



Engendering Citizenship, Work and Care

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Engendering Citizenship, Work and Care

FREIA

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Ruth Lister

**Engendering Citizenship, Work
and Care**

Preface

The papers in the paper series nos 40-42 were presented at the international workshop, **"Engendering Welfare States and Democratic Citizenship"**, organized by FREIA - Feminist Research Centre in Aalborg, 5-6 December, 1996.

The workshop was organized as a part of FREIA's Ph.D. programme **"Gender Relations - State, Market and Civil Society"**, which is integrated in the national Ph.D. programme: **"Meanings of Gender in an interdisciplinary perspective"**. It addressed Danish senior researchers and Ph.D. students within the Social Sciences. The conference was financed by the Department of Development and Planning, and the Social Science Faculty at Aalborg University.

The objective of the workshop was to analyse the problems engendering welfare states and democratic citizenship from different theoretical perspectives as well as from different policy contexts from the United Kingdom and Denmark. The aim was to understand the interconnection between gender and democracy as well as the potentials and problems for women's agency in the modern European welfare states.

A main purpose of the workshop was to strengthen the national and international cooperation between Ph.D. programmes in Gender Studies in the Social Sciences. And more specifically the aim was to develop the dialogue between international and Danish researchers working with Gender Research on Welfare States and Democracy. The two invited guests professor Ruth Lister from Loughborough University and Professor Anne Showstack Sassoon from Kingston University, who at the time was a Guest Professor in Feminist Research in the Social Sciences at FREIA, both participate in research networks and research projects with members of FREIA. They were each asked to present a theoretical paper and a more policy oriented paper, and members from FREIA as well as colleagues from the two Research Programmes "Welfare States" and "Democracy and Citizenship in Transition" at Aalborg University were invited as discussants.

FREIA is happy to be able to publish the three conference papers. The fourth paper by Anne Showstack Sassoon "Gender and Civil Society - A Critique of the Anglo-American Debate" has been published in a book that contains a the most recent collection of articles by members of FREIA: Christensen, Ravn & Rittenhofer eds. "Det Kønnede Samfund", (Gendered Society) Aalborg University Press 1997.

The programme of the workshop will be found at the end of this publication.

Birte Siim

Inclusion/Exclusion: Feminist Perspectives on Citizenship

This paperⁱ is divided into two main parts. The first reviews the different meanings of citizenship in order to argue for a synthesis of the rights and participatory traditions, linked through the notion of human agency. The second considers citizenship's exclusionary tensions which have served to exclude women and minority groups from full citizenship, both from within and without the nation state. In doing so, it addresses the challenge of diversity and difference for citizenship to argue the case for a 'differentiated universalism' with regard to both participation and rights-based conceptions of citizenship.

1. What is Citizenship?

A contested concept

The impossibility of arriving at an exhaustive and comprehensive definition of citizenship, commented on even by Aristotle, is a common refrain running through the literature. Rather than attempt such a definition of this 'slippery concept' (Riley, 1992, p180), many today fall back on that provided by Marshall (1950, pp28-9): 'Citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed'.

The key elements here are membership of a community (itself an increasingly contested concept); the rights and obligations which flow from that membership and equality. In each case, we are talking about not simply a set of legal rules governing the relationship between individuals and the state in which they live but also a set of sociological

relationships between individuals and the state and between individual citizens (the latter receiving particular emphasis in the Scandinavian literature).

The Scandinavian literature also attaches especial importance to the participatory meaning of membership in a community, which provides a bridge between Marshallian rights and more republican approaches to citizenship which stand in two competing traditions: the liberal rights and the civic republican, conceptualised by Oldfield (1990) as citizenship as a status Vs citizenship as a practice.

Among those who subscribe to the former approach there are both classical liberals who would confine citizenship to the formal (negative) civil and political rights necessary to protect individual freedom and those who, following Marshall, would also include social rights as necessary to the promotion of a more positive notion of freedom. Among proponents of the latter there are both contemporary apostles of civic republicanism for whom the true citizen is actively involved in political and civic affairs and those who emphasise the obligations of citizens (or of certain citizens) to undertake paid work and/or engage in voluntary service. Increasingly significant too is an ecological interpretation of the needs of the wider society and the duties which they entail (Roche, 1992; Twine, 1994).

These two different orientations to citizenship are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, it is not unusual for those on the right to combine a classical liberal conception of citizenship rights with an emphasis on the paid work obligations of poorer citizens, reflecting both ideas of contract (Scott, 1993) and the combination of neo-liberal and neo-conservative strands in new right thought (King, 1987). Conversely, in the UK, the Labour leader's articulation of a 'Left view of citizenship' has emphasised not only rights but also the duties which individuals 'owe

to one another and a broader society' (Blair, 1994, p4). Moreover, while those who represent the two traditions of republicanism and liberalism remain in different camps, my own argument is that a rounded conception of citizenship needs to draw on a modernised and progressive interpretation of both.

