

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: **ARGENTINA AND CHILE: POLITICS AND
FRONTERAS IN GEOGRAPHIES OF GENDER AND
NATION**

Gwyndolyn Jo Weathers, Doctor of Philosophy, 2004

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Over the course of the twentieth century, women in Argentina and Chile have organized in political, economic, and social arenas. In the 1980s and 1990s, sectors of the women's movement in both countries were interested in constructing agencies for women within the state, and they pushed for and achieved the establishment of the National Council on Women (Consejo Nacional de la Mujer) in Argentina, and the National Women's Service (Servicio Nacional de la Mujer) in Chile. In the mid-1990s, both agencies constructed plans designed to promote women's equality, increase inter-ministerial attention to gender, and enable more vertical ties with civil society organizations, including NGOs. The results have been mixed. The Argentine plan resulted in international funds reaching the provinces to do work "with a gender perspective," and despite the difficulties encountered because of Argentina's crisis in the early 2000s, gender-sensitive programs have been put in place at the local level, although on a very small scale. However, the civil society organizations that are involved are not necessarily those with ties to the women's movement. In Chile, the plan has resulted in

increased inter-ministerial cooperation, but civil society is largely out of the loop, even when the agency openly depends upon the perception of receptivity to civil society for its own legitimacy. In the context of these relations, and the contrasts that they present, I contend that civil society-governmental relations are shifting, primarily because both women's NGOs and women's agencies in the state must re-situate themselves vis-à-vis newly emergent actors in civil society, as well as continuing negotiations for state power in a globalized economy.

ARGENTINA AND CHILE:
POLITICS AND *FRONTERAS* IN GEOGRAPHIES OF GENDER AND NATION

by

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PREFACE

When I began my studies of gender and development at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (Monterey, California) in 1993, I took classes on international feminist issues and development with Professors Carol McKibben and Jan Black, and the world, finally, began to make much more sense to me. Eleven years later, I am here, completely absorbed in this labor of love that is feminism, slowly finding my way to voice, slowly, slowly, finding my own way to make a contribution, to ease the sources of pain that are oppression and domination, to create space where we can come together as fully human, to revel in the beauty that we are capable of producing and seeing in one another. We have waged far too much war, in so many ways, and my generation's task, like every generation's before, is to renew our commitment to our own humanity, to see beyond these boundaries and fences and lines that keep us from one another. Not to make us homogenous, not to flatten out our differences, not to say that I know what needs to be done. I do not. I think we cannot know the form that these coalitional efforts will take; they will take the forms that are appropriate to the context in which they are formed. There is not a prescriptive grand narrative, nor is there indifferent relativism. There is purpose, there is agency, there is determination, and there is strength to be gained from all of those things. The women and men with whom I spoke for the purposes of this project are all making contributions; my teachers and mentors and advisers are all making contributions; those who have loved me and supported me are making contributions. If we remain true to our ethical sensibilities, we will not get lost. Slowly, slowly, we will find our way.

DEDICATION

In Memoriam

Professor Richard Brown asked me, “What has language learning meant for you?”

I have been working on the answer ever since.

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Intellectual and personal inspirations for this project and my entire graduate school experience come from an unbelievably rich web of people. You all have my gratitude, and this would not have been possible at all without you. Believe it.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Situating the Research Project: Gender Justice in Latin America

This project is centrally concerned with boundaries that define limits as well as new kinds of spaces in the negotiations of gender relations in Argentina and Chile. It is largely women¹ as social and political actors who, in South America as in many parts of the world in the early- and especially the late-twentieth century, have forced the (re)negotiations of gendered state-society terrain through struggles for the franchise, reproductive health rights and other expressions of full citizenship in the nation-state, even as the nation-state is involved in renegotiating its own status vis-à-vis a globalized economy and as a result, citizens are directly engaging transnational institutions. The status of gender relations in Argentina and Chile constitutes part of large-scale debates about our world's lack of "gender justice" because of multiple forms of gender inequalities. These include but are not limited to: cultural biases that tend to favor those characteristics associated with men for assuming leadership roles in society and families; violence that disempowers those who suffer it in their homes and in their larger societies; capitalist structures that value particular kinds of production while devaluing much of the world's labor that is performed outside of the market; the assumption that those who are privileged in hierarchical societies have the right to speak for all; and masculinist politics,² engaged in by both men and women, that are played out through, and at great

¹ Htun (2003) makes a case for male technocrats advancing women's rights, but in terms of social movements, it has most often been women, with male allies, who have pursued the rights I discuss here.

² I adopt the term "masculinist" following Peterson and Runyan (1999) as an alternative to the more

cost to, all women's bodies through limiting access to basic forms of reproductive health care. My focus on Argentina and Chile at once highlights the particularities of these cases as it simultaneously points out that the dynamic societal/state shifts around women's rights are occurring in multiple geographic/political/cultural settings both within and beyond Latin America.

Project Inspirations

This project and the format it took were inspired by the political economy of a tomato, an educational trip to Costa Rica, and my graduate school experiences of disciplinary boundary-crossing and boundary-blending. The tomato is a reference to a transnational research effort in the 1990s in which scholars and activists followed the path of tomatoes grown in Mexico and shipped to the United States and Canada where they were consumed as part of fast food diets (see Deborah Barndt, editor, *Women Working the NAFTA Food Chain: Women, Food & Globalization*, Toronto: Second Story Press, 1999). The tomatoes were not the object of study per se but rather provided a link between individuals and organizations that encountered the tomatoes through growing, raising, and consuming them, thus performing the role of what Bowker and Star (2000) call a "boundary object" (see Chapter 4 for a fuller explanation of this concept).

My journey to Costa Rica in 2000 came after a hard year of graduate school. It was an educational trip sponsored by the Council on International Educational Exchange,

commonly used "patriarchy." Patriarchy remains an extremely useful term, but has often been disembodied from particular historical circumstances, such that it is assumed that certain forms of male domination have existed everywhere and always in identical forms. It essentializes not only historically, then, but also culturally, and assumes that men always dominate and women are always dominated. This in turn leaves little room for analysis of intersecting forms of domination and oppression, such as those of class and race, and disallows the possibility of all people embodying both dominance and resistance, determined by particularities of circumstance.

and I was the only graduate student attending as a participant. The other members of the group were women from around the United States, all of whom had completed their Ph.D.s and were professors in a variety of disciplines, from Spanish literature to women's studies to geology. The trip organizers arranged for us to meet with women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs), women's governmental offices, and women's craft cooperatives, as well as environmental organizers and women's studies programs. It was an inspiring trip because of the travelers I was with and because of the people we met, and planted the seed in my mind of doing a dissertation project framed around discussions with people in a variety of organizational and institutional settings.

On that trip, I went with a small group on a nature hike through the Cloud Forest, close to where we were staying in the green mountains far away from the congestion of San José. Expecting to see the famed quetzal, a bird whose feathers are translucent but appear as brilliant hues of green, turquoise, and red, we kept our eyes focused on the canopy. We did eventually see a quetzal in the distance, but what we learned to recognize along the way, through the trained eyes of our guide, were the much more numerous insects whose camouflaged bodies posed as sticks and leaves down closer to the ground. It was a small lesson that in paying attention to the details, the more seemingly ordinary things, there was much beauty to behold. It was a lesson that plays well in a sociological setting, too: Paying attention to the details of our environments provides much food for thought in understanding larger systems.

The third element of inspiration was my long journey through graduate school at the University of Maryland, College Park. Both a professional and personal experience, my Ph.D. program was where I sought to blend comparative sociology, which allowed

me to maintain the transnational dimension of my earlier studies in international policy and Spanish, with feminist studies. Boundary crossing was as much a part of these experiences as learning within the disciplinary bounds of sociology and women's studies, and working in and across disciplines, learning to manage those tensions, became part of what I understand as space for knowledge production.

This project is also an effort to continue to bridge my academic interests, which revolve around comparative sociology for its international and transnational focus, and feminist studies. This project remains much more of a comparative effort than a feminist theoretical work on gender, although I could not have arrived at being able to see things like dichotomous constructions and the politics of naming without the feminist theoretical training I have had during graduate school, including here endless conversations with peers in my graduate program as we negotiated our own relationships with sociology and women's studies.

Research Goals

This dissertation research project has two related goals. The first is to explore and analyze relationships between civil society and governmental sectors that come into contact with one another through the politics of what is currently described as "gender mainstreaming." This is an effort to commit all policy-makers to using a "gender lens," meaning that, at a minimum, they are paying attention to women and men as subjects of policy interventions. These efforts are carried out by agencies in the state that were created through the efforts of women's movements (or at least those sectors of these movements interested in accessing/changing the structure of the state), but that have

increasingly become integrated into “politics as usual.” This means that the relations of these offices experience ebbs and flows in terms of closeness with civil society, and the sub-sector of civil society composed of women’s non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The goals of the research project are to examine (1) how national machineries for the advancement of women operated within the liberal democratic states of South America in the 1990s and early 2000s; (2) to what degree particular projects undertaken by these national machineries in the 1990s reflected and shaped, or were displaced by, local and international discourse and practices on gender and development and gender mainstreaming; and (3) how the emergent discourses on social/political/economic “crisis and order” of the early 2000s competed with “gender and development/gender mainstreaming” priorities to create or deflect space for (re)constituting the gendered nation.

The relationships between the actors in focus are fruitful as a lens onto the dynamics of understanding undercurrents of gendered power and knowledge on which paradigms of democracy and development rest, as they can be observed at the level of the nation-state. Viewed together, Argentina and Chile can tell us about the usefulness of comparative sociological tools that clarify political relations in the nation-state situated in the broader capitalist world-system.

The second goal is to further the work done thus far to introduce elements of the “cultural turn” into studies relating to the nation-state in the capitalist world-system. I do so in one way by exploring the dynamics of interviewing as a way to obtain information from individuals in a variety of organizational locations that are hierarchically situated vis-à-vis one another. I also bring in elements of observation that are related to

language/cultural translations, elements that would be missed by using more traditional approaches to sociological analyses of state and society. As Hobson (2003) notes,

There is much scholarly debate about what is new about ‘new social movements’ [including women’s movements in the late twentieth century]...; Melucci (1995) makes a strong case for newness of current struggles in terms of their repertoires or action and the framing of claims. But our research suggests that *what is new in recognition struggles is our analytical tools for interpreting them*” (292, emphasis added).

Although much work done by Northern scholars on Latin America’s women’s movements is done in solidarity with those movements, the relationship of the scholar to her/his work is not often made explicit as part of the work itself. Often, such processes are relegated to the dedications, prologues, and footnotes, or to separate articles produced about methodology.

What is innovative here, then, is that in this sociological work I actively think about how these dynamics of scholar and interviewees influence access and cross-cultural relations as they reflect power dynamics that are related to individual’s human capital as well as countries of origin. This act of bringing subjectivities of researcher and interviewee to the fore is deliberate, and I see this as being an aspect that could be further developed and integrated to encourage open dialogue about these issues. The issues of trust and access may be possible to overcome with additional time in the field, as in the case of ethnographic fieldwork more often done by anthropologists. However, there is a need to explore the use of interviews and more limited field duration for sociological fieldwork. How can we best learn from this process and have it be productive and creative?

This project makes use of subjectivity as a site for knowledge production on gendered relations of power, bringing the cultural turn to bear on a comparative sociological approach. Viewed together, Argentina and Chile provide an example of the ways in which cultural resources contextualize gender and translation practices.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2 presents the comparative studies literatures of interest that enable the sociological analysis of key entities in this study, namely, the nation-state, social movements and networks, and the capitalist world-economy. Both institutionalisms and world-systems approaches, as two distinct but related bodies of intellectual work, provide useful tools in naming the entities mentioned above. A distinguishing characteristic of world-systems analyses is the understanding that it is not only the research that is situated historically (as by a designated period of time) but also the researcher. This consciousness of the relationship of what we study and what kinds of questions we can generate about it, allows an opening for the introduction of subjectivities into research, and feminist scholars are among those who have worked on this most explicitly.

Chapter 3 takes up where Chapter 2 leaves off, on the topic of subjectivities. Here I explore the four key terms mentioned in the title: politics, *fronteras*, geographies and gender, as they relate to each other at the level of observation, which is the comparative context of Chile and Argentina as nation-states located in the global capitalist economy. I seek to explain how each of the four key terms captures the dynamics of representation and interpretation through further examination of literatures relating to the project. Here, for example, I explore the definitions of social problems and

social puzzles proposed by Kuhn, the boundaries of which become blurred when researching gender inequalities. I also explore further the cultural underpinnings of categorizing nation-states in particular ways that emphasize their differences, making it difficult to compare paradigms for women's equality across boundaries of global North and South. Indeed, debates about equality and development were framed as antagonistic in the 1970s and 1980s (that is, they were framed as equality versus development) during the large-scale women's meetings held under the auspices of the United Nations.

In Chapter 4, I present the methodological tools used in this study. In order to bring together state sectors and societal actors, I make use of a "boundary object." The idea in using this as a methodological tool is that the boundary object is something that allows people in a variety of locations to speak to each other. I make use of two plans that the governments of Argentina and Chile produced in the 1990s to serve this purpose. These plans, the *Federal Plan for Women* (Argentina), and the *Plan for Equality of Opportunities between Women and Men* (Chile) are designed to mainstream gender into public policies and society. I explicitly examine language promoting equality in South America to interrupt the assumption of equality existing as a phenomenon solely in the areas designated as the (liberated) global "North."

The plans, however, cannot be analyzed simply as stand-alone documents. They only make sense in the context of state-civil society relations as they are constantly negotiated in both countries. The project was thus constructed around developing samples of interviewees, whom I approached with an initial question about the plans. The plans, then, served as my conversation starter, reminiscent of Barndt's (1999) use of tomatoes as a product linking a wide variety of actors together.

Chapter 5 is the case study of Argentina, built around the interviews and research done during fieldwork there in 2002. The points that are salient in creating a comparison with Chile include the particular funding arrangements that Argentina's Federal Plan for Women involved (an official loan from a multilateral development bank); the deradicalization of the state agency tasked with gender mainstreaming through a break of the state and (a form of) feminism; and the evolving context of civil society activism in response to the crises of the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Chapter 6 is the case study of Chile, and, as in Argentina, is built around the interviews and research done during fieldwork there in 2002. Civil society-government relations in Chile have not experienced the more obvious break that those in Argentina have, but this does not mean there are not ongoing negotiations and tensions with regard to access of NGOs to the state ministry on women. Although maintaining a higher official status than the agency in Argentina, the necessity of playing politics means that the ministry and the minister in charge are circumscribed by party politics (a similarity shared by both countries, after 1994 in Argentina). Additionally, efforts to galvanize civil society, particularly those efforts forged through a government-multilateral development bank project, relegate women's NGO efforts to a parallel, rather than intersecting tract. As in Argentina, it requires constant negotiation to keep gender visible in evolving civil society activism.

In Chapter 7, I synthesize the dynamics of state-NGO and civil society relationships (and on occasion, multilateral development banks) provides important insights into the undercurrents of gendered power and knowledge on which paradigms of democracy and development rest. The politics that are visible highlight the need for the

agencies charged with gender mainstreaming to play politics in order to maintain themselves. What this has meant is that the relationship to civil society (mostly in the form of NGOs) fluctuates. Chile's case demonstrates how this translates into being a political player, with no real connection to civil society, and Argentina's case demonstrates how an atmosphere of crisis provides greater opportunity for such interaction, reflecting the increased need for responsiveness to civil society on the part of the government in power.

Through exploring more cultural terrain, we can also see how dichotomies of crisis and order play out in Argentina (the crisis site in the binary opposition) and Chile (the site of order) and that these contrasting positions obscure the difficulties that women's state agencies and NGOs are facing in both. I also explore possibilities for translating "mainstreaming" into "transversality," using an English version of the Spanish term (*transversalidad*). Finally, I explore the interview as a site of knowledge production as experienced in this project, before concluding with a brief look at the gendered nation-state.

Finally, in Chapter 8 I draw out my findings, placing them contextually within the framework established for this study, to highlight the importance of boundaries (of various kinds) to this project. Boundaries serve to construct and maintain particular orders of geographies, comparative categories, and producers of knowledge. In collapsing certain kinds of boundary markers, or choosing to engage them strategically, we better understand the dynamics of power at play.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURES OF INTEREST

Introduction

In this chapter, I review literatures of interest that provide an initial understanding of the state, the world-system, and networks. I first discuss contributions of comparative studies, understood as encompassing institutionalisms and world-systems approaches. Although the state is theorized differently in each of these bodies of academic work, together they inform us about state formation processes. Theorization of gender both in terms of the state and the world-system provide important critiques and establish new knowledge about each of these entities. The social movements explored in comparative literatures of recent years are most often framed in terms of networks that connect organizations and individuals within and across state boundaries, and throughout the larger transnational arena.

Introduction to Comparative Studies:

Institutionalisms and World-Systems Approaches

Comparative sociological studies are concerned with large scale processes and changes in those processes over time. On the whole, comparative studies is a field in which scholars seek to illuminate the conditions that shape the emergence of such key actors and systems as states and capitalism that definitively mark the modern era. Regardless of the historical scope of the project engaged by comparativists, there is an understanding that history matters, such that the current macro level entities and

processes that shape our existence have deeply rooted ties to events and conditions occurring over the *longue durée* of past centuries (see Braudel 1972). The lengthening of the time frame also enables an understanding that allows broader patterns to emerge that may not be visible from a localized, non-comparative angle.

The issue of *what* is compared, of course, is of critical theoretical and methodological importance in the comparativist scholarship. Historical institutionalists tend to focus their work towards explaining the emergence of state formation and the processes that produce particular institutional formations in particular moments. Such work also looks at situations in which states change in drastic ways, perhaps even resulting in their dissolution (as in studies of revolution). World-systems analysts tend to emphasize the growth and expansion of the capitalist system as process, wherein the formation of particular states is integrated into comparisons that categorize states as being in the economic core, periphery or semi-periphery, such that individual state formation is not the focus of analysis. Katznelson (1997) describes (and is worth quoting at length) the work of noted comparativists and their contributions to the field, stating that

[d]uring the 1960s and 1970s, a remarkable group of audacious comparative-historical investigations, mainly written by political sociologists who grounded their work in the structural, historical, and organizational materialism of Karl Marx and Max Weber, constituted a research program and convened a bound epistemic conversation that utterly had transformed the potential scope, ambition, and content of comparative politics....[T]he treatments of immense historical change by scholars including Perry Anderson, Reinhard Bendix, Shmuel Eisenstadt, Samuel Huntington, Barrington Moore, Stein Rokkan, Theda Skocpol, Charles Tilly, Louise Tilly, and Immanuel Wallerstein, for all their considerable differences of theoretical geneology and emphasis, shared in the effort to elaborate on those locations where large-scale processes (including differentiation, state-building, war, capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, and cross-border flows of ideas, people, capital, and goods) and institutions (understood both as congeries of rules for cooperation, commitment, and conflict resolution and as formal organizations) actually meet....Though hardly unitary in theoretical terms, [these macroanalytical scholars] developed a probabilistic

approach to structure, wagering that the most significant processes shaping human identities, interests, and interactions are such large-scale features of modernity as capitalist development, market rationality, state-building, secularization, political and scientific revolution, and the acceleration of instruments for the communication and diffusion of ideas (Pp. 82-83).

Katznelson also notes, however, as does Migdal in the same volume of *Comparative Politics*, that there has been a notable shift in the parameters of institutionalist studies in recent decades. Comparing the work done in the 1990s with their predecessors (mentioned above), “institutionalist scholars in comparative politics have shortened their time horizons, contracted their regimes questions, and narrowed the range of considered outcomes” (Katznelson 1997:85). This comes about in part because of historical trajectories that include, among other things, the questioning of Marxism, given “global events and by challenges to its essentialism, functionalism, and teleology” (86). Migdal (1997) and Evans (1995) also refer to challenges from “insurgent” tendencies, including rational choice and postmodern approaches which have served to reshape the landscape of historical institutionalisms within academia.

In the sections below I explore more fully contributions from historical institutionalisms and world-systems approaches that contribute valuable methodological tools useful for the present analysis. I will more fully differentiate the ways world-systems approaches view connections of time and space (TimeSpace) in laying out questions for study such that the researcher herself is implicated in the processes and results of knowledge production. The work of feminist world-systems scholars (e.g., Forsythe 2002 and Ward 1993) highlights the ways in which such an approach enables us to make use of feminist scholarship and comparative work to expand both arenas so as to better understand the value of women’s movements globally.

Historical Institutionalisms: Studying the State and the Logic of Comparison

State formation is a key focus of historical institutionalisms, often focusing almost exclusively on the states that emerged in Europe as part of the transition from feudalism. The underlying thesis of much of this work builds on Tilly's (1990) foundational idea that "States make war and war makes states" in the search for what makes a "strong" state. Such a state is one that has an exclusivity of authority—it controls its territory, the use of force within those boundaries [though not to the degree of total control suggested by the Weberian model (Steinmetz 1999)], and the loyalty of its subjects, as they emerge into citizens.

Historical institutionalists who take issue with the idea that war is the exclusive engine of what makes states, and makes them strong, often do so by focusing on areas of the world such as Latin America and Africa. Miguel Centeno (2002), for example, argues that while the thesis may hold true for certain states emerging in particular places at particular historical junctures, in fact wars in Latin America perpetuated a status quo of regionalized loyalties, internal conflicts, and growing debt to finance wars. Centeno's work, although for the most part accommodating Tilly, does raise an important critique about the Euro-centrism in the bulk of comparative studies on states, and the weight given to the idea that European states serve as the model (a type of Weberian "ideal type"): "The fate of Latin America needs to be normalized and reunderstood in the absence of an implicit other" (275).

Not only does Latin America need to be "normalized" in the context of relations with the United States and Europe; the very idea of the state needs to change from one of

total command of loyalties and deep societal “penetration” (a term which suggests the masculinist perspective that grounds much of this work), to one of the “limited state,” per Midgal’s (1997) suggestion. This formulation recognizes the state as it is situated at the meso level between civil societies and forces of globalization, and suggests that states—all states, whether in Latin America or elsewhere—are engaged in negotiating demands from multiple sectors. As Skocpol (1985) points out, following Otto Hintze’s work on the state, if we focus on states as organizations that control territories, we lose the ability to focus on those features that polities hold in common, and thus, how “state structures and actions are conditioned by historically changing transnational contexts” (8). These transnational contexts, exogenous to but impinging upon the state, include “geopolitical relations of interstate domination and competition, . . . the international communication of ideals and models of public policy, and . . . world economic patterns of trade, division of productive activities, investment flows, and international finance. States necessarily stand at the intersections between domestic sociopolitical orders and the transnational relations within which they must maneuver” (ibid.).

Cultural Inroads in the Study of the State

Contextualization, rather than presumed universality, is perhaps the first step to developing a critique of hegemonic practices and discourses that emerges as a powerful part of what has been termed the postmodern or cultural turn/condition. In the social sciences, the cultural turn signals theoretical impulses from previously submerged traditions including the sociology of knowledge, as well as disciplinary boundary transgressions of humanities and social science traditions (Steinmetz 1999). What is most

notable is perhaps that “[c]ultural theories have made deep inroads into fields such as the sociology of sexuality, gender, popular culture, and social movements and the social and historical study of science. Yet the study of the state has remained relatively aloof from these discussions” (ibid., 3).

More recently, cultural institutionalists have taken up challenges presented by defining and analyzing culture by focusing on institutions within the state that were designed to produce a comparable end goal. The state boundary in this case functions as the proxy for culture such that the institutional formations manifest dominant cultural tendencies within state borders. Dobbin (1994), for example, focuses on the train systems that were established in the United States, France, and England, and finds that cultural values were reflected in institutions responsible for creating national systems of locomotive transit. The impact of this was that subsequent decisions that people within these institutions took with regard to the system. The cultural values delimited those things that it was even possible to imagine as feasible in the construction of a rail system, and thus the rail system took on the particular character of the belief systems in the nations in which they were built.

Dobbin contextualizes the decision-making processes, recognizing the particularities of the assumptions underlying institutional decisions, rather than assuming that institutional structures promote a universal notion of bureaucratic function. However, his work still suggests that culture is a product of the state, by virtue of naturalizing that particular boundary. An additional difficulty that work in this vein does

not address adequately is how to account for those states within whose bounds multiple cultures exist and sometimes³ vie for influence.

Gender and State Studies

With regard to work that explicitly engages accounts of gender, there have been debates regarding the origins of differing state types, with the juxtaposition of cultural and “rational choice” models. Adams (1999) clearly defends a cultural model for explaining familially oriented actions as a stronger account of the dynamics involved in patrimonial state-formation, at the same time as she engages an examination of cultural “signifying practices” in core concepts and assumptions of the rational choicers, effectively deconstructing the otherwise unexamined cultural assessments about emotionality embedded within.

Another approach that has illuminated the ways in which the state can act as an agent in shifting gender relations, as well as being a gendered entity itself, is through policies that directly deal with motherhood, such as Orloff’s (1999) comparative approach to motherhood, work, and welfare in four countries (the United States, Britain, Canada, and Australia). Arguing that different state agencies promote differing identities for women, Orloff notes that the gender-neutral model of citizen-worker is emphasized with regard to some sectors, whereas others focus on women’s identity as largely unpaid caregivers have taken up challenges presented by defining and analyzing culture by focusing on institutions within the state that were designed to produce a comparable end goal. Gender ideology as it plays out in state policy-making contexts, involves a number

³ I say sometimes, because not all cultures advocate a politics of domination, a cultural perspective that lends itself to control over societal discourses.

of significant components structured through dichotomous characterizations, including sameness/difference, equality/inequality, autonomy/dependency, and racial/ethnic difference in models of motherhood (Orloff 1999:323).

Nation-states have historically provided limited spaces for the articulation of women's interests or women's organizing (True and Mintrom 2001). Indeed, the orientation of state attitudes (in legal studies, exemplified by judicial systems) and those who fill the ranks of its apparatuses, led some scholars to initially denote the "state as male" (MacKinnon Date). Such essentialist claims have largely been eschewed by works seeking to illuminate the variety of ways in which states are shaped by, and provide shape to, gender relations (Haney 2000). Some of these works examine particular policies and dynamics of state-society engagements, because "social policy has symbolic significance in upholding or undermining the gender order" (Orloff 1999:323).

Orloff deals quite directly with ideology and discourse in her work, combining them to facilitate her analysis of social policies directed at women. She sees competing ideological orientations and cultural idioms as co-existing within specific discourses. In this way, discourses reflect boundaries of what it is possible to imagine, boundaries that are themselves constituted by cultural assumptions. In her words, this view is similar to Gramsci's concept of hegemony (327). Ideologies, in this case, are both resource and constraint on state policy and collective action, whereas cultural assumptions and discursive structures constitute "elements of the political and institutional context within which the whole range of political activities occur" (327-28).

True and Mintrom (2001) provide the largest-scale study to date of state bureaucracies for gender mainstreaming (alternatively referred to as gender equality

bureaucracies), documenting the creation of these agencies in 111 countries between 1975 and 1998.⁴ Because they are interested in exploring the significance of transnational (feminist/women's) networks as a causal factor more important than other alternative explanations, they opt for a large-scale study. At the same time, however, they note that small numbers of in-depth case studies can be useful in verifying the importance of their findings (transnational linkages in domestic policy shifts).

“Gender mainstreaming” emerged in the early 1990s (Anderson 1993, cited in True and Mintrom 2001), and by 1995 it was identified in the Beijing Platform for Action as the “new mandate for national machineries” (True and Mintrom 2001:31). The focus on mainstreaming is seen as a shift from having the agency be the primary mechanism for promotion of gender equality. It means that the agencies play a coordinating role and, as such, mainstreaming can be interpreted as a radical strategy rather than a liberal one.

Women's Movements in Latin America

In Latin America, goals of social/gender justice in the late twentieth century are entangled with the histories of transitions from military regimes to democracies. The literature on women's movements in Argentina and Chile documents the importance of such mobilizations in the push for a transition from military regimes and dictatorships to a more democratic polity (e.g., Frohman and Valdés 1995, Feijóo 1994, Fisher 1993, Jelin 1990, Chinchilla 1989, and Jaquette 1989).

⁴ They utilize a sample of 157 countries, and 111 are documented with machineries in place by 1998. They note that three additional countries (Laos, Latvia, and Solomon Islands) made institutional changes of this nature after 1998.

The aforementioned studies foreground grassroots activism directed *at* the state, rather than a focus on building a theory *of* the state per se. The work that emerged in the mid 1980s and mid 1990s that sought to theorize the dilemmas of the Latin American state, the tendency towards authoritarianism, and subsequent difficulties of consolidating democracies in these countries (e.g., Linz and Stepan 1986, 1996; and O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986) did not problematize these processes through a gender lens.

Navarro and Bourque (1998) review the conclusions of work done in the mid-1990s that is both interested in post-authoritarian and democratic state formations and the gendered aspects of this; in particular, the patterns that denote various ways in which women are situated within redemocratized states and societies. This process is heavily influenced by the character of the authoritarian regime from which the resistance and pressure for redemocratizing emerges, and the conditions under which it cedes power. These authors contend that degrees of gender equity and women's political participation once democracy is (re)established are also dependent upon the type of regime under which the women mobilized as well as the alternative proposed as the democratic opposition to the authoritarian regime.

Latin America: Insiders and Outsiders

In the western hemisphere, Korzeniewicz and Smith (2001) have noted the differences in philosophies between those actors choosing to work with the state ("insiders"), and those who oppose it ("outsiders"), on governmental-based processes such as the Summits of the Americas, held throughout the 1990s. Within women's activism, these divides can be seen in work such as Alvarez (1998), whose emphasis on

the professionalization of non-governmental organizations and their relationship to the state (seen as “insiders” or “institucionalizadas” by Alvarez 1998 and Schild 1998), as well as the staff who flow between the two, make these “neo” governmental, rather than “non” governmental. Others who work in professional NGOs emphasize a continuing critique of state agencies’ abilities to meet the needs of women adequately (Valdés 1993), which serves to place them as more “outsiders” or “autónomas” than Alvarez’ claims would have them be. In later work, Alvarez, along with Friedman, Beckman, Blackwell, Chinchilla, Lebon, Navarro, and Ríos Tobar (2002), note that some of these tensions have lessened in the Feminist Encounters (*Encuentros Feministas*) held throughout Latin America, Central America and the Caribbean. These tensions were at their high point in 1996, but subsided by the late 1990s, when insiders and outsiders made efforts to work across these boundaries, rather than reinforcing them.

Networks: Beyond the State

Scholarship on networks in recent decades illustrates the variety of actors that can be involved in any particular network formation and helps to specify the local/national/transnational relationships of people and organizations through which information, people, and resources flow, and seeks to specify how local and transnational actors may work together to impact the state.⁵

⁵ My own work here borrows from network analysis in that I recognize a variety of actors who are engaged in making change happen. However, I am not specifically engaged in a network analysis because the interviewees are not part of a formalized network of individuals and organizations—some of them have specific connections, while others do not. While I had originally approached this project with the idea of looking at those organizations with formal linkages, and as such they would constitute a network of some sort, once in the field I interviewed a wider array of actors than originally anticipated, in part because of the limited reach of the programs I was looking at. This actually clarified, as well, that I had approached this in terms of looking at organizations as they were engaged programmatically, in a rather unidirectional flow, and the resulting work in Argentina and Chile made me rethink the limitations of programmatic links.

The problems activists face are not constrained to national boundaries by any means, and so activists and movements have “gone global” (Alvarez 1998). However, before using this terminology loosely, it is important to consider how academic work on these trends approaches what is often called “cross-national,” or “transnational,” rather than “global,” activism.

The first of these utilizes the term social movement and applies it across national borders, if not regionally or worldwide. This is true of women’s activism, said to constitute a “global women’s movement” (a usage found largely in Northern SMOs⁶) and anti-globalization activism and scholarship (see Starr 2000 for a North American perspective on web-based AGSMs⁷). Problematic hierarchical relationships⁸ are often not specified in these rather celebratory approaches to the activism, but unequal relations do in fact constitute an issue of concern, to be discussed below.

A further specification of activism is found in studies of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as providing crucial linkages for actors. While Alvarez (1998) is skeptical of “NGOization,” Tarrow (1998) and Keck and Sikkink’ (1998) argue that NGOs are linking citizens around the world in human rights and women’s transnational advocacy networks. *Advocacy* networks are understood as different from the *social* networks that are the bases for contentious politics within a given society (Tarrow

⁶ SMO = Social Movement Organization

⁷ AGSM = Anti-Globalization Social Movement

⁸ See Alexander and Mohanty 1997, especially the Introduction: “‘International’ feminism embraces an approach of the articulation of many voices to specify an inclusive feminism—call for ‘global’ sisterhood’ are often premised on a center/periphery model where women of color or Third World women constitute the periphery. Race is invariably erased from any conception of the international (based on nation, devoid of race), all the more so because of a strict separation between the international and the domestic, or an understanding of the ways in which they are mutually constituted” (xviii-xix).

1998:188). Transnational advocacy networks emerge as a naming practice and framework of study for scholars hesitant to name cross-border activism as “social movements.” These same scholars are those who are least likely to use the terms globalization, and its commensurate grassroots unit of analysis, global civil society. These tend to examine social movements (SM) and social movement organizations (SMOs) in the context of national borders (e.g., Tarrow 2001 and 1998). The varying definitions of transnational social movements versus networks revolve around the establishment of particular criteria (“evidence”) that are more or less stringent. Some, including Brysk (N.d.) bypass the debates surrounding the naming of networks versus movements versus international regimes versus civil society in search of defining the object of study as process or actor.

Beyond NGOs, however, Keck and Sikkink (1998) refer to the following as potential “major actors” in TANs: international and domestic nongovernmental research and advocacy organizations; local social movements; foundations; the media; churches, trade unions, consumer organizations, and intellectuals; parts of regional and international intergovernmental organizations; and parts of the executive and/or parliamentary branches of governments, noting that “[n]ot all of these will be present in each advocacy network” (9). Despite the inclusion of such players as state- and intergovernmental-level offices, their model for transnational advocacy networks remains heavily focused on NGOs interacting across national boundaries.⁹ These complex relationships civil society, NGO, and state initiatives and relations with each other and with international/regional financial and governmental institutions are the result of

⁹ The current work further also relies heavily on NGOs as civil society actors, but also incorporates others actors in these networks, as well.

dynamic processes through which organizational, community, municipal, regional, national and international boundaries come into play.

Social movement scholarship, including that focused on what some have termed the “new” social movements (defined primarily as women’s, environmental, and lesbian/gay, and indigenous struggles), of recent decades has focused on developing a social psychology to accompany the focus on resource mobilization as motivating factors for collective actions (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996; Morris and Mueller 1992). Thus, identity formation plays a central role in many of the discussions of new social movements.

Noticeable in the texts on grassroots activism in transnational or globalized contexts is the view of the state as simultaneously 1) antithetical to the grassroots (that is, the state serves as the target for much grassroots activism), and 2) the defense (if a weak, or weakened, one for rights of citizens in the face of global capital that puts financial control in the hands of multilateral development banks and multinational corporations controlled by those in the North. Indeed, the slogan “think globally; act locally” is seen as “deliberately” leaving the state out of the equation, thus representing “a withdrawal of faith in the state as a mechanism of reform” (Gulbenkian Commission 1996:82).

