

Institution: The University of Manchester
Unit of Assessment: 21 (Politics and International Studies)
Title of case study: Gendering Analysis of Political Representation and Public Policy
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The underrepresentation of women in political life, gender equality in policy making and the relationship between gender representation and gender equality, are considered in parallel within research undertaken at the University of Manchester (UoM). The work has informed Labour Government commitments to promote diversity of representation in local and national government, and more recently has underscored the detrimental impact of the Coalition Government's austerity policies; informing the Opposition Labour Party, contributing to public debate and empowering those most harshly affected. Explicit policy impact can be seen in two domains. Firstly, the 'Duty to Promote Democracy', introduced via Statute in 2009. Secondly, following the 'Speakers Conference on Parliamentary Representation' (2010), research for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) on diversity in Parliament, that continues to inform policy debate.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The research was undertaken by a team from across the Department of Politics, under the leadership of Professor Claire Annesley (2000-present) and Professor Francesca Gains (1999-present); with recent EHRC work undertaken alongside Dr Catherine Durose (University of Birmingham) and Liz Richardson (Senior Lecturer, UoM, 2006-).</p> <p>(1) Institutional Underrepresentation: Key findings emerged from the work of UoM's Evaluating Local Governance (ELG) research team (2002-08), with their analysis of constitutional reform in local government forming the basis for a review of diversity in five 'best performing' councils, conducted for the 'Councillors Commission' (2007) [E]. The research found no improvement in the diversity of representation in local government despite hopes that new constitutional arrangements, first introduced in the Local Government Act (2000), would encourage a more diverse group of aspirant candidates. Diversity in national institutions was again considered in the EHRC report 'Pathways to Politics...', which addressed the relationship between common routes into politics and the under-representation of groups protected by the Equality Act (2010) [B].</p> <p>(2) Gender and the Core Executive: Research on New Labour policies revealed that women's presence in the core executive is necessary for substantive policy progress towards gender equality; mere parliamentary presence is not enough. Furthermore, a range of both formal and informal barriers remain (such as exclusion from unofficial networks) preventing women's equal access and progress in politics [D]. A subsequent analysis of Coalition Government policies suggests that an absence of women across key areas, alongside the low status of gender equality machineries as part of the solution(s) to the global financial crisis, can be <i>specifically</i> pinpointed as contributory factors in the stalling and reversal of equality gains [A]. The research also highlighted how policies promoting gender equality are more likely to form a part of government agendas when the economy is growing. In periods of recession, gender equality tends only to be pursued as a result of pressures from 'outside' (e.g. at the EU level) [C].</p> <p>(3) The Gendered Consequences of Public Policy: Recent research has critically analysed how policy outputs are gendered, both under the more favourable environment associated with New Labour Governments and under the more hostile climate associated with the current Coalition Government. Since 2010, UoM research has offered detailed analyses of the detrimental impacts that the current Coalition Government's policies to tackle the public deficit are having on women. This is seen in terms of three factors: how women's incomes, from social security and wages, are being reduced; how unemployment is affecting men and women; and the effect of public service cuts and restructuring on women as primary users. The research clearly identifies a major reversal of equality gains made over the preceding years [C].</p>
<p>3. References to the research (all references available upon request - AUR)</p> <p>The research has been published in peer reviewed journals, and influential policy reports</p> <p>[A] (2013) Annesley, C. & Gains, F. "Investigating the Economic Determinants of the UK Gender Equality Policy Agenda" <i>British Journal of Politics and International Relations</i> 15(1) 125-146 (REF 2014) doi:10.1111/j.1467-856X.2011.00492.x</p> <p>[B] (2011) Durose, C., Gains, F., Richardson, L., <i>et al</i> 'Pathways to Politics: Equality and Human</p>