Rights or Obligations?

Rights

Marshall's tripartite formulation of the civil, political and social is usually taken as the starting point for any discussion of citizenship rights, although the legitimacy of social rights has been subject to renewed challenge with the renaissance of classical liberalism in the form of the new rightⁱⁱ.

Two key arguments for social rights are first, that they help to promote the effective exercise of civil and political rights by groups who are disadvantaged in terms of power and resources (Lister, 1990a, 1993); and second that they are essential to the promotion of individual autonomy which, according to Doyal and Gough's theory of human needs, constitutes one of the preconditions for action in any culture and as such one of the 'most basic human needs - those which must be satisfied to some degree before actors can effectively participate in their form of life to achieve any other valued goals (Doyal and Gough, 1991, p54). Doyal and Gough maintain that their theory of human needs provides a justification not only for civil and political rights but also for social rights of citizenship as critical to autonomy, recognising that autonomy cannot be understood in purely individualistic terms, having a social dimension also. The issue of autonomy has especial significance for women in the light of the economic dependency which has traditionally undermined their citizenship.ⁱⁱⁱ

The work of Doyal and Gough exemplifies a growing willingness on the British left to engage in a rights discourse (see also, for instance, Held, 1991; Ginsburg, 1994) in contrast with the traditional Marxist approach which tended to dismiss the idea of citizenship rights as an individualistic bourgeois charade, designed to obscure fundamental economic and social class divisions behind a veneer of equality. Doyal and Gough (*ibid*, p224) reject such an approach as 'counterproductive and dangerous' for it ignores the ways in which rights can help protect human needs thereby (although they do not finish the argument) mitigating economic and social inequalities.

Feminist attitudes towards rights stretch from their embrace by liberal feminists as central to any reform programme to their dismissal by radical feminists as merely the expression of male values and power (for a discussion, see Bryson, 1992). Those writing in a socialist tradition are wary of the individualistic nature of rights; a number of feminist theorists have counterpoised an ethic of care against an ethic of justice or rights (of which more below) and feminist legal theorists tend to caution against placing too much faith in rights, whilst also counselling against outright rejection.

Feminist scepticism about citizenship rights overlaps with that of the radical left who have highlighted 'the failure of citizenship rights vested in liberal democratic institutions to meet the needs of women and racialised groups and the socially and economically marginalised' (Taylor, 1989, p29). In part, this reflects citizenship's exclusionary tensions which I will discuss in the next section.

At the same time, it also suggests another avenue which is the 'radical extension' (Doyal and Gough) of Marshall's triad to embrace other categories of rights which have been demanded by social movements, in particular reproductive rights. To the extent that the latter *are* now

recognised, it represents a triumph for feminist 'needs discourses' in the 'politics of needs interpretation' (Fraser, 1987). David Held (1987,1989,1994) who has made the case for such a 'radical extension', identifies seven clusters of rights corresponding to key sites of power - health, social, cultural, civil, economic, pacific and political - which, he contends, are key to the entrenchment of the principle of autonomy and to the facilitation of free and equal political participation.

In similar vein, Carol Gould (1988, p212) argues that 'the right of participation in decision-making in social, economic, cultural and political life' should be included in the nexus of basic rights. Her approach is echoed in attempts on the left to develop a more dynamic and active form of social citizenship rights than those traditionally associated with the post-war welfare state. Dissatisfaction with the passive nature of the latter has prompted explorations of the potential for user-involvement and greater democratic accountability of welfare institutions (see, for instance, The Sheffield Group, 1989; Croft and Beresford, 1989, 1992; Beresford and Croft 1993). This is not to be confused with the recasting of the citizen as consumer of welfare services under the Citizen's Charter introduced by the British Prime Minister, John Major (see Taylor 1991/92; Jones and Wallace, 1992; Miller and Peroni, 1992; Doern, 1993; Oliver and Heater, 1994).

Obligations

The market-oriented conceptualisation of social citizenship rights exemplified by the Citizen's Charter is nicely complemented by the right's growing emphasis on citizenship obligation and in particular the obligation to undertake paid employment. This reflects what Maurice Roche (1992) has dubbed a 'duties discourse', which is becoming increasingly influential in Western European (and US) social policy (Kremer, 1994).

Roche points to the influence of new social movements (in particular greens and feminists) in the development of this 'duties discourse'. A key issue for feminists is how care fits in to any configuration of citizenship obligations (Kremer, 1994; Bubeck, 1995). However, it is, as Roche points out, the right (in particular neo-conservatives) who have deliberately challenged the existing 'rights discourse' and who have done most to shift the fulcrum of the citizenship paradigm which dominates contemporary politics in countries such as the UK and US.