In this way, the grassroots-state-transnational triangulation is formed, but the state is an often-ignored part of this formation. This may be due in large part to an uncertainty of what has happened empirically to the state in the transition from the “development project of nationally-managed economic growth with a view to enhancing national welfare...to a new principle [of] globally-managed economic growth with a view to

sustaining the integrity of the global financial system and the conditions for transnational corporate capitalism” (McMichael 1996:34).

Thus, civil society (portrayed as constituted by citizenry, grassroots organizations, and NGOs) is seen as the global grassroots equivalent unit of analysis to the transnational, or global, sphere. “Global civil society” is portrayed as a powerful counterbalance to state power [and the multinational corporate power facilitated by the state] as Smith (1998) notes, but she is concerned that the break with state-centered models may be “overly optimistic” (94) in their assessments of civil society as such. Similar debates surround notions of cosmopolitanism, described above, in which celebrations of the post-national phase of connection, such as Appadurai (1996) are treated with caution by others such as Kaplan (2001) who see older patterns of hegemony playing out across the newer landscape of “flows” that Appadurai describes.

This notion (if not the demonstration) of the state as constraining or weakened is suggestive of an underlying belief in a cosmopolitan idea(l) which can best be achieved through direct citizen interactions across borders. Cosmopolitanism, posited by some as the opposite of nationalism and orientalism (Kaplan 2001), is placed by others on a continuum with nationalism, as a struggle to comprehend multiple, ethical, attachments to spaces that fall within and beyond the nation-state (Robbins 1999). The idea of cosmopolitan democracy (Archibugi, Held, and Köhler 1998) constitutes a renewed interest in democracy beyond the borders of individual states, and is what much anti (corporate) globalization activism emerging from civil society revolves around. Protest and negotiation around structural adjustment processes, for example, can be viewed as one part of a larger anti-corporate globalization ideology. This ideology is pursued

through a variety of “modes,” including contestation and reform, and pushes for “globalization from below” (Starr 2000). Both of these modes are attempting to restrain and democratize globalization processes, which simultaneously interrupt traditional notions of state sovereignty at the same time as they depend upon state-level mechanisms. Thus, in seeking increased political opportunities, activism is seen to move across borders, although this is not as much about “feeling” (Robbins 1999) as it is a necessity for those with few internal (local) resources, or those living in circumstances where outright activism on their own behalf is too dangerous (Keck and Sikkink 1998). The perspective of Robbins (1999) is perhaps most closely matched by that of scholars seeking to expand work on identity in movements dealing with cultural negotiations of meaning (described above).

Ribeiro (1998) distinguishes between globalization and transnationalism. He views globalization as a historical process related to the expansion of capitalism, whereas transnationalism is focused on the organization of peoples within imagined communities, their relationships to power, the reformulation of identity, the relationships between the public and private spheres, as well as citizenship (see p. 326). Transnational is the levels involved—the politics of scale, so to speak; figuring out how else to think about the borders other than a hierarchical arrangement of “local” to “global.”¹⁰

¹⁰ Thinking about the transnational and the local: My interest in transnational linkages was the focal point that anchored this study. Once in the field, when asking questions of interviewees, I began to think that this project would perhaps be better described as studying the local in an international context, rather than a study of transnational linkages per se. The transnational aspects are present, but did not necessarily take the form that I expected: they constitute important contextual factors that enable the more local level linkages I encountered. And, even as I began to think about this as a study of ‘the local,’ I found myself unwilling to surrender the local to the local, to say, ‘Only the native can know the native.’ The local is necessarily transformed by virtue of who is aware of it, who is talking about it, and the places to which that knowledge is transmitted. This is not to say that it is because *I* am observing this that it is changed (I am, as bell hooks would no doubt point out, left far more enriched by my fieldwork experience than those I interviewed and interacted with). Rather, it is the fact that *someone like me* in terms of my social location (being from the

World-Systems Analysis: Shifting the Paradigm for Comparative Studies

World-systems allows for the examination of distinct “levels” of analysis while maintaining a critical understanding of the influences of global capital flows on the dynamics we are witnessing. Struggles are part of this—this is not a Parsonsian functionalism. World-systems as an approach is written much more from the perspective of social movements (“the party of change”) than from those interested in maintaining the status quo (“the party of order”).¹¹

World-systems analysis emerged as a critique of modernization theory, when it became apparent that modernization theory “simply did not produce the results anticipated. The seeds of failure were in the methods of analysis; the units were not autonomous and comparable, but all were formed historically and relationally in the drive for capitalist accumulation” (Lee 2002:25).

World-system approaches constitute important critiques to classical/modern comparative studies by focusing both on the unit of analysis, and on the relationship between the social scientist and the knowledge being produced. World-system analysis begins from the assumption that the unit of analysis here is the system itself in which states develop, and the state is but one of four key players. Re-centering the focus onto systemic functions radically reconfigures the movements that occur within the boundaries of the state, as well, and allows for an understanding of greater levels of connectivity between movements occurring in different temporalities from the nineteenth century into

U.S., middle class, etc) *can be aware* of what is going on in Argentina and Chile that we can understand how powerful is the communication across national boundaries, due to those transnational processes that can be termed globalization from below (grassroots activism and networking) and globalization from above (transnational capital flows and the corporate/national governmental maneuvering that facilitates them).

¹¹ These denominations are Wallerstein’s.

the twentieth. Such an analytical stance also gives the term “globalization” much longer historical roots than other scholarly approaches.

As Samman (2002) notes, separating societies into units and classifying them as distinct species is to make divisions among units that have been produced relationally; moreover, “[t]he notion that the world could be divided along lines of polarities—primitive/modern, mechanical/organic, gemeinschaft/gessellschaft, particularistic/universalistic, Oriental/Occidental—limits our understanding of how historically this dualistic conceptualization is itself produced by the powerful forces of differentiation within the world-system” (277).

The Functioning of the World-Economy, States, and Anti-Systemic Movements

The functioning of the world-system is tightly organized around cycles of expansion and contraction (stagnation), lasting about 40 to 55 years, referred to as “Kondratieff” cycles (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1980:168). Cycles occur with respect to 1) production of the commodities involved in unequal exchange and the geographical location of core and peripheral economic processes; 2) the reorganization of household structures (defined as income-pooling units to which members of classes and status groups belong); and the incorporation of new zones into the world-economy (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1980:171-173). In such a formulation world production exceeding world demand results in stagnation. In their efforts to maintain or expand profit in such moments, entrepreneurs seek to expand production, reduce costs, or reduce competition, or a combination of the three. In the global flows of labor enveloped by these efforts, the direction is outward from “core” zones to “peripheral” zones. In expansionary phases,

this flow is reversed, such that flows of labor are directed inward to encompass those who are otherwise excluded from employment through structures of stratification that facilitate certain groups' access while denying access to others, as well as the physical location of available work. The stagnation cycle results in a decline of the waged labor force, such that class struggles "become the visible outgrowth of the stagnation phase" (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1980:169). Within these cycles of expansion and stagnation, there are four institutions basic to the capitalist world-economy that are created: the state, classes, ethno/national status groups, and households (ibid).

These cycles have systematically articulated and strengthened state machineries everywhere, but the initial differences of state strength mean that such differences continue to exist, even though states overall have grown stronger relative to forces internal to the state. The reality of increasing polarization in the power of states contradicts the rhetoric of the United Nations that insists on sovereign equality (ibid).

"Antisystemic movements" is the term given to social movements and national movements, which emerge in the nineteenth century as political responses to increasing economic restraints. The social movement Wallerstein refers to, however, is limited to "labor unions, socialist parties, and other kinds of workers' organizations" (173) and their goal is usually focused on obtaining state power. National movements are those that emerge in peripheral and semiperipheral zones of Europe to call for transforming the system of global inequality, and in the interim focus on creating a stronger national entity (173-4). Wallerstein's view is that social movements spread from core to semiperiphery and periphery, while national movements have spread in the opposite direction, leading to the "new explosion of political ethnicities in Western Europe and North America" (174)

and that they are deeply interrelated: “today, there is scarcely a social movement which is not nationalist, and there are few national movements which are not socialist” (174). Structural pressure from the world-system is what creates the “ambiguity” of, on the one hand, a search for equality in the system as a whole through transformation of it, and on the other hand, the focus on interim solutions that seek a stronger national entity.

Introducing Subjectivity: Feminist Theorizing of World-Systems

Forsythe (2002), in her feminist world-systems work, formulates both a critique and a revisioning of the origins of the world system. She explores the implications of shifts in understandings of the body and relations of kinship emerging in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries as the motive for shifts in relations that fueled the changeover from feudalism to capitalism, rather than relations of the work-force to seigniorial and urban patriarchal strata that Hopkins and Wallerstein (1980) emphasize. Forsythe also notes the important disjuncture that occurs in most work done in women’s/gender studies and those of international political economy, which is central to her ability to read the role of the body--which emerges as the key point on which “post68” [post-1968] women’s movements make their intervention—into the world-system itself. The disconnect usually found between and among scholars of women’s movements and world-systems is a result of how the unit of analysis is configured; one takes the “local” and the other the “global” as the focus of scholarly work. Forsythe’s observation is that,

[t]o produce knowledge about long-term, large-scale social change that corresponds to the prescriptions of women’s movements for research respecting embodiment and multiplicity requires that we examine preconceptions about the status of both the knower and the known in the research process (147).

She interrogates the divide that signals the specialization of feminist analysis in examining the “knower”, and world-system approaches that largely have focused on the “known” (ibid.). However, world-systems, as posited by Forsythe, is a “useful ally” (157) for producing knowledge on gender differentiated relations to and within world-economic processes.

An important shift in the world-system occurs with the explosion of social movements in the late 1960s that signals changes in negotiations around difference (“identity”) and the site of these negotiations is not limited to within the state. The state constitutes a boundary that delimits certain relations, but it is not the only one.

Opening the Door to Subjectivities

In combining multiple interests, I set out to first affirm feminist work in this arena, building on those scholars (especially Forsythe 1998 and 2002; Adams 1999, and Orloff 1999) who have paved the way in terms of making clear the need for analyses that take seriously women as actors. When we discuss “social movements,” or “the state,” to who is it, in terms of gendered/sexed bodies that we refer? That is, who occupies these end categories? Once we stop assuming that these labels speak for themselves in terms of the actors grouped by them, we can better explore the dynamics within and between societies that is the task of any comparative study.

Equally, if not more important, is to take feminist postmodern/poststructural insights and apply them as a lens onto the dynamics of power. A useful deconstruction of labels/end categories that are strategies for managing power in hierarchical societies will provide greater understanding of power dynamics, and in a world-system that hinges on

capitalism and the struggles between parties of order and change, understanding power is the central problematic. This is, in my estimation, an excellent path to bring to fruition C. Wright Mills' postulate of the sociological imagination.

In the current moment, understanding power must necessarily involve both knower and known, as Forsythe (2002) stated. This means that as social scientists we must be willing to engage others in contexts where we may not be the expert, and we must recognize power dynamics involved in social science projects. Expressing vulnerability, however, is not something sociologists do, very often or very well. Certainly the field as a whole is reluctant to express its insecurities of self. Anthropologists, in a sense, have had to do what sociologists have not, because of the way their field explicitly served to uphold empire (see for example, Tsing's (1993) assessment of this). That is, anthropologists from the First World had to reassess their role in cross-cultural, cross-national encounters, when the Third World raised its collective/dissident voice, and changed global dynamics in the middle of the twentieth century. From this has emerged a rich literature of self-reflection that bears many useful lessons for sociologists. Volumes such as *Racing Research, Researching Race* (Winddance Twine and Warren 2000) and *Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork* (Wolf 1996) raise the issue of the researcher and her position, as much as they raise the issue of what is being researched.

It is my contention that the experiences embodied in travel compel us to engage these issues of changes in the discipline of sociology and the environment in which it exists. Travel, as such, includes understanding the social, political, and economic terrain of a particular place, and also demands that we situate ourselves vis-à-vis those with

whom we interact. In the case of the over-exposed U.S. social scientist as traveler, these questions of social location become relevant in reading power relations between and among us and our nations. In my experiences in Latin America for this particular project, all of these questions that I had struggled with in the proposal preparation, were brought to the fore in a multiplicity of ways.

In order to deconstruct the binaries, we must engage the conceptual terrain of *relationality*—found in world-systems approaches, in poststructural analytical tools, in feminist subjectivities. I rely primarily on Hopkins (1978); Forsythe (2002); and Scott (2003) to develop the tools necessary for this project, thus utilizing feminist/poststructural/world-systems approaches to be able to think about and work through categories of peoples and their nations.

Hopkins' (1978) notion of “figure-ground” is that first one thing/event/circumstance comes clearly into focus, and then the other, and it is the interplay of one off the other that creates a meaningful engagement between the two.¹² Scott's (1988, 2003) poststructuralist analysis invokes a similar kind of analysis, wherein she deconstructs debates that force feminists to choose between seeking equality or difference by seeing how they are played off one another. Understanding the debates about equality and difference (that is, universal sameness of women and men, or women's difference from men) as a particular framing of dichotomous categories/choices helps us understand that there is something beyond choosing either equality or difference. Similar debates exist regarding sameness and differences among women.

¹² I want to acknowledge Nancy Forsythe for drawing attention to the compatibility of Hopkins work with feminist work. My work here takes Forsythe's premise, adding in Joan Scott, whose assessments of post-structuralism I find very useful.

There are four key poststructural concepts/techniques/tools provide that Scott uses. They are (1) language, (2) difference, (3) deconstruction, and (4) discourse. Language is a system through which meaning is created and cultural practices organized (this is the more anthropological side to it). Difference, as alluded to above, is the creation of categories that are constructed in relation to one another. Deconstruction, emerging from feminist uses and readings of Foucault's work, concerns the reading power and hegemony in texts and an examination of how meaning is created in the contrasts of the categories. Finally, discourse analysis involves analysis of the variety of sources through which discourse is produced, including texts, rhetoric, and use of imagery.

The techniques invoked above assume that "meaning is conveyed through implicit or explicit contrast, through internal differentiation" in reading texts (Scott 1988:7). These analyses also rely less on abstract categories (e.g., women, men) and explore gender as contingent on historical and social circumstances. Knowledge, utilizing this approach, "is not prior to social organization, it is inseparable from social organization" (Scott 1988:6). Thus, understanding how gender is produced as a process is critical to understanding how actors linked together for purposive action are organized.

Conclusion

Comparative studies provide the basis for this study, but more traditional institutionalist approaches to studying states and networks encompassing social movements do not incorporate subjectivities from the "cultural turn." World-systems approaches begin to open the door to subjectivities by understanding the researcher as

implicated in the research itself, but it is only with feminist scholarship in the genre that subjectivities are brought in as central to understanding the very workings of the world-system. This then establishes a way to link more traditional sites of study with strands that have emerged from other disciplinary locations. Using these combined tools enables a clearer assessment of what comparative studies as such can accomplish, where their limits are, and how we can overcome those limits by engaging feminist and poststructuralist lenses. I take these issues up in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Politics, Fronteras, Geographies, Gender

The conceptual framework for this project is grounded in the key terms in the title of this work: politics, *fronteras*, geographies, and gender. When examined together and in relation to each other, these concepts effectively capture at least some of the subjectivity brought into the scientific arena by feminisms, cultural studies, and a focus on the sociology of knowledge. In that respect, they work between and among the literatures generated in social science spaces on civil societies, the NGO sector, social movements, networks, states, and capitalist development.

In this chapter, I discuss how each of these elements represents an important set of inter-related ideas that, taken together, ground this study. The four broad categories are also inter-connected, and it is the relationship between them that is fruitful as a lens onto the dynamics of understanding what observations at the level of the nation-state (the fifth key term in the title of this project) can tell us about the undercurrents of gendered power and knowledge on which paradigms of democracy and development rest.

Feminist theories and actions emerge from different sites. This is important in considering gender relations in Latin America, where the largest share of research and theorization on women and gender has emerged from social movements sites, “materialized in feminist organizations, NGOs promoting women, development NGOs,” contrasting with the bulk of such knowledge production in the industrialized countries emerging from the academy (Anderson 1996:38).

Thus, even as the focus here is to understand them in relation to each other, they remain distinct spaces (the academy, research institutions, grassroots organizations, NGOs, multilateral development banks, state agencies on women). Therefore, I propose the term “forms of movement for gender equality” to reference the range of sites where knowledge is produced. “Equality” here also can be read as “equ(al)ity”, to emphasize that equity is part of this equation—that is, an evening out of the relations of power, along with the idea of fairness (that improving women’s status is about achieving social justice).

Forms of movement for gender equality shift in relation to changes in the gendered power relations of civil society/NGO sector-state-multilateral development banks, signaling the shifting terrain on which struggles of identity and redistribution are waged. The power relations among these distinct but related sectors thus reflect where knowledge/activism (forms of movement) are playing out most prominently in any given moment.

In this chapter, I lay out the theoretical tools necessary to situate the forms of movement for gender equality that occur in Argentina and Chile in the late twentieth century. In this case, the issue of what is studied (the ontological question: What can we know about forms of movement that take up the question of gender inequality?) is entirely bound up with how we study (the epistemological question: How can we know those forms of movement and their goals of gender equality?). Thus, although methodology is contained within a separate chapter (Chapter 4), theory and method are tightly intertwined.

The Importance of Dichotomous Constructions

To arrive at the point of being able to consider “comparison” as a historically specific tool of analysis, we need to understand the power dynamics involved in constructing categorizations (often dichotomous) of peoples through gender/race/class/nation, or of countries through classifications as core/periphery or North/South. Dichotomous thinking is such a powerful organizing tool in modernity, that it continues to be a highly worthwhile project to deconstruct the binaries that we use in almost constant fashion to organize the world around us.

The literatures reviewed in Chapter 2 all create categories for purposes of analysis. The focus of Chapter 3, then, is about how to understand what kind of categories social scientists construct, in order to then see ways that we can *deconstruct* them. Or, in lieu of totally dismantling them, at a minimum, the goal is to understand the dynamics of power that are at play through seeing where lines of differentiation are drawn around matters of scientific importance.

Politics: The Power of Naming Women’s Activisms

Analysis of women’s collective activism targeting the state immediately begs the question of how to name these actions, and what the debates around naming practices themselves mean in terms of both activists and the researchers who study them. When, and how, and by whom are women’s actions named and seen as “feminist,” “feminine,” “women’s,” “community-based,” or “human rights” activisms? Are they “local,” “national,” or “global”? Are they “networked”? What are the historical moments that frame these questions? These naming practices are complex because they serve to situate

the contexts of social movements and international development paradigm shifts from the 1970s through the 2000s.

Naming practices can be seen as embodying both hierarchical and liberatory possibilities. Used as a discursive imposition, such labels can be seen as disciplining actions; however, use of particular labels to put forward a political agenda can be emancipatory (Marchand 1995). However, *not* naming movements as particular types can also have a liberating effect, if we take the view that making distinctions may be futile because there is no way to adequately address the fact that many women's movements, emerging as they do from contexts that may warrant a variety of tactics, are simultaneously feminist *and* feminine (Stephen 1997), or feminist *and* human rights based.

Reading histories of movements and the creation of particular programs becomes a project in and of itself when we understand that language powerfully embodies, reflects, and perpetuates the relationships of dominance and subordination in the world at large. Discourses, as “tactical elements...operating in the field of force relations,” (Foucault 1990:100) bring together power and knowledge. Within any given strategy employed to manage power relations, there may be multiple, even contradictory discourses (ibid.).

Representation as Truth

There was a noticeable struggle in feminist literatures in the 1990s over the value of the postmodern positionality¹³ [this can be seen by juxtaposing the works of Collins

¹³ (If it can be argued that there is a “postmodern position” given the surrender of the subject in some postmodern work.)

(1998) and Kaplan and Grewal (1997), for example]. These debates were how to fight political battles, which strategies were considered the most useful. What resonates, however, for those who advocate a thoughtful postmodern stance, is the presence of multiple subjectivities, rather than one identity that always must be at the fore. Identity is contextual, and the terrain on which struggles occur is constantly shifting—certainly capitalism shifts and changes and encapsulates things previously outside it (including identities), so why shouldn't the tactics to struggle within it for both recognition, on the one hand, and distribution, on the other?

Indeed, the ongoing transformations of state development practices, increasing privatization, crisis and change in government, and growth of regional and transnational grassroots social justice movements against top-down corporate globalization processes (e.g., the World Social Forum, founded in Porto Alegre, Brazil) are the context in which women's activism of the late 1990s and early 2000s in Latin America are staged and upon which they act. These tendencies can be seen as the "wider field of power relations [that provides] meaning, realization, and context of experiences" (Dean 1997:3).

The typology that typically serves to categorize U.S. North American feminist activism and scholarship of the 1968-1990 period, illustrates how naming simultaneously produces and circumscribes knowledge, and highlights the tensions emergent in the 1990s mentioned immediately above. This typology relies on a hegemonic model constructed as a

four-phase feminist history of consciousness, a cognitive map consisting of "liberal," "Marxist," "radical/cultural," and "socialist" feminisms. We can schematize these phases as "women are the same as men," "women are different from men," "women are superior," and the fourth catchall category, "women are a racially divided class" (Sandoval 2000:51).

Sandoval's accounting highlights how the politics of race and nation can be seen as being excluded as a part of all feminisms. The typology, contends Sandoval, limits our understanding of oppositional praxis in the 1968-1990 period (and, I would argue, into the current moment). That is, this representation of feminist oppositional consciousness occupies the totality of the *space* in which oppositional consciousness exists, even as it does not speak to the totality of the *forms* of oppositional consciousness.¹⁴ The typology creates exclusionary boundaries and practices that reinforce the typology itself.

Sandoval's work is crucially important because it highlights the degree to which particular accounts may constitute themselves as the only game in town (the "real" story), even as they serve as the basis from which to critique the ability of science to produce "truth." This does not mean we are relegated to uncritically accepting all accounts, and accepting them as equal in their abilities to explain power relations. Rather, what we need is "an interpretive approach grounded on how people understand themselves as creators and practitioners of their world" (Escobar 1992:63).

In this situation, then, representation of what the debates are leads to an analysis centered on reading how actors in communities represent themselves to one another and others whom they may claim to serve or represent. "Representation" involves a two-fold enterprise of surmising the image of self and the image presented to others, and what that says (intentionally or unintentionally) about the state of those relations.

¹⁴ This then is the "con text" of the typology. The discourse represents itself as the total discourse by filling all available space. In actuality, the discourse is only one representation, and the *con* is that it assumes to speak for all discourses that might potentially occupy in some measure, this space. Thanks to Carlos Schröder for this point.

Fronteras

“Fronteras” is a Spanish language term. It can be multiply defined, a quality that lends texture to it, which in turn makes it rich in possibility. Translations include frontier, boundary, and border. In a U.S. context, “la frontera” has come especially to our attention as the border with Mexico, and in the writings of Chicana feminists like Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), as she describes “the borderlands.” It is a physical and psychic space. It can be the space between countries where they meet in inchoate yet highly policed fashion. Things are different on either side of that line. We may see it, hear it, feel it, or otherwise experience it, but we understand *la frontera* as a space of change.

Here in the space of the dissertation, I choose *frontera* as a way to see boundaries as both border and frontier: fences that keep us in but beyond which lie new spaces. And once we have crossed a *frontera*, particularly in understanding the world through the feminist politics of social location, it is no longer possible to look back on the spaces traversed in the same way.

Fronteras of Social Problems and Intellectual Puzzles

Thomas Kuhn (1962) makes an important distinction between social problems and intellectual puzzles. To do normal science, he says, we must deal with intellectual puzzles. This is because puzzles are questions we can answer, whereas social problems, by their very nature, overflow the boundaries of what science alone can resolve. Consider, too, Przeworski and Teune’s (1970) assessment of (and retreat from) what lies beyond the bounds of the scientist’s work: “Controversies concerning the choice of the basic postulates of science require explication of underlying metascientific criteria and

are usually unsolvable” (3). The boundaries of academic disciplines are thus defined by determinations of what fits under the rubric of “puzzles” by virtue of available explanatory tools, while other areas are designated as outside the discipline, and some are seen to fall entirely outside the bounds of a purely academic environment.

These boundaries are precisely the reason why the work of social change to create social justice takes so many forms. Over the last several decades, important social movements and related critical scholarship emerged that responded to and created growth, opportunity, changes and challenges in civil societies, governments, and international financial and governmental institutions. Activists, scholars, and policy makers in the Americas and elsewhere strategized to create more egalitarian social, political and economic arenas with respect to gender, at the same time as socially conservative influences and organizing within and beyond national societies emerged to compete with these egalitarian ideals. The tensions between these tendencies form an important part of this study.

Kuhn uses his dichotomy of puzzle/problem to explain paradigm shifts within scientific arenas, noting that when the puzzles themselves become increasingly unanswerable using the accepted intellectual tools, new frameworks are developed as explanatory mechanisms. In part, we can see that this expansion is not only about explanatory theories, but what is being asked. Science, the scientist, and scientific production all came to be questions that broke down some of those tightly guarded boundaries: As science has become more inclusive in terms of who is able to be a scientist, so too have scientists increasingly woven social problems into the fabric of what can be framed as puzzles.

In the academic arena, problems taken up by feminist scholars and comparative sociologists (and feminist comparativists!) include inequalities in the global economy, in their gendered, raced, and classed formations, and the policies and politics of states and nations. I will turn to the relevant scholarship emerging from theoretical contributions that deal with ontological and epistemological questions that have served to closely examine the relationships between social problems and scientific puzzles.

Important, too, are intellectual trends that have increasingly questioned the impact of dichotomous thinking in the Western world. Derrida (1982, 1976) makes an important contribution to understanding how naming things in categories and then focusing on the differences produced by such divisions, has profound impacts on what is meaningfully engaged as scientific endeavor, what knowledge is, and how we participate in the construction of knowledge. If we then begin to think of the binarism of social problem and intellectual puzzle itself as a question, we are immediately thrust into the terrain of the poststructural: what does the binary, the setting up of these two concepts in opposition to one another, signify? How is meaning constantly deferred¹⁵ as we shift our gaze from problem to puzzle and back again? How are problems and puzzles defined in particular historical moments? Can we refuse to surrender the social problem to the “non-scientific”?

This is not to say that Kuhn’s division is not useful. He is certainly correct in noting that scientists must put boundaries around any particular project, including those of time and other resources, although make strategic divisions between the social problem and the intellectual puzzle, in order to. The social problem, then, as I would

¹⁵ Derrida utilizes the term “différance” to capture this idea of always-deferred meaning between the two sides of a dichotomous construction.

define it, relying here on Kuhn's divisions for just a moment, is that there is a lack of "gender justice" globally because of multiple forms of gender inequalities. These include but are not limited to: cultural biases that tend to favor those characteristics associated with men for assuming leadership roles in society and families; violence that disempowers those who suffer it in their homes and in their larger societies; capitalist structures that value particular kinds of production while devaluing much of the world's labor that is performed outside of the market; the assumption that those who are privileged in hierarchical societies have the right to speak for all; and masculinist politics, engaged in by both men and women, that are played out on the terrain of, and at great cost to, all women's bodies. To engage this in a dissertation project, I have cast the above as an intellectual puzzle that can shed light on at least some of the dynamics involved in creating and perpetuating inequalities, as well as on the dynamics of efforts for social change that positively impact women's status in society, and by extension, those labors and characteristics that tend to be more associated with women, and feminist visions that seek empowerment rather than power as domination (power over others). I will visit the questions that constitute the puzzle as part of Chapter 4 (on methods).

Even strategic engagements, however, leave open the question and importance of the binary and the relationship between categories established as opposites of one another. And so, Kuhn's initial reference becomes part of the puzzle and problem, raising further questions about dichotomous thinking more generally, not least in terms of comparative studies like this one where two countries are selected as the study site. It is important to be clear, for example, that by focusing on South American countries, the aim of this study is not to reinscribe the rather tired idea that the people of Latin America

suffer a kind of terrible machismo that does not exist in the United States or in other areas of the world. I have no interest in implicitly juxtaposing an oppressive Latin America with a “liberated” North. There are more similarities than differences between these spaces in terms of gender relations, and the issue in focus here is when and why gender differences do matter in any given context.

Fronteras of Science and Society

I would like to state that as much as this is about contributing to literatures and the fields to which they are relevant, this is also about engaging sociology in a societal context. Sociologists have avoided some (but only some) of the anthropologists’ baggage by staying in their own backyard. And the cultural turn has largely passed by the sociology that is practiced and taught in the U.S., so it remains relatively isolated, studying its own classics and maintaining a positivist stance in the face of post-positivism. As Shelley Feldman notes, her own appreciation of the attention that Wallerstein gives to epistemic concerns within the broad field of sociology “is especially significant given the response of, for example, Joan Huber, who, as president of the American Sociological Association, viewed the intellectual claims of feminists, postmodernists, and poststructuralists as the cause for the decline in the significance of sociology as an academic discipline worthy of administrative support” (2002:192).

A young man who ran his own newspaper kiosk on Avenida Rivadavia in the heart of Buenos Aires asked me one day, as I stopped to buy the Sunday papers and some weekly news magazines, what I was doing in Argentina. I told him, and his response was enthusiastic: “Ah, *this* is the place for a sociologist! There’s so much going on.” This was

a refreshing change of pace from the typical response I receive in the U.S. when I mention that I am a sociologist, a response that runs along the lines of “Oh, my cousin is a social worker, too.” Our broader society lacks understanding of sociology as a field of study, in no small part because of the severe lack of space for public intellectuals, but also in part due to the distance that sociologists put between themselves and the intellectual projects they pursue. If we fail to situate ourselves, as producers of knowledge, vis-à-vis our projects and the communities we want to build, we fail to create a space for a sociology that can be understood in the larger society. I raise these critiques in the context of my own sociological work in this project with the understanding that we critique those things we love so that we and they can grow. The critique is itself a significant site of growth: “[W]e must conclude that all criticism is first and foremost creative and that the ideological emerges, precisely, at the moment when criticism stops” (MacKenzie, 2002:26).

Geographies

One source of empirical and theoretical inspiration for this work is Kaplan and Grewal’s (1999) observation that while references to “gender,” “geography,” and “nation” are plentiful, theories that link these three terms are still developing.¹⁶ In my own efforts to link these into a research project, I seek to analyze how we can understand

¹⁶ Their comment, in the opening paragraph of their essay, “Transnational Feminist cultural Studies: Beyond the Marxism/Poststructuralism/Feminism Divides,” is made in reference to the 1993 annual Modern Language Association meetings. “...we were powerfully struck by the fact that there was very little theorization of the relationships among these historically grounded terms” (349). They suggest that geographical difference is now being managed much in the same way that sexual difference has been managed. “In this happy pluralism, the conflicts and dependencies that structure a multinational world of neo- and postcolonialisms are erased or managed. Such management of diversity is not in and of itself new, nor is the role of feminism in this process of containment a recent development. Yet, in the effort to deconstruct the present positions of subjects within postmodernity, the tensions between liberal and more progressive forms of feminism are not being confronted” (ibid.).

specific debates about gender and development in Latin America as important sites for linking North and South [both global North and South, and North and South America(s)]. The question of geography is one that concerns representation of spatial/political relationships, and confronting boundaries is a key question in geographical formations. The question of geography brings in other travel-related issues that are not inconsequential: Transnational boundary crossing brings with it negotiations of power, found not only in socio-economic terms, but also in language, cultural perspectives, and personal encounters.

Geographies as Questions of the State, Culture and Theory

The work on states done by historical institutionalists tends to focus on structures and organizational capacities in a way that emphasizes political linkages. As such, the bulk of this work does not engage “culture,” which, as Migdal notes, is difficult to define: “[w]e know that culture is important, that the state is more than a configuration of roles or an interchangeable structure; we just cannot quite figure out how to study it comparatively, how to make it much more than a giant residual category” (1997: 215). In other words, if culture is entirely unique to a particular territorial formation, then how can things that are completely unique be deemed as “comparable units” to be compared across state boundaries? And is particularity a substantial enough criterion for designating that which is cultural?¹⁷

¹⁷ Some anthropological models suggest the uniqueness of culture is such that not only can it be studied as a non-comparable thing, but that “only the native can know the native,” that is, only someone from inside that culture can understand it in a way that is true.

Przeworski and Teune (1970) note that from the 1950s until the time when they are writing that area study programs constituted the dominant paradigm for the study of other cultures. Area studies as such were artifacts of the Cold War (Appadurai 1999), providing a way to manage global geopolitical interests and threats, in the language of the day, for strategic purposes. In terms of theoretical production, Przeworski and Teune's perspective is that area studies fall short with regard to their value for general social theory, when compared to general cross-national or cross-cultural studies. However, these latter types of studies have a major shortcoming of their own: "a methodology validated by social science practice in a single culture, particularly the United States" (xi). The emergence of such approaches from within a "single culture"¹⁸ focused research difficulties on aspects such as translation of questionnaires, while ignoring the expertise of area specialists, who considered "a nation, culture, or region [to] be considered as a 'whole'" (ibid.).

Some scholars within the studies of Latin American social movements point to the connections between culture, defined as material practices which embody particular values and subjectivities, and politics (Escobar and Alvarez 1992; Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar 1998). While identity is seen as key to the new social movements of the late 1960s and beyond, the links between identity and culture are not often made explicit. Escobar and Alvarez (1992) and Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar (1998) suggest that making such linkages explicit will highlight the ways in which Latin American struggles are cultural in content, and thus the relationships of constituencies to the state, market,

¹⁸ The idea of a "single culture" within the United States is presumably reflective of dominant (masculinist) social science perspectives, rather than a reflection of the population at large. Drawing attention to the time frame (the 1960s), the social movements that are emerging in this moment will soon enough draw attention to and produce a critique of the idea of any such "single culture" even within the social sciences. See discussion of feminist perspectives, below.

and civil society are embedded in what are otherwise viewed as primarily economic and political structures [following from earlier work on the embeddedness of economy and society by Granovetter (1985)].

Przeworski and Teune (1970) emphasize two notable changes “taking place among social scientists” (ibid): 1) a greater awareness of the importance of theory in grounding any data so that they are meaningful, and 2) “the emergence of competent social scientists throughout the world. No Latin American study program in a North American university can match the detailed information, language skills, and access to data possessed by the hundreds of Latin American social scientists” (ibid.). Understanding limitations of foreign scholars and working in cross-cultural/national partnership are the hoped-for outcomes of their proposals for a comparative logic.

They further the aforementioned discussion by engaging the debates over the nomothetic and ideographic nature of natural sciences and history, respectively, and argue that a modification of these extreme positions leads to the assessment of social science statements as being acceptably applicable to classes of nations or areas (say, for example, Latin America, Southeast Asia, rather than only one country within either of those regions) that share “syndromes of historical, cultural, and social characteristics” (Przeworski and Teune 1970:7). The hard science/historical division is not completely overcome, however, because more general statements (applying what one finds in Latin America to Eastern Europe, for example) would be deemed “improper” (ibid., 8).

Following from the above, then, “proper” comparative labels are often related to the designations of states’ or regions’ level of economic development. Revisiting Katznelson (1997) for a moment, we can also see that his re-reading of (John Stuart)

Mills in combination with Tocqueville and Weber, is about the development of proper comparisons through care in the construction of boundaries:

Read together, Tocqueville, Weber, and Mill point to a distinctive way of constructing cases for comparative analysis, focusing less on the causal importance of this or that variable contrasted with other but more on how variables are joined together in specific historical instances. They do so by wagering on key factors, deployed as ideal-types, in interaction with others, but not on ideal-types too distant from situations on the ground...This orientation to comparison prefers ideal-types that are realist and concrete rather than nominalist and abstract, preferring theory to guide investigations, say, about Catholicism and Protestantism rather than religion or about class relations within capitalism rather than structures of inequality (99).

