The Gender of Informal Politics

Russia, Iceland and Twenty-First Century Male Dominance

GENDER AND POLITICS

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Gender and Politics

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Preface

As I finalize this book manuscript in February 2017, its arguments are especially timely and important, not just in Russia and Iceland, which are its focus, but also elsewhere. After a campaign with unprecedented and explicit misogyny against the first woman candidate from a major political party, Donald Trump has assumed the US presidency, creating a cabinet that is overwhelmingly white male, surrounding himself with informal advisors from his personal networks, and ignoring pleas for transparency about his finances over reasonable concerns about potential conflicts of interest. Americans became familiar with Russian *kompromat*, the often gendered and sexual compromising materials that intelligence agencies have used to coral Russian elites, with the release of a supposed dossier revealing Trump's outrageous sexual behavior in Moscow. In Russia, Vladimir Putin remains entrenched in power, using the same macho affectations to help legitimate his (and Trump's) authority. Domestic violence, effectively criminalized just the previous summer, was mostly decriminalized, as Putin withdrew his support in response to a populist movement that declares such laws are part of a Western, liberal agenda. In supposedly democratic and egalitarian Iceland, the political party most responsible for the economy's virtual collapse in 2008 is back in power, led by Bjarni Benediktsson, who, the Panama Papers revealed, had managed to protect his wealth in offshore accounts. In a country where a year can go by without a murder, the body of a 20-year-old Icelandic woman was found on a beach, missing for eight days and who, it seems, had been sexually assaulted. After decades of increases in women leaders in countries around the world, the last several years have brought remarkable declines, with half of the world leaders as there were two years prior.

I began this book in the wake of the global economic crisis, 2008–2010. As the Icelanders helped make clear, gender was everywhere in the crisis—in its causes, in its consequences, and in the political solutions—but the commentary in the United States was overwhelmingly gender blind. Studying Russia had made clear to me just how much power was gendered, symbolized in Putin's dramatic masculinity stunts. From feminist political science, I also understood that such gendered power was structural, endemic to institutions and practices.

At first, as I was a new mom and an optimist, I was hopeful that there would be reckoning for the wheeling-and-dealing economy of wealth creation, in its virtual finance form in the United States and Iceland as well as in its postcommunist form in Russia. However, as I dug deeper into gender and institutions, I saw the breadth and depth of the informal politics and the impossibility facing world leaders, many of whom were women, of cleaning up the man-made mess. I began to see a worldwide con perpetrated by the overwhelmingly male elites, often working behind the scenes, though the evidence was hard to come by. Such understanding of politics is common to Russianists, which was my training, but many of my other colleagues were skeptical when I tried to explain. So, I turned to Iceland, a country seen as democratic and clean of corruption, but had suffered the worst in the earliest stages of the economic crisis. After two research trips in 2010, I returned to Iceland in 2011 to present my research at the European Consortium on Political Research, where I became sure I was on the right track. First, Iceland's then president Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson gave the keynote speech in the outsized Harpa concert hall, which was a symbol of Iceland's excesses. To my astonishment, but to my non-Icelandic counterparts' acceptance, he argued that political science had not been critical enough of economic liberalization and that he was Iceland's savior, despite the raft of critical political economy and his role as shill for Icelandic tycoons' financial irresponsibility. Second, when I cautiously presented my research on Iceland, two Icelandic scholars, Þorgerður Einarsdóttir and Gyða Margrét Pétursdóttir who had written a formal gender report on the crisis, stood up and said that they completely agreed. The evidence suggested that Icelandic citizens were victims of the same shenanigans as in Russia, thankfully with less coercion, suggesting the con was indeed widespread.

This book is my answer to the puzzle of how this worldwide con thwarts gender equality. We would be remiss not to note that, as a result of their efforts, women have made many advances, into politics, in nongovernmental

