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Dialectics of Citizenship

RUTH LISTER

Elements comprising a set of building blocks for a feminist reconstruction of citizenship might include: a critical synthesis of citizenship as a status and a practice; strengthening the inclusive side of citizenship (within and across nation-states); the principle of differentiated universalism, addressing tensions between an analysis grounded in difference and the universalism standing at the heart of citizenship; and a challenge to the binary thinking that constrains the articulation of women's claims to citizenship.

Feminist citizenship theorists face a dual question: whether a concept originally predicated on the very exclusion of women can be reformulated so as satisfactorily to include and not simply append them; and in doing so, whether it can give full recognition to the different and shifting identities women simultaneously hold. In other words, is the very idea of a "woman-friendly citizenship" contradictory both because citizenship is inherently woman-unfriendly and exclusionary, and because the category "woman" itself represents a false universalism which replicates that of traditional constructions of citizenship? In this article, I propose a set of building blocks for a feminist reconstruction of citizenship that addresses these questions.

My argument is twofold. First, refashioned within a feminist framework, citizenship provides an invaluable strategic theoretical concept for the analysis of women's subordination and a potentially powerful political weapon in the struggle against it. Moreover, it throws a searching light on difference, despite its universalist roots. Second, a dialectical approach best enables us to ride the tensions inherent in such a reconstruction in a way which opens up our theoretical and political choices. This point is illustrated with reference to a number of feminist debates which impinge on women's claims to full citizenship.

CITIZENSHIP AS STATUS AND PRACTICE

My starting point is to reformulate and bring together the two great historical traditions of citizenship, those of liberalism and civic republicanism, in a critical synthesis. In these traditions, citizenship is understood as involving respectively rights and political obligation, the former prioritizing the individual, the latter the interests of the wider community. These elements have been conceptualized as citizenship as a *status* versus citizenship as a *practice* (Oldfield 1990). The broader contemporary "duties discourse," which emphasizes obligation more generally and in particular paid work obligations, is not my focus here; but its relevance for feminist politics should be noted, particularly in relation to the vexing question of the value to be placed on care as a citizenship obligation.

Today, most rights-based accounts of citizenship take as their starting point T. H. Marshall's celebrated exposition of its three elements, which extended the liberal formulation of civil and political rights to embrace also the social (Marshall 1950). Despite earlier skepticism toward traditional formulations of citizenship rights among some feminists and other radicals, the case has been made for extending those formulations to embrace new categories demanded by social movements. Two sets of rights, in particular, can be identified in this context. First are reproductive rights, which can be seen both as an extension of the civil-political-social rights triad and as inseparable from it. Their importance to women's autonomy and democratic participation has been a key tenet of modern feminism and has now been given official recognition by bodies such as the United Nations. Second is the right to participate in decisionmaking in a range of spheres, reflected, in the context of welfare institutions, in demands for user-involvement and greater democratic accountability.

Here, a rights-based conception of citizenship as status shades into an emphasis on citizenship as practice, closer to the civic republican tradition. The renaissance today of this tradition, particularly in the United States, represents a reaction against the individualism of the previously dominant liberal citizenship paradigm. The reclaiming of active, collective politics as the essence of citizenship is pivotal to contemporary civic republicanism and in particular to its appropriation, suitably modified, by some feminists, most notably Mary Dietz (1987). Others, while attracted by the portrayal of citizenship as active political participation, remain critical of some of civic republicanism's other key tenets (Young 1989, 1990; Phillips 1991, 1993). Potentially problematic for feminists are its demanding nature, which has particular implications for women, disadvantaged by the gendered division of time; its narrow conception of the "political" built on a generally rigid separation of public and private spheres; and its uncritical appeal to notions of universality, impartiality, and the common good. Without pursuing the argu-

ments in detail here (see Lister 1998), it is possible to develop a model of political citizenship based partly on civic republicanism which is more "woman-friendly."

In particular, this model has to embrace a broad definition of political citizenship, in contrast to the model of classical civic republicanism, which confines political citizenship to the formal political sphere of government. A broad definition would include both the process of negotiation with welfare institutions, frequently conducted by women, and the kinds of informal neighborhood politics in which women tend to take the lead, in contrast to their underrepresentation in the formal political system. These forms of political activism are important for citizenship from the perspective of their impact both on the wider community and on the individuals involved. From the collective perspective, they can serve to defend and extend the rights shared by other community members and to promote "social capital," the value of which has been emphasized by Robert D. Putnam as a prerequisite for effective public policy and as an expression of healthy citizenship (1993). From the perspective of the individual, involvement in collective action can boost self-confidence, as individuals (and this has been particularly true of women) come to see themselves as political actors and effective citizens.

The same is not always true of engagement with formal politics, which women often experience as more alienating than empowering, although this does not constitute an alibi for women's continued exclusion from formal political power. Nor does it mean that formal politics itself can be left untouched. The relationship between formal and informal politics needs to be recast so that the former is more open to the latter. An example is that of the women's committees established by the former Greater London Council and some other British local authorities in the 1980s. Through the use of open meetings, consultation exercises, and co-options, these committees made a concerted effort to involve marginalized groups of women and thereby provide a link between them and local government. Although not totally successful—not least because they became a forum for divisive identity politics—they did go some way toward forging new relationships between formal and informal modes of politics.

