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What is This?

From state feminism to market feminism?

Johanna Kantola and Judith Squires

Abstract

This article argues that the concept of 'state feminism' no longer adequately captures the complexity of emerging feminist engagements with new forms of governance. It suggests that 'market feminism' offers a new conceptual framework from which feminist engagements with the state can be analysed and evaluated, and the changes within state feminism can be understood. The article documents the growing feminist embrace of the logic of the market, which manifests itself in changed practices and priorities. The article gives examples of 'market feminism' and argues that the move from state feminism to market feminism impacts on both the political practices and policy priorities of women's policy agencies.

Keywords

state feminism, market feminism, neoliberalism, governance, women's policy agencies

The concept of 'state feminism' is widely used to refer to the alliances between women's policy agencies and women's movement activists, and their effectiveness in getting state responses to the movement's demands. Since the UN recommendation in 1975 that these agencies should be established in nation states they have spread across the world and become key actors in gender policy. The role, success and characteristics of these agencies have become the focus for intensive feminist research.[1] Recent research has identified a tendency towards 'changing state feminism', which reflects on changes within both state practices (new forms of governance, New Public Management, welfare state retrenchment, globalization) and feminism (diversity policies and gender mainstreaming) (Kantola and Outshoorn, 2007). In this article we focus on one aspect of these changes: the impact of neoliberalism on both the context in which state feminism is situated (the state) and the form that it takes (feminism).

We argue that the concept 'state feminism' no longer adequately captures the complexity of the emerging feminist engagements with new forms of governance. This conviction was crystallized by a recent paper exploring the relation between feminist NGOs and women's policy agency *El Servicio Nacional de la Mujer* (SERNAM) in Chile, which highlighted the fact that this agency

Corresponding author:
Johanna Kantola, University of Helsinki, P.O. Box 54, Helsinki 00014, Finland.
Email: johanna.kantola@helsinki.fi

seeks private funding for their activities (Stoffel, 2007).[2] These femocrats thus no longer turn to the state – as implied by 'state feminism' – but rather to the market to pursue gender equality. Similarly, a recent study into the funding of women's organizations worldwide found that there has been a general shift in funding to private foundations (AWID, 2007). This article seeks to explore these trends, noting that governments have opted for differing degrees of neoliberal market reform with different consequences for women's policy agencies. Nonetheless, we suggest that 'state feminists', as government bureaucrats, are often embedded in these reforms, frequently embracing their logic and structurally unlikely to take a critical stance towards them. The academic 'state feminism' literature, by contrast, needs to be more circumspect.

We suggest that we are witnessing a move from state feminism to 'market feminism'. We coin the term 'market feminism' as distinct from 'state feminism' to analyse the ways in which feminist engagements with public policy agendas are increasingly mediated via private sector organizations according to the logic of the market. This results in gender equality machineries in nation states becoming ever more embedded in neoliberal market reform.

The article gives examples of what we are labelling 'market feminism' and argues that this move from state feminism to market feminism impacts on both the political *practices* and policy *priorities* of the women's policy agencies. These developments not only change the relationship between the agencies and the women's movement, but also give primacy to those feminist claims that are complicit with a market agenda.

These changes can also be conceptualized in terms of the representative process, which is two-fold within both state feminism and market feminism, comprising both the substantive representation of women and the constitutive representation of gender (see Squires, 2008). The substantive representation of women captures one facet of the representative process, whereby representatives (usually assumed to be elected parliamentarians) aim to speak on behalf of female constituents by describing their preferences and consciously held interests (Celis et al., 2008). The constitutive representation of gender captures another significant facet of the representative process, whereby representatives (including unelected femocrats and gender experts) articulate these interests in ways that inevitably privilege particular conceptions of gender relations (Squires, 2008). We work with the assumption that both state feminism and market feminism are about substantive representation of women and constitutive representation of gender, which means, for example, that state feminist practices (as a form of representation) have been both enabling and constraining, constituting gender relations in particular ways. We suggest that market feminist practices make different sorts of representative claims, constituting gender relations in new ways – ways which erode the space for the types of representative claims-making pursued by an earlier generation of state feminists, but which also facilitate new forms of claim-making.

The article will proceed as follows. First, we define 'state feminism' and outline some important research findings. Second, we focus on challenges to traditional notions of state feminism that relate to new forms of governance and new forms of feminist activism. We suggest that both render the notion 'state feminism' problematic and point to the emergence of variants of market feminism. Third, we define market feminism and explore its relationship to state feminism, suggesting that market feminism is distinct from state feminism. The final part of the article draws upon examples from three regions, namely Australia and New Zealand, Chile, and the EU, to give illustrative examples of the emergence of market feminism.

State feminism

'State feminism' is a term that has emerged to describe 'women's policy agencies', 'national machineries for the advancement of women' or 'gender equality machinery' within state

bureaucracies that deal with women's policy issues or gender equality. It refers to any state-based agency, at any level (sub-national, national, regional, international), in any branch (elected, administrative or judicial), that seeks to promote gender equality (often described in this context as the 'advancement of women'). At the nominal level it can be defined as 'the actions by women's policy agencies to include women's movement demands and actors into the state to produce feminist outcomes in either policy processes or societal impact or both' (Mazur and McBride, 2008: 254). A key characteristic of state feminism has thus been the usage of state-based policy-making mechanisms and targeting the state in promoting gender equality. 'State feminism' thereby signifies overcoming the traditional suspicious attitudes that many feminists have felt towards the patriarchal state (Kantola, 2006). However, the extent to which women's policy agencies are 'state *feminist*' is an empirical question in this research (Lovenduski, 2008: 176). Over the past three decades 'state feminism' has become a formal, operationalized concept that is widely used in cross-national analyses (Mazur and McBride, 2007: 501).

