The past fifteen years have seen declining public support for European integration, and widespread suggestions that a legitimacy crisis faces the European Union (EU). Many in the EU have believed that this problem could be effectively tackled by vesting greater powers in the European Parliament (EP), the Union's only directly-elected institution. The central argument of this book is that, while considerable efforts have been made to increase the status of the EP, it is in crucial respects a failure as a representative body. This failure is grounded in the manner in which the parliament is elected. The electoral systems used for EP elections in many EU countries are, the book argues, actively obstructive of Europe's voters being represented in the way that they are most likely to respond positively towards. While the behaviour of EP members is shaped strongly by the electoral systems under which they are elected (which vary across the twenty-five member states of the EU), the electoral systems currently in place push most of them to behave in ways contrary to what citizens desire. Drawing on public opinion data, surveys of MEPs and considerable qualitative interview evidence, this book that the failure of parliamentary representation in the EU has a strong foundation in electoral institutions.
them. The common element is the empowerment of the median voter by making the party (s)he votes for the median party in the legislature. Comparative evidence covering 21 democracies from 1950-1995 is assembled to check out the descriptive credentials of this idea, in contrast to the government mandate which forms the normal description and justification of democracy as providing ‘a necessary link between popular preferences and public policy’. Although, spontaneous majorities rarely emerge, median voter - median party correspondences do (72% of all governments, 82% under PR). Policy correspondence, distortion, long term bias, and responsiveness are examined in both static and dynamic terms. They reveal that underneath short-term fluctuations, the long-term equilibrium positions of governments and median voters map each other closely. Many other questions about democracy are also raised and investigated — economic and retrospective voting (‘kicking the rascals out’): policy incrementalism, etc. — giving the book an appeal to different groups of specialists in political science. The comparative data on voting, on electoral party and government preferences, and on actual policy outputs are unsurpassed with regards to comprehensiveness over nations and time.

The Politics of Presence
Anne Phillips

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A number of contemporary democracies have introduced measures to ensure a more equitable representation of women and/or ethnic minority citizens within elected assemblies. These measures have included the use of gender quotas in the selection of parliamentary candidates, and the use of ‘race-conscious’ districting to increase the electoral chances of ethnic minority representatives. Drawing on a distinction between the politics of ideas and the politics of presence, this book explores and defends the case for such measures. The politics of ideas considers accountability in relation to declared polices and programmes, and sees the sex or race of the representative as a matter of relative indifference. In the politics of presence, by contrast, the gender or ethnic composition of elected assemblies becomes a legitimate matter of democratic concern. This book addresses the concern that the case for political presence could encourage essentialist understandings of group identity or group interest. It argues against an either/or alternative between the politics of ideas and the politics of presence and for a new combination of these two models of representation.
Elections in Africa

Dieter Nohlen, Bernard Thibaut, and Michael Krennerich (eds)

Elections in Africa is the first volume of a series of election data handbooks published by OUP; it covers all the 53 states in Africa. Elections have always been an integral part of post-independence African politics and have assumed the utmost importance in the course of recent democratization processes. However, comparative research on political development in Africa lacks reliable electoral data. Elections in Africa fills this gap. Following the overall structure of the series, an initial comparative introduction on elections and electoral systems is followed by chapters on each state of the region. These contributions examine the evolution of institutional and electoral arrangements from independence to the present (1999), and provide systematic surveys of the up-to-date electoral provisions and their historical development. Exhaustive statistics on national elections (presidential, parliamentary, and constitutional assembly), referendums and coups d’état are included within each chapter; these cover electoral bodies and voting, electoral participation of parties and alliances, vote distribution, parliamentary composition, and power holders. The data are presented in the same systematic manner for all countries in order to provide electoral statistics in line with internationally established standards of documentation, so that the data can be easily compared. The book, therefore, provides a definitive and comprehensive set of data on elections in order to facilitate comparative research. Together with the other books of this series, Elections in Africa is a highly reliable resource for historical and cross-national comparisons of elections and electoral systems worldwide.

