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Abstract

Leadership is a term that women strive to claim as their own. Whether in the halls of Congress, the corporate boardroom, or the privacy of the home, women's leadership challenges traditional notions of the concept. Throughout the ages images of leadership feature men in uniform and men in positions of power, whether it be military, government, or market. The traditional view of leaders is imbued with male images of "heroes," who issue orders, lead the troops—save the day. But leadership has another face. It is the face of Abigail Adams admonishing her husband to "Remember the Ladies" in the formation of this new American nation (McGlen, O'Connor, van Assendelft, & Gunther-Canada, 2002, p. 1). It is the face of Susan B. Anthony in 1872 standing trial for illegally voting. It is the face of scores of women in today's world who have shattered glass ceilings in corporate America and hold important legislative and administrative posts in state and federal government. Yet there is more to the concept of "women's leadership" than substituting one face for another. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

women's leadership, Abigail Adams, Susan B. Anthony, gender bias, gender equality, third-wave feminism

Disciplines

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Leadership is a term that women strive to claim as their own. Whether in the halls of Congress, the corporate boardroom, or the privacy of the home, women's leadership challenges traditional notions of the concept. Throughout the ages images of leadership feature men in uniform and men in positions of power, whether it be military, government, or market. The traditional view of leaders is imbued with male images of "heroes," who issue orders, lead the troops—save the day. But leadership has another face. It is the face of Abigail Adams admonishing her husband to "Remember the Ladies" in the formation of this new American nation (McGlen, O'Connor, van Assendelft, & Gunther-Canada, 2002, p. 1). It is the face of Susan B. Anthony in 1872 standing trial for illegally voting. It is the face of scores of women in today's world who have shattered glass ceilings in corporate America and hold important legislative and administrative posts in state and federal government. Yet there is more to the concept of "women's leadership" than substituting one face for another.

Leadership can be viewed as a gendered concept. That is to say that there is something about being female or socialized to "female values" that can be identified in women's organizational behavior. Research in political science, psychology, sociology, and Women's Studies supports this claim (Swers, 2002). Studies show that women, more so than men, as leaders, encourage nonconfrontational styles of decision making. Women, more than men, utilize network building to work toward consensus in support of new organization initiatives, new legislation, policy, or laws, as the case may be. In addition, women are more inclined to lead from "where they are," to "create change in their own lives and in their own communities"

(Dicker & Piepmeier, 2003, p. 163). Women are less inclined to need an official title or location on the organization chart to initiate change. Women are more inclined to challenge hierarchy, or classic, top-down organization structure (Iannello, 1992).

Women's collaborative nature has long been a factor in gaining equal rights for women in the United States. As far back as the Revolutionary War, women collaborated in organizing boycotts of tea and other British goods (Elshtain & Tobias, 1990, pp. 94–95). This early collaboration gave women their first opportunity to make claims for citizenship—the early seeds of first-wave feminism and the fight for the right to vote (Klosko & Klosko, 1999). The Women's Strike for Peace (WSP) in the early 1960s, the beginning of a second wave of feminism, was an example of women's collaboration in forming a spontaneous "un-organization," as they liked to say, focused on reducing the threat of nuclear war. WSP also unintentionally used the strength of "female culture" to disarm the infamous House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and the communist witch hunt conducted by Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-WI; Swerdlow, 1990). Numerous examples of women's collaborative leadership exist throughout the second wave of American feminism.

By contrast, a "third wave" of feminism, emerging in the 1990s and extending to the present day, is raising new questions about women's leadership in the 21st century. While collaborative leadership is still valued, third-wave feminists see new possibilities for individual initiative, rejecting group identity, in some cases rejecting the label "feminist," as they seek power in their professional and personal lives as well. To understand this contrast in the

form and function of women's leadership, it is important to gain a broader understanding of feminism in waves. Of particular interest is the way in which collaborative leadership emerged in the second wave of feminism that produced consensual and modified consensual organization structure. These organizations contributed in many ways to cultural and political changes advancing the collective rights of women in the United States. The question is, in the third wave, how has this paradigm shifted?