Most of the key texts contributing to this shift originate in the US, including influential works by Mead (1986) and Novak et al (1987) which identify engagement in paid work by welfare recipients to support their families as the prime obligation. The key policy issue - of whether this obligation should apply to those caring for children, and in particular lone parents, underlines its gendered nature.^{iv}

More generally, a number of British politicians across the political spectrum, together with influential commentators, have embraced the communitarian message of Amitai Etzioni's *The Spirit of Community* (1993, p4) in which, in order to correct 'the current imbalance between rights and responsibilities', he calls for 'a moratorium on the minting of most, if not all, new rights' and the re-establishment of the link between rights and responsibilities, recognising that the latter do not necessarily entail the former.

Few would dispute that responsibilities as well as rights enter into the citizenship equation. The question is: what is the appropriate balance and relationship between the two and how does that balance reflect gender and other power relations, an aspect of the question which is particularly pertinent when considering the obligation to take paid work. One helpful formulation, which attempts to encapsulate a reciprocal relationship between rights and obligations (although it does not really capture the

dimension of environmental obligation), is that put forward by Geraint Parry (1991, p186) of a 'mutual society' based on the familiar principle of 'from each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her need for the conditions of agency'.

As I shall argue below, the notion of agency helps knit together the different approaches to citizenship. It can also be found implicitly in notions of 'active citizenship' which have been promoted in the British context, from very different standpoints. The term was first coined by government ministers as an exhortation to discharge the responsibilities of neighbourliness, voluntary action and charity (an example of Marshall's vaguer citizenship duty to promote the welfare of the community) largely discredited because of the context of the rundown of public sector services and privatisation programme within which it was advanced. Nevertheless, in both the UK and the US ideas for citizens' or community service have been put forward and some have argued that community service should equate with paid work as a means of discharging the general obligations of citizenship (Leisink and Coenen, 1993).

There is too a more radical conception of active citizenship on offer, reflected in an alternative definition provided by Ray Pahl (1990, p8) as 'local people working together to improve their own quality of life and to provide conditions for others to enjoy the fruits of a more affluent society'. This is a form of active citizenship which disadvantaged people, often women, do for themselves, through, for example, community groups, rather than have done for them by the more privileged; one which creates them as subjects rather than objects (Holman, 1988, 1993). A vivid example of this kind of active citizenship can be found amongst women's groups in Northern Ireland (Lister, 1994a; WCRG, 1995).

The notion of active citizenship duty has also been broadened out to encompass ideas of ecological citizenship obligations which stretch beyond the geographical and temporal boundaries of the citizen's community (Giddens, 1991; Weale, 1991; Roche, 1992; Twine, 1994; van Steenbergen, 1994).

There are, though, some such as David Marquand (1991) who, whilst placing active citizenship in the civic republican tradition, dismisses it as a 'deformed' variant thereof which does not engage with the essence of civic republicanism which is the duty to take part in government. While Marquand is right to highlight the depoliticised nature of the conservative notion of active citizenship, his position runs the danger of promulgating a narrow interpretation of civic republicanism and of what counts as political action in the citizenship stakes.

Citizenship as political obligation

It is in the civic republican tradition that we find the source of today's duties discourse. Originating in the classical Graeco-Roman world, it appeals to the values of civic duty, the submission of individual interest to that of the common good and the elevation of the public sphere in which the citizen is constituted as political actor.

The renaissance of civic republicanism, particularly in the US, the appeal of which is not confined to any one point in the political spectrum, represents a reaction against the individualism of the previously dominant liberal citizenship paradigm. This, it is argued, represents an impoverished version of citizenship in which individual citizens are reduced to atomised, passive bearers of rights whose freedom consists in being able to pursue their individual interests: 'citizenship becomes less a collective, political activity than an individual, economic activity' (Dietz, 1987, p6).

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 feminist writers, most notably Mary Dietz. For Dietz (1987, p15), it is only 'through active engagement as citizens in the public world' and the recognition of the activity of citizenship as itself a value that feminists will 'be able to claim a truly liberatory politics as their own'.

Others have been attracted by the portrayal of citizenship as active political participation, whilst remaining critical of some of its other key tenets (see, for instance, Young, 1989, 1990; Phillips, 1991, 1993). Potentially problematic for feminists are: the demanding nature of republican citizenship which has particular implications for women, disadvantaged by the sexual 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 universalism, impartiality and the common good.

An important element of any feminist citizenship project is to define both citizenship and the 'political' in broad terms so as to encompass the kind of informal politics in which women often take the lead and the struggles of oppressed groups generally (see, e.g. Coote and Pattullo, 1990; Lovenduski and Randall, 1993; Ferree & Martin, 1995).

Without pursuing the arguments here (see Lister, 1995 and forthcoming), it is possible, I think, to develop a modified model which draws on the civic republican tradition but in a way which promotes the interests of women's citizenship.