The emergence of state feminism as a global phenomenon has generated a substantial literature that evaluates the impact of state feminism on the policy-making process in relation both to western post-industrial democracies and to developing countries. The Research Network on Gender, Politics and the State (RNGS), has led the agenda on state feminism in western post-industrial democracies.[3]

Different RNGS research projects have tried to determine the extent to which, and the circumstances in which, different kinds of women's policy agencies provide effective linkages for women's movements to achieve substantive and procedural responses from the state.[4] Policy success for women's policy agencies is a dual response from the state, where the state both accepts individual women, groups or constituencies representing gender interests into the process, and changes policy to coincide with feminist goals.

Reflecting on the findings of all these projects (132 policy debates in five key issues in 17 different countries), McBride and Mazur argue that many of the agencies involved in these debates were important in realizing women's movements' demands in policy-making and in gaining access for some women to decision-making arenas. However, trying to identify the factors that led to success was complex, and the authors conclude that successful policy agencies can occur in a variety of contexts and with combinations of conditions in post-industrial democracies (McBride and Mazur, 2010).

The project considered three sets of factors that related both to 'state' and 'feminism': features of the women's movement, of the wider policy environment, and of the women's policy agencies themselves. In relation to the first of these, they suggest that success is most likely where the women's movement is cohesive in relation to their demands (movement unity) and considers the issue as a high priority (issue priority). In relation to the second, they suggest that success is most likely where there is a left-wing government and a good 'fit' between the approach of the mainstream policy actors of the given policy area and the women's movement's actors. However, this correlation did not apply in all cases, and with certain policy issues 'there is virtually no difference in the policy environment characteristics between the cases of successful alliances compared with the failed alliances' (Mazur, 2005: 11).

In relation to the third, they found it much harder to determine which features of the women's policy agencies were most likely to lead to success. The range of possible factors considered included scope, type, proximity, administrative capacity, leadership and policy mandate, but no clear agency characteristics were found across all policy issues (Mazur, 2005: 10). For instance, in relation to abortion, successful agencies tended to have separate budgets and staff and be led by feminists (Banaszak, 2003; McBride Stetson, 2001); in relation to job training they found no single profile of women's policy agency for either successful or failed alliances (Mazur, 2001); in relation

to political representation, successful agencies tended to be cross-sectional, close to party leaders, led by feminists and with small or no separate budgets (Lovenduski et al., 2005); similarly, in relation to the 'hot issue', resources did not appear to be significant, but closeness of the agencies to power and feminist leadership was (Haussman and Sauer, 2007). Cumulatively, these studies suggest that the success of women's policy agencies will depend more on external factors, namely the characteristics of the women's movement and the policy environment, than on internal factors, namely the features of the women's policy agency itself.

The women's policy agencies that operate within the logic of state feminism are, within this literature, assumed to be the privileged speakers for women's interests, engaging in the substantive representation of women (see Squires, 2008). However, it is also clear that women's policy agencies have privileged particular interests (Hobson 2003), benefited small female elites (Franceschet, 2003) and focused on those issues that are compatible with the dominant state policies (Matear, 1997; Waylen, 2000). Indeed Zippel notes that these agencies have now shut feminists out of the implementation process (Zippel, 2006). While the state feminist literature has generally focused on the achievements of women's policy agencies, many autonomous women's organizations have expressed concern that the institutionalized policy community has marginalized rather than represented their demands. Furthermore, states have embraced women's movements and women's policy agencies' discourses and policy agendas and adapted them to their own, often neoliberal, priorities (Banaszak, 2003; Elman, 2003; Stratigaki, 2004). This indicates that movements and policy agencies have been embedded not just in the state practices but also converged with the corporate world and business interests, a trend often promoted by the neoliberal states (Elman, 2003: 104). Theoretically, women's policy agencies have then not just 'represented women' but also *constituted* gender identities via their representational practices, generating both productive and disciplinary narratives of gender relations. Changes in 'feminism' and 'the state' therefore appear to threaten the state feminist successes for some, while potentially opening up new avenues of representation for others.

Challenges to state feminism

The context in which state feminism emerged and operated during the last couple of decades of the twentieth century has been subject to extensive change, with the form and operation of state feminist practices subject to equally profound transformations. Significant transformations have occurred in relation to both the state and feminism, marked by the emergence of new forms of governance and new forms of feminist activism (Kantola and Outshoorn, 2007; Squires, 2007). Key developments here are the emergence of a transnational network of gender experts adept at deploying discourses of economic efficiency, coupled with the 'offloading' of state powers and policy responsibilities to civil society actors. Both can facilitate and contribute to moves towards more market-based forms of state feminism.

New forms of governance

The inter-relation between the state and the market, and the ways in which markets have been shaped by legal frameworks and institutional forces, have been reconfigured by the emergence of neoliberal discourses. There is no 'pure' form of neoliberalism; a diverse range of practices and philosophies variously comprise this complex and often contradictory phenomenon (see Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Larner, 2000; Mitchell, 2001; Peck and Tickell, 2002). While advocates of neoliberalism have influentially claimed that 'open, competitive, and unregulated markets, liberated

from all forms of state interference, represent the optimal mechanism for economic development' (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 2), in practice, the implementation of neoliberal policies has entailed active forms of state intervention to impose market rule upon diverse aspects of social life, creating complex and often contradictory patterns of governance. Commentators have suggested that neoliberal policies commonly entail two inter-related processes: 'roll-back neoliberalism' and 'roll-out neoliberalism' (Peck and Tickell, 2002). Here 'roll-back neoliberalism' refers to 'the active destruction or discreditation of Keynesian-welfarist and social-collectivist institutions (broadly defined)' (Peck and Tickell, 2002: 37). 'Roll-out neoliberalism', by contrast, refers to 'the purposeful construction and consolidation of neoliberalized state forms, modes of governance, and regulatory relations', including the creation of socially interventionist policies and the sharing or delegating of authority to non-governmental agents (Peck and Tickell, 2002: 37).