Feminism in Waves

The metaphor of "waves" is often used to describe and explain the history of feminism in the United States (Evans, 2003). The first wave of feminism in the United States is usually marked by the women's rights convention held in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York. This included the writing of *The Declaration of Sentiments* by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, as well as others, whose goal was establishing legal identity for women separate from their fathers and husbands. This wave crested with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, finally winning the right to vote for women in the United States (Klosko & Klosko, 1999, p. 11).

The second wave of feminism began with the consciousness-raising groups of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) helped define "the problem with no name" that many middle-class American housewives were experiencing. This problem went to the core of women's self-worth and lack of identity in the public world of paid labor and their definition of self primarily as wife and mother in the private realm of family. The second wave of feminism sought equal rights for women in the public sphere "kicking open" the doors to many previously all-male professions (Evans, 2003). While feminists in the 1970s and early 1980s achieved some rights with regard to abortion and equal access to education and jobs, they fell short of the chief legislative goal: an equal rights amendment (ERA) to the Constitution.

A third wave of feminism is thought to have begun in the 1990s and continues to the present day. This wave has the potential to empower women by helping them shatter the "glass ceiling" in politics, business, and other fields to which women have limited access, whether it be the presidency of the United States or chief executive officer of major corporations. From first to third wave, women have made—and continue to make—legal, economic, and political progress.

Feminism in the Third Wave

Third-wave feminism is thought to have begun in the early 1990s as a partial reaction to issues raised in the Hill/Thomas Senate hearings on sexual harassment as well as claims of "post-feminism" and *Time Magazine*'s 1998 cover story asking the question, "Is Feminism Dead?" Out of sexism in the Hill/Thomas hearings and reaction to 12 years of Reagan-Bush conservative policies, the Third Wave Foundation was formed, aimed at recruiting and supporting feminists between the ages of 15 and 30. Additionally a new culture of music and journalism appeared with the creation of punk groups such as Riot Grrrls and "zines" (magazines) such as *Bust, Bitch,* and others (Dicker & Piepmeier, 2003).

Third-wave feminism's roots are clearly embedded in popular culture. Even though in *Manifesta,* Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards (2000) outline a 13-point agenda for action that includes safeguarding women's reproductive rights, increasing the power and visibility of lesbian and bisexual women, and guaranteeing equal access to health care, generally, third-wave feminism is not thought of as an activist movement. This is because there doesn't seem to be a collective identity. In fact, third-wave feminists reject the notion of collective identity and refuse to be categorized because they *embrace* disunity (Gilmore, 2001, p. 218).

Much of social movement theory argues that collective identity is crucial to social movement formation and ultimately the ability to challenge existing structures of power. Feminist social movements in the past have been said to engage in struggles on two levels: over meanings and over the distribution of resources for society. For example, in the first wave of feminism women's nature had to be viewed in a new way before women were seen as worthy of a political resource: the right to vote. Thus cultural change led to political change. In the second wave of feminism a collective consciousness enabled women to see themselves differently than just wives and mothers. This made it possible for women to exercise leadership in challenging existing gender relations and eventually gain power in the public sphere. If this is the model for leadership and change, the question is: What does feminism in the third wave contribute to a collective consciousness?

If third-wave feminism could be seen as having one ideological perspective, it would be born out of a tension with the second wave. As one author states, "We want to be linked with our foremothers and centuries of women's movements, but we also want to make a space for young women to create their own, different brand of revolt, and so we chose the name Third Wave" (Walker, 2004, p. xvii). Third-wave feminists criticize the second wave for its lack of diversity, as the second wave is commonly known for being led mostly by white affluent women. Third-wave feminism is multicultural in nature and sexually diverse as well, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual perspectives. Third-wave feminism recognizes the "interlocking nature of identity—that gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality and class never function in isolation but always work as interconnected categories of oppression and privileged" (Henry, 2004, p. 32).

One could look at a third-wave feminist reader like Rory Dicker and Alison Piepmeier's book *Catching a*

Wave to get a sense of the wide range of topics included in the third-wave discussion. The chapters cover issues related to the news and entertainment media's treatment of feminism, childhood development and feminism, concepts of feminist leadership on college campuses today as well as broader leadership for the movement, and feminism applied to particular groups. The groups include American Jewish women and the third wave, Arab American feminism, hip-hop feminism, and a discussion of transsexual feminism. Additionally, chapters explore subjects such as pornography, highlighting differences in perspective between second- and third-wave feminists.