Thus, from the perspective of the self-development of the individual citizen, the significance of which is emphasized by a number of civic republicans, as well as that of the wider community, it makes sense to adopt a more inclusive notion of what counts as citizenship. In this way, our understanding of political citizenship ceases to be rooted in the experiences of men and divorced from those of women (Jones and Jónasdóttir, 1988). However, in casting citizenship as a demanding political obligation, classic civic republicanism contained a male bias from the outset. The ideal citizen of classical republicanism was largely freed from the necessity of laboring or of meeting his bodily requirements; this was facilitated by the ranks of noncitizens—women and slaves.

Today, the gendered division of domestic labor and time similarly privileges male citizens. The notion of political participation as an obligation thus runs the risk of casting out from the body of citizens all those unable to meet its demanding requirements, and of creating another source of self-criticism for already overburdened women. The classical republican model's dependence on an exclusive minority of citizens largely unencumbered by the demands of everyday living is one reason it cannot simply be translated into the context of twentieth-century democracies, and why feminists cannot accept it uncritically. Instead, it is possible to recast participatory political citizenship in terms of rights and opportunities rather than obligations, thereby shifting the focus to the conditions which either undermine or promote its expression (Held 1987).

Critical Synthesis

The rearticulation of both the liberal and republican citizenship traditions in ways that are more inclusive than their original formulations indicates how, while they remain conceptually different, they do not necessarily have to conflict; indeed, they can be seen as mutually supportive, even if tensions between them remain. An example is the interaction between social and political citizenship, which has been key in the development of women's position as citizens in the twentieth century. The nature of the social rights that have emerged has partly reflected the extent to which women have been involved in their construction. Conversely, the extent of women's political involvement has partly reflected the nature of the social and reproductive rights they have achieved, and their mobilization has been, partly, a function of their relationship with the welfare state.

This helps to underline the importance of a dialectical approach, if citizenship is to provide a useful tool for feminist theory and action. A rounded and fruitful theorization of citizenship, that can be of potential value to women, has to embrace both individual rights (particularly social and reproductive rights) and political participation, and has also to analyze the relationship between the two (Sarvasy and Siim 1994). For feminists adopting this approach, citizenship emerges as a dynamic concept in which process and outcome stand in a dialectical relationship. At the core of this conceptualization lies the idea of human agency.¹ Citizenship as participation represents an expression of human agency in the political arena, broadly defined; citizenship as rights enables people to act as agents, individually or in collaboration with others. Moreover, citizenship rights are not fixed. They remain the object of political struggles to defend, reinterpret, and extend them. Who is involved in those struggles, where they are placed in the political hierarchy, and what political power and influence they can wield will help to determine the outcomes of such struggles. Such a conceptualization of citizenship is particu-

larly important in challenging the construction of women (not least, minority group women) as passive victims, while keeping sight of the discriminatory and oppressive male-dominated political, economic, social, and cultural institutions that still deny women full citizenship. People can be, at the same time, both the subordinate objects of hierarchical power relations and subjects who are agents in their own lives, capable of exercising power in the "generative sense of self-actualization" (Giddens 1991).

Uniting citizenship as a status and citizenship as a practice does not, however, mean that the former is conditional on the latter. We need to distinguish between two formulations: to *be* a citizen and to *act as* a citizen (Kymlicka and Norman 1994). To be a citizen, in the legal and sociological sense, means to enjoy the rights of citizenship necessary for agency and social and political participation. To act as a citizen involves fulfilling the potential of that status. Those who do not fulfil that potential do not cease to be citizens. To suggest otherwise is once again to create a measuring rod against which women are more likely to fall short because of their continued domestic responsibilities, and one which could deny the citizenship of those constrained by severe disability, chronic illness, or infirmity.²

EXCLUSION/INCLUSION: ACROSS NATION-STATES

This reinterpretation of the two citizenship traditions has been informed by the principle of inclusiveness. This principle involves strengthening the inclusive side of citizenship's coin while explicitly acknowledging, and as far as possible challenging, its exclusionary side both within and at the borders of nation-states. The latter means that the thinking involved in a feminist reconstruction of citizenship, as both a status and a practice, has to adopt an internationalist and multilayered perspective. It is only through such a perspective, which also draws on the language of human rights, that we can address the limitations of citizenship which are thrown into relief by growing numbers of migrants and asylum seekers. The existence of significant numbers of non-citizens within and of would-be entrants to national polities raises questions about the nature of legal, political, and social citizenship rights and the conditions under which they are granted.

