’ve been in a senior position in the party, you’ve had to take hard decisions in the party, you’ve made enemies in the party, it’s very difficult. But I think you do actually have a resonance with the wider community, and not with the activists. And to restrict the [shortlist] numbers to four, and for a room full of thirty people to make a decision about which four candidates is a bloody joke. I mean, it’s Neanderthal politics. It’s Dickensian politics.’<sup>174</sup>

---

<sup>171</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>172</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>173</sup> Barnes, E. (2008) ‘Alexander vows to stand up for ‘victims’ of SNP’, *Scotland on Sunday*, 30 March 2008.

<sup>174</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.



These issues were exacerbated by a sense of complacency on the part of the CLP and the central Scottish Party as to City North and Greenside's status as a 'safe' seat. As the CLP was going through the selection process, the SNP was already mobilized and campaigning within the constituency, having selected a high-profile, well-funded candidate at a much earlier stage. Due to the late timing of the City North and Greenside selection contest, Scottish Labour was already well behind the SNP's campaign. In addition, Labour party activists within the CLP were poorly organized:

'Two days before the election date, I see that one of the ex councillors of the Labour Party...he was just hanging posters two days before the election date. Whereas the SNP had been knocking on doors a month before. With their open bus with the loudspeaker in it, you know. Going door to door.'<sup>175</sup>

Some within the CLP felt that this lack of organization was in part the fault of the selected candidate, who was not perceived to be a particularly active campaigner: 'I think you've got to really want to win it, you know, if you put yourself forward as a candidate.'<sup>176</sup> Others attributed the lack of organization to the 'old-fashioned' and traditional nature of the City North and Greenside CLP:

'It was a creaking constituency in the sense that the level of campaigning was frankly abysmal...[My] former wife lives right in the constituency, moved there 10 years ago, has yet to see somebody from the Labour Party at her door. But, for example, last year had three visits from the SNP and a number of leaflets from the SNP. In the end, voted SNP. And that summarized the failure of that constituency party to campaign on an ongoing and thorough basis. So it's an old-fashioned constituency in that sense.'<sup>177</sup>

The lack of organization and activist turnout within the CLP can be linked, in part, to a wider trend of declining Labour party membership in Scotland<sup>178</sup>. In the case of City North and Greenside, this overall drop in membership is reflected in a return to the core 'old guard' of the CLP party membership:

---

<sup>175</sup> Interview 10 with CLP Member.

<sup>176</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>177</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>178</sup> With regards to Labour Party membership in Scotland, it should be noted that Scottish Labour does not actually control party membership, and that members can not actually 'join' the Scottish Party. The British Labour Party controls membership recruitment, manages membership, and collects membership fees from individual members (Lynch and Birrell, 2004).

‘You have a situation now where, particularly in terms of the Scottish Parliament, things are not going well and membership is declining. So you’re back to your core old folk that are 80 plus....I mean guys that were old when I joined – when I joined the party in [Greenside], I was just twenty-three, turning twenty-four – and these folk are still around and make up the bulk of the membership.’<sup>179</sup>

Finally, as discussed in more depth in chapter six, the election results in City North and Greenside reflect a wider electoral swing in favour of the SNP, who won twenty seats more than in 2003, successfully taking several of Scottish Labour’s ‘safe’ seats and ultimately winning 47 seats to Labour’s 46, ending over fifty years of Labour dominance of Scottish politics. Following the election, media coverage of the City North and Greenside electoral result was generally subsumed within the wider media coverage of Labour losses and SNP victories. There appears to be no specific coverage of Labour’s electoral loss in City North and Greenside, and any general coverage of electoral results mentioned the seat only in passing, providing few additional details.

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter told the ‘story’ of a selection, reconstructing the temporal sequence of events in a Scottish Labour constituency seat selection contest in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections. At first glance, findings from the case study reinforce trends within the wider literature on political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland, which argues that the Scottish Labour Party can be characterized by an increasing degree of territorial autonomy in the area of candidate selection (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Laffin and Shaw, 2007; Laffin et al, 2007). Evidence from the case study confirms that the British Labour Party plays little to no role in Scottish parliamentary candidate selections post-1999, and that formal control over rule-making and interpretation in the candidate selection process lies primarily with the central Scottish Party.

---

<sup>179</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

Yet, the case study highlights an overall trend of *decentralization* in the candidate selection process that goes substantially beyond the ‘revised structure of power’ highlighted by devolution scholars (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006, p. 149). Much of the literature on candidate selection in post-devolution Scotland continues to focus on the changing role of the British Labour party, as internal decision-making over candidate selection is increasingly devolved downward to the regional Scottish party (e.g. Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Laffin and Shaw, 2007; Laffin et al, 2007). The case study, however, highlights the overall lack of formal and informal intervention in the process by the central Scottish Party, and demonstrates the extent to which candidate selection decisions are now increasingly left to the discretion of local Labour parties, potentially signalling a return to the party’s past tradition of decentralized constituency-based selection (Denver, 1988). Running parallel to this is an apparent trend of *informalization*, in which there appears to be an overall drift from, as well as lack of enforcement of, the formal rules, regulations, and procedures of the selection process. It is clear, then, that there is more ‘going on’ in the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland than the mainstream literature seems to suggest. The following chapter returns to these issues in more depth and draws upon the insights of both new institutionalist and feminist theory to provide a more thorough interpretation and analysis of the micro-level case study.

## **Assessing the Case Study: Beyond Mainstream Explanations**

Having told the ‘story’ of the City North and Greenside selection contest, the focus of this chapter is on interpretation and analysis of the micro-level case study. Drawing on the insights of feminist and new institutional theory, it suggests that the candidate selection process remains a tense battleground post-1999, despite declarations to the contrary within the mainstream literature (e.g. Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004). Evidence from the case study highlights ongoing tensions and contradictions in the political recruitment process in the Scottish Labour Party, while also drawing attention to an increasing gap between the formal rules of candidate selection and the implementation, enactment, and enforcement of these rules on the ground. The chapter interprets these areas of tension, conflict, and contestation through a gendered lens, providing brief illustrations of particular gendered mechanisms of institutional resistance and reproduction, while also highlighting some of the gendered dynamics and institutional interconnections that underpin the institutions of political recruitment. It concludes with some preliminary insights into the complex and gendered dynamics of innovation in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution, which the thesis expands upon in the subsequent chapter.

### ***I: Revealing the Tensions***

As argued in chapter seven, mainstream accounts of the candidate selection process post-devolution generally conclude that the tensions apparent in Scottish Labour’s candidate selection process in 1999 have been resolved (e.g. Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004). While these accounts draw attention to changes in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution – highlighting the increasing autonomy of the regional Scottish party – they overwhelmingly focus on the continuity of formal rules over time,

stressing the ‘apparent stability’ of the ‘structures and practices’ of the Labour Party after some initial difficulties in 1999 (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006, p. 150; Laffin and Shaw, 2007; Laffin et al, 2007; Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004). Findings from the case study, however, suggest that the reality is more complex, highlighting ongoing tensions and contradictions in the political recruitment process in the Scottish Labour Party, while also drawing attention to an increasing gap between the formal rules of candidate selection and the implementation, enactment, and enforcement of these rules on the ground.

## **From Centralization to Decentralization**

Findings from the case study suggest that the tensions between central intervention and local control in candidate selection post-devolution are ongoing, despite declarations to the contrary within the mainstream literature (e.g. Mitchell and Bradbury 2004). As argued in chapter seven, allegations of ‘control-freakery’ have become the dominant frame for interpreting candidate selection post-devolution, reflected in both party discourse and in the corresponding academic literature. In the City North and Greenside seat, many interviewees remained highly critical of central party intervention into the process in 1999. As one candidate applicant who had originally stood for selection in 1999 stated:

‘If ever organizations treated people in the same way that we’d been treated by the Labour Party at that stage, most people would just have walked away and said, stuff you.’<sup>180</sup>

In the case of City North and Greenside, the candidate selection process was left almost entirely to the discretion of the CLP: ‘as far as I was aware, the [Scottish Party] seemed to be quite happy to leave them up to it.’<sup>181</sup> The central Scottish Party appears only to have formally intervened at the very beginning and end of the process, convening the initial organization panel to set the selection timetable, in conjunction with the CLP EC, and sending the Scottish Organizer to observe the final hustings meeting. Several candidate

---

<sup>180</sup> Interview 4 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>181</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

applicants and party members highlighted this lack of central intervention into the process as a positive development for the party:

‘I didn’t sense any Central Party influence at all. I’m not a big fan of Stalinist politics, you know...So it was our decision, in the membership of the local party. And that’s good.’<sup>182</sup>

While formally, the central Scottish party still retains primary authority over candidate selection decisions, in practice, the party appears to have withdrawn from almost any intervention – formal or informal - into the process. Again, in the mainstream literature, decentralization in candidate selection and recruitment is explained and interpreted through the dominant ‘control freakery’ frame. For example, Hopkin and Bradbury (2006) explain the increasing decentralization of the candidate selection process as strategic political manoeuvring, ‘in light of the difficulties [the Labour Party] had experienced in imposing its will’ in 1999 (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006, p. 142). In the case of City North and Greenside, central intervention was perceived to be highly contentious, particularly in the area of gender balance: ‘We’ve seen down South, when seats have been lost which were quite safe seats, because a candidate was seen to be imposed by the central party.’<sup>183</sup> As noted previously, the central Scottish party was reluctant to implement or enforce strong equality guarantees, particularly given the late timing of the City North and Greenside selection contest: ‘we couldn’t afford to end up in a long drawn out contentious process when we had a small number of weeks to put a candidate in place.’<sup>184</sup>

Evidence from the case study also highlights ‘processes unfolding on the periphery’, which are often overlooked in existing accounts that focus solely on the control-freakery frame (Thelen, 2004, p. 295; see also Clemens, 1997; Orren and Skowronek, 1994; Weir, 1992b). Institutions do not just generate positive feedback, they also ‘generate grievances’ (Schneiberg and Clemens, 2006, 218). In moments of institutional change, the “losers” do not necessarily disappear. Those who ‘lost out’ in the 1999 selection contests frequently appealed to principles of party democracy, arguing that the highly centralized process had

---

<sup>182</sup> Interview 9 with CLP Member.

<sup>183</sup> Interview 9 with CLP member.

<sup>184</sup> Interview 3 with CLP Officer.

resulted in a ‘restriction rather than a broadening of democracy’ within the Labour Party<sup>185</sup>. However, evidence from the City North and Greenside case highlights a distinct shift in internal party debates surrounding centralization and decentralization. CLP members and candidate applicants frequently re-framed the issue of central party intervention in terms of locals vs. outsiders: ‘The last thing we would want is somebody from the outside.’<sup>186</sup> In the case of City North and Greenside, almost all of the candidates were relatively ‘local’, living within the wider City area, if not within the specific City North boundaries. ‘Localness’, then, became a matter of degrees:

‘I mean, I’m two streets away from the edge of the boundary so I was pretty nearly local anyways. And the fact is that you don’t know every bit of the constituency anyways – it’s huge. So local only means some things when it suits people, was a bit how I felt about it.’<sup>187</sup>

## From Formalization to Informalization

Evidence from the case study also draws attention to an overall trend of informalization in candidate selection and recruitment, highlighting a distinct gap between the formal rules of the selection process and the practical implementation and enactment of these rules on the ground. As such, mainstream analyses of candidate selection post-devolution that focus only on the continuity of formal rules over time often miss the ‘slippage between these and the real world to which they are supposed to apply’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 25; see also Hacker, 2005). The case of City North and Greenside highlights the extent to which the selection process increasingly operates in accordance with informal rules and shared understandings. While this decoupling of formal and informal rules is masked by formal stability on the surface, the day- to-day ‘business’ of candidate selection is largely guided by informal norms. For example, evidence from the case study highlights an increasing informalization of candidate selection criteria. Formally, job descriptions and job specifications – which were rewritten in the run-up to the 1999 Scottish Parliament elections

---

<sup>185</sup> These are the words of Mark Lazarowicz, former chairman of the Scottish Labour Party, who was rejected during the interview stage in the run-up to the 1999 Scottish Parliament elections (cited in Bradbury et al, 2000b, p. 158; see also Jones, 2001).

<sup>186</sup> Candidate Applicant, quoted in East Robney newspaper, 2006.

<sup>187</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

– are still in place. However, job descriptions were not distributed to the members of the City North and Greenside CLP:

‘The thing is, there is a job description. And I have got them...because I’ve been interviewed twice by the Labour Party and at that point you get given the job specification and job description. And, I mean, it just outlines all that you’d expect an MSP to do, but it’s quite detailed and explains the relationship with the local party and different things. So the job description exists. And I asked [the Scottish Organizer] for it to be passed on to the CLP Executive in [City North and Greenside] and was told to mind my own business.’<sup>188</sup>

In the absence of formal job specifications and descriptions, participants in the selection process frequently commented on the lack of agreement or discussion among party selectors as to what a ‘good’ candidate was, both in a general sense and in a particular sense for the constituency in question:

‘They didn’t step out and say who’s going to be the best candidate who’ll work the hardest, work to win the seat, have the most experience, more people will vote for because we ought to win the seat, has got the highest profile...I think a lot of people didn’t think that through.’<sup>189</sup>

‘I mean, I don’t know what they were looking for. Nobody tells you what they’re looking for...I mean, the reverse of that is nobody gives you an advert. Nobody tells you. So the CLP...they didn’t ever have a discussion, even on the Executive, even in a smaller group. They never had a discussion about what they were looking for in an MSP.’<sup>190</sup>

Yet, while there was no explicit use or enforcement of formal selection criteria, interviews with both candidate applicants and selectors suggest an implicit sense of what selectors were looking ‘for’, although as one candidate applicant remarked: ‘I think I had much more of a sense of it at the end of the process than at the beginning.’<sup>191</sup> For example, while candidate applications varied, overall the applications converged around similar themes, highlighting the perceived importance of local politics and political experience. In interviews, candidate applicants repeatedly cited the importance of being seen as ‘local’:

---

<sup>188</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>189</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>190</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>191</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.



‘[This] was a constituency where it was very hard for someone outside the constituency to get themselves selected as a candidate, unless they’ve got a very, very high public profile.’<sup>192</sup>

## Rule-Making and Rule-Breaking

This trend of informalization in candidate selection and recruitment appears to be compounded not only by the overall lack of intervention into the process by the central Scottish Party, but also by the inconsistent and uneven enforcement of formal rules by both central and local party officials. As Streeck and Thelen (2005) note, there is ‘nothing automatic about institutional stability...Institutions do not survive by standing still’ (p. 24). Rather, institutions require ‘active maintenance’, they need to be continually ‘reset and refocused, or sometimes more fundamentally recalibrated and renegotiated’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 24). Without active ‘tending’, institutions can be subject to atrophy and drift, processes that, while masked by formal stability on the surface, can ultimately result in fundamental change (Hacker, 2005; see also Skocpol, 1992).

However, drift does not just ‘happen’ (see Hacker, 2005). Rather, it ‘can be promoted by political cultivation’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 25). Findings from the case study draw attention to the active cultivation of drift and erosion in the institutions of political recruitment, highlighting repeated incidences of rule-breaking as well as a general lack of rule enforcement on the part of key party actors. In some areas, the practice of rule-breaking appears to have become a ‘rule’ in itself<sup>193</sup>. For example, while the party’s Candidates Code of Conduct explicitly prohibits any campaigning until after the short-listing stage, in practice, there was a general understanding amongst the candidates that there would be canvassing outside of the formal rules: ‘the rules were acknowledged and ignored.’<sup>194</sup>

---

<sup>192</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>193</sup> On the importance of rule-breaking more generally, see Herrigel (2008); Sheingate (2009, forthcoming).

<sup>194</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

Other incidences of rule-breaking in the case study highlight the importance of positional power and authority in the selection process, raising questions as to *which* institutional actors are allowed to make, interpret, and break the rules. In the case of City North and Greenside, authority over rule interpretation and enforcement lay with key party actors in the CLP and the central Scottish party, namely the CLP Procedural Secretary and the Scottish Organizer. Yet, by virtue of their positional power, these actors were in a position not only to make, interpret, and enforce the rules, but also to break them. For example, one candidate applicant reported a rule violation to the Scottish Organizer regarding another candidate, who as a CLP officer had direct access to the membership lists before they were officially available:

‘One of the issues we had early on was that [he] started canvassing before the lists were officially available. Because he was [a CLP officer], he had the lists anyway. And I said to him that I thought that was an inappropriate use of the lists. And it is in breach of the rules, absolutely in breach of the rules, and he just laughed. ...and I said something to somebody at the Scottish Labour Party office and they’re just like, well, it’s a contest.’<sup>195</sup>

From the start of the selection process, candidate applicants were informed that they should contact either the CLP Procedural Secretary or the Scottish Organizer with any questions or complaints regarding selection rules, regulations, and procedures. Yet, while both formal and informal complaints regarding incidences of rule-breaking were made to both actors both during and after the selection process by candidate applicants, as well as other party members, local and central party officials do not appear to have taken any direct action on these complaints in most cases: ‘It was just like well, it’s been done. Yes, it wasn’t right. Oh well, carry on.’<sup>196</sup>

## Something Old, Something New

While formally, many institutional reforms are still in place, findings from the case study highlight an overall lack of enforcement of the rules, regulations, and procedures of the candidate selection process, and draw attention to an increasing gap between formal rhetoric and reality. For example, in the case of City North and Greenside, central Scottish party

---

<sup>195</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>196</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

officials continue to formally stress the importance of central control in enforcing equality guarantees, while also highlighting the reluctance of local parties to implement these guarantees: 'Change [in the numbers of women MSPs] happened because of party centralization and would probably not have happened otherwise. We said to them, we will have it.'<sup>197</sup> Yet, in practice, the central Scottish party has been generally reluctant to implement or enforce strong equality guarantees post-1999, and decided against using mechanisms such as AWS very early on into the City North and Greenside selection contest. In addition, the central party does not appear to have made an active effort to recruit women candidates for the seat in question, or to encourage them to run.

The case of City North and Greenside, then, raises potential questions as to both the success and sustainability of institutional innovation in the institutions of political recruitment, questions which reflect wider debates surrounding the 'success' of the new politics in post-devolution Scotland. Yet, while the conventional wisdom in the mainstream academic literature seems to be that the new politics is a 'spent force' (e.g. Arter, 2004; McGarvey, 2001; Mitchell, 2004), evidence from the case study highlights the ways in which participants in the selection process draw upon diverse and sometimes contradictory institutional elements – old and new, formal and informal – and suggests that the tensions between the 'new politics' and 'politics as usual' are ongoing.

For example, in applications and campaign materials, candidate applicants frequently drew upon traditional conceptions of political experience, while at the same time emphasizing a broader interpretation of the necessary 'skills' and 'knowledge' required for political office. For instance, the front-running female candidate put a central emphasis on her extensive political experience:

'With only just [a few] months until the election and acknowledging that no seat can be considered safe, you will want a candidate with proven campaigning and communications skills and someone who will hit the ground running.'<sup>198</sup>

---

<sup>197</sup> Interview 1 with Scottish Labour Party Official, 18.1.2007.

<sup>198</sup> Candidate Campaign Material 3.

Yet, at the same time, the candidate highlighted her ‘life experience’ as a ‘qualified primary school Teacher with three children.’<sup>199</sup> Other candidate applicants, both male and female, also highlighted the skills that they had acquired as parents, citing experiences as the ‘head of a family’<sup>200</sup>, ‘motivating kids’<sup>201</sup> and ‘balancing family life, work and political commitment.’<sup>202</sup> Others stressed the importance of informal experience: ‘I believe the most useful knowledge is not formally acquired and my life experience has taught me most about human relationships, power and values.’<sup>203</sup>

Participants in the selection process also employed competing definitions of ‘new’ and ‘old’ politics when discussing the divided nature of the City North and Greenside CLP. In particular, the town of Greenside was frequently portrayed as ‘traditional’, ‘old-fashioned’, and ‘Old Labour’, in contrast to the City North side of the constituency:

‘I got a hold of a list of members and sadly what surprised me was that as someone who’d joined the party in 1976 as I say in [Greenside], and was involved in the late 80s and early 90s – it’s a hell of a lot of the same people that were around. And what struck me about the constituency was that it was a very old-fashioned constituency in terms of its politics...you know, New Labour was really not around.’<sup>204</sup>

## ***II: The Gendered Politics of Erosion***

Overall, evidence from the case study suggests that while significant innovations have been made in the institutions of political recruitment in the Scottish Labour Party post-devolution, the underlying pattern is one of erosion and drift. In the area of gender balance in particular, findings from the case study highlight an increasing gap between formal rhetoric and reality, as well as a general reluctance on the part of both the central or local party to implement or enforce positive action mechanisms and equality guarantees post-1999. At first glance, however, it is difficult to distinguish clearly gendered patterns from what may well be a

---

<sup>199</sup> Candidate Campaign Material 3.

<sup>200</sup> Candidate Application 12.