Global Stakeholder Democracy

Terry Macdonald

A pressing question at the forefront of current global political debates is: how can we salvage the democratic project in the context of globalization? In recent years, political activists have mounted high-profile campaigns for the democratization of powerful international institutions such as the World Bank and IMF, and for greater ‘corporate accountability’. In turn, many of the NGOs linked to these campaigns
have themselves faced demands for greater democratic legitimacy. Through reflecting on the democratic dilemmas surrounding the political power of global NGOs, this book challenges the state-centric theoretical assumptions that have underpinned the established democratic theories of both ‘cosmopolitan’ and ‘communitarian’ liberals. In particular, it challenges the widespread assumption that ‘sovereign’ power, ‘bounded’ (national or global) societies, and ‘electoral’ processes are essential institutional foundations of a democratic system. The book then re-thinks the democratic project from its conceptual foundations, posing a number of questions. What needs to be controlled? Who ought to control it? How could they do so? In answering these questions, the book develops a theoretical model of representative democracy that is focused on plural (state and non-state) actors rather than on unitary state structures. It elaborates a democratic framework based on the new theoretical concepts of public power, stakeholder communities, and non-electoral representation, and illustrates the practical implications of these proposals for projects of global institutional reform.

To Keep or To Change First Past The Post?
André Blais (ed.)

The book addresses the following questions: What fosters or hinders reform of first past the post? When and why does reform emerge on the political agenda? Who proposes and who opposes reform? When and why do reform proposals succeed or fail? What kind of proposal tends to be put on the table? Are some types of proposal more likely to succeed? Why? The book offers a thorough examination of all these questions. A first chapter undertakes a comparative analysis of the conditions under which reform is initiated. The following chapters investigate in detail the politics of electoral reform in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and New Zealand, the debates that take place, the proposals that are advanced, and the strategies deployed by the actors. These analyses contribute to a rich and nuanced understanding of why first past the post is often challenged and sometimes replaced.

The Representative Claim
Michael Saward
In an era of disaffection from traditional political institutions and the rise of transnational politics, the need to rethink political representation— who speaks for whom and with what authority—has taken on a new and practical urgency. This book offers and defends an innovative approach to the topic, built around the straightforward but versatile idea of the ‘representative claim’. Representation is defined broadly as a dynamic process of claim-making, and not solely an institutional fact deriving from election. The book shows how the idea of the representative claim provides critical purchase where conventional approaches reach their analytical limits. The elaboration of the representative claim is conducted against the background of a systematic critique of prominent existing theories. The crucial aesthetic, cultural and performative sides of representation are developed as part of its political dimension, and the key concepts are put to work in examinations of cases of non-elective representation, political parties, and the representation of women and ‘nature’. Concluding with a detailed account of what can make representative claims democratically legitimate, the book shows how our ideas of democracy are disrupted and revised when we embrace the notion of representation as the making and reception of claims.

The Impact of Women in Congress

Debra L. Dodson

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This book explores the complex relationship between women’s presence and impact in two strikingly different, consecutive congresses. Drawing on hundreds of elite interviews and archival information, the case studies of three highly visible policy areas (reproductive rights, women’s health, and health care policy) move beyond the question of ‘Do women make a difference?’ to confront the oft-ignored, contested issues surrounding gender difference and impact: its probabilistic nature, contested legitimacy, and disputed meaning. The analysis enhances understanding of how gendered forces at the individual, institutional, and societal levels combine to reinforce and redefine gendered relationships to power in the public sphere, and suggests strategies to strengthen substantive representation of women.
Women's Health: Staying the Course with a Critical Mass
Debra L. Dodson

in The Impact of Women in Congress

Women’s health policy united women across party lines in the 103rd and yielded numerous victories. These successes continued a trend established in earlier Congresses and, relatively speaking, would not come under attack in the 104th when almost every other political gain previously made by women was vulnerable. As such, juxtaposition of women’s health case studies with the reproductive rights case studies allows us to go once again beyond the simple question of ‘Do women make a difference?’ to explore not only how the confluence of individual, institutional, and cultural factors gives meaning to gender and shapes the probabilistic relationship between descriptive and substantive representation of women over time and across policy areas, but also to suggest strategies for advancing substantive representation regardless of women’s proportional presence. The results illustrate the value of diversity and suggest strategies that can sustain unity amid diversity. They suggest that in addition to increasing women’s presence, substantive representation of women will be facilitated by raising the gender consciousness of women in the mass public, by reinforcing awareness (and fear) of the gender gap, and by women’s advancement within the institutional hierarchy. In short, even with a ‘mom and apple pie’ issue, making a difference requires efforts by women inside the Congress to put matters on the agenda and the mobilization of women outside the institution to give legitimacy and political teeth to demands that challenge masculinist values.