And so, we surrender our ability to read processes to end categories (invoking a Hopkins' term, to be discussed below) such as "developing," "least developed," "OECD," "high income," and "middle income" (all found in the United Nations *Human Development Report*, as one example). Put into Przeworski and Teune's (1970) analysis from above, these are nomothetic labels: "The goal of comparative research is to substitute names of variables for the names of social systems, such as Ghana, the United States, Africa, or Asia" (8). Following from Bendix' (1963) work, such a substitution would occur if one were able to attribute differences not to country called India, for example, but to a level of economic development found there. The level of development substitutes for India, which is a name designating a specific social system (see discussion of "Systems versus Variables in Comparative Research," Introduction, Przeworski and Teune 1970). Such "developmental" divides make it difficult to adopt any new geographical sense because they reinscribe particular narratives about a linear sense of development, most fully developed by modernization theorists in the mid-twentieth century. As narratives, they constitute cultural judgments.

The labels are unable to keep pace with dynamic change because they rely on a Parsonsian functionalist perspective of systemic stability.¹⁹

[T]he formulation of general theories is possible if and only if these theories take into account what appears to us to be a pervasive property of social reality: social phenomena are not only diverse but always occur in mutually interdependent and interacting structures, possessing a spatiotemporal location. *If stable, these patterns of interaction can be treated as systems* (Przeworski and Teune 1970: 12, emphasis added).

This logic results in a tautology: If the patterns are stable, they can be treated as a system. If treated as a system, it assumes stability. Any kind of rapid change becomes labeled as crisis, rather than as a regular part of systemic dynamics.

Two examples provide insights into the tension of stability and crisis. Whereas the financial gains and increases in per capita incomes of the 1990s had merited Argentina's categorization (in terms of macroeconomic indicators and by a self-assessment of this wealth by Argentines) as "the First World." By 2002, when more than half of its population had fallen beneath a poverty line set at income of \$2 (U.S.) a day, Argentina was not able to apply for funds from certain agencies because in theory it no longer qualified.²⁰ There was an assumption that whatever levels of economic achievement reached in the 1990s would somehow remain in place. This is the linear logic of modernization which posits that countries at some point will "take off" (Rostow 1978) and will continue a relatively smooth upward climb. Confusion is sown by the dynamic processes of change. At the same time, however, a label such as "least developed" or even "Sub-Saharan Africa," given what we know (and assume) of these

¹⁹ Although I indicate their inadequacy, neither am I deliberately pushing for a totally idiographic perspective that suggests sole applicability within any one social system/nation/state.

²⁰ Perspective shared by several interviewees familiar with United Nations' work, for example.

places from indicators such as income, presence of conflict, etc. may simply serve as the embodiment of “crises.” Naming of spaces in this way, suggesting at once stasis and change, presents contradictions that remain unresolved as long as we assume the individuality (independence) of states and/or regions, and as long as the cultural understandings of what constitute crisis and stasis remain unexamined, and the ways that they are constituted in relationship to each other.

This difficulty of the Cartesian sensibility of dualism underlies Mills’ work. He provides a striking statement in “Of Fallacies in General”, clearly stating that our bounds of knowledge are circumscribed by such binarisms: “we never really know what a thing is, unless we are also able to give a sufficient account of its opposite” (1974:735). What this suggests is that we can examine countries within any one category, or we can compare across boundaries—but we must assume some kind of essentialized notion of likeness/difference in order to set up the comparison and/or contrast. The unit of analysis in the comparative studies that emerge from Mills’ method of difference and Weber’s ideal cases, even if modified in Katznelson’s reading of them (in combination with Tocqueville), or in the work of Przeworski and Teune, is the (discretely configured) state or society. The boundary that emerges through dynamic processes acquires enough rigidity that “endogenous” changes emerge from players with state boundaries (elites, armed forces, peasants, citizenry) but those situations and dynamics that cannot be attributed to endogenous factors are determined to be external (“exogenous”) to the system. Thus, while the states within the interstate system are examined in great detail, the interstate system in and of itself is not theorized; it is, rather, an exogenous factor influencing dynamics within and between states.

Work in the U.S. and Europe that focuses on “state feminism” only in the context of the wealthiest of the industrialized nations reinscribes that dominant narrative that egalitarian approaches to combat gender-based discrimination are only undertaken in the North, whereas the South *is* (racial and economic) difference. This flattens differences between and among the countries of the South, emphasizing the primary difference as being that between North and South. The same problem may be raised within the context of studies of the welfare state. The welfare state is assumed to exist (even as it sustains attacks brought about by privatization efforts and increasing rich/poor divisions) in the North; hence, research on gender and the welfare state focuses here. Elsewhere, the focus, when not on single cases (Griffin and Gates 2002) is enveloped by the label of “development” which flattens out the distinctions between state, market and civil society. Part of this “flattening out” is due to the fact that we must choose the boundaries around our objects (subjects) of study, and this can be determined by academic interest as well as by the discipline of disciplines (see discussion of Kuhn, above).

Gender

The modern approach advocated by historical institutionalists by and large does not allow for explorations of subjectivity, and this is one of the spaces where historical institutionalisms and feminist scholarship (in particular, postmodern feminist scholarship) are negotiating with one another. Multiple, sometimes contradictory subjectivities of both researcher and researched are important to understanding women’s movements as social movements, but because the positionality of the researcher is generally not brought in as a question in the context of institutional studies, it has been difficult to reconcile modern

and postmodern influences—thus the categorizations as “insurgent,” above.

Key questions in scientific endeavors revolve around perspective: Whose perspective is it that marks the framework for study? And, how can we know the limits of our own perspective? The issue of perspective historically has been dealt with through the social relations in which scientists and science operate. The scientist is designated as “knower” and the subject [object] of study as that which is to be “known” (Forsythe 2002, Peterson and Runyan 1999). As Hubbard (2000) succinctly puts it, “every fact has a fact maker.”²¹

The power granted to the scientific endeavor has to do, in no small part, with the person(s) involved in imagining, designing, planning, and carrying out the project. The prestige associated with the scientific endeavor has been assumed because the scientists themselves had the social status (privilege) to gain entry into the kinds of training necessary. Making facts, and even prior to that, making fact makers, as it were, is a social endeavor, subject to the hierarchical organization, and repercussions of such hierarchical arrangements, found in the larger society. [See Hubbard (2000) and Martin (1996) for excellent discussions of the ways in which beliefs frame what scientists observe, such that rather than seeing something to believe it, we believe and thus find it in our work.] That is, the social context of scientific labors is prior to the science itself and can never be disembedded from those labors and the results they produce. The point, then, is to recognize the biases and work to understand how those produce particular kinds of knowledge and the ways that knowledge can serve to perpetuate or interrupt societal assumptions.

²¹ Przeworski and Teune (1970) note that “Phenomena become facts when they are expressed in some language” (13).

In Hubbard's work, and in others such as Nancy Leys Stepan (1991, 2001) the hierarchical categorization of gender, race, class, and nation, science and knowledge are deconstructed to interrogate the deeper meanings tied to societal positioning. Thus, science as a social project can provide justification for unequal power relations; indeed, Hubbard's work highlights the scientific assumptions regarding black and white women's sexuality in the latter nineteenth century United States, wherein black women were assumed to be able to bear children (too many, in fact) under the most precarious of living and working situations, whereas white (middle class) women were portrayed as "too delicate" to engage in physical labor, much less while pregnant.

Feminist scholarship that developed the ideas of "standpoint" epistemologies engaged the issues of social location that become clearer when we ask who is producing knowledge, as well as what counts as knowledge in the first place. The Hegelian master-slave narrative served as an entry point into this arena, providing the idea that the institution of slavery is viewed and experienced in sharply contrasting ways by those who dominate in such a system, and those whose lives are lived in captivity of their masters. Formal structures and institutions create relational dynamics between persons that privilege one and subordinate another.

Standpoint epistemologists such as Smith (1987), Collins (1990), and Harding (1993) take up the idea that the "view from below" provides a window onto system dynamics that otherwise are obscured by power and positions of privilege. Not only is the idea of standpoint invoked to capture the idea that social location influences perspective, but it is also used to understand how starting from women's lives is a space in which to produce scientific knowledge. While standpoint theories were criticized in the 1990s for

being essentialist, they continue to provide a critical foundation for making visible the social locations of those operating from positions of greater power.

The question of objectivity in science is one of the central questions that have been raised in both theoretical and methodological terms in feminist scholarship of the last two decades. Harding, a principal contributor to the work in this area, made use of standpoint epistemologies discuss the multiple ways in which starting from the experiences of women's lives provides us with questions that are not only scientific in nature (in that they serve to produce scientific knowledge) but that also examine the context of scientific production itself. In Harding's work, she explicitly compares (feminist) empiricists who promote a more traditional idea of objectivity (achieved through distance from the subject [object] of study) with what she calls "strong objectivity." In this stance, she suggests that scientific objectivity is not rigorous enough to give us undistorted knowledge. What is needed is an explicit expression of the political endeavor, one that begins from the standpoints produced from the social locations of women, to produce less distortion. This commitment to a strong objectivity is tied, she notes, to "strong reflexivity."

In the context of the current project, "strong reflexivity" permits an exploration of the tensions, contradictions, and overlaps in the ways a variety of actors engage with a particular problem, that of gender inequality, to understand more clearly the power relations existing between and among nations, states, civil society, and the globalized space of women's movements and development bank activities.

Women in Development

In the development sector, women's relationship to economic processes came into focus in the early 1970s. Not coincidentally, this is the moment in which women's movements had begun to focus their concerns on women's exclusion from economic, political and social processes. And, beginning in 1975, designated the Year of the Woman by the United Nations, the U.N. held a series of conferences from 1975 through 1995,²² designed to bring together governmental representatives, as well as providing a space for non-governmental (non-state) organizations and individuals to interact, with some limited interactions also taking place between the governmental and non-governmental sectors.

The interactions and creation of globalized discourses around women and development paradigms produced Women in Development (WID) as the approach taken within financial institutions engaging with processes of development. The WID paradigm shares much of the liberal feminist approach, given that it does not critique the development paradigm as such, but critiques women's exclusion from these processes of generating formal paid employment (in the same way that liberal feminists in the U.S., for example, by and large did not critique many of the fundamental arrangements in governance and institutions—only women's exclusion from them). The critique of the development process is limited to its lack of inclusivity, but does not extend to acknowledgement of differences among women, or to a critique of the institutions producing development programs. This signals compliance with a First World

²² In 2000, the Beijing +5 Conference was held in New York, and there is a Beijing +10 Conference being held in 2005, plans for which are currently underway. I delimit the timeframe through the mid-1990s to coincide with the focal points of women's activism directed at the state in Argentina, the most intense of which occurs 1983 to 1992.

mainstream development perspective—that the global North is *the* modernization model for the Third World; and that modernization is synonymous with industrialization and urbanization (Rai 2002).

Discourses on state feminism and development processes are one and the same in the context of many countries including those in this study, and have been since the early 1980s. This institutionally-based approach was legitimated by the United Nations structure that produced, in 1979, the international bill of women’s rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (the CEDAW). Women’s movements pushing “from below” utilized the CEDAW as a powerful ally for advancing women’s interests first in the state and, from there, in society.

The CEDAW was produced in a world context that was engaged in the Cold War, and deep antagonisms between First and Third worlds, as well. What this meant in the context of women’s organizing were divisions between what Hobson (2003) would now name as *struggles for recognition* (the identity issues present in new social movement formations) and *struggles for redistribution* (lessening of gross inequalities of wealth and other resources attached to that, such as the ability to set agendas). In the 1975 and 1980 UN conferences, these tensions were expressed in debates among First and Third worlds about how to focus on formal equality as citizens and the development of economies.

The sharpness of divisions around this “non-dialogue” (Yuval-Davis 1997) has lessened as critiques from women of color in the West/global North have “challenged the ethnocentrism, often racism of western feminists from within” (ibid., 118), by deconstructing racial hierarchies and class privileges embedded in particular feminist discourses, producing substantive critiques of universalist assumptions regarding the

sources and solutions to gender oppression. These critiques merged with challenges from women's movements from the global South to form a powerful oppositional consciousness that transformed the agendas of the 1985 and 1995 United Nations conferences, as well as women's organizing well beyond those institutional boundaries.

The diverse points that the groups from the countries of the South and North declared in the successive United Nations Conferences on Women seemed to be based on distinct strategies for overcoming women's oppression. Under the slogan "Equality, Development and Peace," the conferences sought to unify countries with common goals in favor of women, but while Equality was the road taken by women from the industrialized countries, Development was seen by the Third World as an indispensable condition—or rather, as an absolutely necessary context—from which to find ways to overcome gender inequalities. It seemed that some basic social and economic conditions were essential for the exercise of certain rights like equality of opportunities and liberty, the ideological underpinnings of a market economy (Barrig 1998:104-5, translated by author).

In the development sector, what the critiques of the 1970s and 1980s produced was a paradigm shift from WID to GAD (Gender and Development), emphasizing the idea that gender is present in all aspects of institutions as well as in the programs they produce. This perspective promoted an internal focus on gender equity within development institutions (see, for example, Kardam 1991). The struggle to transition from WID to GAD is captured in the construction of the "needs-based" versus "strategic" activism dichotomy (Molyneux 1985). The former term is suggested as activism centered on fulfilling needs not designated as gender specific, such as securing sufficient food through locally based (e.g., neighborhood) efforts. The latter is associated strategic activism as that focused on changing women's subordinate status in society. In research, this often means that when Latin American activist agendas look like liberal feminist agendas based in the U.S., then they are counted as feminist struggles (Marchand 1995). Conversely, when a particular group of women engages in a community-based struggle

for survival, the assumption is that this extends women's traditional roles of mothers/wives, and is, therefore, non-feminist. The division of strategic/needs-based is intended as a tool for understanding, but the result is a reification of a world divided into developing and developed, into non-feminist consciousness among those women who are community activists, and non-community consciousness among feminists. While the intention may have been to present a more nuanced discussion of approaches to women's activism, situating it along a continuum, the practice has been to rely on the end categories to sort out where the boundaries of feminism lie, particularly with regard to the global South. What is useful about Molyneux's breakdown of interests, however, is to point out that there is no single interest or set of interests of women's interests (Mazur 2001).

A contrast with such typologies is provided by one of the groundbreaking publications of the 1980s, *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives* (Sen and Grown 1987) published as part of the "New Feminist Library" collection (of the Monthly Review Press), the intersectionality of gender and other oppressions tells us that

there is and must be a diversity of feminisms, responsive to the different needs and concerns of different women, and *defined by them for themselves*... This heterogeneity gives feminism its dynamism and... allows the struggle against subordination to be waged in all arenas... and it necessitates substantial change in cultural, economic, and political formations. For many women, problems of nationality, class, and race are inextricably linked to their specific oppression as women. Defining feminism to include the struggle against all forms of oppression is both legitimate and necessary (19, emphasis in original).

Similarly, Sandoval's (2000) re-mapping of the terrain of oppositional consciousness to contest U.S. feminist hegemonic discourses generates an alternative

topography of “consciousness in opposition” which includes struggles against gender oppression and those struggles against domination through hierarchies of race, sex, nationality, economics, and culture (54). Her re-visioning of the forms consciousness takes are made possible by the differential form of consciousness and social movement, which constitutes the fifth element in the topography. Arising from the praxis of U.S. feminists of color who move “between and among” ideological positions of equal-rights, revolutionary, supremacist, and separatist modes of oppositional consciousness, the positionalities are understood as tactics, and as such, they can be used as needed. They are not constituted as singular identities (58).

Gender and Development

“Gender and development” (GAD) emerged as a global discourse in the 1980s, weaving feminist sensibilities about gender inequalities with concerns for economic growth and participation of women together with understandings of institutional politics framing much of development programming. The feminist sensibilities were brought to the fore by women’s movements; concerns about development processes to date were summed up with the 1980s being commonly referred to as “the lost decade” in Latin America; and institutional politics were pushed into the limelight through the emergence of feminists in the state and multilateral institutions.

Keck and Sikkink (1998) offer an explanation for the smoothing over of North-South differences by the 1995 conference. Their perspective does not adequately account for the issues Alvarez raises in terms of the inequalities reinforced by channeling funds in very specific ways, resulting in much better access for some, while excluding others from

these preparatory processes, and ultimately, from the Conference itself. Alvarez (1998) notes that arrangements of preparatory meetings leading up to the Beijing Conference in countries like Brazil were controlled by limited numbers of organizations, largely those having close contacts with funding agencies like USAID in the North.

The complex relationship of women to the state is further complicated by economic development processes undertaken by the state. Although early texts such as Boserup (1970) focused on getting women into the development process (commonly denoted as “WID” or “women in development”), later texts are more critical of the processes through which development programs emerge (a critical position referred to as “GAD” or “gender and development”). What Bose and Belén (1995) refer to as “new feminist research on development” (4-5) makes a strategic move away from the women-as-victim model that was an important building block of ideas that centered on women’s marginalization in (salvatory) development processes. These texts highlight women’s problematic relations to both the state and the market (Elson 1992) and point to institutional issues arising within places such as the World Bank that are seen as gendered (Kardam 1991). The World Bank itself weighs into these conversations, with publications stressing its efforts in both engendering developmental and institutional processes (e.g., The World Bank 2001 and 2002). At the same time, within spaces such as the World Bank, for example, gender analysts must ‘sell’ the idea of gender analysis to other units and countries and convince individual client countries to fund these projects.

Engaging with this field of analysis, Bose and Belén (1995) posit that the relationship of women’s struggles to the economy that encompass local experiences and

national and international economic processes places development processes in a continuum with older forms of colonization and dependency.

The questions raised by these movements center around how to make the state itself more democratic and, specifically, how to make democracy meaningfully inclusive of women. Feminist scholarship has highlighted the ways in which the state makes gendered distinctions regarding the viability of citizenship, which is why democracy in and of itself is not enough to guarantee inclusion of women. Pateman's (1988) focus on the state and its contracts with citizens as gendered, provides one such example. Drawing on Hobbes, Locke, and other classical scholars of the state, she places the social contract under a gendered lens to examine the problematic relationship of women to the state generally, as both a theoretical and practical concern. Thus, although women were key in these transitions and the consolidation of democratic practices, they have received few of the benefits of democracy (Feijoo and Nari 1994). The transition in Latin American countries from dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s to democracy in the 1980s and 1990s, yielded a "double discourse: a discourse of [democratic] participation and a nondiscourse of economic exclusion" (Jelin 1998:408).

Women's social movements in local (national) terms have been widely studied in North and South America, as well as throughout the world (see Basu 1995 for such a collection). The basic backdrop for the study of Latin American social movements in particular from the 1970s focuses primarily on two distinct arenas, each involving the state in crucial and overlapping ways: 1) democracy and 2) neoliberal economic paradigms, including structural adjustment.

At the same time as the IMF and national governments negotiate moves towards increased privatization, the global South also maintains important relationships with such institutions as the World Bank, and in the case of Latin America, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Both financial institutions play key roles in funding projects related to development and poverty reduction, as well as state modernization and civil society-related initiatives. In the case of Argentina, the IDB is a partner in funding the National Council on Women's *Plan Federal de la Mujer* as one instance of how it is supporting practices that serve to modernize the state.

What is interesting is the way in which the conversations about achieving equality for women have been transferred somewhat from the arena of the state to market-based development bank territory. That is, conversations about 'empowerment' are an economic development discourse. Equality may be the goal for liberal feminists vis-à-vis the state, but empowerment is grounded in market access. Thus, the term 'empowerment' is somewhat out of place, or at least an awkward fit, within the state machineries that promote women's position and rights in society.²³

Defining how relationships are more or less hierarchical, empowering, or democratic puts these three terms into play, and is complicated by the situation in which practices may be hierarchical, but not inherently disempowering. This may be true for

²³ Anecdotally, while in Argentina for fieldwork I presented an outline of my project to a small group at a graduate institution. I used the term 'empowerment' in the context of discussing the National Council on Women and its Plan Federal de la Mujer and the response from one of my colleagues there was that the term was "too radical" [note: 'radical' as in pushing the envelope, not Radical, the opposition party in Argentina] for the context in which I was using it. In reflecting on this, my attention is drawn to the fact that indeed, this term is out of place in that context. In re-thinking the use of the term empowerment, the displacement becomes more obvious when juxtaposing egalitarian feminist approaches with development-centered approaches. Such a juxtapositioning and creation of dichotomous categories, however, is problematic in that it reiterates the divisions present in the 1970s and 1980s when international discussions in the global North revolved around "discrimination," whereas in the global South the focus tended to be on "survival." Thanks to friends and colleagues at the Universidad de San Martín, Buenos Aires for their thoughtful feedback and support.

less powerful actors for whom formal, structured mechanisms provide access to spaces that would perhaps not be available if such relations were dependent upon informal arrangements.

CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGIES FOR RESEARCH AND WRITING

In Focus: Relations Between and Among Actors

This project focuses on analyzing the relationships between and among grassroots civil society, NGO, state, and multilateral development bank actors engaged in creating forms of movement for women's equality in Argentina and Chile. The relationships between the actors in focus are fruitful as a lens onto the dynamics of understanding undercurrents of gendered power and knowledge on which paradigms of democracy and development rest, observed at the level of the nation-state.

This is a project in which the epistemological questions are tightly intertwined with ontological questions. That is, *how* we are able to recognize something has everything to do with *what* we know about it (the subject that holds our interest). I am writing this dissertation from the disciplinary location of sociology, but sociology as it intersects with feminist studies from a variety of disciplines (sociology, women's studies, comparative literature, anthropology, history, philosophy). This means, relating this back to the above, that my tool kit contains within it methodologies that are about *how we think*, as much as *what we do* to channel that thinking into analysis of the topic at hand.

Taking up the issues raised by the discussion of relevant literatures (found in both Chapters 2 and 3) and the conceptual framework described in Chapter 3, then, how is it possible to find a way to connect the actors of interest? How can feminist and comparative analyses be best brought together to analyze these ideas of politics, *fronteras*, geographies, gender in the nation-state? What are the specific tools necessary?

Project Overview and Analytical Practices: From Proposal to Fieldwork

The “Boundary Object” as Methodological Tool

The original working title of this project was “North-South Empowerment Paradigms: Accountability Practices and the Deepening of Democracy.” This project, in the proposal stage, took the form of an inquiry into “ethical accountability” practices with the idea of looking into how organizations and people within them relate to one another, and make meaningful connections, as they work from state, NGO, and multilateral-development bank sites.

With the idea of interviewing in mind (to be discussed below), I needed to be able to start the conversation with individuals in organizational sites. I needed a “hook” that would be able to engage them, something that would provide some structure in our encounters.

Bowker and Star (2000) offer just such an approach.²⁴ They take up the analysis of how people and information relate to each other by naming “boundary objects” as their focal point. The term “boundary object,” coined by Star (Star and Griesemer 1989, Star 1989b) are

those objects that both inhabit several communities of practice and satisfy the informational requirements of each of them. Boundary objects are thus both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites. They are weakly structured in common use and become strongly structured in individual-site use. These objects may be abstract or concrete....They are used in the service of an action and mediate it in some way. Something actually becomes an object only in the context of action and use; it then becomes as well something that has force to mediate subsequent action” (Bowker and Star 2000:297-98).

²⁴ I have Angela Stach to thank for drawing my attention to the usefulness of this tool. Her enthusiasm for Bowker and Starr’s work was contagious among those of us in a University of Maryland sociology-women’s studies graduate student research group; thus, I encountered Bowker and Starr’s text through Angela and the research group setting.

Previously, they note “Boundary objects are one way that the tension between divergent viewpoints may be managed” (292). And, finally, “Boundary objects, however, are not just...temporary solutions to disagreements about anomalies. Rather, they are durable arrangements among communities of practice” (307).²⁵

Starting the Conversation

In my study, the boundary objects are those two plans designed by states and civil society organizations in Argentina and Chile to improve the status of women. In simple terms, the Federal Plan for Women (Argentina) and the Plan for Equality of Opportunities between Women and Men (Chile) serve as conversation starters with people in a variety of state and civil society settings. I use the plans as a way to get people to tell me the stories of their organizations and their relationships. I am therefore privy to an ongoing conversation that allows for simultaneously acquiring more information about the individuals and organizations, and their relations to others doing similar kinds of work. Additionally, these conversations allow for re-reading the boundary object and the organizational relations discussed therein, in light of what interviewees tell me. The re-reading of the Argentina and Chile plans for women is made possible by examining how meaning is created through contrasts, as well as through how these actors are creatively establishing critiques.

²⁵ “Communities of practice” is a term developed by Lave and Wenger (1991) and is similar to the idea of “social worlds” (developed by Strauss 1978). “A community of practice (or social world) is a unit of analysis that cuts across formal organizations...and other forms of association such as social movements. It is...a set of relations among people doing things together” (Becker 1986, cited in Bowker and Star 2000:294).

By defining the plans as the anchor point of the dissertation research—but, very importantly, *not* the focal point of the analysis—, my aim is to map the connections of a variety of organizations and individuals as they come into contact with the program, shaping its content and outcomes. Different than studies that focus strictly on a particular type of organization (non-governmental, governmental, multilateral institutionally-based) or on particular associations of actors (those designated activists in collective action movements), my project will foreground the linkages between and among these “communities of practice”.

The plans themselves operate at the level of observation (the nation-state) as they emanate from the states’ agencies on women. This is important to acknowledge because it serves to clarify again that the unit of analysis is the world-system, whereas the level of observation (analysis) is the nation-state. The significance of selecting Argentina and Chile as the national sites was a conviction that ethnocentric notions of development and gender can (and must) be deconstructed by getting to a space that is so deeply “inside” the programmatic focus of those terms that it is rendered somewhere “outside” of the social, economic and political spaces of power in the North where those notions are deployed, such that the contradictions embedded within them and the specificities of their cultural context would become much more readily apparent. That is, by going to those places that receive development funds, those places I have read about and refused to believe that the story told in U.S. North American terms is the only way to understand the dynamics of what is happening, I hoped to tell another story of the local/national/inter- or trans-national.

Each of these plans stated the importance of not only governmental involvement

in promoting equitable social relations, but also signaled a role for civil society organizations. This would, ideally, provide a vehicle through which to engage both kinds of actors. Additionally, the Argentina plan involved the Inter-American Development Bank as a key funding agency. The Chilean plan is unfunded, and this is a key point of differentiation (see below). However, in terms of the kinds of language used to describe women's and men's relations in society, the plans reflect similarities of time and space: they are invoking a "gender perspective," a cross-cutting (mainstreaming) focus to integrate gender into all areas of public policy, and are developed in a moment when the focus is on civil society, rendering it an important component of any such work.

In both the Argentina and Chile case studies, I use interview transcripts and documents relating to governmental efforts to improve public policy making through applying a "gender lens," which have as a goal the lessening of gender inequalities in society. However, in the case of Argentina, I also bring in documentation that details the various stages of institutional status of the governmental women's agency. In part, this is due to the fact that I had access to these materials through a key informant in Argentina, a counterpart for whom I did not have in Chile. Additionally, because this documentation provides a direct link to the Inter-American Development Bank document that was produced in 1998, it is important in terms of generating insights into who receives credit for particular types of knowledge production. The Chilean Plan for Equality of Opportunities between Women and Men was created entirely within the Chilean state and did not involve a multi-lateral development bank actor; therefore, the issues of knowledge production and credit are contained to within the bounds of the national government and the women's NGO sector.

I built up the idea of “accountability practices” as those organizational practices that would allow for greater or lesser degrees of democratic relations within and between them, as they functioned within networks focused on advancing women’s status in society. From this idea, I built hypotheses around three central questions. The first asked what practices of accountability, both rhetorical and demonstrable, exist between and among organizations. The second question focused on the ways particular practices of accountability would render organizational relationships more, or less, democratic. Relatedly, what would be the relationship between “democratic relations” and practices of accountability in (more egalitarian) “communities of practices” and (more hierarchical) network(ed) relations? And finally, what would these practices signify for transnational activism? That is, how is it that these practices construct “differences that matter” between and among organizational actors below, within, and above the state?

Fieldwork: August – November 2002

I conducted a series of semi-structured interviews in Buenos Aires and Santa Rosa, Argentina; and in Santiago, Chile between August and November, 2002. I began to build up a list of organization names and possible contacts through my initial Web-based research in the U.S. Thanks to two individuals working with me on the dissertation project, my advisor and a committee member, I was able to initiate a few contacts while still in the U.S., making arrangements to meet with individuals upon arrival. The immediacy of these contacts was invaluable in both investigative and personal terms. I thus began to form what would become my snowball sample through initial contacts with

academic and human rights circles. I also attended events such as the World Social Forum, through which I met people and arranged for interviews.

Web Research and “Spatial Disorientation”

Prior to conducting the interviews in Argentina and Chile, I began to search for answers to my research questions by conducting electronically-based searches on the World Wide Web, in the hopes of accessing the world of women’s and feminist NGOs in Argentina and Chile. What I discovered in the process of seeking out things with Internet search engines is that when looking at a list of organizational names, there are very few if any criteria for determining which organizations function, participate, are considered important for their work in the field, are connected to what is happening, and are otherwise vital parts of civil society.

These lists of organizations, and even organization websites, helpful as they are, are one-dimensional portraits that only become three-dimensional in their human aspect. It was the three-dimensionality that was lacking for me, and that signaled the need to talk with people. This is not to say that there are not some good websites out there—there certainly are—but that websites and directories are only a starting point.

I also felt, in a sense, “spatially disoriented.” This is a term I encountered while taking a course on Web-based technologies, interestingly enough, and in that context refers to the sense that someone has of “I don’t know where to go, I don’t know what to do” when entering a Web space that they experience as chaotic.²⁶ I experienced the entirety of the Web-based research as spatially disorienting because I sat in my own study trying to get the feel of civil society activism and governmental programs and multi-

²⁶ Web-CT training, University of Maryland, College Park, January 2003.

lateral development bank activities, as they occur in other geographic/cultural contexts which I had little feel for beyond academic encounters through texts.

Websites and directories, as it turns out, also constitute pieces of ongoing conversations. The disorientation that stems from reading them in isolation—out of the context in which they operate—means that making sense of them, like making sense of the role of the Federal Plan for Women and the Plan for Equality of Opportunities, must occur through participating at least peripherally, in the conversational community.²⁷

Interviewing: Questions, Answers, and Interpretations

In any interview scenario, there are two substantive issues to be dealt with simultaneously. The first of these is *what* is being said, by both interviewee and interviewer. What is the content of the questions we ask? What is the content of the information we receive as response? What form does content take, through the initial asking and answering, and clarifications that evolve over the course of the interview?

The same applies to any written document: what does it tell us in informational terms? What is it that we see when we look at a text, a report, a pamphlet, a photocopy of a resolution, and images reproduced in and on those pages? What does the *conjunto*, the sum total, of that document, tell us? Not only in terms of who wrote it and when, but how is the author situating herself in the text? What can we read about the author in the subtext of the written word?

Making sense of the content, however, is not a passive receiving of information on the part of the researcher, to be synthesized at some later point. This, then, introduces

²⁷ The need to be a “peripheral participant” is stated in Bowker and Star (2000).

the second of the substantive issues. There are analytical and interpretative processes involved in the receiving of said information, whether a verbal communication or a written report. This is not simply about occupying the role, for the time being, of researcher. This is also about the stratification issues that influence one's sense of identity and relations with others. If we are to take seriously the feminist challenge of making visible all social locations and the privileges and oppressions existing therein, we have to then acknowledge the place we occupy in these moments of interaction, of questioning and response, of reading, and of thinking through.

Jayati Lal writes of these issues, in a volume called *Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork* (Wolf 1996). I mention the title of her work because it seems particularly relevant: "Situation Locations: The Politics of Self, Identity, and 'Other' in Living and Writing the Text." The historical moment we inhabit, named as a "postmodern era of intensified globalization" (186) is increasingly recognized in anthropology and other social sciences. On sociology, Lal notes that as a discipline it "has historically been premised on studying self and hence obsessively concerned with creating and maintaining distance rather than on undermining it" (208). This is in contrast with anthropology that has focused on "studying Other." The project of anthropology has relied on native informants without becoming them, achieving authenticity through these credentials of understanding the Other's subjective judgments of her/his own society, but retaining authority through not being the Other (ibid.).

Poststructuralist concerns with "representations of the Other and the author/ity of the researcher-ethnographer and ethnographic texts" have merged with these multiple intellectual/transnational border crossings and deposit us in a space where we have to

struggle with the implications of our own work and our interactions in the field and beyond it (ibid). These are, then, the “dilemmas” of fieldwork mentioned in the title of Wolf’s volume. Dilemmas require resolution, but such clarity only comes from acknowledging as fully as we are able the dynamics of power that we are caught up in even as we seek to disentangle them; we participate in their continuity even at the moment that we recognize this is anathema to our interests on a human level.

This is, of course, the basic task of research: to cull, sort, synthesize and otherwise make sense of a rich variety of informational sources to develop a narrative that is both impelling and informative, that adds a drop in the bucket of what we call knowledge. Depending on the project, we will take well-established parameters and work within those boundaries, accepting certain formulations for what counts as evidence, and what processes we should utilize to gather together the sources of information and analyze them.

Other projects, particularly those concerned with this process of making visible the dynamics of power, may endeavor to expand the idea of what counts as knowledge. Usually this takes the form of re-examining situations and relations through a lens that is critical of previous assumptions, and of exclusions of people whose voices were not historically claimed as expert. It is to take Hegel’s notion of the dialectic of the slave/master relation seriously, to center, as feminist standpoint theories suggest, “the view from below” in hierarchically organized and stratified societies. In many senses, this work begins to take a much closer look at day to day situations and relations, unpacking them, and looking at what they can tell us about power, self, and society. Here, Dill’s (1979) work on black women who worked as domestics in the mid-twentieth century

United States comes to mind. Dill centers these women as protagonists and weavers of their own identities, their own sense of dignity and humanity. Through her work, we hear the women's voices and simultaneously see the difference it can make that a Black feminist sociologist asked these questions of this particular group of women. The difference is that she asked these questions at all, and that she acknowledges the dynamics of social location so explicitly as part of the research question and overall project.

In feminist ethnographic accounts, analysis of power relations can also reflect on what is not said. Women interviewing other women have reflected on the meaning of silence, for example (see *Scattered Hegemonies*, Grewal and Kaplan 1997). What does silence mean? Is the pause a space that is merely a space in the conversation, or is it a form of resistance, an alluding to something that cannot comfortably be spoken of? In the current project, what is the meaning of the words that are chosen, the way that this person is positioning herself through language within the organization, within a larger community, in the context of governmental-NGO relations, of NGO relations within formalized networks, within societies undergoing deep and rapid change through endogenous and exogenous pushes? And, what does the rapport established mean? What are the dynamics of the interview process itself, and can that tell us something important about knowledge production? Are these dynamics themselves part of knowledge production and consumption?

Transcription, Coding, and Analysis of Transcripts

All interviews (with one exception) were conducted in Spanish. Most were tape recorded; when this was not possible, the researcher took notes at the meeting. The tapes

were transcribed into Spanish. All translations of Spanish language interviews into English are mine.