- Rights Commission Research Report 65' (Manchester: EHRC) (AUR)
- [C] (2011) Annesley, C. & Scheele, A. "Gender, Capitalism and Economic Crisis: Impact and Responses" *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 19(3) 335-347
doi:10.1080/14782804.2011.610604
- [D] (2010) Annesley, C. & Gains, F. "The Core Executive: Gender Power and Change" *Political Studies* 58(5) 909-929 (REF 2014) doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2010.00824.x
- [E] (2007) John, P, Gains, F., Goodwin, M., Richardson, L., Rao, N. & Evans, E. 'Improving the Representativeness of Councillors: Learning from Five High Performing Local Authorities in England' (London: DCLG) (AUR)

4. Details of the impact

Pathways to Impact: Sustained and productive relationships with research users have been cultivated at the highest levels. Gains and Richardson have a long-standing record of consultation and research delivery with Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) [1] and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) [2] around equality and diversity. Annesley was the national expert (UK) for the EU 'Expert Group on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, Health and Long-Term Care Issues' (EGGSI), producing eight reports (2008-2012) [3]. Annesley is also on the management committee of the Women's Budget Group (WBG) "*assist[ing] the WBG in ensuring that gender equality impact analysis is applied to fiscal policy, and that the gender dimensions of austerity policies are addressed in public debate*" [4]. Together, these engagements, at the interface of research, advocacy and policy, have ensured broad participation across the social scale (Opposition MPs, the media, grassroots feminist groups and vulnerable citizens). Critically, those most at risk have been aided – through targeted interventions – to apprehend and recognise the injurious nature of austerity measures, and afforded tools to campaign against them.

Impact 1: UoM research has shaped proposals on how to improve political diversity.

Recommendations on how local authorities can support efforts to increase representative diversity in local government were taken up by the **Roberts Commission** (the 'Councillors Commission') and informed the key recommendation that all local authorities should have a statutory duty to promote democracy – a recommendation translated into a commitment within the White Paper 'Communities in Control Real People, Real Power' (2008). The ensuing 'Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act' (2009) included this provision as a new 'duty to promote democracy'. The Chair confirms this chain of events: "*The Commission utilised recommendations from the ELG report that suggested local authorities should support efforts to increase representative diversity in local government... Although this duty was subsequently repealed by the Coalition Government, it is notable that ELG research still informs policy debate on this issue. For example, University of Manchester research was cited at a recent Communities and Local Government Select Committee enquiry into 'Councillors and the Community' (2012) where evidence from the University of Manchester's Liz Richardson... cited both ELG research, and the work of the Roberts Commission, in support of measures to encourage renewed local authority involvement in improving the diversity of councillor representation ... The subsequent CLG Select Committee report included recommendations on how councils could promote local democracy which flowed from this... In my view, robust research and evidence of this nature is crucial in order to inform the policy debate on local government and democracy more widely*" [5].

This research agenda was taken forward by Gains and Richardson in work for the **EHRC**, which followed the final report of the 'Speakers Conference on Parliamentary Representation' (2010) – with research findings fed back to committee members [D]. This is confirmed by the EHRC's Research Manager, who also adds that the research was later cited in EHRC publications, utilised in evidence to the Office for Disability Issues, and "*knowledge of the issues raised in the report helped inform the focus of the section of 'Women in public life' in the recent EHRC treaty submissions to the UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)... the report has been of value. Overall it has contributed to both policy and research*". The report has also been utilised by the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (an NDPB chaired by Alan Milburn) and the Government Equalities Office. Latterly, it was cited in the influential 2013 'Sex and Power' report, produced by a coalition of NGOs, with the report picked up by the Observer, with Annesley quoted directly [2].