In this context, feminist research highlights that the state has 'reshaped, relocated, and rearticulated its formal powers and policy responsibilities' throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Banaszak et al., 2003: 3), with states now situated in a multilevel governance framework. State authority has been 'uploaded' to supranational organizations and 'downloaded' to substate, provincial or regional governments. Meanwhile, a weakening of the power of elected state spheres and a growing reliance on other and partly non-elected state bodies marks a form of 'lateral loading', and the delegation of state powers and responsibility to actors in civil society marks the move towards 'offloading' (Banaszak et al., 2003: 4–7). While uploading and downloading present women's movements with a more fragmented and diverse series of state institutions, lateral loading and offloading present a depoliticized and remote set of state policy-making agencies. Where the former potentially increases access and improves the opportunities for women to enter policy-making arenas, the latter potentially works against the inclusion of women's interests and gender equality issues in public policy discussion, formulation and implementation.

We have argued that state feminism traditionally focuses on the dynamic between gender equality advocates and the state, framed by an assumption of a modernist bureaucratic state and a cohesive national women's movement. In the context of governing styles in which boundaries between and within public and private sectors have become blurred, entailing contracting, franchising and new forms of regulation, including new public management (Pierre, 2000; Rhodes, 1996), state feminist analyses increasingly need to be refined (see also Banaszak, 2003; Elman, 2003).

There is an extensive literature which documents changing state practices. Increasingly, authoritative decisions are produced, not 'by a single hierarchical structure, such as a democratically elected legislative assembly and government, but instead arise from the interaction of a plethora of public and private, collective and individual actors' (Christiansen et al., 2003: 6). Good governance now requires that the state 'operates in a network with private interests and groups as a partner' (Merrien, 1998: 58), steering rather than managing in a 'post-bureaucratic' manner (Barzelay, 1992: 199). In addition, market mechanisms have become a kind of 'test' or regulatory ideal of good or efficient government (Foucault, 1997: 76; Hindess, 1997), with technologies, such as accountability, audit and budget discipline, being deployed to reshape the priorities and self-understandings of those who are targeted by them (Larner, 2000: 13; Rose and Miller, 1992; Teghtsoonian, 2004: 278). These technologies have required managers and staff 'to translate their activities into financial terms, to seek to maximize productivity for a given income, to cut out waste, to restructure activities that (are) not cost-effective, to choose between priorities in terms of their relative costs and benefits, to become more or less like the financial manager of their own professional activities' (Rose, 1999: 152). This turns public servants into 'calculating selves', who accord priority to the calculative technologies of accounting, which seem to accord 'an objectivity, neutrality, and legitimacy to decisions that otherwise appear to be subjective'

(Miller, 1994: 227–253; see also Miller, 2001). For instance, under New Public Management (NPM), public servants are instructed to act as private sector managers with devolved responsibility in which government focuses on policy-setting and management rather than the direct production and delivery of services. This management model, which is argued to produce a more flexible and less regulated workplace, entails high levels of self-management and self-surveillance (Blackmore and Sachs, 2001). The NPM style of government involves using a wide range of 'tools' like grants, loans, contracts, vouchers, to direct government provision, many of which rely on networks of non-governmental organizations to deliver government services, such that 'entrepreneurial government share a concern with competition, markets, customers and outcomes' (Rhodes, 1996). This shift towards governance and NPM, with its greater reliance on third parties in the design, implementation and evaluation of policy, creates new demands and opportunities for feminist activists. As governments have adopted the NPM reform agenda and moved from the direct delivery of services to a reliance on third sector organizations to play the role of service providers, many NGOs have been empowered both financially and organizationally. However, the service level agreements used to manage the relationship between the government and the various NGOs subject the provider organizations to strict accountability criteria, which tend to constrain their ability to meet the demands of the groups that they aimed to represent (see Davies and Thomas, 2001, for a discussion of gender and public management).

These tensions are intensified by the growing reliance on evidence-based policy-making. As knowledge and research have become key assets in the production of policy, evidence-based inputs are given greater weight. Where external actors are able to supply policy-relevant knowledge they are afforded greater authority, encouraging non-governmental organizations to frame their intervention in objective rather than interest-based terms. Notions of good governance have always stressed the importance of basing policy-making on factual evidence rather than on mere opinion (Rose, 1991), but evidence-based policy-making has become particularly important over the last decade and is now the dominant model for evaluating claims in the policy process (Marston and Watts, 2003). Research and expertise are required to ensure that policy outcomes align with policy intentions. Evidence-based policy-making is argued to facilitate greater transparency than was afforded by older models of incrementalism (Laforest and Orsini, 2005).

New forms of feminist activism

The opportunities and challenges that the changing forms of governance pose to women's movements have been explored in feminist literature. We discuss them here in some detail with the aim of later relating this discussion to state feminism. We identify two tendencies: one towards professionalization and the other to transnationalization of the women's movement.

The new emphasis on evidence-based policy-making has offered up new political opportunities that feminist NGOs have been quick to exploit. NGOs are producing knowledge that will further the goals of their organizations and sway policy-makers, abandoning contentious modes of advocacy in favour of more 'legitimate' evidence-based claims of expertise (Laforest and Orsini, 2005). In order to produce such expert knowledge and develop their research capacity, feminist organizations inevitably require increasing levels of organizational stability and funding. This tendency is symptomatic of the managerialist dynamics of neoliberal governance, focusing on the growth of consultancy services, and the demand for new expertise in fundraising and organizational management (Chasin, 2000), which makes activists increasingly accountable to funding bodies rather than political constituencies (Richardson, 2005: 528). This generates concern amongst some scholars regarding depoliticization: as Laforest and Orsini argue, 'while

