Does Feminist Policy Matter in Post Industrial Democracies? A Proposed Analytical Roadmap

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this paper is to draw on research in both feminist and non feminist policy studies to propose a roadmap for assessing what happens to explicitly feminist policies after they are formally made in the highly complex, yet crucial "post adoption" phases – implementation, evaluation and outcomes. The paper makes a case for studying systematically feminist policy post adoption, reviews existing work to identify some of the foundations for and gaps in studying feminist policy, maps out the post adoption process, presents a list of factors for feminist policy success and proposes concrete steps to study feminist post adoption.

Introduction[1]

With over 40 years since women's movements in post industrial democracies first began to articulate demands for feminist government action and since governments began to make policies in response to those demands, it is important to take stock in whether these new multi-faceted, transversal and highly complex policies have been successful. That is, has the policy agenda coming out of the second wave women's movement in Western democracies to promote gender equality and women's rights been achieved in society and if so, what are the ingredients for that success? Simply put, does feminist policy matter and why?[2]

Despite the development of complex policy tools and expertise for gender equality policy assessment and a highly active and successful community of scholars engaged in the comparative study of feminist policy, little work has systematically solved the feminist policy puzzle of whether, to what extent and why the wide array of government action with explicitly feminist intent has actually achieved the complex goals of gender equality and improved women's rights. Moreover, three generations of policy implementation research outside of an explicitly feminist purview, have basically ignored gender equality policy as an analytical terrain as well as the significant body of scholarly work that has studied it.

[1] The ideas in this paper come out of the collaboration in my work on feminist policy and state feminism over the years: the members of the Research Network on the Gender Politics and the State, undergraduate students in my course on Comparative Public Policy, and the participants of the ECPR Workshop in 2012 on "Thinking Big About Gender Equality. Special thanks go to the editors of this proposed issue, whose work in particular has been inspirational. A version of this article is forthcoming in the *Journal of Women, Politics and Policy*.

[2] The core meaning of feminism used here covers the promotion of women's rights and status, in the context of the intersectional complexities of women as a group, and efforts to reduce gender and sex-based hierarchies in the public and private realms.

The goal of this paper is to draw on research in both feminist and non feminist policy studies to propose a roadmap for solving the feminist policy puzzle that focuses on assessing what happens to policies after they are formally made in the highly complex, yet crucial "post adoption" phases – implementation, evaluation and outcomes. The proposed roadmap includes, clear conceptualization of the different stages of these downstream processes as terrains to assess, a menu of options for measuring policy success, a list of potential ingredients for explaining that success and suggested research steps. The central argument is that researchers need to be systematic and clear about which part of the post adoption process they are studying, their indicators for success and their explicit research goals. These clearly defined concepts can then be used to test theories in empirical analysis about the extent to which the full range of feminist policies have been successful, the drivers and ingredients for those success (and failures) and to design more effective and meaningful policies. The hope of this paper is, therefore, to contribute to ongoing efforts to generate systematic knowledge about the feminist policy puzzle and in doing so to help advance feminist and non feminist policy studies alike for practitioners, scholars, and activists.[3]

The case for studying systematically feminist post adoption is made in the first part of the paper. Next, work in Feminist Comparative Policy and non feminist implementation studies is reviewed to identify some of the foundations for and gaps in studying feminist post adoption. The following section maps out post adoption as a "dependent variable" in terms of its different processes and the menu of potential indicators for analyzing

[3] The new international group, Gender Equality Policy in Practice Project (GEPP), comprised of nearly 80 researchers has begun to develop a research design to conduct such a large-scale study. It aims to submit funding proposals and launch the study in 2016. The construct proposed here will be considered by the group as a point of departure in this planning process (http://www.csbppl.com/gepp/). A planning workshop was held thanks to a public grant overseen by the French National Research Agency (ANR) as part of the "Investissements d'Avenir" program within the framework of the LIEPP center of excellence (ANR-11-LABX-0091, ANR-11-IDEX-0005-02)".

success and failure. The final section turns to the list of key factors ("independent variables") that have been identified for feminist policy success and how they might be put to the test as hypotheses in future studies of feminist post adoption. The conclusion turns to the concretes steps researchers might take to study systematically feminist post adoption.

The Case for the Systematic Study of Post Adoption

As assessments of research on gender and policy making have shown (e.g., Blofield and Haas 2013; Lombardo, Meier and Verloo 2013; Mazur 2002), Western postindustrial democratic governments since the early 1970s have adopted a dizzying number of feminist policies across a broad range of policy sectors.[4] Gender mainstreaming policies that seek to systematically insert gender equality across all sectors of government action have also been actively pursued since the late 1990s in Western democracies, particularly in Western Europe through the impetus of the European Union (e.g., Lombardo et al. 2013). Increasingly, many feminist policies have brought in other vectors of inequality based on, for example, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and/or age, through an "intersectional (Weldon 2008; Krizsan et al. 2012)" approach and "gender+ (Lombardo et al. 2013)" policies. Areas of government action that do not take an explicitly feminist approach also have important implications for changing gender relations in the public and private spheres to address sex based inequality between men and women, particularly with regards to social welfare policies.[5] In addition, governments at the national and international level as well as nongovernmental groups and individual gender experts have developed and used sophisticated tools for implementing and assessing impacts of gender

[4] Mazur (2002), for example, identifies the following sub sectors of feminist policy: blueprint; political representation, equal employment, reconciliation, family law, reproductive rights, and sexuality and violence.

[5] For a review of scholarship on gender implications of social policy see Sainsbury (2008).

equality policy; to name a few, gender audits, gender budgeting, gender impact assessments, gender performance indicators, gender equality indexes, and gender trainings (Lombardo et al. 2013, Blofield and Haas 2013 and Lombardo, Meier and Verloo 2009; Walby 2009).

As Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) first showed in the case of environmental policy in Berkeley, California in the early 1970s and students of policy implementation have asserted since[6], what occurs after a policy is formally adopted by government can short circuit the original intent of the formal policy statement. Given the extent to which feminist policies inherently seek to challenge the status quo of gender relations, this caveat is about implementation is even more applicable. As many feminist studies have shown, governments may not seek to actively and authoritatively implement such controversial policies that challenge long held established patterns of behavior on the part of the powerful; rather they may systematically pursue "symbolic (Edelman 1964)" measures, formal policy statements, with no "policy outputs" or results (Cobb and Elder 1983: 22).[7] As a consequence, for practitioners, activists and scholars interested in determining whether these highly complex and often contentious feminist policies and instruments actually promote women's rights and gender equality, the stages of feminist policy development after the formal decision must be assessed in relation to the pre-adoption and adoption phases (e.g., Blofield and Haas 2013; Lombardo et al 2013 and Mazur and Pollock 2009). Moreover, common and clear standards for success and failure need to be developed, including attention to policy outcomes and impacts as well as formal programmatic outputs.

[6] For reviews of the non feminist policy implementation literature see for example, Matland (1995); De Leon and De Leon (2002); O'Toole (2000); Saetren (2005 and 2011).

[7] See, for instance, Mazur's (1995) analysis of symbolic reform in the case of equal employment policy in France. Anderson (2006:15-16) defines symbolic versus material/ concrete/ authoritative reform more generally for public policy analysis.

Developing an approach and conceptual tools to systematically study post adoption will enhance understanding of the dynamics and the determinants of successful feminist policies as well as suggest how to design more successful policies, when policies fall short. Such a systematic focus on post adoption will also more generally allow an assessment of whether governments in post industrial democracies have actually responded to demands for gender justice and equality and whether inequities between the sexes have been reduced. Thus, being systematic about post adoption addresses both policy oriented questions of design and best practices as well as more theoretical questions of democratic performance, governance and inclusion that place gender politics at the center of democratic processes.

Feminist Comparative Policy (FCP): Setting the Agenda for Post Adoption Research

The FCP Approach as a Foundation for Post Adoption Research

The approach to studying post adoption being proposed here comes out of a relatively new area of feminist study, "Feminist Comparative Policy (Mazur 2002)." In fact, as will be discussed in further detail at the end of this section, focusing on the feminist post adoption process can be seen as the next phase of the FCP research cycle. FCP assesses how, why and to what end the contemporary state in western post industrial democracies has responded to demands for the advancement of women's rights, gender equality and striking down gender based inequities in society through policies and structures. A wide range of state responses has been studied in comparative perspective since the field first took shape in the early 1980s. This body of work studies feminist, gender-specific and gender-neutral policies that affect gender relations, women's policy agencies, the construction of gender and its impact in policy formation, gender and

welfare states, and women's movements relations to the state. With over 100 practitioners active from nearly all of the Western post industrial democracies, a significant level of scholarship -in 2001 over 400 published works were identified, an established scientific infrastructure- in 2010 there were 9 major international research projects with significant funding (Mazur 2009), FCP has become a highly institutionalized area of study.

The approach elaborated here to studying feminist post adoption reflects the following major features of FCP.

1) Gender as a relational concept is "the prime category of analysis (Scott 1986)" through focusing on how feminist policies that aim to challenge gender-based hierarchies and promote women's rights are developed, implemented and evaluated.

2) Analysis takes an "integrated feminist approach (Mazur 2011)" that combines empirical, post-modern and standpoint epistemologies; studies are aimed to build empirical based theory and to be used in more applied policy settings.

3) The state is seen to be malleable and potentially open to feminist influence (Pringle and Watson 1992), rather than a resistant patriarchal entity (e.g., MacKnnon 1989). The research question is whether and how feminist interests can overcome embedded and long established state patriarchies, gendered "logics of appropriateness (Chappell 2006)" to actively implement authoritative and meaningful policies.

4) Representation and democracy, emphasized by normative feminist theorists are crucial (Squires 1999). The policy process, including the processes after a policy decision is made, is seen as an arena for "descriptive and substantive representation (Pitkin 1967)" where gender specific policy actors like women's movements and women's policy agencies are agents of representation alongside elected officials (e.g., Celis 2012 and Weldon 2002, 2011).

5) Given the common levels of political, social and economic development of post industrial democracies many comparative small, medium and large 'n' analyses of feminist policy formation are made only in these countries (e.g., Weldon 2011 and McBride and Mazur 2010) in large part to avoid "stretching (Sartori 1970)" concepts. Although there is an increasing call to conduct a "comparative politics of gender" that includes all countries of the world (Beckwith 2010), the roadmap for post adoption elaborated here covers these most similar countries. It will be up to experts of non western feminist policy to determine with this approach can be applied in other cultural, political and economic settings outside of Western consolidated democracies.

FCP Work on Post Adoption:
A Focus on Pre-Adoption, Adoption and Outputs

Although FCP analysts have not necessarily used the term post-adoption, many analysts have made calls to focus on the thorny and complex phases of post adoption: implementation, evaluation, and the assessment of outcomes (Blofield and Haas 2013; Lombardo et al. 2013; Mazur and Pollock 2009 and Mazur 2009). Moreover, some of the early literature on gender and development looked at the design implementation and impact of development policies to develop better policy assessment tools and eventually better policies (Lombardo et al.2013: 656).

Different aspects of post adoption have been studied in western post industrial democracies, but this is not representative of the bulk of studies of feminist policy formation. As reviews of the work on feminist policy making assert, post adoption has not been on the feminist policy studies agenda until recently (Blofield and Hass 2013; Lombardo et al. 2013; Mazur and Pollock 2009). An assessment of nine recent international

research projects on feminist policy issues, for example, shows that none of the projects focused on implementation or impact evaluation (Mazur 2009). Rather the agenda setting, adoption phases of policy formation were examined with a particular focus on the content of policies, policy debates, issue framing and problem definition with few connections to the crucial phases of post adoption. This attention to framing of issues and content of formal policies is echoed in much of the FCP literature (e.g.,Kantola 2010; Lombardo and Forest 2010; Lombardo, Meier and Verloo 2009; McBride and Mazur 2010; Weldon 2011; Ferree et al. 2002). Thus as, Blofield and Haas (2013) state,

> While scholars have identified distinct patterns in types of government policies, more research is needed that links different policy frames to their adoption, implementation and outcomes (694).

