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March 2, 2017

Where Are the Women? An Analysis of Gender Mainstreaming in Introductory Political Science Textbooks

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/amy_atchison/9/

Title:

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Abstract:

Textbook content is a powerful indicator of what is and is not considered important in a given discipline. Textbooks shape both curriculum and students' thinking about a subject. The extant literature indicates that gender is not well represented in American government textbooks, thus signaling to students that women and gender are not part of the mainstream in political science. I contribute to this literature by using quantitative and qualitative content analysis to examine gender mainstreaming in ten introductory political science textbooks. I find that the quantity of gendered content is small, and the quality of that content varies considerably from text to text.

Introduction

Since the 1970s, the concept of gender as an analytic construct has gained traction in political science research (Murphy, 2010), yet the evidence indicates that the advances in gender and politics scholarship have not been mirrored in political science education (Cassese & Bos, 2013). For more than two decades, gender and politics scholars have promoted gender mainstreaming—the systematic inclusion of gender-related content¹—into political science education. They have argued that not only will mainstreaming help students to better understand the political world, but it may also help female students see themselves as elected officials or political scientists (Carpenter, 2007; Doherty, 2013; Mertus, 2007).

Here I argue that the central challenge to effective gender mainstreaming in the political science classroom lies with the lack of gendered content in existing textbooks. Thus far, research on the extent and success of gender mainstreaming in political science textbooks has focused mainly on introductory American government texts. The findings have been grim, showing relatively little gender-related content in American government texts. In this article, I expand the field by examining more general introduction to political science textbooks in order to determine whether or not the lack of gender mainstreaming is also at play in other areas of political science education. Following Olivo (2012) and Cassese, Bos, and Schneider (2014), I conduct quantitative and qualitative content analysis to determine both the quantity of and quality of the material related to women and feminism. Just as in American government texts, I find that gendered content in introductory political science texts is scarce and that the quality of that content varies considerably from text to text.

¹ Such as the gendered nature of institutions, the gendered effects of ostensibly gender-neutral laws, etc.

In subsequent sections I first contextualize these findings in the broader conversation about gender mainstreaming in the political science classroom. I then focus on the importance of textbooks in guiding both course content and students' understanding of the discipline, concluding with my hypotheses related to gendered content in introductory political science textbooks. My discussion of data and methods follows. In the final sections I discuss the quantitative and qualitative results, concluding with the implications of my findings and suggestions for future research.

The Importance of Textbooks in Gender Mainstreaming

The (Brief) Argument for Gender Mainstreaming in Political Science²

In 1991, an APSA report ("The Wahlke Report") recommended that political scientists incorporate gender into mainstream political science courses. Then, as now, the most common method of addressing gender was to present it separately, either on in a day/week set aside for gender (often presented by a female guest lecturer) (Lacey & Smits, 2015), or in an elective gender and politics class. The Wahlke Report recommendation eschewed this approach, arguing that gender should not be "treated as a separate and unique problem to be dealt with in a particular course or two or by a particular faculty member" (Wahlke, 1991, p. 53). Since then, gender and politics scholars have made a strong case for gender mainstreaming in the classroom. They argue that exposing students to the gendered ways in which society works will increase awareness of gender-related biases and will help students to question why various

² For longer arguments in favor of gender mainstreaming, see the "Teaching Politics & Gender: Views from the Field." Critical Perspectives in *Politics & Gender*, June 2013, 9(2): 207-238; for suggestions as to how to mainstream gender, see "'Mainstreaming Gender in the Teaching and Learning of Politics" symposium in *PS: Political Science & Politics*, July 2016, 49(3)

forms of inequality are accepted as the status quo (Lyle-Gonga, 2013). In addition, scholars argue that gender mainstreaming creates an environment that encourages female students to pursue careers in political science or government, and may also increase acceptance of gender research in the discipline (Atchison, 2013; Frueh, 2007; Sjoberg, 2007).

To clarify, “gender mainstreaming,” does not simply mean that faculty should add a gender week to their regular curriculum. True mainstreaming goes well beyond the “add women and stir” approach. First, the idea is that gender must be incorporated into all aspects of the course. To paraphrase Sjoberg (2007), rather than having a week on elections, a week on legislatures, and a week on gender, a gender mainstreamed class should have a week on elections with reference to how gender and electoral institutions interact, a week on legislatures with a discussion of how the descriptive and substantive representation of women affects legislative outcomes, and so on.