Impact 2: UoM research has contributed to ongoing work by the Women's Budget Group (WBG) concerning the gendered impact of the Government's austerity programme. The scope of the research has thus widened to consider, concomitantly, the gendered implications of public policy. Under the auspices of the WBG, Annesley took the lead in formulating and writing the WBG response to the 'Comprehensive Spending Reviews' (2010, 2013) and the 'Autumn Financial Statement' (2011); contributing to several other outputs. Likewise, Annesley contributed to an Observer editorial which argued that *"According to campaigning groups the Fawcett Society and the Women's Budget Group, more than 70% of the £18bn cuts to social security and welfare will fall on women.... For all its failings, Labour understood the way in which targeted support – tax credits, child benefit, childcare subsidy and jobs growth in the public sector – benefited women, helped to reduce child poverty and stimulated the economy"*. As the WBG chair confirms: *"these contributions have been important in keeping the gender equality impacts of fiscal policy on the agenda of government departments, public bodies and women's organizations... The analysis of the 2010 spending review was submitted in evidence to the formal investigation of this Review... and positive reference was made to this evidence in the report that the [Equalities and Human Rights] Commission issued in May 2012. As a result the government accepted that Budgets and Spending Reviews must be accompanied by an Equalities Impact Assessment"*. Following this breakthrough, Annesley continues to assist the WBG in monitoring and suggesting refinements to these impact assessments, working closely with the EHRC. This impact has also been bolstered through ongoing engagement with the media; Annesley co-writing a policy briefing on the gendered impact of Universal Credit for the WBG, which was published as an LSE blog. Significantly, this was picked up (and linked to) by Observer journalist Nick Cohen whose article states: *"The benefit changes have been designed to 'reinforce the traditional male breadwinner model', in the words of the Women's Budget Group, an alliance of academics and trade unionists, which fights a determined, if often hopeless, battle to defend poor and working-class women. Reinforce the patriarchal male and, inevitably, you restrict women's independence"* [4].

Impact 3: UoM research has informed the policy of Her Majesty's Opposition. As awareness has grown regarding the gendered impact of austerity policies on women, increased traction has emerged within policy circles. Annesley has twice been invited to present research to the Women's Parliamentary Labour Party (WPLP) (22nd November 2011 & 12th March 2013) and to a group convened by Yvette Cooper MP (Shadow Minister for Women and Equalities) and Kate Green MP (Chair, WPLP). Green also sought Annesley's advice on a one-to-one basis, confirming that: *"these presentations have proved very valuable in enabling women politicians to make an evidenced case for more gender-sensitive policy, and to mount an informed challenge to Coalition policies... The Parliamentary Labour Party has also made extensive and ongoing use of Professor Annesley's research, as it continues to: challenge ministers, via parliamentary questions; evaluate spending announcements; and highlight the gender blindness of government... I hope she will also be able to assist in assessing the gender impact of Labour's own policy proposals as we develop our election manifesto"*. This was confirmed, as following the second WPLP presentation Annesley was contacted by Yvette Cooper's office, requesting additional information on the gendered aspects of underemployment and casualisation, as they were *"putting together some briefings for Women and Equalities Questions in the chamber after Easter and [...] these figures could provide an interesting basis."* This ongoing dialogue has also led to UoM research on the topic of women's representation being publicly revisited, most notably within two North West Young Labour (NWYL) policy forums (Manchester, December 2012 & Warrington, January 2013). The policy document produced (with a foreword by Kate Green,) will inform the Labour Party's National Policy Review. Annesley's contribution is cited directly, noting that she *"made a forceful case for increased female representation in government. With a stark lack of women in the vital departments like the Treasury, Work & Pensions or 'The Quad'... we agreed that Labour should have the courage to commit to at least 50% of the Cabinet and Government Ministers being women. We should also take similar steps in Council executives"* [6].

Impact 4: UoM research has empowered people affected by Coalition cuts through knowledge transfer. Ongoing engagement has been carefully targeted in order to uphold the key messages emerging from UoM research. For instance, Annesley was invited to present analysis on the gendered impact of the Coalition's economic policies to the 'All Party Parliamentary Group for