More recent research that does deal with post adoption focuses primarily on administrative outputs, seldom providing the details of the "practice (Montoya 2013)" of state and non state actors in implementation and evaluation. Similarly, the question of the impact of policies is often left out of the implementation equation. Some notable examples illustrate this point. Zippel (2006) looks at the degree to which employers in Germany and the USA put into practice new sexual harassment regulation. Van Der Vleuten (2007) assesses how EU member states "implement" EU directives in national laws. Haffner-Burton and Pollock (2009) study how gender mainstreaming is put into place in EU government in administrative regulations or "outputs". Krook (2009) focuses on the implementation of quotas across the globe. Mazur assesses the implementation and evaluation of equal employment policy in France, the USA and Great Britain (1995) and the implementation of feminist policies in post industrial democracies (2002). Montoya (2013) studies violence against women policies in the EU through primarily examining administrative outputs and interest group activities at the EU, national and local levels.

Policy impact has been the major focus of the gender and welfare state literature, one of the major areas of FCP, but it often examines aggregate outcomes of general social policy regimes in terms of patterns of gender relations without looking at the specifics of the policy process or at the details of policy implementation (e.g., Sainsbury 2008; O'Connor, Orloff and Shaver 1999). More recent feminist social policy studies have brought in specific political actors (Morgan 2009) and specific aspects of child care programs (Ciccia and Bleijenbergh 2012) to assess the determinants of national level social policy. One area of feminist policy studies that has begun to tackle the complex connections between policy content, implementation and impact is the work on gender quotas in elected office, an important feminist policy, adopted in many countries of the world (Krook et al. 2012).

It is clear that one of the major reasons, feminist policy studies is just now turning to the post adoption phases is that gender equality policies were only placed on government agendas beginning in the early 1970s and some of the more developed policies, like gender mainstreaming, were not put on the books until the late 1990s. Thus, this turn to post adoption may very well be a part of the research cycle in feminist policy studies that first began by assessing how feminist policy issues were placed on government agendas and formulated into laws and policy decisions. We now have a significant amount of time that has gone by to make assessing implementation and outcomes meaningful in terms of the degree to which these new policies have actually changed gender relations and equality between the sexes.

Another reason for the lack of attention to implementation practices is the time-consuming and costly nature of investigating the specific activities of policy actors, particularly in comparative cross-national studies that include many countries or in multi-level studies in the European Union where practices need to be studied at the EU, national, sub-national and local

levels. At the same time, aggregate indicators of outputs, like regulations, administrative offices, training programs, etc. may not capture what really is happening in implementation, which is a messy business involving a broad range of "stakeholders"- compliant groups, administrative actors, target groups, watchdog groups and individual citizens. The time is worth it, however, to produce valid findings that actually reflect what is happening on the ground and hence whether policies are being authoritatively pursued after adoption.

A final obstacle to the systematic study of feminist policy formation after adoption is how to develop a valid and reliable measurement of policy success. Here, standards of what is considered feminist policy success must be discussed and raised; an issue of potential disagreement given the contested nature of feminist politics in many circles. As Blofield and Haas (2013: 678) assert,

> Even when there is agreement about the existence of a particular form of gender inequality, disagreements inevitably arise over the appropriateness and feasibility of possible policy solutions.

Indeed, much of the analyses of feminist policy that focus on discourse are premised on the notion that there are conflicting views and frames over the goals and outcomes of feminist government action (e.g., Lombardo et al 2009; McBride and Mazur 2010; Walby 2009). In many cases, as Anderson (2006) and others have shown for all areas of policy, policy goals themselves may not be clear, hence, it may be difficult to identify success in terms of the intent of the original policy. Also, it is not always clear whether a change in gender relations or women's status is actually a result of the policy or not; the reduction of gender-based differences may very well be the result of other factor unrelated to the policy; what Anderson (2006) calls the "difficulty of determining causality."

Non Feminist Policy Implementation Studies: A Partial Roadmap

Clearly, non feminist policy implementation studies provide an important touchstone for developing a systematic approach to feminist post adoption. The general policy process approach that underpins the approach to feminist post adoption proposed here initially came from US-based policy scholarship. Anderson's book on Public Policymaking covers well the US literature in delineating the different stages of policy formation with their complex processes and actors – "problem definition, agenda setting, adoption, implementation and evaluation and policy impact (2006)".[8] Much of the feminist policy studies literature uses this process approach as well. For instance, Blofield and Haas (2013) in their review of feminist policy work identify four stages of the policy process along these same lines "issue framing, policy adoption, implementation and policy outcomes". Similarly the differentiation drawn between outputs – "visible measures of government activity (Dye 1992: 354 cited in Ibid, 691 and outcomes – "changes in society that are associated with measures of government activity (Dye 1992:35 cited in Ibid., 693)" is central to any understanding of feminist post adoption processes.