Second, rather than incorporating gender as a descriptive category, advocates of mainstreaming encourage the adoption of gender as an analytic construct (Atchison, 2013; Cassese, Bos, & Duncan, 2012; Sjoberg, 2007). Using gender as a simple descriptive places women into a homogeneous group: all women are *X* or all women do *Y*. Presenting gender as an analytic construct acknowledges that women are *not* a homogeneous group; cross-cutting cleavages such as class, race, religion, and sexuality (among others) result in groups of women with different experiences, beliefs, and attitudes (Hancock, 2007). Despite these differences among women, when gender is examined as an analytic construct it demonstrates that because women share the experience of marginalization in male-dominated societies, women often have shared political concerns. These include policy areas such as child care, violence against

women, and maternity leave. Research shows that women of different ideological leanings may have different policy preferences or rationales related to these concerns (Bratton & Ray, 2002; Xydias, 2013), but their shared concerns stem from experiences common to most women. When professors omit gender from their classrooms and/or treat gender as a superficial descriptor rather than as an analytic construct, they present an incomplete and misleading picture of politics to their students (Matthes, 2013). How can political phenomena be presented accurately when the perspectives of half of the population, in all their complexity, are not considered?

Despite these compelling arguments for mainstreaming, evidence indicates that very little gender mainstreaming is taking place in political science classrooms (Cassese & Bos, 2013; Lacey & Smits, 2015). In the next section, I explore the connection between the status of gender and politics research in the discipline and the lack of gender mainstreaming in the classroom.

Explaining the Lack of Mainstreaming

The lack of gender mainstreaming in the classroom is linked to perceptions of gender in political science research. In its early days, the concept of gender as an analytic construct was poorly received in the discipline. As a result, gender and politics research was marginalized. Although acceptance of gender and politics research has noticeably improved since the 1970s (Lovenduski, 1998; Murphy, 2010), Childs and Krook (2006) demonstrate that (a) gender is not fully incorporated in the discipline and (b) some political scientists still question the value of both feminist and gender and politics scholarship. While it could be argued that this is down to simple sexism, Baldez (2010) points out that it is more complex – that both mainstream political

scientists and gender and politics scholars must work together to integrate gender and political science more fully. One major challenge to this is that, as Baldez (2010, p. 200) puts it, mainstream scholars “rarely question whether gender is relevant to politics”. This is problematic for gender mainstreaming because while one need not be a politics and gender expert in order to engage in mainstreaming, one must recognize and acknowledge the importance of gender as an analytic construct in order to mainstream effectively.

The Textbook as “Normalizing Text”

This knowledge gap regarding gender and politics is of particular significance in the classroom. As Boyer (1991, p. 11) notes: “as a scholarly enterprise, teaching begins with what the teacher knows.” Nevertheless, professors would be hard-pressed know everything there is to know about their discipline and they do not typically have the time and resources to create class materials from scratch. Instead they frequently rely on textbooks to help shape course content, and the textbooks they choose often provide students’ first exposure to a discipline. Reliance on textbooks is not without problems. One such problem is illustrated by Cragun (2007, p. 1), who calls them a “necessary evil” in that they present material in an easily digestible format but often lose vital complexities in the process. This may constitute a “dumbing down” of the material as it is presented to the student. Nevertheless, textbooks remain an integral part of the academic enterprise and can be seen as “as a body of knowledge backed by a consensus of practitioners” (Myers, 1992, p. 5). Some even argue that textbooks teach particular paradigms that shape students’ disciplinary world-view (Kuhn, 1963; Myers, 1992; Trawick, 2009). Thus, textbooks reproduce scientific knowledge for the student audience and shape not just *what* students think about a subject but *how* they think about it.

This brings us to a second problem related to textbooks: the information in the book demonstrates to students what practitioners consider “legitimate” knowledge in the field (Wallace & Allen, 2008), which means it is important to note that what is left *out* of textbooks is just as important as what is put *in* them. What is left out sends a very clear message to students about who (white male elites) and what (institutions) are important in political science (Cassese et al., 2014).