A multilayered conceptualization of citizenship loosens its bonds with the nation-state, so that citizenship is defined over a spectrum which extends from the local to the global, reflecting local and regional pressures for greater political autonomy on the one hand and globalizing tendencies on the other. In particular, the notion of global citizenship, which reflects at the international level the rights and responsibilities associated with national citizenship, offers a tool to challenge, or at least temper, citizenship's exclusionary power. It does so in two main ways, both of which involve a link between citizenship and human rights. First, the framework of global citizenship encourages a focus

on the responsibilities of the more affluent nation-states toward those that lack the resources to translate human rights (as defined by the U.N. to embrace economic, social, and cultural rights) into effective citizenship rights. This follows Kathleen B. Jones's sketch of a feminist stance that "stresses the global parameters of the responsible citizen's obligations" (1994, 269). The importance for feminism of placing citizenship in a global context is underlined by the evidence that women in poorer nations, as managers of poverty and suppliers of "flexible labor," bear the greater burden of the policies of the richer nations and the international economic institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund, that represent those interests.

Second, the relationship between citizenship and human rights opens up the possibility of a more inclusionary stance toward nation-state outsiders: migrants and asylum seekers. Although the mainstream migration literature tends to assume that these groups are male, it is estimated that women account for about half of all international migration and for just under half the refugee population (United Nations, 1995). It is ironic that, at a time when the power of the nation-state is being curtailed by both globalizing forces and internal fissiparity and devolutionary pressures, its role in regulating the boundaries of exclusion through the laws governing immigration and asylum is being executed with increasing aggressiveness in the world's more affluent societies.

The relationship between citizenship and human rights is a complex one. One formulation is that supplied by Rainer Bauböck. First, he suggests, the right to the citizenship of an identifiable state is itself a basic human right. Second, human rights and citizenship rights share a common language: human rights represent the "cornerstone" of citizenship rights and "a universalized form of citizenship, transcending boundaries of state membership" (1994, 247). As such they are increasingly a reference point for feminists successfully claiming human rights as women's rights, reflected most notably in the 1995 Beijing U.N. Women's Conference Declaration. Citizenship rights derive from human rights as the necessary condition for human agency, so that the former could be said to represent the specific interpretation and allocation by individual nation-states of the more abstract, unconditional, and universalizable human rights.

There is, though, a tension between the dictates of human rights and the right of nation-states to exercise sovereignty in the control of access to their territories. Here universal rights and more narrowly circumscribed citizenship (and residence) rights can come into conflict. Nevertheless, by the same token, the discourse of human rights represents a resource for migrants and asylum seekers, counterpoised against the exclusionary boundaries around citizenship and membership drawn by individual nation-states. International human rights law, if enforced by more effective institutions of global governance, could circumscribe nation-states' powers to exclude "outsiders" by the implementation of an internationally agreed-on set of principles, including

the principle of non-discrimination. The notion of global governance has been promoted by the U.N. and also by an international Commission on Global Governance, both of which look to a strengthened and democratized U.N., with the addition of an Economic Security Council, as providing the foundation stone.³ David Held (1995), who has begun to sketch out the framework for a cosmopolitan governance, likewise looks to a reformed and strengthened U.N., along with the development of regional parliaments, such as the European Parliament, in the shorter term. In the longer term, he envisages, *inter alia*, a directly elected global parliament of democratic peoples and the entrenchment of cosmopolitan democratic law. Such visions may appear fanciful in the context of the current world order; nevertheless they are increasingly being promoted through existing international forums.

Citizenship as practice is also being furthered at the international level by the embryonic growth of a global civil society, through which social movements and nongovernmental organizations can pursue their goals across national borders. As they have done at the local level, women are playing an active role in this alternative forum for citizenship politics, often making use of electronic communications (Gittler 1996; Pettman 1996). The U.N. summits of the 1990s have demonstrated the strength of international women's organizations and lobbies, as witnessed in their ability to shape the agenda and outcome of both the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women and the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development. However, as at the national level, this does not justify women's exclusion from the actual and potential arenas of global power.

A DIFFERENTIATED UNIVERSALISM

Within nation-states, the exclusion of women has been pivotal to the historical, theoretical, and political construction of citizenship. The appropriation of citizenship as a concept of potential value to feminism involves a number of steps. The first is to expose how, hidden under the cloak of false universalism, that exclusion has been not accidental but integral to both historical traditions of citizenship. This situation affects the terms on which women are today admitted to citizenship. Second, a similar challenge to the false universalism of the category "woman" means that a feminist reinterpretation of citizenship must integrate a gender analysis into a broader understanding of the significance of difference. The features of the gendered mask worn by citizenship's exclusionary face also bear the imprint of other dimensions of exclusion. Social divisions such as class, "race," disability, and sexuality interact with gender either to aggravate or to modify its impact on women's citizenship status and potential. Nevertheless, recognition of how differences within the category "woman" mediate women's relationship to citizenship does not have to mean abandoning the category altogether. To the extent that

women, in their diversity, share a citizenship status which is, at best, marginal, it is appropriate to deploy the theoretical and political tool of gender.