<sup>201</sup> Candidate Application 2.

<sup>202</sup> Candidate Application 5.

<sup>203</sup> Candidate Application 4.

<sup>204</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

wider erosion of the norms, rules, and practices put into place under the banner of the ‘new politics.’

## Direct and Indirect Discrimination

Candidate applicants and party members reported few incidents of direct gender discrimination, in contrast to other recent studies of gender and political recruitment in the United Kingdom and elsewhere (e.g. Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski, 2002). In the few instances when participants in the City North and Greenside selection contest did talk about direct discrimination, they attributed sexist comments to party members more generally:

‘I think in terms of the female thing, the gender balance thing...in terms of [City North and Greenside], I think there is a view, and this was said to me on a number of occasions when I was standing there, we’ll not select a woman here. And whether it’s from a close-minded community with values that take a long time to die or what, I don’t know, but that was the view among the members.’<sup>205</sup>

Findings from the case study do suggest that incidences of indirect discrimination – for example, in which gendered assumptions of what is an ‘ideal candidate’ hinder potential women candidates – are still prevalent in the Scottish Labour Party. Both of the female short-listed candidates felt that they were judged on a different basis than their male counterparts:

‘I’ve said...to some people, you wonder if you were a man with the experience I’ve had. You know, if you look at my CV, it’s pretty impressive. And yet they don’t select you...it all came down to support for the local man.’<sup>206</sup>

‘The candidate who was selected conveyed in the meeting...that the trade unions were with him. Which is factually correct. He had some trade union experience, but so have I. But it came across that he was the trade union man, and that, I think, is also something about what people in the audience want to here about what men are saying. Because I think, it’s still harder to get your head around the idea that the seasoned trade union

---

<sup>205</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>206</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

activist is going to be a woman. So I think, although I'd got that background, and certainly the paperwork shows that that was where all my support came from, how do you convince a lot of retired male trade unionists that you're bringing the same thing to the table? I think it's harder.'<sup>207</sup>

Yet other participants in the City North and Greenside selection contest denied allegations of either direct or indirect gender discrimination, again re-framing the issue in terms of 'local' versus 'outsider' candidates:

'I think the two female Labour candidates in the final four probably would suffer from, not because they were female, but because they weren't so well-connected into the constituency party....I don't think they were biased against women, in the sense that [the retiring female MSP] managed to get the nomination back in 1999. But she was local.'<sup>208</sup>

## **Positive Action and Equality Guarantees**

The case study also raises questions as to the institutionalization of equality guarantees and positive action mechanisms in the Labour Party post-devolution. As discussed previously, the central Scottish Party decided very early on against the use of strong equality guarantees in City North and Greenside. The central party also does not appear to have actively recruited women candidates for the seat in question, or encouraged them to run. The reluctance of the central and local party to implement and enforce equality guarantees post-1999 can partly be understood as complacency, engendered by the comparatively high levels of women's representation achieved in past elections and the belief that discriminatory attitudes and practices are a 'thing of the past'. As one candidate applicant stated:

'The gender balance thing, I'm relaxed about that. We achieved it in 1999, and if the other parties adopted it in policies, we'd have the most – in terms of female representation – the best parliament in the world practically. So that's done its bit.'<sup>209</sup>

---

<sup>207</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>208</sup> Interview 9 with CLP Member.

<sup>209</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

Nevertheless, the party did implement ‘softer’ equality measures, complying with official requirements outlined in the party’s formal rules that the final candidate short-list be gender-balanced and that party branches and affiliated trade unions nominate one man and one woman. However, the female short-listed candidates, in particular, repeatedly highlighted the fact that these measures did not guarantee equality of outcome:

‘I mean, looking back on it, it certainly gave me an experience that maybe, had that quota system not been in place, maybe I wouldn’t have been shortlisted at all. So I wouldn’t have had the experience of going through the process. But the other side of the coin is that it allows that box to be ticked. And then whoever the two women are may, in my view, not really be listened to through the rest of the process, because other people have made their mind up and ticked that box.’<sup>210</sup>

‘The branch nominations, you see, the problem you’ve got is that it didn’t bother some people because you’d one man and one woman....What would have been interesting is if you could have just nominated one person. That would’ve been different altogether. So I was quite clear that I was always going to get [Greenside] as a woman...but at the end of the day, it was all loyalty kind of stuff to the man who was there.’<sup>211</sup>

Evidence from the case study also highlights a potential shift in party discourse surrounding the selection of women candidates. In the run-up to the 1999 Scottish Parliament elections, there were expectations that the entry of substantial numbers of women into the new parliament would ‘make a difference’, opening up opportunities for a different type of politics and political culture (Brown 2001a, 2001b; Mackay et al, 2003). Yet, in the case of City North and Greenside, candidate applicants and CLP members highlighted not only the lack of discussion within the CLP as to whether the retiring female MSP should be replaced by a woman, but also a more general lack of discussion as to why women candidates should be selected:

‘I can’t remember anyone ever saying well, you know, why do you think it’s important as a woman to be selected. I don’t remember them ever asking that question.’<sup>212</sup>

---

<sup>210</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>211</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>212</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

‘I think the Labour Party itself needs to take the whole of Scotland, it needs to have a think about why do we have women candidates. What strength do they bring to the party?’<sup>213</sup>

## Women Organizing and Women’s Voice

Evidence from the case study also raises questions as to the state of ‘women’s collective voice’ within the Scottish Labour Party post-devolution (Mackay, 2004b, p. 120). Fiona Mackay (2004b) understands ‘women’s voice’ within Scottish Labour to include ‘the structures and opportunities that exist for women *as women* to organise within the party, to share experiences and build capacity, to campaign and lobby for women to take their place in the mainstream, and to articulate gendered policy concerns’ (pp. 104-105; emphasis in original). As discussed previously, the City North and Greenside CLP does not have an affiliated women’s forum. There are a significant number of active women members in City North and Greenside – particularly in the City North side of the constituency – although some in the CLP felt that these women were not particularly ‘feminized’: ‘[City North] probably has the strongest representation of active women members, of the City constituencies. But the least active gender-driven women, if you know what I mean.’<sup>214</sup> Others attributed the lack of women’s organization in City North and Greenside to the particular demographics of the CLP:

‘Here in this constituency, people are mostly middle-class or lower middle-class. The social problems...they have problems of sustainability, rather than women getting together, you know.’<sup>215</sup>

Other participants in the selection process linked this issue to wider questions surrounding the reorganization of women’s structures within the Labour Party. As discussed previously, women’s structures within the party were extensively reorganized in 1998 at both the British and Scottish levels, resulting in the abolishment of women’s sections at branch level and the creation of constituency-wide women’s forums (Mackay, 2004b; Russell, 2005). One of the female short-listed candidates highlighted the differences between her experience in standing

---

<sup>213</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>214</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>215</sup> Interview 10 with CLP Member.



for selection in City North and Greenside and her experiences in previous selection contests, in which women's sections had been active:

'It's not there in the Labour Party at the moment. And it definitely makes a difference. In terms of just support and places you can go to just bounce ideas about. And you know that there's going to be women in each of the bits of the jigsaw speaking for you, talking to the people, and...asking supportive questions. So that's quite an isolating experience actually. I mean, a lot of the women who were most supportive, they were concentrated in one branch, so that was good there, but limiting. And then a lot of women who were not in the Labour Party, but who, you know, know me through other things. But that wasn't relevant at the end of the day.'<sup>216</sup>

While the 1998 reorganization was intended in part to 'rejuvenate' the women's structures, making them more open and accessible (Mackay, 2004b, p. 117), the general agreement in City North and Greenside was that in practice, these structures have essentially been 'downgraded'. In interviews with candidate applicants, CLP members, and party activists, many continue to see this downgrading as a 'trade-off', a price paid for winning the twinning argument in the 1990s, as well as the programme of party quotas at the UK level (see also Mackay, 2004b). Concerns were also frequently raised as to the lack of accountability following the 1998 reorganization:

'It was definitely a trade-off. The year the UK Labour Party closed down the women's organizations, that was the deal. We'll have reserved seats for women on the National Executive, reserved seats on everywhere you like. We'll have women's officers who have to be women – shock, horror. And that was supposed to be progress. But there's no accountability there...I mean, when we said we wanted three women on the Scottish Executive Labour Party, for example, it was so that we knew they would speak for women. We don't have that anymore.'<sup>217</sup>

Evidence from the case study, then, points to what may well be a wider erosion of 'women's voice' within the Labour Party. Several of the women involved in the City North and Greenside selection process repeatedly highlighted a growing unease on the part of women's activists and MSPs within the party, citing the example of the recent Scottish Labour Party Conference in 2008. Two women's meetings were organized at the conference, one as a more formal meeting and one as an informal meeting of the Scottish Labour Women's

---

<sup>216</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

Network, bringing together trade union women, Labour women MSPs, and rank and file women members. Participants in the meetings noted a general sense among party women ‘that it’s just slipping. It’s slipping quite quickly. And that nobody’s noticing.’<sup>218</sup> In particular, party women noted the increase in all-male conference platforms:

‘If you looked at some of the platforms at the conference like [some of] the trade unions - all male platform. I mean you just wouldn’t have seen that five years ago. They can’t even get it in their heads that this was a problem. It just went unnoticed...and on Saturday night I was talking to some of the Labour women MSPs and there’s a real unease. They were rattling off other fringe meetings they’d been at where the platform had been all male.’<sup>219</sup>

Participants in the meeting also highlighted a general disappointment and frustration among party women regarding the reorganization of women’s structures within the party:

‘We had a meeting at which there was a very, very good discussion...with women just saying we’re fed up with this. Absolutely fed up with this. And even though there are no structures, we’re just going to use what limited structures there are and say we want a women’s conference in Scotland. And we want a women’s conference of Labour members and trade union members where we’re allowed to put forward whatever we want to discuss. We’re not going to go and listen to eight speeches from male full-time people. We want to plan what we want to discuss. And there was a real kind of feeling about, it’s just not good enough.’<sup>220</sup>

The wider question of the potential ‘dilution of women’s collective voice’ (Mackay, 2004b, p. 120) within the Scottish Labour Party is a critical one. Certainly, all of my dealings with the central Scottish party were with young, white men, reflecting Anna Coote’s vivid description of Downing Street’s ‘inner sanctum’:

‘The occupants are predominantly young, male, white graduates: a generation who grew up feeling that the gender issue was sorted (perhaps by their own mothers) and are inclined to think feminism is yesterday’s politics. They enjoy power and do not want to give it up. They have developed a symbiotic relationship with the media, especially the political lobby, which tends to be peopled by similar sorts – men who are complacent

---

<sup>217</sup> Interview 11 with Scottish Labour women’s activist, 1.5.08.

<sup>218</sup> Interview 11 with Scottish Labour women’s activist.

<sup>219</sup> Interview 11 with Scottish Labour women’s activist.

<sup>220</sup> Interview 11 with Scottish Labour women’s activist.

about their masculine privileges, who disregard the women's agenda and routinely denigrate feminism. The young men at the political centre can justify distancing themselves from any pro-woman cause on the grounds that this sort of thing always gets a bad press' (Coote, 2000, p. 3).

Given the time constraints of the thesis, this broader question is beyond the scope of this project. However, evidence from the case study underscores the need for further detailed research on the changing role and status of women in the Scottish Labour Party post-devolution, building on the findings of previous work in the field (see in particular Mackay, 2004b).

### ***III: The Tensions Revisited: Applying a Gendered Lens***

This preliminary analysis of the case study suggests that the underlying trend of erosion and drift in the institutions of political recruitment has a gendered dimension, highlighting perceived instances of gender discrimination in the case study, raising questions as to the institutionalization of positive action mechanisms and equality guarantees post-devolution, and pointing to a wider erosion of 'women's collective voice' within the Scottish Labour Party. Drawing on insights from existing feminist scholarship on gender and institutions, the following section evaluates these questions in more depth, revisiting key areas of tension, conflict, and contestation in the micro-level case study through the perspective of a gendered lens.

As Mary Hawkesworth (2003, p. 531) argues, the gendering and regendering of political institutions are 'active processes with palpable effects,' occurring through the actions of embodied institutional actors, as well as through institutional rules, norms, and standard operating procedures. The following section begins to trace these active and ongoing processes, providing brief illustrations of particular gendered mechanisms of institutional resistance and reproduction - such as discursive strategies of gendered 'Othering' - while also highlighting some of the gendered dynamics and interconnections underpinning the institutions of political recruitment. As such, the section offers some preliminary insights into the complexity and contingency of institutional innovation in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution, which the thesis expands upon in the subsequent chapter.

## **From Centralization to Decentralization: gendered and racialized Others**

Evidence from the case study suggests that the ongoing tension between centralization and decentralization has a distinctly gendered dimension. Throughout the City North and Greenside selection process, debates over equality guarantees were frequently reframed in terms of local control versus central intervention. This constructed dichotomy was further reinforced by the frequent verbal use of temporal markers, such as ‘previously’, ‘historically’, and ‘back in the day’. In the case study, candidate selection in ‘the old days’ was constructed as not only different from, but also as superior to, the central imposition of equality guarantees in the 1999 selection contests. The City North and Greenside selection contest, then, marked a ‘return to form,’ and the lack of central intervention into the process was generally seen as a positive development by CLP members and candidate applicants:

‘It was great. I wasn’t selected in 1999 to be a potential candidate, by three women....But I was pleased to note on this occasion for the 2007 elections, that the party centrally didn’t draw up a kind of approved list, if you like. They left it up to the constituency. Which historically has always been the case.’<sup>221</sup>

In the case of City North and Greenside, this discursive strategy served to degender internal party debates surrounding positive action and equality guarantees. As several CLP members explained, the ‘problem’ with centrally enforced equality guarantees was not about women candidates specifically, rather the problem was the central imposition of ‘outsiders’:

‘We’ve seen down South, when seats have been lost which were quite safe seats, because a candidate was seen to be imposed by the central party.’<sup>222</sup>

“If we take the subject of an all-women shortlist, there’s an almost hostility to it, on most occasions when the topic comes up....It’s less about opposition to the idea in principle.

---

<sup>221</sup> Interview 4 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>222</sup> Interview 9 with CLP Member.

It's much more about creating a situation in which we end up with candidates and members from outside."<sup>223</sup>

While the tension between locals and outsiders was presented in gender-neutral terms, at the same time, this constructed dichotomy is profoundly gendered. The repeated linking of equality guarantees with 'imposed central intervention' positions female candidates as perpetual outsiders to the process, marking women as 'Other.' This 'outsider' status is a common theme in feminist work on gender and institutions which highlights the ways in which masculinist political institutions, cultures and practices 'can make women feel, without being told in so many words, "you are out of place here"' (Cockburn, 1991, p. 65; see also Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995; Puwar, 2004; Ross, 2002). In the case of City North and Greenside, one of the short-listed female candidates, who was a member of a neighbouring CLP, described her experience as an 'outsider' at a candidate event:

"One of my kind of pitches was that what I brought to the constituency was people, really, from different movements all over Scotland who would come and help... And you could feel a wee ripple going through a section of the room. And it was – I hadn't meant it that way at all – but afterwards a couple of people said to me they could just feel the people next to them getting all prickly about this outsider apparently suggesting that what we needed was a lot of women and gay people coming in, when they could run things themselves, thank you."<sup>224</sup>

This constructed dichotomy also disadvantaged particular political masculinities, positioning certain male candidate applicants as 'outsiders.' Some saw this as part of the strategic 'internal machinations' of particular local party men, aimed at keeping certain male candidate applicants off of the shortlist: 'In the end, I was carved out by the machinations of a [local party officer]. I've got a history with [him] going back to when I was on the Council and he was involved in the Council as well.'<sup>225</sup> Both male and female 'outsider' candidates perceived this tension in gendered terms:

'There were favoured candidates. It was a favourite son selection. And at the end of the day, it became quite obvious quite quickly that these were the two people that had

---

<sup>223</sup> Interview 3 with CLP Officer.

<sup>224</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>225</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

possibly the best chance of getting selected. And I was an outsider because I lived more than 500 yards from the edge of the constituency.<sup>226</sup>

In the City North and Greenside selection contest, strategies of gendered ‘Othering’ can also be seen in the positioning of the ethnic minority candidate applicants, both of whom were men. Feminist work on the interplay of race and gender in political institutions highlights the opposing dynamics of ‘invisibility’ and ‘hypervisibility’ (see in particular Hawkesworth, 2003; Puwar, 2004). On the one hand, ethnic minority entrants into political institutions are ‘highly visible as conspicuous bodies, for whom specific slots are made as representatives of particular rather than general forms of humanity’ (Puwar, 2004, p. 58). As one of the ethnic minority candidates stated:

‘If I lost the seat, I would have lost my face as well to the Labour Party... We would have lost the whole of Scotland for an ethnic minority. So it would have been worse for me. It would have been practically the end of my political career.’<sup>227</sup>

On the other hand, ethnic minority entrants into political institutions are also rendered invisible ‘as they struggle to be seen as competent and capable’ (Puwar, 2004, p. 58). In the case of City North and Greenside, the ethnic minority candidate who reached the shortlisting stage was not seen as a ‘male’ candidate. For example, in the short-listing stage, the decision to implement a gender-balanced four-person shortlist left five male candidate applicants competing for two spots on the shortlist. As a result, there were mixed feelings as to whether the CLP should explicitly reserve one of the two available shortlist places for an ethnic minority candidate. As one of the male candidate applicants put it: ‘If one of the ethnic candidates had got through, there would only be one male left in the last four.’<sup>228</sup> The positioning of the male ethnic minority candidate as radically different to the other white male candidate applicants again constructs ethnic minorities as ‘outsiders’ or ‘Others’, ‘challenging their status as fully human’ (Hawkesworth, 2003, p. 53).

---

<sup>226</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>227</sup> Interview 2 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>228</sup> Interview 4 with Candidate Applicant.

## **From Formalization to Informalization: gendering the ‘ideal candidate’**

Findings from the City North and Greenside case study also highlight the gendered dimensions of trends of informalization in the candidate selection process, particularly with regards to the issue of candidate selection criteria. As argued in chapter two, the assumption behind the formalization of candidate selection criteria is that particular selection criteria can be formally established as a basis for evaluating and assessing a candidate’s ‘suitability’ for the job. Yet, feminist work on gender and political recruitment highlights the ways in which ‘objective’ selection criteria are socially constructed and shaped by gendered norms, conventions, and practices (see for example Chapman, 1993; Lovenduski, 2005; Lovenduski and Norris, 1989; Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski, 2002). Candidate selection criteria carry with them a set of gendered assumptions, for example, with regards to experience, education, training, resources and domestic responsibilities that result in male candidates seeming more ‘suitable’ in many cases. As such, female candidates often fail to be selected not because they are less ‘qualified’, but because of the way in which the necessary ‘qualifications’ for political office are defined (see for example Chapman, 1993; Niven, 1998).