The available evidence indicates that gender is largely absent from American government textbooks. While we should take pains to avoid conflating gender and women (Di Stefano, 1997), it is women’s voices and experiences that are largely missing from political science and the extant literature on gender and textbooks examines terminology largely related to women, females, and feminism. The research has primarily focused on introductory American government textbooks as these are among the most widely read textbooks in political science (Olivo, 2012). Studies indicate that gender-related content is limited in American Government texts and is most often found in chapters that address the women’s suffrage and women’s rights movements in the context of civil rights (Cassese et al., 2012; Cassese et al., 2014; Olivo, 2012). This is problematic in that it segregates gender from the rest of the American government curriculum rather than treating it as “an important analytic construct that is directly applicable to the main themes, concepts, and lessons in the course” (Cassese et al., 2012, p. 240). Also of note in the extant literature is that Cassese et al. (2014) find that female authors are more likely than male authors to include substantive gender-related content in American government textbooks. This is in keeping with one of the main findings of gender and politics research: women are more likely to represent women’s interests than are

their male colleagues (Mushaben, 2005; Tremblay, 2006). Moving beyond introductory texts, Cassese, Holman, Schneider, and Bos (2015) look at political science methods texts and find that that gender is virtually non-existent in this area, as well. Where gender *is* included in methods texts, it is treated as a descriptive category.

If textbooks tend to drive our curriculum and curriculum is “constituted as a normalizing text” (Erevelles, 2005, p. 423), then the evidence indicates that gender is not being normalized in introductory American government classes or in research methods classes. The question, initially posed by Cassese et al. (2014), is whether or not there is a similar lacuna in other introductory areas of political science education. In this paper, I build on the extant literature regarding gender mainstreaming in political science textbooks by examining introductory political science textbooks for both women-related content and the placement of said content. I am particularly concerned about introductory political science texts because in the United States, they are often used in general education classes which are targeted at students who are unlikely to take another political science course. Outside of the United States, Introduction to Political Science is often a foundational course in the discipline. In an increasingly globalized society, how gender-related information is presented to students sets the tone for how they view women’s issues both domestically and globally.

An introduction to political science typically exposes students to political theory/ideologies, regime types, institutions, and political participation. Do they also contain basic information about gender and politics? I extend the evidence from introductory American

government texts and political science research methods textbooks and hypothesize the following:

- H₁: Content related to gender/women is lacking in introductory political science texts

As mentioned above, previous studies indicate that information about gender is concentrated in the civil rights chapter(s) of most American Government textbooks. Introductory political science textbooks do not tend to have chapters related to civil rights, but do usually have chapters on political theory and/or ideologies. Because, editors no longer feel that feminism can be safely ignored (Childs & Krook, 2006) it is relatively common that authors include feminism in discussions of political theory or ideology. On this basis I present a second hypothesis:

- H₂: Women and politics content will be concentrated in chapters related to theory and ideologies.

Data & Methods

Following Cassese and Bos (2013) and Cassese et al. (2014), I conducted a quantitative content analysis of ten Introduction to Political Science textbooks; the texts are listed in Table 1.³ Like Cassese et al. (2014) I used the eBook version on VitalSource. Using the eBook does limit the available texts to only those published by large publishers, but it has the advantage of allowing for a more detailed search of the texts. I queried each book for the following keywords:

³ I used only texts available on VitalSource and excluded country-specific editions of texts (e.g. the “Canada edition”). These ten books are not a sample; they are the latest editions of the introductory texts that were available on VitalSource at the time of this writing.

- Women/women
- Feminism/feminist
- Gender
- Female/females
- Girl/girls

After a personal reading of the text, I then classified each use of the search terms as either substantive or non-substantive. Non-substantive references include terms such as: men and/or women, men or women, women and minorities, male and/or female, etc., without any analytic import.⁴ I also recorded the subject of the chapter and the page number on which each mention was found.⁵ The resulting dataset is comprised of 1668 total and 1365 substantive mentions of the search terms on 529 separate pages.

[Table 1, about here]

Quantitative Results and Analysis

As hypothesized (H_1), the ten textbooks included in this study contain relatively little content related to women and politics. First, following Olivo (2012), I examined the percentage of pages on which I found references to women. As shown in Table 2, the percentage ranges from 5.3% to 19.8% per text, with an average of 10.8%. Although not strictly comparable, this falls between the percentages found by Olivo (2012, p. 135) and Cassese et al. (2014, p. 260) at 9.73% and 14.8%, respectively. This indicates that just as in American Government texts, there is a dearth of mentions of women in Introduction to Political Science textbooks.

[Table 2, about here]

⁴ See Cassese et al. (2014, Appendix Table A2) for full explanation of non-substantive applications; they also query for lady/ladies, congresswoman/congresswomen, and sex/sexual. As these are more specific to American government and concerns in American politics, I chose not to include them in this study.