The third step is to address the tension between such an analysis, grounded in difference, and the universalism that stands at the heart of citizenship. The solution is not to abandon citizenship as a universalist project, for to do so is also to abandon its "emancipatory potential" that strikes such a political resonance for many people (Vogel 1988; Riley 1992). Without the promise of the universal, against which the denial of full and genuine citizenship to women and minority groups can be measured and claims for inclusion can be directed, the concept of citizenship loses its political force. Helpful here is Iris Marion Young's distinction between universality as impartiality, "in the sense of the adoption of a general point of view that leaves behind particular affiliations, feelings, commitments and desires," which she rejects as a fiction, and the "universality of moral commitment" to the equal moral worth and participation and inclusion of all persons (1990, 105). It is in this latter sense that citizenship cannot be divorced from its universalist roots. Thus our goal should be a universalism that stands in creative tension to diversity and difference and that challenges the divisions and exclusionary inequalities which can stem from diversity.

The underlying principle that can guide us is that of a *differentiated universalism*, which embodies the creative tension between universalism and particularity or difference. This draws on contemporary radical political theory, which is seeking to "particularize" the universal in the search for "a new kind of articulation between the universal and the particular" (Mouffe 1993, 13; Benhabib 1992; Gunew and Yeatman 1993).⁴ The application of the principle of differentiated universalism yields an enriched understanding of citizenship both as a status and a practice.

A Politics of Solidarity in Difference

Taking citizenship as a practice, the principle of differentiated universalism is embodied in Anna Yeatman's conceptualization of a "politics of difference," which involves "a commitment to a universalistic orientation to the positive value of difference within a democratic political process." This requires both "an inclusive politics of voice and representation" and "a readiness on the part of any one emancipatory movement to show how its particular interest in contesting oppression links into and supports the interests of other movements in contesting different kinds of oppression" (Yeatman 1993, 231; 1994).

At the theoretical level, it is possible to draw from the rich literature in this area a number of elements that would constitute such a politics of solidarity in difference. First, and underpinning the others, must be some kind of "framework agreement" of political values, or "grammar of political conduct," that provides the foundations for citizen engagement. This, Chantal Mouffe (1992)

suggests, is more compatible with modern democratic pluralism than the notion of a "common good" enshrined in traditional civic republicanism. Second, a key feature of this political syntax is a commitment to valuing difference, as built into the very fabric of the political project and embracing a nonessentialist conceptualization of the political subject as made up of manifold, fluid identities which mirror the multiple differentiation of groups. Which identities individuals choose to identify with politically cannot be taken either as a given or as static. A group-differentiated politics which asks the individual citizen to identify with just one aspect of her identity runs the risk of fragmentation at the individual as well as the group level.

The third plank is a commitment to dialogue. This commitment has been expressed under a number of rubrics; most notably, "dialogic," "deliberative," or "communicative" democracy. Underlying them is Habermas's notion of a "communicative ethic," which emphasizes the crucial role of free and open public communication and deliberation between citizens as the basis of democratic political legitimation. This has been used critically by a number of feminist political theorists who envisage such public dialogue as the framework for the articulation of difference in which diverse voices, particularly those normally excluded from public discourse, have an equal right to be heard. Unlike Habermas himself, for those feminists the point of such dialogue is not to arrive at agreement on "the" general interest, but instead to promote the development of views and the exercise of judgement, having taken account of different viewpoints.

This commitment to dialogue is premised on the belief that it enables new positions to emerge as other viewpoints are acknowledged. The importance of dialogue in which "each group becomes better able to consider other groups'" standpoints without relinquishing the uniqueness of its own standpoint or suppressing other groups' partial perspectives is underlined also by Patricia Hill Collins as typical of Afrocentric feminist thought (1991, 236). Nira Yuval-Davis (1997), drawing on the work of a group of Italian feminists, calls this a process of "rooting" and "shifting," in which participants remain rooted in their own identities and values but at the same time are willing to shift views in dialogue with those of other identities and values. This, Yuval-Davis suggests, represents a "transversal" dialogue or politics, which depends on participants avoiding uncritical solidarity and the homogenization of "the other."

How to turn such theoretical ideas into practical realities is, of course, another question. As Yuval-Davis warns, in some situations, conflicting interests are not reconcilable in this way and, by and large, political systems do not provide the time and space for such dialogue. Moreover, there is a tendency to underestimate the difficulties some groups, in particular the poor and economically marginalized, would have in entering the dialogue in the first place. Nevertheless, we can point to examples to show that such a transversal politics

is possible. To take just two from conflict areas: during the period of transition to the new South Africa, a Women's National Coalition was formed, which represented an "extraordinary convergence of women across geographical, racial, class, religious and political lines" and "a forum through which women who harbored deep animosities could also identify common concerns" (Kemp et. al., 1995, 150-51). Through a process of dialogue and negotiation and despite fissures and disagreements, the coalition drafted a Women's Charter for Effective Equality, which gave women in their diversity a voice in the writing of the new constitution. The opportunity to have a voice at such a historic time, combined with a focus on a clear, specific goal, is believed to have provided the impetus to work through the differences that existed.