Second-wave feminism revealed the oppression of women in the entertainment media in terms of obsession with the portrayal of women as sex objects. This is described in the literature as "victim feminism" and obviously extended to opposition to pornography, which was seen as promoting violence toward women. Some feminists, such as Catharine MacKinnon, worked toward laws aimed at banning pornography (Evans, 2003). Third-wave feminists reject victim feminism and endorse "power feminism," which is based on a sense of individualism. Thus, for example, not all third-wave feminists are against pornography as long as women involved in it claim empowerment via economic (or other) resources. Some theorists observe that the third wave is "a movement that contains elements of second wave critique of beauty culture, sexual abuse, and power structures while it also acknowledges and makes use of the pleasure, danger, and defining power of those structures" (Heywood & Drake , 1997, pp. 2–3).

Emerging Leadership

Leadership in the second wave of feminism, based largely on consensual style, clearly emerged in the public sphere of politics, achieving goals of new legislation that enabled women equal access to resources in many policy arenas, including education, work, and some aspects of family life. Second-wave feminism was a movement, based on a collective consciousness. Third-wave feminism appears in a different form. Leadership in the third wave is individually defined. The goals of leadership in the third wave are not collective and are not focused as much on policy change at the national level. They may be locally focused, they may be an outcome of personal direction, or they may be both. For the purposes of comparison, organization and leadership in the second and third waves of feminism will be addressed next.

Second-Wave Organization and Structure

Concepts of leadership in the second wave of feminism are inextricably tied to feminist organization structure that emerged in the 1960s, continuing into the 1970s and 1980s in some cases. First-wave organizations such as the National Woman Suffrage Association, formed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, disbanded after women secured the right to vote in 1920. So much energy had gone into the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment on August 26, 1920, that the women's movement virtually collapsed from exhaustion. With the exception of a few organizations such as the National Woman's Party (NWP), founded by Alice Paul in 1916 (formerly the Congressional Union for Women Suffrage), and the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW) and "good government" groups such as the League of Women Voters, the women's movement became dormant until the 1960s (Klosko & Klosko, 1999, pp. 277–278).

The 1960s saw the birth of new women's organizations and marked the beginning of what we now term the *second wave* of feminism. In 1961 President Kennedy created a national Commission on the Status of Women that led to the formation of a citizen's advisory council and women's commissions in all 50 states. These commissions clearly documented the second-class status of women in the United States, yet the government did little to bring about change. This lack of action mobilized many who had been involved with the commissions to join with Friedan in founding the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. Thus began one branch of the feminist movement, later to be joined by organizations such as the National Women's Political Caucus and the Women's Equity Action League, as well as the organizations such as the BPW that had existed since the 1920s. The structure of all these organizations was top-down hierarchical, with elected officers, boards of directors, by-laws, and other procedural rules. Leadership was defined "traditionally," that is, by position (Evans, 2003, pp. 18–53).

As second-wave feminism moved forward, hierarchy itself became an issue. This, in turn, affected the second-wave view of leadership. The primary goal of feminists in the second wave was to reduce patriarchy, defined as male domination by birthright, wherever that was possible. They believed that patriarchy was perpetuated through hierarchical organization; thus eliminating hierarchy was essential to eliminating patriarchy. In the literature of organization theory, hierarchy is defined as "any system in which the distributions of power, privilege and authority are both systematic and unequal" (Iannello, 1992, p. 15). In this context power is defined as domination. Privilege implies a right, immunity, or benefit enjoyed by a person or restricted group of people. Authority is defined as "legitimate" power, in which those subject to domination by others willingly accept this arrangement (Iannello, 1992, p. 15).

By the late 1960s the feminist movement had organized small groups called "consciousness-raising" or "rap" groups. Much of this organization was in reaction to Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique*. There Friedan wrote of a "problem with no name," which characterized the plight of the 1950s suburban housewife who longed for a life-affirming value that only men had access to through their

professional careers. Woman joined small groups to discuss Friedan's book and identify larger issues of sex discrimination in U.S. society. The groups became committed to nonhierarchy and began experimenting with organization structure. They were not interested in formal leadership and organization as it had developed in the larger groups of the movement.