organizations, and in gender equality policies. Yet, the results in terms of women's lived experiences are so much less than hoped for, especially for non-elite women. Written for all who care about gender equality, this book puts forth an argument that this gender equality paradox is best understood as a bait and switch, perpetrated by the male-dominated informal elite networks empowered by the so-called economic liberalization over the last four decades. Privileging wealth acquisition for insiders over the free markets, formal institutions, which had been empowered in advanced democracies and promised in democratizing countries in the late twentieth century, have been hollowed out and supplanted by non-elected, non-constitutional bodies, such as advisory bodies and informal gatherings (in the backyard, sauna, golf course), which are even more male dominated. These male-dominated elite networks—such as Putin, his loyal old friends, and rich oligarchs—maintain their power through unwritten rules, promoting some elite women while keeping them in line. In the end, though, these "lucky" women, women's NGOs, and gender equality became the scapegoat for man-made messes, such as the recent global economic crisis, the growing gap between the rich and the poor, and failure to enact structural reforms that would address most people's real problems. At the same time, I still see some hope, in the growth of the guerrilla feminism such as Pussy Riot, the innovative use of new social media to raise consciousness among a new generation, and activists' tactical maneuvering within the informal politics that together expose the hypocrisy of this male dominance.

I am most grateful for the financial support for my fieldwork, which came from the City University of New York's PSC-CUNY Research Award Program and the American-Scandinavian Foundation. CUNY also gave me a mostly funded year-long sabbatical for planning and research and then a semester off to write through the Advanced Research Collaborative at the Graduate Center (plus some release time here and there from Brooklyn College). I also benefited from fellowships at Columbia University's Harriman Institute for Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies and at the University of Helsinki's Aleksanteri Institute-Finnish Centre for Russian and Eastern European Studies. Being part of these communities where I could present my research and be among others doing exciting research was enervating. I am also grateful for New York University's Center for European and Mediterranean Studies, where I have been a visiting scholar for almost a decade, helping to coordinate—with Nanette Funk, Sonia Jaffe Robbins, and Mara Lazda along with the

Network East-West Women and Ann Snitow—a monthly workshop on gender and transformation. This workshop has kept me informed about gender in Europe and Eurasia and helped me flesh out my ideas. Parts of the following are reprinted with permission in Chaps. 1, 2, and 3: Johnson, Janet Elise. "Fast-Tracked or Boxed in? Informal Politics, Gender, and Women's Representation in Putin's Russia" (2016. *Perspectives on Politics* 14 (3): 643–659.

As I began to conceptualize this book, I wrote several articles with scholars who are also friends now and whose assistance was invaluable. I have been discussing ideas with Aino Saarinen from the Aleksanteri since Putin came to power. She brought me into her research projects as well as to Finland, deepening my interest in Nordic countries. Together, we wrote "Twenty-First-Century Feminisms Under Repression: Gender Regime Change and the Women's Crisis Center Movement in Russia" (2013. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society* 38 (3): 543–567), which helped me see how feminism was adapting to particularly inhospitable environments. Aino also introduced me to her (then) graduate students, Meri Kulmala and Maija Jäppinen, who broadened my understanding of how things were being done in Russia, and, in 2013, even conducted joint fieldwork with me. The three of us wrote about "Street-Level Practice of Russia's Social Policymaking in Saint Petersburg: Federalism, Informal Politics, and Domestic Violence" (2016. *Journal of Social Policy* 45 (2): 287–304). Maija and I also wrote together about domestic violence policy (2016. "The State to the Rescue? The Contested Terrain of Domestic Violence in Postcommunist Russia." In *Gender Violence in Peace and War*, edited by Victoria Sanford, Katerina Stefatos, Cecilia M. Salvi and Sofia Duyos-Álvarez, 146–157. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press). In Iceland, Þorgerður Einarsdóttir and Gyða Margrét Pétursdóttir answered too many questions and helped me gain access and street cred, writing together "A Feminist Theory of Corruption: Lessons from Iceland" (2013. *Politics & Gender* 9 (2): 174–206). Despite the common assumptions that scholarship is best done by unencumbered individuals sitting in ivory towers, these collaborations have made my work stronger and more enjoyable.

I have also had a coterie of Russian-speaking research assistants who made me feel resourced, through the generosity of the Herbert Kurz Undergrad Research Assistant program. I cannot list all that they have done for this project, but I cannot thank enough Kate Krasavina, Elena Bachina, Maryam Genik, and Sarvar Akobirova. These students demonstrate that

Brooklyn College has not only some of the best and brightest students, but students with unusual and important skills. I also had the help of an informal research assistant, Alexandra Novitskaya, a feminist refugee from Russian academia, who has turned into a scholar in her own right and with whom I have now co-authored. In Iceland, Karen Ásta Kristjánsdóttir helped me arrange interviews and communicate through my language barrier. I blame my former student, Hrönn Sveinsdóttir, for my interest in Iceland, but thank her and Edda Jonsdóttir for our many long conversations to make sense of what I was observing. Valerie Sperling, S. Laurel Weldon, Louise Chappell, and Georgina Waylen graciously read parts of the project. I am also grateful to the Gender and Politics series editors, Sarah Childs and Johanna Kantola, who believed in my project (Sarah even said that I shouldn't "pull my punches"). Of course, as everyone says, the mistakes and oversights left here are mine.