At the same time, the formalization of selection criteria can disrupt masculinist norms and assumptions, challenging the seemingly gender-neutral model of the ‘ideal candidate.’ In the Labour Party, the formalization of candidate job descriptions and person specifications was aimed in part to create a more ‘fair and open process’ (Russell, 2005, p. 70), intended to reform what had been ‘a relatively closed process of nomination and selection by unrepresentative, largely male, constituency activists more on the basis of patronage than competence’ (Bradbury et al, 2000b, pp. 151-152). Findings from City North and Greenside suggest that, following the lack of maintenance and enforcement of existing formal selection criteria, there has been a drift back to this gendered model of the ideal candidate, the ‘local man’. As already discussed, formal job descriptions and person specifications were not distributed in the selection contest. In addition, while candidate applicants are formally required to have already been selected on the panel of approved candidates, not all candidate applicants were centrally vetted, including the candidate who was selected to contest the seat:

‘They ended up selecting a person who wasn’t on the panel. And within three days he was interviewed and found to be suitable and was on the panel. You could have had a situation where if there’d been any degree of anything applied, he wouldn’t have got through that interview.’<sup>229</sup>

As argued previously, findings from the case study point to an informally shared understanding of what selectors were looking ‘for’, repeatedly highlighting the importance of being seen as ‘local’. Throughout the selection contest, participants re-framed the knowledge and skills required to run for political office in terms of a candidate’s ‘localness’ rather than his or her qualifications. The competence of gendered ‘outsiders’, then, was frequently portrayed as inferior to that of constituency ‘insiders’:

‘She wasn’t a local candidate and I don’t how she performs in front of folk, but she didn’t strike me as an outgoing sort of candidate, you know, that folks would warm to.’<sup>230</sup>

Both ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ candidates framed this tension in gendered terms, repeatedly highlighting the importance of ‘male loyalty’ and ‘favourite sons’: ‘there’s always a good reason why a man’s a stronger local candidate.’<sup>231</sup> As one of the female short-listed candidates put it:

‘I’ve said...to some people, you wonder if you were a man with the experience I’ve had. You know, if you look at my CV, it’s pretty impressive. And yet they don’t select you...it all came down to support for the local man.’<sup>232</sup>

As highlighted previously, candidate applicants generally drew upon broader conceptions of the necessary qualifications required to run for political office, emphasizing traditional political qualifications, while also drawing attention to broader conceptions of ‘life experience.’ This broader conception of ‘experience’ has a clear resonance with the gendered pre-1999 discourse of a ‘new politics,’ in which there were expectations that ‘women would bring their specific life experiences and expertise to the job and would alter

---

<sup>229</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>230</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>231</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.



the style of political debate' (Brown, 2001a, p. 209). Yet while both male and female candidate applicants employed broad interpretations of necessary political qualifications, 'traditional' political experience – namely experience in elected office – was frequently constructed as superior to other types of experience and qualifications: '[He's] a nice guy, but he didn't have any political experience, other than being an election agent. I don't know what his political views are.'<sup>233</sup> Experience in elected office and the corresponding electoral 'profile', then, became a way for certain candidates to establish political competence, compensating for outsider status:

'[This] was a constituency where it was very hard for someone outside the constituency to get themselves selected as a candidate, unless they've got a very, very high public profile. So, [the front-running female candidate] was always in good shape, because for all that she wasn't a local, she had a high profile and political experience.'<sup>234</sup>

Findings from the case study, then, suggest that in the absence of formal selection criteria, 'experience' has been informally re-linked with traditional political qualifications, a discursive shift that has important gendered implications. In particular, findings from City North and Greenside highlight distinct differences in the ways in which the qualifications and experiences of the two female short-listed candidates were perceived by participants in the selection process. Research in the women and politics field suggests that women need to 'work harder' to be perceived as competent, as female candidates are less likely to possess the masculinist attributes and qualifications associated with 'winning' candidates (see for example Chapman, 1993; Fox, 1997; Jamieson, 1995). Both of the female short-listed candidates highlighted the need to be 'extra competent' in comparison to their male counterparts: 'I think it's like applying for a lot of jobs, I think you need to be extra good.'<sup>235</sup> The front-running female candidate repeatedly drew attention to the number of years she had been in political office - 'party member since 1979', 'councillor from 1984 to date'<sup>236</sup> - while also highlighting the extent to which she had 'proven' herself in traditional masculine political arenas:

---

<sup>232</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>233</sup> Interview 4 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>234</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>235</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>236</sup> Candidate Application 1.

‘I think we need a woman candidate that can cope with the cut and thrust of the Parliament, that has been through the business of politics and who can manage the wheeling and dealing of political business, civil servants and still hold issues that you believe to be important. I believe [she] has the experience and guts to do this.’<sup>237</sup>

The second-ranked female candidate cited her past experiences as a trade union office-holder, women’s activist, and staff member in the Scottish Parliament, while also emphasizing a broader interpretation of the necessary skills required for political office, including ‘balancing family, work, and political commitment.’<sup>238</sup> Yet, in contrast to the front-running female candidate, the second-ranked female candidate was rendered invisible in the process, having met neither of the gendered and informally constructed standards for ‘competence’: ‘she was neither local...nor did she have a high enough public profile.’<sup>239</sup> In interviews, the second-ranked female candidate was rarely mentioned, if at all. When asked directly about the second-ranked female candidate in interviews, candidates and selectors often discounted her very quickly. Her trade union links were dismissed: ‘she has a union profile, but...only two to three per cent of the population are union members.’<sup>240</sup> Others discounted her experience as a women’s activist: ‘she wasn’t getting any particular support from being active in that women’s group.’<sup>241</sup> Meanwhile, her experience in the Scottish Parliament was not seen to ‘count’ as relevant experience: ‘she worked in the Scottish Parliament but she was sort of a back room person.’<sup>242</sup>

## **Rule-Making and Rule-Breaking: gendered bodies in male space**

As argued in the previous section, this trend of informalization was compounded by the overall lack of intervention into the process by the central party and the inconsistent enforcement of formal rules by both central and local party officials. From the beginning of the process, the City North and Greenside selection contest was an ‘uneven playing field,’<sup>243</sup> in which key party actors in positions of power were charged with making, interpreting and

---

<sup>237</sup> CLP Member quoted in Candidate Campaign Material 3.

<sup>238</sup> Candidate Application 5.

<sup>239</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>240</sup> Interview 2 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>241</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>242</sup> Interview 4 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>243</sup> Interview 4 with Candidate Applicant.

enforcing the rules. In the case of City North and Greenside, these actors were predominantly male, including party figures such as the CLP Chair, CLP Procedural Secretary, and the Scottish Organizer. By virtue of their positional power, these actors were also able to ‘break’ rules to their own advantage. For example, as mentioned previously, one of the candidate applicants, who was a CLP officer, had early access to the party membership lists: ‘one of the issues we had early on was that [he] started canvassing before the lists were officially available.’<sup>244</sup> The ‘uneven playing field’ particularly disadvantaged candidates from outwith City North and Greenside who, by virtue of their ‘outsider’ status, were less aware of the informal ‘rules of the game.’ This was particularly the case for candidate canvassing and campaigning:

‘I mean, I knew people because of my day job....But one or two of the people who’d applied from outside [City North and Greenside] were being completely principled about [campaigning] and, you know, being correct about using the procedures, and I think that’s not fair.’<sup>245</sup>

Rule-breaking, then, served as a way of marking gendered difference, further reinforcing the dichotomy of ‘locals’ and ‘outsiders.’ While local insiders were able to break the rules, using informal and shared understandings to their advantage, ‘outsiders’ were frequently ‘kept out of the loop,’<sup>246</sup> an omission that was attributed to their lack of ‘local connections.’<sup>247</sup> As one of the female ‘outsider’ candidates reflected:

‘I definitely raised a couple of things with [one of the CLP officers], who later decided to stand for the seat....And it turned out he’d gone round to all the party members, but he was late in letting me know that for sure he was standing. So there were a series of times where he and [the Procedural Secretary] were, if you like, custodians of some information – like abuses of procedure – and it wasn’t shared properly with the rest of us.’<sup>248</sup>

As discussed previously, ‘insider’ candidates were rarely penalized for incidences of rule-breaking. In the absence of either formal or informal sanctions, the practice of rule-breaking

---

<sup>244</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>245</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>246</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>247</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>248</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

often became a ‘rule’ in itself: ‘everybody was doing it.’<sup>249</sup> Circumventing or subverting the formal rules became an established convention - part of ‘playing the game’<sup>250</sup> - and some actors were better at playing the game than others. For example, one candidate applicant discussed a series of alleged rule violations committed by the selected candidate, the Greenside local councillor:

‘To put it all in context, compared to the stories I’ve heard from other selections, ours was pretty fair and above board. There was a bit of bad feeling....but to be honest, [he] did it better than we did. Fair play to him.’<sup>251</sup>

In contrast, for ‘outsiders’, rules imposed constraints. These actors were positioned as ‘outside’ the game, making it considerably more difficult for them to ‘work’ or navigate the complex interplay between formal and informal rules (see Sheingate, 2009 forthcoming). At the same time, outsider candidates were expected to follow the rules of the game, and were informally sanctioned for challenging the status quo. Feminist research on political institutions underlines the gendered costs of challenging the institutional status quo, documenting the ‘pernicious ways’ in which gender is reinscribed in political institutions (Kenney, 1996, p. 461). As argued in chapters three and four, institutions are generally marked as ‘masculine’. While constructions of femininity and masculinity are both present in political institutions, the masculine ideal underpins institutional structures, practices, and norms, shaping ‘ways of valuing things, ways of behaving and ways of being’ (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995, p. 20). Within this context, women and other non-standard political actors are constructed as ‘space invaders’ – to use Nirmal Puwar’s (2004) term - their bodies marked out as subordinate and disruptive.

In the case of City North and Greenside, female participants in the selection process who reported rule violations were frequently marked out as ‘troublesome.’<sup>252</sup> As one of the female short-listed candidates reflected: ‘you’re seen as well, that’s her just trying to make a fuss.’<sup>253</sup> In addition, female participants who did complain were told by central Scottish party officials that they had not followed proper procedure in reporting incidences of rule-

---

<sup>249</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>250</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>251</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>252</sup> Interview 3 with CLP Officer.

breaking: 'For me to investigate such claims, I require each of the allegations you have made in writing outlining what procedure you believe not to have been followed and any evidence you have which proves that this is the case.'<sup>254</sup> The reporting of rule violations, then, was re-framed as a sort of 'rule-breaking' in itself. As one of the female candidate applicants noted:

'One of the things that I did complain about at the time, and nothing was done about it, was the [Greenside] branch meeting...and the [Scottish Organizer] – you know, months later when I asked where the complaint had gone – said you didn't raise it in writing. Now he had told me explicitly just to pick up the phone if anything was a problem at the beginning.'<sup>255</sup>

Findings from the case study, then, suggest that there is a gendered dimension to rule-making and rule-breaking, raising questions as to which gendered bodies are allowed to break which rules in which contexts.

### **Something Old, Something New: 'new men' and 'favourite sons'**

Evidence from the case study also highlights the ongoing and gendered tensions between 'new politics' and 'politics as usual.' The new politics model has been conceptualized elsewhere as a more 'feminized' politics, in which the increased presence and voice of women – as backbenchers, ministers, lobbyists, civil society partners – have influenced and shaped the political agenda (Mackay, 2006; Mackay et al, 2003). As Mackay, Myers and Brown contend: 'the presence of women and the new constitutional arrangements and institutional designs are mutually reinforcing' (2003, p. 97). In contrast, 'old politics', or 'politics as usual' is frequently positioned as a more 'masculine' style of politics associated with the Westminster model. As Joni Lovenduski argues, the rules, norms, and practices of the Westminster model center around masculinist zero-sum games, including a 'declamatory, adversarial' style of debate favouring 'rhetoric, speechifying, posturing and arcane practice...rather than cooperation, consensus-seeking and real discussion of alternatives' (Lovenduski, 2005, p. 54).

---

<sup>253</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>254</sup> Correspondence between female CLP member and Scottish Organizer, November 2006.

<sup>255</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

To some extent, findings from City North and Greenside support these broad conceptualizations of ‘new politics’ and ‘politics as usual.’ For example, in interviews, both candidate applicants and CLP members continued to view the Scottish Parliament as a ‘feminized’ political site:

‘When you go into the building, it still feels like a place that’s got lots of women working in it....coming and going on an equal basis. You know, there’s not a mood that says politicians are men, or it’s a man’s world in there. It doesn’t feel a bit like that to me....And every time I meet younger women coming into different campaigns, you know, they’re growing up knowing there is a parliament. There isn’t any reason why they couldn’t be in there, or couldn’t be around it, or couldn’t be lobbying it.’<sup>256</sup>

However, findings from the case study also highlight the ways in which participants in the selection process drew upon complex and sometimes contradictory understandings of ‘new’ and ‘old’. In particular, male participants in the selection process often employed competing gendered discourses, establishing their credentials as ‘new men’, while at the same time positioning themselves as ‘favourite sons’. For example, male candidate applicants were very quick to highlight their acceptance of gender balance: ‘the gender balance, I’m relaxed about that.’<sup>257</sup> As one local male candidate applicant stated: ‘In [City North and Greenside], we do more than just pay lip service to gender issues, that’s for sure.’<sup>258</sup> In addition, several of the male candidate applicants positioned themselves as different from and, therefore, superior to ‘traditional’ candidate applicants from the Greenside area of the constituency, further reinforcing their progressive ‘new men’ credentials. In interviews, the town of Greenside was frequently linked with a more masculine and ‘old-fashioned’ style of politics:

‘[Greenside’s] quite a traditional Labour Party in that key players pretty much say this is how we’re going to vote, we’re going to support our local man and everybody just gets on board and does it.’<sup>259</sup>

‘[What] struck me about the constituency was that it was a very old-fashioned constituency in terms of its politics...you know, New Labour was really not around.’<sup>260</sup>

---

<sup>256</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>257</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>258</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>259</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

At the same time, however, male candidates enacted aspects of a more traditional political masculinity. In City North and Greenside, male participants repeatedly highlighted the importance of ‘playing the game,’<sup>261</sup> being ‘well-connected,’<sup>262</sup> ‘local politicking’<sup>263</sup> and ‘knowing the right people.’<sup>264</sup> When asked to clarify in interviews, the ‘right people’ were usually identified as key local and central party men: ‘he’s a great pal of mine’<sup>265</sup>, ‘we’ve been mates for a long time.’<sup>266</sup> There are parallels here with Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski’s (1995) description of the British Labour Party:

‘The Labour party system, despite the detailed rule book, is essentially one where informal local patronage remains important. What matters, still is who you know in these constituencies....Candidates from outside the region have little chance of success in these seats. The process may be abused by powerful local factions (‘fixing’), and competition is relatively closed....[In] good seats, few get in ‘cold.’ You need to know the ropes.’ (p. 54).

Evidence from the case study, then, points to a partial reassertion of masculinist discourses and practices of local patronage and the privileging of ‘favourite sons.’ This potential drift back to ‘politics as usual’ is compounded by a number of different factors, including the ongoing tension between issues of selectability and electability, as highlighted in the previous chapter. For example, in the absence of formal selection criteria, participants in the City North and Greenside contest repeatedly drew attention to not only the lack of discussion as to what a ‘good’ candidate was, but also raised questions as to ‘what candidates are selected *for*.’<sup>267</sup> Findings from the case study suggest that not only has there been a reassertion of the gendered model of the ideal candidate – the ‘local man’ – but also that this model has been, to some extent, de-linked from the practice of selecting an MSP. As noted previously, questions about the Scottish Parliament are no longer included in candidate application forms. And while formal job descriptions and person specifications outline the

---

<sup>260</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>261</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>262</sup> Interview 4 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>263</sup> Interview 8 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>264</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>265</sup> Interview 6 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>266</sup> Interview 4 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>267</sup> Interview 5 with Candidate Applicant (emphasis added).

duties and responsibilities of an MSP, these were not distributed in City North and Greenside. As one candidate reflected:

‘I think people forget that they’re selecting somebody who’s going to be part of a national parliament. You’re not only there as a local representative. You will be making legislation and policy for the whole of Scotland. And every group within that....I think that people are very bad at looking at the bigger picture.’<sup>268</sup>

As such, the case study raises questions as to the success of the ‘new politics’ in a wider sense, beyond the feminized site of the Scottish Parliament. While the parliamentary ‘face’ of Scottish Labour is female, findings from the case study suggest that the underlying trend in the party is one of erosion and decline. As one candidate applicant noted:

‘I mean, that’s the contradiction. You still see lots of Labour women. The face of Labour in Scotland is still quite female. But what lies next out there is not going to be like that.’<sup>269</sup>

However, while the case study highlights general patterns of erosion and drift in the institutions of political recruitment in the Scottish Labour Party, it also suggests that elements of the ‘new’ and the ‘old’ continue to uneasily co-exist with one another. It is not the case that different actors clearly articulate the discourse of ‘new politics’ or ‘politics as usual.’ Rather, participants appear to draw on a diverse range of sometimes contradictory institutional elements - enacting multiple and gendered understandings of both ‘new’ and ‘old’ – in different sites, at different times, and to differing degrees.

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter assessed the findings of the micro-level case study of a Scottish Labour constituency seat selection contest in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections. The central argument of the chapter is that candidate selection remains a site of conflict and

---

<sup>268</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.

<sup>269</sup> Interview 7 with Candidate Applicant.



contestation within the Scottish Labour Party post-1999, despite declarations to the contrary within the mainstream literature.

Overall, findings from the case study suggest that while some innovations have been made in Scottish Labour's candidate selection process post-devolution, the underlying trend is one of gendered erosion, decline and drift following the initial institutional reforms of 1999. The case study suggests that the 'success' of institutional innovation in candidate selection and recruitment is a complex and contingent question, and that elements of the 'old' continue to co-exist with elements of the 'new', constraining and shaping each other. Moreover, it suggests that gender relations and norms are particularly 'sticky' institutional legacies with which to contend, highlighting the gendered dynamics of institutional resistance and reproduction that underpin the institutions of political recruitment and limit possibilities for change.

The case of City North and Greenside is an illustrative one and, as such, raises many questions in need of further exploration. The following chapter attempts to explore these questions in more depth, situating the specific findings of the micro-level case study within the theory-building project of the thesis and drawing out the implications of the Scottish case for the wider feminist institutionalist theoretical project.

## Conclusion: Rethinking Political Institutions

This thesis set out to explore the ‘promise’ of a feminist institutionalism in the context of the comparative literature on gender and political recruitment. It began in chapter two with a theoretical critique of Norris and Lovenduski’s (1995) supply and demand model, one of the only frameworks that integrates gender into the dynamics of candidate selection and recruitment. It argues that the supply and demand model represents a key turning point in the literature – in that it attempts to systematically theorize both the gendered and institutional dimensions of the political recruitment process – but ultimately concludes that the model has not fully realized its potential.

The tensions and problems that the thesis identifies in the supply and demand model reflect wider trends in feminist work on gender and institutions more generally. Chapters three and four critically evaluated the institutional ‘turn’ in feminist political science, in which studies have gradually moved from a focus on ‘women *in* politics’ to ‘gender *and* politics’. Theoretical and empirical work on gender and institutions has begun to map the ways in which gendered institutional power relations and inequality are constructed, shaped, and maintained through institutional practices, processes, rules and regulations. Yet, while feminist research on political institutions has yielded rich insights, work in the field is accompanied by a growing recognition that a more systematic analysis is needed in order to better understand the gendered nature of political institutions and the dynamics of continuity and change (Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a).

The thesis attempts to integrate these insights in a more systematic and rigorous way, drawing on institutional trends in both feminist and mainstream political science. In doing so, it makes the case for a ‘feminist institutionalism’, a theoretical synthesis of feminist gender analysis and new institutional theory. The project argues that a feminist institutionalism has the potential to ‘bridge the gap’ in existing conceptual and empirical

work on gender and institutions, providing critical insights into the key themes of gender, power, continuity and change. These insights can help to answer the ‘big questions’ of political science – in particular, how and why institutional change occurs – questions which are centrally important not only from a feminist theoretical perspective, but also from a feminist activist perspective.

A key aim of the thesis, then, is to explore and understand the gendered dynamics of institutional continuity, change, and innovation – in this case, reform and innovation in the institutions of political recruitment. It locates these questions in a micro-level case study of the daily enactment of the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland. Evidence from the Scottish case demonstrates that the ‘success’ of institutional reform in candidate selection and recruitment is a complex and contingent question, highlighting opportunities for innovation and change in the institutions of political recruitment, while also drawing attention to underlying continuities. This chapter revisits these findings, providing a general discussion of the main theoretical and empirical conclusions of the thesis. It goes on to assess the central contributions of the project and highlights areas for future study.

### ***I: Gender, Politics, and Institutions: Restating the ‘Problem’***

While there is a growing recognition of the importance of the political recruitment process for prospective female candidates, there have been few systematic studies into the ‘secret garden’ of candidate selection and recruitment in either the feminist or mainstream literature. As highlighted in chapter two, Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski’s (1995) *Political Recruitment: Gender, Race and Class in the British Parliament* continues to stand as one of the most comprehensive studies of gender and political recruitment thus far.

### **Supply and Demand Revisited**

Chapter two makes the case for building on Norris and Lovenduski’s (1995) gender-sensitive and institutionally-focused approach to the study of political recruitment. It argues that Norris and Lovenduski’s formulation of the supply and demand model is a significant

intervention into the literature on political recruitment, representing one of the first and only attempts to systematically theorize both the gendered and institutional dimensions of the recruitment process. At the same time, however, the chapter highlights the ways in which this approach is problematic, drawing attention to the difficulties of ‘translating’ the complexities of gendered institutional dynamics into workable concepts and analytical frameworks for empirical research. The chapter argues that while these gendered and institutional trends are present in Norris and Lovenduski’s work on political recruitment, as well as later efforts to redesign the model, they are not fully developed. First, while the supply and demand model represents a significant improvement of previous work on political recruitment, highlighting the role that gender norms play in the selection process, Norris and Lovenduski view gender as only one of many factors influencing the dynamics of supply and demand. As a result, the model does not fully engage with the underlying gender norms and relations that structure the institutions of political recruitment, for example, shaping recruitment and selection criteria and procedures. Second, while the supply and demand model represents one of the first attempts to systematically theorize the interconnections between the institutions of political recruitment, applications of the framework often oversimplify the dynamics of the selection process. In its later uses, it is generally presented as a straightforward interaction model, assuming a linear and logical relationship between these institutions (see in particular Norris, 1997). For example, Norris (1997) assumes that the four levels of political recruitment work together relatively straightforwardly in cases of institutional reform, arguing that these institutions are nested within a ‘funnel of causality’ (p. 1).