Women's Health: A Shelter in the Storm
Debra L. Dodson

Women’s health did not suffer the same endless litany of political defeats as other policy areas in the Republican-controlled 104th. While the case studies of women’s health research funding, breast cancer screening, and women veterans’ health suggest that women’s presence within
the institution is important for ensuring substantive representation of women, they also suggest that other factors play a critical role in giving meaning to women’s presence. These include the political environment of Congress, the ideological perspective of those who hold positional power, and the extra-institutional pressure generated from the gender gap in the mass public, which gives legitimacy to action on behalf of women’s health among male members concerned about the next election.

Health Care Reform: The Convergence of the Politics of Presence and the Politics of Ideas

Debra L. Dodson

in The Impact of Women in Congress

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This chapter deconstructs gender differences to explore the contested issues surrounding gender difference, when the politics of presence converged with partisan politics in the struggle over health care reform during the Democratic-controlled 103rd Congress. The impact of the institutional environment on women’s agenda and actions, along with differences in environmental pressures across parties and committees, are explored. The analysis attempts to move beyond the simple question of whether women make a difference to an understanding of how political environments, structured by partisanship and steeped in masculinist values, affect and can be affected by the feminale. The case study suggests that one cannot truly understand gender differences in an institutional vacuum, even as it forces us to confront the relationship between gender difference and substantive representation of women, and to consider the value of the concept of feminist protest in understanding partisan differences in gender difference and women’s impact.

Health Insurance Reform: Institutional Structure, Contingent Meanings

Debra L. Dodson

in The Impact of Women in Congress

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The story of health insurance reform in the 104th brings to life many of the contested issues surrounding gender difference in impact. It illustrates the importance of going beyond quantitative evidence of gender difference to look carefully at the substance of those differences that emerge, to understand their relationship to the broader political context, and to explicitly consider the motivations belying difference. That those who were seen as advocates for women in the health care reform battles of the 103rd played little role in health insurance reform, while some of the more visible vocal women critics of the Clinton plan led the effort some saw as ‘radical’, that the prime [female] motivator and facilitator of the effort was not seen as driven by gendered forces or even connected with women’s organizations, and that Republican women who had supported women’s health also supported a measure likely to have reversed state mandates protecting women’s health benefits all make health insurance reform a unique laboratory for addressing the contested issues that surround difference. The conclusions suggest a growing gap between gender difference and the standards of third wave feminism, the need for an active engaged women’s movement to counter the threat posed by essentialist assumptions that grant legitimacy to any pronouncement women make on behalf of women, the contribution differences in the masculinist cultures of parties may make toward partisan differences in the manifestation of feminist protest, and they caution against the gendered consequences of ostensibly gender-neutral institutional procedures.

Conclusion: Looking Toward the Future
Debra L. Dodson
in The Impact of Women in Congress
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By going beyond the simple question ‘Do women make a difference?’ and delving into the meaning of elected women’s sense of connection of women using this dynamic framework, the results provide insight into factors that encourage substantive representation of women and shape the meaning of gender. They suggest that women may not only transform institutions, but be transformed by them and the larger political environment. To that end, the conclusion suggests six strategies likely to further substantive representation of women at any given level of descriptive representation: (1) strengthening the voices of women on the outside to encourage those on the inside to challenge masculinist values and amass the majorities they need to effect change; (2) electing
men who see women as a political group with legitimate needs and interests; (3) strengthening the recruitment of gender conscious women, while nurturing gender consciousness among women inside and outside the institution; (4) increasing the legitimacy of substantive representation of women by casting achievement of such goals in terms consistent with institutional norms; (5) confronting the legitimacy of women’s claims to act for women by rejecting essentialist assumptions; and (6) confronting the contested meaning of substantive representation of women in theory and practice, while simultaneously accommodating the realities women face as actors within institutions with norms and values beyond their control. These strategies in the long term may help determine whether any compromises women make as ‘team players’ will contribute to the regendering of this political institution or simply mean more political jobs for women who reinforce long established norms, and whether ultimately we can expect ‘regendering’ within Congress to transform the nature of partisan political debate or simply reinforce the divisions of contemporary partisan politics.