Synthesis

Recognising the limitations of both the main citizenship traditions, we need, as Chantal Mouffe (1992, p4) argues, 'to go beyond the conceptions of citizenship of both the liberal and the civic republican traditions while building on their respective strengths'. This conception would, she suggests, draw on both the liberal formulation of free and equal rights-bearing citizens and the richer republican conceptualisation of active political participation and civic engagement (but based on a radical, pluralist reframing of the 'common good'). A reading of the literature suggests that while the rights and participatory approaches to citizenship remain conceptually different, they do not necessarily have to conflict; instead they can be seen as mutually supportive, even if tensions between them remain.

An example of how the two coalesce is provided by the process of negotiation with welfare state institutions, by individuals as well as groups, the main responsibility for which tends to fall to women (Nelson, 1984, Jones, 1990). This perspective on citizenship is exemplified by the work of Scandinavian feminist scholars such as Helga Hernes and Birte Siim. Hernes (1987, p138), for example, writes:

The welfare state literature, to the extent that it deals with individual citizens, deals with those aspects of citizenship that are related to social policy entitlements. Democratic theories and empirical studies of democratic politics emphasise the participatory aspects of citizenship. Any adequate account of contemporary citizenship in Scandinavia must include all these dimensions if the interplay between material rights, multi-level participation, and political identities is to be grasped.

The interaction between social and political citizenship has also been key in the development of women's position as citizens in the twentieth

century (Lewis, 1980; Dale and Foster, 1986; Hernes, 1987; Riley, 1988; Gordon, 1990; Bock and Thane, 1991; Sarvasy, 1992; Koven & Michel, 1993; Hobson & Lindholm, 1995). The nature of the social rights that have emerged has, in part, been a reflection of the extent to which women have been involved in their construction. Conversely, the extent of women's political involvement has, in part, been a reflection of the nature of the social and reproductive rights they have achieved and their mobilisation has been, in part, a function of their relationship with the welfare state.

This helps to underline the importance of a synthetic approach, which embraces elements of the two main historical citizenship traditions. Citizenship then emerges as a dynamic concept in which process and outcome stand in a dialectical relationship to each other. At the core of this conceptualisation lies the idea of human agency.^v Citizenship as participation represents an expression of human agency in the political arena, broadly defined; citizenship as rights enables people to act as agents. Such a conceptualisation of citizenship is particularly important in challenging the construction of women (and especially minority group women) as passive victims whilst keeping sight of the discriminatory and oppressive male-dominated political, economic and social institutions which still deny them 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-actualisation (Giddens, 1991).

Finally, to tie up this discussion with the earlier one on obligation, I want to draw a distinction between on the one hand an emphasis on the importance of political participation, broadly defined, for citizenship and on the other a construction of active political participation as a citizenship obligation. Given the constraints on women's lives and the obstacles they face, there is a real danger of creating a measuring rod of citizenship

against which many women might, yet again, fall short. I therefore draw a distinction between two formulations: to *be* a citizen and to *act* as a citizen, thereby bringing together Oldfield's bifurcation of citizenship as a status and a practice.^{vi} To be a citizen, in the sociological sense, means to enjoy the rights necessary for agency and social and political participation. To act as a citizen involves fulfilling the full potential of the status. Those who do not fulfil that potential do not cease to be citizens; moreover, in practice political participation tends to be more of a continuum than an all or nothing affair, which can fluctuate during the individual's life-course, reflecting, in part, the demands of caring obligations which can also be interpreted as the exercise of citizenship obligations.

2. Citizenship's exclusionary tensions

The greater or lesser ability of certain groups to act as citizens and the degree to which they enjoy both formal and substantive rights as citizens depends on where they stand on a continuum of inclusion and exclusion which at the extremes represent the two sides of citizenship's coin. Whereas much of the citizenship literature has traditionally focused on its inclusionary face, more radical contemporary writings tend to portray citizenship as a force for *exclusion* which creates non or partial citizens. These can be characterised as 'those who are excluded from without' and 'those who are excluded from within' specific citizenship communities or nation states (Yeatman, 1994, p80).

Exclusion from without

The exclusionary force of nation-state bound citizenship has been thrown into relief with the growth in the number of migrants and asylum-seekers both within and outside Europe in recent decades. Although generally not reflected in the mainstream migration literature, women form a significant proportion of migrants and of asylum-seekers and for them the exclusionary force is compounded (Morokvasic, 1984, 1991, 1993; Kofman & Sales, 1992; Bhaba & Shutter, 1994; Knocke, 1995; Kofman, 1996). This force is now being strengthened as members of the EU become European citizens behind the racialised ramparts of Fortress Europe.

The status of large numbers of peoples resident in states of which they are not legally citizens raises a number of question marks over the meaning of citizenship in a world where migratory pressures are likely to intensify (Hammar, 1990; Layton Henry, 1991; Castles and Millar, 1993). The more inclusionary the response, whether it be at the level of citizenship rights or at that of acceptance of 'the other' as a fellow citizen with cultural rights, the better will citizenship match up to its universalistic claims.