Every organization faces the question of leadership. This is particularly true with regard to the development of more equalitarian structures. Organizations attempting to avoid hierarchical structure face a dilemma. They may wish to allow leadership to develop naturally out of the skills and interests of its members, but there is risk that some members may gain unaccountable power in the organization. Thus Jo Freeman (1974) coined the phrase, "the tyranny of structurelessness" (p. 202). This means that if there is no organization process that places women in leadership positions, there is also no process to remove them should they assume a leadership position due to media attention or external circumstances. In response to the extremes of hierarchy and nonstructure (meaning no process at all), feminists in the second wave began experimenting with consensual forms of organization. Consensual organizations are defined as groups in which control or power rests primarily with members. They operate through consensual process, which means that issues are discussed, then summarized, and if no objections are voiced, they become policy. Voting does not occur and is viewed as less efficient than consensus. Voting generates winners and losers. Those who lose may reorganize and present the same or similar issue again. The organization remains divided (Freeman, 1974).

Consensual organization is *structured;* it is the outgrowth of a participatory, egalitarian culture that is willing to invest quality time in the decision-making process. In consensual organization, procedure is as important as outcome. When outcomes are achieved, it is because all members are invested in them and support them. Members of consensual organizations support the notion that efficiency is gained in the long run. Although voting provides short-term efficiency, issues tend not to be resolved. As feminist consensual organizations evolved, it became apparent that not all types of decisions faced by organizations warranted the attention of the entire membership. This thinking gave birth to a "modified" consensual structure. Distinctions are made among types of policy decisions: critical and routine (Iannello, 1992, p. 94).

Critical decisions are those that have the potential for altering the path of the organization or defining its central mission. These decisions are made by the entire membership. Routine decisions are those that sustain the organization on more of a daily basis and are not likely to alter the path of the enterprise. Routine decision making in modified consensual structure is delegated outward, not downward, to coordinators who have expertise in a particular area. These decisions sustain the organization but do not alter its path. A diagram of this organization would portray routine decision making as lines of communication inside a circle, with critical decision making remaining on the outer circle representing the entire membership (Iannello, 1992, p. 96).

The contributions of consensual and modified consensual organization in the second wave of feminism were important in challenging conventional hierarchical organization structure and the patriarchy perpetuated by those structures. The existence of these organizations in the form of health clinics, peace groups, and Women's Studies programs on college campuses, to name a few, provided models of leadership, organization, and communication that began to affect the larger bureaucratic structures of business, education, and government. Although it was obviously not possible for these large bureaucratic structures to completely adopt consensual practices, some of the values supporting consensus were incorporated at various levels of these bureaucracies. And although second-wave feminist organizations were not the only organizations in the world to provide an alternative example to hierarchy, at the very least they sparked enough interest in alternative models to give birth to new concepts of leadership and organization in traditional settings (Senge, 1990).

Third-Wave Initiatives

Third-wave feminists seek the individual opportunity to explore, experiment, and focus on their own personal and career development. Further, the concept of individual *leadership* is quite opposite the notion of leadership through a collaborative process utilized in the consensual organizations that served the second wave of feminism so well. Consensual organization, in rejecting individual leadership, required accommodation and sought individual power through "oneness" with the group. Feminist leadership in the third wave can be collaborative, or not, but is more frequently individually focused. Third-wave leadership is mindful of hierarchical boundaries but not bound by hierarchical minds—nor is it restrained by consensual process. Third-wave feminism presents the *opportunity* for leadership, the ability to reestablish "self" as the subject (Drake, 1997, p. 97). In this way third-wave feminist leadership serves to challenge the established paradigm of consensual structure in the second wave.

Goals of Third-Wave Leadership

In the public sphere third-wave feminists have the opportunity to shatter the glass ceiling. Due to the successes of second-wave feminism, many more women have reached higher levels in corporations, law firms, and government. Now that the link between hierarchy and patriarchy is not as strong as it once was, young women have a new platform from which to launch their own careers. One way to think of it is that they have a running start in reaching the top and much more legitimacy in making the attempt. As Baumgardner and Richards (2000)

state, these young women grew up with feminism "in the water" (p. 17).