A rich literature on policy implementation since the early 1970s also brings insights and concepts that are useful for studying feminist post adoption. Despite assertions that policy implementation studies were dead after their heyday in the 1980s, scholars of policy implementation more recently have asserted this field is "very much alive and relevant (Saetren 2005 and 2011)." They argue that European implementation scholars have made important recent contributions (O' Toole 2000); a similarity with the

[8] It is important to note that not all policy scholars accept the process oriented approach to policy development. Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993), for example, assert that policy formation should be understood in terms policy learning within policy communities or "advocacy coalitions".

cosmopolitan nature of the FCP community. Matland's 1995 review of the policy implementation scholarship, identifies a major division between the "top-down" and "bottom-up" schools. Top down approaches focus on how centrally located administrative actors carry out the goals of the original policy through enforcement on the target group. The bottom-up approach locates policy implementation at a more local, decentralized level where services are delivered and the concern is with the lower level policy actors that are administering the policy, the target populations and the full range of stakeholders. Matland proposes an alternative to the two "models", the "ambiguity-conflict" model which accounts for the highly contingent and controversial nature of policy implementation and is highly context specific.

De Leon and De Leon (2000) take the bottom-up vs. top-down division and argue that policy implementation studies need to focus on the bottom-up part of implementation that emphasize more democratic processes and the understanding that policy implementation should be accountable to the public with full participation. Such a shift, they assert will bring a renaissance in policy implementation studies that will return it to its original vigor in the United States. Fischer (2012) and others have emphasized the importance of more bottom-up processes as well in examining the policy process in terms of "deliberative democracy" and of discourse and argumentation, similar to the "discursive turn" in many FCP studies particularly those being conducted by Europeans (Mazur 2011). This focus on democracy and top down vs. bottom up approaches resonates with FCP's focus on representation and democracy mentioned above and is a central focus of the analytical approach proposed in this paper. Thus, democracy is an important theme for both feminist and non feminist policy scholars.

Despite the connections and similarities in all of this rich literature on policy there is virtually no mention of gender policy or the feminist scholarship that studies it. Saetren's reviews of the implementation literature in 2005 and 2011 further identify the vitality of implementation

studies across 7800 articles, books and chapters and Ph.D. dissertations – 7300 in the 2005 article published between 1933 to 2003 and 500 articles reviewed in his 2011 piece. The substantive categories he uses to classify the literature do not include a gender category; health, education, law, environment and economics and there is no evidence that any gender specific policy studies were classified. Nonetheless, what Saetren identifies as the "third generation of implementation studies" matches well with current research developments in FCP and the approach to feminist post adoption being proposed here.

> Key variables must be clearly defined; hypotheses derived from theoretical constructs should guide empirical analysis; more use of statistical analysis using quantitative data to supplement quantitative analysis; more comparison across different units of analysis with the same policy sector; more comparison across different units of analysis across different policy sectors; more longitudinal analysis. (3)

Thus, the non feminist policy implementation literature furnishes a partial roadmap for studying post adoption. While there are areas of overlap between non feminist and feminist policy studies, the complete silence on gender specific policy studies means that theories coming out of policy implementation may not be fully accurate. The roadmap that is presented below aims to address this gap by integrating some of the central concepts from implementation studies and hence putting some of the core implementation theories to the test.

Being Systematic About Mapping Post-Adoption: A Focus on Democracy, Representation and Symbolic Reform

The complex issues raised by both feminist and non feminist analysts alike warrant a careful conceptualization of the key analytical components of the feminist policy post adoption puzzle that may then better structure

empirical analysis. As the rich literature on concept formation in political science shows, this attention to concept definition and operationalization is a crucial part of doing good science that produces sound theory and valid results (e.g., Goertz 2006).[9]

The roadmap for studying feminist post adoption proposed here is expressed in terms of a dependent variable - objects of explanation or outcomes - and independent variables - drivers or ingredients.[10] The post adoption phase can be seen as the dependent variable, mapped out in this section, that researchers seek to explain and understand. It shows how the stages of the policy process unfold after adoption and whether they lead to policy success or failure. The next section turns to a presentation of the potential drivers or ingredients of policy success that researchers have considered. This roadmap can be used to assess post adoption at all levels: individual policy decisions, a set of more general policy decisions, the policy sector, the national level, the international level. It is important to note that while this conceptualization of feminist post adoption proposes a systematic roadmap, it does not provide a simple parsimonious solution to the feminist policy formation puzzle. Rather, it furnishes a menu of options from which researchers can choose, depending on the research context - theory building, scholarly, impact assessment, action oriented, etc. and the resources for conducting research. As Goertz (2006) and others who work on conceptualization show, the research context is what determines how a concept will be operationalized. As a result, it is fundamental that the first step in conducting a study of feminist post adoption is to clearly state the

[9] For a discussion of issues of conceptualization in gender and politics research as well as individual treatments of key gender and politics concepts by feminist scholars see Goertz and Mazur (2008).

[10] While the terminology of variables may be rejected by post positive scholars and is often associated with quantitative and statistical analysis, it is useful to use these constructs here to differentiate between what is being explained – post adoption processes and outcomes and the factors that explain those outcomes.

research context and goals and from this the appropriate measurements can be selected.

Figure 1
Mapping "Post-Adoption" in the Policy Formation Process in Post Industrial Democracies

Implementation	Evaluation	Outcomes
Outputs Instruments Structures Programs Funding Court Cases **Practice** Follow through activities What is actually done? **Institutional Feedback (DR)** Stakeholders/actors/groups in state and society mobilizing around/participating in process. **Accountability** Actors/outputs need to be accountable to publics and constituencies through process and mechanisms. **Responsiveness (SR)** Were group interests/demands/ discourse reflected?	**Outputs** Formal and Informal Evaluation (E/e) Summative & Formative **Practice** Assessment of Instruments, Structures, Programs, funding, court cases and outcomes **Institutional Feedback (DR)** Stakeholders/actors/groups in state and society mobilizing around/participating in process. **Accountability** Actors/outputs need to be accountable to publics and constituencies through process and mechanisms. **Responsiveness (SR)** Were group interests/demands/ discourse reflected?	**Direct** Impact/Results Was the Problem Solved? (May be determined in the evaluation process) Were group interests/demands/discourse reflected? (SR) **Indirect** Attitude/Values/Norms Change Public Opinion Change Enhanced Participation (DR) Representation and Democracy **Feedback** Policy Change → Process starts over (problem definition, agenda setting, etc.) New Stakeholders, Networks.