⁵ Capturing the page number allows me to track the number of distinct pages on which references to gender can be found.

Second, following Cassese et al. (2014), I examined the prevalence of mentions of the search terms in each text. For simplicity's sake, I use the plural or the noun (e.g. women or feminism) throughout the discussion. As shown in Table 3, the percentage of substantive mentions of all search terms ranges from about 68% (gender) to 93% (females) and almost 82% of the total mentions of the search terms are substantive. This indicates that although few texts have robust treatments of gender, the relatively few mentions are predominantly substantive. Like Cassese et al. (2014), I find that the most commonly used term is women, with a mean of about 100.5 total uses and 81 substantive uses per text. The least-used term is 'girls,' with a mean of just 4.5 total uses per text, of which only 3.8 are substantive. While Cassese et al. (2014) find that 'feminism' is among the least used of the search terms in American government texts, I find that in introductory political science texts feminism is the second-most used of the search terms. Table 3 shows a mean of 25.4 uses of feminism per text, of which nearly 91% are substantive. This provides some evidence that references to women may be concentrated in sections that discuss feminism (H₂).

[Table 3, about here]

Additional evidence for H₂ is presented in Table 4, demonstrating that that more than half of all mentions of the search terms are found on just 3.7% of the total number of pages examined in this study. This indicates an extraordinary level of concentration of the terms on just a handful of pages. If gender were truly mainstreamed in these texts, the substantive references would be more plentiful and spread across more locations in each text. Most important with regard to H₂, about 33% of all mentions and 36% of substantive mentions of the

search terms can be found in chapters related to theory and ideologies. Moreover, the prevalence of the search terms in chapters on theory or ideology is common to all ten texts in the study. This provides very strong evidence that segments on feminism drive a considerable amount of the gendered content in Introduction to Political Science texts.

Unexpectedly, there are also relatively large concentrations of gendered terminology in chapters dealing with political participation—this includes chapters related to parties, groups, movements, and/or elections; these content areas account for nearly 22% of the total mentions of the search terms and nearly 23% of the substantive mentions. In total, Table 4 demonstrates that just two categories account for about 54% of all mentions of the search terms and almost 59% of all substantive mentions. Unlike feminism, however, the political participation trend is common to just six of the ten texts.

[Table 4, about here]

Also of interest is that there are four additional categories in which relatively large concentrations of the search terms may be found. Those are shown in Table 5, below. What makes these interesting is that each of these results is driven by just two or three of the textbooks included in the study. For example, the apparent concentration of gendered content in chapters related to globalization, LDCs, and international relations (IR) is driven by two books: Magstadt and Etheridge and Handelman. Together, they account for 85% of total mentions related to globalization/LDCs/IR and 87% of the substantive mentions. Given that just a few books drive these results, they cannot be interpreted as being representative of a trend in introductory political science textbooks.

[Table 5, about here]

As noted above, Cassese et al. (2014) find that female-authored American government textbooks tend to have more substantive gender-related content than similar texts by male authors. Because only one of these texts was written by a woman (Grigsby), I was unable to test whether or not female authors were more likely to include gender-related content in introduction to political science textbooks. It is worth noting that the Grigsby text contains the highest percentage of substantive mentions (nearly 90%) of all texts sampled. As shown in Table 6, when the Grigsby text is dropped from the analysis several categories lose a considerable number of mentions. Substantive mentions of the term ‘women’ fall by more than 27%. More importantly, substantive mentions of feminism fall by more than 45%. Overall, when the Grigsby text is removed from the analysis, roughly one-quarter of both the total and substantive mentions of all search terms are dropped from the dataset. This does provide limited evidence to support Cassese et al.’s (2014) finding that female authors tend to include more women and politics content than do their male colleagues.⁶

[Table 6, about here]

Qualitative Analysis

Overall, the high percentage of substantive mentions of our search terms (82%) indicates that when the authors do introduce gender they *are* generally introducing students to gender as an analytic construct. However, the treatments of the search terms vary wildly

⁶ While Grigsby does do an excellent treatment of feminism, the text is lacking in terms of descriptive versus substantive representations, as well as women’s movements and suffrage.

amongst the texts. In this section, I illustrate this variation by examining the two largest concentrations of substantive mentions of the search terms.