So far, one of the great contributions of third-wave feminism is its challenge that each young woman define feminism to include herself (Drake, 1997). This challenge may hasten young women's ability to discover their "centered self" (Pipher, 1994, pp. 1–15). Thus the feminist struggle in the third wave becomes a personal one. In the private sphere of home and family, third-wave feminists have their work cut out for them. Second-wave feminism brought attention to the significant differences in the way men and women have been socialized to think and act with regard to home and family. Surprisingly even women who thought themselves more "liberated" came to realize that they too were invested in the powerful social norms underlying the belief that men should be the "breadwinners" (Potuchek, 1997).

Summary and Future Directions

So what can be said about leadership in the third wave of feminism? Broadly it may be defined as a break with the paradigm of the second wave, retaining the ethos of consensual process as one possibility for leadership while exploring a wider range of individual initiatives. The wider range includes exercising leadership in the private sphere of the family, which some refer to as "the final frontier" of women's quest for equality.

Third-Wave Feminism and Motherhood

While much of the third-wave feminist focus is located in the social culture of women between the ages of 15 and 30, more attention needs to be given to a slightly older group of women who came of age during the Reagan era and are now mired in the issues of motherhood. This group, aged 30 to 50, is often ignored in the discussion of third-wave feminism, especially in the generational mother-daughter discourse between second- and third-wave feminists (Henry, 2004).

Judith Warner's (2005) book, *Perfect Madness: Motherhood in the Age of Anxiety,* argues that women in this age group were especially socialized to the notion of individual responsibility that was characteristic of the social and economic conservatism of the Reagan years. Believing that they had real "choices" regarding career and family, many of these women pursued careers first and then tried to accommodate those careers to family.

This accommodation took many forms. Some women worked in careers that offered flexible hours or allowed them to work at home. Others found themselves being sidelined from career advancement by employers who demanded more of them even though they had families. And some women "chose" to quit their jobs in favor of staying at home with their children. In all of this very few women were truly happy with their choice, and nearly all of the women took full responsibility for this unhappiness.

If each mother's life was not working out as planned, this circumstance was due to her individual "choices." If her children, house, and family life were not perfect, it was her fault, because she was "responsible." Further, these women were utilizing their career skills in attempts to "perfect" their home lives, bringing CEO-like skills to sports schedules, music and dance lessons, birthday parties, and other child-related activities. As Warner (2005) explains, "rather than becoming rebels or pioneers, we became a generation of control freaks" (p. 47). Warner refers to this as "the mess," which in some ways is the modern version of second-wave feminism's "problem with no name," the phrase coined by Friedan in 1963.

As a starting point for addressing this "mess," Warner (2005) calls for a "politics of quality of life" (p. 268). By comparing her experiences of first becoming a mother in France with those of mothers in the United States, Warner is easily able to see the part that culture plays in defining the role of mothers and the locus of responsibility with regard to family. In brief, according to Warner, French culture views mothers as citizens who deserve a full and rewarding "adult" life of their own. There is a clearer separation of adult "space" and child "space" as it applies to the structure of the French home both physically (no child-centered "family room") and mentally (time for adult conversation).

French culture views the raising of children as a community responsibility, and thus the French are willing to spend government money for quality day care and paid parental leaves, as many other European countries do. As Siim (2000) explains in her book, *Gender and Citizenship,*

> French political and intellectual history transcends the liberal language of abstract individualism by placing the individual as part of the national political community. And historians and political scientists have recently suggested that there is a specific French conception of citizenship . . . with implications for women's citizenship. (p. 46)

As Siim (2000) further explains about the French example, "Parental policies were built on a double assumption that women are both workers and mothers—and that subsequently public policies ought to support women in their dual role" (p. 20). Warner calls for American policy making that would begin to relieve the individual burden that American mothers bear. She states that "one of the most surprising things about our current culture of motherhood is that while it inspires widespread complaint, it has not led to any kind of organized change" (p. 53).

Warner is far from alone in her analysis. Many other books and articles have been written that underscore her arguments. Taylor, Layne, and Wozniak (2004) have written a book titled *Consuming Motherhood*, which looks at the effects of motherhood under modern capitalism. Arlie Hochschild's (1997) book *The Time Bind*, which has the subtitle *When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work*, points to a work/family crisis. In *The Impossibility of Motherhood,* Patrice DiQuinzio (1999) highlights the "paradoxical politics of mothering" (p. 28).