The coding of transcripts went through various phases, each involving reading for further specificity. In the first reading of the transcripts, I mapped out general topics of conversation within the course of the interview (knowledge of or involvement with the Federal Plan for Women/Plan for Equality of Opportunities; civil society-government relations more generally; mechanisms for greater transparency in dealing with government; defining a gender perspective; substance of organizational/ individual work; views on multilateral development bank funding). Subsequent readings of the transcripts focused more closely on the issues of civil society-governmental relations, looking to “match up” perspectives from a variety of locations on particular events and interpretations of governmental-civil society interactions (that is, how is the same event or relationship viewed from an institutional perspective? from an NGO perspective? If there is contradiction in the meaning of the even or relationship, what is the potential meaning of the differences in perspectives?). Here, too, I was also looking closely at the way individuals in organizational spaces defined themselves vis-à-vis other organizations, hinging upon how they understood “gender” in their work.

The transcripts, then, constitute part of the conversation in which the Federal Plan for Women/Plan for Equality of Opportunities are also “participants.” This meant that I have also put the documents as texts into play with the transcripts as texts, again looking for overlaps and disjunctures. Additionally, the interviews with individuals with direct knowledge of the plans in their current form, or of the plans as they were being developed serve to contextualize the plans themselves. It is only in the context of the

interviews that the plans become meaningful parts of the ongoing conversation around gender mainstreaming, state and civil society relations and the conditions within the nation-state.

Re-Visioned Research Questions, After Fieldwork

Reflecting on my fieldwork experiences as peripheral participation in ongoing conversations among actors in Argentina and Chile, I was able to further clarify the relationships between civil society organizations and institutions working on advancing women's rights in Argentina and Chile.

I defined the "civil society" component here as primarily NGOs, but with the understanding that other grassroots organizational formations and individuals (outside market and government) constitute part of the whole of civil society, as well.

"Institutions" in this instance refers to federal-level women's agencies/ministries and multilateral development banks.

The second question revolved around establishing the "differences that matter" in organizational linkages between civil society and state/multilateral institutions.

Specifically, do feminist/non-feminist politics signal a set of 'differences' that impede organizational cooperation? And, do any of the differences found reflect broader societal patterns (that is, do they reflect something more than organizational arrangements)?

"Difference" typically includes issues of economic class, race/ethnicity, and here, may include feminist versus non-feminist politics. However, because I expected that other kinds of differences would emerge through the fieldwork, I left open the question of which differences would be significant in terms of organizational/societal work on

women's rights.

The final question asked what contradictions can be found in commitments to gender equality central to the deepening of democracy in Argentina and Chile. A series of follow up questions rounded out this inquiry: a) where are questions of democratic practice and accountability raised? b) What are the organizational sites where power is negotiable? c) Why is power contested in some sites, and not in others? d) What is the significance of negotiations/contestation to the democratic society?

In the above, Question 1 establishes the logic of comparison. That is, there is something to be said about the characteristics of civil society-institutional relations in both Argentina and Chile, and while there are elements of shared regional identity, there are suggestions of differences in terms of institutional arrangements and the like, internal to the national boundary. Question 2 constructs a preface to discussing the differences that emerge from the fieldwork and again reinforces the idea that comparison is valuable. The ways in which differences are defined, will be determined by those things that resonate culturally/nationally, and reflect ongoing societal debates, especially as regards women's participation in the body politic. Question 3 serves as an empirical enticement to theorize questions of organizational and societal relations that revolve around accountability and negotiation of power relations in the complex, gendered "geography" of the nation.

Writing the Dissertation

The science of using these techniques is to purposefully and strategically engage a multiplicity of accounts to read how they make meaning in relationship to each other.

That is, the focus is on the relations that develop among acting agencies or abstract categories, rather than the agencies (in this case, organizational bodies) and categories (of women, of nations) themselves.

In reworking this through the final phase of writing the dissertation (Spring 2004), I reflected again on the goals of the research project. In the final analysis, the goals of this research project are three-fold. First, I examine how local and global women's movements created the conditions for the emergence of national machineries for gender mainstreaming that operated within the liberal democratic states of South America in the 1990s. Second, I ask how particular projects undertaken by these national machineries in the late 1990s reflected and shaped, or were displaced by, local and international discourse and practice on gender and development. Finally, I explore how the emergent discourses on social/political/economic “crisis and order” of the early 2000s competed with “gender and development” priorities to create or deflect space for reconstituting the gendered nation.

The questions that serve to frame my research interests are as follows: 1) What are the dynamics that produced the women's institutions and, subsequently, the particular understandings of “a gender perspective” that emerge in federal plans for women's equality? 2) What does the dominant notion of a gender perspective reflect in terms of local/national/transnational power relations? That is, how is national/sub-national discourse around gender and nation influenced by national and supranational discourses, emanating from bodies such as the United Nations and multilateral development banks? And, what are the possibilities for critical solidarities among civil society-NGO-state actors acting from “a gender perspective”? What do the tensions in defining a gender

perspective represent in terms of (possible and actual) alliances? I also ask, 3) Where is gender in the narrative of crisis/order, the dichotomy that is often used unreflexively to describe Argentina's and Chile's relationship to each other, and what are the implications in terms of gender relations in society?

Conclusion: Usefulness of the Boundary Object

The use of the boundary object provided a point from which to begin a conversation with individuals working in a variety of civil society and institutional settings. The language of gender equality, found within the plans used as the conversation starter, as well as statements regarding the quality of state-society relations, was an effective point of entrée. Utilizing a dialectical approach, in the manner suggested by Hopkins (1978) with the interplay of figure-ground, or Scott (1988, 2003), with noticing how contrasts create meaning, I was able to effectively revisit the questions of study such that the language better reflects and captures the dynamics of the conversations structured through the interview process. In the following chapters, I describe and analyze the dynamics of state-society relations visible through the approach utilized here.

CHAPTER 5
ARGENTINA

Women's Activism in Argentina: Setting the Scene

Argentine women's political activism dates to the nineteenth century, when many were active in the Anarchist Movement and the Socialist Party. Women also began their own political parties in the early twentieth century, as well as establishing newspapers and magazines. One of the feminist Socialist party activists from the beginning of the twentieth century until her death in 1986 at age 100, Alicia Moreau de Justo, also co-founded the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights (Asamblea Permanente de Derechos Humanos) in 1975, now considered one of the "historical" human rights groups (Navarro and Bourque 1998). A foundation in her name continues her feminist work, providing counseling and intervention for domestic violence.

Around the time when Argentina's welfare state was expanding, there was a military coup, in 1943, followed by an election in 1946 which saw General Juan Domingo Perón come to power. He supported women's suffrage and proposed a suffrage bill that passed in 1947. The establishment of the Peronist Women's Party ensured a strong women's vote for Perón in the 1951 election. By 1952 this organization, run by Eva Perón, had a membership of half a million. This, and other acts, earned Eva ("Evita") a loyalty that is visible today among women Peronist party members. The Peronist party more generally garnered working-class loyalties that would endure throughout the twentieth century (Fisher 1993).²⁸

²⁸ See Marta Raquel Zabaleta, *Feminine Stereotypes and Roles in Theory and Practice in Argentina Before and After The First Lady Eva Perón* for a rich account of the 1943-55 period.

The following decades saw military rulers come and go, Perón's exile, "anti-Peronist hysteria" (Navarro and Bourque 1998:180), and the arrival in power of Perón again in the 1970s, followed by his second wife, who became Argentina's first woman president. She was deposed by a military coup in 1976, the six years after which became known as the Dirty War, and this is where the focus of the work here begins.

In the 1980s, efforts to transform women's status in society came from civil society, political parties, and governmental efforts. These collective endeavors, lasting a little over a decade (1983-1994), produced an important number of public policies, laws, and studies, and also resulted in the creation of governmental institutions connecting the NGO and state sectors through the individuals involved. This period represented the height of cross-cutting gender-focused policies produced within and across state sectors most particularly.

In the new economic era of the 1990s, heralded by policies designed to stabilize inflation, stimulate investment, and decentralize the country, state feminists pursued funding for an infrastructural project through the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). This joint project of the national women's agency and the Women in Development Unit of the IDB allowed both organizations to produce knowledge about gender and development and strengthen their skills in this arena, and represented an important increase to the national organizations budget and stature, but was ultimately defined by its project-based focus (*proyectismo*²⁹) rather than social change of gender relations deeply interconnected with civil society and social movements. This can be seen as a result of both internal and transnational processes.

²⁹ See de la Masa 2000.

In this chapter, the points that will form the basis for comparison with Chile are the key moments in state-civil society relations, structured through national political processes, transnational monetary flows, and economic, political, and social crises: (1) the development of the joint state-multilateral development bank project as mutually constitutive of Argentina as a nation and the IDB's infrastructure; (2) the 1994 break of state and feminist policies which led to increased mobilizations of women's movement civil society actors during the Constitutional Convention held that year and heralded the decline of the status of the *Consejo*; and (3) the context of the late 1990s and early 2000s, whereby civil society activism prompted state and development bank sectors to engage directly with the ongoing economic, political, and social crises, and offered the potential for using a gender perspective to carry out NGO sector (if not broader civil society) activities.

What becomes more visible in Argentina, when set in contrast with Chile, is the impact of multilateral bank/national governmental relations on the status and programmatic focus of Argentina's state agency (Chile's agency has not engaged on so large a scale with MDB funds). Additionally, the politically-charged environments of the offices are heightened when viewed together (rather than seeing only one or the other as more political, as other authors have argued). Finally, Argentina's civil society-state relations, when juxtaposed with Chile's, are more often framed through language that emphasizes disjunctures, but also more vertical linkages and (potentially greater) possibilities, which impacts the reach of the state agency in times of deep(er) crisis.

A Note on Age in the Activist Community

Many of those in the generation of women's and feminist activists who came of age under the military regime are now considered long-time feminists, or in (Argentine) Spanish, "historical." As one such feminist said to preface her comments at the monthly breakfast meeting of the Fundación Mujeres en Igualdad held in Buenos Aires: "They call me 'historical' in order to avoid calling me 'old'" (Elena Tchalidy, comments recorded by author, September 2002 MEI breakfast meeting, Buenos Aires). Whether termed "historical" or "longstanding," (as others such as Alvarez et al. 2002 have done), or "old," such voices provide vital links to the past, giving insights into the emergence of and changes occurring in the women's, feminist, and human rights communities from the 1970s to the 1990s that transformed both society and the state. I rely on a number of such women, in addition to documents and reports from the time period, to recover the institutional history of Argentina that begins with the Alfonsín government in 1983. The perspectives of younger activists, academics, and program professionals are key sources of information for understanding current relations and the (dis)engagements of state, politics, and society.

Struggles for Democracy

In the years just prior to the democratic elections, there were women who were beginning to work on issues of gender inequality, but for the most part in the early 1980s, what was seen as necessary was "to reconquer democracy as such" (Argentina Interviewee 1). In most mobilizations, the overarching theme was that of seeking to re-establish respect for human rights, and attempting to locate missing children and spouses.

There were nine human rights organizations that began in this time period (they are also now referred to as “historical”), including the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, and the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. In the Permanent Assembly, as they developed their work, they began to realize the challenge of covering all sectors, and thus divided up the work within the Assembly into distinctive areas, including women’s rights; economic, social, and cultural rights; the rights of the elderly, among others (Argentina Interviewee 24). In a similar fashion, women’s movement activism emerged as distinct from human rights activism, galvanizing massive women’s movement activities only once the Alfonsín administration was underway.³⁰ The 1980s, in many ways, was a decade defined as “a moment of mass movements” (Craske 1999:184).

Thus, on the political front, the 1980s saw both the end of a six-year military regime in which an estimated 30,000 people were disappeared, as well as the (re)appearance of democracy with the election of President Alfonsín. The decade, however, has often been described as “lost” in regional economic development terms because of the noticeable declines in macroeconomic indicators.³¹ Indeed, an economist from the Inter-American Development Bank stated that for Latin America the decade

³⁰ The human rights and women’s rights communities have followed somewhat similar trajectories in terms of institutionalization processes and debates between “insiders” and “outsiders.” The government of Buenos Aires, for example, now has an office on human rights, the head of which in 2002 was a woman who had to leave the country during the military regime. On the other hand, there is now a split between the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo that occurred over whether or not to accept government funds offered to those who had suffered the loss of family members during military rule (Argentina Interviewees 24 and 25).

³¹ Between 1980 and 1990, for example, recessive tendencies existed in manufacturing, construction and the commercial sector. Exports did increase, but investments declined. The democratic government that came in with the Alfonsín administration in 1983 proposed a series of economic reforms designed to promote growth and investments, but over the course of the ‘80s there were sharp increases in inflation (reaching 4,923.6% by 1989); falling production and increased societal tension due to severely constrained buying power. In addition, the issue of a sharply increased external debt had emerged from the time of the military junta’s regime (Centro Nacional de Coordinación y Consejo Nacional de la Mujer 1994:15-16).

was, in all likelihood, the worst period of economic crisis experienced during the entire century (Urrutia 1991).

This situation of steep declines in economic indicators, in juxtaposition with democratic gains, yielded a “double discourse: a discourse of [democratic] participation and a nondiscourse of economic exclusion” (Jelin 1998:408). The discourse on political participation invoked rebuilding notions of citizenship, and this was pushed by social movements, acting through a sense of “solidarity and responsibility to others” (Jelin 1995:95). The latter, stemming from declines in social and economic well being that resulted in growing poverty rates in the 1980s, served as the impetus for a great deal of women’s social and political organizing, as human rights issues had served to make urgent the need for activism in the earlier period. As Birgin (1995) notes:

the ‘lost decade’ was not a total loss for [women]: they came out of their isolation, they made themselves visible in statistics and censuses, they increased their levels of education and training, and involved themselves in collective actions. Women participated in solidarity networks that facilitated the development of survival strategies and actions in defense of their own and their children’s health....The development of a women’s social movement as social actor was the “unwanted effect” that the decade brought (27).

The women’s social movement, though, took multiple forms beyond activism in civil society. Women were also active in formal political party formations, as those from the larger progressive, center and center-left, political parties organized themselves into what came to be called the *multipartidaria* (multi-party organization) to lobby for change, focusing on such issues as passage of a law legalizing divorce, and shared *patria potestad* (parental authority over

minor children).³² As one interviewee, active during that time period, stated: “We thought we were going to be able to achieve real spaces of power, from our militancy in the political parties plus feminism” (Argentina Interviewee 1).

Additionally, women labor union activists working together in the mid-1980s not only focused on proposed labor reform laws, but also on reproductive rights.³³ A later success, considered a major achievement for political-feminist linkages, was the passage of the Quota Law for electoral processes, in 1991.³⁴ Moreover, women from a wide variety of sectors, including those mentioned above, as well as feminist and social organizations, joined with each other to form the “Women’s *Multisectorial*” (the Spanish term refers to the broad cross-section of actors involved).

In 1985, a small group of women from Argentina attended the Nairobi United Nations world conference on women, a landmark event in the trajectory of the U.N. conferences because of the notable attendance of the NGO forum that ran as a parallel conference to the governmental meetings. While the legacy of the governmental event was the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies document (which served as an important base for the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action), the legacy of the NGO gathering was the proliferation of women’s NGOs around the world. After returning from the meeting, “everyone wanted to hear about what had happened, so when we returned, we immediately have a meeting of women to tell them what happened, and that was the

³² Shared parental authority of children was granted in 1985 in Argentina (Navarro and Bourque, 1998); divorce became legal in 1987.

³³ This blending of activism nearly cost one woman, from the public employees’ union, her job, when a “more radical feminist group” proclaimed “clitoris rights” on posters at a March 8 International Women’s Day celebration, offending men from the union (Argentina Interviewee 26).

³⁴ The Quota Law was cited as the best example of political (governmental)-civil society cooperation in Argentina (Argentina Interviewee 2).

beginning” of the Women’s National Meetings (*Encuentros*), meetings held regularly at the national level in Argentina since that moment (Argentina Interviewee 20).³⁵

There were also openings in this time period with respect to knowledge production generated through external funding. International foundations, such as Ford, MacArthur, and Tinker, sponsored work on political sociology which allowed independent researchers to do work that explored issues such as authoritarian political culture. One researcher recalled her work at that time on the role of the Catholic Church, gender, and sexual and reproductive rights, recalling the projects that were funded during this time (1986-87) were, in her view, “really quite interesting” (Argentina Interviewee 27). In later years, she noted, there was little funding for more theoretical kinds of reflections. Another interviewee reflected on the fact that during the dictatorship there had been a great deal of funding available, and some research centers were actually established during the period of military rule, since people were not working within the (public) universities. “People either left the country or they went to other centers” (Argentina Interviewee 4).

*Emergence of Institutional Approaches*³⁶

The combined initiatives of women’s and feminist movements and political party activism, as well as receptivity from the presidential administration, garnered results in terms of the creation of offices and programs in a variety of institutional spaces during the 1980s and into the early 1990s. Beginning in 1983, in the first year of its

³⁵ The meeting in Salta, in 2002, drew some 12,000 women from around the nation.

³⁶ I am sincerely indebted to Mónica Capano for supplying me with the original documents referred to in this and the following section. She made these materials available to me from her personal files.

administration, President Alfonsín's government created the Directorate for Women in the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2002). The following year, the National Directorate for Human Rights and Women was established, as an office of the Foreign Relations Ministry.³⁷ Within the framework of the Program for the Promotion of Women and the Family, a ministerial resolution created an advisory council that brought together women from political, trade union, and academic circles, along with women from feminist and community organizations (Centro Nacional de Coordinación 1994). The new administration abolished a law passed in 1974 that had abolished the sale of contraceptives.³⁸ In 1985, the Argentine government made CEDAW into a national law³⁹ (Programa Estado y Mujer 1991), and governmental offices began to produce studies, such as one on female employment in the national public administration.⁴⁰

In 1987, President Alfonsín issued a decree creating the Under Secretariat for Women, located in the Ministry of Family Health and Social Welfare (replacing the Directorate for Women that had been located within that ministerial space). The Under Secretariat had an autonomous structure and budget, and its objective was to “sponsor

³⁷ In addition, a program on women and health was created in the Ministry of Health and Social Action, and another for promoting women and family was created as a dependency of the Secretariat of Human Development and the Family (Centro Nacional de Coordinación 1994).

³⁸ The law that was abolished had been passed under the Isabel Perón administration to prohibit the sale of contraceptives based on the idea that allowing them to be sold would “denaturalize the basic maternal function of woman, distracting young people from their natural duty as protagonists in the future of the country” (Birgin 1995:25).

³⁹ Law 23.179

⁴⁰ Their findings showed that during the period analyzed, 1977-1983, there was a “considerable feminization of the national public sector,” coinciding with a period of rapid deindustrialization and increased national external debt that began in 1976 under the military regime (Programa Estado y Mujer, 1991). In a 1994 report, author Mónica Capano's findings showed that the number of female mayors increased from 1983 throughout the decade.

and favor all those instances of articulation and coordination between the State and women as full social and political subjects” (ibid, 19). Cita Montes de Oca, a woman known as a feminist and co-founder of an NGO that maintains a crucial role in the women’s movement even now, was tapped as the Under Secretary, a post she occupied for the next two years.⁴¹

The Under Secretariat promoted itself as a national organism different than others within the state, in terms of creating a welcoming space for and attention to local and regional needs. According to the historical overview given by the government in anticipation of the Beijing Conference, the provinces and NGOs were welcomed into this space, and this openness resulted in the creation of provincial mechanisms in nineteen provinces (ibid.).

Building Blocks: Creating the National Council on Women

With a change of administration in 1989, and a mandate for state reform, President Carlos Menem⁴² eliminated the office of the Under Secretariat for Women (FLACSO N.d.). A women’s office existed during the first years of the new administration, but the women’s movement heavily criticized it for its lack of initiatives. Feminists working within the Peronist party who wanted more than the mere formality of a space designated as being for women, began to build up a program that they called “State and Woman,” inside the Secretariat of Public Welfare.⁴³

⁴¹ Montes de Oca was recognized by those supportive of state feminist efforts as a key resource in these political struggles (Argentina Interviewee 1).

⁴² Menem was from the Peronist party, and represented such a force within it, that *Menemismo* was the term used for his particular kind of Peronist party politics. The previous administration (Alfonsín’s government) was of the Radical party.

Despite the earlier elimination of the Under Secretariat for Women, Resolution N^o 014/91, through which the government officially sanctioned the State and Woman program, declares that “the National Executive Power has defined as priorities those public policies that impel the egalitarian incorporation of women in all areas of social life, [and] that it is necessary to promote an adequate presence of Women in Public Administration at all levels” (Resolution 014/91:1).

The objectives of the Program include direct references to national-provincial linkages and strengthening of the provinces. As an example, the Program is designed to support a federal perspective into the incorporation of issues of concern to women with regard to social programming, strengthening provincial-level organizations. Moreover, the Program’s objectives focus on optimizing human and material resources in the development of mechanisms that support coordinated work across the different areas of the Provincial Women’s Offices (*Áreas Mujer Provincial*, or AMPs). This is supported with the idea that it facilitates decentralization of the implementation of policies and/or programs (Resolution 014/91: 2). The program’s three major components include training at national, regional, and sectoral levels;⁴⁴ technical assistance at the national and provincial levels for specific Program goals; and research that can be applied to the training and technical assistance (*ibid.*).

[By way of direct comparison, the purpose of the Federal Plan for Women is to “enhance the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and programs, in

⁴³ The primary function of the program was to work with female state employees. Since the state was the largest employer of female labor at that time, it was argued that the state should be a leader in taking and upholding actions favorable to women (Argentina Interviewee 1).

⁴⁴ Specific topics of courses were listed as gender policies, women and public policies, women in public administration, feminization of public employment, legislation, work, and education.

order to bring long-term improvements to the situation of women in the country” (IDB 1998, 7). (IDB 1998, 7). The Plan involves two primary components, the first of which is institutional strengthening for both the CNM and the provincial women’s offices (*Áreas Mujer Provinciales*, or AMPs). The second primary component of the Plan is support for local initiatives. These primary points of focus involves supporting mechanisms that increase the technical skills in the national and provincial women’s offices so they can better guide policy-making processes and programs in the state and civil society in what it means to have a gender perspective, and promoting cooperation among organizations, including those in civil society, the provinces and municipalities (IDB 1998).]

The Resolution establishing this program is of particular note because it so closely matches the goals, objectives and practices laid out in the Federal Plan for Women. This is important because even some individuals working in the state agency on women and the final Inter-American Development Bank document on the Federal Plan, give full credit for the Plan to the IDB alone. This point will be discussed further below.

In the year before presidential decrees established the National Women’s Council in 1992, Menem used the same mechanism to create the Coordinating Council on Public Policies on March 8, 1991 (International Women’s Day).⁴⁵ Directly responsible to the President, the Coordinating Council’s mission was “the achievement of the commitments assumed through the Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women,” and some of the specific objectives included supporting equality of opportunities between the sexes; public policies oriented towards women; studying women in various fields, including legal, education, health, politics, and labor; and promoting meetings, debate

⁴⁵ Decree N° 378/91 established the Coordinating Council, and Decrees 1426/92 and 718/92 established the National Council on Women (CEDAW 2002:5).

and coordination between the various institutions of the *Areas Mujer* throughout Argentina (Consejo Coordinador de Políticas Públicas para la Mujer pamphlet N.d.).⁴⁶

These decrees established that the President of the CNM would report directly to the Office of the President of Argentina, and thus occupy the rank of Cabinet minister. However, the reality is that the position never achieved that status (Argentina Interviewee 4, and Craske 1999), particularly after it was formally placed under a coordinating committee. At that time, however, all financial and accounting systems, internal controls and auditing were handled by the General Secretariat of the Office of the President [of the Nation]. Thus, the CNM was not directly involved in its own financial management (IDB 1998:29).

Virginia Franganillo, who earlier had been designated the head of the State and Woman Program became the first president of the CNM.⁴⁷ At this point, Virginia Franganillo, considered a strong feminist leader, was the head of the CNM, Mónica Capano headed the *State and Woman* program, and Gloria Bonder headed a program in Education. With these three women in place, all of whom had direct and strong ties to political parties and feminist NGOs, “public policies on women in the State begin to open and be diffused” in close association with non-governmental organizations” (Argentina Interviewee 1).⁴⁸

⁴⁶ The Coordinating Council brought together representatives who were deemed competent in the subject matter from the executive branch, the provinces, the Buenos Aires city government, and the legislative and judicial branches. The Consejo was hierarchically structured, with President and Vice Presidential posts, five secretarial posts (Public Relations, Institutional Relations, Legislative, Relations with Allied Associations, and Scientific -Technical Relations), and board members (Consejo Coordinador de Políticas Públicas para la Mujer pamphlet, N.d.)

⁴⁷ The State and Woman Program continued to exist even after the CNM’s creation. The Program functioned as one of the inter-governmental institutional linkages for the CNM.

⁴⁸ Where I use “diffused” she uses the verb *transversalizar*, translations for which will be discussed further

The Federal Plan for Women

Once in office, Franganillo developed Argentina's *Federal Plan for Women*⁴⁹ (henceforth, the Federal Plan) in conjunction with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Both the Argentine state and the IDB were grappling with integrating gender into their institutional focus at around the same time period, in the early 1990s (Argentina Interviewees 2 and 3). The IDB had recently created its Women in Development Unit, but at the time it was "very weak within the structure" of the Bank (Argentina Interviewee 3).

What was happening in the [Inter-American Development] Bank and in the state, happened in politics. Gender was a formally stated interest of the Bank. When the time came to execute policies...they didn't know very well how to do it. So we had to lobby a great deal between the experts and the person responsible for women's issues in the IDB, the women in the Ministry of Economy, and in the National Women's Council, until we were able to get [Virginia Franganillo] installed...as part of the first mission to the Inter-American Development Bank (Argentina Interviewee 2)

Put another way, "in talking...with the IDB people, it was resolved that we would try this pilot experience in [Argentina] that afterwards could be replicated in other countries of the region" (Argentina Interviewee 3).

When Ms. Franganillo attended that first meeting of the Bank mission with Ministers and Secretaries, she was the only person from the National Women's Council. She proceeded to talk at length about the need for institutional strengthening to be able to implement policies in all governmental sectors with a gender perspective. When she finished, there were no questions asked of her. She later asked a colleague who was

below.

⁴⁹ The official name is the *Plan Federal de la Mujer* (Federal Plan for Women). In the 1998 documents produced by the Inter-American Development Bank, the name is stated as the *Programa Federal de la Mujer* (Federal Program for Women).

present if the Ministers and others in attendance had understood anything she had talked about. “No,” was the reply. The lack of understanding, as her colleague explained, stemmed from the perspective that the health sector deals with health issues, education deals with education, and so forth. The idea that Franganillo was proposing was to put gender inequality on the state’s map,⁵⁰ to have a holistic policy to ameliorate and transform the conditions of women’s lives through technical assistance and putting the subject (gender inequality) into the hierarchical structures of the state .

Indeed, “in Washington it was a very talked about project at the time they designed it and the project team got all these awards for project design, for taking into consideration, you know, the promotion of women’s interests and the provinces and the institutional strengthening and all of this” (Argentina Interviewee 10).⁵¹ Work on the Federal Plan began in 1991, but it was not approved until 1998, and funding for it came through in 1999.⁵² The complications arising for both the National Women’s Council and the funding from the Argentine state will be discussed in the following section.

⁵⁰ *Jerarquizar* is the Spanish term used by the interviewee (Interviewee 2).

⁵¹ It is not clear if the project team referred to is the Washington-based portion only (those who worked in the Bank).

⁵² An interviewee who worked in the CNM during the last year of Eschivone’s (the last CNM President during the Menem administration) and the years of Storani’s administrations (the CNM President during the Alianza government of de la Rúa, 1999-2001), noted, “I have the impression that the IDB came and offered it, rather than the [CNM] asking for it. It seems to me that the IDB had a whole slew of programs on institutional strengthening and they came to offer one [such program] to the National Council” (Argentina Interviewee 5).

The State and the International Environment:

Building Infrastructure, Preparing for Beijing, the President and the Pope

Leading up to the mid 1990s, there was activism on abortion occurring on all sides of the issue, and there were ongoing debates about the term “gender.” These two defining issue/concepts collided later in the decade, often being conflated by activists on the political right as a way to marginalize the use of the term gender.

From the perspective of feminists active on the abortion issue, 1990 signaled a year of transnational cooperation, as related by this activist health educator:

September 28 [is celebrated as the day] for the decriminalization of abortion in Latin America and the Caribbean. We instituted it...in '90, at the Feminist Meeting (*Encuentro Feminista*) that was held here in Argentina, of all Latin America and the Caribbean. We took the proposal with us, the Argentine women, that we should establish a special day to focus on this, we took a written declaration...We proposed it in a workshop of more than 200 women from all of Latin America and the Caribbean, and they approved that declaration and they proposed a day to us...the 28th of September was proposed by the Brazilian women (Argentina Interviewee 28).⁵³

In March 1994, President Menem stated explicitly, during his attendance at the IV Meeting of the Heads of State of Ibero-America, that he defined the right to life as beginning at conception. Although he failed to gather allies from other countries, he had attempted to make alliances in order to issue a communication condemning abortion. This action, invoked in an international setting, preceded the national campaign Menem led to include a clause stating that “the right to life from conception until natural death” in the Argentine Constitution, the reform of

⁵³ This interviewee went on to say that “[In 1991] Catholics for a Free Choice, from Uruguay, the Health Network from Chile, held a meeting...for those of us who were committed to...the abortion issue, and from there [we developed] the campaign that is now up and running...this year [2002] the focus is on the secular state, the necessity of a secular state in the face of the growth of religious fundamentalisms, Bush, the whole mix.”

which was being debated in 1994. In September of that year, the Minister of Justice, Dr. Rodolfo Barra, sustained this position at the United Nations Conference Population and Development (the Cairo Conference) (Gutierrez 2000; and Belucci 1997 and Gutierrez et al. 1998, cited in Gutierrez 2000).

Menem's initial statement in March had spurred a group of women in Buenos Aires into action, and they formed what would become the Self-Convened Women to Freely Decide (MADEL),⁵⁴ a collaborative effort of 108 women's groups from unions, political parties, women's NGOs, and independent feminists. MADEL wrote an open letter to "constitutional constituents and the society of Argentina" that was published in July and raised its objections to the inclusion of the proposed clause in the Constitution, on the grounds that it was anti-Constitutional to propose this without having had it discussed as part of any party platform going into the constitution, and that it violated the constitutional principles established by the commitments the Argentine state had made to international agreements and conventions, such as the CEDAW. In an open letter to Minister Barra, MADEL signaled the illegitimacy of his and the government's stance on "defense of life" given that this same government provided amnesty for those responsible for the human rights violations occurring during the 1976-1983 period, a time in which "many of the victims were pregnant women, whose children born in captivity were adopted out" to those who were responsible for the disappearances (Gutierrez 2000:89).

⁵⁴ I want to thank María Alicia Gutierrez, one of the activists who took part in MADEL, who gave me a copy of the volume published by CEDES and CELS in which her article about MADEL's activism appears.

Another process was underway in 1994, leading up to 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing, China. At the preparatory meeting for Beijing, held in Mar del Plata, there was a confrontation between the Chancellery of the Ministry of Foreign Relations,⁵⁵ the “official voice” for international conferences, and the National Women’s Council (Argentina Interviewee 1). Although the CNM had engaged in much of the work that went into producing the national preparatory report and so was familiar with the material, the representative from the Chancellery would ultimately go to Beijing as the Argentine representative, in no small part due to the fact that she was standing by the government’s view of life beginning at conception.⁵⁶ Franganillo, as head of the CNM, was adamantly in support of the right to abortion and resigned over this issue.⁵⁷

At the Beijing conference, Ambassador Regazzoli addressed the gathering by stating that Argentine women had come to consciousness about “her mission, a clear image of woman as mother, of woman as spouse, of woman who unites with man to

⁵⁵ At that time, the office was called the Women’s Directorate within the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

⁵⁶ Although this may have represented a high point of tensions in the Chancellery-CNM relationship, there were indications from several interviewees that such tensions in terms of international representation on issues that the CNM is primarily responsible for is an ongoing issue, and is an issue that has yet to be fully resolved. In Chile, for example, it was clear that SERNAM was the representative of the government at international events, as well as operating internal to the state, and was supported by others with expertise in working in the international arena.

⁵⁷ There were two individuals whose statements during interviews represent a different version of events. One was that Franganillo had in fact stayed on in the CNM leadership for two to three years following the emergence of the abortion issue. Another stated that Franganillo had been thrown out by the Menem government “for strictly political reasons because she was very committed to the issue of reproductive rights and when Menem decides to totally align himself with the Vatican, there they throw her out” (Argentina Interviewee 4). These latter comments coincide with the comment that “Virginia [Franganillo] was advancing little by little without them realizing it, until we were in the Consejo. Well, after they realized, they killed us” (Argentina Interviewee 1).

procreate” (*Clarín* 1995, cited in Gutierrez 2000). However, the Vatican had altered its discourse somewhat at that point, utilizing an argument that the debate about abortion should be viewed as a problem of global Northern colonization of the global South whereby developed countries sought demographic control over poor countries, and the effect was that Argentina appeared to be more conservative in its stance than that Vatican itself (Gutierrez 2000).⁵⁸

The end result of the Constitutional Reform produced two relevant and notable Articles that have direct impacts on women’s status in Argentine society and reflects these ongoing tensions. The first is Article 2, which states that the federal government supports the Roman Catholic Church. The second is Article 75, paragraph 22, which grants Constitutional status to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), among other international treaties and conventions concerning human rights [Argentina was the first country in the world to have granted constitutional rank to the CEDAW (Secretaría de la Mujer N.d.)]. Article 75 opens, however, with a statement that it is incumbent upon the Congress “to approve or reject treaties concluded with other nations and international organizations and the concordats⁵⁹ with the Holy See. Treaties and concordats have a higher rank than [national] laws” (1994 Constitution).

The juxtaposition of the Catholic Church and CEDAW, both of which the State has formally stated it supports, immediately configures a site of struggle over

⁵⁸ “Gender” as a term was banned in the Ministry of Education in the mid-1990s. An interviewee active in the state at that time alluded to this, with a mention of how what Gloria Bonder had built up within education was dismantled in the period around the Beijing Conference. Craske (1999) attributes the banning of the term as being linked to the Beijing Conference preparations. Note that this is the period in which the negotiations are taking place which lead to Franganillo’s resignation.

⁵⁹ A concordat is defined as “an agreement between a pope and a government with regard to the interest of the church” (de Gámez 1973, 1064).

interpretation of women's rights (and of the Constitution?), especially those concerning reproduction and any right to abortion (thus far, abortion remains illegal in both Argentina). Their simultaneous appearance also speaks to the politics and sharp political turns of the decade. The early 1990s represent the zenith of the CNM's trajectory in terms of visibility, autonomy, and effectiveness, while the latter part of the decade signals the high point of solidarity between the Presidential administration—in particular, the President (Carlos Menem)—and the Catholic Church. In 1994, abortion became a more visible issue in Argentina. Sharp differences over the issue emerged between Franganillo and President Menem when the latter upheld the stance established in the 1994 Constitution, and the country's stance at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, led to Franganillo leaving the CNM's leadership.

During Menem's administration, he established "the Day of the Unborn Child" (Argentina Interviewee 5). Menem, of course, was not alone in his beliefs, though his activism on the issue set the tone for his party and his government. The 1999 report entitled "John Paul II Speaks to Women," was an official publication of the Women's Secretariat of the Justicialista Party. The report's cover pictures the Pope holding a young child on its cover, along with a photo of President Menem, Eva Perón, and women from around the world.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ The imagery of Eva Perón and the Catholic Church are tightly interlinked in official Peronist settings. In the CNM headquarters in Buenos Aires, in the office of the then-President of the CNM, there hung a large, Andy Warhol-style depiction of Eva Peron, so that when looking at the President seated at her desk, Eva's larger than life (and neon-colored) image was visible directly above. Another depiction of Eva, but this one a photograph enlarged to poster size, hung to the left of the other image, and between the two, sitting on the table was a pyramid-shaped object (a tall triangle) with two small images of the Virgin.