Theory & Ideology: Feminism

As noted above, some political scientists have embraced feminist theory and the concept of gender as an analytic construct, while others remain skeptical or unengaged with the feminist literature. This is quite evident in the very different treatments of feminism in the textbooks included in this study. Grigsby, for example, has included a thorough and nuanced portrait of the feminist spectrum. She devotes multiple pages to the concept of feminism, explores the differences between liberal and radical feminism, and even discusses differences *within* each strand of feminist thought. In contrast, Magstadt's treatment of the subject is so simplistic that he has just one substantive mention of feminism in the entirety of the textbook. Grigsby's treatment of feminism is notable not just because her discussion of the feminist spectrum is much more robust than that of her male colleagues, but because many of her male colleagues have done remarkably poor treatments of feminism.

Like Magstadt, neither nor Van Belle nor Reimer, et al discuss feminism in a meaningful way. For example, Van Belle's treatment of feminism is so lacking that the word "feminism" does not actually appear in the text ('feminist' does) and he makes only superficial reference to the fact that there are different types of feminists. Roskin, et al treat feminism as a single and one-dimensional ideology and devote less than a full page of text to it, but even that is a more complex treatment than provided by Dooley and Patten's feminism sidebar. It must be noted that Heywood includes a more multi-dimensional discussion of feminism than any of the other

male authors and that Etheridge and Handelman do provide more nuance than most. Etheridge and Handelman's treatment of feminism is somewhat undermined, given that they also have a passage on gender relations in Cuba (p. 70) that includes this sentence:

"The introduction of feminist concerns into a macho political culture improved sexual equality (husbands, for example, were pressured to do housework, and women were encouraged to enter the labor force) but likely also contributed to a sharp rise in the country's divorce rate."

This portrait of feminism as a divisive force in Cuban society serves to reinforce the negative stereotype that feminism somehow diminishes men and breaks up families.

Whether it is the simplistic treatments of feminism provided by most of these texts or the flawed portrayal referenced above, feminism is—for the most part—portrayed as an alternative to more mainstream theories of political science. Instead, feminism should be portrayed as providing a way to look at politics through a gendered lense (Sjoberg, 2011).

Political Participation

Whereas information on the women's movement and women's rights is typically concentrated in the civil rights chapters of American government texts, in six of the ten texts⁷ in this study information on women's movements/rights is most often spread among chapters related to political participation—including identity groups, movements, parties, and elections. In terms of identity groups and movements, the texts focus on the suffrage movement, women's rights, and women's /feminist movements. While the women's suffrage movement is typically treated as a separate case, most of the texts discuss women's rights in the context of broader pushes for civil rights and women's movements in relation to other social movements.

⁷ Etheridge and Handelman, Heywood, Parsons, Reimer, et al, Roskin, et al, and Shively.

This is consistent with the treatment of women's movements/women's rights in American government textbooks.

With reference to parties and elections, most of these texts address the gender gap in policy preferences, voting, and representation. They typically include the reversal in ideological preference (from right-leaning to left-leaning) among Western women, as well as the fact that women now tend to vote in larger numbers than their male counterparts. In terms of representation, most authors mention that women are underrepresented in elected office but offer very little in the way of explanation for this; only two include meaningful discussion of gender quotas. The first is Parsons, who includes a useful discussion of descriptive representation and quotas in the larger context of electoral systems. The second is Etheridge and Handelman, who not only present data regarding the numbers of female elected officials but also focus considerable attention on the role of parties in promoting (or discouraging) women's representation. This section also includes a robust discussion of both party-level quotas and state-level quotas. While it would be ideal for the aforementioned texts to include a few paragraphs on the evidence that descriptive representation of women results in substantive representation of women,⁸ both have made a good effort at fair depictions of the concept of descriptive representation and the use of quotas to improve women's representation in legislative bodies.

The Heywood text's treatment of descriptive representation stands in stark contrast to both the Etheridge & Handelman *and* Parsons treatments. This is surprising, given Heywood's better-than-average treatment of feminism. In the text, Heywood (p. 201-202) claims (a) that

⁸ i.e. when there are more women in office, they produce policies that are more favorable to women

the concept of descriptive representation of underrepresented groups is the product of socialist/feminist/radical thought and (b) that advocates of descriptive representation believe “that only a woman can represent women, only a black person can represent other black people, only a member of the working class can represent the working classes and so on.” Given the prevalence of negative stereotypes about socialists, feminists, and radicals, Heywood is clearly using those terms to frame descriptive representation as an illegitimate method of combatting the systematic exclusion of women and minorities from politics. This frame echoes Wallace and Allen’s (2016, p. 646) finding that textbooks send “implicit messages...regarding legitimate policy responses to eliminate historical, institutional, and structural barriers affecting underrepresented or marginalized groups.”