Introduction: The Best of Times, The Worst of Times
Debra L. Dodson

in The Impact of Women in Congress
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Drawing on the strikingly different records of the 103rd and 104th Congresses — congresses in which women’s proportional presence was roughly similar — this introduction to Part I highlights the empirical evidence of the complexity belying the probabilistic relationship between descriptive and substantive representation of women. This lays the foundation for comparing and contrasting gender’s impacts on policymaking as the environment changes, examining how women’s efforts to bring (feminale) gendered perspectives to the policymaking process affect and are affected by (masculine) gendered institutions, assessing the implications for the connection between descriptive and substantive representation of women, and exploring what this may mean for all citizens in a representative democracy. Special attention is devoted to why the 103rd and 104th Congresses are an ideal laboratory for exploring the dynamic, probabilistic relationship between descriptive and substantive representation of women.
Rethinking Difference
Debra L. Dodson
in The Impact of Women in Congress

This chapter acknowledges the compelling evidence that women in public office make a difference, even as it explores the controversies that often lurk beneath the surface of such assertions: the probabilistic rather than deterministic nature of the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation of women; the contested legitimacy of women representing women; and disagreement about what it means to represent women. To that end, the chapter explores the need to develop theoretical and empirical models that recognize diversity, to take actions out of a contextual vacuum, to re-examine the appropriateness of the empirical models that structure the analysis, to confront (and ultimately counteract) institutional and cultural pressures that call into question the legitimacy of women representing women, and to acknowledge the conceptual weaknesses that belie the tendency to treat gender difference as a synonym for substantive representation of women.

Representing Women: Consensus and Complexity
Debra L. Dodson
in The Impact of Women in Congress

In setting the foundation for a closer look at women’s impact, this introduction to Part II draws on the extensive interviews with women members to provide evidence that almost every woman interviewed — regardless of party and across Congresses — expressed some basic sense of responsibility to women. Yet this unity in theory suggested by their words posed a sharp contrast to what was often disunity (or limited unity) of action in practice, pointing to the need to deconstruct seemingly similar sentiments surrounding responsibility and connection to women.
This chapter deconstructs women’s words of connection to women, focusing on the connection women members of Congress feel towards other political women. Content analysis of transcripts shows that women members of Congress seem to conceptualize political women as a group with shared experiences and comradery, common concerns, and/or interrelated fates. However, the data also show that beneath the veneer of unity and connectedness revealed in women’s words is considerable complexity, driven not only by individual level forces — ideology, life experiences, race, etc. — but also shaped by the institutional environment of Congress and the constraints posed by its partisan structure.

The analysis of women’s self-described roles as representatives of women finds both convincing evidence of consensus among women members over time and across parties as well as an abundance of complexity, pointing once again to the importance of going beyond what women say to other factors that give practical meaning to their words: perceptions of women as a group, resentment of perceived gender-related problems facing women, commitment to advancing women, and differences in the relative priority of working on behalf of women. Deconstructing ‘women’ and ‘women’s issues’ reveals differences in meanings that may contribute to different actions on different issues, benefiting different women. A closer look at partisan differences in the institutional and extra-institutional environments reveals challenges and opportunities for surrogate representation of women, which contribute to disunity among women in practice and perhaps diversity in the way feminist protest is manifested.
The ratings of ten interest groups, along with party unity and presidential support scores, are analyzed to explore the broader evidence of change and stability in gender difference and women’s impact across the strikingly different environments of the 103rd and 104th Congresses. Although the results suggest that increased descriptive representation will enhance substantive representation of women, these findings of gender difference coexist with evidence that descriptive representation might not necessarily contribute to increased substantive representation of women. Gender differences narrowed in the 104th, primarily due to the influx of a new cohort of Republican women who were in some cases even more conservative than their male colleagues, but also due to ‘conversion’ effects, as veteran Republican women shifted rightward in an institutional environment where the cost of difference increased. With Democratic men on average being more feminist/liberal than Republican women on average, the question is raised whether substantive representation of women would be better served by increasing the proportional presence of Democrats (regardless of gender) or by increasing women’s presence regardless of party.

Reproductive Rights: Gender Difference and the Paradox of Power

Debra L. Dodson

This chapter uses four legislative battles (the Freedom of Choice Act, Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances bill, Medicaid funding of abortion, and abortion provisions in the Federal Employees’ Health Benefit Act) as case studies for understanding the contested issues and complexity belying gender difference and women’s impact. While women members were seen as united around reproductive rights, institutional dynamics in this partisan environment and extra-institutional pressures encouraged the increasingly diverse group of women to give voice to diversity,
defined (and re-defined) women’s priorities and their understandings of their roles and responsibilities as representatives of women, and influenced their prospects for political success within an institution whose agenda they did not control. While the case studies suggest the need to bring more women into office, they remind us that the potential of presence is limited without positional power, and that mobilized women voters who pose a gender gap threat can provide legitimacy for difference within institutions steeped in masculine values.