The state and state/political-feminism broke in 1994.⁶¹ The government's official posture on abortion (siding with the Vatican and some conservative Muslim countries) at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women was the cornerstone issue that brought about the de-radicalization of the Consejo Nacional, in combination with severe critiques of both the state and the NGO professionalized sectors that emerged in the mid-1990s, and structural changes that froze hiring within the state and increased its reliance on contractors.

Because *the* feminist issue was framed as the right to abortion as the most profound issue of authority, and the presidential administration came down very clearly as being profoundly against legalizing abortion or granting it any moral ground as a part of the spectrum of women's reproductive health and healthcare, there was a break in this relationship that changed the Consejo Nacional from a feminist space of critique and transformation into a women's space that could build some infrastructure but would not challenge the president or the state too deeply.

The position of CNM president was vacant for a time after Franganillo resigned, and the woman who headed the agency for the remainder of Menem's administration in the late 1990s was seen as politically dedicated to the President and those who are most critical of her noted that "she didn't do anything more than dedicate herself to putting out a magazine with her photo" (Argentina Interviewee 4). However, she was the person who also guided the shift in the CNM's position from reporting directly to the President to passing through the Cabinet of Ministers (removing it from direct access to the

⁶¹ Birgin (2000) notes that the situation that came to a head in 1994 was the result of having confused State and government. "It was unthinkable to have a Council that could have a politics different than the rest of the government" (112).

President), a move that took place immediately prior to the change in government in 1999 (ibid.).

*The Federal Plan for Women: “Because we are a part of building the Nation”*⁶²

The CNM worked with the IDB in the late 1990s to create what would become the actual funded version of the Federal Plan. The timing of these final negotiations and the implementation of the Federal Plan coincided with systemic crises in Argentina that came to a head in December 2001. Changing presidential administrations resulted in shifts of the CNM’s place in the governmental hierarchy, and there were debates about what the formal denomination of the placement meant (whether it meant, in real terms, ascension or decline). Part of the debate had to do with party loyalties, but the other piece was the shifting national governing structure in the midst of social/economic/political crises. Activism by civil society generally came to the fore in this period, and within the CNM, the negotiations around the Plan and the agency’s relationship to the multilateral lending institution, and to the women’s and feminist movements, reflected these environmental tensions.

The negotiations between the President of the CNM, Esther Esquiavone, and the IDB were difficult, as noted by one observer of the process: “When they began to design the Plan with the Consejo, the IDB disapproved of the first draft....Esther...thought that the international agencies meddled too much in international loans....There was always a conflict with the IDB because the IDB wanted to do what it wanted to do, and Esther wanted to do what she wanted to do” (Argentina Interviewee 5).

⁶² *Porque somos parte de la construcción de la Nación*, title of *la Revista del Consejo Nacional de la Mujer: Plan Federal de la Mujer 1998/8 de marzo*, Año 2, N° 7. Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Once agreement was reached,⁶³ it became the first such plan of its kind in the region that the Bank or a country had negotiated, in that it was the first gender-focused project to receive funding through a regular bank loan, rather than the “soft” funding usually directed towards social projects.⁶⁴ For those who supported the use of external funding, the IDB project represented significant gains—it is in effect, a transcendence of the “social” boundary, which typically ghettoizes gender(ed) concerns/focus/projects. And, even for skeptics, “it was an impressive thing because the Consejo, that had an annual budget of \$1.1 million, with the Federal Plan, it was going to have \$7 million more” (Argentina Interviewee 5).

On the other hand, some remain critical around the terms of financing for the loan, which was constructed as a 50/50 ratio, meaning that both the IDB and the Argentine government are responsible for contributing 50 percent of funds towards the total funding.⁶⁵ A Congressional representative stated that she believes that Argentina simply does not get a good deal on such arrangements, hence the reason the government is paying in 50 percent (Argentina Interviewee 11). Concerns for the 50/50 ratio became especially keen in the state of fiscal and political crisis that the Argentine state entered in full in December 2001. If at any point the national government makes the determination that it will not or cannot contribute the full amount of its financial commitment towards

⁶³ The IDB approved document was issued in October 1998.

⁶⁴ Regular funds are generally used for infrastructure projects, and social projects are most often funded through a mechanism that does not have criteria that are as stringent as those for the regular funds, given the ‘soft’ (much longer term, more difficult to quantify) goals.

⁶⁵ Other possible arrangements, secured for other regional projects, include 60/40 or even 80/20, meaning that the IDB would contribute 60 or 80 percent, while the national government would contribute 40 or 20 percent.

the project, then the IDB will not provide the funding it has committed to, either.⁶⁶

The purpose of the Federal Plan is to “enhance the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and programs, in order to bring long-term improvements to the situation of women in the country” (IDB 1998:7). The Plan involves two primary components, the first of which is institutional strengthening for both the CNM and the provincial women’s offices (AMPs). The second primary component of the Plan is support for local initiatives. These primary points of focus involves supporting mechanisms that increase the technical skills in the national and provincial women’s offices so they can better guide policy-making processes and programs in the state and civil society in what it means to have a gender perspective, and promoting cooperation among organizations, including those in civil society, the provinces and municipalities (IDB 1998). [The main objectives and indicators for the Federal Plan are described in Appendix B.]

The experience of Argentina’s Plan illustrates the need for gender mainstreaming within the IDB itself. In its preface of the Plan, the IDB provides a map of Argentina, divided into provinces, and socioeconomic data. The data were pulled together by the Statistics and Quantitative Data Analysis Unit, of the Integration and Regional Programs Department, within the Inter-American Development Bank. The information provided covers land area (km²), population, GINI coefficients, labor force, education enrollments and illiteracy rates. None of the data are gender (sex) disaggregated, including those such

⁶⁶ As it stands, the project has never received full funding, even though the initial financial commitment was reduced. Out of \$1.2 billion in the tentative IDB lending program for 1998, the Plan (AR0231) received one-time funding of \$7.5 million (IDB, 1998). The initial funding level for each party was later reduced to \$5 million, (thus, it was initially to be a \$15 million project, then reduced to \$10 million) (IDB 1998).

as labor force and education, which are key areas of concern addressed within the plan itself. The sole statistic in which women figure in (as distinguished from men) is with regard to total fertility rates.⁶⁷

Working a Gender Perspective into Policy and Service:

The Plan, the Provinces, and CSOs:

In Argentina, the Federal Plan states that it is

focused on the women's offices in 23 provinces and in the City of Buenos Aires (24 AMPs). Taking into account the divergent levels of institutional development among the AMPs, and the divergent features of the various provinces, the program will seek to promote a demonstration effect among the AMPs, by drawing upon the experience of the most progressive ones (IDB 1998, 8).

By 2002, the Plan had been implemented in a total of nine provinces as trial sites for the program. The first four provinces selected were those with Peronist governments, coinciding with the Partido Justicialista (Peronist) party's rule at the national level.

Between 1999 and 2001, Argentina had a short-lived coalition administration, an alliance formed by the Radical Civil Union (UCR) and Frepaso parties. While the Alianza governed, five additional provinces were selected for the Federal Plan, and again, the

⁶⁷ The data presented are from the mid-1990s [the exceptions, with data pre-1995 are: population (average annual growth rate) range from 1988-1997; poverty and inequality figures are from 1994; gross enrollment ratio at the tertiary level are also from 1994]. The United Nations developed its Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) in 1995, and have provided gender (sex) disaggregated data from that point forward. This is to say, it is likely that gender (sex) disaggregated data would have been available at the time the "basic socio-economic data" were being put together. The lack of gender (sex) disaggregated data here provides a case in point for the need [at that time] for integration of a gender perspective into the Bank structures and production processes themselves, as well as in the programs produced. This was a major critique of such lending institutions that spurred the transition from a focus on "Women in Development" to "Gender and Development." The latter reflects the need for critical reflection on the programs *and* the institutions that design them, rather than the programs alone.

political leadership of the provinces matched the political stripe of those in power nationally (Argentina Interviewees 5 and 28).

The Plan Federal, as one piece of a slew of efforts to bring about more egalitarian circumstances for women and men in society, is primarily about building infrastructure at the provincial level, and this, in fact, is its legacy. It has been successful in building up that infrastructure and has functioned as a way to redistribute funds to reach small communities in the provinces, and although some of this infrastructural strength has come from the Consejo and the Plan, additional resources at the provincial level have needed to be in place as well in order to ensure that the funds flow all the way through.

Interviews with Federal Plan participants in civil society organizations at the provincial level noted, however, that while the extension of the program provided funds for small projects that did work to maintain a gender focus that did not mean that a gender perspective was incorporated into social planning coming from the top of the governmental hierarchy. In particular, an interviewee in an academic setting took the view that the largest emergency social plan, called “Jefes y Jefas” (short for Male and Female Heads of Household), had incorporated the female head of household into the name for political reasons only, but it did not mean that there was attention being paid to gender issues other than the name itself (Argentina Interviewee 17). Thus, while programmatic efforts may have some trickle down effect, there is no “trickle up” that would enable large scale planning to effectively embody a perspective designed to shift unequal power arrangements. This is, in a sense, a sign of the times given that the CNM’s efforts are largely based on small projects, even with efforts to actively make links with other ministries.

“There are many Argentinas in Argentina”⁶⁸: Managing the Gendered Crisis

In the 1999 election, de la Rúa defeated Eduardo Duhalde, of the Peronist party. In December 2001, massive protests forced President de la Rúa from office. In the aftermath of his departure, and the breakdown of the coalition, several caretaker presidents came and went within the month. The fourth (and final) caretaker president, Eduardo Duhalde, emerged in January 2002. Duhalde remained as the caretaker president until the elections of May 2003, when Nestor Kirchner, as the only remaining candidate, was elected.⁶⁹

While Duhalde’s administrative caretaking translated into some forms of stability, it did not bode well for the CNM. In January 2002, the CNM became a program dependent upon the National Coordinating Council for Social Policies, which reported to the then-First Lady, Chiche Duhalde. This move was characterized by some in the NGO sector as representing an important diminution of status for the CNM both in terms of autonomy and budget (Sabanés Plou 2002).

The National Women’s Council’s status persisted from 1992 to 1999 when—again by Decree (943/99 and 2518/99)—the CNM was transferred, this time to the Executive Office of the Cabinet of Ministers. According to the official governmental view,

⁶⁸ Argentina Interviewee 23.

⁶⁹ The other candidate, former President Menem, dropped out shortly before the final round of voting.

This move had a major impact owing to the importance which the 1994 Constitution accords to the Executive Office. Firstly, it created the Executive Office as a coordinating body with responsibility for the country's general administration and for coordination of activities among ministries (art. 100). This means that since the CNM is part of and reports directly to the Government's coordination body it now has more room for carrying out cross-cutting measures with the various governmental departments (Government of Argentina, official report to the Commission on Eliminating Discrimination Against Women 2002: 5).

Such a view, however, was discounted by several interviewees who noted that the coordinating body is headed by the First Lady. In 2002, this meant that the head of the council was the same woman who had dismantled the *Área Mujer* in the province of Buenos Aires while her husband was governor there.

Gendering Crisis and Opportunity

We are working a lot on issues of masculinity, but...we women have been fighting for our vindication since the French Revolution and men have just begun to think about this in the 1970s...We put forward the issue that 'gender' is not 'woman', gender is a social construction...[that] we have to elucidate...through a critical lens and try to establish a new construction [of it]. In this, too, we insert a perspective on class (Argentina Interviewee 22).

[I]t seems really bad to me to have the feminist movement as a movement by itself. Isolated from the political fight, it dies....Really, it has become disconnected.... I'm totally in agreement with this [idea/action of] introducing [the feminist struggle/transversalidad de genero] in other spaces—just like I'm totally in agreement with all of the alliances that have existed and for having done combined strategies. It cannot be women alone, and this is one of my big fights on the issue of abortion. The abortion appears as a 'women's problem' when a more heterosexual problem doesn't exist (Argentina Interviewee 27).

In the early 2000s, feminists tended to readily categorize the tendencies toward being “autónomas” and “institucionalizadas,”⁷⁰ which can be loosely translated into “outsiders” and “insiders,”⁷¹ the former referring to those who remain aloof from the state and work entirely within the realm of civil society, and the latter being those who work in the state apparatus itself in official government functions, or in non-state organizations that nonetheless choose to work with the state, whether on a regular basis or through sporadic engagements.⁷² Although these divides are seen by some as having decreased regionally since high points of tension in the 1990s (see for example, Alvarez et al. 2002), in Argentina these divisions are recontextualized by a situation in which the state offers little opportunity for *either* insiders or outsiders to work with it in terms of the Federal Plan for Women because it is largely designed as a program focusing on

⁷⁰ I spoke with a woman who was recommended to me as being a feminist who would be a good person to speak with about the work being done by *autónomas*. She ultimately chose not to be interviewed because she felt she had little to offer in terms of current feminist work. In the course of our brief conversation, however, she told me, “At my age, they [feminists] are all ‘insiders’.” She herself was engaging with her local Asamblea Popular, which she considered to be the most energized site in civil society at that moment, and suggested I attend some of the meetings. However, she also proceeded to name any number of feminist groups that were working well outside of the state sector. Indeed, many of the groups she named are made up of younger activists and many organizing efforts also engage with issues of sexuality, a rather clear boundary marker between *autónomas* and *institucionalizadas* (the state and its affiliates generally do not deal with issues of homosexuality, for example).

⁷¹ “Insiders” is a preferable translation for *institucionalizadas*, given that in English the term “institutionalized” can be taken as referring to someone who is living in a mental health institution for treatment of mental illness.

⁷² These terms are used by Korzeniewicz and Smith (2001) and the distinction serves to center the State, which is useful for the present analysis. The terms “insider” and “outsider” have also been discussed at length in the literature on feminist ethnography, but in such a way that places not only the subjects of the research, but also the researcher. This literature focuses on the merits, perils, and challenges of the ethnographer sharing identities (along lines of race, class, sexuality, language) with her interviewees and contacts in the community where the research takes place, and thus being something of an “insider” (see for example, Patricia Zavella, “Feminist Insider Dilemmas: Constructing Ethnic Identity with Chicana Informants,” in Wolf, 1996). The “outsider” in this context is the person who does not have characteristics in common with those she interviews or otherwise works with (see Carol Stack, “Writing Ethnography: Feminist Critical Practice,” in the same volume by Wolf). The authors mentioned here conclude that both insider and outsider status require negotiation and critical reflection in terms of the ethnographer’s relation to both those whom she works with (as research “subjects”) and in the writing that emerges from those experiences.

provincial governmental mechanisms for implementing policies with a gender perspective.

Beyond the geographic limitation, however, a rift between feminists and the state occurred in the mid-1990s, from which these relations have never recovered, and thus even NGOs from the women's movements who have good relations and perceptions of the national state agency on women, have little opportunity to engage with it through the Plan or otherwise. In 2002, the CNM was engaging with a broader cross-sector of society due to the large scale economic crisis (a crisis that was most definitely social and very much political, as well), but this did not mean that it was directly engaging feminist or women's NGOs as counterparts to state policies; conversely, it also did not mean that the women's movement or feminist organizers were looking to the state for solutions.⁷³

An ex-employee who worked in the Consejo Nacional until 2001 said that an evaluation done that year pointed to one of the Consejo's biggest weaknesses being its relationship with other sectors of the State (national government). Although this critique was not necessarily well-received, the Consejo did begin, in late 2001, to reflect on what exactly "*transversalidad* [mainstreaming] of gender meant and what it meant to evaluate public policies using a gender perspective."⁷⁴ The difficulty in figuring this out, according to this interviewee, was that the Consejo was very clear on what it was *not*

⁷³ A small delegation representing some sectors of the women's movement made concerted efforts to communicate with the CNM's newest president, María Lucila "Pimpi" Colombo in April and May of 2004. While they were successful in having a meeting with her, the results of the encounter were much less than promising, according to the notes from the Women in Equality Foundation monthly breakfast meeting for May 2004.

⁷⁴ *Transversalidad*, which may be interpreted as "mainstreaming" is the idea that gender cuts across all levels/sectors of the government

about: it was *not* a space in which to focus on direct services to victims⁷⁵ of domestic violence, it did not have to deal directly with the issue of abortion. This hesitation or lack of embrace of these issues stems from the place that “women’s issues” have historically been associated with social tasks. Thus, the struggle for the Consejo was/has been to not be seen in that light, “not to be made to distribute milk” (ibid.) [thus avoiding any association with the essential feminine (maternal) in order to embrace the (masculine by default) political].

When the current President of the Consejo was asked what ‘gender perspective’ signifies to her, she responded by saying that the Consejo Nacional is concerned with the public policies aimed at women to achieve gender equity. The goal of the Consejo is to ensure that gender policies are incorporated into all the activities and actions of all the other areas of the government. The Consejo’s job, then, is to be an advocate for public policies for women, and here she adds, of gender equity across all sectors of government.

She then used an example of the way that her work is that of a bridge between distinct communities: many NGOs, she notes, work with women but do not have a gender perspective incorporated into their work. However, the Consejo, on her watch, makes a point to work with them. “If not, we have—we had a circle that was a little closed. We said ‘we’ll only work with those that have a gender perspective’ but we will not change reality like that if we don’t incorporate other groups [organizations] that do not have it, so that they will.”

The naming practices of the women’s movement in Argentina are reflective of struggles around authority. The women’s movement constitutes a mass movement in Argentina, but the feminist movement is quite small (Argentine Interviewee 27).

⁷⁵ “Victimas” is the interviewee’s language.

Feminism has had powerful repercussions for the Argentine state and society, but it is not a mass movement. There have been feminists who lead and work within the state and formalized institutions and processes, but by and large (particularly in the early 2000s) feminists remain engaged in direct action projects that are more individualized solutions to societal problems. Feminism constructed in this way is a critical perspective that finds resolution in action that resists authority.

A “political woman,”⁷⁶ when asked what a ‘gender perspective’ means to her, replied:

I link [a gender perspective] much more to a more feminist position...for me clearly this has to do with promoting rights and eliminating discrimination and strengthening the condition of women and others...Certainly this is not the same vision that others have, you have a couple of things, from those who assume that actually gender is very similar to feminism and therefore you have a complete rejection [to those who think gender has something to do with women].

I had a very funny discussion here, on a legislative project,...to create a kind of parliament for women, in reality a type of consultative body...to get women together from all the provinces...Somewhere it was said that it should be integrated and work from a gender perspective. On the Commission [that was to review the legislation] here they got tense because the advisors were saying, ‘no, gender is the same as abortion,’ to which I responded...“Well, I have no problem but if gender is the same as abortion then we have a problem of inconsistency with the law because we signed the International Criminal Court of Rome statute that uses the word gender, so therefore we should de-criminalize abortion, if gender equals abortion.”....Therefore, it means the same thing and we de-criminalize or it does not mean the same thing.

Then and there they decided that it did not mean the same thing.

Subjectivities: Language Possibilities

It is possible to read the crisis in Argentina, highly visible in the late part of 2002, as an “incoherent moment of possibility” (Sandoval 2003).⁷⁷ The incoherence was felt as

⁷⁶ Although she is currently a Congressional representative, prior to her governmental services she worked in the NGO sector.

an existential crisis of the nation, as much as one that was economic, political, and social, and the possibility was captured by the sentiment of one interviewee, when she said, “I think that what you are seeing in this particular moment, after what happened here in December [2001],...forms of citizen participation have widened so much, and they have deepened so much” (Argentina Interviewee 27).

A graffiti, carefully written and attributed to R. Larama, on the base of a monument to Quixote⁷⁸ in the heart of Buenos Aires, reads: “We are nothing. We want to be everything.” “We are nothing,” is a fair reflection of many Argentines’ rather circumspect assessment of their country’s fall from (economic) grace and the accompanying social and political fallout. It also pays tribute to the debates that surfaced among Argentines in broad circles, and were highly visible in academic and activist circles: Who are we, now that we are something other than what we were? In what direction(s) will the nation go, and what kind of place will it become? As Argentine political scientist Oscar Landi expressed in creating revised definitions for “optimist” and “pessimist” appropriate to the times, “The optimist says, ‘We’ve hit bottom.’ The pessimist says, ‘I think we can go further’” [meaning further down].⁷⁹

⁷⁷ The language in quotes was taken from Chela Sandoval’s presentation to the NWSA, Plenary Session, June 22, 2003, New Orleans). She was not referring to Argentina, but was referring to the moment for disciplinary locations that is the current environment in which we are all operating. In that ‘incoherent moment,’ the standard disciplines are using the confusion to encroach upon and exclude newer disciplinary spaces such as women’s studies and Chicano studies.

⁷⁸ This graffiti was documented as well in an online Argentine publication, which gives the detail of the monument and the exact location: “Graffiti ‘No somos nada; queremos serlo todo.’ Con aerosol en un monumento al Quijote, enrejado, en Av. de Mayo y Lima.” [Graffiti, “We are nothing. We want to be everything.” Aerosol on a monument to Quijote, behind fence, at the intersection of Mayo and Lima Avenues.] *Ñusleter*, Mensaje periódico de divulgación literaria #10. <http://niusleter.com.ar/usleter/usleter10.html>. Retrieved July 1, 2003.

⁷⁹ Oscar Landi, comments during luncheon address at the University of San Martín, Buenos Aires, Argentina, August 20, 2002.

The other part of R. Larama's graffiti reads, "We want to be everything" [literally, we want to be it all]. "This 'to be everything' suggests a new utopia, a place that doesn't yet exist" (Feijóo y Salas Oroño). This sentiment, noted Clarín newspaper writer Hector Pavón (March 17, 2002), expressed "[i]ntimate wishes, shared proposals in the collective spirit that resists and firmly believes, like the Parisians of '68, that 'under the paving stones, [lies] the beach.'" ⁸⁰

During the same time period as these social commentaries were circulating, there was an image in use by the women's network brought together on a monthly basis by the Women in Equality Foundation (MEI Foundation) in Buenos Aires. The symbol, the @, was being used by organizations and individuals within the MEI network in Buenos Aires. We can only name it in the context of cyberspace communications, in email addresses: the "at" symbol in English, or "arroba" in Argentine Spanish. This symbol collapses the strictly gendered boundaries of the letters 'a' and 'o', used to define feminine and masculine, respectively, in the Spanish language. "Las niñas" means the female children; "los niños" means the male children. The @ is a new letter that is only a visual representation because we cannot pronounce it once it is placed into a word, e.g. l@s niñ@s. By engaging the symbol @, "los" and "las" are simultaneously referenced and the strictures around gendered markers are relaxed. It is, in a sense, a blurring and simultaneous feminization of gender(ed) boundaries with the increased visibility of that

⁸⁰ The slogans found in graffiti from the May 1968 period can be found at <http://www.bopsecrets.org/CF/graffiti.htm>. The translation was done by the website's author Ken Knabb, March 1999. I use his translation here. He notes that "these graffiti are drawn primarily from Julien Besançon's *Les murs ont la parole* (Tchou, 1968), Walter Lewino's *L'imagination au pouvoir* (Losfeld, 1968), Marc Rohan's *Paris '68* (Impact, 1968), René Viénet's *Enragés et situationnistes dans le mouvement des occupations* (Gallimard, 1968), and Gérard Lambert's *Mai 1968: brûlante nostalgie* (Pied de nez, 1988)."

which denotes the feminine, the 'a'. This is a fitting "sign of the times" in that it is difficult to know exactly how to name the moment captured in this series of images in Argentina. What does "crisis" mean? What does it signal for the future of the country? What is its significance in a globalized context? Does it represent a permanent unsettling? A reconsolidation of heteropatriarchal institutions? Some of both? Something else? What new symbols will serve to recognize the shifting gender regimes/shifting gendered regimes of power/accumulation? The symbol is a picture in a sense, of possibility and of transformation that goes beyond what verbalizing "los" and "las" is able to do. We cannot name it, but we can bear witness to understanding that it represents change in gendered boundaries. That it occurs in a moment of crisis in the nation is not coincidence, for the boundaries of the nation are heavily gendered, and change in one collides with and forms shifts in the other.

Re-situating Outsiders and Insiders:

Understanding the Societal Context for a Moment of Activist Diffusion

While there were many rejuvenated civil society efforts taking place during the crisis, they expressed themselves in parallel, rather than intersecting, fashion. For example, in the government of the City of Buenos Aires, the Director General for Human Rights within the Mayor's Cabinet described the distance between women's organizations and her office as occurring, not because her office does not desire such a relationship, but rather because the women's groups are already very well developed, and the women's rights arena is "big and strong" (Argentina Interview 18).

The office does work closely with organizations focusing on issues of sexual rights (beyond those dealt with by women's organizations, issues of transsexuality, for example). However, the director mentioned that the Council on Children's and Adolescents' Rights works on gender, due to the connection with the family. At the same time, one of the major projects that the Human Rights office is currently undertaking is to work with the eight human rights organizations now designated as "los históricos"—those that have a long history of this work (although there are other groups that also do human rights work and do not fall into this category). One example of this work involves being in charge of an excavation of a sports stadium in San Telmo that served as a clandestine detention center during the dictatorship.

In a sense, the struggles for human rights become the marker for the beginning of history, with the históricas/os as the grandparents in the line of succession. The youth, young women and men of groups such as HIJOS, H.I.J.O.S, and FEAS, staging public acts of protests against those known to have been involved in military brutalities by having a carnival-like festive launching of paint bombs to mark the military officers' homes ("escratches"), are the children and grandchildren of this consciously recovered and established memory/nation.

The Madres are, first and always, a human rights organization composed of women. They are women who mobilized themselves in order to find out what had happened to their missing children and other loved ones who were disappeared by the military regime as it waged its "dirty war" between 1976 and 1983. The Madres de la Plaza de Mayo currently exists as two distinct organizations due to a split over political differences: Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, and Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Línea

Fundadora.⁸¹ There is a need for an in-depth analysis of the political schism with the Madres, and the resulting lineages that mean that there are two groups of Madres, and two groups of children of the disappeared—HIJOS and H.I.J.O.S.--, and there are the Abuelas (Grandmothers) who are a single group. These relationships are not at all explored in any account of the Madres I have read, which means that the Madres are not seen as an organization or a particular form of mobilization, but rather are held up as icons. They are certainly that—there is no doubt of the enormous courage it took and continues to take to live with the results of the dirty war waged on their families and on their society. But the Madres' splits signal changes in the society in which they exist as organizations, and it is important to read those signals and understand what the different groups have to say to each other. The question revolves around not only why the split, but what relationship they continue to have with each other, and what that says about the environment for human rights struggles in Argentina.

It also seems important to acknowledge and to pursue further to understand current and future prospects for institutionalized-autonomous, or state-civil society, relations. There is an explicit feminist-human rights connection present with younger

⁸¹ Lola Rubino, of the Madres, Línea Fundadora, stated that the division in the organization came about when the government offered compensation to those families whose loved ones had been disappeared. Most of the women are older, if not elderly, and the loss of a spouse or child also meant a loss of financial support. The decision to take the money, says Ms. Rubino, was a personal one. Those who objected to being open to receiving government monies were labeled “whores” by the leader of the Madres, Hebe Bonafide, from whom the Línea Fundadora split off. This painful split still has not healed: both groups continue their Thursday vigils in the Plaza de Mayo, but do so in two separate lines, according to Ms. Rubino.

As a casual observation by the author, in many accounts of the Madres, it is Bonafide who is pictured (perhaps as a result of accounts dealing with the two distinct organizations being so rare). Her ability to find her way into the public eye is quite impressive. As the World Social Forum session in Buenos Aires, Argentina opened with a march in August 2002, Bonafide and the Madres were in the Plaza de Mayo. She stated that although they had not been officially invited, they were present to show their support. Minutes later, as the march commenced, Bonafide and Madres appeared in the very front.

Bonafide's organization of the Madres also has a bookstore and coffee shop on the square across the street from the Congress.

activists. There is a group of younger, university-age feminists, Autonomous Feminists (the acronym for which is FEAS, which means “ugly women”) and an organization of young adults who were children of the disappeared who actively work together. The link appears to be much tighter than among the older groups, who tend to focus more on doing their own issue area.

Conclusion

In the 1980s and through the early 1990s there was a tremendous institutionalization of demands by the women’s movement on the state. The push from below by the women’s movement was structured in part through non-governmental organizations. The push from the level of the state came from two directions: from women within political parties, and a receptivity within the highest levels of government, including the President, concerned with both the consolidation and deepening of democracy. The power of the president, to issue decrees creating bureaucratic instruments for promoting women’s interests, and legislative processes that brought about laws supporting changes in society and formal political arenas were critically important, as will be discussed below. The result of the powerful multi-sector push was an institutionalization process that culminated with the creation of the National Council on Women (*Consejo Nacional de la Mujer*) in 1992.

State resolutions and presidential decrees formalize those things that have been pushed from below by the women’s movement, but from there the relationship is very difficult because of the feminist struggle to maintain a critical lens on power, which often translates into a direct critique of the state, including whatever it is doing for women.

Women who are heavily involved in political parties, or the earlier mobilizations to gain state power/access, seem to be much more positive regarding the accomplishments of the state with respect to women's gains.

Those who have always operated from outside have remained critique of the state, and their critique has also emerged and become directed at the formalized NGO sector. In the same way as the state was not legitimate because it acted as gatekeeper to women from the grassroots sectors, so too did NGOs come to be seen as illegitimate if they were not directly tied to the grassroots. The environment of the early 2000s made clear that the older organizations and activists that emerged in the 1980s as Argentina transitioned into democracy are in the process of re-situating themselves vis-à-vis institutions in the state and emergent societal organizing.

CHAPTER 6

CHILE

Women's Early Activist Roots

Women's activism in Chile, as in Argentina, has roots dating to the nineteenth century. As early as 1873, Martina Barros de Orrego lectured on women's suffrage and published on John Stuart Mills' work (Navarro and Bourque 1998). Many women were active in political parties in the earlier part of the twentieth century, and indeed, one of the most active and visible connections between early and late twentieth century is the Movement for the Emancipation of Chilean Women (MEMCH), which began in 1935 and was active through mid-century.

The 1970s and 1980s was a period when, as in many other countries, women's activism became much more visible relative to earlier periods. The dictatorship of Pinochet, installed during the coup of September 11, 1973, served as the inspiration for a vigorous reincarnation of the Movement, and MEMCH 83 emerged as one of the many women's and feminist voices that sought to reclaim democracy for the country as a whole.⁸²

Although the 1970s' activism were focused on human rights, in the 1980s, women began to create sites for study of women's lives and gender relations in society. Those same groups now constitute part of the core of women's NGO activism, even as

⁸² The MEMCH Anthology (*MEMCH Antología: para una historia del movimiento femenino en Chile*) recounts the full history of the organization and women's activism from the nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth. The Anthology was produced to document women's activism in Chile, and included within it are the constitutive act of MEMCH 83 and its declarations of principles. Many thanks to the staff of MEMCH for trusting me with their copy of the Anthology. They kindly loaned it out to me from their organizational library so I could make photocopies.

the NGO sector is regrouping in new formations to interact with the state and larger civil society. In the decade of the 1990s and into the early 2000s, a number of key focal points emerge as important sites of civil society-government negotiations around the predecessor to the current Plan for Equality of Opportunities between Women and Men, 2000-2010 and its rural and regional offshoots; and related interactions where the state engages gender both nationally and internationally. These latter instances include the processes that led to producing official reports for the CEDAW Commission of the United Nations and modifications to Chile's domestic violence law.

As in Argentina, the politics of the larger government play themselves out in the space of the state ministry on women. The contrast with Argentina of having a Plan for Equality that is an unfunded set of guidelines means that although the rhetoric paints the Plan as a "navigation chart" for governmental policy making, it does not carry much weight in the face of shifting administration priorities. And, similar to Argentina, women's NGO and civil society activists are now engaged in processes of re-situating themselves as attention from government and multilateral development banks is focusing on civil society.

Formation of Key NGO Sector Organizations

In Chile, the Women's Studies Circle, a key site for feminist study and consciousness-raising in the late 1970s, first operated under the aegis of the Academy of Christian Humanism, an institution of the Catholic Church. The Academy provided a space during the Pinochet regime for human and women's rights activists. This was possible because the Church was one of the few institutions that was untouched, for the

most part, by the repressive apparatus of Pinochet's regime (Craske 1999). The Church's role in providing such spaces as well as direct aid to people in economic need, garnered it a lasting appreciation. In the current moment, as will be discussed below, this appreciation, along with other factors, has made it difficult to confront the Church in its efforts to deny passage of a key instrument for making more effective an international convention on women's rights (the CEDAW Optional Protocol), what one interviewee called the Church's "retardant" effects on social change in gender relations.⁸³

In the context of the dictatorship, interested women researchers and activists who came together in the space of the Academy and the Women's Studies Circle formed a working group in 1981, as part of a program for training and study for rural indigenous women. When, in the early 1980s, the demands that women were making with regard to attention to gender issues went beyond the limits of what the Academy had envisioned, women from the Circle invited others to work with them to form a new institutional space. From that initial effort, activists founded a number of organizations that remain central to women's rights struggles in the current era. An example is that of the Center for Studies of Women's Development (CEDEM) that emerged from that initial 1981 effort focused on rural and indigenous women.

Women who had found each other in the context of the Circle started two new groups that reflected the varying interests of those involved: the Center for Women's Studies (CEM), and La Morada Corporation. CEM functioned as a kind of federation, with the individual researchers bringing their distinctive trajectories to the table, and maintained those individual interests over time. In 1990, those within CEM who were

⁸³ The social conservatism of the country does not begin and end with the Church, but the Church is able to tap into those tendencies and use them to its advantage on particular issues (Chile Interviewee 5).

working on rural issues decided that the institutional constraints of CEM indicated that the moment was right for another parting of the ways, and so they founded CEDEM in 1990 (Chile Interviewee 10). CEDEM is currently the only women's NGO in Santiago that works with rural and indigenous women, a point that becomes highly relevant in both accomplishments of rural-urban network efforts and in discussions of the need for and lack of relations between professionalized NGO sectors and grassroots women and their organizations.

State-Focused Strategies

In *Strategies for a New Future*, the women from the political party coalition known as the *Concertación* for Democracy (the ruling coalition post-Pinochet), developed a proposal that emerged from the women's movement, to create an office on women. Thus, the institution's inception was a "requirement" demanded by civil society, as a public service deemed important by the movement (Chile Interviewee 10). A coalition of women active in formal political parties and feminists drew up the Program of Governance for Women prior to the democratic elections, and the new president, Patricio Aylwin agreed to implement it. Moreover, Law No. 19.023, passed in 1991 under the Aylwin administration, established Chile's National Women's Service (henceforth SERNAM).

This is not to say its establishment was straightforward, however. Indeed, the view from the NGO sector, provided to the CEDAW Committee in the late 1990s, describes the installation of the agency into the state as "difficult and ambiguous, because...it is an organism specializing in women's affairs, and...must legitimate its

action within an institutional framework that is lacking in gender perspective” (*Chile, CEDAW Shadow Report 1998:7*).

The agency is charged with working with the Executive branch on designing, developing, and evaluating plans and measures to advance women’s status in society to that they enjoy equality of rights and opportunities with men in social, political, economic and cultural arenas. Focal areas also include family, education and community. Its principal activities include the design of public policies for women, coordination of national policies and actions with other ministries, evaluation of the government’s commitment to CEDAW, carrying out and promoting studies that evaluate current conditions of women and families (National Service for Women N.d. and Chile, CEDAW Shadow Report 1999).