Not only is his framing of the concept problematic, but Heywood’s explanation of descriptive representation is also wildly inaccurate to the point of falsehood—as is his claim (p. 201) that if societies were to attempt to make legislatures more reflective of the society, “the electorate might have to be classified on the basis of class, gender, race and so on, and only be allowed to vote for candidates from their own group.” In this discussion, Heywood signals to students that if they belong to the dominant group (white males) there is no need to try to improve the representation of marginalized people. Moreover, Heywood’s message is that to try to build a democracy that is reflective of its constituents is anti-democratic at best and dangerous to democratic principles at worst.⁹

⁹ Wallace and Allen (2016) find that similar messages are sent in American government texts in regard to affirmative action policy.

Heywood's main objections boil down to what Phillips (1995, p. 45) once called the "slippery slope" argument. Opponents of descriptive representation ask: if we act to make government more representative of its citizens, how do we decide which groups are deserving of more representation and what is the cut-off? Mansbridge (2005) scales the slippery slope in three easy steps:

1. The concept of adversarial democracy demands that when there are conflicting interests in a democratic society, those who hold the competing interests should be represented in proportion to their numbers (Mansbridge, 1980)
2. The concept of deliberative democracy demands that when diversity of perspectives may enhance the debate, those diverse perspectives must be represented (Mansbridge, 1999).
Taken together, these concepts do *not* indicate that women's interests *must* be represented by women but, as Mansbridge (2005, p. 624) says:
3. *"Members of a group need such descriptive representation only when their interests or perspectives cannot adequately be represented by individuals who are not themselves members of the group."*

This does not mean that there are no male legislators who advocate for women; indeed there are a number of male legislators who work hard to represent the interests of their female constituents. However, all available evidence shows quite clearly that female officeholders are *more* vocal and *more* responsive about women's issues than are their male colleagues. Female legislators speak more on women's issues (Tremblay, 1998) and have more goals related to policies of interest to women (Wängnerud, 2000). Also, research shows that higher numbers of female cabinet ministers (Atchison, 2015) and higher numbers of female members of parliament (Kittilson, 2008) result in policies that are more beneficial to women. In short, while men *are* able to represent women's interests, women represent their own interests more vigorously and more thoroughly. As to Heywood's argument that promoting descriptive representation is dangerous to democracy: the demand for descriptive representation stems

from society's systemic exclusion of the voices of women and minorities. What is more dangerous to democracy than exclusion?

Conclusion

No matter how well (or poorly) the authors incorporate gender as an analytic construct the fact remains that—in these texts—the substantive information about women is largely relegated to chapters related to theory and ideologies, as well as parties, groups, movements, and elections. This serves to marginalize information about women and politics and demonstrates to students that gender and politics are a separate or unique issue that has no place in the mainstream. Not only do these findings echo those found in studies of American government texts, but they reinforce many of the concerns brought up in those studies. One of the key concerns is that the relative absence of women in political science textbooks reinforces stereotypes. These include (a) the idea that women are less politically involved and/or less politically effective than men (Cassese et al., 2014; Olivo, 2012) and (b) the perception that women's leadership abilities are lacking in comparison to men's (Cassese et al., 2014). A second concern that this study reinforces is that the exclusion of women's political behavior from political science texts renders women's contributions almost invisible, making it hard for young women to see themselves as having political agency.

Because feminism is not widely discussed in American government texts, this study also brings a new concern—authors' treatments of feminism—to the growing literature on the absence of gender-related content in political science texts. Students whose exposure to political science comes from one of the texts in this study are by and large being taught that

feminism is an alternative to mainstream political theories. This reinforces the stereotype that feminism cannot peacefully co-exist with more traditional modes of thinking, yet there are many ways to apply feminism alongside other theories. In International Relations, for example, there are scholars who identify themselves as feminists *and* liberals, feminists *and* realists, feminists *and* constructivists, and so forth (Sjoberg, 2011). Segregation means that students do not see how feminism applies in everyday life and reinforces the perception that feminists are somehow at odds with society.¹⁰