Brubaker (1992) and Carens (1989) underline the symbolic importance of the stance taken by a state towards access to formal citizenship as a signifier of an inclusive or exclusive understanding of membership and national belonging. The latter thus argues forcefully that to require cultural assimilation as a precondition of citizenship is a violation of the liberal-democratic 'principles of toleration and diversity' (p38) and calls into question the equal status of existing minority groups. This, it has been suggested, points to a 'multi-cultural' model of citizenship (Castles and Millar, 1993).

The exact nature of such a model is, however, contested. In particular, it runs the risk of treating cultural groups as homogeneous, ignoring, for instance, gender, age and class differences (Yuval-Davis, 1991; Ali, 1993, Bhavnani, 1993). In his treatise on multi-cultural citizenship, Kymlicka (1995) makes a helpful distinction between minority rights which promote the interests of minority groups in relation to the majority and those which allow minority groups to impose restrictions on their own members in the name of traditional authorities and practices. Support for the former but not the latter, he argues, helps to ensure not just equality between groups but freedom and equality within groups.

There is also a danger that the multi-cultural model ends up as mere liberal toleration of diversity, confined to the 'private' sphere, rather than genuine acceptance and recognition of such diversity in the 'public' (Parekh, 1991; Galeotti, 1993) on the one hand and that it essentialises and freezes cultural differences on the other (Ali, 1993; Essed, 1995). The notion of 'trans-culturalism' which neither reduces people to cultural groups nor ignores cultural identities, has been put forward as a possible way of avoiding some of these pitfalls.^{vii}

The more developed the social rights of citizenship in any country, the stronger the likely pressure to exclude outsiders or to include them only on very restricted terms. Thus, there is an impetus to heighten the barriers around nation-states (or groups of nation-states as in the EU) at the very time when the nation-state is itself becoming less pivotal economically and politically, as it is caught in a pincer movement between the forces of globalisation (including the growing salience of ecological concerns which are no respecters of national boundaries) and regionalism. The image of a weakened nation-state under pressure from globalising and localising forces is a common refrain in the contemporary citizenship literature, although one should not exaggerate the demise

of its power, not least its power still to exercise control over membership and citizenship.

Rather than jettison the concept of citizenship in the face of the pressures on the nation-state, citizenship theorists have tended to seek a more multi-layered conception, operating on several frontiers (Heater, 1990; Parry, 1991) and to argue for the development of an analysis of citizenship at a global level (Turner, 1990; Held, 1991a, 1993; Falk, 1994). This can incorporate notions of rights and responsibilities as well as democratic accountability and political action (including through a developing global civil society, witness the participation of thousands of women from all over the world in the NGO Forum at Beijing).

There is some recognition today that a feminist theory and politics of citizenship must embrace an internationalist agenda (see, in particular, Jones, 1994). Conversely, it is crucial that the theorisation of global citizenship is informed by feminist perspectives and does not recreate the exclusionary tendencies which have typified much of the mainstream citizenship literature.

Exclusion from within

These exclusionary tendencies are inherently gendered, reflecting the fact that women's long-standing expulsion from the theory and practice of citizenship, in both its liberal and republican clothes, is far from accidental and only partially rectified by their formal incorporation in virtually all societies in the twentieth century. The ways in which citizenship's exclusionary face is experienced by individual women are mediated by other social divisions such as class, 'race', disability, sexuality and age.

The de-construction of the unitary woman

Thanks to feminist scholarship, the veil of universalism which enshrouds 'malestream' political theory has been lifted to make visible the female non-citizen who stood outside it and to reveal the male citizen lurking beneath it. This challenge to political theory's 'false universalism' (Williams, 1989, p118) has now been matched by a similar challenge to the false universalism of the category 'woman' which also helps to underline that women's exile from the community of impartial, disembodied citizens, has been paralleled in some ways by that of other groups which, of course, also include women.

The challenge to the false universalism of the category 'woman' has come from two main sources: from the theoretical advance of post-structuralism on the one hand and on the other, from Black and other groups of women whose identities and interests have been ignored, marginalised or subsumed under the category 'woman' which has, in fact, been representative of dominant groups of women in the same way that the abstract individual of traditional political theory has been representative of dominant groups of men (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990). Although the nature of these two dimensions of the challenge has been very different, their impact on feminist theory has been mutually reinforcing (Bryson, 1992; Crowley and Himmelweit, 1992; Afshar and Maynard, 1994).

They have demonstrated the need to problematise the category 'woman' in recognition of the differences between women and the ways in which these differences shape the economic, social and political relationships between women as well as between women and men and women and the state. Nevertheless, there is a danger that, if 'woman' is simply deconstructed and left in fragments, there is no woman left to be a citizen. The fact that the category 'woman' is not unitary does not render it meaningless (Maynard, 1994). Black feminists, such as hooks (1984), Lorde

(1984) and Collins (1990) have argued that, provided the differences between women are fully acknowledged, they do not preclude solidarity between them on the basis of those interests they still share as women. Central to these interests is their exclusion from full citizenship, as the patterns of entry to the gateways to the various sectors of the public sphere remain profoundly gendered. Thus, the project of engendering citizenship is not invalidated, but it has to be conceived of as part of a wider project of differentiating citizenship.