The head of SERNAM occupies the rank of Cabinet Minister, important for this and other similar agencies, because “[i]t has been demonstrated...that when a women’s office has the status of a ministry and its director can participate in cabinet meetings, women’s issues have achieved greater visibility within the country” (IDB 1998:1). However, despite this title, SERNAM does not function as a ministry because it is not endowed with the power of an executing agency. It can only guide policies made in other ministries and arenas of government.

This was a great point of contention in the political struggles around the law that was passed to create the agency, and is a point that continues to be contested, although quite subtly, within documents produced for the public. For example, in the *Plan for Equality of Opportunities for Women and Men: General Guidelines, 2000-2010* (henceforth PIO), SERNAM states an objective of consolidating “the process of

legitimation and institutionalization of the focus on gender in public policies,” where a guideline would be the modification of its legal framework “to make its structure fit with its mission” (Servicio Nacional de la Mujer 2000:81).

Restructuring the Women’s Ministry

The Lagos administration took office in 2000, and in its first year, SERNAM was restructured.⁸⁴ The changes to SERNAM’s structure translated into an ordering of departments around three thematic areas: (1) Participation and Exercise of Rights; (2) Economic Autonomy and Overcoming Female Poverty; and (3) Women, Family, and Quality of Life. Each area has specific topical issues linked to it. For example, the area of Participation is primarily dedicated to all those issues that have to do with women’s citizenship: exercise of rights, political participation, and decision-making (the area is exploring the possibilities for a quota law, among other things). Those working in the thematic area developed around economic issues are developing work around good practices for equality of opportunities in business, in line with thinking about the social responsibility of the business community. In this way, equality of treatment of male and female workers is taken up as an area of social responsibility.⁸⁵ The focal points within the third area, Women, Family, and Quality of Life, include domestic violence, responsible sexuality, and family, all issues dealing with the distribution of roles and

⁸⁴ I was not able to access, as I was able to in Argentina, the head of SERNAM. Nor was I able to talk with people who served as institutional sources of memory. Both employees with whom I had the longer interviews were relatively new. I spoke briefly with a woman who was in charge of one of the three major areas of SERNAM, but was not able to have a formal interview with her due to time constraints (she made space to see me as she was preparing for a meeting, and I was not successful in making a follow up appointment with her).

⁸⁵ In October 2002, a private firm that was serving as a driving force in bringing attention to the issue was in the process of organizing an event about social responsibility, and SERNAM was to participate (Chile Interviewee 1).

divisions of responsibilities. The professionals in this thematic area also have the responsibility of communicating with the Ministries of Education and Health (ibid.).

Support for each thematic area comes from departments such as studies and statistics; international relations and cooperation; planning; administration and finance; and oversight of legal issues; legal reforms. This last is the department that develops (legislative) bills, or develops guidelines for parliamentary motions, supporting the Minister [of SERNAM] when she lobbies for such legislative efforts in parliament (Chile Interviewee 1).

Within SERNAM, there is a view that these approaches and thematic areas represent continuity with previous administrations. As one young woman stated it, there is nothing here that is “totally new”—rather, these are issues with a long institutional trajectory (Chile Interviewee 1). Along with the downplaying of change in agency focal points, despite the rather dramatic reordering that the restructuring entailed (reducing thematic areas from six to three; shifting how technical and administrative support functions for those areas; shifts in the links between the central and regional offices of SERNAM) there is also the perception that the changes in presidential administration have represented some changes in personnel, but do not represent major shifts since all three post-Pinochet governments have been from the same center-left political coalition (Chile Interviewee 2).

Accessing the State: A Matter of Status

There are important historical ties and continuing crossover from the NGO to state sector occurring through employment and contract work, but access is most

favorable for those who were involved in the emergence of the women's movement in the 1980s and who have high status as heads of their respective organizations, and whose organizations are considered to carry weight because of the research they produce. For other, smaller NGOs, access is problematic. A contractor, who self-identifies as feminist, who has worked with some of the larger, more established women's NGOs, but who now forms part of a collaborative working group of "dissenters" from the women's NGO sector, stated that those who have a great deal of institutional recognition "get all the information, all the invitations," but smaller organizations like hers do not share in those experiences.

A SERNAM professional who had come from the NGO sector into the state agency assessed her own close ties to some non-governmental organizations as being kept up largely outside of her official work capacities, more in keeping with her personal interests. She noted that she has some contact through consultancies that NGOs take up with SERNAM, and the NGO and academic sectors are those areas of civil society with which SERNAM has the most contact. The External Relations Department maintains some specific organizational links that gives the department contact with some organizations within civil society (Chile Interviewee 2). In general though, "one doesn't work closely with civil society" from within the state institution.

However, a longtime activist and scholar in the NGO sector who has what she termed "maternal ties" to SERNAM as well as regular access to the state agency, stated quite explicitly that every change of minister and every change of government means "starting practically from zero" in terms of educating them on the issues of concern and

relevance to the NGO sector, particularly the previous governmental commitments made on the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 (Chile Interviewee 6).

Reiterating that perspective, the Director of CEDEM who participated in SERNAM's advisory council concluded that NGO/network communication with SERNAM in recent years was, overall, good: "in general they [the women in SERNAM] respond, they give you appointments, they see you and such." However, "at the same time, we separate ourselves...in spite of how good they [SERNAM] might be,...[in terms of] these communications and all,...a super important issue is that we maintain our autonomy as non-governmental organizations, and in fact, we are also concerned with other issues that are not on the public [state] agenda" (Chile Interviewee 10).

Preparing the CEDAW Report: Inter-State Sector Cooperation

In 2002, major issues in Chilean society, the governing *Concertación* coalition, and within SERNAM included the ongoing discussions of a pending divorce law,⁸⁶ sexual harassment, violence (modifications to the Domestic Violence Law) and the CEDAW Optional Protocol, which involves a review of national laws associated with the CEDAW and its relation to the state.

SERNAM's External Relations department has the primary responsibility for the preparation of the CEDAW country report for Chile. The latest of these was due to be submitted in 2003 to the CEDAW Committee at the United Nations. In preparing the

⁸⁶ The divorce law passed the Senate in October 2002 (To cite: date of full passage). This was an issue that the majority of Chileans seemed to support, but there was great institutional reticence to passage of the law. This was an instance where the Catholic Church did weigh heavily in the debates. An article published in the newspaper during the debates of 2002 depicted the parliamentary body with Jesus on the crucifix hovering in ghostly fashion over the proceedings below. Chile's marriage laws were ultimately changed in 2004, and divorce is now legal in Chile.

report, each Area and Department within SERNAM, as well as other ministries, have to provide information to those in charge of preparing the CEDAW report. At the same time, they ask for information relating to commitments undertaken by the Chilean state with regard to other agreements relating to women, such as the Beijing Platform for Action. The Ministries involved in the 2003 report preparation included Labor, Health, Agriculture, Interior and Economy.

This cooperation represents an important shift from the previous experience, in 1998, when the responsibility for generating all necessary information for the report fell to SERNAM alone. If information arrived at all from the other Ministries, it was of very poor quality (Chile Interviewee 2). To change this, the Ministers heading SERNAM and the Foreign Relations Ministry presented a united front, approaching each ministry, explaining what the report concerned and asking that the ministry name a representative or someone from within the institution to be the designated person in charge of gathering and transmitting this information to SERNAM. In October 2002, SERNAM was beginning to coordinate with these other institutional representatives. Things change, when the request for information is “minister to minister” (Chile Interviewee 2). In 1998, the contribution to the report was not seen as an obligation on the part of the other ministries. SERNAM was also planning to hold meetings with some civil society organizations early in 2003 to ask them for information, as well.⁸⁷

The Politics of Political Coalitions: The Meaning of “Left”

In an interview with Minister Delpiano, the head of SERNAM in 2000, a journalist began his coverage of the interview with a bullet point list that sets up the body

⁸⁷ I do not know if these meetings actually took place in 2003.

of the article wherein they discuss (briefly) some of the issues mentioned above, asks her to comment not only on many of the most controversial social issues in Chilean society (divorce, the morning after pill, and abortion), but also asks her to define “love” and her “favorite color,” just before being asked to define what President Ricardo Lagos means to her.⁸⁸

The key issues of divorce, abortion, and sexual harassment are all issues over which the governing coalition government is profoundly divided. The coalition “does not want to have a serious internal debate” about these issues because they represent such important dividing lines between the more progressive and more conservative tendencies within. As a government, then, the *Concertación* has concentrated on impeding the most right wing of postures emerging from opposition parties, but has not engaged social issues of particular concern to (progressive) women (and men) (Chile Interviewee 13).

Minister Delpiano, for example, is said to be from the political left of the coalition, but observers in the feminist and women’s NGO sectors say they have not noticed that it has made a difference in terms of taking decidedly different stances on social issues (Chile Interviewee 5). From a political perspective, the Minister is seen as “brilliant, fantastic,” the best politician that has led SERNAM to date (Chile Interviewee 6). Almost across the board, interviewees noted her ability to effectively communicate across ministerial boundaries. She has achieved “transversality” at that level, reflected in

⁸⁸ “Woman: half of humanity; Man: the other half; Feminism: a great struggle; Discrimination: a source of problems and pain; Education: a great possibility for the country; Children: a great aspiration; Divorce: a necessity; Love: the goal of human beings; The morning after pill: a necessary evil; Abortion: an undesirable topic for everyone; ...Favorite color: green; Ricardo Lagos: a great statesman” “Adriana Delpiano y el rol de la mujer,” José Luis Ramírez M., September 20, 2001, Calama, *Antofagasta*).

In one month’s time, there was only one mention of SERNAM in *El Mercurio*, in an article relating to the finding that one in ten Chilean children are not recognized by their fathers (“Uno de cada 10 niños nacidos en Chile no es reconocido por su padre,” *El Mercurio*, October 7, 2002, p. 18). At the same time, news coverage of Soledad Alvear, the current Minister of Foreign Relations, acknowledges her previous post as Minister of SERNAM, thus providing some indirect visibility for the ministry.

the changes she was able to effect with respect to the CEDAW 2002 report information gathering process.

What has not happened, however, is a vertical integration of the different sectors of the state agency itself or NGOs. In fact, the success with which she has worked across ministerial boundaries is seen as intertwined with the lack in other areas. Simply put, her energies go into the former, and not into the latter. Her success as a politician, then, comes because she is able to be effective in circles of government. In a situation where political parties as a whole are disconnected from civil society, and where strong critiques of the government (from internal or external sources) are scattered and resisted, the focus of the Minister's attention is understandable. It reflects not only party line prescriptions, and tendencies in society at large that undermine the (critical) view from below. As noted in a report released in 2000, this lack of participation is not only affecting SERNAM and women's NGOs, but is a more generalized phenomenon ("Desarrollo con Ciudadanía y Democracia Participativa: un Nuevo Trato entre el Estado y la Sociedad Civil," 2000).

Re-Situating NGOs vis-à-vis the Visible State

Early in the 1990s, Teresa Valdés stated that "The [women's] movement is not visible, but it continues its action" (Valdés 1993:295). What has happened is that SERNAM has become relatively more visible (though still facing severely limited exposure in the broader society) than anything that would be termed a women's social movement. At an event in 2002, for example, the women's movement (named as such from participants in the event) staged a protest at the Court of Appeals, against the

application of the modifications to the original domestic violence law. Judges at the court thought the action was a protest by SERNAM.⁸⁹

Over the course of the 1990s, and especially with the momentum gained through the Beijing Conference, these now professionalized “historical” organizations have come together to forge a new cohesion in the form a working group coalition of almost a dozen such organizations based in the Santiago area. CEM, CEDEM and La Morada all function as part of the *Grupo Iniciativa*. The coalition’s goal is to put “the gender agenda” into public debate, working on the one hand to impact decision-makers so that they take gender into account, and on the other hand, to work with civil society organizations in their action plans and proposals.

However, seen from the eyes of younger activists, the *Grupo Iniciativa* is for “‘diplomats,’ who are the older women who historically have been committed to the movement and remain within it” (Chile Interviewee 8). Another interviewee chose the term “Enlightened feminists” for the *Grupo Inicitiativa* (Chile Interviewee 5). Yet another said these are “feminists with papers” [proof of their expertise] (personal interview, Interviewee 8). The age boundary is notable: she says it is rare to see someone thirty years old or younger in such a group; there is little intergenerational exchange. As one younger activist working in an NGO noted, she is often the person who goes to give talks and do outreach with other organizations, but “they don’t send me because it’s the most important [thing to do]” (and she laughs) (Chile Interviewee 8).

At a seminar given by the *Grupo Iniciativa Mujeres*, a woman in the audience stood up and asked what had happened with the relationship of the women’s movement

⁸⁹ There were a number of audience members who laughed when this story was relayed, presumably because SERNAM would not stage a protest event.

to the State. She gave an example of an organization associated with the women's movement that now participates with governmental institutions. And no one at the seminar, of those participating, seemed to know how to respond to such a question (Lewin, panel event), suggesting that linkages to civil society organizing outside of the professional NGO sector are sparse.

The *Grupo Iniciativa* may be most effective as an interlocutor with the government. The network developed proposals for following up on governmental pledges made with respect to gender equity in such forms as the Plan for Equal Opportunities and the Plan for Equal Opportunities for Rural Women and created an instrument for citizen monitoring referred to as the ICC. This index tracks how well the government has fulfilled the commitments made through international agreements and conventions relating to women's rights and status (Chile Interviewee 10). However, the ICC has not been used by SERNAM. This instrument, "generated by society," (DOMOS interviewee) seemed to pique the government's interest when it was first presented, but in the time since there has been little real opening for its use by the government after the initial receptivity. Given that "the movement would be energized a lot--and you wouldn't have to go looking for tough fights--if only there were a focus on applying...all the agreements from international conferences at the local level," (personal interview, Chile Interviewee 5), monitoring mechanisms are viewed as important by the NGO sector.

The Plan for Equality

In Chile, SERNAM first produced a Plan for Equality in the early 1990s, and it was in place during the Frei administration. The second plan was instituted under

President Lagos: the *Plan for Equality of Opportunities between Women and Men 2000-2010* (Plan de Igualdad de Oportunidades entre la Mujer y el Hombre, henceforth, PIO).

The tenor of the second PIO document speaks to the centrality of economic development: in her letter introducing the plan, the Minister of SERNAM, Adriana Delpiano Puelma, focuses almost immediately on the importance that SERNAM places on understanding women's full citizenship to mean "women's active participation in the economic life of the country, enjoying the benefits of development" (SERNAM 2000:5). She further states that:

This second Plan for Equality is the result of a very intensive participatory process, that generated proposals discussed and achieved in seeking out consensus, which guarantees they are consistent with the aspirations and needs of thousands of women all over the country. It is also based in the rich experience of SERNAM's professional teams in realizing the previous Plan, which was embarked upon from 1994-1999 and formed the basis of the tasks for the Service [SERNAM] over the last six years.

The *Plan of Equality Opportunities between Men and Women 2000-2010* is the navigation chart for the Chilean state for advancing with sure strides to achieve full citizenship for women. The international commitments pledged by the country in terms of gender equity, the most important of which, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women [CEDAW], whose Optional Protocol we were the first country to sign on to—are a convincing testament that the world community to which we want to belong, is a world that shares in the equality of rights and responsibilities for women and men (SERNAM 2000:6, my translation).

Directly contradicting the Minister's written statements, however, are those that work in SERNAM. When I asked about the Plan's status within SERNAM as the "navigational chart," the response was lukewarm: "Well, theoretically it's a navigation chart, but the truth is that in day-to-day work it is not necessarily connected to this."

While some things are reflective of the Plan, political priorities have changed (Chile Interviewee 2). Such shifts occur even within the Coalition government, as well as in the larger political arena, where the *Concertación* must continue to negotiate with the parties

on the Right, that are increasingly powerful. Additionally, each of the two PIOs was designed at the end of a presidential administration, a fact that also makes commitment to such a plan difficult to maintain. The first government (Aylwin) finished its term with one plan, and the second government (Frei) with another, so “you can’t expect all the Ministers that come in with [President] Lagos to be committed to the agreements under Frei’s administration” (Chile Interviewee 5).

The Plan’s relative vagueness is perhaps what generates the range of responses about its applicability as overall guideline for activities and its applicability to day-to-day issues that the government agency is working on. In this instance, one person working in the agency first noted that day-to-day work does not necessarily reflect the Plan. She then stated that the overall direction of projects does reflect the Plan. At the same time, since the Minister changed SERNAM when she came into power with the Lagos administration, the work of the ministry occurs within broad overarching frameworks, and the projects SERNAM works on will sometimes be determined by political coalitions/endeavors (*coyunturas*). They would not take on a project that falls outside the broad thematic areas or the purview of the departments, but if something comes up that was not in the PIO, and it is relevant in the current environment, SERNAM will take it on. The Plan, according to others, has not been thrown out, in fact, according to a consultant, “they *could not* throw it out,” and it exists as an official document but is not something each Ministry is working through with its respective public (*ibid.*). Chile’s PIO is constructed as a set of non-funded guidelines. [See Appendix A for a summary of the major goals and objectives for the PIO.]

In the PIO, the work of coordinating across ministerial lines is stated as a demand of “the transversality⁹⁰ of a gender focus.” This work took place, according to the authors of the PIO, through commissions and ministerial agreements through which a gender focus was developed in the policies emanating from a variety of areas including education, work, health, justice, and agriculture. The “transversal character” of public policy designed through a gender perspective emphasizes a holistic approach.

The term “transversality” refers to the idea of having gender be a cross-cutting focal point of policy formation and implementation throughout the (national, provincial, and community-level) system(s) of government. It is translated as “mainstreaming” in certain institutional contexts, and that is one way to understand its meaning in English, although here I explore additional potential meanings. Although the institutional setting of SERNAM provides a restricted and highly hetero-orthodox setting, the term itself is a site of possibility. It is worth stating again that the institutional setting may also represent possibility, given that the existence of these institutions is an embodiment of substantial change in the state, since they were established in great part due to the efforts of organized women’s movements that helped to consolidate the transitions of both Argentina and Chile to democracy.

At the sub-national level, SERNAM has offices in all nine regions of the country, each of which produced their own regional plan for equality of opportunities. The regional plans emphasize, much as the Argentine Plan and the IDB do, the importance of decentralization, “considered by regional and community spaces to represent an opportunity, in that these actors assume an active role in the development and

⁹⁰ In Spanish, the term is *transversalidad*. I have translated the term back into an English form to emphasize this as a distinctive term from that of “mainstreaming” which would be an English language equivalent.

implementation of policies of equality of opportunities for women” (SERNAM, 2000b).

The staccato tone of the federal PIO that covers historical developments in series of bullet points, and provides a series of guidelines with little context, is in fact muted by the richer detail provided by the regional plans, suggesting that in this case, the central state’s plan is functioning as a set of guidelines, while the more localized governmental institutions are “in touch” with what is happening on the ground.

The interviewee did not know how this particular project functions in terms of the regions outside the metropolitan area, but was able to clarify that in general terms there is centralized coordination and regional teams that are working with public and private institutional representatives. As well, SERNAM has its regional directorates that generate their own project initiatives, often in line with funds made available to support designated regional priorities.

The federal plans for women’s enhanced social/economic/political status willingly and purposefully engage decentralization as part of modernizing the state. The context of a return to democracy is crucial for understanding why centralism might be rejected (Burki, Perry and Dillinger 1999), in addition to the issues of resource and population concentration (but especially the former), discussed above. Assuming that democracy represents the antithesis of authoritarianism leads to the assumption that decentralization is key to resuming or establishing locally responsive governmental mechanisms.⁹¹ However, SERNAM is noticeably absent from engagements with one of the most powerful ministries, that of the Under Secretary of Regional and Administrative Development, where the politics of (de)centralization play out. This has not been seen as

⁹¹ See Burki, *et al.* (1999) for a thorough review of decentralization processes in Latin America, from the World Bank’s perspective.

a priority ministry for SERNAM to be involved with, and so with the way decentralization processes are managed, “gender disappears” altogether (Chile Interviewee 5).

Internally, however, SERNAM has engaged in its own decentralization processes. The regional offices of SERNAM have more autonomy under the Lagos administration than previously, and the central office has been transferring ever greater responsibilities to the regions in terms of administering the budget, a setup that “has its difficulties and advantages.” Of primary concern is the loss of “institutional coherence” on the message emerging from the central office. Some regional directors of SERNAM offices “lose a little of the force of the message” that the central office wanted to transmit on the topic. This happens as local directors accommodate their programs and messages to the specificity of their region (Chile Interviewee 1).

Defining Difference: Rural and Indigenous Women

Together with rural women’s organizations, CEDEM played an important role in developing a plan for equality for rural women. CEDEM made known to SERNAM that its Plan for Equality did not deal with the particular situation(s) of rural women, including the higher levels of poverty, fewer opportunities, and lower levels of education than women generally experience in urban areas. From that point, CEDEM assumed institutional responsibility for developing a plan, “and in the elaboration of the plan we developed a participatory methodology where we convened leaders of organizations, whether through agricultural channels [to reach] rural women, indigenous women, and we engaged in a very enjoyable process through focal groups and such through which we

constructed that framework” (Chile Interviewee 10). At the same time, CEDEM also proposed roundtable meetings on and for rural women, as a space for dialogue, creating connections between governmental and civil society organizational sectors, in their efforts to improve on public policies relevant to rural women.

The idea of the roundtable caught on and from the initial meeting space that was only for those in the capital’s metro area, such encounters have expanded into all of the regions (Chile Interviewee 10). At the beginning of the roundtable project, the only governmental body present was SERNAM. CEDEM and its partner organizations insisted that other public services involved in public policy-making directed at rural women needed to be part of these discussions, and at the national level roundtable various ministries, including Labor and National Goods, participated (ibid.).

The *Policies for Equality of Opportunity for Rural Women* (PIOR) emerged as the product of these encounters. The consultative process between SERNAM and the rural women’s networks were more substantive than those for the PIO, where theoretically there were also important consultations. Staff from SERNAM indicated that there was little input received from women’s groups in Santiago for the PIO, primarily because they were asked to give feedback only after the plan had largely been designed. The rural women’s experiences, however, were quite different, since it was they who found the PIO to be inadequate in meeting their needs. It was their request to SERNAM that generated the work done on rural women’s needs.

In the context of Santiago, SERNAM began an initiative to develop a tri-sector alliance in 2001, involving the state (SERNAM), United Nations agencies (UNDP and others), and NGOs and networks from civil society, to rethink/innovate with regard to

preventing violence. The idea was to support a tri-sector work agreement by the name of “For Non-Violence and For Peace,” (“Por la No Violencia y La Paz”) produced by the roundtable of organizations involved. SERNAM negotiated with the international agencies for endorsement of the project, “considering as a plus, that the organizations from civil society are there. However, we were never again called until now, [when]...they invited us to participate in this roundtable...having changed the original proposal a great deal” (Chile Interviewee 4). The proposal, in its later manifestation, no longer focused on violence against women, but rather on a broad cross-section of society (children, youth, etc).

SERNAM called on DOMOS as an organization well-known for its work on violence, to systematize the experiences of the roundtable, which had been organized around varying themes dealing with violence against children and youth. What DOMOS noted, however, was that two key networks, the *Grupo Iniciativa* and the *Red Chilena*, both of which were said to be a constituent part of the roundtable process, were, in fact, not involved. DOMOS made the decision to reject SERNAM’s invitation “because it did not seem ethically acceptable to us, because as participants in these networks we were extremely upset by the proceedings and in this context we asked for a meeting with the Minister [of SERNAM] to clarify and make known to her our discomfort” (Chile Interviewee 4). Such a situation, she notes, “goes beyond bad or good intentions” because inside SERNAM there are people for whom the NGO sector participation and voice are very important. Overall, however, this interviewee felt that there is, generally speaking, a government policy that does not consider NGO support relevant in anything other than discourse—“there is a discourse of participation, there is a discourse of the relevance of

NGOs, but there is a practice that is constantly restraining that” (ibid.). The state, she concluded, has a very “utilitarian view” of NGOs, but there are no policies that set up a meaningful engagement.

A SERNAM report on violence in the family provides another example of a similar dynamic. The introduction to the report notes that the issue “was made public” in the mid-80s thanks to the efforts of women’s organizations. In 1992, SERNAM conducted a study that captured the prevalence of the problem in Chile: one in four women, whether married or cohabiting, lived with violence directed against them by their partner. The authors then make a strategic position statement: the impact of the statistics was such that it was this that propelled the subject from the private to the public sphere, resulting, two years later, in the passage of the law sanctioning acts of violence within the family (4). Thus, at the same time as they acknowledge the role of the women’s movement—and even give credit to the organizations as getting the issue into the public’s view, they then rescind that statement by giving the agency the credit for finally making a difference on the issue, for taking it, as it were, into the public sphere in such a way that it mattered. The question is, whether SERNAM would have taken up this issue itself without the impulse from the women’s organizations/movement? It is doubtful, but the authority claimed by the agency at such a moment precludes a more generous stance with regard to the movement’s contributions.

Fading Ties and Overflowing Boundaries

Within the political parties, there is a single remaining parliamentarian, María Antonieta Saa, of the PPD, who is somewhat affiliated with women's organizations.⁹² She is the only politician of that rank that has a direct link to women's organizations, but yet is not, as one interviewee put it, "una lumbrera" (luminary, genius, expert, marvel, learned person) (Chile Interviewee 8). In October 2002, Representative Saa, the President of the Family Commission in the Chilean Congress, attended a meeting of the Red Chilena Contra la Violencia Doméstica y Sexual as a member of a panel that was to discuss the then-currently pending changes to Chile's Law on Family Violence.⁹³

Violence is an issue that SERNAM has focused on. The agency has established centers for attention to issues of family violence. Resources are scarce, but there are 25 such centers currently existing throughout the country. Statistics from a SERNAM-produced prevalence report, *Detection and Analysis of the Prevalence of Intra-Family Violence* [*Detección y análisis de la prevalencia de la violencia intrafamiliar* (Servicio Nacional de la Mujer 2002)], show that 50.3 percent⁹⁴ of women in the Metropolitan

⁹² Craske (1999) notes that political parties have played an important role in the feminist movement in Chile, in terms of the influence the parties have on the forms and structures of other political organizations (165).

⁹³ Law No. 19.325, passed 1994, sanctions acts of violence in the family (Servicio Nacional de la Mujer 2002).

⁹⁴ I spoke with a woman who had worked on this prevalence report in SERNAM. She told me "Fifty percent, or a little over fifty percent, say they suffer or have suffered violence at the hands of a past or present partner. So it's more or less high. And I was worried when I told you that statistic, but I think it's correct, because it's not only the current partner, but also past partners, including psychological or sexual violence...I might be getting confused...doublecheck that [in the report she gave me], don't just take [what I said], I'm going to give you the prevalence study and there we can look it over. I got a little scared when I told you that" (Chile Interviewee 1).

Region of Santiago have experienced some form of violence.⁹⁵ A project now exists that is a preventative citizen network, designed to aid in coordinating the work of those involved with domestic violence, or gender violence, child abuse, and sexual abuse. Noticeably absent from the panel, however, was anyone from SERNAM.

The panel consisted of Saa and four individuals who were there as representatives from women's NGOs, the health network, legislative affiliates familiar with the proposed changes to the law. A letter prepared by MemCH, made available as a handout to those in attendance, states very clearly that although the initiative, emanating from the Executive and supported by SERNAM and the Ministry of Justice, did contain "important advances in some spheres, in other areas we perceive, simply, backsliding, from the perspective of access to justice, protection and reparations for victims, aspects that have been cause for concern and permanent denunciation by women's organizations" long active on issues of domestic violence (text from letter provided by MemCH, October 21, 2002).

At the end of the panel's presentation, as Saa was winding up her remarks, a woman from the public stood and directed herself to Representative Saa. "Madame Representative, I want to say something." She explained that she was a victim of an abusive relationship and was now homeless. She attributed her homelessness to inadequacies in the current law, a lack of protection on these matters. She asked Saa if domestic violence was being considered in these debates as a social problem, a crime committed against women, rather than as a mental illness. "To be an aggressor is not to have an illness! It's a cultural [phenomenon] that is an assault on us women... It is

⁹⁵ The 50.3 percent total represents the following broken down by type(s) of violence: 16.3 percent, psychological; 5.9 percent, physical; 13.2 percent, physical and psychological; 1.2 percent, psychological and sexual; 0.5 percent physical and sexual; 12.5 percent, psychological, physical, and sexual (Servicio Nacional de la Mujer 2002:17).

nothing less than sexual or economic blackmail that you didn't mention, either.”

Nowhere in Saa's comments had she heard her mention the economic issues that she was facing, having to leave her home and facing enormous bureaucratic hurdles in order to press charges against the abusive spouse. She demanded, in this face to face encounter, accountability from the legislator, and she was palpably angry about her situation and the inadequacies in the law. She finished by exclaiming that this is immoral, the lack of defense of victims of domestic violence, on the part of legislators.

The audience applauded loudly for the woman who spoke to Saa, and the applause drowned out Saa's response. What was audible, when the applause died down, was Saa stating "...if there is no trust, then neither is there energy or desire [to continue working on these issues together across NGO/network/political party divides]. Thank you.” And with that, she stood up and said goodbye to the other members of the panel, and left the room (a move that garnered some additional applause from the audience).

Towards the end of the event, Elizabeth Lewin, one of the panel members, returned to the exchange that had transpired, to reflect on public discourse on violence and women's movements, linking both of these through the idea of *desborde*, meaning a loss of control, or overflowing of boundaries. “It seems to me that violence, when it is confronted in public spaces, always has something of a loss of control in it...Violence overflows the boundaries of the justice system. I think there is a social image that women's movements associated with an out of control woman, a woman who does not frame her argument with the established timidity expected” (E. Lewin, comments recorded by author, October 21, 2002). The dynamic of the exchange between Saa and the audience member highlighted tensions in communication between grassroots and

formal political spaces: the style in which the self-identified victim of domestic violence engaged the legislator offended the latter as an improperly contained/restrained encounter. Thus, the substance of the former's comments was marginalized as inappropriate, and seemingly threatened to unravel what little connection Saa had to the *Red Chilena* and related women's movement actors.

Important to note is what this interaction, though admittedly limited, signals in terms of a shift from the 1990s. Craske (1999) noted that "there has been dialogue between political actors and feminists, and feminists had an impact on legal changes implemented since 1989: these affect everyone" (173). Interviews and the event discussed above tend to indicate that in fact, there is an increasing gap between feminists and political actors, and if feminists are qualified as those working in professionalized spaces, then the gap is even larger between political actors and the grassroots, given that the professional NGOs act as intermediary between these two other sets of actors.

Absence and Presence of Gender Perspective and Women in Civil Society

*The paradox of the Chilean transition to democracy is that it rests primarily on the consensus and negotiations achieved more than on the citizen movement that drove it and gave it legitimacy.*⁹⁶

Lagos, as presidential candidate, campaigned on the idea of increased citizen participation,⁹⁷ so for this reason, the IDB-governmental project can be read as highly political (in terms of making gains for his political party/the coalition government) so the

⁹⁶ *Chile CEDAW Shadow Report*, Corporación de la Mujer La Morada, 1999.

⁹⁷ According to Interviewee 15, this idea came from people on Lagos' election campaign team, rather than from Lagos himself, although he became an enthusiastic proponent of this for the duration of the campaign (and is noted for his commitment to this ideal by a number of interviewees).

possibility exists that the spaces opened up by such efforts can be severely constrained through having only those people and organizations that are known quantities. There is a need for the President to commit to civil society, but it should not be the case that civil society has to promise its commitment to the President, given that the idea of governmental accountability and responsiveness would seemingly be assumed in a democratic administration, and if civil society makes explicit compromises to a particular president, it may undermine its ability to speak freely—already a challenge in Chile. At the same time, even this critical stance is softened by the assessment the process of government-IDB-civil society events and actions has been quite transparent, with all relevant documents posted to a website (Chile Interviewee 15).

The Pro Forum Committee of Civil Society (henceforth Pro Foro) and Chilean Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (henceforth Acción) are the two most visible large scale civil society efforts in Chile currently.⁹⁸ Pro Foro states its mission as being focused on institutional strengthening, promoting access to funds for civil society organizations,⁹⁹ and inclusion of civil society in designing, as well as implementing and evaluating public policies and regenerating links to sources of international funding (“cooperation”) (www.sociedadcivil.cl/foro). The Pro Foro’s promotional brochure cites gender inequality as a source of “profound dissatisfaction,” along with poverty, exclusion, and all forms of intolerance and discrimination (Invitation, Asamblea Constitutiva del Foro de la Sociedad Civil, 2002) but according to interviewees, gender

⁹⁸ Acción claims a membership of 4,000 professionals, technical personnel, and advocates and dozens of organizations (<http://www.sociedadcivil.cl/accion/portada/pagina.asp?p=1>). Pro Foro does not provide such information through its website (www.sociedadcivil.cl/foro).

⁹⁹ In October 2002, it was uncertain as to whether MemCH would have sufficient funds to carry on throughout the year, for example. Other organizations that are surviving financially voiced concerns about the politics of money.

concerns are mostly invisible within the forum, as are women's organizations. The Pro Foro held regular meetings with the government in 2002, designed to promote and deepen the "New State-Civil Society Agreement." At once such meeting in October 2002, the government was represented by the Under Secretary of the Ministry of the Secretary General of the Government, the public relations office of the government. A regular attendee of the meetings said that there are perhaps as few as three women's organizations that come to these events. When the facilitator of the meeting opened up the proceedings, he gave a special welcome to all the women present, which only served to further emphasize how few women were in attendance¹⁰⁰ (author's field notes, Políticas Públicas y la Participación Ciudadana meeting, October 25, 2002, Santiago).

At the meeting, the Under Secretary addressed the audience, addressing issues of informational flows between civil society and the government. The government, for its part, was studying the matter, with a report to be released in December 2002. Her office was working with another ministry to develop a financing mechanism for civil society organizations, noting that financial questions are among the most complex. Her characterizations of civil society are worth noting: she stated that Chile is a country of ghettos that are linked together, a civil society where people trust only those closest to them, where people participate when they see a relationship to their own interests. Her question to the audience was: How can we facilitate linkages among civil society actors? An audience member responded to this point by noting that the seventeen years of Pinochet's dictatorship were to blame for such fragmentation and distrust, and that those

¹⁰⁰ He also asked that the public welcome the Under Secretary and another female government official "with great affection." One can only imagine that male governmental representatives would not be introduced with such an emphasis on the need to be emotionally supported by the audience. After these exchanges, the comment of a woman from a Santiago NGO who had just begun to participate in these meetings seemed to fit: she termed the whole process of civil society-state relations as "curious."

present must not forget this. The Under Secretary felt that although the generations of the 1970s and 1980s experienced a decline in political/citizen participation (for obvious reasons), such participation had increased with the generation of the 1990s.

She also raised the point of a lack of cohesion in a slightly different way at the end of her talk by saying that “the value of Chile’s civil society is its plurality,” but individuals/individual organizations do not want to give up what is theirs to achieve a base of common interests from which to build further. She also stated, however, that she was pleased with the progress made in state-civil society relations. Although some might be impatient with the process, she stressed that there is a learning curve associated with the democratic process, so no one should expect it to be instantaneous. This satisfaction with incremental progress is a cornerstone of much of the government’s work in both civil society and gender relations.