I also thank my friends and family who have supported me through this long gestation. These include Brooklyn College colleagues who are also friends, especially Caroline Arnold, who seems to know everything about comparative politics, and Jillian Cavanaugh, who answers all my questions about anthropology. They and other friends—especially Sara VanGunst, Belinda Cooper, and Gwendolyn Alker—provided support at the nexus of emotion and intellect. The Zisman-Kellehers opened their home to us (literally, we live upstairs), offering encouragement, some of the best parts of (urban) kibbutz life, and an office of my own. Maxwell, who was born right after my previous book was published, came with me on my first trip to Iceland and on my fellowship in Finland. I forgive him for not speaking to me for a week after I left him for my second trip to Iceland when he was one and half and thank him for all his offers to help me write over the last year. My biggest thanks go to John who has been a true partner in life, perhaps shouldering even more than his share over the last several years so that I could do what my intellect desired. The next gestation, if you so choose, can be yours.

Brooklyn, NY
February 13, 2017

Janet Elise Johnson

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Informal Politics and the Gender Equality Paradox

The Gender Equality Paradox

Over the last half century, women worldwide have made great strides toward gender equality. Women's legislative participation has doubled, so that about one of every five national legislators is a woman (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2016). These increases have mostly occurred in unexpected places such as Rwanda (with 63.8% women), Cuba, South Africa, Senegal, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Mozambique, Mexico, Angola, and Argentina. Even Arab authoritarian regimes, long the laggards in women's representation, have made progress over the last decade; Algeria and Sudan jumped from single digits to almost one-third, and Saudi Arabia from zero to one-fifth. The number of women heading political systems also swelled from none to 20 in 2011, representing 1 of 10 United Nations members (Hawkesworth 2012). In the new millennium, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany has been among the most powerful politicians in the world, and other women have been elected presidents in presidential systems, including in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. Much legislation has also been passed worldwide over the last half century. These include broad-based gender equality laws, but also more specific laws legalizing contraception and abortion, undermining religion-based family law, introducing gender quotas for political institutions, providing funds for parental leave and childcare, criminalizing violence against women, and legalizing same-sex relations, even marriage (Htun and Weldon 2010: 207). These are enhanced by a variety of international

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and regional agreements—such as the United Nations' Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence—that make radical calls for gender equality.

However, the advance of gender equality has been much slower than expected, especially for poor women and women of the non-dominant ethnicity or sexuality. Structural economic problems remain intractable: gaps in wages and pensions leave even upper-middle-class women in wealthy economies with millions of fewer dollars over their lifetimes than their male counterparts, while women in less wealthy countries are more likely to be poor and malnourished than men. There are also clear moves backward. Restrictions on women's rights to contraception and abortion have increased in countries such as Russia and the United States that used to be at the forefront. There are new ideologies of backlash in right-wing populist movements criticizing feminists and LGBTQ activists for destroying the family and the nation, even in democracies. Egregious acts of male dominance—gang rapes of "modern" women in India, acid throwing at schoolgirls in Afghanistan, and men's mass shootings in the United States—point to aggressive resistance. In this context, equality in affective bonds and intimate relations, especially questions of sexual pleasure, remains so radical that most feminists only make claims to rights to live free from bodily harm.

These contradictions point to many paradoxes of gender equality highlighted in feminist political science. The impact of the increases of women in politics on policymaking has been underwhelming (Blofield and Haas 2013). Women's movements have often been unable to translate their social mobilization into political power (Banaszak et al. 2003). The passage of "gender equality … initiatives … [have had only] partial and variable institutionalization in terms of impact on institutional practices, norms, and outcomes" (Mackay et al. 2009: 254–255). In Nordic contexts, where women have appeared to make the most progress, scholars point to the inclusion of only the dominant ethnicity women and to the inability of women to translate their political power into economic power (Lister 2009; Siim and Skjeie 2008; Hedfeldt and Hedlund 2011). Together, these point to a broad, political paradox: the advances that women have made in terms of inclusion in formal institutions and in the passage of legislation contrast with the realities of gender inequality experienced by differently situated women. In other words, gender equality is a wicked

problem, complex and multifaceted with many hard-to-recognize facets and entrenched resistance.