The challenge of diversity and difference for citizenship

Feminist theory's dual challenge to the false universalism of citizenship and woman has underlined the need for 'a conception of citizenship which would accommodate all social cleavages simultaneously' (Leca, 1992, p30). Whilst attempts to elaborate such a conception demonstrate the difficulties (witness the criticisms of Iris Marion Young's 'politics of difference and group assertion [1990]), it is my view that this is the direction which citizenship theory has to take, if it is to match up to its inclusionary and universalist claims.^{viii} It is not a case, therefore, of abandoning citizenship as a universalist project, for to do so is also to abandon the 'emancipatory potential' which strikes such a political resonance for many people (Vogel, 1988; Riley, 1992; Lister, 1995). Instead, our goal should be, I suggest, a universalism which stands in creative tension to diversity and difference and which challenges the divisions and exclusionary inequalities which can stem from diversity.

I call this a differentiated universalism, drawing on contemporary radical political theory which is attempting to 'particularise' the universal in the search for 'a new kind of articulation between the universal and the particular' (Mouffe, 1993 p13; Yeatman, 1993, p229; Benhabib, 1992; Gunew and Yeatman 1993) and on Judith Squires' edited collection, *Principled Positions*, which attempts to resurrect a notion of social justice by means of bridge-building 'between the supposed universalism

of modernism and the fragmented particularities left behind by post-structuralist deconstructions' (Harvey, 1993, p102).

We can apply this theoretical stance to the question of citizenship rights. At one level, these are represented as essentially abstract and universal and therefore not very amenable to a politics of difference. Nevertheless, it is possible to distinguish two, complementary, approaches to the accommodation of diversity and difference in the conceptualisation of citizenship rights.

The first is to recognise that rights can be particularised to take account of the situation of specific groups both in the 'negative' sense of counteracting past and present disadvantages which may undermine their position as citizens and in the 'positive' sense of affirming diversity, particularly with regard to cultural and linguistic rights. Examples of the former are affirmative action programmes and the kind of wide-ranging disability discrimination legislation enacted in the US. Examples of the latter are first, multi-cultural language policies, which give official recognition to the languages of significant minority ethnic groups, as in Sweden and Australia, giving substance to what has been termed the 'multi-cultural model of citizenship' (Castles and Miller, 1993; Castles, 1994), and second, the specific political, legal and collective rights enjoyed by indigenous American Indians in parallel with their rights as US citizens (Young, 1989, 1990, 1993).

Such attempts to rearticulate the relationship between the universal and the particular are, however, politically charged as can be seen in the US where the growth of the Hispanic community has led to pressures for English to be declared the official language (Young, 1990; Castles and Miller, 1993) and where there is a growing backlash against affirmative action programmes for women and people of colour. There have been similar, if more muted, reactions in the UK to attempts to promote the interests of women and minority groups through special provisions

(Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992; Pollak, 1993; Wilkinson, 1994), which are all too often dismissed as 'political correctness', now used as a blanket derogatory term. Moreover, in countries, such as France, which subscribe to an ideology of individual assimilation (albeit not realised in practice) rather than minority ethnic group recognition, there is considerable resistance to any specific rights which, it is argued, could serve further to stigmatise difference (Silverman, 1992).

The second approach, advocated by David Taylor (1989, p27) is to anchor citizenship rights in a notion of need on the basis 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 what Fraser (1987) calls 'the politics of needs interpretation'.^{ix}

However, Taylor's distinction between needs as differentiated and rights as abstract and universal is, I think, 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 (1984, 1991), upon which Taylor draws is, as he himself notes, rooted in a universalistic understanding of basic human needs which are then subject to different cultural and historical interpretations (Hewitt, 1994). Doyal and Gough (1991, p74) do, nevertheless, accept that oppressed groups will have additional needs so that 'there is a place in any politics of need for a politics of difference'. Similarly, from a feminist perspective, Eisenstein (1991, p122) contends that 'a radicalised feminist rights discourse recognizes particularity and individuality of need even as it calls upon the similarity (rather than identity) of women'.

What this discussion suggests is that both needs and rights need to 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'.

Realigning the public and private

The first step in this politics, as outlined by Nancy Fraser (1987, pp117-8) is the legitimisation of 'women's needs as genuine political issues as opposed to "private" domestic or market matters'. The feminist struggles which this has entailed have involved the deconstruction of the 'patriarchal separation' (Pateman, 1989, p183) between the 'public' and the domestic 'private' which underpins the very (gendered) meaning of citizenship as traditionally understood. The public and private define each other and take meaning from each other. We cannot, for instance, understand the gendered patterns of entry to citizenship in the public sphere without taking into account the sexual division of labour within the private. Similarly, women's treatment under immigration and asylum laws is governed by the public-private divide (Phizacklea, 1995).