Notes: SR- Substantive representation, DR- Descriptive Representation

Figure 1 presents post adoption in terms of three different phases and five different dimensions. It suggests avenues for assessing success and policy effectiveness in terms of descriptive and substantive representation and of top-down and bottom-up approaches for each phase. In this section, each different stage is first presented. Then the different potential measurements of policy success in each stage in terms of the five different dimensions listed in Figure 1 are discussed.

Unpacking Post Adoption:
Implementation, Evaluation and Outcomes

It is important for feminist and non feminist studies alike to be precise about the different stages of the post adoption process. As O'Toole (2000:266) points out, studies of "implementation" often include the act of carryingout policy and the analysis of its effects and results or impact assessment. The feminist studies that do focus on post adoption/ implementation also mix-up different aspects of this complex post decision process and misuse notions of implementation. Here, we identify three different parts of post adoption, based in part on the stage-oriented model (Anderson 2006) that clearly differentiates between the political processes of implementation and evaluation and the actual outcomes of the policy process, which may be the object of the evaluation process, but also may be used by individuals not active in that particular policy process -citizens, scholars, and activists- as potential indicators of success for a particular policy.

Implementation is the policy phase where state and non state actors carryout policy decisions through a wide range of activities. Anderson (2006), for example, identifies "rule-making, adjudication, law enforcement and program operations." Implementation involves administrative actors, compliance groups, courts and criminal justice systems and target populations. As such, this stage brings forward a complex constellation of actors, or "stakeholders", that will vary with the type policy and the level of implementation (e.g., Matland 1995).

Evaluation is a separate process that is often carried out by the same set of implementation actors. Maria Bustelo, in this volume provides additional valuable insights about this process from a feminist perspective. It involves both formal and informal assessments of whether a given policy was successful or not, big *'E'* and small *'e'* evaluation. Big *E* evaluation can be both "summative" and "formative" as well (Anderson 2006). Formal

summative and formative evaluations can be built into policies from their inception, often by the legislature or by requirements from extra national government organizations like the EU or the UN. Small *e* evaluation usually is conducted by nongovernmental organization, but also sector specific agencies, like women's policy agencies, as a part of the watchdog process to monitor whether governments are following through on political promises. As such, policy evaluation is a crucial part of democracy's critical processes. Evaluation also may lead to important changes in policy and placing issues back on government agendas. Given the prevalence of formative evaluation, implementation and evaluation may occur concurrently; thus they are not necessarily sequential processes, although formal summative evaluations can occur after programs have been implemented. In addition, it is important to note the often marginal position of evaluators, i.e., policy experts, to the process, and the degree to which policy evaluations, particularly if they are formal program evaluations can reflect more the political goals of the group/ institution that commissioned than a specific evaluation (Anderson 2006). As such, researchers studying the policy evaluation process need to identify the "positionality" of the evaluator in the political process (Lombardo et al. 2009).

As the non feminist policy literature has taught us, outputs, observable government action, are not the same as outcomes of policies. Here **outcomes** are clearly separated out in three different potential types: direct, indirect and feedback. The type of outcome that is analyzed depends on the context and the goals of the assessment, i.e., whether it is being used in the evaluation process of a given policy by the policy actors or whether researchers outside of the policy process are attempting to determine the success of the policy.[11] **Direct outcomes** involve the impact of the policy

[11] Policy scholars can become policy actors through a public demand for policy assessment and expertise (Hoard forthcoming). At the same time, policy researchers can work outside of the policy process and provide independent less politicized assessments of policy success and failure to develop empirical-based theory for practitioner-oriented and scholarly communities, depending on the context for the research product.

on the target group or problem. An essential part of determining direct impact is whether the problem was solved, but also whether the demands of the groups and individuals who requested the policy in the first place were met. **Indirect outcomes** include long term changes in public opinion, norms, values and attitudes, potentially operationalized by a series of indicators like public opinion, polls, voting patterns or men's and women's status indexes[12]; what Inglehart (1990) and other have referred to "culture shift." The processes of implementation and evaluation can also lead to enhanced participation of excluded individuals and actors, like women in the case of feminist policy formation, and hence enhance overall democracy and representation. There are also unintended consequences or "diffuse policy impacts (Anderson 2006: 272)" that may harm other groups. In feminist policy, it is clear that men as a group may become the unintended losers in feminist policy formation; this may be an important indicator of success or failure depending on the analyst's perspective. Feedback can also be an outcome of a given policy (see below).

A Menu of Options for Measuring Success

The five dimensions of post adoption presented in Figure 1, outputs, practice, institutional feedback, accountability and responsiveness provide the building blocks to assess policy success and failure. **Outputs** are differentiated from "**practice** (Montoya 2013)" in both implementation and evaluation. That is, just because government programs, structures, instruments and funding were established does not necessarily mean that there will be follow through. Thus, researchers need to identify the administrative outputs that were established to implement and evaluate policy and then determine whether the various policy actors actually did anything in practice. Identifying outputs AND practice is particularly important in feminist policy formation where elected officials may be

[12] See Blofield and Haas (2013: 678-9) for a discussion of the available cross-national gender indexes.

willing to sign-off on a policy that promotes gender equality, establish mechanisms to implement and evaluate, but less supportive of the potential politically costly process of putting into action those policy instruments. Therefore, promoting "concrete" activities, rather than "symbolic" gestures, may take more political will and bottom-up pressure than just setting up administrative machinery (Anderson 2006, Edelman 1964 and Mazur 1995).