this shift creates opportunities for organizations which engage in research activities, it also constrains their options by closing off political spaces to forms of representation that may be unconventional or deemed too politicised' (Laforest and Orsini, 2005: 483–484). NGOs in general are increasingly adopting professional forms of organization, adhere to social scientific standards of knowledge production and speak the language of rational empiricism. Feminist organizations are no exception here, readily becoming responsible 'evidence producing' organizations peopled by 'gender experts'.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the growth of gender mainstreaming practitioners.[5] The growing use of 'gender experts' and implementation of 'analytical tools' such as gender impact assessments fit in with the logic, providing 'evidence' about the likely gendered impacts of proposed policy initiatives in order to render the policy-making process more 'effective'. This leads Bacchi and Eveline to suggest that: 'dominant forms of mainstreaming are clearly congruent with this self-managed model of governance' (Bacchi and Eveline, 2004: 103–104). Meanwhile, Baden and Goetz argue that gender analysis, including the use of gender disaggregated statistics, which are frequently undertaken to generate a more robust analysis of the likely impact of policies and so prevent policy failure, has the function of reducing 'gender' to a product: 'the gender-disaggregation approach … tends to a static and reductionist definition of gender (as woman/man) … Bureaucratic requirements for information tend to strip away the political content of information on women's interests and reduce it to a set of needs or gaps, amenable to administrative decisions about the allocation of resources' (Baden and Goetz, 1997: 7).

Evidence-based policy-making has tended to encourage feminist NGOs and gender experts to deploy economic rather than political discourses to frame their gender analyses. The clear shift towards deploying arguments of economic efficiency as the basis for promoting gender equality considerations is justified in that efficiency considerations enable one to raise gender equality considerations in relation to any policy, irrespective of its goals, in a manner that 'should appeal to all policy makers' (Himmelweit, 2002: 50–51). Yet, as sceptics have been quick to point out, this 'can lead to co-optation into political discourse of concepts such as 'gender equality' but only once their meaning has been 'transformed' and 'corrupted' in the service of other policy priorities such as economic policies' (Shaw, 2005:17; see also Shaw, 1999). In other words, using economic arguments can seem strategically wise and worthwhile but can have the impact of redirecting and co-opting feminist goals (Stratigaki, 2004).

A positive reading of the feminist turn to 'expertise' is that the emergence of evidence-based policy-making offers social activists in NGOs new opportunities for making new knowledge claims and for having these claims accepted given that evidence-based policy-making unsettles the monopoly on policy knowledge previously claimed by the traditional public servant (Lang, 2000). Nevertheless, the nature of the knowledge claims made by 'gender experts' remains contested, and the world these claims enact is still 'provisional' and open to democratic challenge. The negative reading of feminist engagements with these new forms of governance is that, in order to participate in governance processes, activists become 'responsible' in form and voice and lose their political edge: the processes involved in securing consultancies and generating 'objective' social scientific knowledge thereby bring groups into alignment with state objectives. The point we make here is that the concept of 'state feminism' no longer adequately captures the complexity of the emerging feminist engagements with new forms of governance.

The second significant trend is towards transnationalization. Many studies have suggested that the women's movement has declined in visibility and influence (Bagguley, 2002; Ryan, 1992; Threlfall, 1996, cf. Dean, 2010) or become 'more moderate, state-involved, and accommodationist' (Banaszak et al., 2003: 2). Others also stress the shift from local or national organizational

structures to 'transnational' activism (Alvarez, 1999: 184; Mendoza, 2002: 306–307). Thus, there is a high degree of consensus that it is fragmented transnational advocacy networks (TANs), rather than cohesive national movements, that are now driving forward gender equality demands (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Transnational feminist advocates have been rather successful in putting pressure upon states around the globe to adopt gender regimes that are consonant with newly emerging international policy norms. The extensive literature on globalization frequently endorses a narrative of increasing political interconnectedness, creating policy convergence (Drezner, 2001), with debate focusing on whether such convergence should be understood to be driven by structural and material factors (Montanari, 2001), or by ideational norms (Campbell, 2004). The latter camp argues that international norms and transnational networks are now key to the policy-making process (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). These norms, which are embedded in international treaties, declarations and policy recommendations of international organizations, have increasingly included the status of women as a significant focus (Chappell, 2008; Kardam, 2005; True and Mintrom, 2001).

The wide range of international resolutions and treaties that incorporate norms regulating state behaviour with respect to women's rights issues has led some scholars to argue that a 'global gender equality regime' has emerged (Kardam, 2005). Global women's networks, working actively through the United Nations system, successfully linked gender equality concerns to human rights considerations and democratization agendas, creating international gender equality norms that have been widely diffused across the globe (Hawkins and Humes, 2002; True and Mintrom, 2001). This, rather than local social movement activism and lobbying, has generally placed the pursuit of gender equality onto state policy agendas. The spread of gender mainstreaming is one example of the global diffusion of gender policy priorities.

In sum, whilst state feminist literature has highlighted the importance of women's movement cohesion to policy success, the women's movement today appears to be increasingly fragmented and its policy priorities contested. In terms of practices, rather than gathering strength from the national level, it is in many cases invigorated and backed up by transnational feminist networks. In terms of priorities, transnational feminist practices can either challenge 'the recolonization effects of transnational capitalism' or merely add to their power, reconstituting them 'in its own field of action' (Mendoza, 2002: 297).

Towards market feminism?

Emerging out of these analyses of changing forms of governance and changing forms of feminist activism are some basic tenets of market feminism. While wary of over-generalization, and attuned to the fact that the fragmented women's movement can result in a range of organizations with differing practices and priorities (Ferree and Tripp, 2006), we aim here to map out the key features that a shift from state to market feminism might entail.

In doing so, we do not intend to suggest that the state and the market are distinct; clearly these are not separate realms – market relations are shaped by state activity and non-activity and vice versa. Indeed, markets have been reconfigured by the legal frameworks imposed by self-proclaimed neo-liberal states (Brenner and Theodore, 2002), while state institutions have been transformed by the embrace of market mechanisms in spheres of activity previously governed by alternative logics (Rai, 2008: 20). Neither do we want to suggest that earlier feminist practices have not embraced the market. Whilst political consumerism as a form of political activism is becoming intensely theorized (Micheletti, 2003), Alexandra Chasin, in her study of the gay and lesbian movement 'going to the market', critiques consumption as a form of political

participation where market mechanisms became the most effective means of individual identity formation for gay people (Chasin, 2000: 24).