The struggle to control the meaning and positioning of the divide is central to the project of engendering citizenship, an insight which still tends to be ignored or discounted by male citizenship theorists, despite the fact that the link was made between women's exclusion from citizenship and their position in the private sphere by Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill back in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Conclusion

The starting point of this paper has been the attempt to synthesise through the notion of human agency the two different historical traditions of citizenship in which citizenship is constructed both as a status and a practice. This provides a framework for thinking about women's citizenship which both recognises the structural constraints which still diminish and undermine that citizenship whilst not reducing women to passive victims.

In examining the exclusionary tensions which serve to perpetuate women's exile as a group from full citizenship, emphasis has been placed on the need to locate a gendered analysis within the wider framework of difference and the divisions and exclusionary inequalities which flow from it. This points to a conception of citizenship grounded in a notion of differentiated universalism which represents an attempt to reconcile the universalism which lies at the heart of citizenship with the demands of a politics of difference. Together with the reconstruction of the public-private dichotomy, these ideas are offered as possible building blocks in the elaboration of a feminist theory of citizenship.

Birte Siim: December 1996

Comment to Ruth Listers paper:

It is a pleasure to comment on Ruth Listers paper, because we are both engaged in the theoretical and analytical project “Engendering Citizenship” but we come to this project from different traditions and from different national political cultural contexts. We have discussed our different projects a couple of times this year already in Loughborough and in Wassenaar. I have looked at my notes from Loughborough in May, and from Wassenaar in July, and when I look at them I feel that I learnt a lot from our exchange. I just hope that today we can develop the dialogue further and that I will not only repeat myself this time.

Fundamentally, I agree with Ruth Lister’s theoretical and analytical project of synthesizing different approaches to citizenship: e.g. the social rights, the needs and the political participation approach from sociology and political science and to engender the concept of citizenship agree with the ambition to develop a rounded notion of citizenship that draw on a modernized and progressive interpretation of both liberalism and civic republicanism. I also agree that a dynamic notion of citizenship that focuses on human agency as the core of this approach.

FIRST COMMENT:

My first comment is about the notion of *human agency*. Ruth Lister draws on one aspect of human agency: personal development and personal autonomy which is very important but it seems to me that there are other aspects of agency that can be important: the collective aspect/dimension of social and political agency. Political science has focused on the potential of political action and political agency and of political community and while this is only one dimension of agency, it seems to me that it is important to confront the individual/personal

aspects of agency with the collective aspect. We need to conceptualize the interaction between social and political agency. One tradition talks about *empowering* social groups. I think the empowerment approach to agency is important and the other approach to agency talk about *political power*. The first approach is a 'politics of difference' that focuses on empowering social and political agency 'from below' (Iris Young), the other is a 'politics of presence' of oppressed groups (Anne Philips) - and the need for a transformation of politics (Cantal Mouffe) seems to be a third approach to engendering citizenship. To conclude, I find that if we want to talk about human agency and a dynamic notion of citizenship, we need to confront individual and collective dimensions of agency - and to focus on the interaction between social and political agency, between empowering 'from below' and 'from above' through political presence in decision-making fora. We also need to confront the need for organization and representation of oppressed groups with the need to transform group identities and to create new solidarities. These are difficult and controversial questions that we do not necessarily have agreed upon solutions to, among feminists.

One example is the discussion whether women' as women' have substantial/common interests in relation to caring - or just interests in being present to put the question of caring on the political agenda. Women may have different roles and priorities in relation to care, as mothers daughters care givers and care-takers. May be we can create an alliance historically but we cannot presume that a common interest in caring solutions exists beforehand. The point here is that interests and political priorities and projects do not exist beforehand but need to be created through political praxis- communities. Different interests for example between social workers and clients on social assistance. there may be alliances - in the Danish welfare state- but they have to be created and sustained. There may be a need to give priority between the needs of the elderly and of children.

There is a need to incorporate the notion of *caring* in citizenship but its a debate how we do it.

SECOND COMMENT:

About exclusionary tendencies- 'from without' and 'from within'. This is a very important renewal of citizenship. To incorporate the notion of *difference* in the category of citizenship May be we need to discuss the limits of the concept of citizenship, for example in relation to human rights like Turner. I am not convinced about the argument: the more developed the social rights of citizenship in any country the stronger the likely pressure to exclude outsiders. Is this a thesis or a historical fact? It seems to me it would be better to talk about 'models of citizenship': Turner has two dimensions: a) the public/private division in political culture b) active /passive notion of citizenship. I think that his framework could be developed from a feminist perspective. Wahlby/Nira Yuval-Davis argue that 'private' means two different things in the liberal and republican discourse: either the positive notion of the family/non-intervention of the state - or the negative notion of the private/family and the positive notion of the public, political. From a feminist perspective, private can be both oppressive family ties and emancipatory- autonomy to decide over their own lives/lifestyles. There is a need for a more global notion of citizenship and for women to embrace the international agenda. Is this only a question of citizenship rights-needs- participation - or about access to political power. Is access to political power one aspect of citizenship? The question of political power is may be one aspect of citizenship - but it is also more than citizenship it needs to be embraced from a perspective of political power.