Subsequent efforts to redesign the model have explicitly attempted to develop the theoretical interconnections present in Norris and Lovenduski’s work, attempting to reintegrate the key features of the supply and demand model into a *feminist* and *institutional* framework. The thesis focuses in particular on the reformulation of the model by Mona Lena Krook (2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming), who attempts to arrange the factors that influence political recruitment into ‘more precise causal categories’ (2006, p. 7), differentiating between the *systemic*, *practical*, and *normative* institutions that shape patterns of candidate recruitment. Krook argues that the institutions of political recruitment interact in complex and interlocking ways. She explores the effect of these institutional configurations by analyzing *iterated sequences of reform* to increase women’s parliamentary representation, tracing multiple efforts at institutional reform over time. As such, Krook puts a central emphasis on

the importance of timing, sequence, and context, analyzing how the impact of a particular configuration of institutions shifts as one or more institutions in the configuration are reinforced or reformed over the course of a reform campaign. The thesis argues that Krook's work represents a significant step forward for work on gender and political recruitment, building on and refining the gendered and institutional dimensions of the supply and demand model. Yet, it also points to the ways in which Krook's reformulation of the model is still problematic. In particular, Krook's model continues to underplay the complex ways in which gender 'plays out' in the political recruitment process. While Krook puts a greater emphasis on the pivotal role of norms and ideas in the candidate selection process, she does not explicitly theorize the gendered foundations of these norms and continues to view gender as a 'factor' that affects the process, rather than a crucial dimension of the institutions of political recruitment.

## **Towards a Theory of Gendered Institutions**

The tensions apparent in the literature on gender and political recruitment point to wider trends and ongoing debates in feminist political science more generally. Chapters three and four move from a specific focus on gender and political recruitment to a broader discussion of the institutional 'turn' in feminist political science, critically evaluating the shift in emphasis from '*women in to the gendering of* political institutions' (Kenney, 1996, p. 455; emphasis in original). The thesis argues that while this shift is a significant one, it has not been fully realized, as feminist political scientists continue to grapple with the implications of understanding gender as a complex frame of reference (Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a). Current work on gender and institutions provides compelling evidence that there are important gendered dynamics at work within political institutions, highlighting the active and ongoing process involved in constructing and maintaining gendered institutional power hierarchies (see for example Chappell, 2002; Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995; Katzenstein, 1998; Puwar, 2004). This work also points to the ways in which institutions interact and interconnect with each other, alternatively supporting or blocking efforts at institutional reform and innovation (see in particular Krook, 2009 forthcoming). Yet, despite a wealth of institutionally-focused feminist research, there have been few attempts to

integrate these rich insights in a more systematic way. There are, of course, exceptions<sup>270</sup>, but these works by themselves do not constitute a coherent theoretical body of work on gender and institutions. The institutional ‘turn’ in feminist political science, then, is accompanied by a growing recognition that a more systematic approach is required and that new conceptual tools and methods are needed in order to explore and understand these gendered institutional dynamics (Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2004a).

The thesis attempts to fill this gap, pointing to new directions for feminist work on gender and political institutions. Drawing on institutional trends in both mainstream and feminist political science, it makes the case for a ‘feminist institutionalism’, a theoretical synthesis of feminist gender analysis and new institutional theory. It argues that the combined insights of feminist political science and mainstream new institutional theory offer a way to take existing work on gender and institutions forward. While the new institutionalism can offer a range of mid-level conceptual tools to feminist political science, a gendered approach can also greatly enrich new institutional analysis, establishing gender as a crucial dimension of political institutions and putting a central emphasis on institutional power relations. In particular, the combined insights of these two approaches provide key insights into the dynamics of continuity and change, highlighting the complexity and contingency of processes of institutional innovation and reform. These questions are critically important to feminist political science, which is explicitly concerned not only with recognizing how institutions reproduce gendered power relations, but also with how these institutions can be challenged and transformed.

The thesis is centrally preoccupied with these questions, seeking to explore and understand the gendered dynamics of institutional continuity, change, and innovation. It locates these questions in an empirical case study of reform processes in the institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland. Evidence from the Scottish case highlights opportunities for institutional innovation in the candidate selection process, but also draws attention to underlying continuities as well as trends of erosion and decline in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution. Chapter six focused on gendered patterns of political recruitment in Scottish political parties over time. While it is difficult to make

---

<sup>270</sup> The thesis reviews several of these texts, including Duerst-Lahti and Kelly (1995); Kenney (1996); and Lovenduski (1998).

strong claims on the basis of three elections, the chapter's analysis of the results of the Scottish Parliament elections 1999-2007 points to a general trend of either stasis or decline in the recruitment of female candidates in Scottish political parties. While the use of positive action and equality guarantees in 1999 continues to have a significant impact on headline figures, underlying patterns of turn-over suggest that there has been a re-masculinization of parliamentary candidacies. In particular, analysis of the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections highlights clear gendered patterns of candidate placement, with women candidates generally positioned in lower places on the regional lists compared to their male counterparts and less likely to be selected to fight safe or winnable constituency seats. Overall, indications are that progress remains fragile, contingent and that previous gains have been the result of accident rather than design (Mackay, 2003, 2006; Mackay and Kenny, 2007). While the presence of women in the Scottish Parliament has, to some extent, become a 'routinized' or common-sense feature of post-devolution Scottish politics, the results of the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections suggest that the 1999 and 2003 elections may come to be seen as the 'high tide' of women's representation, as the one-off effects of positive action and equality guarantees in the first parliament continue to wane in the absence of continuing reforms (Mackay and Kenny, 2007, p. 26).

Chapters seven, eight and nine turned from a focus on macro-level trends of political recruitment to a fine-grained analysis of the candidate selection process within the Scottish Labour Party. These chapters evaluated paths of institutional reform in the Labour Party over time and assessed the findings of a micro-level case study of a Scottish Labour constituency seat selection contest in the run-up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections. To a certain extent, findings from the micro-level case study confirmed the wider trends identified in chapter six, highlighting underlying patterns of gendered erosion, decline and drift following the initial gender equality reforms of 1999. At the same time, however, the picture became more complicated. The following section briefly revisits these empirical findings and conclusions, drawing out the implications for the wider feminist institutionalist theoretical project.

## **Winners, Losers, and the Politics of Institutional Reform**

In line with current work in both feminist political science and new institutional theory, the thesis argues that one can only ‘make sense’ of particular institutions by ‘placing politics in time’ (Pierson, 2004), systematically situating contemporary moments in the context of a larger temporal framework (see for example Chappell, 2002, 2006; Mettler, 1998; Pierson 2000c; Pierson and Skocpol, 2002; Skocpol, 1992; Thelen, 2000; Waylen, 2007, 2009 forthcoming). As discussed in chapter seven, the Scottish case is often seen as a historical ‘breakpoint’, a ‘culmination’ of inter-connected paths of institutional reform (Mackay, 2004b; Russell et al, 2002). Yet the changes that took place in the candidate selection process in Scottish Labour post-devolution were not the obvious outcome of a reform trajectory that began in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Evidence from the Scottish case, then, points to a more dynamic conception of institutional continuity and change, suggesting that the reform of the institutions of political recruitment in the Labour Party has been a gradual process over an extended period of time, shaped by past decisions and gendered institutional legacies, marked by ongoing political renegotiation and driven by the interactions and tensions between different, and sometimes contradictory, paths of reform. As such, it puts a central emphasis on the ongoing political contestedness of the institutions of political recruitment, highlighting shifts in coalitional foundations over time and drawing attention to the ways in which strategic institutional entrepreneurs initiate change endogenously, working ‘within the context of existing opportunities and constraints’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 19; see also Deeg, 2005; Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming). As Kathleen Thelen argues:

‘When institutions are founded, they are not universally embraced or straightforwardly ‘adapted to’ but rather continue to be the object of ongoing conflict, as actors struggle over the form that these institutions should take and the functions they should perform’ (2004, p. 32).

In the case of the Labour Party, gender equity entrepreneurs were able to take advantage of opportunities for innovation, including, for example, the party’s internal disarray following the constitutional reforms of 1979-1981 (Lovenduski, 2005; Perrigo, 1996; Russell, 2005). At the same time, these entrepreneurs were able to ‘manufacture’ opportunities for institutional innovation themselves by strategically framing particular events as internal party ‘crises’. For example, a key turning point in the path to reform came in the mid to late 1980s, when gender equity entrepreneurs within the Labour Party published a series of Fabian pamphlets linking Labour’s electoral failures to the gender gap in Labour’s electoral



support (e.g. Hewitt and Mattinson, 1989). In essence then, these Labour Party women were able to strategically ‘create their own demand’ (Sheingate, 2003, p. 189; see also Banaszak, 1996; Chappell, 2002; Clemens and Cook, 1999; Schneiberg and Clemens, 2006), re-framing the party’s internal crisis in such a way that the only ‘solution’ was the institutional reform that they themselves were proposing – gender-balanced representation.

A focus on strategic entrepreneurs, however, only tells part of the story. As Paul Pierson (2004) notes, by placing too heavy a weight on the role of particular actors in generating change, we run the risk of underplaying or ignoring ‘the types of circumstances that make those kinds of efforts more or less likely to succeed, or that constrain the direction of successful reform efforts’ (p. 141). Evidence from the Scottish case also draws attention to the ways in which ‘temporal sequences...converge with substantial consequences’ (Pierson, 2000c, p. 87), highlighting the interaction effects between inter-locking trajectories of institutional reform. The intersection of the reform trajectories of party modernization, feminization, and devolution opened up opportunities for further institutional innovation in the institutions of political recruitment. Scottish Labour women – along with a broader alliance of trade union women, women’s organizations, feminist academics, and gender experts– were able to take advantage of this particular temporal and spatial convergence and were key members of the ‘winning coalition’ that shaped institutional innovation in post-devolution Scotland (see Mackay, 2006). Like their counterparts at the UK level, they framed their demands within wider party debates over modernization and women’s votes. At the same time, however, their demands were tightly coupled to the idea of a ‘new’ and distinct Scottish politics (Brown, 2001a, 2000b; Mackay, 2006; Mackay et al, 2003).

Nonetheless, as Thelen (2000) notes, interaction effects ‘do not necessarily push developments further along in the same direction’ (p. 104). While the intersection of these reform ‘paths’ opened up opportunities for reform and innovation in the institutions of political recruitment, this strategic coupling also set into motion new conflicts, constraining possibilities for future change. Evidence from both wider trends in Scottish political parties and the micro-level case study suggests that these reform trajectories have become, at least partially, decoupled post-1999. For example, in the run-up to devolution, women’s representation served as a visible symbol of a ‘modern, relevant, and democratic Scotland’ (Mackay, 2004b, p. 113; see also Brown, 2001a, 2000b; Mackay et al, 2003). Yet, as noted in chapter six, the recent drop in the numbers of women MSPs in the 2007 Scottish

Parliament elections has received little attention in either the news media or relevant academic literature (see also Mackay and Kenny, 2007).

Meanwhile, findings from the micro-level case study suggest that the ongoing tensions and contradictions between these different paths have potentially opened up new opportunities for political contestation and resistance. In particular, evidence from the micro-level case study demonstrates that the ‘margins matter’ (Schneiberg and Clemens, 2006, p. 218; see also Weir, 1992b). As Eric Schickler (2001, p. 255) notes, ‘the “losers” in one round of institutional reform do not go away; instead, they (or successors with similar interests) typically remain to fight another day’. In the case of Scottish Labour, the tensions and contradictions between these inter-connected paths of reform opened up spaces for discursive contestation, as those who ‘lost out’ in the 1999 selection contests repeatedly and publicly criticized the ‘centralisation of control’ in the process. As highlighted in chapter seven, these allegations of ‘control-freakery’ have become the dominant frame for interpreting candidate selection post-1999, reflected in both party discourse and the corresponding academic literature<sup>271</sup> (e.g. Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Jones, 2001; Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004). Evidence from the case study suggests that this discursive ‘victory’ has had far-reaching consequences. As the central Scottish party has increasingly withdrawn from selection decisions – in part due to the perceived controversy of central intervention post-1999 – participants in the selection process have been left with considerable leeway to circumvent and subvert formal rules and institutional innovations.

## **‘Nested’ Institutions and the Gendered Limits of Change**

The Scottish case, then, highlights the general and gendered difficulties of embedding innovations and reforms within a pre-existing institutional context. Academic commentators increasingly question the success of the ‘new politics’ in Scotland, highlighting the extent to

---

<sup>271</sup>Cutts, Childs, and Fieldhouse (2008) address similar dynamics at the UK level with regards to all-women shortlists (AWS). In the aftermath of the 2005 General Election, media coverage overwhelmingly focused on the defeat of the AWS candidate, Maggie Jones, in the ultra-safe Labour seat of Blaneau Gwent, largely ignoring the successful election of 23 other AWS Labour women. The dominant frame, then, was one of ‘AWS backlash’, with the case of Blaneau Gwent offering ‘proof’ that AWS candidates lose votes. Cutts, Childs and Fieldhouse critique this frame, arguing that there is no evidence of any significant ‘AWS effect’ in 2005.

which post-devolution political practices resemble those of Westminster and criticizing the ‘unrealistic’ hopes and expectations of devolution campaigners (e.g. Arter, 2004; McGarvey, 2001; Mitchell, 2004). Evidence from the case study, however, suggests that the reality is far more complex, highlighting opportunities for innovation and change in the institutions of political recruitment, while also drawing attention to underlying continuities.

The institutions of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland have not been created *de novo*; rather they are ‘nested’ within an existing system in which many elements of the ‘old’ have survived (Mackay, 2006, p. 20). Findings from the case study suggest that these gendered and institutional legacies of the past continue to have a powerful effect on the present. While formally, many of the institutional reforms of 1999 are still in place, these rules do not appear to be actively maintained or enforced and the ‘day-to-day business’ of candidate selection is largely guided by informal norms and shared understandings. The underlying trend, then, is one of erosion and drift, in which the increasing gap between the rules of the selection process and the actual implementation and enactment of these rules on the ground is masked by the appearance of formal stability on the surface. In the absence of active maintenance of existing institutional rules and reforms, participants appear to have fallen back on ‘familiar formulas’ (Thelen, 2004, p. 292), partially filling the gap with elements from past institutional repertoires, including, for example, masculinist practices of local patronage.

As such, evidence from the case study as well as wider trends over time raise questions as to the ‘success’ and sustainability of institutional reform and innovation in the institutions of political recruitment. A key criterion of the success of institutional innovation is the extent to which reforms have become ‘common-sense’, creating ‘routinized, taken-for granted patterns of behaviour’ (Inhetveen, 1999, p. 406). Yet, insights from both feminist work on gender and institutions as well as recent trends in the new institutionalist literature also point to the ways in which the daily enactment of institutions provides spaces for ongoing contestation and creative agency (see for example Connell, 2002; Kenney, 1996; Mahoney and Thelen, 2009; Streeck and Thelen, 2005). While this dynamic conceptualization of institutions offers helpful theoretical insights, it also complicates the picture. If institutions are sites of ongoing contestation, marked by dynamic processes of ‘reproduction, disruption and response to disruption’ (Clemens and Cook, 1999, p. 443), then it is unclear as to whether reforms can ever be fully institutionalized (or correspondingly, de-institutionalized).

The task, then, is to identify ‘*which specific elements* of a given institutional arrangement are (or are not) renegotiable and why some aspects are more amenable to change than others’ (Thelen, 2004, p. 36; emphasis in original).

As argued in chapter nine, evidence from the case study suggests that gender relations and gender norms are particularly ‘sticky’ institutional legacies with which to contend. Feminist research on gender and institutions highlights the particular difficulties of institutionalizing gender reforms, highlighting the constant possibility for norm erosion, drift and reversal. As Sally Kenney (1996) argues:

‘Many of those who theorize gender as a continuous process of change and negotiation do not see this process as leading inevitably and irreversibly towards progress. While they note the substantial progress for women in achieving electoral office, political appointments, or partnerships in law firms, they also carefully document how gender is then reinscribed in the institutions in pernicious ways’ (p. 461).

In the case of Scottish Labour, there are visible signs that ‘gender parity has slipped down the political agenda’ (Childs et al, 2005, p. 43). While Scottish Labour has consistently maintained a gender-balanced parliamentary group across three consecutive elections, it is incumbency rather than the institutionalization of gender balance that accounts for this strong performance; the underlying trend is one of decline in the number of female candidacies. Post-1999, Scottish Labour has been extremely reluctant to implement or enforce strong equality guarantee measures such as AWS, although central party officials continue to formally stress their commitment to gender-balanced representation. While the party does use ‘softer’ equality measures – such as gender-balanced shortlists – these policies do not appear to be strictly or uniformly enforced, nor do they guarantee outcomes. Evidence from the case study also points to a wider ‘dilution of women’s collective voice’ in the Labour Party (Mackay, 2004b, p. 120), evidenced in the recent ‘downgrading’ of women’s structures within the party. Meanwhile, the mainstream literature on political recruitment post-1999 either makes no mention of women’s representation or generally concludes that it is no longer an ‘issue’ (Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004, p. 299; see also Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Laffin and Shaw, 2007; Laffin et al, 2007).

At first glance, it is difficult to distinguish clearly gendered patterns from what may well be a wider erosion of the norms, rules, and practices put into place under the banner of the ‘new politics.’ As argued in chapters three and four, gender is not always easy to ‘see’ in institutions. Gender is part of the ‘logic of appropriateness’ of political institutions, operating at discursive levels and enacted through subtle and sometimes unconscious practices (Chappell, 2006). By focusing on the micro-level, the case study puts a central emphasis on the ‘normal, everyday, implementation and enactment’ of the institutions of political recruitment (Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 11), drawing attention to the active and dynamic processes through which these institutions are gendered and regendered and highlighting some of the complex, contradictory and often hidden ways in which gender plays out in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution. In interpreting and assessing the case study, the thesis identifies particular gendered mechanisms of institutional resistance and reproduction – including, for example, discursive strategies of gendered ‘Othering’ – which may have ‘limited portability’ in other contexts (Pierson, 2000c, p. 73; see also Elster, 1989). Certainly, there are parallels here with other studies of gender and political institutions which, for example, highlight the ways in which male-dominated political elites have been ‘remarkably resourceful in shifting the locus of power from formal to informal mechanisms’ in order to counteract women’s increased access and presence in formal decision-making sites (Hawkesworth, 2005, p. 150; see also Chappell, 2002; Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995; Puwar, 2004). In addition, the case study suggests that gender – at both symbolic and inter-personal levels – provides embodied institutional actors with powerful means to resist institutional innovation. Findings from the case study highlight the ways in which institutional actors draw upon and enact masculinist norms, discourses, and practices in order to circumvent formal rules, reinforce and consolidate political advantage, and diminish the power and political access of potential institutional ‘rivals’.

While the Scottish case demonstrates the difficulties of institutionalizing innovations and reforms in the face of ongoing political contestation and powerful institutional and gendered legacies, it also illustrates the potential for radical change and transformation. Although many academic commentators view the new politics as a ‘spent force’, evidence from the case study suggests that there have been significant innovations in the candidate selection process, though progress on this front remains fragile and contingent. In particular, the case study highlights ongoing tensions between ‘new politics’ and ‘politics as usual’, suggesting that the ‘new’ and the ‘old’ continue to uneasily co-exist, shaping and constraining each

other. Therefore, in the same sense that the ‘new’ has not entirely displaced the ‘old,’ neither has the ‘old’ subsumed the ‘new.’ It is also not the case that informal practices have entirely ‘emasculated’ formal rules and frameworks (Leach and Lowndes, 2007, p. 198; see also Helmke and Levitsky, 2004). Rather, evidence from the case study highlights complex and gendered interactions between old, new, formal, and informal in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution, emphasizing the ways in which institutional actors draw on a diverse range of sometimes contradictory institutional elements in different sites, at different times, and to differing degrees.

While this dynamic conceptualization of the institutions of political recruitment highlights the active and ongoing ways in which gender is ‘reinscribed in pernicious ways’ in political institutions (Kenney, 1996, p. 461), it also points to possibilities for creative agency and change. If institutions are gendered, then they can also be ‘re-gendered.’ As Karen Beckwith notes:

‘Gender as process suggests not only that institutions and politics are gendered but also that they *can be* gendered...[through] strategic behaviour by political actors to masculinize and/or to feminize political structures, rules and forms, for example literally to regender state power, policymaking, and state legal constructions and their interpretations’ (2005, p. 133; emphasis in original).

Evidence from the Scottish case suggests that gender equity entrepreneurs have had some success in ‘regendering’ the institutions of political recruitment, highlighting, for example, the ways in which candidate selection participants emphasize a broader interpretation of the necessary ‘skills’ and ‘knowledge’ required for political office, an interpretation that is broadly consistent with the gendered pre-1999 discourse of a ‘new’ and more feminized Scottish politics. Findings from the Scottish case also point to the need to consider a longer time frame, demonstrating that moderate reforms can result in significantly radical effects over time, as in the case of the package of internal party quotas in the Labour Party. In the case of post-devolution Scotland, the changes that have already taken place, as well as the ongoing tensions and contradictions in the political recruitment process, may open up future opportunities for further reform and innovation in the institutions of political recruitment. Yet, at the same time, evidence from the Scottish case demonstrates that there is ‘no guarantee that shifts within institutions are ever permanent’ (Chappell, 2006, p. 231), drawing attention to the gendered difficulties of institutionalizing innovation, and

highlighting the need for constant vigilance and active maintenance of institutional reforms (see Mackay, 2006).