The description of Chile’s civil society efforts as sporadic and isolated from each other was shared by a long-time civil society activist who at one time had participated in a group of NGO leaders, business people, neighborhood associations, and centers for critical reflection that were convened by the Frei government to give feedback on the government’s policies on poverty. When what the group had to say was too critical for the government’s taste, the individuals involved reconvened themselves and formed the National Foundation for Overcoming Poverty. His assessment was that there are many examples of civil society activities and networks, but that these constitute islands with no sea of organic connection between them to make a (social) movement. The fragmentation is the outcome of losing whatever economic solidarity Chile had in the 1980s. The economic changes have meant that the labor market has been restructured and collective

action is very weak in terms of union activity. This, in combination with the delinking of civil society from politicians, has resulted in islands with no connecting sea, to repeat the imagery. Politicians refer to themselves now as a distinct class, the political class. The lack of connecting with civil society signals an important loss in terms of infrastructure and leadership for action that existed during the push for a democratic transition.

State-civil society relations are also weakened by the need for “official” civil society representation. In the Pro Forum Committee there is a person who represents municipal groups that theoretically exist in each of the hundreds of municipalities throughout Chile. However, these organizations mostly exist on paper, since they by and large do not exist as functioning entities. However, for the purposes of civil society encounters with the state, the head of the collectivity of municipal groups serves as an important (virtual) representative of civil society. The Neighborhood Councils, first formed in 1968, are also represented in this version of civil society. These organizations are seen by the poverty activist as having been converted into an instrument of the dictatorship, and therefore untrustworthy in the current moment.

Indeed, these organizations, numbering some five thousand in 2002, also face issues of being increasingly disconnected within their own municipalities through mayors who choose to ignore whatever concerns they may bring forward, such as changes to local infrastructure. The director of the Division of Social Organizations, a governmental body that works with the Councils, noted that activities that have the most immediate impact are those that draw people into participating through the neighborhood associations, but if the matters concern going to the municipal government to change longer term plans or lobby for development, “nobody goes” (“Aumenta desvinculación

entre municipios y juntas vecinales” 2002), restating the concerns voiced at the Pro Forum meeting by the Under Secretary who deals with civil society.

With the focus on representation of easily recognizable civil society entities, however, there is a loss of breadth in terms of the kinds of groups and individuals that make up what the government sees as being “civil society.” The strongest unions are not represented, and the students who are active in anti-globalization protests are not a part of this version of civil society. The imposition of the government’s need to see hierarchically organized, bureaucratic structures that it can more easily manage is a constraint on civil society that serves as an exclusionary device, particularly for more critical perspectives, and here the women’s movement organizations can be included.

When asked why so few women and women’s organizations were participating in *Pro Foro*, the attendee mentioned above answered, “lack of information.” She was planning to remedy this by meeting with some women’s organizations to see about getting more of them involved. In talking with NGOs about efforts to galvanize civil society, it was clear that of the longstanding women’s NGOs, participation in the *Pro Foro* effort is limited to the participation of *La Morada*. The reason, however, is not necessarily a lack of information, but strategic choice. A non-*Pro Foro* participant organization is keeping “a very critical eye” on the *Pro Foro* terms of its processes and emerging leadership, and is skeptical of the *Pro Foro* in that it seems to view itself as a super structure for civil society, rather than as a mechanism for broadly constructing a voice and ability to act more politically (Chile Interviewee 4).

Eight of the ten organizations in the *Grupo Iniciativa*¹⁰¹ do participate, however, in *Acción*, and the Director of DOMOS was elected as Vice President of *Acción* in 2002 (Chile Interviewee 4). Created in 1993, *Acción* touts itself as focusing on promoting full citizenship and unrestricted respect for human, economic, social and cultural rights. It accentuates its role as a space for generating and hearing out ideas, fostering development and protection of collective actions and facilitating spaces of debate and reflection. The organizations that constitute this guild association (“asociación gremial”) of NGOs have worked for 25 years on research, citizen empowerment and recovery of social memory (<http://www.sociedadcivil.cl/accion/portada/pagina.asp?p=1>).

When I met with the head of the Department of Participation and Exercise of Rights in SERNAM she explained that SERNAM is participating in the civil society meetings that the government is holding (and that are financed, in part, by the Inter-American Development Bank). She reacted with consternation when I mentioned the meeting of the *Pro Ford* had attended, which presumably is the civil society initiative SERNAM is most closely involved with. She quickly dialed a colleague and asked if SERNAM had been invited, or if s/he had known about the event. After hanging up the phone, she made a comment that it must have been a meeting that only the Under Secretary had been invited to, rather than an event for more government officials, which would explain why she and her colleague had not known about it.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ The eight organizations participating in *Acción* are: ISIS, La Morada, CEDEM, CEM, PROSAM, DOMOS. Fundación Instituto de la Mujer, MEMCH (<http://www.sociedadcivil.cl/accion/portada/pagina.asp?p=2>. Retrieved May 26, 2004)

¹⁰² The Pro Forum Committee meeting was listed in the on-line civil society newspaper, *Diario Sociedad Civil*, www.sociedadcivil.cl.

Conclusion

Chileans use the term “transversality” to refer to the emphasis on promoting a gender perspective at the inter-ministerial governmental level. This usage most closely reflects the English language term “mainstreaming,” found in places like the World Bank. A specific example of how transversality (mainstreaming) worked at the inter-ministerial level includes the political leadership/visibility of the current Minister of SERNAM and her ability to bring other ministries on board for producing knowledge about women’s status for the official 2002 report to the CEDAW Committee.

The limits imposed on “transversal” linkages stem from its purely institutional context, whereby knowledge of gender is limited to clearly understandable markers such as gender-disaggregated data and a focus on how much money is budgeted for “women’s” projects. There is little space for new knowledge about gender, particularly gender as produced from the intersections of class, ethnicity/nation, and sexuality. Nor is there space for NGO-sector produced monitoring mechanisms of gender-disaggregated data and budgeting (the “ICC” citizen monitoring index tool) because this would entail giving credit to these mechanisms as valid sources of knowledge, and SERNAM has a political/cultural need to promote itself as *the* producer of knowledge on gender and therefore validate its political existence and guarantee its own survival. It does this at times through a tacit refusal to engage the NGO sector as one part of civil society, and at other times by taking credit for producing knowledge that makes a difference even while crediting the women’s movement with initially bringing the issue(s) to light.

NGOs and SERNAM were able to engage each other in a kind of critical solidarity to produce the Plan for Equality of Opportunities for Rural Women (PIOR) in

1997.¹⁰³ This is a key example of producing new knowledge about gender—through an intersectional lens that emphasizes rural difference and ethnicity. The production of a meaningful interpretation of gender for women living in rural environs in Chile was strategically developed through the vehicle of a rural/indigenous women’s network, ANAMURI, and the Rural Roundtables held in Santiago and throughout the country, sponsored by SERNAM at the behest of a Santiago-based women’s NGO that works with ANAMURI. Important to consider is that this was in the period prior to the Lagos administration, that is, prior to the enormous rhetoric about participation that emerges from 1999 forward. At the same time as the PIOR was produced, however, the 1998 CEDAW report and PIO for 2000-2010 were produced with very little collaboration of governmental-NGO sector. Failures of collaboration are highly visible in the early 2000s in the debates on modifications of Chile’s domestic violence law.

Reflecting again on the success of producing the PIOR, despite the estimated 6,000 to 8,000 members of ANAMURI, this activism remains (apparently) almost totally invisible to the key person in the IDB (Santiago office) working on a programs of “participation” with indigenous communities. Meanwhile, the IDB is sponsoring a key civil society participatory mechanism in Chile as a whole, where not only are rural and indigenous women as actors invisible, but so too are women more generally, including those organized through long-standing feminist NGOs. *Pro Foras* already constrained and reflects the heavily male/masculinist leadership of the governmental structures,

¹⁰³ This does not mean that it remains visible within all offices of SERNAM. An interviewee from the agency was under the impression that the plan was no longer active. “Well, I don’t know if it’s current. That would have to be checked out with the person who is in charge, but that person is from the past administration, not the current one. Probably it’s still ongoing, but it is not a new thing” (Chile Interviewee 1).

which then further delimits what it is about. *Acción*, a civil society organizing tool developed in 1993, reflects a more critical space of knowledge production and is where women's (urban) NGOs are more heavily involved.

In Chile, a place where it seems, still, to be so difficult to speak without fear, the first formal conference held on memory and disappearance occurred in October 2002. Former President Aylwin was there, academics, relatives of the disappeared. This new step, in a sense a resurgence of memory, a gesture that speaks to defying the encouragement to "move on" (amnesia) rather than remember (and thus bring to justice those responsible for the murders and disappearances) occurs at a juncture with, or perhaps because of, the Right reorganizing itself, distancing itself from Pinochet, setting out to win the upcoming elections. Indeed, many seem convinced of this result as a foregone conclusion. The *Concertación* has held out for three administrations, but charges of corruption have begun to emerge, weakening its stance.

CHAPTER 7
ARGENTINA AND CHILE:
THE DYNAMICS OF POLITICS AND *FRONTERAS*
IN THE GENDERED NATION-STATE

Comparing Argentina and Chile

In both Argentina and Chile, the governmental offices for women have instituted national-level plans for promoting the empowerment of women and/or the equality of women and men. Argentina's *Federal Women's Program*, and Chile's *Plan for Equality of Opportunities between Women and Men 2000-2010* represent governmental approaches to "gender mainstreaming," an effort to develop public policies promoting an equitable focus on women and men in a wide variety of government agencies and in conjunction with (if only on paper) some sectors of civil society. Such approaches arise from decades of local, national, and international struggles for women's rights and function through linkages between (increasingly professionalized) non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research institutes, grassroots social movements and social movement organizations, the state, multilateral development banks and international governmental bodies. I have made use of these plans in the manner of Bowker and Star's "boundary object," to understand more fully the gendered dynamics of state society interactions.

In this final chapter, I revisit the research questions to answer them with what it is possible to see when viewing Argentina and Chile together. Briefly, let me re-state those questions. First, what are the dynamics that produced the national machineries for gender

mainstreaming that operated within the liberal democratic states of South America in the 1990s, and subsequently the understandings of “a gender perspective” that emerge in federal/national plans for women’s equality? Second, to what extent does the dominant notion of a gender perspective reflect local/national/transnational power relations? [Follow up questions include: a) How is national/sub-national discourse around gender and nation influenced by national and supranational discourses, emanating from bodies such as the United Nations and multilateral development banks? b) What are the possibilities for critical solidarities among civil society-NGO-state actors acting from “a gender perspective”? c) What do the tensions in defining a gender perspective represent in terms of (possible and actual) alliances?] Finally, where is gender in the narrative of “crisis/order,” the dichotomy that is often used unreflexively to describe Argentina's and Chile's relationship to each other, and what are the implications in terms of gender relations in society?

Synthesizing the dynamics of state-NGO and civil society relationships, as they occasionally encounter multilateral development banks, provides important insights into the undercurrents of gendered power and knowledge on which paradigms of democracy and development rest. I utilize the conceptual framework established in Chapter 3 to first highlight what is noticeable through a more traditional comparative sociological focus, and then that which becomes visible by a focus on subjectivities (“Politics”). The latter focus also creates an opening for discussing the relationship of the researcher to the project, and the challenges arising in a project grounded in firsthand exchanges (“*Fronteras*”). As a way to bring these two arenas together, I conclude with a series of observations and analyses (“The Gendered Nation-State”).

Politics: Gender Mainstreaming Machineries

The dynamics that produced the women's institutions in Argentina and Chile are those that are bound up in the transitions to democracy. The shifts from authoritarian/military regimes in Latin America to elected democracies are noted by some scholars to constitute a part of the "third wave" of democratization (Huntington 1991). Notable for its promotion of liberal democracy—in which equality *of opportunity* prevails over equality *of outcome*—conservative social forces, including those advocating neo-liberal economic regimes, operate freely in this new democratic context (Beilstein and Burgess, cited in Peterson and Runyan 1999). This particular categorization, however, does not account for the ways in which conservative social forces have operated vis-à-vis women in society in other "waves" of democracy, denying them full rights as citizens, even as the political system is declared (and studied by sociologists, historians, and political scientists) as "democratic." That is, even though naming these as third wave democracies may be helpful in terms of establishing temporal/spatial boundaries for periods of the spread of democratization, the emergence of state feminism remains an under-theorized piece of the intellectual puzzle as to why these democracies take the forms that they do, when they do. Indeed,

since the eighteenth century, the exclusion of women from the political system and their relegation to a status of second-class citizens have been vital issues for feminists; however, with a few notable exceptions, these issues have had little relevance for political philosophers or political scientists. When addressing the 'woman question,' political philosophers have accepted women's exclusion from the public realm as a given (Navarro and Bourque 1998:175)¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ See Navarro and Bourque (1998) for an overview of women's struggles for political franchise throughout Latin America in the early twentieth century, as well as a regional overview of social/women's movements, the role of the Catholic Church, and the international context of women's organizing in the late twentieth century.

In both Argentina and Chile, women emerged from the periods of military rule as 1) organized, 2) possessing an understanding of democracy as being about enjoyment of full citizenship for women as well as men, and 3) focused on the state as a mechanism for change. The newly elected democratic administrations were (relatively) open to expanding the recovered democratic space to include formally constructed offices on women at the level of the national government. This may be seen as a period of closeness between state and society, such that demands from society (in this case, women's social movements) were instituted as part of the recovered space of democracy at the highest levels of government. Even at that point, however, there were constraints and difficulties in the gendered relationships of these offices, their status, and their personnel, to the rest of the government apparatus. The plans for gender equality reflect the already-existing institutional relations of the country in which they are produced.

From that initial period of the transition to democracy, women's movements have become less visible, but other sites have emerged to produce knowledge about gender relations, including the state agencies and NGOs. I studied "forms of movement" rather than "social movements" or "networks" because the relationships explored emerged from societies configured not only by social movements, but by the interactions of these movements with institutions of the state and flows of capital and discourse. Social movements are integral to the development of the institutions that produce plans for women's equality in the 1990s, but the institutions are not at all deeply embedded—at least in the current moment—in those movements from which they originally emerged. The movements that produced institutions within the state are in the process of redefining themselves in relation to newer strands of societal activism, as are the institutions

themselves. Thus, I invoked “forms of movement” as a way to simultaneously capture multiple strands of activism and institutional change.

State-society relations, if taken as an important indicator of the deepening of democracy, fluctuated throughout this period, as can be seen in those governmental-societal sectors working to advance women’s status. Although there have always been women’s movement actors who chose to operate far outside any direct interactions with the state, for those organizations and individuals that did choose to engage it, the “divorce” in Argentina can be seen as finalized in 1994, with some attempts at reconciliation emerging in the late 1990s, an opening provided in part by the economic, political, and social institutional crises that came to a head in late 2001. But feminist-state divorce does not mean that there is no space for interaction with the much broader women’s movement: feminists are not precluded from having points in common with these “women’s rights” based spaces in the state.

In Chile, as the rhetoric around civil society participation increased, particularly in the late 1990s, actual participation of women’s NGOs (as a sub-sector of civil society) with the state agency on women decreased. Relative political success for the head of the agency has meant playing to a governmental audience, reflecting the large gap between formal political parties (the “political class”) and civil society actors.

Responding to the Literature

Using Stetson and Mazur’s (1995) four-category typology of influence and access for gender mainstreaming machineries, Craske (1999) concludes that Chile’s strong party system means SERNAM has low policy influence, but social organizations have high

access to it. Craske assumes that the women's groups that interact with SERNAM are "independent" (but does not qualify that term); she also notes no internal criticism of the work done by SERNAM's head, Minister Bilbao, which she interprets as signaling "an antipathy towards having a ministry which is too strongly identified with feminism" (186).

I would argue, based on my research done in 2002 that it is political party constraints that curb any more openly feminist engagements, given that the current minister was seen as coming from a position further to the left than Minister Bilbao, yet this has yielded little real change from the perspective of women's NGOs. The agency exists as a political space, not a feminist one. What openings occurred at the beginning of the transition to democracy closed quickly, as Frohman and Valdés noted in the mid-1990s. In spite of this, there seems to be a continuing expectation from those active in the women's NGO sector that the Left embrace a more feminist stance as part of its own agenda. The fact that it has not is reflective of an overall social conservatism, which, as one interviewee noted, pre-exists the Catholic Church (but which the Church certainly uses to its advantage for political gain). Additionally, the overall environment in Chile is suggestive of momentum from right wing parties as they gain distance from Pinochet's regime, and the man himself.¹⁰⁵ This could mean a repositioning of the center-left coalition more towards the center.

I would also argue from my findings that in the early 2000s, at least among a certain sector of SERNAM staff and those in parts of the women's NGO sector, there *is* a

¹⁰⁵ On May 28, 2004, the Court of Appeals in Santiago ruled to lift the immunity that to date Pinochet has enjoyed, on the grounds of (alleged) poor mental and physical health. The move clears the way for him to be sued for violations of human rights during the 1970s and 1980s, and is said to have surprised both sides (*The Washington Post*, May 29, 2004).

criticism of the agency's overall lack of interaction with grassroots organizations, heightened by the rhetoric of citizen participation under President Lagos' administration and Minister Delpiano's "brilliance" (to quote an interviewee) at being a political player—and with the noticeable gap between political parties and grassroots coalitions.

By Craske's account, SERNAM is a bridge between women's groups and the government, a space where there is a place for those who were active in the women's movement. The agency coordinates government-voluntary sector activities and works to make other ministries cognizant of gender issues. The sub-director of the agency in 1995 stated that a shift had occurred in how women's issues were categorized, less as welfare concerns (*asistencialismo*) to citizenship issues, and that specialists from SERNAM were working to engage women's issues at all levels of government (Craske 1999, from interview with Paulina Veloso).

Viewed together, both Argentina's and Chile's offices on women are highly political spaces (though in all likelihood they are certainly no more political than other ministries or state agencies where the head is designated by the ruling administration's leadership). This signals a kind of "normalization", in some senses, of these as a regular part of the state's structure, as they come to reflect the kind of relationship with civil society that the overall political environment embodies. In the case of Chile, this means maintaining distance from the grassroots sectors, with limited entrée for high status NGOs and individuals within them who have long historical linkages to the state agency. That is, SERNAM's minister, and the ministry itself, reflect the notion of Chile's politicians as their own class of actors. The minister's success as a politician means,

precisely, that she does not spend time and energy courting the NGOs or civil society more broadly.

In Argentina, being a political creature meant opening up (if in limited fashion through programmatic constraints) to civil society sectors during the worst of the crisis; and in the time since greater stabilization, a return to status quo relations, wherein the agency again becomes a depoliticized in feminist terms, and highly politicized in terms of playing the political game determined by the President. In April 2004, a small group of women representing some NGOs and civil society groups met with the newly installed head of the CNM. When they expressed concern to her regarding the agency's current status (responsible to the First Lady and the commission on social policy that she heads), she told them she was perfectly content to report to the First Lady. If they had a problem with it, she suggested they pursue it. When they inquired about taking further action on the CEDAW Optional Protocol, she replied that they would be better off focusing on issues internal to the country, rather than wasting their time on ineffective international agencies (the United Nations). Finally, when they broached the topic of reproductive rights, including abortion, she stopped the conversation before it could start by stating that they were all clear about where everyone stood with respect to the issue; therefore, there was no need to discuss it (because they would only disagree) (MEI meeting notes, May 2004).

The issue of CEDAW is worth re-considering here, to counter what True and Mintrom's (2001) quantitative analysis suggests. They determined that CEDAW was not statistically significant in terms of being a factor promoting the establishment of women's machineries. While that may be the case, CEDAW continues to be considered very

important within the women's and feminist circles. Particularly important now is the Optional Protocol, and the fact that the head of the CNM in Argentina seeming refusal to engage it suggests the continuing value the convention carries. It continues to be a very real part of negotiating women's power with the state and constitutes an important piece of the "transnational" efforts/aspects of women's more "local" movements.

Important to note, too, is that even as political parties, for the most part, became closed to any feminist-related demands on them, the political parties were not shutting themselves off from all societal influences. The Vatican exercised increasingly direct and open opposition to feminist demands by working through formal political parties to oppose any further strengthening of the CEDAW at national levels, including media campaigns in Chile that associated the CEDAW Optional Protocol with abortion and gay marriage. In Argentina, the full Senate Commission of Foreign Relations had signed off in favor of the Optional Protocol. With the change in government, before it could be voted on in the full Senate, the Chancellery of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Church sent a message directly asking for the Senate Commission's signature to be revoked. While both countries overall provide a favorable environment for the Church, this new phase of direct intervention would seem to signal a shift in these relations that also reflects the increasing distance from the high point of United Nations women's conferences in the mid-1990s and the momentum that they generated in local and transnational arenas for the advance of women's rights, including an important focus on reproductive rights.

Fronteras: Seeing and Deconstructing Binary Oppositional Categories

When we open up social science observations to more cultural tendencies, there is more freedom to explore indicators of social change that otherwise would escape notice. The shift in consciousness through which historically marginalized peoples come to see and understand themselves as subjects, rather than objects, is one of the most important contributions of the twentieth century struggles for human rights, in all their forms. The fights to reclaim democracy from authoritarian regimes also involved this dynamic, providing a powerful demonstration of overcoming the premise of binary oppositional categorizations that suggest a hierarchical pairing of rational/emotional, subject/object, state/society. A shift in consciousness that produced beneficiaries of public policy who perceived themselves as subjects, rather than objects, of said policy, is a

recognition that implies and permits the establishment of a relation of 'otherness' between constitutive actors of social policy: in generic terms, between state and society...a relation founded in the mutual recognition of the subjectivity of the other and [one] that breaks with, therefore, the technocratic promise that attributes an objective reason to the state pole and an incapacity of reason to that of society" (Gallardo and Moure 1993:251-52, italics in original).

A version of the dichotomy discussed by Gallardo and Moure appears in Argentina's process of creating its Federal Plan for women. The process, seen in its totality through the 1990s, highlights the ways in which what was localized knowledge (or efforts to learn how to implement policies cognizant of gender and create that capability at multiple levels of the state) became multilateral development bank (MDB) institutional knowledge/expertise. The MDB is the institution that then carries the label of "expert," while the state becomes the "student." The displacement occurred once the program was institutionalized in a later moment of feminist de-radicalization of the state

agency. It is so easy, then, to talk about displacement of discourses; they are mutually constituted, so the boundaries are diffuse and much still looks like locally-grounded efforts, even as there is of course great awareness of the global context.¹⁰⁶

The path of the development of the Federal Plan demonstrates how the IDB's Women in Development Unit was able to build experience and expertise hand in hand with the *National Council on Women*. And, very importantly (as a way to increase its status, perhaps, on Stetson and Mazur's scale), what this means is that this agency—even as it was constructed under Menem, without ministerial status, was an important source of knowledge production (or at least, individual feminists functioning within it) of gender in the state and the gendered state itself. Even more difficult are the NGO-multilateral development bank ties, which can be traced out in conversations, but which do not necessarily constitute part of an organization's formally acknowledged work.

Why would Argentina specify working with the NGO sector, and why would Chile keep its plan for equality operating entirely within the arena of the state? These differences in approach, even as the rhetoric contained within the plans is quite similar in reflecting concerns with gender and equality, would seem to be related to perceptions of legitimacy. In the case of Argentina, rather than being about the state's legitimacy, this may be about the IDB trying to legitimate itself by invoking civil society as its new point for alliance, even if the government (represented here by the CNM) is not necessarily working on that. This is, after all, in the aftermath of the disasters that were structural adjustment policies, which—regardless of whether you come down in favor of them or not—provoked large scale protests around the world [cite specific protests/riots] and

¹⁰⁶ This might be seen as a statement on the semi-peripheral status of these countries in the capitalist world-system.

forced the multilateral development institutions to revamp their strategies to focus on building institutions—promoting democracy, civil society, etc. to stabilize the society on which to build up the conditions for macro level financial stability.

In Chile’s case, perhaps the closer alliance of NGO-government (SERNAM) is assumed, such that regardless of how much or how little participation/consultation there is, it is assumed that those para-statal NGOs will be working with SERNAM on this project regardless. What makes that assumption okay is the way that people like Sonia Alvarez have criticized *las insticionalizadas* for working with the government. Those relationships have developed in ways that mean at least some NGOs do, in fact, do a lot of work that feeds into what SERNAM is supposed to be producing or overseeing. However, there are degrees of institutional affiliation, and these relationships continue to be negotiated.

Theorizing Difference: Dichotomies and Intersectionality

Craske (1999) made use of “marianismo” and “machismo” (based on Stevens’ 1973 work) as the theoretical basis for which to launch an otherwise amazingly thorough look at Latin American women’s political engagements over the course of the twentieth century. The bias in this model is that it depends on “the [singular] model of female homemaker and male breadwinner” (Craske 1999:194) that discounts completely the critiques of this that she herself mentions as rendering such a dichotomy obsolete.¹⁰⁷

This makes her work even more difficult, because in her assessments of all political endeavors, and in particular, that of feminists’ limited capacities to influence the state and its policies, she resorts to dichotomous categorizations to

¹⁰⁷ She cites Cubitt and Greensdale, “Public and Private Spheres: The End of Dichotomy,” 1997.

analyze her own empirically rich evidence, even as that evidence consistently defies these same categories. She notes this numerous times, but continues to rely on the dualities as “informing” societal guidelines on appropriate behavior (in addition to marianismo/machismo, she uses strategic gender interests/practical gender interests; public/private divide; and women’s interests/men’s interests). What is useful is that it is an attempt to ground it culturally, but it does so in an essentializing manner.

Consider how ill-suited such a simplification is, when viewed through other situations in which such dichotomies have been deployed. In the Central America struggles of the 1980s, the observation of scholars working on feminist issues was that many on the left created two categories of feminism: “good” and “bad.” The former was that which put the revolution first, the latter was considered bourgeois and irrelevant to working-class women (Sternbach et al. 1992, cited in Craske 1999). The same categorizations are now marked out by the Catholic Church and play out in the contexts of Argentine and Chilean women’s struggles. In the Argentine case, “good feminists” are those who struggle for women’s rights, who do not confront men and who respect life from conception to natural death; “bad feminists”¹⁰⁸ are those who want legalized abortion and who, from the stereotype, would be engaged in constant confrontation with men.

These theoretical challenges are important because it signals the limits to these particular lenses. Consider, for example, the way in which an interviewee

¹⁰⁸ “We are the ‘enemy’,” said an Interviewee who works on reproductive health rights and advocates decriminalization of abortion (Argentine Interviewee 28).

for the current study argued for a socially constructed notion of gender as social organizing system:

We are working a lot on issues of masculinity, but...we women have been fighting for our vindication since the French Revolution and men have just begun to think about this in the 1970s...We put forward the issue that 'gender' is not 'woman', gender is a social construction...[that] we have to elucidate...through a critical lens and try to establish a new construction [of it]. In this, too, we insert a perspective on class (Argentina Interviewee 22).

My point in the above is to posit that the theoretical work going on in the activism in policy issue and advocacy networks, or in these forms of movement to broadly encompass state and society activisms, is that unless women in Latin America are viewed as generating knowledge that creates worthwhile paradigms for northern scholars to work within, there continues to be an imbalance in the North-South flow of ideas. Having said that, of course there are severe constraints in the production of gender theory in Latin America, especially, because of structural constraints on academic spheres (relatively few spaces for study of gender/feminist theories and heavy workloads for academics that mean they are working more than one job to stay afloat financially; lack of circulation of texts from private collections or NGO spaces, both in one society and across national borders). So perhaps the questions go back to how can we adequately support each other's work, particularly when funding has decreased, for a variety of reasons, on all sides?

The point is to pay attention to what resonates and why that might be the case. It is very difficult with gender because there is an avoidance of engaging with grand narratives, given that those have so often emerged from within very privileged spaces, with many assumptions about who can speak for whom. On the other hand, as the debates

have played out within feminist theorizing and activism, unlimited differentiation presents its own difficulties. This is ultimately what Joan Scott is talking about: having to “choose” either equality or difference is the historically generated question of the 1980s and 1990s and even the early 2000s.

Crisis/Order

From the perspective of several Argentine scholars with whom I spoke, their view of Chile was as a place of institutional order and discipline. These impressions, spoken by individuals working in a governmental setting tended to be used in juxtaposition, to point out how demanding Argentines are, how little institutional loyalty they have, how “disorderly” Argentina is in comparison. This assessment was also placed on state-NGO relations, where there appears to be little dissent, few outward signs of discontent or disagreement. However, this assessment also came from those in academia and professional women identifying as feminists (but not working in an explicitly feminist political organization). As one interviewee clearly stated this juxtaposition:

It’s interesting because you are going to find two countries, lamentably, opposite [from one another]...Chile is pure institutionalism without civil society and we are the other extreme...Chile has an extreme of institutionalization of everything, and a society that is almost as if it were calibrated along lines of what can and cannot be done. They do not demand more than what they believe can be demanded (personal interview, Argentina Interviewee 4).

In the context of an Argentina experiencing crisis in political, economic, and social terms in 2002, certainly the comparison is understandable.¹⁰⁹ Because of the severity of the crisis, there was a great deal of highly public debate about the economic model based so much on the market.

¹⁰⁹ Society-wide debates raged about “security” in late 2002, and emerged in the presidential race when presidential candidate Carlos Menem’s campaign advertised that he would bring order to Argentina. He himself declared this directly, saying he would be unafraid of using military/police forces to instill order.

The crises in Argentina meant that when the caretaker government of Eduardo Duhalde settled in during early 2002, the President of the state women's agency focused immediately on blending an ongoing project (the Federal Plan for Women) with efforts to ameliorate the economic emergencies facing large sectors of the population. This meant engaging—although tempered through constraints—with local level civil society organizations that wanted to work on poverty alleviation. The difficulty from the agency's perspective in this negotiation was how to engage these organizations in pilot programs, ensure a gender perspective in their work, and ensure flows of funding throughout a period in which the government was severely hampered in terms of its own ability to provide the counterpart to multilateral development bank funding, the terms of which had been established in a flush period for the Argentine government earlier in the 1990s. These negotiations meant that the agency was working more closely with some grassroots efforts in the provinces. It is ultimately not clear, however, how this would have played out in terms of theorizing intersections of gender and poverty, because early in 2004, the President of the agency was replaced by a woman who is seen by the professional/historical sector of the women's movement as being adamantly anti-feminist.

However, the other side of that crisis/order dichotomy means that “order” is the result of a severe lack of space for debate. When asked about the shape of debates on the neoliberal paradigm (in a moment in 2002 when there were the beginnings of debates in the newspapers), a longtime Chilean activist responded,

Of course, because the crisis [in Argentina] is very obvious, it's very visible. On the other hand, here it appears that everything has been successful. Thus, the problematic symptom is the concentration of incomes and the increase in inequality between rich and poor. Put like that it sounds really cold, but I can take

you to see what those rich-poor differences are, and it would shock you. And our people, even the most progressive, are so content and firm in terms of what we have done so well. ...Well, it's true that there are good things...[but] how do you generate a debate that doesn't immediately become polarized? Ah, 'you're against the system...' We are still very marked by...our current political situation, by the tendency towards polarization" (Chile Interviewee 6).

South American Solidarities: Possibilities for "Transversality"

Institutional usages of the idea of *transversalidad* mean that it is narrowly framed as mainstreaming (even though mainstreaming is supposed to be a process that accesses a wide swath of the policy arena; it is still the policy arena). The way it is defined, though, does seem to depend on the political environment and what that environment seems to support. That is, in Chile, the "transversal" focus is inter-ministerial, while in Argentina, "transversal" is a more vertical integration across and through governmental and societal sectors. In the latter case, the degree of crisis in the nation has everything to do with levels of receptivity to verticality. The quality of transversal linkages is very important in terms of NGO and civil society actors' access to the state because in the case of women's movement NGOs and grassroots organizations, the state agency on women may serve as the only or main point of entrée for them to engage with the state, particularly given the declines in political party-civil society linkages.

Exploring the possibilities of this term outside the bounds of strictly defined hetero-orthodox institutions, however, reveals additional possibilities. "Transversality of gender" (which can perhaps serve as a direct translation for *transversalidad de género*) does not exist in English. However, pieces of that phraseology do exist: in the context of

U.S.¹¹⁰ women's studies and sociology, we have "trans" and "gender." When they are put together, we arrive at the term "transgender(ed)." Transgendering occurs through a very clear sense of identification, but one that falls outside the bounds of physical body=gender identity=sexual practice, as understood by those who see only clearly demarcated, hetero-orthodox "masculine" and "feminine" borders as legitimate. In such a hetero-orthodox understanding of boundaries, *male* (physical body/biology) = *masculine man* (gender identification) = *heterosexual* (assumed sexual orientation), and *female* (physical body/biology) = *feminine woman* (gender identification) = *heterosexual* (assumed sexual orientation).

We also speak of "transnational" as crossing national borders. We leave the boundaries intact, but the act of crossing them has powerful repercussions that serve to shift relations inside/between them. Just as transgendering makes us think about what it is that we mean by gender identity (man/woman/transgendered person), so too, then, does transnational make us think about what it is to be a nation, and what it means to leave the nation behind in a physical or emotional sense, or to change from within what it has previously been understood to be.

These boundary crossings, however unsettling they may be, are not to be immediately categorized as dangerous (even though the reality of physical journeys across gendered and national boundaries that are heavily protected and policed often do result in physical harm to the traveler): "[T]rans' denotes the other side, toward another

¹¹⁰ The term "transgender" itself, as far as I have been able to verify, does not have a direct translation into Spanish. Thus, "transgender/ed/ing" is used in its original English in Spanish language contexts. Likewise, *transversalidad* can perhaps be adopted in an English language context to signify that for which we have no direct translation.

place. This ought to be far from, the antithesis of,...mediocrity, corruption, violence and injustice”(Gabetta 2003, 3).

If *transversalidad* is only translatable as *mainstreaming*, and vice versa, the implication is that the usage of one or the other is restricted to those circles where gender and development are in focus (such as the institutional settings of the CNM and SERNAM). However, *transversalidad* is actively used well beyond the parameters of dialogue around policy-making in international financial/development institutions such as the IDB and the World Bank. For example, Gabetta (2003) asks, in a recent contribution to *Le Monde Diplomatique* if it is not the case that a

South-South *transversalidad* expressed by the Group of 22,¹¹¹ headed by Brazil, India, South Africa and eventually China, [is] more promising than begging— [which carries with it]...almost no hope of opening the markets of—the United States and Europe? The alternatives are many, and they are not mutually exclusive (my translation).

That this term is found in contexts beyond those institutional boundaries is suggestive of two things. The first is that, if it somehow always implies gender, the usage of *transversalidad* expands the theoretical and practical boundaries of where and when we are considering gender to play a foundational role in the dynamics at hand. This would mean it is cross-cutting, but in society at large, and not those limited sectors (of civil society or government) that come into contact with institutional programs sponsored by national women’s machineries.

The second possibility is that *transversalidad* speaks to particular kinds of critical solidarities among nations, and possibly other groups/institutions/persons. Although

¹¹¹ Currently, the Group of 15. This is an effort, pushed by Brazil, to bring together some of the most populous nations of the global South in order to confront the United States and Europe in the World Trade Organization, particularly on the issue of the latter’s continuing subsidization of agriculture. These efforts became formalized during the WTO meetings in Cancún, Mexico in 2003.