Another question is to what extent we can compare all oppressed groups as excluded and in the same way? What is special about women's exclusion/inclusion? From the Scandinavian perspective, I have argued

that it is important to analyze the *inclusionary* tendencies of citizenship in relation to women. What difference does women's presence in the public, political sphere make for the way we do politics and for the content of the political?

3. COMMENT:

The relation between engendering and degendering citizenship. What do we want and how do we reach the ideal that we want? How to strengthen women's group interests and to empower women and at the same time to develop solidarity with other oppressed groups? The question of overlapping solidarities and identities. The question: How to recognize care without locking women into caring role which would exclude them from power and influence. We can may be agree about the goals: recognition of differences - but how to reach the goal- and to what extent do women agree about what differences are important? Can we expect to find a solution that all women agree about. There are many controversial issues:

- 1) cash payments to carers for small children - controversial in Denmark not in the Netherlands
- 2) rights to receive public care - controversial in Britain
- 3) obligation to work for mothers
- 4) citizen income as payment for care?
- 5) citizen obligation to care in the family or in the community like a military service for all women and men? (Diemut Bubecher) controversial for men and women . Should it be voluntary to care- and if so will only women do it. Or should it be a citizen obligation to care for children? There seems to be no solution to this dilemma that all women agree about across Europe - or across generation.

It is a normative political question: What do women want? How much

work and how much care?

It is also a political question what society decides/accepts how much choice women have between wage work and caring work - and whether we allow women a choice - and not men? This is a question of solidarity.

Will other women accept to work for women who care- and will men??? Should caring for children be an obligation for both women and men? We see that care cannot be isolated from wage work. A discourse about citizenship is also about wage work. What kind of rights and what kind of duties women and men have in society. This is very much a political cultural question - and a generational question.

TO CONCLUDE:

I find that the question of empowerment - from below and of how to combine empowerment from below in peoples daily lives with political presence and political power are central questions for engendering citizenship. A controversial and difficult question- of how to combine the two feminist strategies.

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- ii Raymond Plant (1988, 1989, 1990, 1992) has provided a detailed critique of and counter-argument to the new right's position on social rights.
- iii The issue of autonomy and economic independence in the context of notions of interdependence is key to the construction of women's citizenship, but for reasons of space is not pursued here; see Lister (1990, 1994, 1995).
- iv The policy trend in both the US and Europe is to include lone parents in the obligation to undertake paid work. The clearest example in Europe is the Netherlands where the presumption that lone mothers are exempt from the obligation to undertake paid work is progressively being abandoned (Bussemaker, 1991; Kremer, 1994; Bussemaker et al, 1995. In contrast, the UK is one of very few countries which still permit lone parents to claim social assistance until their youngest child is of school-leaving age without being required to register for paid work. This has, though, been challenged recently by the Labour-appointed independent Commission on Social Justice on the grounds that it is not in women's long term interests to

remain out of the labour market for such a long period and that therefore once their youngest child has reached school-age (or possibly older) they should, subject to certain safeguards including the availability of adequate child care facilities, be required to register for part-time work.

- v My conceptualisation of human agency is influenced by the work of Carol Gould (1988) 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' (p47). In developing her self, the individual is also acting upon, and thereby potentially changing the world, a world which at the same time structures the choices available (see also Twine, 1994). Moreover, individuals are understood to be 'social from the start, both in the fact that social relations are an essential mode of their individual self-development and that they characteristically engage in common activities, oriented to common and not merely individual ends' (Gould, 1988, p71).
- vi Kymlicka and Norman (1994, p353) make a similar point in their survey of recent work on citizenship theory, arguing that 'we should expect a theory of the good citizen to be relatively independent of the legal question of what it is to be a citizen, just as a theory of the good person is distinct from the metaphysical (or legal) question of what it is to be a person'.
- vii 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.
- viii See, for instance, the criticisms of Iris Marion Young's 'politics of difference and group assertion' (1990) which attempts to incorporate difference into the theory and politics of political citizenship which I do not pursue here (see, e.g., Mouffe, 1992; Phillips, 1993; Wilson, 1993; Lister, 1995).
- ix The disability rights movement provides a good example of a political challenge to orthodox needs interpretations. It has also underlined the dangers of disconnecting a needs from a rights discourse; in the UK, disability rights activists have argued that a shift of emphasis from the rights to the needs of disabled people has opened the way for the professional domination of welfare provision and 'a retreat from active to passive citizenship' (Oliver and Barnes, 1991, p8).

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