A second example can be found in Northern Ireland. In a photo essay, titled "Different Together," Cynthia Cockburn describes how a form of transversal politics is being pursued by Belfast women's centers:

Individual women hold on to their political identities—some long for a united Ireland, others feel deeply threatened by the idea. But they have identified a commonality in being women, being community based and being angry at injustice and inequality, that allows them to affirm and even welcome this and other kinds of difference. (1996a, 46)

Two Belfast women who gave evidence to the Northern Ireland Opsahl Commission explained that, in their experience, cooperation was easier "when the deliberations and activities are directed towards the issues which matter" in women's lives, by which they meant the struggle to improve the quality of life in the disadvantaged communities in which they lived.⁵ Cockburn (1996b), drawing also on women's projects in Bosnia and Israel, found a number of factors which facilitated working across communal divisions, including a clear practical focus and a sensitivity in defining agendas. Each case revealed a commitment to working with the "other" and an affirmation of "difference." This was combined with an acknowledgment of differences within each group and of the fluidity of ethnic identities, as well as a willingness to look outward; for instance, in Belfast, to women in local Indian and Chinese communities. None of this was easy; but these examples suggest that with commitment, it is possible to forge a politics of solidarity in difference.

Particularizing Rights

With regard to citizenship as a status, the common representation of citizenship rights as abstract and universal would seem to make them rather unamenable to a politics of difference. Nevertheless, it is possible to distinguish two complementary approaches to incorporating diversity and difference into the

conceptualization of citizenship rights without sacrificing the principle of common and equal rights, which in itself is necessary for the accommodation of difference.

The first approach is to recognize that rights can be particularized to take account of the situation of specific groups, both in the reactive sense of counteracting past and present disadvantages, which may undermine group members' position as citizens, and in the proactive sense of affirming diversity, particularly with regard to cultural and linguistic rights. Examples of the former are affirmative action programs and the kind of wide-ranging disability discrimination legislation enacted in the United States. Examples of the latter are the specific political, legal, and collective rights enjoyed by indigenous American Indians in parallel with their rights as U.S. citizens (Young 1990), and language policies that officially recognize the languages of significant minority ethnic groups, as in Australia (Castles 1994). It must be acknowledged, though, that such attempts to rearticulate the relationship between the universal and the particular are politically charged. This is most evident in the United States where the growth of the Hispanic community has led to pressures for English to be declared the official language in some cities and where affirmative action policies have been rendered unlawful following the passage of Proposition 209 in California.

Moreover, the "multi-cultural" model of citizenship, which could be said to underpin some of these policies, is not without its problems, particularly from a feminist perspective. First, it runs the risk of treating cultural groups as homogeneous, ignoring, for instance, differences of gender, age, sexuality, and class, and of essentializing and freezing cultural differences (Yuval-Davis 1997). Helpful here is the distinction made by Will Kymlicka in his treatise on multicultural citizenship (1995). On the one hand are minority rights that promote the interests of minority groups in relation to the majority; on the other are rights that allow minority groups to impose restrictions on their own members' individual rights in the name of traditional authorities and practices. Support for the former, but not the latter, Kymlicka argues, helps to ensure not just equality between groups but freedom and equality within groups. Even though, as he acknowledges, maintaining such a distinction might be difficult in practice, and leaves open the question of whose interpretation of minority rights holds sway, it does offer a possible framework for addressing claims for minority group rights while recognizing divergent interests within groups. Conversely, the multicultural model risks ending up as a mere liberal toleration of diversity, confined to the "private" sphere, rather than a genuine acceptance and recognition of such diversity in the "public" (Galeotti 1993). Given the difficulties raised by multiculturalism, the notion of "transculturalism" has been suggested as a means of acknowledging cultural identities without reducing people to static and uniform cultural groups.⁶ Its implications, both theoretical and political, would need further exploration.

The second approach, advocated by David Taylor (1989, 27), is to anchor citizenship rights in a notion of need, in that need can be seen as dynamic and differentiated, as against the universal and abstract basis of rights. This formulation is useful in opening up the political dynamics of the relationship between needs and rights in citizenship struggles, or Nancy Fraser's "politics of needs interpretation" (1989), which involves a series of struggles over the legitimation of "competing needs discourses," the interpretation of needs, and their translation into rights. An example is the challenge by the disability movement to medicalized needs discourses which undermine the citizenship rights of disabled people. Taylor's distinction between needs as differentiated and rights as abstract and universal is, however, something of an oversimplification. As I have just suggested, rights can be differentiated on a group basis; and Doyal and Gough's theory of needs (1991), on which Taylor draws, is, as he himself notes, rooted in a universalistic understanding of basic human needs that are then subject to different cultural and historical interpretations. This suggests that both needs and rights should be understood as tiered, embracing both the universal and the differentiated and standing in a dynamic relationship to each other through the "politics of needs interpretation."

ARTICULATING WOMEN'S CLAIMS TO CITIZENSHIP

The principle of differentiated universalism can also be applied to the terms on which women's claims to citizenship, as both a status and a practice, are articulated. Typically, women have been faced with a choice between a universalistic claim based on the principle of our equality with men and a particularistic claim based on our difference from them. These claims represent, on the one hand, a gender-neutral, and on the other a gender-differentiated model of citizenship. In both cases, it is a male standard against which women's citizenship is being measured, and difference is conceptualized in binary rather than pluralistic terms. Overlapping oppositions are those between the universalistic ethic of justice and the particularistic ethic of care, and between the ideals of independence and interdependence.