## ***II: Theoretical and Empirical Contributions***

The opening section of this chapter identified the ‘problem’ that the thesis set out to address, highlighting existing tensions and gaps in feminist work on gender and institutions. The central argument of the thesis is that a ‘feminist institutionalism’ offers a promising answer to this ‘problem’. It contends that there is much to be learnt from the combined insights of feminist and new institutional theory, and argues that a feminist institutionalist approach can expand our understanding of gendered political institutions in three key ways.

First, a feminist institutionalist approach establishes gender as a crucial dimension of political institutions. The theoretical and empirical work of the thesis provides powerful evidence that there are important gendered dynamics at work within the institutions of political recruitment that have not been recognized by mainstream approaches. In line with existing work in feminist political science, the thesis argues that gender needs to be taken into account in order to understand the operation and evolution of political institutions. Evidence from the case study draws attention to the gendered foundations that underpin institutional norms and practices, including, for example, the gendered norm of merit, which has been repeatedly problematized in other contexts (see for example Burton, 1991; Chapman, 1993; Chappell, 2002, 2006; Lovenduski and Norris, 1989; Savage and Witz, 1992). It also highlights specific gendered mechanisms of institutional reproduction and resistance, such as discursive strategies of gendered Othering. As discussed previously, feminist theoretical and empirical work on gender and institutions suggests that gender relations are cross-cutting, that they play out in different ways in different types of institutions and on different institutional levels, ranging from the symbolic level to the ‘seemingly trivial’ level of interpersonal day-to-day interaction where the continuous performance of gender takes place (Kenney, 1996, p. 458; see also Acker, 1990, 1992; Connell, 1987, 2002; Lovenduski, 1998). The argument that gender plays out differently in different institutional sites at different times is a critical one for institutional analysis, as variations in gender practice and gender regimes in particular institutional contexts shape

institutional interactions, institutional outcomes, and opportunities for strategic engagement (see Banaszak et al, 2003; Bashevkin, 1998; Chappell, 2002, 2006; Dobrowolsky, 2003; Hawkesworth, 2003; Katzenstein, 1998; Lovenduski, 1998, 2005; Mackay, 2006; Vickers, 1994).

Second, a feminist institutionalist approach makes power a central analytical focus of institutional analysis (see also Kenny, 2007). While power is generally underplayed in the new institutionalist literature, recent work in the field – particularly the work of Kathleen Thelen – has put a renewed emphasis on the importance of power relations within institutions (see for example Thelen, 2003, 2004; Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming). Yet, Thelen and others continue to overlook the gendered dimension of institutional power relations. In contrast, feminist political science has gender at its core – that is to say, it is centrally concerned with problematizing and, ultimately, challenging hegemonic discursive constructions of gender and exposing the institutional processes and structures involved in constructing and maintaining gendered power hierarchies within political institutions (see for example Chappell, 2002; Halford, 1992; Hawkesworth, 2003). Evidence from the Scottish case demonstrates that the gendering and regendering of political institutions are ‘active processes with palpable effects’ (Hawkesworth, 2003, p. 531), occurring through the actions of embodied institutional actors, as well as through institutional rules, regulations, norms, and standard operating procedures. These findings demonstrate not only that gender norms and gender relations are particularly ‘sticky’ institutional legacies with which to contend, but also that gender – at both the symbolic level as well as the level of day-to-day interaction – is a primary means through which institutional reform and innovation can be resisted. This suggests that the dynamics of institutional power relations, resistance, reproduction, continuity, and change need to be filtered through a gendered lens (Mackay, 2004a, p. 113; see also Chappell, 2002, 2006; Kenny, 2007; Mackay, 2008; Mackay and Meier, 2003). Furthermore, this suggests that new institutionalist accounts which ignore or underplay these gendered dynamics are not only incomplete, but also ‘accredit and perpetuate distorted accounts of the political world’ (Hawkesworth, 2005, p. 151).

Third, a feminist institutionalist approach provides critical insights into the gendered dynamics of change, continuity and innovation. Evidence from the Scottish case points to the complexity and contingency of institutional innovation in a multi-level party system, highlighting the power of past decisions and gendered legacies over future events, as well as



the tensions and contradictions between inter-locking paths of reform. Drawing on the insights of both feminist and new institutional theory, the thesis argues that institutional change occurs in a 'world' of other institutions as well as powerful institutional and gendered legacies, and is therefore constrained by both past decisions and existing forms and practices. 'New' institutions, then, are never really 'new.' As Robert Goodin (1996, p. 30) explains, institutional designers 'always work with materials inherited from and to some extent unalterably shaped by the past.' Additionally, institutional design and innovation require 'carrying coalitions' which are often made up of diverse interests, goals and motivations and, therefore, result in 'untidy compromises,' building institutions that are full of tensions and contradictions (see Schickler, 2001). These inherent ambiguities and contradictions can then be contested by changing coalitions of actors over time (Mahoney and Thelen 2009 forthcoming; Sheingate 2009 forthcoming). In other words, while institutional legacies profoundly shape the operation of political institutions, they do so in unpredictable ways.

A feminist institutionalist approach, then, offers helpful insights for work on gender and institutions regarding the bounded nature and contradictory outcomes of institutional innovation in existing systems. On the one hand, it suggests that patriarchal and masculinist institutions designed to exclude women can be challenged and transformed. In Scotland, for example, the mobilization of women's movement coalitions and feminist activism during the devolution campaign were, in part, driven by a practical understanding of the need to be in 'at the start' of a new institution (Mackay, 2006; Mackay et al, 2003). In addition to the achievement of high levels of women MSPs in the new Scottish Parliament, activists also succeeded in building gender concerns into constitutional and institutional 'blueprints' (Mackay, 2006; Mackay et al, 2003). Yet, the findings of the thesis also draw attention to the fact that institutions designed to advance gender equality may be co-opted by other interests. Moments of institutional design, restructuring, and innovation are followed by a 'longer period of institutionalisation and uncertainty as the new structures and practices...are either embedded and consolidated, or amended, neglected and discarded' (Mackay, 2006, p. 2; see also Banaszak et al, 2003; Chappell, 2002; Dobrowolsky and Hart, 2003; Waylen, 2007). As highlighted previously, there is some evidence that elements of the 'new politics' have been institutionalized in the political recruitment process post-devolution. However, the underlying pattern appears to be one of erosion and decline, a trend that is masked by the appearance of formal stability on the surface.

While these contributions relate to institutional design, a feminist institutionalist approach can also provide insights into issues of institutional evolution, reproduction, and change, or what Louise Chappell (2006) refers to as *institutional dynamism*. Evidence from the case study suggests that the candidate selection process in the Scottish Labour Party remains a tense battleground, highlighting ongoing tensions, conflicts and contradictions in the institutions of political recruitment post-1999. Recent developments in the new institutionalist field point to a more dynamic conception of institutional stability and change, viewing institutions as sites of ongoing power struggles and putting a central emphasis on political conflicts and coalitions (see Schickler, 2001; Thelen, 2003, 2004). In particular, recent work in the historical institutionalist field has paid more attention to endogenously-generated change, highlighting ‘more subtle shifts that unfold incrementally’, but that can ‘add up’ to significant innovation and change over time (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming, pp. 2-3; see also Pierson, 2004; Schickler, 2001; Streeck and Thelen, 2005; Thelen, 2003, 2004). In historical institutionalist thinking, there is ‘nothing automatic, self-perpetuating, or self-reinforcing’ about institutional arrangements (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming, p. 11). Instead, institutions are ‘always subject to interpretation, debate, and contestation’ and the day-to-day ‘enactment’ of institutions provides spaces for ongoing political contestation and creative agency (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009 forthcoming, p. 14; see also Streeck and Thelen, 2005).

This dynamic approach to conceptualizing political institutions offers a number of useful insights to feminist work on gender and institutions. To begin with, it suggests that feminist political scientists need to take issues of history, temporality and sequencing seriously. An analysis over time draws attention to the potentially transformative effects of gradual and incremental processes of change while also highlighting underlying continuities through historical ‘breakpoints’ (Pierson, 2004; Pierson and Skocpol, 2002; Thelen, 2003, 2004). It also highlights the dynamic and ongoing interactions between gender and institutions (see in particular Chappell, 2006). As Nancy Burns (2005, p. 140) argues: ‘gender is easier to see over space and time, after the researcher does the work of adding up the many often-small wrongs through which gender inequalities are manifest.’ This focus on institutional dynamism also yields important insights for gender equity entrepreneurs seeking reform agendas. On the one hand, it draws attention to possibilities for creative agency, highlighting the ways in which institutions serve not just as constraints but also as strategic resources for

institutional actors. Yet, at the same time, evidence from both new institutionalist and feminist accounts of political institutions demonstrates that there is ‘no guarantee that shifts within institutions are ever permanent’ (Chappell, 2006, p. 231). In particular, evidence from the Scottish case draws attention to the ways in which the ‘losers’ from previous rounds of reform often serve as important catalysts for ongoing processes of institutional resistance, reproduction, and change. Findings from the micro-level case study also draw attention to the need for constant vigilance and active maintenance, highlighting the particular vulnerabilities of gender equality reforms to processes of resistance, drift, and reversal.

The theoretical and empirical work of the thesis also makes a substantial contribution to the literature on gender and political recruitment. First, the thesis provides an important new case study of the political recruitment process, offering additional insights into the under-researched ‘secret garden’ of candidate selection and recruitment. Second, a feminist institutionalist approach provides the necessary theoretical and methodological tools needed to take the supply and demand model forward, setting out starting points for future research in the field. As highlighted previously, the thesis demonstrates that the supply and demand model needs to take gender seriously. Gender can not simply be conceptualized as a ‘factor’ that affects the dynamics of supply and demand, manifested at the individual level through, for example, direct or imputed discrimination by party gatekeepers. Rather, gender needs to be integrated throughout. A key first step is to map and analyze the ‘gender regimes’ of political parties (Connell, 1987, 2002), as the decision-making process of candidate selection takes place ‘within the context of formal party rules, and informal norms and practices’<sup>272</sup> (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, pp. 141-142). Political parties are generally coded as ‘masculine’; this does not mean that they are exclusively male dominated, but rather that they are historically ‘built around unacknowledged traditional conceptions of gender relations’ (Lovenduski, 2005, p. 58). Evidence from the case study demonstrates that these gendered legacies from the past continue to have a powerful effect on the present, for example, drawing attention to the ways in which participants in the selection process are able to circumvent institutional reforms by employing elements from past institutional repertoires – namely informal and masculinist party practices of local patronage and the privileging of ‘favourite sons’.

---

<sup>272</sup> See Figure 2.1 in chapter two.

In terms of methodological contributions, the thesis demonstrated that discourse analysis can reveal a great deal about the social construction of gender – ranging from the symbolic level to the level of interpersonal interaction. However, in seeking to systematically ‘gender’ the dynamics of supply and demand, we have to be precise about what gender ‘means’ in different contexts and at different institutional levels. As highlighted above, R.W. Connell’s formulation of the *gender regime* and the *gender order* –outlined in chapter three - offers a potentially useful way to systematically assess the ‘state of play’ of gender relations in the institutions of political recruitment (Connell, 1987, p. 120). Connell (2002) identifies four analytical dimensions of gender relations, many of which are already implicitly addressed in this thesis and can be developed in other contexts. First, and most importantly, are *power relations*, which operate both as domination and oppression and, in a more post-structuralist sense, as diffuse and discursive power. Evidence from the case study highlights the importance of positional power and authority, for example, with regards to rule making, interpretation, and enforcement. Yet, in adopting a discursive approach, it also traces the subtle and intimate ways in which power is exercised at the interpersonal level, drawing attention to the ways in which particular discursive strategies are used to construct and reinforce gendered difference. *Production relations* center around the gendered division of labour, as well as the larger division between the public and private sphere. For example, the thesis problematizes the underlying gendered assumptions that shape and structure candidate selection criteria, raising questions as to what is seen to ‘count’ as relevant experience when running for office. Evidence from the case study suggests that ‘experience’ has been informally re-linked with traditional political qualifications associated with the public sphere, such as time spent in political office. Meanwhile, skills and knowledge associated with the private sphere, such as parenting experience, have been correspondingly devalued. *Emotional relations* include sexuality and sexual relations, but also incorporate major areas of emotional attachment, such as the family, the workplace, or society more broadly. Evidence from the case study suggests that the masculinist practices of local patronage identified in chapter nine have a significant emotional dimension. These emotions include a general resentment about change – framed in terms of opposition to ‘central intervention’ – and a reassertion of gendered discourses surrounding the importance of ‘male loyalty’ and the privileging of ‘favourite sons’<sup>273</sup>. Finally, *symbolic relations* center on the main sites where gender meanings are constructed – language, dress, gesture – and refers to the

---

<sup>273</sup> Connell identifies a similar dynamic in public sector worksites, which she refers to as the ‘emotions of gender transition’ (2006, p. 843).

operation of masculinity/femininity as a powerful symbolic dichotomy. The thesis highlights the ways in which particular gendered meanings and dichotomies play out in the institutions of political recruitment post-devolution and also points specifically to *how* political masculinities and femininities are defined in relation to each other in particular contexts, for example, through discursive strategies of gendered Othering.

Work on gender and political recruitment must also be attentive to institutional interconnections, exploring the ways in which the institutions of political recruitment interact with each other in dynamic and often contradictory ways. Norris and Lovenduski's supply and demand model already points to these institutional complexities, for example, highlighting the ways in which supply-side and demand-side factors interact with each other at different stages of the process. Yet these theoretical nuances are often lost in subsequent applications of the model, which generally assume that the institutions of political recruitment interact with each other in straight-forward and linear ways. Mapping these institutional interconnections will require further in-depth research into the 'secret garden' of candidate selection and recruitment, which, as noted previously, has received surprisingly little systematic attention in either the feminist or mainstream literature. In order to unravel these complexities, additional empirical work is needed in the form of careful case-by-case analysis, which this thesis provides, as well as small-n comparative research.

Recent reformulations of the supply and demand model - particularly the work of Mona Lena Krook (2003, 2006, 2009 forthcoming) - have brought us closer to this goal, systematically situating the effects of the institutions of political recruitment within the context of broader institutional configurations. In addition, Krook's analysis demonstrates the importance of placing the institutions of political recruitment within a broader historical and temporal context, tracing the effects of institutional configurations by analyzing iterated sequences of reform to increase women's political representation over time. As this thesis has shown, by adopting a longer time frame and engaging in detailed within-case process tracing, we can develop nuanced insights into the dynamic and changing relationship between gender and institutions. These insights can help us to answer key questions surrounding the gendered dynamics of continuity and change, allowing for a better understanding of how and why positive gender change can occur in some contexts but not others (see also Waylen, 2009 forthcoming).

Yet, while Krook's reformulation of the supply and demand model brings us closer to answering these crucial questions, it adopts a relatively narrow interpretation of reform and innovation in the institutions of political recruitment, focusing solely on candidate gender quotas (see also Squires, 2007). In contrast, the thesis demonstrates the need to consider institutional innovation in a broader sense. Candidate gender quotas are undeniably a key strategy for increasing women's representation in national parliaments (see Dahlerup, 2006a; Krook, 2009 forthcoming; Lovenduski, 2005; Squires, 2007). Yet, while quotas are intended to counter gender biases in the distribution of political positions, debates over quotas often ignore the internal party dynamic, a key institutional arena in which the politics of distribution play out. In seeking to explore and understand this dynamic, the thesis makes a significant and original methodological contribution to the literature, highlighting the central importance of the 'inner life' and day-to-day enactment of the institutions of political recruitment. A focus on the micro-level enables us to 'see' the ways in which gender power relations play out in the institutions of political recruitment, for example, highlighting the ways in the everyday enactment of gender relations and gender norms serve as a central mechanism of institutional reproduction and resistance. In line with recent insights from both new institutional analysis and feminist political science, a micro-level approach also draws attention to the 'slippage' between formal rules and the implementation, enactment, and enforcement of these rules on the ground, pointing to the ways in which the daily enactment of political institutions provides spaces for ongoing contestation and creative agency.

These dynamics cannot be captured by accounts of political recruitment that focus on the continuity of formal rules over time. For example, evidence from the micro-level case study draws attention to the ways in which the day-to-day practices of candidate selection have been decoupled from formal party rules and regulations, a process that has been entirely overlooked by the mainstream literature on political recruitment post-devolution (e.g. Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; Mitchell and Bradbury, 2004). In addition, these micro-level dynamics cannot be captured by accounts that focus solely on the meso- or macro-level. While we may be able to 'see' certain effects of micro-level processes of contestation at the macro-level, these effects and trends do not provide a complete picture in themselves. For example, while macro-level trends of political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland over time point to an underlying trend of erosion, drift, and decline, evidence from the micro-level

case study presents a more complex and nuanced picture, drawing attention to underlying continuities in the institutions of political recruitment, while also highlighting opportunities for innovation and change. The methodological innovations adopted in this thesis will hopefully be adopted by other researchers in the field.

Finally, the thesis contributes to a greater understanding of post-devolution Scottish politics, where there is little primary research in the area of candidate selection and recruitment since the 1999 elections. The thesis provides an important critique of the central assumptions of current research on political recruitment in post-devolution Scotland and demonstrates that the candidate selection process remains a site of conflict and contestation within the Scottish Labour Party post-1999, despite declarations to the contrary within the mainstream literature. The empirical work of the thesis, then, represents a substantial contribution to the field, providing new data on change and continuity in the institutions of selection and recruitment in Scottish political parties post-1999, while also providing a fine-grained reconstruction and analysis of the micro-level dynamics of a selection contest. As discussed previously, the scope of the thesis has been a necessarily narrow one. As such, further investigation into the Scottish Labour Party, as well as Scottish political parties more generally, would be worthwhile and would enable us to make stronger claims about the gendered dynamics of the political recruitment process in post-devolution Scotland.

In focusing on the Scottish case, the thesis makes a partial trade-off between the ‘goals of generalization versus “thick” causal explanations of individual cases’ (Bennett and Elman, 2006, p. 468); therefore, the extent to which the findings and conclusions of the thesis can be related to other settings is limited. However, as argued in chapter five, while cross-case comparison is critically important for the process of theory-building and constructing generalizations, causal processes are most visible at the level of single case studies, and within-case analysis can help to develop at least limited generalizations which may ‘travel well across different settings’ (Pierson, 2000c, p. 74; see also Flyvbjerg, 2006; George and Bennett, 2005; Gerring, 2004; Ragin, 1992). While the thesis is empirically focused on post-devolution Scotland, the feminist institutionalist theoretical framework can be adapted and applied to other cases, and may be particularly useful in explaining the contradictory outcomes of institutional innovation in other multi-level systems. As discussed previously, the thesis also identifies specific gendered mechanisms of institutional reproduction and resistance which may have at least ‘limited portability’ in other contexts (Pierson, 2000c, p.

74). In addition, the empirical work of the thesis will be of interest to scholars in the field of territorial politics and party politics, opening up new directions for comparative work on gender and political recruitment in regional political parties.

### ***III: Towards a Feminist Institutionalism?***

The theoretical and empirical work of the thesis establishes a foundation for a ‘feminist institutionalism’, an innovative and path-breaking research agenda that explicitly challenges the boundaries between mainstream and feminist theory. A feminist institutionalism has the potential to get at some of the ‘big questions’ of feminist political science, such as how certain institutions are gendered and regendered and how and why institutional change occurs, as well as understanding the relationship between different actors and the institutional context (for further discussion see Kenny and Mackay, 2009 forthcoming; Waylen, 2009 forthcoming). These questions are centrally important not only from an academic point of view, but also from a feminist activist perspective. This feminist institutionalist research agenda is at its heart a transformative one; it is informed by ‘action-oriented goals’ and is centrally concerned with understanding how institutions reproduce gendered power distributions and how these institutions can be changed (Mackay and Meier, 2003, p. 16). As Kathleen Thelen (1999) notes, understanding how institutions are constructed provides insights into how they might come apart.

A feminist institutionalism also has the potential to transform mainstream new institutionalist research. The thesis demonstrates that there are important gendered dynamics at work within political institutions and that mainstream accounts which overlook these dynamics are incomplete. It also points to ways in which new institutionalist tools and theoretical frameworks can be gendered (or, more accurately, ‘re-gendered’). For instance, findings from the thesis reinforce and refine recent theoretical developments in the new institutionalist literature, highlighting the ways in which institutional actors are able to subvert or circumvent institutional innovation through the daily enactment of gender relations. The thesis also points to new directions for research on political institutions, for example, drawing attention to the gendered dynamics of rule-enforcement and rule-breaking and raising questions as to which gendered bodies are allowed to break rules in which



contexts. Finally, the thesis highlights the ways in which a ‘feminist institutionalism’ could potentially generate new and gender-specific tools and concepts, identifying particular gendered mechanisms of institutional resistance and reproduction – such as discursive strategies of gendered Othering – which can be explored in other contexts.