Identifying **institutional feedback** on a given policy decision is another means of determining whether a policy goes beyond symbolic reform (Skocpol 1992 and Mazur 1995). Here, the bottom-up and top down approaches are combined. It is important to examine the range of actors that comes forward to mobilize around implementation across all of the stakeholders, state and non state actors, implementers, legal actors, compliant groups or target groups. The institutional feedback component indicates whether there is follow through on the formal outputs that are set-up. Although higher levels of institutional feedback do not necessarily mean policy success - compliant groups like businesses can be active in the process to block implementation as well. "Descriptive representation", operationalized by FCP scholars from Pitkin's original typology, can also be determined in the institutional feedback dimension of post adoption. Where formerly excluded groups have the potential to be included in the process. Feedbacks can be identified in evaluation and implementation processes and can also be used as indicators of success for the outcome of a policy through policy change, new networks and policy actors and new mechanisms to make the process accountable. Similarly, the development of new networks and groups in the processes of implementation and evaluation can indicate that a policy has enhanced representation of women's interests.

The notions of **accountability** and policy responsiveness, coming from feminist and non feminist democratic theory (e.g., Celis 2012) and work on

deliberative democracy (e.g., Fischer 2012), are also potentially crucial dimensions of assessing feminist policy success. Here, the democratic context for policy adoption is fundamental; policy processes and actors need to be accountable to the public and constituencies that are represented in that policy. Thus, policy implementation and evaluation is not just a top-down administrative procedure removed from the political realm, it is actually at the center and an object of contestation and deliberation in the full messiness of the democratic process. This is where Schattschneider's (1960) and others notion that policy is the result of the struggle over meaning comes to the fore. In such a deliberative process, different groups will come forward and express their interests; in feminist policy it is important to develop mechanisms that assure that the demands for women's rights and change in gender relations are met and responded to. Women's policy agencies, government agencies set-up to advance women's rights, are potential accountability mechanisms, but the emphasis here is on meaningful accountability. Thus, representatives in the process need to be in touch with constituency interests and demands, often coming from women's movement actors and then the process must assure that these voices are heard and responded to. The responsiveness to feminist and women's movement demands is the outcome of this deliberative and accountable process; often the "policy discourse" used is an indicator of that outcome (Lombardo and Forest 2012; Lombardo et al 2009). Researchers can then determine whether the policy process reflects the target group/ women's movement demands; in other words whether women's interests were substantively represented.

The notion of **symbolic versus concrete (authoritative or material) reform** is a useful tool, expressed in a continuum where the two concepts are ideal types and cases are lined up in between them or in interval variable form on a given scale with 0 being the most symbolic and 10 for example the most concrete. The different dimensions of success can then be used to determine symbolic and authoritative post adoption. An ideal type

of symbolic post adoption might include outputs alone on evaluation and implementation, no practice and hence no feedback, accountability or responsiveness or even results. An ideal type of concrete or authoritative policy would be high levels of outputs and follow through, with meaningful accountability mechanisms, responsiveness and institutional feedback in implementation and evaluation and clear direct and indirect result that show improvement in the targeted problem and long term change in attitudes and enhanced participation in the process. Of course, there could be different authoritative outcomes depending on the content and starting point of the original policy. For example a concrete outcome could be the redesign of a new policy. In this context, the post adoption process is looked at in its entirety and in fact it is important to do so from a scholarly perspective of systematically answering the question of does feminist policy matter and why. Examining policy implementation and evaluation alone, would not necessarily produce the same results as studying the processes and their outcomes.

At the same time, researchers, depending on the research context, may choose to look at one stage of the policy process, just the outcomes for instance, or focus on one or a combination of indicators for success; accountability mechanisms, responsiveness, or representation. Another issue to be considered are the indicators used for success, particularly for the accountability and responsiveness dimensions in the two processes. Much feminist scholarly attention has been paid to defining women's interests as a group in terms of its full diversity and intersectional attributes (e.g., Schwindt-Bayer and Taylor Robinson 2011; Weldon 2008; Lombardo et al 2009; Lombardo and Forest 2010; Kirzan et al. 2012). Researchers, as a result, need to be watchful about which interests and demands are being used to determine policy responsiveness and overall success, particularly given the debate over gender equality among feminist actors themselves.

The selection of indicators for the success of policy outcomes will be crucial in producing valid and reliable results. The question of whether the policy outcome responded to the goals of the original policy is very different from whether the policy responded to demands expressed in the process of policy formation, particularly given feminist policy measures tend to dilute feminist demands (Mazur 2002). The origin of the impact indicators needs to be clearly stated as well – did they come from politicized sources or more independent and reliable sources; how were they constructed? are they comparable across different contexts? These are just some of the questions researchers need to answer as they are selecting indicators for assessing the impact of policies. It is important to keep in mind feminist standards for success; both in terms of what feminist groups were asking for and also what feminist experts and scholars determine as successful outcomes and results, particularly when thinking about assessing the impact of feminist policies.[13]

Putting the Theory in Studying Post Adoption: A Search for the Ingredients for Success

Once policy success has been measured in a given case or study, the final, yet crucial step, is to identify the ingredients for feminist policy success in empirical analysis; that is, how to empirically theorize which explanations for feminist policy success are the most important. FCP scholars have already shown the highly case-specific and contingent nature of successful feminist policy formation and the often shifting combination of factors that come together at different times in different settings to produce feminist successes (e.g., Htun and Weldon 2012; Weldon 2012; Mazur and McBride 2010; Mazur 2002 and 2003; Walby 2009). This complexity has also been

[13] See Bustelo in this volume for more on feminist evaluation standards and Lombardo et al. (2009) and Blofield and Haas (2013) for critiques about gender indexes and mainstream impact assessments of gender equality policy.

noted by non feminist implementation scholars (Matland 1995). Thus, there appears to be no magic bullet for feminist policy success. At the same time, researchers can systematically accumulate knowledge about the drivers of successful feminist policy post adoption by drawing upon previous work to identify the potential ingredients for success as hypotheses to be tested in their studies and research projects. In this way, researchers can develop sound theories for feminist policy success that are both reliable and valid and take into consideration all of the potential drivers. Some of the most prominent hypotheses are listed here. A central question for research is whether the notion of contingency and complexity of causal factors that were found in other feminist research contexts will also apply to feminist post adoption success when it is systematically studied too. Moreover, additional factors not listed here may be salient in explaining feminist policy successes in post adoption once these processes are formally put under the microscope.