The dangers of pursuing the chimera of a gender-neutral citizenship ideal have been underlined elsewhere (Jones 1990; Vogel 1994). Such an ideal would require women, as the price of their admission to citizenship, to adapt to a template fashioned in a male image and would ignore how the body politic denies the body female. In this way, the issue of women's citizenship is treated by those who subscribe to this ideal as purely quantitative, relating to our presence or absence in the citizen ranks, rather than qualitative, concerning the very nature of citizenship. To force women into the mold created by male citizenship paradigms could stunt and contort the process of self-development that is pivotal to human agency and citizenship.

The alternative of a gender-differentiated citizenship is no less problematic. It runs the risk of sinking into the sands of an essentialism which, in lauding women's (read mothers') essential nature and values, ignores the differences between women and serves to trap them in the private domestic sphere. This could then reinforce women's economic dependence and political marginalization. Moreover, historical analysis indicates that such maternalist discourses can all too easily be misappropriated to the advantage of men, and that it has proved very difficult to win recognition of the value of caring work in the construction of social citizenship rights (Lewis and Åström 1992; Koven and Michel 1993).

Carol Pateman sums up the difficulties which have for centuries faced women in their fight for full citizenship as "Wollstonecraft's dilemma."

On the one hand they have demanded that the ideal of citizenship be extended to them, and the liberal-feminist agenda for a "gender neutral" social world is the logical conclusion of one form of this demand. On the other, women have also insisted, often simultaneously, as did Mary Wollstonecraft, that *as women* they have specific capacities, talents, needs and concerns, so that the expression of their citizenship will be differentiated from that of men. Their unpaid work, providing welfare could be seen, as Wollstonecraft saw women's tasks as mothers, as women's work *as citizens*, just as their husbands' paid work is central to men's citizenship (1989, 196-97).

The dilemma today, Pateman continues, lies in the mutual incompatibility of these two routes to citizenship. The patriarchal welfare state permits only two options: either women conform to the male citizenship model or they continue with their tasks as carers, which that model does not and cannot value. Although theoretically illuminating, Pateman's conceptualization of the dilemmas is, on the face of it, politically paralyzing. While the tension is clear between two routes that point in different directions, are they necessarily incompatible? Are the outcomes identified by Pateman the only paths available? An alternative perspective is to argue that we will have to continue to straddle both routes, through the construction of a number of criss-crossing paths, if we are to redraw the map of citizenship satisfactorily to include women in their diversity. The aim has to be to find ways of moving beyond the dichotomies that underpin the different routes to citizenship encapsulated in Wollstonecraft's dilemma.

Equality and Difference

Indeed, much contemporary feminist writing on "equality versus difference" has already helped to clear the path (Bacchi 1990; Meehan and Sevenhuijsen

1991; Bock and James 1992; Fraser 1996). Increasingly, the dichotomous pairing of the two is being challenged as representing a logical, conceptual, and political misconstruction. Equality and difference are not incompatible; they only become so if equality is understood to mean sameness. Indeed, the very notion of equality implies differences to be discounted or taken into account so that, despite them, people are treated as equals for specific purposes. Equality and difference are, therefore, better understood as simultaneously incommensurate and complementary rather than antagonistic. The opposite of equality is inequality. To posit it as difference disguises the relations of subordination, hierarchy, and consequent disadvantage that underlie the dichotomy, and serves to distort the available political choices.

The problem does not lie in "equality" or "difference" as such, neither of which feminists can afford to discard, but in their misrepresentation as opposites (which is not to say that each is not capable of being interpreted in ways which are problematic for women's citizenship). Joan Scott sees the resolution of the equality-difference dilemma as a two-step process of deconstruction that cuts through the underlying dichotomy. The first step, she posits, is

the systematic criticism of the operations of categorical difference, the exposure of the kinds of exclusions and inclusions—the hierarchies—it constructs, and a refusal of their ultimate "truth." A refusal, however, not in the name of an equality that implies sameness or identity, but rather (and this is the second move) in the name of an equality that rests on differences—differences that confound, disrupt, and render ambiguous the meaning of any fixed binary opposition (1988, 48).

Writing explicitly in the context of citizenship, Wendy Sarvasy takes the process further to argue for a synthesis of equality and difference. She takes inspiration from a group of North American post-suffrage feminists who "groped for a theoretical and practical synthesis of equality and difference as the basis for women's citizenship and as the defining characteristic of public policies in a feminist welfare state" (1992, 330). They developed a conception of "the feminist-citizen-mother who performed a role both gender differentiated and equal" (358). This "citizen-mother" would be validated in her role but would not be confined to it; she would be a citizen in her own right, both politically and economically independent.

In this way, motherhood, or more broadly, care, is incorporated into the meaning of citizenship without identifying women solely as mothers and carers. Pateman (1989), despite her pessimistic reading of Wollstonecraft's dilemma, suggests two further, related steps through the impasse she identifies. The first is to question the allocation of responsibility for the welfare of all citizens. The second is to problematize men's relationship to citizenship which

is built on their freedom from the caring responsibilities that in turn constrain women's citizenship both as a status and a practice. With both steps, the focus of attention is usefully shifted from women to men, the gendered division of labor, and wider societal responsibilities for children and others in need of care. More fundamentally, these steps call into question the meaning of citizenship itself and the differential value it places on "public" paid work and "private" unpaid caring work.