Gabetta's approach (above) focuses on the global South, it would not necessarily have to be exclusive to those nations. A promising perspective on this point is that put forward by Eschle, building on the work of Yuval-Davis. *Transversalidad*, translated as *transversal politics*, offers us the possibility of

a useful shorthand to describe a process of political negotiation encompassing actors in disparate geographic and social locations. It involves the construction of a joint political project through dialogue that recognizes and respects the different subject positions of the participants and that is characterized by a critical stance toward territorial and social boundaries. It indicates, in effect, global movement democracy (Eschle, cited in Decker 2001, 207).

Transversalidad of this version offers the possibility for ethical commitments at all levels of political/social interactions, and could suggest a political arena more responsive to diverse constituencies.

The Interview as Site of Knowledge Production

The interview process itself proved to be an important site for understanding power relations of interviewer and interviewee, not only as individuals with varying degrees of "human capital" but also of people with particular national origins. In particular, when interviewing women and men with long trajectories (twenty to thirty years) in the field of women's and/or civil society activism, or those who occupied high positions in hierarchically arranged organizations, it was best to have a personal connection to someone who could provide an introduction.

While this was an effective way to meet with people, it was not a full guarantee of a successful outcome. The clearest example of this is illustrated by my encounter with a woman who has a well-established academic career, and with whom I had established

initial contact by way of being personally introduced to her. She asked me to provide her with an overview of my project, in which she seemed interested at the time. In fact, she suggested that I might rearrange my fieldwork to accommodate her own travel schedule (to be in the country at the time she would be there, to use that as a starting point for my research). I sent her a brief overview in advance of our meeting and was able to schedule an appointment once in-country. On the morning of the meeting, we sat in her office, and she inquired as to whether I was still working on the project for which she had the description. I responded affirmatively, and she said, “I don’t work on those issues.” She did provide me some booklets that she thought would be helpful, answered several phone calls in the time I sat in the office, and when another person arrived at her door—some ten minutes after I had entered—the meeting was over. Not even having had the time to ask any of the questions I had for her, I left the building nothing less than stunned.

Balancing out that experience was the interaction with a scholar with whom I had made initial contact over email, introducing myself by way of establishing my relationship to a person whose work she knows. When I showed up for our appointment, she seemed to only vaguely remember that we had agreed to meet. However, after we began our conversation, she became increasingly animated as I went through my series of questions with her, and it ended up being a substantively very rich exchange. In this case, I sensed that my questions, particularly those designed to encompass the specificities of the organizations with which she worked, were helpful in helping me to establish my own human capital in the context of the interview.

It is a delicate balancing act when working with a semi-structured interview framework. In some cases, asking open-ended questions may have had the impact of

making it appear that I did not know enough to engage the topic in-depth. In one instance, the interviewee told me that later in the day she would have a meeting with others with whom she would speak about gender perspective in policy: “They will have a much more developed vision of this, of course, not like what I’m outlining here for you.”

Awareness of status played a direct role in what some individuals were willing to share with me. In one case, my lesser status (as a graduate student, merely working on a dissertation project), enabled the interviewee to feel quite comfortable discussing failed projects with me (“Oh, I think it’s okay to say that”) and may have facilitated, in my view, her rather casual approach to the subject matter at hand. This latter point meant that she appeared very blasé about work with civil society groups, or the “groundroots” [sic] as she put it, shortly before claiming herself as an expert on civil society. On the other hand, when interviewing people in some of those same organizations that she mentioned, they were very careful to request anonymity for fear of spoiling the relationship on which their institutional access depended. If privilege means you do not have to care, then this is quite clearly reflected in these hierarchically arranged organizational relations.

The view in SERNAM, as well as from key state Argentine feminists, invoked, of incremental public policy: “we have to be patient, we’re learning how to ‘do’ democracy.” That is an attitude that somehow out there somewhere is an ideal that we have to learn how to be. But there are radically democratic practices ongoing in Chilean society. The interview site was a place, for example, in which interviewees invoked radically democratic practices. This occurred in two places in Chile, and was particularly interesting given the overall environment in which expression seems constrained by a societal taboo on too much disagreement

When I interviewed a longtime activist/academic in Chile, I presented her with the required consent form, which she read it very thoroughly. [For many people, this was a perfunctory exercise. They simply read it quickly and checked off the boxes granting me permission to record them, or not, to use their names, or not, to use their organizational name, or not, and we quickly got on with the interview.] After a careful reading, she looked directly at me and, holding up my Internal Review Board-approved consent form, said, “This has a lot in it for you and nothing in it for me. I am happy to do the interview; in fact, I see it as my duty because as a student I asked for many, many interviews. But I will not sign this consent form. You need to re-do it, so that it has something for me in it. I cannot tell you how many North American researchers have come here, interviewed me, and I never hear from them again. I don’t know how they use my interview, what they do with it.”

And with that, I realized that however much I had contemplated these issues and struggled with them in my proposal writing class, and however much I had struggled and squirmed in meeting the IRB requirements and pulled out the form with dread at each interview, knowing the potential chilling effect it could have on the best of a tentative rapport established with people with whom I had no previous connection...no matter any of that, I was confronted with the fact that what I was using as a representation of myself, did not reflect my politics—or, more accurately, those politics I was struggling to make my own. In South America, as in many places, the question of democracy is a very important one. It is that question, in fact, that drove much of my interest in this project. And here I sat, not engaging the politics of democracy in the sense of having a meaningful, shared engagement with those people I was interviewing.

The end result was that we first had our interview, in which she gave me her full and undivided attention, and I then spent the next twenty-four hours rewriting the consent form to better establish a balance between the taking and the giving. This meant that first I engaged in defensive justification; then I tried to get affirmation from friends; and then, I simply spent intense hours reworking the consent form.

In my first attempt at re-writing [bearing in mind that this had already been through several revisions prior to the interview process and in negotiations for approval of the form], I gave the interviewee all the power I had held in the original formulation. When I realized that all I had done was to turn the tables, I then felt uncomfortable. I did not wish to have a “committee” of a few dozen.

At the same time, I began to realize that, for all that I had read and contemplated about participatory research, I was not there in terms of being able to fully center the research project on others’ views of what was needed. I still wanted to be the researcher, and to have it be my project, even as I relied on my interviewees as experts to guide me through. Perhaps I *was* just another one, who wanted the information and would take it and run.

Re-working the form some more, I settled on a compromise format, saying that I would remain in contact, and that if they hadn’t heard from me in a reasonable amount of time then they could contact my advisor or, if desired, drop out of the project. The response that I received was, “Not bad.”

“Not bad” means that I was able, with some practice, to better balance institutional requirements with personal commitments. This balance is one that individuals and organizations struggle with in their efforts to change society for the

better. Negotiating institutional boundaries is a difficult balancing act, and the contours of those boundaries affect all of us who come into contact with them. I want to be a part of a conversation, but I am still learning how to speak a negotiated language, one of community and friendship and scholarship. These are lessons for writing and producing texts. These pieces of writing become part of the conversation, a testament to those things we believe enough to put down on paper, those things we want to understand more fully and our willingness to continue to learn. They are a testament to those people we are fortunate enough to encounter who push us with their direct challenges to make us think and feel more deeply, to engage more fully.

For me the experience was about the sensitivity needed to negotiate cross-cultural and cross-national boundaries. Perhaps this is an overly dramatic reading, but on the other hand, it may actually be that it is understated, given the complex histories of social and hard sciences and the interactions of Latin America with the United States, our intertwined histories and continuing unequal power relations between nations and peoples, as well as within our respective borders.

The Gendered Nation-State: The Unit of Observation

This study posited a world-systems perspective in that the way the research questions are framed are as historically situated as the relationship of the researcher to those interviewed for the project. Introducing this idea of subjectivity, best demonstrated in feminist comparative works of the late 1990s and early 2000s, is what distinguishes such an approach from that of an institutionalist perspective. (Note, however, that this is not a study of the capitalist world-system. I bracket that in terms of analysis; however,

global capital shifts as they are linked to emergence of democracies are visible through the funding flows that are drying up for Latin America and opening up for other geopolitical spheres.)

The two countries in focus in the study constitute the *level* of analysis, but not the *unit*. The unit of analysis is the world-system, a system that is historically bounded, on the one end by the transition from feudalism to capitalism, and on the other, we do not yet know. In part, what happens if we look both historically and systemically, is that we do not underestimate the power of global capitalism, and we can relate the movements happening within and across the boundaries of states as part of the antisystemic movements that emerged in the mid-nineteenth and mid-to-late twentieth century. That is, we can see that the struggles in which people are engaged in various Latin American countries as part of larger-scale dynamics. These are not simply emergent in these singular, autonomous spaces (otherwise, how do we explain that authoritarianisms and democracies emerge in adjacent and non-adjacent spaces in such close succession?); rather they constitute part of the ongoing relational shifts in struggles for economic and political power throughout the world.¹¹²

We can understand “difference” built around class, race, sexuality, and nation through a feminist lens as an attempt to articulate the experiences of a variety of social locations, rather than only those that are the most visible and obviously powerful (meaning powerful in the sense of being able to dominate). It is about understanding that social location does have something to do with generating particular perspectives: the

¹¹² As an effective example of how this can work, Polanyi’s (1944/1967) influential work, *The Great Transformation*, provides an understanding of localized events/processes as reflective of global systemic dynamics, rather than each country being unique such that it produces singular political forms. Polanyi examines fascism; I examine dynamics within liberal democracies.

view from below can generate powerful questions for feminist analysis. At the same time, there is no innocent subject position, something we gain from criticisms of essentialist tendencies in standpoint theory.

The “gender perspective” that emerged throughout the 1990s into the 2000s varies in terms of rhetoric and practice. The approach to gender as intersectional (constructed at the interstices with class and ethnicity, at least) has rhetorically all along, but it has not been the practice in terms of engaging with a wide variety of civil society actors. The bulk of state-civil society interactions have occurred through the nexus with women’s NGOs that are professional in character and are those that have been trained and/or trained themselves as counterparts to state public policy functions. In the case where Chile’s state agency on women engaged an intersectional perspective in developing a plan for rural women, this came about through its long-time linkages with an NGO that served as the sole intermediary (in all of Santiago) with a large rural and indigenous women’s network.

The state-society splits of the 1990s seem to be, in no small part, produced or at least furthered by, successes in the market economies of both countries (as constructed through macroeconomic indicators, e.g., reduced inflation, open markets, and stable currencies).¹¹³ This affected the ability of many NGOs to function in the 1990s and the early 2000s in both Chile and Argentina, even as political doors were closing on them, has to do with the status of the country relative to others in the region or in the world. That is, once these countries were proclaimed as “successful” on either democratic or economic (or both) criteria, this caused shifts in international funding agencies’ priorities

¹¹³ Although only Chile is still a “poster child” for neo-liberal economic policies because of its relative stability in that sector, it is also true that Argentina followed the International Monetary Fund’s prescriptions during the 1990s and was rewarded with being seen as successful.

that took money out of those places and put it into others seen as being in need. While recognizing that they are better off (or were, at a given point) than other countries might be in democratic or economic terms, organizational actors noted that this did not mean that there were funding mechanisms available internally to them. Thus, democratic and economic successes of the country were the undoing for a number of NGOs. This was part of the dynamic that produced *proyectismo* among NGOs, as they competed for resources from outside agencies in order to do work. Additionally, however, *proyectismo* is fed by trends in the funding agencies themselves, trends notable for a shift from social-political interests of the 1980s to a much decreased focus on critical thinking about inequalities in the 1990s.

The interplay of voices from different locations within and outside of the state, then, gives us information that allows for more critical assessments of events and relations. In the case of disjunctures between what is said in varying locations, this may speak to how information does or does not flow across institutional boundaries, and that is an important issue with respect to both making and implementing public policy. Learning the ins and outs of bureaucratic governmental structures, including ministries, secretariats, agencies and programs, can be a time-consuming task, and one of the decisions going into “paying attention” is to decide if the knowledge is worth the time and energy.

For those organizations that have worked with the governmental offices, or have been offered the opportunity, there is most certainly a kind of cost-benefit analysis going on. In one case in Chile, for example, the feeling was that “the funds are really limited, and not only limited but bureaucratically distributed, so, everything has to be very

complicated, everything documented, for a pathetic amount of money” (*una miseria de plata*) (Chile Interviewee 6). A person in the Inter-American Bank, on the other hand, said, “when [organizations carrying out programs with IDB funding] present their disbursement requests, they have to present a list of all the expenditures. We’re very detailed about this...it doesn’t matter if you spent 2 pesos for the taxi, the receipt, there’s a copy of that receipt and it’s stamped.” She went on to explain that in the aftermath of the financial crisis and devaluation in Argentina, the Argentine government required “all of this money...to be routed through checks and through official transfers, no more cash transactions...They just have to use,...like all of us, we’ve used all our lives, we’ve used checks and wire transfers” (Argentina Interviewee 10).

The height of women’s feminist organizing through the state occurs in the late 1980s and early 1990s, at the same moment as major women’s organizing around the world takes place through non-governmental organizations (particularly after the 1985 Nairobi conference). The shift to the NGO sector occurred out of need, as states were delegitimized and weakened by development crises and the assessment of market mechanisms as superior instruments for redistribution of resources. NGOs emerged in large part because of failures of states, but they also contributed to a critique of the state that encompasses, wholesale, women’s offices that emerged at the level of the state. As the NGO sector has come increasingly to be legitimated as the best channel through which to distribute development funds, there then emerged a critique of the NGO sector—at the very height of its organizing capacities. This critique, emerging the mid-1990s around the preparations for the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women (see Alvarez 1998), re-centered women’s movements in society as the legitimate source for

solutions to women's oppressions. We are now in a moment where, if such critiques and mobilizations are not occurring from within society, then there is a void, with both decreasing funds available for NGOs in Latin America and the continued struggles for adequate funding at the level of the state. The money is in the market sector, which is being heavily critiqued by anti-corporate globalization modalities for its lack of focus on human rights, but these critiques are not necessarily gendered, and are not necessarily emerging first and foremost from women's mobilizations.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSIONS

The Importance of Boundaries

The single most important thread that runs throughout this research effort is the importance of boundaries in the struggles for women's equality in Argentina and Chile. Indeed, in the title I chose the word *fronteras* to mean boundaries that define limits, but also new spaces. The boundaries in focus here are those involved in constructing geographies both physical and metaphorical; comparisons of countries and concepts; and those that serve to frame the production of what counts as knowledge and who counts as knowledge producers.

Perhaps the most important function boundaries have is that they demarcate spaces and maintain certain kinds of order, whether that be order in terms of academic disciplines, gender, politics, nations, or geo-political arrangements. When existing disciplinary, social, political, and/or economic arrangements (order) are recognized as unsatisfactory, the push for change often comes through first deconstructing the boundary marker to collapse it, transform it, or engage it strategically. These are the lessons that feminist poststructuralist works, such as those by Sandoval (2000) and Scott (2003), provide. I have made use of such poststructuralist tools as deconstruction and difference produced by playing categories off one another to better understand the dynamics at work in the boundaries that are referenced in the present work.

Comparisons and Borders

By establishing comparative boundaries involving countries, we can explore how a pair of South American nation-states are often played off one another, and the ways in which people in those place and outside of them construct and continually reinforce particular identities, much in the same way that West and Zimmerman (1987) suggested that people “do” gender (continually acting in certain ways to state and re-state their identity as a particular kind of gendered being).

That is, Argentina’s crisis, reaching its height in late 2001, was often cited by interviewees as a way to contrast Argentina with Chile, extending and deepening the pairing of crisis and order that is invoked frequently in comparing the two. This contrast is particularly acute in reflecting on institutional arrangements. However, what we can see more clearly in engaging both countries and reflecting critically on the use of “crisis” and “order” is that these are only useful in terms of the degree to which certain indicators are present. That is, those things that indicate crisis are present even in the midst of order. Indeed, crises of exclusion are indicative of powerful orders, be they capitalist or military, or even democratic.

What remains to be seen is what impact the generational shift will have on these countries, as new activists emerge from within civil society and NGO spaces. The impacts of these shifts have yet to be fully felt. It remains a question to what degree the emergence of the new generation will shift possibilities for critical solidarities across borders with respect to women’s rights.

Defining Gender and Activisms

The politics of naming discussed in Chapter 3 involve creating categories of activism. I first chose to utilize the phrase “forms of movement for women’s equality” to engage the idea that there are multiple spaces that run the gamut from civil society (non-state) to state to market-place where women and men are involved in negotiations of gender relations. It is certainly important to acknowledge that the push for such change stems from women’s movements that emerged while the countries of Argentina and Chile were enduring military rule. However, the boundaries around spaces where gender relations are engaged have enlarged since the democratic transitions. Thus, focusing on women’s movements *and* the state sector and multilateral actors provides a fuller sense of how these shifts in spatial locations of conversations on gender are evolving.

Sandoval’s (2000) work re-reads the hegemonic typology of feminisms through the lens of oppositional consciousness generated by women of color’s activism that weaves itself between and among different tactics such as those that claim women’s equality with men, women as different from or superior to men, and women as a racially divided class. Going back to the idea of the “con text” of typologies, wherein representations of activism act to fill the totality of the space in which those activism can be discussed, without representing the breadth of the totality of those activism, how can we critically read the activism occurring in civil society and within the state in Argentina and Chile?

In the series of interviews in Argentina and Chile, I asked a very basic question, the answers to which provided one of the key ways in which actors name themselves and use differentiation of self and others. This provides important insights into the politics of

naming, and the ways in which boundaries of insiders and outsiders play out. The question: “What does a “gender perspective” mean to you?” prompted a variety of answers. Interviewees who self-identified as feminist referenced that in relation to how they defined a gender perspective. They would often do so not only by defining gender as a social construction that created certain ideologies about women and men and resulted in hierarchical societal arrangements, but by also saying that this view, *contrasted with others*, was clearly feminist.

Even among those who did not self-identify as feminist, no one explicitly denied being a feminist. This is one way to consider the impact of feminism in these country contexts: whereas the movements, defined by the way they could be identified in the 1980s (largely as mass movements, highly visible in the streets, for example, or in political parties) no longer exist as such, it is very difficult to engage the term “gender” without specifying feminism as a movement, whether or not one feels oneself to be a direct participant in this. As one of the Chilean interviewees put it, you know feminism has been woven into the cultural fabric of the nation when you see a young woman who has no outward connection to the feminist movement able to articulate and elaborate on certain themes, as something that is simply a part of her world.

There are criticisms (with which I certainly agree) about the de-politicization that accompanies the use of “gender,” in its usage in institutional and civil society settings, both in the context of the Federal Plan and Plan for Equality as well as beyond this to more generalized relations. The slight opening offered by the small scale “gender perspective” projects in Argentina are not necessarily linked to women’s movements. The organizations receiving funding were not necessarily feminist organizations at all,

although all were engaged in technical training processes to strengthen their ability to see through a gender(ed) lens. Yes, there was an opening to civil society, but it was *not* necessarily connected with women's/feminist activism. However, in engaging with the term "gender" and practicing public policy that addresses women's and men's needs, there is still a need to engage with the term and perspective's feminist roots, acknowledged one way or another (whether through embrace or rejection).

The explicit engagement of "gender" as a feminist term, or one that is employed as a technical tool to simply reference women and men (without necessarily addressing the power differences between them) are one end of the spectrum of what "gender" can signify. The other end of the spectrum is represented by those who equate "gender" with abortion, or gay marriage. "Gender," far from being rendered obsolete by being used in such a variety of ways, actually captures and reflects societal debates and struggles grounded in local politics as well as large-scale, transnational discourses. It is a negotiated term the meaning of which will continue to shift. The usefulness of it in its malleability is that it allows many communities to speak to one another. However, ultimately they will define their politics as feminist or non-feminist, and this will serve as the impetus for coalitional efforts of various kinds (so this can include women's feminist NGOs coming together, as well as actors tied to the Vatican).

How does intersectionality of class, color, and nation, play out in the interviews with these organizational actors and individuals? Class, in relation to gender, is the single largest concern acknowledged among interviewees. This was a heightened concern in Argentina, of course, because we were talking in the same year as the devaluation had taken place, poverty levels had skyrocketed, and the demands of the unemployed and

negotiations with the International Monetary Fund were at the forefront of societal concerns. However, in Chile, too, particularly among the younger activists, concerns with the lack of organizational engagement across class lines were key.

Insiders and Outsiders in Transnational Context

It is useful, in the final analysis, to bring the different kinds of “insiders” and “outsiders” together to reflect on both ontological and epistemological questions relating to the forms of movement for women’s equality in Argentina and Chile. This pair of terms has been used to refer to organizations and their relationship to the state, in particular processes such as the summit processes in the western hemisphere. The labels also fit the patterns exhibited by women’s and feminist NGOs as some choose to work with the state ministries on women, while others choose to work outside of those boundaries. These relationships are also found within the human rights communities, where some advocate working with the state, while others choose to reject any overtures from the state and remain outside its structures.

In both sociological and anthropological work, “insiders” and “outsiders” have been analyzed as reflecting the position of the researcher with respect to the community or actors s/he is working with. The challenges of both sharing identities (along lines of race, class, sexuality, language) or lacking commonality in terms of those characteristics merit serious negotiation and critical reflection in terms of the relation to both as research “subjects” and the writing that emerges from interviewing and participant observation as research activities.

The present study highlights insider and outsider relationships both in relation to the state, forms of movement around women's equality and civil society activism, and in relation to the researcher's relationship to the interviewees. In Argentina, young feminists active in the University of Buenos Aires call themselves "Autonomous Feminists," using a clever play on words to create the acronym FEAS (FEministas Autónomas) which literally means "ugly women," marking them as outsiders to the idealized Argentine feminine beauty standards. They follow in the footsteps of older activists, whose work is entirely within civil society and emerges independently from state-based or focused activities.

There is a shared language based around the negotiated meaning of gender as it relates to policy mainstreaming that provides a common base for communications across transnational boundaries, both South to South, and South to North/North to South. The commonality of this language among middle class, educated activists, researchers, technocrats and bureaucrats highlights what world-systems analysis emphasizes, and what we can also understand from deconstructing dichotomies more generally: the differences may be greater among individuals and organizations within any one country than they are between individuals and organizations of different countries. This may enlarge the sphere of who is an "insider" well beyond the bounds of the nation-state to include those in multilateral development banks, for example. The "outsiders" may be the actors who act in the most localized capacity, in fact. Thus, feminists who were interested in autonomous spaces were participating in the Popular Assemblies in Argentina, which were highly localized (neighborhood level) organizations. And the women's NGOs in Santiago that formed the *Grupo Iniciativa* are certainly insiders with respect to the ability

of at least some of them to access SERNAM, but they are outside the civil society organizational space that receives government and IDB funding, by their own choice.

In both Argentina and Chile, it is a struggle to keep gendered power relations visible in more general civil society contexts. It can also be interpreted as other kinds of difference (those involving economic class and access to the market economy) are more important in the current moment because of downward shifts—whether drastic or more gradual—in the economy.

APPENDIX A

Field Work Conducted August – November 2002

Argentina Interview Sites

The Argentina case study (Chapter 5) is based on analysis of interviews derived through snowball sampling. I developed these contacts through initial personal contacts, as well as cold calling on organizations/individuals, and through making contacts while attending local events. The events attended included feminist workshops at the World Social Forum, Argentina; two events commemorating the Disappeared; a seminar sponsored by the National Women's Council; a Popular Assembly meeting; a meeting of the Education Committee of APDH; luncheon seminars at the Universidad de San Martín; a dinner seminar at the Fundación Tido; grassroots organizing day trip with Género y Sociedad; and the Women in Equality Foundation breakfast meeting.

A number of interviewees requested total anonymity, while some requested that I use only their organizational affiliation. In the current stage of the written project, I have not identified interviewees because of the privacy concerns expressed by some individuals.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Number of Interviews</u>
APDH (human rights)	[2]
Autonomous feminist organization	[1]
City of Buenos Aires government (women's/human rights)	[2]
Congress	[1]

Site	Number of Interviews
Consejo Nacional de la Mujer	[5]
CSOs working in province on Plan Federal de la Mujer	[8]
Feminist health activist/trainer	[1]
Feminist scholar (research institute)	[1]
Fundación TIDO (women's labor rights)	[2]
Género y Sociedad (professionals working with grassroots women's organizers)	[1]
IDB	[1]
Independent contractor, rural women's issues	[1]
Lawyer (for Congress)	[1]
Madres de la Plaza de Mayo	[1]
NGO/former state employee	[1]
Student/NGO activist/former state employee	[1]
Student/former state employee	[1]
Women's NGO (domestic violence)	[1]
Women's NGO (rural women)	[1]
Union leader	[2]

Chile Interview Sites

The Chile case study (Chapter 6) is based on analysis of interviews derived through snowball sampling. I developed these contacts through initial personal contacts, as well as cold calling on organizations, and through making contacts while attending local events dealing with proposed changes to the domestic violence law (panel event of women's health rights network, *Red Chilena*); and a meeting focused on improving civil society-governmental relations through a formally-structured project (meeting of *Pro Foro* Committee)

A number of interviewees requested total anonymity, while some requested that I use only their organizational affiliation. In the current stage of the written project, I have not identified interviewees because of the privacy concerns expressed by some individuals.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Number of Interviews</u>
Anonymous, women's NGO	[1]
Anonymous, NGO (outside women's NGO circuit)	[1]
CEDEM (women's research-oriented NGO)	[2]
Civil society activist/scholar	[1]
FINAM (women's micro-enterprise NGO)	[1]
FLACSO (Research Institute)	[1]
IDB (Multilateral Development Bank)	[1]
Independent Feminist Contractor	[1]
Independent University Scholar	[1]

Site	Number of Interviews
Judge	[1]
La Morada (women's human rights NGO)	[3]
SERNAM (Government Agency)	[2]

APPENDIX B

Argentina's Federal Program for Women¹¹⁴

Summary of Objectives and Indicators in Logical Framework

Main Objective (long term):	Indicator (apparent over the longer term):
To improve the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and programs in order to enhance the status of women in Argentina	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Greater degree of linkage between objectives and recommendations of the National Policy on Equal Opportunities in policies and programs at the national and provincial levelb. Increasing incorporation of recommendations of the National Policy on Equal Opportunities into national and provincial laws and regulationsc. Greater sensitivity to the issue of equal opportunities and gender equality among the various bodies responsible for policy formulationd. More effective enforcement of the National Policy on Equal Opportunities nationally and provinciallye. More effective action by the bodies responsible for enforcing the National Policy on Equal Opportunities nationally and provinciallyf. More effective action by CSOs in promoting and enforcing the National Policy on Equal Opportunities nationally and provincially

¹¹⁴ Note: The original title in the 1998 IDB document is the Federal Program for Women. Program was changed to Plan at a later stage.

Purpose:

Indicator (evident at program's end):

To strengthen the institutional capacity of the National Council of Women (CNM) and the Provincial Women's Offices (AMPs)

- a. The CNM and its constituent bodies will operate more effectively and more efficiently
- b. Greater coordination between the CNM and AMPs
- c. More effective cooperation between the CNM and relevant state bodies
- d. More effective cooperation between the the CNM and CSOs
- e. The AMPs will operate more effectively and more efficiently
- f. More effective cooperation between the AMPs and relevant official bodies at the provincial and local level
- g. More effective cooperation between the AMPs and CSOs
- h. AMPs will be operational in all provinces

Specific Objectives:	Indicator (evident at program's end):
To give women's offices the skills and tools needed to guide other governmental and non-governmental bodies in building a gender focus into their policies and programs	A greater degree of competence and effectiveness in the operations of the CNM and the AMPs
To promote a more effective role for CSOs in defining and strengthening policies and programs of priority for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. An effective CNM role in formulating and/or reforming policies, legislation and/or public programs in areas considered of priority for equal opportunity plans b. More structured action by the AMPs to give effect to their equal opportunity plans and their strategic plans c. More institutional stability, greater autonomy and larger budgets for the AMPs in their operations d. More effective and sustained coordination between the CNM and AMPs and other government and State official bodies e. More effective and more sustained coordination between the CNM and the AMPs and CSOs f. CSOs involved in the program will operate more effectively

Source: The Inter-American Development Bank, *Argentina: Federal Program for Women*, Operation No. 1133/OC-AR. Washington, DC, 1998. Annex II-1:1-3.

APPENDIX C

Chile's Plan for Equality of Opportunities

Between Women and Men, General Guidelines 2000-2010

Summary of Objectives and Indicators

Chapter 1: A Culture of Equality

Objective:	Indicator:
1. Public opinion critical of gender discrimination	1. Annual opinion surveys on non-discrimination and equality of opportunities
2. Eliminate sexist stereotypes, and promote positive images of women through the media	2. Periodic measurement of positive and negative image of women in advertising in the media
3. Incorporate contents and practices into the educational system that support attitudes and values favoring gender equity	3.a. Presence of content on gender equality in official educational texts b. Presence of content on gender in university/advanced studies c. Gender differential in high school enrollment d. Gender segregation in areas of higher education
4. Encourage attitudes and practices in knowledge production, artistic creation and technological development that take into account gender difference	4.a. Percent of universities with gender programs/centers of study b. Distribution by gender of resources received for culture, art, research

Chapter 2: Promoting the Rights of Women and Guaranteeing Their Full Exercise

Objective:

1. Disperse knowledge on women's rights, bearing in mind age, social, cultural, ethnic characteristics
2. Create, improve mechanisms to protect access to justice and the exercise of women's rights
3. Adapt norms to reflect Constitution, international conventions that guarantee equal rights
4. Ensure women and girls' right to physical, psychological, sexual integrity
5. Protect women's right to sexual, reproductive health

Indicator:

- 1.a. Number of women (15 years+) who access information, services regarding their rights, by region
- b. Proportion of women (15 years+) per Information Center
- 2.a. Creation of Ombudsperson; focus on non-discrimination of women
- b. Number of universities with gender equity in legal and social science studies curricula
- c. Content on equality and women's rights in Judicial Academy
3. Number of discriminatory norms modified or struck down, new norms in force, after January 2000.
- 4.a. Sex-disaggregated statistics on family violence, identified by where complaints were registered
- b. Distribution by sex, victims of crimes attempted against women's physical, sexual security
- 5.a. Change in proportion of teen mothers, by urban/rural, income quintiles
- b. Percent of women of childbearing age in public health care system programs who use contraceptives

Chapter 3. Participation in Power Structures and Decision-Making

Objective:

1. Develop strategies to foster women's participation in decision-making
2. Stimulate creation, strengthening of women's networks
3. Strengthen women's leadership to facilitate their recognition as social subjects, subjects of rights

Indicator:

- 1.a. Existence of affirmative action mechanisms in local electoral positions
- b. Proportion of women in three branches of government
- c. Percent of women in elected positions at national, regional, community levels
- d. Percent of women in Foreign Service, by position, place
- e. Gender Empowerment Index (UNDP)
- 2.a. Percent of public resources supporting women's organizations, by type of organization
- 3.a. Percent of women in leadership/managerial positions in parties, worker/union/neighborhood associations
- b. Frequency of women as media spokespersons for topics of general interest, science, culture

Chapter 4: Economic Independence of Women and Overcoming Poverty

Objective:	Indicator:
1. Publicize women's position in economy and labor force	1.a. Gender gap: women's earnings as a percentage of those of men, by occupational group and education b. Percent women receiving food stamps/ total women who have a right to such support c. Gender gap: distribution by sex of producers of farm products and livestock
2. Eliminate obstacles to equal access to economic resources	2.a. Proportion of economically active women who access health and unemployment insurance systems b. Percent of workers in precarious work conditions, by sex
3. Guarantee women's rights in employment	3.a. Labor force participation rate by sex, according to income b. Unemployment rate by sex, according to income quintile c. Coverage of child care for infants and children to 5 years, by income quintile
4. Improve access to labor market/ stimulate professional development of women, esp. women of limited resources	4. See indicators for Chapter 3.
5. Improve representation of women in trade union organizations, tripartite bodies, economic and labor forums, economic decision-making arenas	5.a. Percent women directors/managers of public and private firms b. Distribution by sex, beneficiaries of public programs for economic development, by socioeconomic status
6. Stimulate women's abilities in economic entrepreneurialism	6.a. Average earnings for heads of household, by sex b. Annual rate of growth of male/female employment, by income quintile

Chapter 4: Economic Independence of Women and Overcoming Poverty, continued

Objective:

Indicator:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 7. Lessen levels of poverty among women | 7.a. Number, description, coverage of public programs oriented towards reducing female poverty
b. Percentage of women who leave poverty |
|---|--|

Chapter 5: Well-Being in Daily Life and Quality of Life

Objective:	Indicator:
1. Adapt legislation to current reality of all types of families, and ensure equality of rights for all types of families	1. Existence of legislation regulating matrimonial disintegration and <i>de facto</i> unions
2. Promote shared family responsibilities between women, men	2. Index of Time Use (ITU); proportion of time dedicated to household, educational, recreational activities, by sex
3. Support access for women to spaces that encourage individual and social well-being	3.a. Rate of coverage of services for older adults, by sex and residential zone b. Coverage of women enrolled in Digeder's recreational programs, by region
4. Prevent violence against women; deliver support services	4.a. Number of municipal and private programs for prevention of family violence, by region and rural/urban zone b. Number of women and girl children per public and private centers for prevention and care or domestic violence, by region
5. Improve women's access to good quality health services	5.a. Existence of health service statistics, disaggregated by sex b. Annual coverage of preventative exams for cervical and breast cancer for women older than 15 years c. Mental health care coverage, by sex and region
6. Improve access to and quality of women's education	6.a. Drop out rate by educational level, sex, and type of family b. Percentage of pregnant teens who stay in school c. Results from Simce test, by sex

Chapter 5: Well-Being in Daily Life and Quality of Life, continued

Objective:

7. Promote and develop initiatives for care of the environment; rights of women and their families to sustainable development

Indicator:

7. Percentage of women and men participating in programs to improve the environment

Chapter 6: Gender Focus In Public Policies

Objective:

1. Consolidate the legitimization and institutionalization of the focus on gender in public policies
2. Strengthen internal governmental coordination to take up specific problems deriving from gender inequalities, with a holistic focus
3. Promote gender focus at the regional and local levels, as well as in international relations

Indicator:

- 1.a. Existence and type of pilot programs that become models for policies more generally
- b. Number of ministries and services that have incorporated objectives and guidelines for action proposals in the Plan
- c. Percent of public expenditure on programs and actions for equality of opportunities, by ministry or service
- 2.a. Description of political-technical mechanisms for inter-ministerial cooperation for execution of policies and programs for equality at federal and regional levels
- b. Annual disbursements contributed by other public entities to programs coordinated by SERNAM
- c. Existence of statistics for government sectors, disaggregated by sex
- 3.a. Description and percent of regions that have incorporated objectives from the Plan [for Equality of Opportunities] into Regional Development Strategies
- b. Description and percent of communities that have incorporated objectives and guidelines from the Plan into Plans for Community Development
- c. Existence of adjunct offices on gender to Chile's diplomatic Missions to multilateral organisms (New York, Brussels, Geneva)
- d. Percentage of projects on gender equity that are approved by Fund for Regional Development and other similar funds, in relation to the total of approved projects

Chapter 6: Gender Focus In Public Policies, continued

Objective:

4. Favor women's participation in elaboration of public policies
5. Evaluate and follow-up on Second Plan for Equality of Opportunities Between Women and Men with the participation of organized women and civil society

Indicator:

4. Description of consultative mechanisms for women in design, monitoring and evaluation of governmental programs
5. Bi-annual public accounting on the advances of the Plan

Source: Servicio Nacional de la Mujer, *Plan de Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres y Hombres: Lineamientos Generales, 2000-2010*. Santiago de Chile, 2000.

[Author's translation]

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