This book argues that the primary obstacle holding women back in the twenty-first century is a revised form of male dominance that promises gender equality but simultaneously undercuts it. It is a con, a bait and switch. In what follows, I argue that women's and feminist movements have made it harder for most countries to maintain the formal rules that had limited women over the previous several centuries. At the same time, economic liberalization has strengthened elites outside of formal structures and constituted corrupted, informal rules and institutions. For example, elite women are promised pedestals as policymakers and in non-governmental organizations, but are then boxed in with little room or power to represent women or promote progressive change. Similarly, attempts to blame and shame countries for ignoring problems such as violence against women result in new laws, but with little budget or teeth, while inequality and violence increase. The bait and switch has blindsided activists and taken the steam out of many progressive movements, but people are beginning to fight back with a new kind of feminism.

The notion of a bait and switch in progressive politics is not a new one. Julie Mertus (2004) argued that the United States' proclaimed commitment to universal human rights was like a used car salesman promising he can deliver more, with different standards for itself and its allies than for its enemies. Barbara Ehrenreich (2005) made a similar argument about the American dream: even when people get college degrees with marketable skills, they remain at risk of financial catastrophe because there are little social supports. But putting this metaphor in the front and center of feminist political science brings an important new lens for understanding the gender equality paradox. As Maria Konnikova (2016: 36) argues in her book summarizing the psychological literature on the confidence game, con men "in some sense, merely take our regular white lies to next level," and we are all susceptible to such scams because of a basic instinct to trust, causing us to overlook what we know to be true, especially when strong emotions are at play. Advocates for progressive change, with their strong emotions and prerequisite optimism, are thus likely marks, especially in polities where there are powerful white lies that the system runs according to constitutionally established rules. The scam is a byzantine and powerful system that interacts with these white lies, which too much of political science has overlooked with their Western and confirmation biases.

Feminist Institutionalism and Postcommunist Regime Dynamics

To explore and develop this bait-and-switch lens, this book heavily draws from feminist institutionalism and postcommunist regime dynamics, two political science literatures that, at first glance, seem unconnected. On the one hand, building upon other types of historical and sociological institutionalism, scholars working within feminist institutionalism have shown that rules about how men and women are to behave—that is, gender, in intersection with other structures such as race, class, and sexuality—are an intractable part of political institutions (Krook and Mackay 2011; Bjarnegård 2013; Chappell and Waylen 2013). Some rules are obviously gendered, such as Soviet laws restricting women from some of the most lucrative jobs, but seemingly gender-neutral institutions—such as formal rules allowing year-long election campaigning or informal rules that major decisions should be made in the naked sauna or on the golf course—may have gendered impact (Chappell and Waylen 2013: 7–8). Feminist institutionalists also examine how "political institutions affect whether women can 'act for' women" (Waylen 2010: 227). Institutions can be gendered in ways that promote gender equality, such as agencies charged with promoting gender equality and new expectations by international organizations that states respond to violence against women. As Louise Chappell and Georgina Waylen (2013: 602) have argued, gendered rules of the game are complex, working differently in different political arenas, and the consequences of gendered informal institutions are essential to power, as they shape who gets to decide policy and the distribution of resources.

Though, to date, the focus has been on formal rules, feminist institutionalism has begun to consider the gendered "informal 'rules of the game'" (Krook and Mackay 2011: 1). Scholars are gendering the work of Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky (2004: 727), who conceptualized informal institutions as "socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels." That is, informal institutions are rules, more than just informal behavioral regularities, in which there is an enforcement mechanism for non-conformity.[1] As Lee Ann Banaszak and Weldon explain about gendered informal rules:

> [I]nformal institutions relegate women to the homemaker role, enforce normative heterosexuality, and/or privilege men in the family and leadership