We are suggesting that market feminism is most appropriately understood as a response to, rather than a subcategory of, state feminism.[6] While there will be some overlap between state and market feminism, market feminism is not simply a subset of state feminism. Rather, it is a separate concept that relates to, but is not dependent on, state feminism. If market feminism were to be understood as a subcategory of state feminism, it would need to display all the characteristics of state feminism plus some additional ones. Accordingly, one could argue that the defining feature of state feminism is the successful alliance between women's policy agencies and women's movement activists with the state, and that market feminism is also the successful alliance between agencies and the movement with the state but also entails specific strategies, funding, and discourses that rely on market ideas and practices. One could, in other words, speak of 'market state feminism'. From this perspective market feminism operates within, rather than against, state feminism. On this basis, one could note that state feminism was never far removed from the claims of market feminism as women's policy agencies and women's movements have always been entrepreneurial in making political claims (Elman, 2003: 104). A well rehearsed argument has, for example, been that gender equality 'increases productivity'. Governments, too, have been quick to adopt feminist claims for their own purposes, for example using arguments about movement autonomy in relation to violence against women as a reason not to fund refuges or for divorcing class from abortion rights in the US (Banaszak, 2003; Elman, 2003; Kantola, 2006). Understood in this way, it would provide the conceptual framework to understand the changes that have been occurring in relationships between the women's movement and women's policy agencies as a result of the spread of neoliberalism.

However, this is not the way in which market feminism is being conceptualized in this article. On balance, we suggest that to depict market feminism as a subcategory of state feminism is to inappropriately privilege state feminism over the feminism of women's movements. Significantly, the social movement literature (see Banaszak et al., 2003) teaches us that many women's movements explicitly revelled in their autonomy from the state, including its femocracies. Ironically, the price for their success was the eventual commodification of their dissent and increased reliance on markets (in the form of corporate sponsorship and government grants). This suggests that the desired autonomy of women's movement feminism proved too costly to maintain, resulting in the NGOization of various movements: it does not suggest that market feminism is simply another form of state feminism.

We argue that market feminism seeks to promote gender equality by turning to the channels and mechanisms offered by the market. The term also seeks to capture the institutionalization of the new norms in feminist practices and priorities. In coining the phrase 'market feminism' we seek to highlight the emergence of a different form of disciplinary discourse at play. For this reason, we think that one can speak of a movement from state to market feminism, where the two concepts stand in tension with one another.

Rather than viewing market feminism as an inherently problematic or a positive development, we wish to explore its forms and impact on state feminism with the help of case studies from different parts of the world. We focus, first, on the changing *practices*, foregrounding the offloading of policy agency activities to NGOs and the implications this has for the women's movement; and second, on the changing *priorities*, foregrounding the rise of the language of economic efficiency and the implications this has for the pursuit of gender equality.

Studies on state feminism tend to focus on single-country cases (Baldez, 2001; Franceschet, 2003), compare most-similar cases (Haussman and Sauer, 2007; McBride and Mazur, 2006;

McBride Stetson, 2001; Mazur, 2001; Lovenduski et al., 2005; Outshoorn, 2004; Outshoorn and Kantola, 2007; Teghtsoonian, 2005; Teghtsoonian, 2008) or compare a few most-different cases (Okeke-Ihejirika and Franceschet, 2002). Our aim is to map out broader trends in relation to a move towards market feminism in three selected cases: (i) Australia and New Zealand; (ii) Chile in Latin America; and (iii) the EU.

The selection of the cases is intended to be illustrative of the practices and priorities that a move to market feminism may entail in different contexts. In all of these cases, state feminism has been well established and entrenched as well as researched. Neoliberalism, too, has been increasingly normalized. Neoliberal policies and forms of governance have become particularly entrenched in Australia and New Zealand since the 1980s. Chile, in turn, embraced the 'New Policy Agenda' organized around neoliberal economics and liberal democratic theory (Alvarez, 1999: 182). Neo-liberalism has involved the withdrawal of the state from the provision of social services, the removal of food and transportation subsidies, and fostering export competitiveness based on low-wage (female) labour (Franceschet, 2003: 10). The EU, in turn, is important because of its dominantly market based approach to integration. The fiscal austerity measures required by the European Union (EU) have spread a neoliberal economic agenda to most member states (Outshoorn and Kantola, 2007: 268). All in all, neoliberalism is not uniform, but is adopted differently in national contexts, and it takes different manifestations (Larner, 2000).

Market feminism in different contexts

In this section, we identify examples of the practices that we have above termed market feminism. Rather than claiming to exhaustively discuss state feminism in each context, we focus on changing practices and priorities in Australia and New Zealand, Chile and the EU to the extent that they help us to understand what shifts to market feminism might entail.

Australia and New Zealand

Since the 1980s, feminist scholars, practitioners and international actors have become used to looking to Australia as a pioneer in state feminism. The Australian practices resulted in the construction of the term 'femocrat' and the UN, for example, regarded Australia as the model country of state feminism (Chappell, 2002a; 2002b; Eisenstein, 1996). The model consisted of a multifaceted combination of agencies, units and portfolios including, most importantly, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and the Office of the Status of Women. However, what interests us here is the way in which a neoliberal turn in Australian governance patterns has fundamentally challenged this picture. We suggest that the most pervasive manifestations of market feminism are to be found in the closure, downsizing and re-orienting of women's policy agencies. This has been the case in Australia, where neoliberal policies and governing practices have resulted in dismantling of women's policy agencies, a process that Marian Sawer has called 'The Fall of the Femocrat' (Sawer, 2007).[7] Units that disappeared in Australia by the 2000s included the Office of Indigenous Women, the Migrant Women's Advisor, the Gender and Curriculum Unit, the Equal Pay Unit, the Work and Family Unit, the Women's Health Unit, the Women's Sport Unit, and the Women's Policy Unit in Social Security (Sawer, 2007: 29). Part of the right wing ideology that underpinned this downsizing of the state was based on notions of efficiency and 'impartiality', namely avoiding special interests (Sawer, 2007).