What this project is ultimately concerned with is good social science<sup>274</sup>. By ‘gendering’ the new institutionalism, we can improve mainstream theory-building, methodology and research. At the same time, insights from the new institutionalism can provide feminist political scientists with the necessary tools and concepts to systematically explore and understand the gendered dynamics of political institutions. In building a feminist institutionalism, we can take both feminist and mainstream research forward, leading to better political science and analysis.

---

<sup>274</sup> For an extended discussion of this argument, see Goertz and Mazur (2008).

## Appendix A: Interview Schedule

1. How did you first hear about the opening in the constituency seat of City North and Greenside?
2. Why did you first decide to stand for selection?
3. Was there anyone particularly influential in encouraging you to stand for selection?
4. How important were formal speeches/presentations in the selection process? How important were informal interactions with party members?
5. How important was union support? Branch nominations?
6. What were the rules for canvassing and campaigning? What was your experience of canvassing/campaigning?
7. In your experience of the selection process, what are the most important qualities to CLP members in selecting parliamentary candidates? What were party members were looking for? For example:
  - How important were local issues and a local background?
  - How important was political experience? (and what kinds of experience?)
  - How important was party service or party loyalty?
8. What role did key party figures play in the selection process? For example:
  - Local MPs?
  - Retiring MSP ?
  - Branch Chairs/Members?
  - CLP Officers? The CLP Procedural Secretary?
  - Union Officers/Members?
  - Central party officials (John Smith House)? The Scottish Organizer?

## Bibliography

- Abbott, A. (2001) *Time Matters: On Theory and Method*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Aberbach, J.D., Putnam, R.D. and B.A. Rockman (1981) *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*. Cambridge: MA: Harvard University Press.
- Achen, C.H. and D. Snidal (1989) 'Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies', *World Politics*, 41 (2), 144-169.
- Acker, J. (1990) 'Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations', *Gender and Society*, 4 (2), 139-158.
- Acker, J. (1992) 'From Sex Roles to Gendered Institutions', *Contemporary Sociology*, 21, 565-569.
- Alexander, G. (2001) 'Institutions, Path Dependence, and Democratic Consolidation', *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 13 (3), 249-270.
- Amenta, E. (2003) 'What We Know about the Development of Social Policy: Comparative and Historical Research in Comparative and Historical Perspective' in J. Mahoney and D. Rueschemeyer (eds) *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 91-130.
- Amenta, E., Bonastia, C. and N. Caren (2001) 'U.S. Social Policy in Comparative and Historical Perspective: Concepts, Images, Arguments, and Research Strategies', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27, 213-234.
- Aminzade, R. (1992) 'Historical Sociology and Time', *Sociological Methods and Research*, 20, 456-80.
- Aminzade, R. (1993) 'Class Analysis, Politics, and French Labor History' in L. Berlanstein (ed) *Rethinking Labor History*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, pp. 90-113.
- Ansolahehere, S. and J. Snyder (2002) 'The Incumbency Advantage in U.S. Elections', *Election Law Journal*, 1 (3), 315-338.
- Arter, D. (2004) 'The Scottish committees and the goal of a 'New Politics': a verdict on the first four years of the devolved Scottish parliament,' *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 12 (1), 71-91.
- Aspinwall, M.D. and Schneider, G. (2000) 'Same menu, separate tables: the institutionalist turn in political science and the study of European integration', *European Journal of Political Research*, 38, 1-36.
- Atkinson, A. and A. Coffey (1997) 'Analysing Documentary Realities' in D. Silverman (ed) *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*. London: Sage, pp. 45-62.
- Bacchi, C. (1999) *Women, Policy and Politics: The Construction of Policy Problems*. London: Sage.
- Bacchi, C. (2000) 'Policy as Discourse: What does it mean? Where does it get us?', *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, 21 (1), 45-57.
- Bacchi, C. (2004) 'Policy and discourse: challenging the construction of affirmative action as preferential treatment', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11 (1), 128-146.
- Bachrach, P. and M.S. Baratz (1962) 'The Two Faces of Power,' *American Political Science Review*, 17, 301-326.
- Banaszak, L.A. (1996) *Why Movements Succeed or Fail: Opportunity, Culture, and the Struggle for Woman's Suffrage*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Banaszak, L.A., K. Beckwith and D. Rucht (eds) (2003) *Women's Movements Facing the Reconfigured State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bashevkin, S. (1998) *Women on the Defensive: Living through Conservative Times*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Bates, R.H. (1989) *Beyond the Miracle of the Market*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bates, R.H., Grief, A., Levi, M., Rosenthal, J. and B. Weingast (1998) *Analytic Narratives*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Baumgartner, F.R. and B.D. Jones (1993) *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Beck, L.J. (2003) 'Democratization and the Hidden Public: The Impact of Patronage Networks on Senegalese Women', *Comparative Politics*, 35 (2), 147-169.
- Beckwith, K. (2005) 'A Common Language of Gender?', *Politics and Gender*, 1 (1), 128-137.
- Beckwith, K. (2007) 'Numbers and Newness: The Descriptive and Substantive Representation of Women', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 40 (1), 27-49.
- Bell, D. (1992) *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism*. New York: Basic Books.
- Benavides, J.C. (2003) 'Women's Political Participation in Bolivia: Progress and Obstacles', Paper presented at International IDEA Workshop 'The Implementation of Quotas: Latin American Experiences', Lima, Peru: 23-24 February.
- Bennett, A. and C. Elman (2006) 'Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9, 455-476.
- Bennett, A. and C. Elman (2007) 'Qualitative Methods: The view from the subfields', *Comparative Political Studies*, 40 (2), 111-121.
- Berkovitch, N. (1999) *From Motherhood to Citizenship: Women's Rights and International Organizations*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.
- Bernstein, R. (1997) 'Might Women Have the Edge in Open-Seat House Primaries?', *Women and Politics*, 17 (2), 1-26.
- Black, J.H. and Erickson, L. (2000) 'Similarity, compensation or difference? A comparison of female and male office-seekers', *Women and Politics*, 21 (4), 1-38.
- Black, J.H. and Erickson, L. (2003) 'Women Candidates and Voter Bias: Do Women Politicians Need to Be Better?', *Electoral Studies*, 22, pp. 81-100.
- Blaikie, N. (2000) *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Blyth, M. (1997) "'Any More Bright Ideas?': The Ideational Turn of Comparative Political Economy', *Comparative Politics*, 29, 229-250.
- Bochel, J. and Denver, D. (1983) 'Candidate Selection in the Labour Party: What the Selectors Seek', *British Journal of Political Science*, 13, pp. 45-59.
- Boston, J., Levine, S., McLeay, E. and N.S. Roberts (1998) 'Enthusiasm and entropy: New Zealand's experience with proportional representation', *Representation*, 35 (1), 32-40.
- Boundary Commission for Scotland (2004) *Fifth Periodical Report of the Boundary Commission for Scotland*. Edinburgh: Boundary Commission for Scotland.
- Bradbury, J., Denver, D., Mitchell, J. and L. Bennie (2000a) 'Devolution and Party Change: Candidate Selection for the 1999 Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly Elections', *Journal of Legislative Studies*, 6 (3), 51-72.
- Bradbury, J., Mitchell, J., Bennie, L. and D. Denver (2000b) 'Candidate Selection, Devolution and Modernization: The Selection of Labour Party Candidates for the 1999 Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly Elections', *British Elections and Parties Review*, 10, 151-172.
- Breitenbach, E. (1990) "'Sisters are doing it for themselves': The Women's Movement in Scotland' in A. Brown and R. Parry (eds) *The Scottish Government Yearbook 1990*. Edinburgh: The Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland, University of Edinburgh, pp. 209-206.
- Breitenbach, E. and F. Mackay (eds) (2001) *Women and Contemporary Scottish Politics: An Anthology*. Edinburgh: Polygon.

- Bristow, S. (1980) 'Women Councillors – an Explanation of the Under-Representation of Women in Local Government', *Local Government Studies*, 73-99.
- Brown, A. (2001a) 'Women and Politics in Scotland', in E. Breitenbach and F. Mackay (eds) *Women and Contemporary Scottish Politics: An Anthology*. Edinburgh: Polygon, pp. 197-212. (Originally published in *Parliamentary Affairs*, 49 (1), 1996).
- Brown, A. (2001b) 'Deepening Democracy: Women and the Scottish Parliament' in E. Breitenbach and F. Mackay (eds) *Women and Contemporary Scottish Politics: An Anthology*. Edinburgh: Polygon, pp. 213-229. (Originally published in *Regional and Federal Studies*, 8 (1), 1998).
- Brown, A. (2001c) 'Taking their Place in the New House: Women and the Scottish Parliament' in E. Breitenbach and F. Mackay (eds) *Women and Contemporary Scottish Politics: An Anthology*. Polygon: Edinburgh, pp. 241-247 (Originally published in *Scottish Affairs*, 28, 1999).
- Brown, A., Donaghy, R., Mackay, F. and E. Meehan (2002) 'Women and Constitutional Change in Scotland and Northern Ireland', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 55 (1), 71-84.
- Brown, A., Jones, A., and Mackay, F. (1999) *The 'Representativeness' of Councillors*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Brown, A., McCrone, D., and L. Paterson (1996) *Politics and Society in Scotland*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Brown, W. (1988) *Manhood and Politics: A Feminist Reading in Political Theory..* Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Bryman, A. (2008) *Social Research Methods*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bryson, V. (1992) *Feminist Political Theory*. Basingstoke: MacMillan.
- Burau, V. (2007) 'Institutional configurations and reforms of old age care policies: between stability and change'. Paper presented at the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR) General Conference, Pisa, 6-8 September.
- Burch, M. and M. Moran (1985) 'The Changing Political Elite', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 38, 1-15.
- Burns, N. (2005) 'Finding Gender', *Politics and Gender*, 1 (1), 137-141.
- Burns, Nancy, Schlozman, Kay, and Sidney Verba (2001) *The Private Roots of Public Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Burrell, B. (1992) 'Women Candidates in Open-Seat Primaries for the U.S. House: 1968-1990', *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 17 (4), 493-508.
- Burrell, B. (1994) *A Woman's Place is in the House*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Burton, C. (1991) *The Promise and the Price: The Struggle for Equal Opportunity in Women's Employment*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Büthe, T. (2002) 'Taking Temporality Seriously: Modeling History and the Use of Narratives as Evidence', *American Political Science Review*, 96 (3), 481-493.
- Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1992) 'Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of Postmodernism' in J. Butler and J. Scott (eds) *Feminists Theorize the Political*. London: Routledge, pp. 3-21.
- Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*. London: Routledge.
- Cain, B., Ferejohn, J. and M. Fiorina (1987) *The Personal Vote*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Calvert, R. (1995) 'Rational Actors, Equilibrium, and Social Institutions' in J. Knight and I. Sened (eds) *Explaining Social Institutions*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 57-95.
- Campbell, A.L. (2005) *How Policies Make Citizens: Senior Political Activism and the American Welfare State*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Campbell, J.L. (1989) 'Institutional analysis and the role of ideas in political economy' in March, J.G. and Olsen, J.P. (eds) *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*. New York: The Free Press.
- Campbell, R. (2006) *Gender and the Vote in Britain: Beyond the Gender Gap?* Colchester: ECPR Press.
- Campbell, R. and J. Lovenduski (2005) 'Winning Women's Votes? The Incremental Track to Equality', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 58 (4), 837-853.
- Carey, J. and M.S. Shugart (1995) 'Incentives to cultivate a personal vote: a rank-ordering of electoral formulas', *Electoral Studies*, 14 (4), 417-439.
- Carroll, S.J. (1994) *The Impact of Women in Public Office*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Caul, M. (1999) 'Women's representation in parliament: the role of political parties', *Party Politics*, 5 (1), 79-98.
- Caul, M. (2001) 'Political Parties and the Adoption of Candidate Quotas: A Cross-National Analysis', *Journal of Politics*, 63 (4), 1214-1229.
- Chapman, J. (1993) *Politics, Feminism, and the Reformation of Gender*. London: Routledge.
- Chappell, L. (2002) *Gendering Government: Feminist Engagement with the State in Australia and Canada*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Chappell, L. (2006) 'Comparing Political Institutions: Revealing the Gendered "Logic of Appropriateness"', *Politics and Gender*, 2 (2), 223-248.
- Chappell, L. (2008) 'The International Criminal Court: A New Arena for Transforming Gender Justice' in S. Rai and G. Waylen (eds) *Global Governance: Feminist Perspectives*. London: Palgrave, pp. 160-184.
- Checkel, J.T. (2006) 'Tracing Causal Mechanisms', *International Studies Review*, 8 (2), 362-370.
- Childs, S. (2004) *New Labour's Women MPs: Women Representing Women*. London: Routledge.
- Childs, S. and M.L. Krook (2006a) 'Gender and Politics: The State of the Art', *Politics*, 26 (1), 18-28.
- Childs, S. and M.L. Krook (2006b) 'Should Feminists Give Up on Critical Mass? A Contingent Yes', *Politics and Gender*, 2 (4) 522-530.
- Childs, S., Lovenduski, J. and R. Campbell (2005) *Women at the Top 2005: Changing Numbers, Changing Politics?* London: Hansard Society.
- Clemens, E. (1997) *The People's Lobby: Organizational Innovation and the Rise of Interest Group Politics in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Clemens, E.S. and J.M. Cook (1999) 'Politics and Institutionalism: Explaining Durability and Change,' *Annual Review of Sociology*, 441-466.
- Cockburn, C. (1985) *Machinery of Dominance*. London: Pluto.
- Cockburn, C. (1991) *In the Way of Women: Men's Resistance to Sex Equality in Organizations*. London: Macmillan.
- Collier, D. (1993) 'The Comparative Method' in A. Finifter (ed) *Political Science: The State of the Discipline II*. Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, pp. 105-119.
- Collier, R.B. and D. Collier (1991) *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Collier, D., Mahoney, J. and J. Seawright (2004) 'Claiming Too Much: Warnings About Selection Bias' in H.E. Brady and D. Collier (eds) *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 85-102.
- Connell, R.W. (1987) *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Connell, R.W. (1995) *Masculinities*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Connell, R.W. (2002) *Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Connell, R.W. (2006) 'Glass Ceilings or Gendered Institutions? Mapping the Gender Regimes of Public Sector Worksites', *Public Administration Review*, 66 (6), 837-849.
- Coote, A. (ed) (2000) *New Gender Agenda: Why women still want more*. London: IPPR.
- Cowley, P. and Childs, S. (2003) 'Too spineless to rebel? New Labour's women MPs', *British Journal of Political Science*, 33, 345-365.
- Crossman, R.H.S. (1963) 'Foreword' in W. Bagehot (ed) *The English Constitution*. London: Fontana.
- Crouch, C. (1986) 'Sharing Public Space: States and Organized Interests in Western Europe' in J. Hall (ed) *States in History*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 177-210.
- Crouch, C. (2003) [Review of the book *The Rise of Neoliberalism and Institutional Analysis*], *Perspectives on Politics*, 1 (1), 202-203.
- Crouch, C. and M. Keune (2005) 'Changing Dominant Practice: Making Use of Institutional Diversity in Hungary and the United Kingdom' in W. Streeck and K. Thelen (eds) *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*, pp. 83-102.
- Cutts, D., Childs, S. and E. Fieldhouse (2008) "'This is What Happens When You Don't Listen": All-Women Shortlists at the 2005 General Election,' *Party Politics*, 14 (5), 575-595.
- Dahlerup, D. (2006a) *Women, Quotas and Politics*. London: Routledge.
- Dahlerup, D. (2006b) 'Introduction' in *Women, Quotas and Politics*. London: Routledge, pp. 3-31.
- Darcy, R., Welch, S. and J. Clark (1994) *Women, Elections and Representation*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- de Beauvoir, S. (1953) *The Second Sex*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Deeg, R. (2005) 'Change from Within: German and Italian Finance in the 1990s' in W. Streeck and K. Thelen (eds) *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 169-202.
- Denver, D. (1988) 'Britain: Centralized parties with Decentralized Selection' in M. Gallagher and M. Marsh (eds) *The Secret Garden: Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective*. London: Sage, pp. 47-71.
- Denver, D. (2007) "'A Historic Moment?'" The Results of the Scottish Parliament Elections 2007', *Scottish Affairs*, pp. 61-79.
- Derrida, J. (1976) *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Derrida, J. (1978) *Writing and Difference*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Devine, F. (2002) 'Qualitative Methods' in D. Marsh and G. Stoker (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 197-215.
- DiMaggio, P. and Powell, W. (1991) 'Introduction' in W. Powell and P. DiMaggio (eds) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-40.
- Dobrowolosky, A. (2003) 'Women's Constitutional Organizing Across Time and Space' in L.A. Banaszak, K. Beckwith, and D. Rucht (eds) *Women's Movements Facing the Reconfigured State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 114-140.
- Dobrowolosky, A. and V. Hart (eds) (2003) *Women Making Constitutions: New Politics and Comparative Perspectives*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Dodson, D.L. and S.J. Carroll (1991) *Reshaping the Agenda: Women in State Legislatures*. NJ: CAWP.
- Donnachie, I., Harvie, C., and I.S. Wood (eds) (1989) *Forward! Labour Politics in Scotland 1888-1988*. Edinburgh: Polygon.
- Driscoll, A. and M.L. Krook (2009 forthcoming) 'Can There Be a Feminist Rational Choice Institutionalism?', *Politics and Gender*, 5 (2).

- Driver, S. and L. Martell (1998) *New Labour: Politics after Thatcherism*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Duerst-Lahti, G. (1998) 'The Bottleneck: Women as candidates' in S. Thomas and C. Wilcox (eds) *Women and Elective Office*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 15-25.
- Duerst-Lahti, G. and R.M. Kelly (eds) (1995) *Gender Power, Leadership, and Governance*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Eagle, M. and J. Lovenduski (1998) *High Time or High Tide for Labour Women?* London: Fabian Society.
- Elster, J. (1989) *The Cement of Society: A Study of Social Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Erlandson, D.A., Harris, E.L., Skipper, B.L. and S.D. Allen (1993) *Doing Naturalistic Inquiry: A Guide to Methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Evans, E. (2008) 'Supply or Demand? Women Candidates and the Liberal Democrats', *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 10 (4), 590-606.
- Fairclough, N. (1992) *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Falleti, T.G. (2006) 'Theory-Guided Process Tracing in Comparative Politics: Something Old, Something New,' *APSA-CP: Newsletter of the American Political Science Association Organized Section in Comparative Politics*, 17 (1), 9-14.
- Ferguson, K. (1986) 'Male-ordered Politics: Feminism and Political Science' in T. Bell (ed) *Idioms of Inquiry: Critique and Renewal in Political Science*. Albany: State University of New York.
- Finnemore, M. (1996) 'Norms, culture, and world politics: insights from sociology's institutionalism', *International Organization*, 50 (2), 325-47.
- Fligstein, N. (1997) 'Social skill and institutional theory', *American Behavioural Scientist*, 40 (4), 397-405.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006) 'Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12 (2), 219-245.
- Foucault, M. (1984) *A History of Sexuality*. London: Peregrine.
- Fowler, L.L. and R. McClure (1989) *Political Ambition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Fox, R. (1997) *Gender Dynamics in Congressional Elections*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fox, R. and Lawless, J. (2004) 'Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office', *American Journal of Political Science*, 48 (2), 264-280.
- Fox, R. and Z. Oxley (2001) 'Gender Stereotyping in State Executive Elections: Candidates Selection and Success', *Journal of Politics*, 65 (3), 833-850.
- Franceschet, S. and J.M. Piscopo (2008) 'Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina', *Politics and Gender*, 4, 393-425.
- Franzway, S., Court, D. and R.W. Connell (1989) *Staking a Claim: Feminism, Bureaucracy and the State*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Gaddie, R.K. and C. Bullock (1995) 'Congressional Elections and the Year of the Woman: Structural and Elite Influences on Female Candidates', *Social Science Quarterly*, 76 (4), 749-762.
- Gaines, B.J. (1998) 'The Impersonal Vote? Constituency Service and Incumbency Advantage in British Elections, 1950—92', *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 23: 167-95.
- Gallagher, M. (1988) 'Introduction' in M. Gallagher and M. Marsh (eds) *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective*. London: Sage, pp. 1-19.
- Gallagher, M. and Marsh, M. (eds) (1988) *The Secret Garden: Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective*. London: Sage.
- Gatens, M. and A. Mackinnon (eds) (1998) *Gender and Institutions: Welfare, Work and Citizenship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gaventa, J. (1980) *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.