Ulla Björnberg and Anna-Karin Kollind (2005), in their work, *Individualism and Families,* discuss "time politics," meaning shorter work hours and extended leaves, as a means for reaching gender equality by "dissolving the hierarchical dualism of work and private life" (p. 14). These books are just a sampling of the literature that now exists, articulating the very real hardships facing mothers in U.S. society. Most of these books conclude with a call for government intervention and assistance, yet, to date, in the United States, their analyses have fallen on deaf ears or have been ignored entirely by legislators. Thus the "dualism" of work and private life in the United States remains an "individual" matter.

Mothers in U.S. society are consumed with the daunting task of balancing the public and private, the responsibilities of career and home. From the concerns of this group come the most pressing, if not dire, questions of our time: Who will take care of the family? Without time to step back and reflect on the problem, mothers are trapped in a never-ending circle of personal responsibility for making "choices" that don't actually exist. They attempt to "perfect" a lifestyle in which perfection is not possible. At the same time, a false sense of equality is being experienced by a younger group of women as they pursue a path of individualism. If nothing changes, their sense of equality will be challenged as they enter the stressful world of family life in the next decade.

Out of this nexus comes the declaration that "feminism has failed." Linda Hirshman's research, first presented in *The American Prospect* (2005) and most recently published in her book *Get to Work: A Manifesto for Women of the World* (2006), notes that "half the wealthiest, most-privileged best educated females in the country stay home with their babies rather than work in the market economy" (2005, p. 1). For example, she provides data that show that in the year 2000, only 38% of female Harvard graduates with a master's degree in business administration (MBA) were working full-time. Hirshman (2005) correctly identifies the problem of the lack of change in the private lives of women (p. 3). She argues, "While the public world has changed, albeit imperfectly . . . private lives have hardly budged. The real glass ceiling is at home" (p. 1).

Hirshman also points to the flaws in so-called choice feminism. Women are faced with the "moral" dilemma of whether to work or stay at home with their children and that these "choices" are incredibly constrained. This is the frame that pits working moms against stay-at-home moms, thus creating a war between women rather than a war against patriarchy. Additionally, she points out that press coverage of the "choice" dilemma does nothing to advance the cause of women. Hirshman (2005) argues that women need real solutions, not feminist theories. She finds these solutions in the world of work. She offers three rules to young women: "prepare yourself to qualify for good work, treat work seriously, and don't put yourself in a position of unequal resources when you marry" (p. 6).

On this last point she recommends that women either find a spouse with less social power (i.e., marry down,

marry someone much younger or much older) or find a spouse with an ideological commitment to gender equality (much harder to do in reality). The goal is to avoid taking on more than your fair share of the "second shift," but this is difficult to accomplish. Hirshman (2005) cites a survey by the Center for Work-Life Policy indicating that 40% of highly qualified women with spouses felt that their husbands create more work around the house than they perform (p. 8). Further, according to another team of researchers, "when couples marry, the amount of time that a woman spends doing housework increases by approximately 17 percent, while a man's decreased by 33 percent" (p. 8).

Women's choice in opting out of the world of work could be viewed as a rational alternative to the "perfect madness" that Warner describes in her book. Viewed this way, "opting out" is not a failure of feminism but instead the only real solution to current economic and political circumstances. Additionally, Hirshman's solutions or "rules" reinforce individualism: Women should solve this problem personally by strategically selecting a partner and maintaining a high level of ambition for work. At a time when there are no other alternatives, this may be good advice—or the only advice. But what about the long term?

Hirshman (2005) states that "the family is to 2005 what the workplace was to 1964 and the vote was to 1920" (p. 6). This should be viewed as a political challenge, calling for a redistribution of resources. To achieve political change, like their sisters before them, third-wave feminists must work toward a redefinition of terms. This time, it is not a redefinition of women's nature, as it was in the first wave of feminism. Although there are still questions about "the ethic of care" and women's "natural inclination" or "suitability" toward children and home, feminism in the second wave worked to provide more equitable answers (Evans, 2003). The challenge for feminist leadership in the third wave is to redefine women's *responsibility* toward the private sphere of children and home.