> positions. These are not just patterns of behavior but, rather, informal institutions that are communicated, enforced, and sanctioned through nonofficial channels. These informal institutions are communicated through the media, educational materials, and informal interactions within communities: They are sanctioned by ridicule and social disapprobation, by religious communities' practices, and through violence against women and men who violate gender scripts. Indeed, even state actors informally sanction such institutions when police refuse to take violence against women by spouses as seriously as they do bar brawls. (Banaszak and Weldon 2011: 268)

Banaszak and Weldon (2011: 270) suggest examining a matrix of informal and formal institutions, in which "gender equality outcomes" are understood to result from the "interaction between formal and informal institutions" (see Table 1.1). Other feminist institutionalists make politics an empirical question about "how things are done around here," avoiding a "strict separation between informal and formal rules or prejudging their relative significance" (Lowndes 2014: 687–688).

On the other hand, the study of the regime dynamics of Russia and other non-Baltic post-Soviet states, though mostly gender-blind, is at the cutting edge of theorizing informal politics. The best of the literature has moved from the transition paradigm to one examining the interplay between of the informal with the formal, from a focus on "the ideal" to "the real" to capture "regime dynamics" (Hale 2015). Instead of seeing the informal as an addendum to the formal, they use concepts such as the "dual state" to highlight the tensions between the formal constitutional order and an "administrative regime," the informal institutions that compete and sometimes even substitute for it (Sakwa 2011). They find informal institutions so "deeply embedded" within and "subversive" to formal institutions that the latter are not effective (Gel'man 2004: 1023).

Table 1.1 How formal and informal institutions shape gender equality outcomes

Informal institutions	*Patriarchal formal institutions*	*Officially neutral formal institutions*	*Egalitarian formal institutions*
Tending toward gender equality	Inequality but open for change	Substantive equality	Strong substantive equality
Tending toward gender hierarchy	Substantive inequality	Substantive inequality	Inequality but open for contestation

Source: Table 2 from Banaszak and Weldon (2011: 270)

As Scott Radnitz (2011: 351) asserts, these dynamics are at play many times and at many places, even in ostensible democracies where "rule enforcement may be inconsistent and the formal institutions of governance implicated in unpredictable or inequitable outcomes."

The role of elite networks provides a bridge between the two literatures. For post-Soviet scholars, such networks are constituted by those with overlapping economic and political power and fashioned through "informal collaboration between certain individuals, frequently based on old personal connections, newly garnered personal ties, or even consciously built links" (Sharafutdinova 2010). They make the polity so infused with the "personalized exchange of concrete rewards and punishments" that "abstract, impersonal principles such as ideological belief" are rendered only a cover story (Hale 2015). Though more easily observable in hybrid and authoritarian regimes, Janine Wedel (2009) found similar flexible networks in the United States in which members had roles inside and outside of government, using tactics that were often legal because they were able to transform the rules to suit their collective goals—in other words, to formalize many of the informal rules of the game. As they are organized around shared interest in exploiting resources "to benefit a small minority at the expense of the majority," informal networks are likely key to inequality across regime types (Radnitz 2011: 351).

Feminists have long pointed to the role of old boys' clubs in male dominance, but political scientists are now building the necessary theory. Drawing on theories of men and masculinities, especially the concept of homosociality, they show how gender is essential to building and maintaining such networks. As Karen Gabriel (2014: 49) explains, homosociality is typically "used to describe and analyze non-sexual same-sex bonds, specifically between men" but does not preclude sexual contact or other physical contact, especially in societies such as India and the Middle East, where "public displays of physical intimacy between men of all ages (such as handholding, waist-holding, shoulder-clasping) are common and quite acceptable." Using a Japanese metaphor—"the art of the gut"—Robin LeBlanc (2010) describes a "visceral, uncontainable bond" between elite men that creates deeper connections than would be expected by shared experiences alone. For Elin Bjarnegård (2013: 24–25), homosociality is a form of "bonding social capital" that makes male-dominated elite networks rational, as being of the same sex can help individuals "understand and thus can predict each other's behavior," a rough proxy for loyalty. In other words, for elite networks to be built and thrive, "interpersonal

capital needs to be built up before an individual is included in a political network and … there are gendered aspects to this interpersonal capital: it is predominantly accessible for other men as well as more valuable when built between men."