At least, however, it seems that students in introductory political science classes are being exposed to the concept of feminism. As noted earlier, the extant literature indicates that *American* government students seem to be receiving little-to-no information about feminism in their foundational courses. One must wonder, then: what do the missing discussions of feminism imply about American government textbooks? More importantly, what does this imply about what American government students are being taught? As a comparativist, I am not an expert on American government and/or what is being taught in American government classes; however, the exclusion of feminism from the textbooks indicates that students are not being pushed to think critically about the gendered ways in which American society operates. It also indicates that students are likely being taught only “mainstream” ideologies, but not the ideologies that challenge our notions of who should have power and how people should be represented. Given the current climate in American politics, including the misogynistic backlash against a woman who is a conventional presidential candidate in all ways except one (gender),

¹⁰ For more information on college students’ opinions/perceptions of feminism, see Houvouras and Scott Carter (2008)

the implication that American students are not being exposed to the basic premises of feminism is troubling.

Finally, although it is an extreme example, the Heywood text provides an excellent illustration of the potential power that a text can have on the way students think about political issues. As Wallace and Allen (2016) clearly demonstrate, how an author frames the subject is pertinent to how students will likely understand and internalize the subject. In the Heywood text, the author frames descriptive representation as a problematic practice in a democratic society. Heywood also frames his version of descriptive representation as *fait accompli*, thus leaving the students with the impression that his version of the concept is standard in the discipline. Heywood, however, provides no evidence to support his contention that having a government that better reflects the make-up of the population is unnecessary and that promoting descriptive representation is dangerous to democracy. Yet there *is* strong evidence that descriptive representation is necessary and that it strengthens democracy by ensuring that the interests of marginalized groups are vigorously represented. By choosing to depict the concept of descriptive representation inaccurately, Heywood has purposely skewed the way students understand the representation of marginalized groups in democratic societies.

The extant research on the absence of gendered content in political science texts tends to include information on historically underrepresented minorities and the intersections of race/class/gender. This is possible because the basic class structure and racial make-up of American society is common to all introductory American government texts. While it would be ideal to also test for the inclusion of material on race and class in this study, most introductory

political science texts take a somewhat comparative approach and there is tremendous variation in texts' depictions of race and class. Despite this limitation, this article broadens the scope of the research on gender mainstreaming in political science textbooks and provides additional evidence that mainstreaming is not occurring in a meaningful way. In order to better understand the level of mainstreaming throughout the discipline, it is important that future research expand to include (at a minimum) introductory comparative government and international relations textbooks. Future research should also take a cue from (Cassese et al., 2015) and examine the inclusion of gender in higher-level textbooks. Additionally, this article provides limited evidence to support Wallace and Allen's (2016) finding that the framing of policies that tackle systematic exclusion can either challenge or support unsubstantiated myths about merit, gender, race, and political representation. This suggests that comparing the framing of minority representation across sub-fields could provide insight into whether the discipline, through its textbooks, is perpetuating or dispelling such myths.

Finally, is it enough to identify the gender lacuna in political science textbooks without suggesting how to fix the gap? As we proceed with our explorations of gender in political science textbooks, it is important to think about what a good gender-mainstreamed textbook would look like. How do we best present the role of women in political life without presenting it as somehow separate from the role of men? Do we need to rethink the standard topics found in most textbooks, or should the standard topics be expanded to ensure that gender is included not just as a descriptive, but as an analytic construct? How would a mainstreamed textbook address intersectionality and demonstrate the compounding effects of race and class on political participation and political outcomes? These questions, and dozens related to them,

boil down to one main question: how do we create textbooks that accurately and fairly depict the diversity of social forces at play in modern political systems?

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Tables & Figures

Table 1: Textbooks Sampled

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1. Dooley, K., & Patten, J. (2012). *Why Politics Matters: An Introduction to Political Science* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT Cengage Learning.
 2. Ethridge, M., & Handelman, H. (2013). *Politics in a changing world* (6th ed.). Stamford, CT Cengage Learning.
 3. Grigsby, E. (2015). *Analyzing Politics* (6th ed.). Stamford, CT Cengage Learning.*
 4. Heywood, A. (2013). *Politics* (4th ed.). New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
 5. Magstadt, T. (2014). *Understanding politics: Ideas, institutions, and issues* (11th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.
 6. Parsons, C. (2017). *Introduction to Political Science: How to Think for Yourself about Politics*. United States: Pearson Education, Inc.
 7. Riemer, N., Simon, D. W., & Romance, J. (2014). (4th ed.). London: Sage/CQ Press.
 8. Roskin, M. G., Cord, R. L., Medeiros, J. A., & Jones, W. S. (2012). *Political Science: An Introduction* (12th ed.). London: Longman.
 9. Shively, W. P. (2011). *Power & choice: An introduction to political science* (12th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill
 10. Van Belle, D. A. (2015). *A novel approach to politics: introducing political science through books, movies, and popular culture* (4th ed.). London: Sage/CQ Press.
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*Note: the Grigsby text is the only female-authored text in the group.