Where the agencies have been retained, their form and remit has been changed in order to bring their aims in line with dominant policy agendas and ideologies. In Australia, this has effectively

been done in terms of funding. When long-term funding becomes scarce, women's policy agencies need to base their activities on short-term projects and seek outside partners to carry these out. New Public Management (NPM) has reinforced the trend of devaluing in-house gender expertise and favouring management skills and contracting out. Contracting out has also resulted in increased volatility of bureaucratic structures and a continuous change of environment where it is difficult to sustain long-term gender projects (Sawer, 2007: 27).

In Australia, operational funding was replaced by project funding, tied to compulsory competitive tendering for service provision with no scope for representational or advocacy work (Sawer, 2007: 25). Compulsory competitive tendering can, however, be qualified by ideology – only some actors can take part in the competition. The influence of the men's rights movement was such that only the government's 'preferred service providers', and no women's services, were permitted to tender for the helpline and referral service associated with the 'Australia Says No' to domestic violence campaign (Sawer, 2007: 34). Current funding practices also involve new forms of control. For instance, contracts can include clauses requiring advance notice to government of media activity (Sawer, 2007: 25). This, in turn, shapes the priorities and language of the actors: femocrats framed domestic violence in ways that fitted the conservative government's agenda by emphasizing its cost to the economy and its lawless character (Sawer, 2007: 33).

New Zealand depicts similar normalization of neoliberalism to that of Australia. However, the key women's policy agency Women's Affairs Ministry survived in the hostile environment. The case illustrates how the Women's Affairs Ministry in Aotearoa/New Zealand went to great lengths to adopt what we call 'market feminism' in an attempt to survive in the neoliberal context.

The changing practices of state feminism in New Zealand are illustrated by, for example, the way in which the Women's Affairs Ministry implemented new planning, budget and accountability processes and moved away from more feminist participatory forms of organizing. The new operational style and political discourse served to demonstrate the Women's Affairs' ability to work within the prevailing paradigm, displaying partial adjustment to the neoliberal paradigm (Teghtsoonian, 2005: 315). The key factor that contributed to the Women's Affairs survival was its mandate that did not include responsibilities for programme or service delivery and provided only limited funding to support women's movements. Thus, the government cuts to programmes and services were not targeted specifically at Women's Affairs (Teghtsoonian, 2005: 319).

In the context of market feminism, the close relationships between the women's movement and the women's policy agencies can become a target for neoliberal critique. Feminist focus on women's collective social and political disadvantage is antithetical to the neoliberal emphasis on the individual and 'ordinary citizens', whose interests are argued to lie in a minimalist state and low levels of taxation (Teghtsoonian, 2005: 315). Thus, in the case of the Ministry of Women's Affairs in New Zealand, its minimal relationship to community-based women protected it from neoliberal criticism (Teghtsoonian, 2005: 324). Instead of drawing upon feminist or participatory citizenship discourses, the Women's Affairs reframed its attempt to bring forward the views of community-based women as providing the government with 'contestable policy advice'. In other words, the linkages with women's groups were reframed as a neoliberal 'good' (Teghtsoonian, 2005: 324). In place of strong links with a cohesive women's movement, one increasingly finds weak civil society links coupled with a growing reliance on contracts with specific NGOs.

Part of this was shifting priorities and language. Similarly, the Ministry of Women's Affairs in New Zealand stated in 1988 that violence against women and women's unemployment are 'important indicators of inefficiency' in service delivery (Teghtsoonian, 2005: 315). In relation to gender mainstreaming, the Ministry of Women's Affairs argued in 1996 that 'gender analysis improves opportunities for increased sales, innovation, niche marketing and extra productivity,

and therefore makes good business sense' (quoted in Teghtsoonian, 2004: 272). Whilst this can serve to attract business sector supporters for gender mainstreaming, it can also shift attention away from the underlying structural conditions that perpetuate gender inequalities and even exacerbate them.

In sum, the cases of Australia and New Zealand illustrate that neoliberalism as a form of governance can fundamentally shape the context where state feminism operates by pushing it towards new forms of market feminism. The Australian case shows that this can be done, for example, by changes in the forms of funding, which not only make the position of the agencies more precarious but fundamentally shape their agendas and policy priorities. The case of New Zealand, in contrast, offers insights to market feminism by illustrating how the agencies can survive through the adoption of new practices and priorities that are complicit with the market agenda.

Chile

Together, these various changes in the practices of state feminists impact on the women's policy agencies' relationship to the women's movement. Most research on state feminism emphasizes the existence of a strong, mobilized women's movement and close links between the movement and the women's policy agency as crucial to successful women's policy (Baldez, 2002; Friedman, 2000; Kantola and Outshoorn, 2007; Weldon, 2002). This link is often framed as one of accountability – women's policy agencies are accountable to its imagined constituency, women's movements (Mazur, 2002; Squires, 2007). However, the emergence of market feminist practices alters this dynamic. Chile is an interesting case as the impact of the creation of the women's policy agency SERNAM, established in 1991, has been widely studied in relation to its impact on the Chilean women's movement (Baldez, 2001; Franceschet, 2003; Waylen, 2000). We briefly explore this link in relation to market feminism.