This shift highlights two other overlapping oppositions that have helped to shape women's articulation of their claims to full citizenship: between the competing claims of an ethic of care and an ethic of justice or rights, and between the value of independence as opposed to that of interdependence. Karen Offen's characterization of the equality versus difference division historically as one between "relational" and "individualist" feminism helps to illuminate how the three sets of dualities interact (Offen 1988). Relational feminism stresses women's difference and their contribution in the context of nonhierarchical relationships, underpinned by the values of care and human interdependence. Individualist feminism, in contrast, prioritizes the individual, her rights, and her quest for personal independence or autonomy. The emphasis is on a more abstract notion of justice. Offen's own conclusion from her historical analysis—that contemporary feminism needs to draw on the strengths of both currents—supports my own argument.

An Ethic of Justice *and* Care

In each case, as argued in relation to equality versus difference, the either-or choices lead us into a theoretical and political cul de sac. Rather than setting care and justice in opposition, as mutually exclusive ethics, we need to see them as complementary, each reinforcing and thereby transforming and strengthening the other. This is acknowledged by a number of both justice and care theorists. Thus, for instance, from within the justice paradigm, Susan Moller Okin suggests that the best theorizing about justice "has integral to it the notions of care and empathy, of thinking of the interests and well-being of others who may be very different from ourselves" (1989, 15).

From within the care paradigm, Joan Tronto is at similar pains to make clear that she is not setting up an ethic of care in opposition to one of justice (1993). She recognizes the importance of rights to the protection of oppressed individuals, and suggests that care has to be tied to a theory of justice in order to address the conflicts of interest and imbalance of power that can arise between the providers and recipients of care in a context of inequality; to adjudicate which needs have priority; and to guard against the dangers of parochialism, by which she means that individuals can be indifferent to the needs of others than those for whom they themselves care. A standard of justice is also necessary, Tronto concedes, to assess the distribution of care tasks and benefits

and its relationship to patterns of power; or put another way, to disconnect care from "compulsory altruism" (Land and Rose 1985). Thus our understanding of citizenship can be enriched by an ethic of care, while the practice of care has to be underwritten by an ethic of justice and the rights associated with citizenship.

Dependence, Independence, and Interdependence

The synthesis of the ethics of care and of justice also helps us to rethink the trichotomy of dependence, independence, and interdependence. (Here, the opposition lies not so much between dependence and independence, with interdependence providing the synthesis, as between dependence and independence and interdependence.) It does so by providing a framework in which due recognition can be given to the interdependence that is quintessential to human relationships—in particular, relationships involving the giving and receipt of care—while not losing the cutting edge of the longstanding feminist critique of women's economic dependence on men and the negation of rights and autonomy it entails.

Independence has traditionally been construed as a prerequisite for citizenship. Some feminists have rightly questioned the sometimes uncritical acceptance of a discourse of independence and the values it embodies in the promotion of women's citizenship. Nevertheless, we also have to guard against uncritical use of the language of interdependence that runs the risk of obscuring underlying unequal relationships of dependence and independence. The unequal power relationship that underpins some women's economic dependence on men means that the interdependence of which the dependence is a part is skewed in men's favor. It is not surprising, therefore, that the other element of the equation—men's dependence on women for care and servicing which facilitates their own independence as citizens and workers—is conveniently obscured. Fraser and Gordon (1994, 24) argue that we need to distinguish between two different kinds of dependence involved in this relationship of interdependence. One is "socially necessary" dependence, which represents the need for care, "an inescapable feature of the human condition." The other is "surplus" dependence which "is rooted in unjust and potentially remediable social institutions." The goal would be to end the link between care and surplus dependency.

More broadly, the argument that the promotion of women's citizenship requires both their economic and their physical autonomy does not have to entail subscribing to an atomistic liberal individualism. Autonomy, and the agency that derives from it, is made possible only by the human relationships that nourish it and the social infrastructure that supports it. The point is that if citizenship is to be understood as involving relationships of interdependence, those relationships must not be distorted by the denial of

women's autonomy or the inequalities of power that characterize relationships of dependency.

Across the Public-Private Divide

Underpinning the theoretical dichotomies that have distorted our choices, as well as women's exclusion from full citizenship, has been an even more fundamental dichotomy. This is the rigid gendered separation of the "private" or domestic and "public" spheres, in which the former has represented particularity, care, and dependence and the latter universalism, justice, and independence. The rearticulation of this public-private divide provides one of the keys to challenging women's exclusion at the level of both theory and praxis. This involves the disruption of the divide's gendered meaning; recognition of the ways it is socially and politically constructed and therefore fluid rather than fixed, with different implications for different groups of women; and acknowledgment of how, in practice, each side affects the other.