Third-Wave Leadership and Conservative Feminism

Feminism as it has been discussed so far has been defined through a liberal ideological lens. Modern liberal ideologists in the United States generally express the view that the federal or national government has a responsibility to establish legislation and therefore programs to help people in need, to enhance equality from a nationwide perspective, and to protect citizens from the ill effects of a capitalist economic, or market, system. The New Deal programs of the 1930s still serve as an example of modern liberal thought. With regard to U.S. feminism, liberal feminists have sought to help women become an integral part of the governing process by electing them at every level: local, state, and federal (Tong, 1998, p. 23). This enables women, through political leadership, as legislators, executives, and bureaucrats, to enact and implement laws that are favorable to women.

Not only are third-wave feminists rejecting the paradigm of the second wave, they may also be rejecting the ideology of modern liberalism. There is an obvious modern liberal underpinning to second-wave feminism in U.S. politics. In its quest for the collective, for expansion of women's rights through an equal rights amendment and endorsement of pro-choice policy with regard to reproductive freedom, second-wave feminists embody a modern liberal political stand. That is to say that the basic tenants of modern liberalism are grounded in a view that the federal government has a responsibility to create and administer legislation and laws that promote equality and advance the cause of minorities. The standpoint is from that of the collective, the broadest community. Conservatism tends to reject the collective view and initiatives that are group based from the federal level. Conservatism favors a more localized, individualized approach.

Conservative feminists, like third-wave feminists, reject what they see as a group-bound sameness, promoted by second-wave feminists. Conservatives argue that liberal feminists make "monolithic" prescriptions or establish qualifications for calling oneself a feminist. Further, they argue that individuals have the right to practice "private feminism" (over "public feminism"), which is expressed through personal and individual choices made in the private sphere of home and family (Koertge & Patai, 1994, p. 3). Liberal feminists argue that traditional identities have been forced upon women in the private sphere of home and family; thus the public sphere is the only avenue for changing these perceptions.

There is much debate among feminists and others as to whether "conservative" feminism actually exists. There are, however, conservative women who claim feminism as part of their agenda. Academics such as Christina Hoff Sommers, author of *Who Stole Feminism?* (1994), have argued that conservative feminism has a place in the third wave. The existence of organizations such as Independent Women's Forum and ifeminist.com confirm this (Schreiber, 2008, p. 7). Sommers (1994) argues that conservative feminism can be viewed as "equity" feminism, a feminism grounded in free market principles that favor equality of opportunity over equality of outcome. The concept of equity feminism has taken hold among many younger conservative women who feel alienated from feminist-based programs and organizations, such as women's centers, on their college campuses. Attempts at including conservative perspectives in women's center programs have met with controversy on some campuses. Often, at the heart of the controversy, is the issue of whether an individual or organization can claim to be feminist while at the same time including a pro-life position on abortion. Feminist Elizabeth Fox-Genovese (1996) makes the following comment on this subject:

> Feminists accuse the religious right of trying to dictate what a woman should be and how she should think about a vast array of complicated problems. Meanwhile, these same feminists practice the very thing they preach against. . . . Feminist diversity does not embrace women who oppose abortion . . . (or) prefer to stay at home with children. (p. 30)

Feminist scholars such as Jean Bethke Elshtain contend that liberal feminists are incorrect in their assertion that women need to be liberated from their traditional roles in the family. She argues that "ideals and values from this world can exist separate from female subordination if women's traditional identities are not perceived as devoid of vitality and substance and defined by male domination" (Elshtain, 1982, p. 368). This perspective has also been described as "maternal" feminism and "communitarian" feminism. Those holding these perspectives do not consider the boundaries of the public and private spheres to be as sharp as liberal feminists may suggest.

Most women in the third wave want to advance the idea that feminism is individual and fluid (Dicker & Piepmeier, 2003). This goal gives way to models of leadership that encompass a much broader range than in previous feminist movements. In the third wave there is less of a commitment to leadership that fosters a collective consciousness, yet a dynamic individualism that is pathbreaking with regard to achievement in both the professional and the personal sphere. So what can be said about leadership in the third wave of feminism? Broadly it may be defined as a break with the collective paradigm of the second wave, retaining the spirit of women's cooperation while exploring a wider range of individual initiatives. Scholars are still in the process of studying third-wave leadership. The challenge will come in measuring its real outcomes.

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