In the new context, women's policy agencies have started to subcontract to feminist NGOs to advise on or carry out government women's programmes. For example, Chile's women's policy agency SERNAM regularly turns to feminist NGOs to conduct research on indicators of gender inequality, to draft policy statements and to evaluate the effectiveness of its programmes (Alvarez, 1999: 192). Notably, these evaluations and studies rarely result in political debates with civil society constituents on gender policy. This tendency is an example of NGOs' growing contractual relationship with the state that may compromise their feminist critique. New Public Management is associated with a concern with outputs, which results in a heightened emphasis on visible impact and quantifiable project results when allocating funding. This further shifts issue priorities towards ones where visible results are easily attainable and away from consciousness raising or community building projects. A further emphasis on 'policy relevance' effectively redirects the activities and internal dynamics of many actors (Alvarez, 1999: 197).

The women's movement organizations hence become gender experts rather than citizens' groups advocating on behalf of women's rights. Feminist NGOs are summoned to supply the expertise governments need to evaluate and implement 'gender-sensitive' programmes. This, Sonia Alvarez argues, is in danger of reducing feminist NGO interventions into technical ones. Yet, changing funding patterns, and reduced funding from international actors, are pushing feminist NGOs to take up this paid work offered by the state (Franceschet, 2003: 11). Furthermore, there is a tendency in the neoliberal states to view NGOs as 'surrogates for civil society' (Alvarez, 1999: 183). For example, feminist NGOs are then expected to act as intermediaries to larger societal constituencies. This denies other groups access to gender policy debates and results in silencing of critical voices (Alvarez, 1999: 183). Whilst some argue that this turns the pursuance of gender

equality into a technical task (Schild 2000), others point to the new opportunities that this has pro-vided for the NGOs in the form of resources and discourse (Franceschet, 2003: 14). The Chilean case, thereby, draws attention to the ways in which market feminism changes the relationship between the bureaucrats and the women's movement and to the ways in which market feminism also transforms the women's movements.

'Integrated' Europe

Feminist scholars debate the role of the European Union (EU) in relation to gender equality, with some emphasizing its potential and others remaining more sceptical about its overall neoliberal and market oriented ethos. Many agree that discourse, policy and practices on, for example, equality and citizenship are based on the primacy of the market (see, for example, Bell, 2002; Elman, 2007), which makes it particularly pertinent for a discussion on market feminism.

As the competencies of the EU have gradually expanded, its influence on member states' gender policy has expanded and come to have both direct and indirect effects on the position of women's policy agencies (see Kantola, 2010a; 2010b; Kantola and Nousiainen, 2009). One dimension of this impact is the emphasis that the EU is placing on gender mainstreaming. According to some scholars, women's policy agencies and gender mainstreaming have been tied together from the beginning and they call women's policy agencies the 'institutional mechanisms for gender main-streaming' (True and Mintrom, 2001) and the 'key facilitators of the mainstreaming process within and across states' (True, 2003: 380). Others use women's policy agencies and gender mainstream-ing interchangeably (see Teghtsoonian, 2004), but arguably the relationship between the two is an empirical issue (Kantola and Outshoorn, 2007). Gender mainstreaming can potentially be an important tool for achieving gender equality for the women's policy agencies. It has provided women's policy agencies with further development of such policy instruments as gender monitor-ing, checklists, guidelines, interministerial committees, gender awareness training, and integrating gender to national plans (Goetz, 2003: 77; Staudt, 2003: 41). In the worst cases, gender main-streaming can be interpreted as a replacement for specific gender policies and structures (Lombardo, 2005: 414; Stratigaki, 2005). When gender equality becomes everybody's responsibility, there appears to be no need for specific structures, such as women's policy agencies.

Women's policy agencies and women's movement actors in Europe have adopted the language of gender mainstreaming as a strategic tool. Yet, as a strategy for women's policy agencies, gen-der mainstreaming continues to suffer from the familiar problems of lack of funding and political commitment, adopting a technocratic rather than participatory form (Outshoorn and Kantola, 2007: 278). At the moment, there is little empirical evidence of its having resulted in transforma-tive change in gender inequalities or policy outcomes. Rather, gender mainstreaming is making many gender advocates more complicit with the overall neoliberal forms of governance that emphasize efficiency and productivity in the EU. True (2009: 125) suggests that the dominant frame used by the European Commission when discussing gender mainstreaming in all policies is a neoliberal one, whereby arguments for gender mainstreaming are based primarily on economic factors. Gender equality then is not a goal as such, but subordinate to other, more pressing con-cerns, such as efficiency, productivity, development or employment. Such constructions of gender mainstreaming rely on a notion of gender equality that resonates with dominant policy frames, which entail embracing marketized economic goals (Squires, 2007: 137). Whilst women's organi-zations and women's policy agencies in the EU seek to challenge this dominant neoliberal frame, they too have been influenced by it and sometimes seek to make the 'business case for gender equality' because of its discursive and persuasive power (True, 2009: 127). This language

compromises transformative and feminist definitions of gender mainstreaming that might rely on a notion of gender equality that requires redistribution, participation of civil society actors and reorienting policies (True, 2003: 371).

The EU has a wide array of women's policy agencies, including the Commission's Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities, that have been important in politicizing gender. The latest addition to its complex set of agencies is the new European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), which has been given the task of providing information to the European Commission for it to undertake gender mainstreaming in its policies (Kantola, 2010a: 90). Feminist commentators have been somewhat cautious about the mandate and the tasks of the Institute. The form of knowledge that the Commission wishes the Institute to provide and disseminate is very technical and based on the values of 'objectivity, reliability and comparability' (Zippel, 2006). As suggested above, in evidence-based policy-making more generally, the role of external actors, such as women's movement organizations and women's policy agencies, is to supply policy-relevant technical knowledge rather than to envision political alternatives or new agendas. The tendency is symptomatic of the managerial dynamics of neo-liberal governance, focusing on the growth of consultancy services, which can have very depoliticizing effects on activists and agencies.