Table 2: Page Count and Percentage, Total References to Women

Text, by Author	# of pages that reference women	# of pages in book	% of pages that reference women
Dooley & Patten	45	416	10.8%
Ethridge& Handelman	77	576	13.4%
Grigsby	76	384	19.8%
Heywood	68	520	13.1%
Magstadt	66	608	10.9%
Parsons	27	512	5.3%
Reimer et al	57	544	10.5%
Roskin et al	33	400	8.3%
Shively	39	428	9.1%
VanBelle	41	508	8.1%
Total	529	4896	10.8%

Table 3: Number of Mentions by Search Term

Term	Total Mentions	Mean # Mentions	Range Mentions	Total Substantive Mentions	Mean # Substantive Mentions	Range Substantive Mentions	% Mentions that are Substantive
Woman/en	1005	100.5 (82.5)	30-253	812	81.2 (76.6)	15-222	80.8%
Feminism/ist	254	25.4 (33.4)	2-107	230	23 (32.6)	0-104	90.6%
Gender	217	21.7 (18.9)	8-63	148	14.8 (15.5)	1-52	68.2%
Female/s	147	14.7 (15.2)	3-51	137	13.7 (14.6)	3-48	93.2%
Girl/s	45	4.5 (4.3)	0-11	38	3.8 (4.2)	0-11	84.4%
All terms	1668	166.8 (137.8)	47-410	1365	136.5 (129.6)	25-364	81.8%

Note: Mentions do not include notes chapters, glossaries, or appendices.

Total number of textbooks: 10 | Standard deviations in parentheses.

Table 4: Primary Categories of Search Term Concentration

	# of Mentions	% Total Mentions	# Substantive Mentions	% Total Substantive	# Pages Referenced	% Total Pages
Theory/Ideology	551	32.60%	494	35.98%	93	1.90%
Political Participation	369	21.83%	310	22.58%	89	1.84%
Total	920	54.44%	804	58.56%	182	3.74%

Total observations: 1668

Total substantive observations: 1365

Total number of pages, all 10 texts combined: 4896

Note: Mentions do not include notes chapters, glossaries, or appendices.

Table 5: Other Categories of Search Term Concentration

Chapter Subject	# of Mentions	% Total Mentions	# Substantive Mentions	% Total Substantive	# Pages Referenced	% Total Pages
IR/Globalization/LDCs	149	8.82%	134	9.76%	47	0.96%
Introduction	99	5.86%	82	5.97%	27	0.55%
Political Culture	77	4.56%	65	4.73%	27	0.63%
Legislatures	41	2.43%	34	2.48%	12	0.31%
All Other Categories	382	22.60%	245	17.84%	232	4.94%
Total	748	44.26%	560	40.79%	345	7.39%

Total observations: 1668

Total substantive observations: 1365

Total number of pages, all 10 texts combined: 4896

Note: Mentions do not include notes chapters, glossaries, or appendices.

Table 6: Mentions with and without the female-authored textbook

Search Term	Total Mentions, all texts	Total Mentions, w/o Grigsby	Difference (% lost)	Total Substantive, All Texts	Total Substantive, w/o Grigsby	Difference (% Lost)
Woman/en	1005	752	253 (25.2%)	812	591	221 (27.2%)
Feminism/ist	254	147	107 (42.1%)	230	126	104 (45.2%)
Gender	217	201	16 (7.4%)	148	138	10 (6.8%)
Female/s	147	129	18 (12.2)	137	120	17 (12.4%)
Girl/s	45	34	11 (24.4%)	38	27	11 (29%)
All terms	1668	1263	405 (24.3)	1365	1002	363 (26.6)

Note: Mentions do not include notes chapters, glossaries, or appendices.

Total number of textbooks: 10 | Standard deviations in parentheses.