Sex Equality' (26th October 2010), and was invited by BBC Radio 4 'Woman's Hour' to lead a discussion on the impact of coalition cuts on women (11th May 2011) [7]. Other forms of outreach have been similarly tailored, and as Kate Green MP – who has shared a platform with Annesley at numerous events – notes, her contributions *“helped to inform, politicise and empower the women, many of whom have gone on to speak out in their own communities, workplaces and in the media”* [6]. Specific examples include the presentation of research to: WomenMATTa (Manchester and Trafford Taking Action) (20th July 2010); Independent Choices – a Manchester advocacy group for victims of domestic abuse (1st December 2010); the 'Hard Times' conference to 170 grassroots women in Sheffield (18th April 2011); an LSE public event on austerity (11th May 2011) [8]; a Unison fringe meeting in Manchester (19th June 2011) [22]; and the TUC women's conference in Liverpool (18th November 2011). One of the co-organisers of the **Hard Times Conference**, noted shortly afterwards that Annesley's *“presentation topped the 'star' stakes in the sense of the number of people who expressed special appreciation of her talk in the 'feedback' sheets....”* She later commented that: *“Annesley spoke in the plenary debate with great clarity and authority about the impact the austerity measures recently announced might have on the middle to lower earnings population and particularly on women... The conference with its wide audience was important in strengthening a commitment to the importance of better gender analysis of the impact of new policies, and the significant role universities can play in ensuring the gender duty placed on public authorities by the Equalities legislation is well grounded in evidence”* [9]. On the back of these engagements, Annesley has recently undertaken similar dissemination in both a Scottish context, and at a 'UN Women workshop of local civil society groups' held in in Macedonia (October 2012) where her contribution *“inspired CSO discussion on national and regional networking through the production of joint policy/budget watchdog reports”* [10].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (all claims referenced in the text)

- [1] Email from DGLG to Peter John (18th July 2007)
- [2] **EHRC**: Testimonial from Research Manager, **EHRC** (29th July 2013); Email from Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission to Durose (12th July 2013); (2013) Centre for Women and Democracy 'Counting Women In – Sex and Power 2013: Who runs Britain?' Centre for Women and Democracy (p.25); (2013) Roberts, Y. 'Report finds shocking absence of women from UK public life', *The Observer* (24th February)
- [3] (2013) EGGSI 'The Impact of the Economic Crisis on the Situation of Women And Men and on Gender Equality Policies Synthesis Report' (Brussels: European Commission)
- [4] **Women's Budget Group**: Testimonial from Chair, WBG (14th August 2013); (2012) Editorial 'Equality: coalition is missing the point about women' *The Observer* (12th February) (Annesley thanked by author Yvonne Roberts); (2010) WBG 'The Impact on Women of the Coalition Spending Review 2010 (November) & (2012) 'The Impact on Women of the Autumn Financial Statement, 29 November 2011' (January); (2011) British Policy & Politics at LSE 'Universal Credit may reinforce the traditional 'male breadwinner' model and affect many women's access to an income' (Blog: 21st June); (2013) Cohen, N. 'Mothers and children lose out in benefit changes' *The Observer* (28th April)
- [5] **Roberts Commission**: Testimonial from Chair, Councillors Commission (2007–09) (12th August 2013); (2007) 'Representing the Future: The Report of the Councillors Commission' (December) (pp. 32,76,116); (2008) *Communities in Control: Real Power Real People* (White Paper) (p.2); (2009) Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act (included new 'duty to promote democracy', Chapter 1 Part 1); (2013) *Communities and Local Government Select Committee Report HC 432 'Councillors on the Frontline'* (paras. 43 & 57 & pp.58-59) & Uncorrected evidence (HC432i, *passim*)
- [6] **The Opposition**: Testimonial from Kate Green MP, Shadow Spokesperson for Women and Equality (26th June 2013); Email from Office, Yvonne Cooper MP (27th March 2013); (2013) NWYL 'Equality for All?... ' (28th February) (p.5)
- [7] (2011) BBC Radio Four 'Woman's Hour – Feature: Budgeting for Gender Equality' (11th May)
- [8] (2011) Budgeting for Gender Equality: Is Government Economic Policy Fair to Women? LSE Gender Institute and Department of Sociology (11th May)
- [9] Testimonial from former Labour MP, Sheffield Hillsborough (28th July 2013) & Email/Conference Report (19th May 2011)
- [10] (2013) Confidential document from UN Women – The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (21st October)