

Representing groups, deconstructing identities
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3 distinct theoretical frameworks for group presentation

- 1.equality perspective that leads to a strategy of inclusion
- 2.difference perspective that leads to a strategy of reversal
3. diversity perspective that leads to a strategy of displacement

Equality vs Difference

- Tension arises from "whether a commitment to gender neutrality can ever be achieved by pursuing a strategy of equality." -> equality perspective
- In a patriarchal society the pursuit of equality might result in requiring everybody to assimilate the dominant gender norm of masculinity. -> difference perspective
- They have acted as two theoretical poles structuring the debate.

Equality perspective – Strategy of equality

- Gender ought to be irrelevant in the political sphere.
- Gender difference is viewed as as a manifestation of sexism, as a patriarchal creation used to rationalize the inequalities between the sexes. (Straightforward myth or a contingent result of social conditioning).
- Gender difference is synonymous with inferiority and is to be rejected in the name of more genuinely inclusive democratic practise.
- Women's integration into existing political structures. Advocate transcendence of gender differences.

Difference perspective(Dif) - Strategy of reversal.

- Gender difference is a biological given or a result of social conditioning.(EP: GD is a myth)
- Accept and celebrate gender difference.
- Difference != inferiority.
- Seek to reverse the order of things: to place at the center that which is currently marginalized, to value that which is currently devalued, to privilege that which is currently subordinated.
- Individualistic competitive, rational qualities of existing democratic structures are viewed with suspicion and hostility -> nurturing, peace-loving, intuitive and emotional qualities celebrated.
- >The aim is to lessen the power, not to join the ranks, of the male order.
- Women != men -> demand their distinctive voices heard
- Fundamental difference lies on the question of impartiality.(EP: equality is gender neutral. Inequality comes from distortion of impartiality)(DP:impartial is actually androcentric or male defined)
- Gender-neutral vs gender differentiated citizenship.(Wollstonecraft's dilemma)
 - >impossible choice(Joan Scott)
- Beyond this dichotomy. A third view ->diversity

Diversity perspective (Iris Marion Young)(Div) – Strategy of displacement

- ...is not located on either side of the E/D divide ->definition from constructing the division itself.
- Rather than recentre political theory around a female as opposed to male gendered perspective,
Div seeks to decentre political theory with respect to gender altogether.

- Dif & Div seek to problematize the very foundations of political theory in the light of taking gender seriously. Both distinct from an equality perspective.
- To go beyond the equality/difference debate -> new perspective.
- Critique:
 - (EP)Failure to recognize socially constructed and patriarchal nature of criteria of evaluation deemed pertinent to social inclusion.
 - (DP)Failure to theorize the extent to which maleness and femaleness are themselves socially constructed and which underplays the plurality of other forms of difference.
- >Strategy of displacement

Group presentation

- ET may fear that the introduction of gender-based group presentation into politics renders gender pertinent where it should be non-pertinent; DifT, in contrast, may fear that to focus on political representation(rather than participation) is to limit one's attention to a narrow institutional concept of politics that is itself exclusionary; and DivT may critique the potential for institutional reification of fluid indentifications.
- Women have interests that are best represented by women
- Social groups displaces the apparent dichotomy between interest groups and identity groups.
- Under represented groups stay under represented until groups develop sense of their own interest.(GT!!!)
- >DP:women not just another interest group->strategy of reversal
- A politics of presence:a policy of ideas that focuses on policies and representation that focuses on peoples beliefs and interests.
- >Interest based and identity based arguments for group presentation are different versions of politics of presence. Both share a sense that the identity of the messenger matters.

Social Groups

- Electoral & legislative processes are unrepresentative. Participation and inclusion for all groups-> reserved number of seats for marginalized groups.
- Public resources should be made available to minority groups for self-organisation(1), for analyse and generate public proposals(2) and a veto power regarding the group directly(3).
- No directly elected representatives in the national legislature itself.
- Where the concept of social groups displaces the apparent dichotomy between interest groups and identity groups, the concept of objective judgement is offered as a means of displacing the apparent dichotomy between impartiality and partiality.