This rearticulation illuminates how the gateways to citizenship for women and men are differently shaped by the interaction of public and private elements. Thus, for instance, we cannot understand the gendered patterns of entry to citizenship in the public sphere without taking into account the gendered division of labor in the private. Similarly, women's treatment under asylum laws, which generally deny refugee status to women fleeing sexual persecution, is governed by the public-private divide. The struggle to control the meaning and positioning of that divide is central to the project of engendering citizenship, an insight that is usually still ignored or discounted by many male citizenship theorists. It is one of feminism's achievements that it has successfully challenged the positioning of the divide in relation to a number of issues and has, to some extent, undermined its power.

CONCLUSION: BEYOND DICHOTOMY

The subversion of the public-private divide, as it is conventionally understood, exemplifies the approach taken in this article. From the meaning of citizenship itself through our understanding of inclusion-exclusion and the relationship between universalism and difference to some of the theoretical dilemmas that have faced feminism, I have attempted to challenge the binary thinking that all too often forces our conceptual and political choices into rigid and separate compartments. Deconstructing the dichotomy to reveal how each side of a binary division implies and reflects the other is one of post-structuralism's key tools. The binary thinking that it challenges has been one of the linchpins of Western thought since Aristotle and Plato—in contrast to

Eastern thought, which has better understood the inter-relationships between opposites.

Recent feminist diagnoses of binary thinking's harmful effects highlight its tendency to promote a logic of subordination, domination, and hierarchy, in which one side of the binary line is valued at the expense of the other and relations of exclusion are legitimated. Moreover, binary thinking encourages essentialism and homogenization, the objectification of "the other," and the polarization of debate, forcing what may be inappropriate either-or choices, and thereby distorting the untidy realities of human experience.

It is, of course, easier to state the problems with dualistic thinking than to find a way to move beyond it. The identification of the false dichotomies characteristic of orthodox, masculine Western thought can all too easily slip into a simple reversal of the value attached to the two sides of the binary divide. While this may be a stage we have to go through, the challenge is to avoid stalling at the point of substitution of one subordinated category for another. The approach adopted in this essay has attempted to embrace the dialectical relationship between the two sides of each of a number of theoretical divides. Through a process of subversion and critical synthesis, the aim has been to reconstruct citizenship along pluralist rather than dualist lines.

The starting point was to conceptualize citizenship as both status and practice, with the two elements interacting in a dynamic relationship through the notion of human agency. The reinterpretation of the two traditions from which citizenship as status and practice derives has been informed by the principle of inclusiveness. This principle was then applied to the operation of citizenship both across and within nation-states. For the former, it pointed toward the possibilities of global constructions of citizenship as part of a multilayered, internationalist conceptualization that loosens citizenship's ties with the nation-state and begins to address the exclusionary powers of nation-states, drawing also on the discourse of human rights. Within nation-states, the principle of a differentiated universalism was suggested as a means of embracing the tension between difference and the (false, exclusive) universalism that stands at the heart of citizenship. This was then applied to citizenship both as a practice and a status through a discussion of a politics of solidarity in difference or transversal dialogue, and the particularizing of rights while maintaining the principles of universalism and equality.

These general building blocks provided the foundation for tackling the more specific question of women's claims to citizenship. The principle of differentiated universalism was applied to a number of key debates in feminist theory in an attempt to move beyond the binary divides which so often trap us into either a gender-neutral or a gender-differentiated model of citizenship, neither of which is satisfactory on its own. Thus, I have argued that it is not a question of having to opt for a claim to full citizenship based on *either* women's equality with *or* difference from men, inspired by an ethic of *either* justice *or* care;

premised on an ideal of *either* the independent *or* interdependent citizen. In this way, the challenge to binary thinking has provided the putty that cements the building blocks together.

Reconstructed along feminist and radical pluralist lines, citizenship provides a theoretical tool that contributes to the analysis of the structural constraints that continue to face women in their diversity, without denying women's agency. As an inspiration and a yardstick, it also offers a political tool. What is still missing is the question of power, which has been more implicit than explicit in my account but which has to be brought back into the equation, if feminist citizenship theory is to be of value to a feminist citizenship praxis.

NOTES

1. My conceptualization of human agency is influenced by Gould and her articulation of the actions and choices of autonomous actors as a process of self-development: "of concretely becoming the person one chooses to be through carrying out those actions that express one's purposes and needs" (1988, 47). Her conception of human agency locates it both in a dialectical relationship with social structures and as embedded in social relations.

2. The question of those whose capacity to exercise citizenship obligations and rights is impaired is raised by Bulmer and Rees (1996) and Meekosha and Dowse (1997).

3. The commission, which reported in 1995, was chaired by the prime minister of Sweden and the former secretary general of the British Commonwealth. Its membership included a former president of the World Bank.

4. Relevant too are attempts to reconcile the insights of post-modernism with a clear anti-oppressive moral standpoint through the vehicle of a theory of social justice. See Flax (1992); Squires (1993); and Fraser (1995).

5. The Opsahl Commission, of which I was a member, was an independent commission on the future of Northern Ireland. Its report, based on evidence from about three thousand people, was published as Pollak (1993).

6. The notion of transculturalism was suggested by Philomena Essed at a seminar on citizenship and peace, held in Cork, the Republic of Ireland, November 1995.

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