- Geddes, B. (1990) 'How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics', *Political Analysis*, 2, 131-150.
- Gelb, J. (2003) *Gender Policies in Japan and the United States: Comparing Women's Movements, Rights and Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- George, A. and A. Bennett (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development*. Boston, MA: MIT Press.
- George, A.L. and T.J. McKeown (1985) 'Case Studies and Theories of Organizational Decision Making', *Advances in Information Processing in Organizations*, 2, 21-58.
- Gerring, J. (2004) 'What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For', *American Political Science Review*, 98 (2), 341-354.
- Gerring, J. (2007) *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goertz, G. and A. Mazur (eds) (2008) *Politics, Gender, and Concepts: Theory and Methodology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goetz, A.M. and Hassim, S. (2003) *No Shortcuts to Power: African Women in Politics and Policy Making*. London: Zed Books.
- Goldstone, J.A. (1991). *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Goodin, R. (1996) 'Institutions and their Design' in R. Goodin (ed) *The Theory of Institutional Design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-53.
- Gould, P. (1998) *The Unfinished Revolution: How the Modernisers Saved the Labour Party*. London: Little, Brown and Company.
- Gray, G. (2006) 'Women, Federalism and Women Friendly Policies', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 65 (1), 25-45.
- Green, J.C. (1998) 'The Role of Gender in Open-Seat Elections for the U.S. House of Representative: A District Level Test for a Differential Value for Campaign Resources', *Women and Politics*, 19 (2), 33-55.
- Grey, S. (2002) 'Does Size Matter? Critical Mass and New Zealand's Women MPs', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 55 (1), 19-29.
- Grief, A. and Laitin, D.D. (2004) 'A Theory of Endogenous Institutional Change,' *American Political Science Review*. 98 (4), 633-652.
- Guba, E.G. and Y.S. Lincoln (1994) 'Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research' in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 105-117.
- Hacker, J.S. (2005) 'Policy Drift: The Hidden Politics of the U.S. Welfare State' in W. Streeck and K. Thelen (eds) *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 40-82.
- Halcli, A. and J. Reger (1997) 'Strangers in a Strange Land: The Gendered Experiences of Women Politicians in Britain and the United States' in L. Richardson, V. Taylor and N. Whittier (eds) *Feminist Frontiers IV*. New York: McGraw Hill: pp. 457-471.
- Halford, S. (1992) 'Feminist change in a patriarchal organization: the experience of women's initiatives in local government and implications for feminist perspectives on state institutions' in M. Savage and A. Witz (eds) *Gender and Bureaucracy*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 156-185.
- Hall, P. (1986) *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hall, P. and Taylor, R. (1996) 'Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms', *Political Studies*, 44, 936-957.
- Hall, P.A. (2003) 'Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Politics' in J. Mahoney and D. Rueschemeyer (eds) *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 373-404.

- Hall, P.A. and D. Soskice (eds) (2001) *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hansen, L. (2006) *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*. London: Routledge.
- Harvey, A.L. (1998) *Votes Without Leverage: Women in American Electoral Politics, 1920-1970*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hassan, G. (2002) 'A Case Study of Scottish Labour: Devolution and the Politics of Multi-Level Governance', *Political Quarterly*, 73 (2), 144-157.
- Hassan, G. (ed) (2004a) *The Scottish Labour Party: History, Institutions, and Ideas*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Hassan, G. (2004b) 'The People's Party, Still?' in *The Scottish Labour Party: History, Institutions, and Ideas*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, pp. 1-18.
- Hawkesworth, M. (2003) 'Congressional Enactments of Race-Gender: Toward a Theory of Raced-Gendered Institutions', *American Political Science Review*, 97 (4), 529-550.
- Hawkesworth, M. (2005) 'Engendering Political Science: An Immodest Proposal', *Politics and Gender*, 1 (1), 141-156.
- Hay, C. (2001) 'The "Crisis" of Keynesianism and the Rise of NeoLiberalism in Britain: An Ideational Institutional Approach' in J.L. Campbell and O. Pedersen (eds) *The Rise of NeoLiberalism and Institutional Analysis*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hay, C. (2006) 'Constructivist Institutionalism' in R.A.W. Rhodes, S. Binder, and B. Rockman (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hay, C. and D. Wincott (1998a) 'Structure, Agency and Historical Institutionalism', *Political Studies*, 46 (5), 951-957.
- Hay, C. and D. Wincott (1998b) 'Interrogating Institutionalism, Interrogating Institutions: Beyond "Calculus" and "Cultural" Approaches', Center for European Studies Program for the Study of Germany and Europe Working Paper 8.3, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hearn, J. (1989) *The Sexuality of Organization*. London: Sage.
- Hearn, J. (1991) *Men in the Public Eye*. London: Routledge.
- Helmke, G. and S. Levitsky (2004) 'Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda', *Perspectives on Politics*, 2 (4), 725-740.
- Hepburn, E. (2008) 'The 2007 Scottish Elections: a Dark Day for Participatory Democracy', *Regional & Federal Studies*, 18 (1) 93-101.
- Herbert, S., Burnside, R., Earle, M., Edwards, T., Foley, T. and I. McIver (eds) (2007) *Election 2007*. SPICe briefing 8 May 2007, 07/21.
- Herrick, R. (1995) 'A Reappraisal of the Quality of Woman Candidates', *Women and Politics*, 15 (4), 25-38.
- Herrigel, G. (2008) 'Roles and Rules: Ambiguity, Experimentation and New Forms of Stakeholderism in Germany', *Industrielle Beziehungen*, 15 (2), 111-132.
- Herrnson, P. (1997) 'United States' in Norris, P. (ed) *Passages to Power: Legislative Recruitment in Advanced Democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 187-208.
- Herrnson, P.S. (1998) *Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and in Washington*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.
- Hewitt, P. and D. Mattinson (1989) *Women's Votes: The Key to Winning*. London: Fabian Society.
- Hills, J. (1981) 'Candidates, the Impact of Gender', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 34, 221-232.
- Hills, J. (1983) 'Lifestyle Constraints on Formal Political Participation: Why So Few Women Local Councillors in Britain?', *Electoral Studies*, 2: 139-152.

- Hodder, I. (2002) 'The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture' in D. Weinberg (ed) *Qualitative Research Methods*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 703-716.
- Hoffman, K., Palmer, C. and R.K. Gaddie (2001) 'Candidate Sex and Congressional Elections: Open Seats Before, During, and After the Year of the Woman' in K. O'Connor (ed) *Women and Congress: Running, Winning and Ruling*. New York: Haworth Press, pp. 37-58.
- Hopkin, J. and J. Bradbury (2006) 'British Statewide Parties and Multilevel Politics', *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 36 (1), 135-152.
- Htun, M.N. (2002) 'Puzzles of Women's Rights in Brazil', *Social Research*, 69 (3), 733-751.
- Huber, E. and J.D. Stephens (2001) *Development and Crisis of the Welfare State: Parties and Policies in World Markets*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Immergut, E.M. (2006) 'Historical-Institutionalism in Political Science and the Problem of Change' in A. Wimmer and R. Kossler (eds) *Understanding Change: Models, Methodologies, and Metaphors*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 237-259.
- Inglehart, R. and Norris, P. (2003) *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press..
- Inheteven, K. (1999) 'Can Gender Equality be Institutionalized? The Role of Launching Values in Institutional Innovation', *International Sociology*, 14 (4), 403-422.
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (2009) 'Women in National Parliaments: Situation as of 28 February 2009'. Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union. Available at: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>
- Ipsos MORI (2006) 'Voting Intentions In Scotland 2005-2006' Edinburgh: Ipsos MORI Scotland. Available at: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/polls/2006/voting-intentions-scotland.shtml>
- Irving, H. (2008) *Gender and the Constitution: Equality and Agency in Comparative Constitutional Design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jacobson, G.C. (1997) *The Politics of Congressional Elections*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: HarperCollins.
- Jamieson, K.H. (1995) *Beyond the Double Bind: Women and Leadership*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jepperson, R.L. (1991) 'Institutions, Institutional Effects, and Institutionalism' in W. Powell and P. DiMaggio (eds) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 143-163.
- Jeydel, A. and Taylor, A.J. (2003) 'Are Women Legislators Less Effective? Evidence from the U.S. House in the 103<sup>rd</sup>-105<sup>th</sup> Congress', *Political Research Quarterly*, 56 (1), 19-27.
- Jones, M.P. (2004) 'Quota Legislation and the Election of Women: Learning From the Costa Rican Experience,' *Journal of Politics*, 16 (4), pp. 1203-1223.
- Jones, N. (2001) *The control freaks: How New Labour gets its own way*. London: Politico's.
- Kantola, J. (2006) *Feminists Theorize the State*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Kathlene, L. (1995) 'Position Power versus Gender Power: Who Holds the Floor?' in G. Duerst-Lahti and R.M. Kelly (eds) *Gender Power, Leadership, and Governance*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 167-194.
- Katzenstein, M.F. (1998) *Faithful and Fearless: Moving Feminist Protest inside the Church and Military*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Katznelson, I. (2003) 'Periodization and Preferences: Reflections on Purposive Action in Comparative Historical Social Science' in J. Mahoney and D. Rueschemeyer (eds) *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., pp. 270-301.
- Kavanagh, D. (1992) 'The Political Class and its Culture', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 45, 18-32.
- Keating, M. and D. Bleiman (1979) *Labour and Scottish Nationalism*. Macmillan: Basingstoke.

- Kelly, R.M. and G. Duerst-Lahti (1995) 'Toward Gender Awareness and Gender Balance in Leadership and Governance' in G. Duerst-Lahti and R.M. Kelly (eds) *Gender Power, Leadership, and Governance*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 259-271.
- Kenney, S. (1996) 'New Research on Gendered Political Institutions', *Political Research Quarterly*, 49 (2), 445-466.
- Kenny, M. (2007) 'Gender, Institutions and Power: A Critical Review', *Politics*, 27 (2), 91-100.
- Kenny, M. and F. Mackay (2009 forthcoming) 'Already Doin' it for Ourselves? Skeptical notes on feminism and institutionalism,' *Politics & Gender*, 5 (2).
- Kent, G. (2000) 'Informed Consent' in D. Burton (ed) *Research Training for Social Scientists: A Handbook for Postgraduate Researchers*, pp. 81-87.
- King, C.S. (1995) 'Sex –Role Identity and Decision Styles: How Gender Helps Explain the Paucity of Women at the Top' in G. Duerst-Lahti and R.M. Kelly (eds) *Gender Power, Leadership, and Governance*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 67-92.
- King, G., R.O. Keohane and S. Verba (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kittilson, M.C. (2006) *Challenging Parties, Changing Parliaments: Women and Elected Office in Contemporary Western Europe*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press.
- Knight, J. (1992) *Institutions and Social Conflict*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kogan, M. and D. Kogan (1982) *The Battle for the Labour Party*. London: Fontana.
- Krasner, S. (1984) 'Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics', *Comparative Politics* 16 (2), 223-246.
- Krasner, S. (1988) 'Sovereignty: An Institutional Perspective', *Comparative Political Studies*, 21 (1), 66-94.
- Krook, M.L. (2003) 'Not All Quotas Are Created Equal: Trajectories of Reform to Increase Women's Political Representation'. Paper presented at the European Consortium for Political Research, Joint Sessions of Workshops, Edinburgh, 28 March – 2 April.
- Krook, M.L. (2004) 'Gender Quotas as a Global Phenomenon: Actors and Strategies in Quota Adoption', *European Political Science*, 3 (3), 59-65.
- Krook, M.L. (2006) 'Beyond Supply and Demand: Gender Quotas and Institutions of Candidate Selection'. Paper presented at the First Workshop of the Feminism and Institutionalism International Network, Edinburgh, 8-9 December.
- Krook, M.L. (2007) 'Candidate Gender Quotas: A Framework for Analysis', *European Journal of Political Research*, 46 (3), 367-394.
- Krook, M.L. (2009 forthcoming) *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Krook, M.L. and J. Squires (2006) 'Gender Quotas in British Politics: Multiple Approaches and Methods in Feminist Research', *British Politics*, 1, 44-66.
- Laclau, E. and C. Mouffe (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso.
- Laffin, M. and E. Shaw (2007) 'British Devolution and the Labour Party: How a National Party Adapts to Devolution', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 9, 55-72.
- Laffin, M., Shaw, E. and G. Taylor (2007) 'The New Sub-National Politics of the British Labour Party', *Party Politics*, 13 (1), 88-108.
- Lane, J.E. and S.O. Ersson (2000) *The New Institutional Politics: Performance and Outcomes*. London: Routledge.

- Laponce, J.A. (1994), "Democracy and Incumbency: The Canadian Case," in A. Somit, R. Wildemann, B. Boll and A. Rommele (eds), *The Victorious Incumbent: A Challenge to Democracy?* Brookfield, VT.: Dartmouth, pp. 122-49.
- Lawless, J.L. and Fox, R.L. (2005) *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Leach, S. and V. Lowndes (2007) 'Of Roles and Rules: Analysing the Changing Relationship between Political Leaders and Chief Executives in Local Government', *Public Policy and Administration*, 22 (2), 183-200.
- Levi, M. (1981) 'The Predatory Theory of Rule,' *Politics and Society*, 10 (4), 431-466.
- Levi, M. (1990) 'A Logic of Institutional Change' in K.S. Cook and M. Levi (eds) *The Limits of Rationality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Levy, C. (1992) 'A Woman's Place? The Future Scottish Parliament' in L. Paterson and D. McCrone (eds) *Scottish Government Year Book 1992: Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland*, University of Edinburgh, pp. 59-73.
- Lieberman, R.C. (2002) 'Ideas, Institutions, and Political Order: Explaining Political Change', *American Political Science Review*, 96 (4), 697-712.
- Liebert, U. (2003) *Gendering Europeanisation*. Brussels: Peter Lang.
- Lincoln, Y.S. and E. Guba (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Lombardo, E., P. Meier and M. Verloo (2009, forthcoming) *The Discursive Politics of Gender Equality: Stretching, Bending and Policy-Making*. London: Routledge.
- Lovenduski, J. (1993) 'Introduction: the Dynamics of Gender and Party' in J. Lovenduski and P. Norris (eds) *Gender and Party Politics*. London: Sage, pp. 1-15.
- Lovenduski, J. (1996) 'Sex, Gender and British Politics', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 49 (1), pp. 1-16.
- Lovenduski, J. (1997) 'Gender Politics: A Breakthrough for Women?', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 50 (4), pp. 708-719.
- Lovenduski, J. (1998) 'Gendering Research in Political Science', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1, 333-356.
- Lovenduski, J. (2005) *Feminizing Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Lovenduski, J. and P. Norris (1989) 'Selecting women candidates: obstacles to the feminisation of the House of Commons', *European Journal of Political Research*, 17, 533-562.
- Lovenduski, J. and P. Norris (1993) *Gender and Party Politics*. London: Sage.
- Lovenduski, J. and P. Norris (2003) 'Westminster Women: The Politics of Presence', *Political Studies*, 51 (1), 84-102.
- Lowenberg, G. and S.C. Patterson (1979) *Comparing Legislatures*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.
- Lowndes, V. (2002) 'Institutionalism' in D. Marsh and G. Stoker (eds) *Theories and Methods in Political Science*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 90-108.
- Lowndes, V. (2005) 'Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed...', *Policy Studies*, 26 (3), 291-309.
- Lowndes, V. and D. Wilson (2001) 'Social Capital and Local Governance: Exploring the Institutional Design Variable', *Political Studies*, 49 (4), 629-647.
- Lukes, S. (1974) *Power: A Radical View*. London: Macmillan.
- Luong, P.J. (2002) *Institutional Change and Continuity in Post-Soviet Central Asia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lynch, P. (2007) 'Impact of the Election Result on the Parties' in S. Herbert, R. Burnside, M. Earle, T. Edwards, T. Foley, and I. McIver (eds) *Election 2007*. SPICe briefing 8 May 2007, 07/21.

- Lynch, P. and S. Birrell (2004) 'The Autonomy and Organization of Scottish Labour' in G. Hassan (ed) *The Scottish Labour Party: History, Institutions, and Ideas*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 104-123.
- Mackay, F. (2001) *Love and Politics: Women Politicians and the Ethics of Care*. London: Continuum.
- Mackay, F. (2003) 'Women and the 2003 Elections: Keeping up the Momentum', *Scottish Affairs*, 44, 74-90.
- Mackay, F. (2004a) 'Gender and Political Representation in the UK: The State of the "Discipline"', *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 6 (1), 99-120.
- Mackay, F. (2004b) 'Women and the Labour Party in Scotland' in G. Hassan (ed) *The Scottish Labour Party: History, Institutions, and Ideas*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 104-123.
- Mackay, F. (2006) 'Descriptive and Substantive Representation in New Parliamentary Spaces: The Case of Scotland' in M. Sawer, M. Tremblay, and L. Trimble (eds) *Representing Women in Parliament: A Comparative Study*. London: Routledge, pp. 171-187.
- Mackay, F. (2008) "'Thick" Conceptions of Substantive Representation: Women, Gender and Political Institutions,' *Representation*, 44 (2), 125-139.
- Mackay, F. and M. Kenny (2007) 'Women's Representation in the 2007 Scottish Parliament: Temporary Setback or Return to the Norm?', *Scottish Affairs*, 60, pp. 25-38.
- Mackay, F. and P. Meier (2003) 'Institutions, Change and Gender Relations: Towards a Feminist New Institutionalism?' Paper presented at the European Consortium for Political Research, Joint Sessions of Workshops. Edinburgh, 28 March – 2 April.
- Mackay, F., Monro, S. and G. Waylen (2009 forthcoming) 'The feminist potential of sociological institutionalism', *Politics and Gender*, 5 (2).
- Mackay, F., Myers, F. and Brown, A. (2003) 'Towards a New Politics? Women and the Constitutional Change in Scotland' in Dobrowolsky, A. and Hart, V. (eds) *Women Making Constitutions: New Politics and Comparative Perspectives*. New York: Palgrave, pp. 84-98.
- Maclean, I. (1983) *The Legend of Red Clydeside*. Edinburgh: John Donald.
- Mahoney, J. (1999) 'Nominal, Ordinal, and Narrative Appraisal in Macrocausal Analysis', *American Journal of Sociology*, 104, 1154-96.
- Mahoney, J. (2000a) 'Path Dependence in Historical Sociology', *Theory and Society*, 29, 507-548.
- Mahoney, J. (2000b) 'Strategies of Causal Inference in Small-N Analysis', *Sociological Methods and Research*, 28, 387-424.
- Mahoney, J. (2001) 'Beyond Correlational Analysis: Recent Innovations in Theory and Method,' *Sociological Forum*, 16 (3), 575-593.
- Mahoney, J. (2003) 'Knowledge Accumulation in Comparative Historical Research: The Case of Democracy and Authoritarianism' in J. Mahoney and D. Rueschemeyer (eds) *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 131-176.
- Mahoney, J. and D. Rueschemeyer (2003) 'Comparative Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas' in J. Mahoney and D. Rueschemeyer (eds) *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-40.
- Mahoney, J. and K. Thelen (eds) (2009 forthcoming) *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency and Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- March, J.G. and J.P. Olsen (1984) 'The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life', *The American Political Science Review*, 78 (2), 734-749.
- March, J.G. and J.P. Olsen (1989) *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*. New York: Free Press.