H1. Policy Sector over Country or Region - Studies have shown that less than the overall institutional design or cultural make-up of a given country or a group of countries feminist policy success has been associated with the structural constraints of a specific policy sector, e.g., employment, reproductive rights etc. In other words, sector, and or policy type, appear to matter more in feminist policy successes than country-level or regional trends (e.g.,Armstrong et al. 2009; Kriszan and Lombardo 2013; McBride and Mazur 2010; Htun and Weldon 2012). Saetren (2011) also indicates the importance of sector in non feminist implementation studies.

H2. The Content of the Original Policy Decision - The actual content of the original policy decision may also play and important role in post adoption. Both feminist and non feminist scholarship identify the formal content of policy as being a crucial factor in policy implementation and outcomes (Blofield and Haas 2013; O'Toole 2000). At the same time, studies show that much progress can be made in the implementation process, particularly

when the original policy decision was highly diluted and symbolic. Implementation politics can also be a formidable obstacle to achieving feminist goals; thus, the importance of policy content should be considered as a potential factor and a question for research and investigation rather than a given.

H3. Political Opportunity Structure, Veto Points, Institutional Design - A wide range of scholarship has pointed to the importance of the structure of the state and access for interests to influence policy as a factor in policy outcomes, "veto points (Stephens and Huber 2001)". Social movement research has also pinpointed the Political Opportunity Structure, usually at the national level, as an important constraint for social movement influence (e.g., McAdam et al. 1996; Ferree et al 2002). For specific studies of feminist policy dynamics, the structure of the sub system and access points has been a major factor; in sectors where the sub system is closed and hierarchical women's movement actors have a hard time influencing policy debates and outcomes, in areas where the sub system is open they have more success (McBride and Mazur 2010). The territorial division of power of a given country and the level of decision-making for a specific policy issue can make a difference as well (Haussman, Vickers and Sawer 2010). Studies have shown how changes in state configurations at different levels affect feminist activity as well (Banaszak et al. 2003).

H4. Party in Power/ Influence of the Left - The political ideology of the party in power has been a favored explanation for policy outcomes. Both feminist and non feminist policy work have identified left-wing majorities as important factors in policychange (Kittilson 2008; Lombardo et al. 2013). However, FCP studies put into question how crucial the presence of left-wing governments are for feminist policy success- identifying cases of feminist policy failure under left-wing majorities and successes under the Right (Mazur 2002; McBride and Mazur 2010).

H5. Cultural Influence: Gender Norms and Religion - Here, the factors under consideration are related to the cultural make-up of a given population and the dominant cultural traditions about gender relations, types of active religions and levels of religiosity, all factors which can be important impediments to the development of feminist policies. For example, research has looked to the salience of religion as an important explanation between reproductive rights policies in the USA compared to Europe (Outshoorn 1996). When dominant gender norms do not fit feminist approaches to gender relations feminist demands tend to be blocked.

H6. Gender Policy Regimes - The gender and welfare state literature categorizes welfare states according to the degree to which national-level social policy allows women and men to choose work and family options through the promotion of "... familialism versus women's employment" and "...the ways in which gender differentiation and gender ideologies are reflected in regime arrangements (Orloff 2002: 19). Typically, there are three categories of gender policy regimes forwarded: "dual-earner" regimes (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden), "general family support" policy regimes (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain) and "market oriented" countries (Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States). The hypothesis here to be assessed is whether patterns of feminist policy success will occur in countries that have more feminist oriented policy regimes like the Nordic countries.

H7. Economic Climate - A healthy and growing economy has been identified as an important factor for favoring the adoption of feminist policies. In many countries, in periods of economic growth, governments have been more favorable to policies that bring women into the work force and help them reconcile family and work obligations (Jenson, Hagen and Reddy 1988). Similarly, more money may be available for specific programs and structures that promote women's rights. As Jenson (2008) shows, recent

trends toward government downsizing have also been instrumental in shifting overall policy frames. The salience of economic climate can be determined by looking at the particular timing of feminist policy success.

H8. Public Opinion - General public opinion on the issue at hand has also been identified by feminist and non feminist analysts as a potential factor in policy success (Kittilson 2008 and Soroka and Wlezien 2010) at least for the content of policies. Here, the hypothesis is that the policy actors will support the implementation of policies that have more favorable public support.

H9. State Feminism/Strategic Partnerships/Feminist Advocacy Coalitions - The dynamics between the various actors that mobilize around a given sub area has also been identified as an important ingredient for feminist policy success. FCP studies have assessed whether a Triangle of Women's Empowerment (TOWE) (Vargas and Wieringa 1998) between femocrats in women's policy agencies, women in parliament and women's groups are a crucial force in feminist successes in policy scholarship on state feminism (e.g., Mazur 2002, Weldon 2011; Lovenduski and Guadagnini 2010). While the need for a strict three-way alliance has not shown to be salient, some form of strategic alliance between feminist actors in the state and society favors more feminist outcomes; thus, leading some feminist analysts to apply the notion of an "advocacy coalition (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1999)" to understanding feminist policy success (e.g., Abrar et al. 2000). When the participants of a sub system share feminist values and understanding for a policy, there is more likely to be a positive feminist outcome.

H10. Critical Actors/ Policy Entrepreneurs/Male Allies - Coming out of the work on women's representation which shows that individuals playing critical roles tend to be more important than a critical mass of female representatives in determining outcomes (Celis and Childs 2008), this

hypothesis points to the importance of individual agency. Other policy research has also highlighted the pivotal role of individuals as "policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon 1995)" and "policy brokers (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1999)". The FCP literature has found that support for feminist causes by powerful men and women who do not formally speak for women's interests, "male/female allies" has been an important ingredient for success as well (e.g., Mazur 2002, 2003). FCP research has also shown the role of experts to be quite important as well in producing feminist policies (e.g., Hoard forthcoming).