The process of Europeanization can be an uneven one: the impact of the EU on its member states is by no means uniform but is mediated through a variety of structures and institutions. For the purposes of this article, the case of the EU and its policy on promoting gender mainstreaming illustrates the subtle processes through which a move towards market feminism can occur. We used the example of gender mainstreaming to highlight how the form that it takes can make the women's policy agencies that promote it complicit with the neoliberal agenda and render legitimacy to it.

Conclusion

This article has argued that we are witnessing a shift from state to market feminism. We have attempted to show that both the practices and the priorities of feminist actors are being transformed in the shift from state to market feminism. While making a general claim, by drawing upon examples from different countries, we wish to emphasize that context matters. Neoliberal reform and its impact on state feminism remains a complex process. As Alvarez argues: 'Blanket assessments of feminist NGOs as handmaidens of neoliberal planetary patriarchy […] fail to capture the ambiguities and variations in both the local implementation of the New Gender Policy Agenda and in and among NGOs themselves' (Alvarez, 1999: 200). We therefore acknowledge that the emergence of market feminism creates both new opportunities and new threats for feminist politics.

A negative reading of recent developments highlights the normalization of neoliberalism and the ways in which women's policy agencies are embedded in it. The agencies are actively taking part in neo-liberal reforms and rendering legitimacy to it by making them 'more gender equal'. At its most extreme, neoliberal policies can signify the disappearance of women's policy agencies in states. Moreover, changing practices and priorities can result in the loss of certain feminist political agendas. For instance, a radical feminist critique may become increasingly difficult to sustain when claims have to be framed within a language of competition and productivity. Nonetheless, a more positive reading emphasizes the increased opportunities created by using market mechanisms to challenge neoliberal norms. The emergence of new, flexible institutions pursuing gender equality may allow for the more effective mainstreaming of gender considerations throughout the policy-making process. Market feminism, in this context, might be read as a reformulation of feminist agenda and as providing new forms of political engagement.

While the earlier state feminist literature tended to assume that women's policy agencies were promoting the substantive representation of women, this more recent literature, which we are suggesting might reasonably be understood as a market feminism literature, has tended by contrast to emphasize the constitutive representation of gender. Where the former literature focused on the ways in which women shaped state institutions to express their interests, the more recent literature focuses on the ways in which reconfigured state practices are constraining and constituting gender relations in particular marketed forms. Our analysis suggests that this is too simplified a narrative; state feminism and market feminism facilitate both the substantive representation of women and the constitutive representation of gender. Our aim is not to bemoan the loss of state feminism and emergence of market feminism, but rather to highlight the different disciplinary and productive possibilities offered by each.

Notes

1. See Baldez, 2001; Franceschet, 2003; Goetz, 2004; Haussman and Sauer, 2007; Lovenduski et al., 2005; McBride and Mazur, 2010; McBride Stetson, 2001; McBride Stetson and Mazur, 1995; Mazur, 2001; Outshoorn, 2004; Outshoorn and Kantola, 2007; Rai, 2003; Squires, 2007; Valiente, 2007; Weldon, 2002.
2. SERNAM is a well researched case. See, for example, Alvarez, 1999; Baldez, 2001; Franceschet, 2003.
3. See Haussman and Sauer, 2007; Lovenduski et al., 2005; McBride and Mazur, 2010; McBride Stetson, 2001; McBride Stetson and Mazur, 1995; Mazur, 2001; Mazur and McBride, 2007; 2008; Outshoorn, 2004; Outshoorn and Kantola, 2007.
4. The RNGS researchers use four categories of classification for the state responses to women's movement actors: dual response, where the state both accepts individual women, groups and/or constituencies representing gender interests into the process and changes policy to coincide with feminist goals; co-optation, where the state accepts the individual women, groups and/or constituencies into the process but does not give policy satisfaction; pre-emption, where the state finds policy satisfaction, but does not allow women, as individuals, groups or constituencies into the process; and no response, where the state has no procedural or substantive response to movement demands.
5. On the relationship between state feminism and gender mainstreaming see Kantola and Outshoorn (2007) and Squires (2007).
6. Our thanks to the two anonymous reviewers who helped us to clarify this point.
7. This is not a unique case as a similar trend has been identified in the Netherlands (Outshoorn and Oldersma, 2007) and British Columbia in Canada (Teghtsoonian, 2005).

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Biographical notes

Johanna Kantola is Senior Lecturer in Gender Studies in the University of Helsinki. Her recent publications include *Gender and the European Union* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), *The Oxford Handbook on Gender and Politics* (co-edited with Georgina Waylen, Karen Celis and Laurel Weldon, Oxford University Press, forthcoming in 2013), *Changing State Feminism* (co-edited with Joyce Outshoorn, Palgrave Macmillan 2007) and *Feminists Theorize the State* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). She has edited a Special Issue on Institutionalizing Intersectionality for *International Feminist Journal of Politics* (with Kevät Nousiainen, 11:4, 2009). She co-edits the *Palgrave Gender and Politics Book Series* (with Judith Squires).
Address: Gender Studies, University of Helsinki, P.o.Box 59. 00014 Helsinki, Finland, email: johanna.kantola@helsinki.fi

Judith Squires is Professor of Political Theory and Dean of the Faculty Social Sciences and Law. Her publications include: *Institutionalising Intersectionality?* co-edited with Andrea Krizsan and Hege Skjeie, (Palgrave, forthcoming 2012), *Contesting Citizenship*, co-edited with Birte Siim (Routledge, 2008), *The New Politics of Gender Equality* (Palgrave, 2007), Gender in Political Theory (Polity Press, 1999). She co-edits the *Palgrave Gender and Politics Book Series* (with Johanna Kantola). She is Reviews Editor for the journal *Government and Opposition* and is a member of the European Consortium of Political Research Press board. She was appointed an Academician of Academy of Social Sciences in 2009.
Address: School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies, 4 Priory Road, BS8 1TY; email: judith.squires@bristol.ac.uk