- Marsh, D. and G. Stoker (eds) (2002) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Matland, R.E. (1993) 'Institutional Variables Affecting Women in National Legislatures: The Case of Norway', *The Journal of Politics*, 55 (3), 737-755.
- Matland, R.E. (1995) 'How the Electoral System Structure has Helped Women Close the Representation Gap in Norway' in L. Karvonen and P. Selle (eds) *Women in Nordic Politics*. Aldershot: Dartmouth Press.
- Matland, R.E. (2003) 'Women's Representation in Post-Communist Europe' in Matland, R.E. and Montgomery, K.A. (eds) *Women's Access to Political Power in Post-Communist Europe*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 321-342.
- Matland, R.E. (2006) 'Electoral quotas: frequency and effectiveness' in D. Dahlerup (ed) *Women, Quotas and Politics*. London: Routledge, pp. 275-292.
- Matland, R.E. and D. Studlar (1996) 'The contagion of women candidates in single member district and proportional representation electoral systems: Canada and Norway', *Journal of Politics*, 58 (3), 707-733.
- Matland, R.E. and Taylor, M. (1997) 'Electoral Systems Effects on Women's Representation: Theoretical Arguments and Evidence from Costa Rica', *Comparative Political Studies*, 30 (2), 186-210.
- Mazur, A. (2002) *Theorizing Feminist Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mazur, A. (2004) 'Feminist comparative policy: leading European political science into the future', *European Political Science*, 3 (2), 67-77.
- McAdam, D. (1982) *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- McAdam, D. and W.R. Scott (2005) 'Organizations and Movements' in D. McAdam, G.F. Davis, W.R. Scott, and M. Zald (eds) *Social Movements and Organization Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 4-40.
- McAllister, I. and D.T. Studlar (2002) 'Electoral Systems and Women's Representation: A Long-term Perspective', *Representation*, 39 (1), 3-14.
- McDonald, R., Alexander, M. and L. Sutherland (2001) 'Networking for Equality and a Scottish Parliament: The Women's Co-ordination Group and Organizational Alliances' in E. Breitenbach and F. Mackay (eds) *Women and Contemporary Scottish Politics*. Edinburgh: Polygon, pp. 231-240.
- McGarvey, N. (2001) 'New Scottish politics, new texts required,' *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 3 (3), 427-444.
- McKenzie, R. (1963) *British Political Parties: The Distribution of Power in the Conservative and Labour Parties*. London: Heinemann.
- McKinlay, A. and R.J. Morris (1991) *The ILP on Clydeside 1893-1932: From Foundation to Disintegration*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Meier, P. (2004) 'The Mutual Contagion Effect of Legal and Party Quotas: A Belgian Perspective', *Party Politics*, 10, 583-600.
- Mellors, C. (1978) *The British MP: A Socio-Economic Study of the House of Commons*. Farnborough, Hants: Saxon House.
- Mettler, S. (1998) *Divided Citizens: Gender and Federalism in New Deal Policy*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Meyer, J.W. and B. Rowan (1991) 'Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony' in W.W. Powell and P. DiMaggio (eds) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, pp. 41-62.
- Minkin, L. (1980) *The Labour Party Conference*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Minkin, L. (1992) *The Contentious Alliance: Trade Unions and the Labour Party*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

- Mitchell, J. (2004) 'Scotland: Expectations, Policy Types and Devolution' in A. Trench (ed) *Has Devolution Made a Difference? The State of the Nations 2004*. London: The Constitution Unit, pp.11-42.
- Mitchell, J. and J. Bradbury (2004) 'Political Recruitment and the 2003 Scottish and Welsh Elections: Candidate Selection, Positive Discrimination and Party Adaptation', *Representation*, 40 (4), 289-302.
- Mitchell, J.C. (1983) 'Case and situation analysis', *Sociological Review*, 31, 187-211.
- Moe, T.M. (1990) 'Political Institutions: The Neglected Side of the Story,' *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*, 6, 213-253.
- Moe, T.M. (2006) 'Power and Political Institutions' in I. Shapiro, S. Skowronek, and D. Galvin (eds) *Rethinking Political Institutions: The Art of the State*. New York: New York University Press, pp. 32-71.
- Moncrief, G.F. (1998) 'Terminating the Provincial Career: Retirement and Electoral Defeat in Canadian Provincial Legislatures, 1950-1997', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 31, 359-72.
- Mottier, V. (2004) 'Feminist Political Theory', *European Political Science*, 3 (2), 79-84.
- Murray, R. (2004) 'Why Didn't Parity Work? A Closer Examination of the 2002 Election Results', *French Politics*, 2 (3), pp. 347-362.
- Nee, V. (1998) 'Sources of New Institutionalism' in M.C. Brinton and V. Nee (eds) *The New Institutionalism in Sociology*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, pp. 1-16.
- Nicholson, L. and S. Seidman (eds) *Social Postmodernism: Beyond Identity Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Niven, D. (1998) 'Party Elites and Women Candidates: The Shape of Bias', *Women and Politics*, 19 (2), 57-80.
- Norris, P. (1996) 'Mobilising the "Women's Vote": The Gender-Generation Gap in Voting Behaviour', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 49 (2), 333-342.
- Norris, P. (1997) 'Introduction: theories of recruitment' in P. Norris (ed) *Passages to Power: Legislative Recruitment in Advanced Democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-14.
- Norris, P. (2004) *Electoral Engineering, Voting Rules and Political Behaviour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Norris, P. and J. Lovenduski (1993) 'If Only More Candidates Came Forward': Supply-Side Explanations of Candidate Selection in Britain', *British Journal of Political Science*, 23 (3), 373-408.
- Norris, P. and Lovenduski, J. (1995) *Political Recruitment: Gender, Race, and Class in the British Parliament*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Norris, P., Lovenduski, J. and R. Campbell (2004) 'Gender and Political Participation'. London: The Electoral Commission.
- Norris, P., Vallance, E. and J. Lovenduski (1992) 'Do Candidates Make a Difference? Gender, Race, Ideology and Incumbency', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 45, 496-517.
- North, D.C. (1990) *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Norton, P. (1994a) 'Parliament in the United Kingdom: The Incumbency Paradox' in A. Somit, R. Wildenmann, B. Boll and A. Rommele (eds) *The Victorious Incumbent: A Threat to Democracy?* Aldershot: Dartmouth.
- Norton, P. (1994b) 'The Growth of the Constituency Role of the MP', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 47, 705-20.
- Norton, P. and D.M. Wood (1990) 'Constituency Service By Members of Parliament: Does It Contribute to a Personal Vote?', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 43, 196-208.
- Norton, P. and D.M. Wood (1993) *Back from Westminster: British Members of Parliament and Their Constituencies*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.



- Olson, Jr., M. (1993) 'Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development,' *American Political Science Review*, 87, 567-576.
- Olson, Jr., M. (2000) *Power and Prosperity*. New York: Basic Books.
- Orren, K. and S. Skowronek (1994) 'Beyond the Iconography of Order: Notes for a "New" Institutionalism' in L.C. Dodd and C. Jilison (eds) *The Dynamics of American Politics*. Boulder, CO: Westview, pp. 311-330.
- Orren, K. and S. Skowronek (2004) *The Search for American Political Development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ostrogorski, M. (1902) *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*. London: Macmillan.
- Ostrom, E. (1998) 'A behavioral approach to the rational choice theory of collective action: Presidential address, American Political Science Association, 1997', *American Political Science Review*, 92 (1), 1-22.
- Palier, B. (2005) 'Ambiguous Agreement, Cumulative Change: French Social Policy in the 1990s' in W. Streeck and K. Thelen (eds) *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 127-144.
- Palmer, B. and D. Simon (2001) 'The Political Glass Ceiling: Gender, Strategy and Incumbency in U.S. House Elections, 1978-1998' in K. O'Connor (ed) *Women and Congress: Running, Winning and Ruling*. New York: Haworth Press, pp. 59-78.
- Palmer, B. and D. Simon (2005) 'When Women Run Against Women: The Hidden Influence of Female Incumbents in Elections to the U.S. House of Representatives, 1956 – 2002', *Politics & Gender*, 1 (1) 39-63.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Perrigo, S. (1995) 'Gender Struggles in the British Labour Party from 1979 to 1995', *Party Politics*, 1 (3), 407-437.
- Perrigo, S. (1996) 'Women and Change in the Labour Party 1979-1995', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 49 (1), 116-129.
- Peters, B.G. (1999) *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The 'New Institutionalism'*. London: Pinter.
- Phillips, A. (ed) (1998) *Feminism and Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pierson, P. (1996) 'The path to European integration: a historical institutionalist approach', *Comparative Political Studies*, 29 (2), 123-63.
- Pierson, P. (2000a) 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics,' *American Political Science Review*, 94 (2), pp. 251-268.
- Pierson, P. (2000b) 'The Limits of Design: Explaining Institutional Origins and Change,' *Governance*, 13 (4), pp. 475-499.
- Pierson, P. (2000c) 'Not Just What, but When: Timing and Sequence in Political Processes', *Studies in American Political Development*, 14, 72-92.
- Pierson, P. (2000d) 'Three Worlds of Welfare State Research', *Comparative Political Studies*, 33, 791-821.
- Pierson, P. (2004) *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Pierson, P. and T. Skocpol (2002) 'Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science' in I. Katznelson and H. Milner (eds) *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*. New York: Norton, pp. 693-721.
- Powell, W. and DiMaggio, P. (1991) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Powell, W. and Jones, D. (eds) (1999) *Bending the Bars of the Iron Cage: Institutional Dynamics and Processes*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

- Pringle, R. and S. Watson (1990) 'Fathers, brothers, mates: the fraternal state in Australia' in S. Watson (ed) *Playing the State: Australian Feminist Interventions*. London: Virago, 229-43.
- Prior, L. (2004) 'Doing Things with Documents' in D. Silverman (ed) *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Sage, pp. 76-94.
- Putnam, R.D. (1976) *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Puwar, N. (2004) *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.
- Radice, L. (ed) (1985) *Winning Women's Votes*. London: Fabian Society.
- Ragin, C.C. (1992) 'Introduction: Cases of "What Is a Case?"' in C.C. Ragin and H.S. Becker (eds) *What Is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-18.
- Rai, S.M. (ed) (2003) *Mainstreaming Gender, Democratising the State? Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Raman, V. (2002) 'The Implementation of Quotas for Women: The Indian Experience', Paper presented at the International IDEA Workshop 'The Implementation of Quotas: Asian Experiences', Jakarta, Indonesia, 25 September.
- Ramazanoglu, C. and J. Holland (2002) *Feminist Methodology: Challenges and Choices*. London: Sage.
- Randall, V. (1987) *Women and Politics*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Macmillan.
- Randall, V. (2002) 'Feminism' in D. Marsh and G. Stoker (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 109-130.
- Ranney, A. (1965) *Pathways to Parliament*. London: Macmillan.
- Rasmussen, J. (1983), 'The Electoral Costs of Being a Woman at the 1979 British General Election', *Comparative Politics*, 15, 462-75.
- Reid, A.J. (2000) 'Labour and the Trade Unions' in D. Tanner, P. Thane and N. Tiratsoo (eds) *Labour's First Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 221-247.
- Reinharz, S. (1992) *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Riker, W. (1995) 'The experience of creating institutions: the framing of the United States Constitution' in J. Knight and I. Sened (eds) *Explaining Social Institutions*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 121-144.
- Rosenau, P.M. (1992) *Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads, and Intrusions*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Rosenthal, C.S. (2000) 'Gender Styles in State Legislative Committees: Raising Their Voices and Resolving Conflict', *Women and Politics*, 21 (2), 21-45.
- Ross, K. (2002) 'Women's place in "male" space: gender and effect in parliamentary contexts', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 55 (1), 189-201.
- Rothstein, B. (1992) 'Labour-Market Institutions and Working-Class Strength' in Steinmo, S., Thelen, K., and Longstreth, F. (eds) *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 33-56.
- Rueschemeyer, D.A. and J.A. Stephens (1997) 'Comparing Historical Sequences: A Powerful Tool for Causal Analysis', *Comparative Social Research*, 17, 55-72.
- Rule, W. (1981) 'Why Women Don't Run: the Critical Contextual Factors in Women's Legislative Recruitment', *The Western Political Quarterly*, 34 (1), 60-77.
- Rule, W. (1987) 'Electoral Systems, Contextual Factors and Women's Opportunity for Election to Parliament in Twenty-Three Democracies', *The Western Political Quarterly*, 40 (3), 477-498.
- Rule, W. (1994) 'Women's Under-representation and Electoral Systems', *PS: Political science and Politics*, 27 (4), 689-92.

- Rush, M. (1969) *The Selection of Parliamentary Candidates*. London: Nelson.
- Russell, M. (2000) *Women's Representation in Elected Office: What can be done within the Law?* London: Constitution Unit.
- Russell, M. (2005) *Building New Labour: The Politics of Party Organization*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Russell, M. and C. O'Conneide (2003) 'Positive Action to Promote Women in Politics: Some European Comparisons', *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 52, 587-614.
- Russell, M., Mackay, F. and L. McAllister (2002) 'Women's Representation in the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales: Party Dynamics for Achieving Critical Mass', *Journal of Legislative Studies*, 8 (2), 49-76.
- Sanbonmatsu, K. 2006. *Where Women Run: Gender and Party in the American States*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Sapiro, V. (1998) 'Feminist studies and political science – and vice versa' in A. Phillips (ed) *Feminism and Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 67-89.
- Savage, M. and Witz, A. (1992) *Gender and Bureaucracy*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sawer, M. (1990) *Sisters in Suits: Women and Public Policy in Australia*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Scarrow, S.E. (1996) *Parties and Their Members: Organising for Victory in Britain and Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schattschneider, E.E. (1942) *Party Government*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Schickler, E. (2001) *Disjointed Pluralism: Institutional Innovation and the Development of the U.S. Congress*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Schmidt, V. (2002) 'Does Discourse Matter in the Politics of Welfare state Adjustment?', *Comparative Political Studies*, 35 (2), 168-193.
- Schmidt, V. (2006) *Democracy in Europe: The Impact of European Integration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schneiberg, M. and E. Clemens (2006) 'The Typical Tools for the Job: Research Strategies in Institutional Analysis,' *Sociological Theory*, 3, 195-227.
- Scott, J. (1991) *Who Rules Britain?* Cambridge: Polity.
- Scott, J.W. (1988) *Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Scott, W.R. (1995) *Institutions and Organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Scottish Constitutional Convention (1990) *Towards Scotland's Parliament: A Report to the Scottish People*. Edinburgh: CoSLA.
- Searing, D.D. (1994) *Westminster's World: Understanding Political Roles*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Seltzer, R., Newman, J. and M.V. Leighton (1997) *Sex as a Political Variable*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Sewell, W.H. (1996) 'Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventful Sociology' in T.J. McDonald (ed) *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. pp. 245-280.
- Seyd, P. and P. Whiteley (1992) *Labour's Grassroots: The Politics of Party Membership*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shaw, E. (2001) 'New Labour: New pathways to parliament', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 54 (1), 35-53.
- Sheingate, A. (2003) 'Political Entrepreneurship, Institutional Change, and American Political Development', *Studies in American Political Development*, 17, 185-203.
- Sheingate, A. (2009 forthcoming) 'Complexity and Constraint in the House of Representatives' in J. Mahoney and K. Thelen (eds) *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency and Power*. Cambridge University Press.

- Shepherd-Robinson, L. and J. Lovenduski (2002) *Women and Candidate Selection in British Political Parties*. London: Fawcett.
- Shepsle, K. (2006) 'Rational Choice Institutionalism' in R.A.W. Rhodes, S. Binder, and B. Rockman (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 23-38.
- Short, C. (1996) 'Women and the Labour Party', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 49 (1), 17-25.
- Siim, B. (2004) 'Towards a contextual and gender sensitive European political science?', *European Political Science*, 3 (2), 97-101.
- Skocpol, T. (1979) *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Skocpol, T. (1992) *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Skocpol, T. (1995) 'Why I am an Historical Institutionalism', *Polity*, 28, 103-106.
- Skowronek, S. and M. Glassman (eds) (2008) *Formative Acts: American Politics in the Making*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Slater, D. (2009 forthcoming) 'Altering Authoritarianism: Institutional Complexity and Autocratic Agency in Indonesia' in J. Mahoney and K. Thelen (eds) *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Squires, J. (1999) *Gender in Political Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Squires, J. (2002) 'Gender and International Relations Revisited' in H. Seckinelgin and L. Odysseos (eds) *Gendering the International*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 208-231.
- Squires, J. (2004) 'Feminist Methodologies', *European Political Science*, 3 (2), 59-66.
- Squires, J. (2007) *The New Politics of Gender Equality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Steinberg, R. (1992) 'Gender on the Agenda: Male Advantage in Organizations', *Contemporary Sociology*, 21, 576-81.
- Steinmo, S. (2008) 'Historical Institutionalism' in D. Della Porta and M. Keating (eds) *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 118-138.
- Stetson, D. and A. Mazur (eds) (1995) *Comparative State Feminism*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stinchcombe, A. (1968) *Constructing Social Theories*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.
- Stivers, C. (1993) *Gender Images in Public Administration: Legitimacy and the Administrative State*. London: Sage.
- Strahan, R. (2007) *Leading Representatives: The Agency of Leaders in the Politics of the US House*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Streeck, W. (2001) 'Introduction: Explorations into the Origins of Non-Liberal Capitalism in Germany and Japan' in W. Streeck and K. Yamamura (eds) *The Origins of Nonliberal Capitalism: Germany and Japan in Comparison*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 1-38.
- Streeck, W. and Thelen, K. (2005) 'Introduction: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies' in W. Streeck and K. Thelen (eds) *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1-39.
- Studlar, D.T. and I. McAllister (1991) 'Political Recruitment to the Australian Legislature: Toward an Explanation of Women's Electoral Disadvantages', *Western Political Quarterly*, 44 (3), 67-85.
- Studlar, D.T. and S. Welch (1993) 'A Giant Step for Womankind? Women Candidates and the 1992 General Election', in D. Denver, P. Norris, D. Broughton, and C. Rallings (eds), *British Parties and Elections Yearbook 1993*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pp. 216-228.

- Swain, J.W., Borrelli, S.A., Reed, B.C. and S.F. Evans (2000) 'A New Look at Turnover in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1789–1998', *American Politics Quarterly*, 28, 435–57.
- Swers, M.L. (2002) *The Difference Women Make*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Swidler, A. (1986) 'Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies', *American Sociological Review*, 51, 273–286.
- Tansey, O. (2007) 'Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-probability Sampling', *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 40 (4), 765–772.
- Tarrow, S. (2004) 'Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide' in H.E. Brady and D. Collier (eds) *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools Shared Standards*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 171–180.
- Teghtsoonian, K. and L. Chappell (2008) 'The Rise and Decline of Women's Policy Machinery in British Columbia and New South Wales: A Cautionary Tale', *International Political Science Review*, 29 (1), 29–51.
- Thelen, K. (1999) 'Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2, 369–404.
- Thelen, K. (2000) 'Timing and Temporality in the Analysis of Institutional Evolution and Change', *Studies in American Political Development*, 101–108.
- Thelen, K. (2003) 'How Institutions Evolve: Insights from Comparative Historical Analysis' in J. Mahoney and D. Rueschemeyer (eds) *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 208–240.
- Thelen, K. (2004) *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thelen, K. and Steinmo, S. (1992) 'Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Perspective' in Steinmo, S., Thelen, K., and Longstreth, F. (eds) *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–32.
- Tickner, J.A. (2005) 'What is your research program? Some feminist answers to international relations methodological questions,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 49, 1–21.
- Tilly, C. (1984) *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Tremblay, M. and Pelletier, R. (2001) 'More Women Constituency Party Presidents: A Strategy for Increasing the Number of Women Candidates in Canada?', *Party Politics*, 7 (2), pp. 157–190.
- Valen, H. (1988) 'Norway: decentralization and group representation' in M. Gallagher and M. Marsh (eds) *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective: The Secret Garden of Politics*. London: Sage, pp. 210–235.
- Verloo, M. (ed) *Multiple Meanings of Gender Equality: A Critical Frame Analysis of Gender Policies in Europe*. Budapest: Central European University Press.
- Vickers, J. (1994) 'Why Should Women Care About Federalism?' in D.M. Brown and J. Hiebert (eds) *Canada: The State of the Federation*. Kingston, Ontario: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, pp. 135–151.
- Wainwright, H. (1987) *Labour: A Tale of Two Parties*. London: The Hogarth Press.
- Walby, S. (1990) *Theorizing Patriarchy*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Waylen, G. (2006) 'Constitutional Engineering: What prospects for the Enhancement of Gender Rights?', *Third World Quarterly*, 27 (7), pp. 1209–1222.
- Waylen, G. (2007) *Engendering Transitions: Women's Mobilization, Institutions and Gender Outcomes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Waylen, G. (2008) 'Transforming Global Governance: Challenges and Opportunities' in S. Rai and G. Waylen (eds) *Global Governance: Feminist Perspectives*. London: Palgrave, pp. 254–275.

- Waylen, G. (2009 forthcoming) 'What Can Historical Institutionalism Offer Feminist Institutionalists?', *Politics and Gender*, 5 (2).
- Weedon, C. (1987) *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Weingast, B. (1996) 'Political Institutions: Rational Choice Perspectives' in R. Goodin and H.D. Klingemann (eds) *A New Handbooks of Political Science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 167-190.
- Weingast, B. (2002) 'Rational-Choice Institutionalism' in I. Katznelson and H. Milner (eds) *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*. New York: Norton, pp. 660-692.
- Weir, M. (1992a) 'Ideas and the Politics of Bounded Innovation' in S. Steinmo, K. Thelen, and F. Longstreth (eds) *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 188-216.
- Weir, M. (1992b) *Politics and Jobs: The Boundaries of Employment Policy in the United States*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Welch, S. (1978) 'Recruitment of Women to Public Office: A Discriminant Analysis', *The Western Political Quarterly*, 31 (3), 372-380.
- Welch, S. and D.T. Studlar (1996) 'The Opportunity Structure for Women's Candidacies and Electability in Britain and the United States', *Political Research Quarterly*, 49, 861-74.
- West, C. and Zimmerman, D.H. (1987) 'Doing Gender', *Gender and Society*, 1 (2), 125-151.
- Weyland, K. (2002) 'Limitations of rational-choice institutionalism for the study of Latin American politics', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 37 (1), 57-85.
- Witz, A. and Savage, M. (1992) 'The gender of organizations' in M. Savage and A. Witz (eds) *Gender and Bureaucracy*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 3-62.
- Wrigley, C. (1997) *British Trade Unions 1945-1995*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Yin, R.K. (1994) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Sage.
- Zalewski, M. (2000) *Feminism After Postmodernism: Theorising Through Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Zucker, L.G. (1991) 'The role of institutionalization in cultural persistence' in W. Powell and P. DiMaggio (eds) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 83-107.