H11. Influences Beyond the National Level - Europeanization, the United Nations women's policy process, particularly the 1995 Beijing conference, and other policy initiatives from the UN like gender mainstreaming (True and Mintrom 2001) as well as the development of transnational social movements and advocacy networks (Ferree and Tripp 2006) have also been shown to be important catalysts, if not driving forces in compelling governments to take on feminist demands.

Conclusion: Next Steps and Implications

Analyzing and theorizing about the crucial post adoption phases of feminist policy formation is an essential step in ultimately providing a definitive answer to whether feminist policy matters and why in post industrial democracies. Developing an empirically based answer to the feminist policy formation puzzle will move feminist policy studies forward for practitioners and academics alike through the development of sound and systematic theories about how to pursue effective and meaningful feminist policy and the ingredients for that success. This paper has attempted to systematically map out the different aspects of post adoption in terms of both feminist and non feminist scholarship, has developed potential indicators for post adoption success and has identified the major hypotheses

that should be studied in future studies about feminist policy success. Researchers should consider the following steps to concretely apply this roadmap in future empirical studies of post adoption.

1. Use Secondary Analyses and Reports First, then Design New Studies - There are already a wealth of studies that have focused to some degree on feminist post adoption in western post industrial democracies- albeit not systematically; some have been mentioned here. In addition, interest groups and governments have conducted evaluations of feminist policies over the years. It would be useful to make a systematic review of already published research and use the information about post adoption to construct a new set of policy adoption cases for analysis.[14] This should be the essential first step prior to designing new studies of feminist post adoption.[15]

2. Specify the Unit/Level of Analysis - The issue of where post adoption is being studied is an important one. In most of the feminist policy formation literature discrete government decisions are assessed; in the gender and welfare state literature the policy of entire country is examined. It is useful to think of different levels of analysis; macro, system-wide, national, international or sub system/sectoral levels. The advantage of looking at discrete policy decisions, i.e. laws, court decisions, executive orders, rather than policy implementation at a more macro level, is that researchers can determine the importance of national versus sub sectoral patterns and also drill down into the crucial details of policy post adoption. No matter what the unit/level of analysis being used, researchers should be clear about where they are observing post adoption dynamics.

[14] Comparative policy studies that have used secondary source data, generally look for confirmation across three different sources (Mazur 2002 2003 and Feick 1992).

[15] A new group is forming under the direction of Joni Lovenduski and Amy Mazur who brought together scholars at the recent European Conference on Gender and Politics to discuss the feminist post adoption agenda. An effort is beginning to conduct such a review. For more information on the group contact Amy Mazur at mazur@wsu.edu.

3. Do Multi Level Studies - Policy formation occurs at all levels of the government system: local, sub-national, national and extra-national. A more bottom-up approach to policy implementation that focuses on democratic processes implies the analysis of implementation below the national level at the sub-national and local levels. For feminist policy issues, international and supranational governments and organizations have provided important incentives for the development of feminist policy. In European Union countries many feminist policies in the member states are made to comply with EU directives. Thus, it is important that post adoption studies focus on all levels of the policy process in their analyses.

4. Do Comparative Analyses - Given the causal complexities of feminist policy post adoption and the issue of whether policy dynamics follow patterns in certain sectors or in certain countries or groups of countries, it is important to use comparative, cross-national and cross sectoral analysis. Even if single case studies are being conducted they can be set-up in terms of the propositions that come out of larger comparative analyses. At the same time, the preference is to conduct studies that have more than one observation across sectors, countries, levels of government or time periods, so that the cases themselves can be used to test hypotheses through the use of the Comparative Method (Rihoux and Ragin 2008).

5. Use a Mixture of Methods - It is also important to use combined methodological approaches and tools either in a single study or across studies. On one hand while the actual research of post adoption processes and outcomes takes a detailed qualitative approach, such as “process tracing (George and Bennett 2005)” or discourse analysis (e.g., Lombardo et al. 2009), on the other hand, analyses that seek to identify patterns in post adoption dynamics and determinants, need to be based on larger number of observations. Thus, researchers should consider using quantitative statistical analysis or qualitative comparative analysis (QCA).

QCA in particular, based on “equafinality” where there are several different paths to success and configurational analysis that shows combination of factors, is particularly useful for assessing the dynamics and determinants of post adoption (Rihoux and Ragin 2008). In addition, when direct policy results are being assessed in terms of impact on gender relations, many of the official gender indeces are in numerical form. Similarly, some of the key ingredients for success are best expressed in terms of numbers rather than nominal indicators, e.g., the economy and public opinion. Thus, the process of moving toward a theory of feminist policy post adoption can be facilitated by bringing together the different analytical leverage each methodological approach has to offer.

In of itself, this exercise has contributed to putting feminist post adoption more firmly on the analytical agenda of feminist policy studies and to compel non feminist policy studies to finally place gender policy scholarship on its analytical radar. Although the proposed roadmap was designed to assess feminist policies, which includes equality + policies, it may very well be useful for analyzing all forms of policy implementation, particularly give the degree to which it incorporates the lessons learned from the more generalized policy implementation literature. Moreover, the call for being systematic and clear about the analytical constructs, indicators and research contexts resonates with the pursuit of good science more generally speaking. Placing democracy at the analytical core of the analysis through the operationalization of post adoption and post adoption success, contributes to the ongoing process of making stables democracies more democratic as well through theory and practice.

Clearly, there is much to be done in this new area of inquiry. At the same time, this proposal has hopefully provided some helpful suggestions and guidelines for making sense of and eventually studying one of the most crucial, yet highly complex, contested and contingent, processes of democracy.

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