Networks also communicate their gendered values—what Raewyn Connell and James W. Messerschmidt (2005) conceptualize as "hegemonic masculinity" and "emphasized femininity"—to structure who is inside and who is outside the network. Hegemonic masculinity, the masculine ideal for political leaders constructed through gendered informal institutions, is the masculinity that confers the most power in a society. There is not just one masculinity, but many masculinities that vary by society, and the most potent masculinity is available only to some men. LeBlanc (2010: Chap. 2) points to a hegemonic masculinity in Japan related to filial and community obligation and deference mixed with some physical strength. In Russia, Vladimir Putin has consolidated a tough guy (*muzhik*) masculinity in which he performs both his physical prowess and his ability "to get things done," the ideals to which all elite males are held. In contrast, women do not come to politics with the social capital of being male, with an easy way of meeting the criteria for meeting the hegemonic masculine ideal political leader, or with the possibility of homosociality with those who dominate elite networks. Instead, they must enact the contextually appropriate emphasized femininity—the constructed gender for elite women that complements and complies with this hegemonic masculinity—to penetrate male-dominated networks. Creating an interaction between gender and the homosocial capital of networks, the men who are able to enact the society's prescribed hegemonic masculinity, in turn, are more likely to build social capital, constructing and perpetuating male dominance.

A Blueprint for Studying the Gender of Informal Politics

Bringing together these insights about gender, informal institutions, and elite networks, I construct a blueprint for the comparative analysis of the gender equality paradox that centralizes the informal politics of male dominance. As with Banaszak and Weldon, the blueprint is by-level, looking at the interaction between the informal and the formal politics. Whereas Banaszak and Weldon (2011: 270) suggest that the "greatest opportunity

to alter existing institutions occur when formal and informal institutions conflict," insights from the study of postcommunism make me less sanguine. These tensions can exist for such a long time that they become consolidated, for example, subverting promises of women's emancipation in the Soviet Union. The informal can also become formalized, especially when male-dominated elite networks control the process. In other words, I point to the bottom right quadrant in the matrix in Table 1.1 as being the most common situation today, but argue that there is a bait and switch that complicates the possibilities for change, not an "opening for contestation."

I suggest that there are four key puzzles that should shape the twenty-first-century feminist political science, each of which becomes a chapter in this book:

1. First, what is male dominance, and how does it operate in the twenty-first century? Do informal politics make male dominance not just a question of the proportion of men to women in formal politics, the focus of most scholarship on women's representation, but one of the hegemonic masculinity and homosociality of elite networks and their power over formal and informal institutions? If male dominance operates as a bait and switch, as I have argued, why does it operate that way? As Jacqui True (2014: 330) suggests, is it because "the governance of the international political economy attends to gender equality and gender balance in the formal, market economy, but fails to recognise the gendered nature of the informal economy"?
2. Second, why has the influx of women (and some feminist men) into politics by the twenty-first century not led to the better representation of women's varied interests? Are the obstacles more than the male-dominated political parties, serving as gatekeepers, and the informal norms that ingrain gender bias that most feminist political scientists blame (e.g. Franceschet and Piscopo 2008: 413–416)? Do informal elite networks sometimes cross or substitute for parties? Are there informal rules, with specified sanctions, limiting women's representation, not just norms?[2] Are these gendered informal rules potentiated by the existence of parallel, informal institutions created by the male-dominated elite networks?
3. Third, why are feminist movements in the twenty-first century limited in their ability to achieve structural change even after decades of

mobilization? Cross-national studies show that promoting gender equality requires feminist mobilization outside of (not just inside) the system (Htun and Weldon 2010: 207; Weldon 2011; McBride et al. 2010). Yet, feminist social scientists have pointed out that many movements have been tamed into non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with gender experts more focused on advising the government than recruiting masses of women (Banaszak et al. 2003; Alvarez 1999; Alvarez 2009). Has neoliberalism co-opted feminism, as Hester Eisenstein (2009) and Nancy Fraser (2013) have argued, or is gendered informal politics the primary explanation?

4. Fourth, why are the results of feminists in politics and social movement so little in terms of actual gender equality? If informal politics are important, can we assume, as most activists and scholars do, that the best strategy for change is naming gendered problems and passing new legislation? Can informal politics help to explain why so many countries pass empty gender equality legislation or fail to implement more substantial gender equality legislation?

As feminist theory comes out of a movement for change, a blueprint for comparative analysis must also consider how feminists use informal politics to resist male dominance. Within each of these puzzles there is a secondary question about what are women and feminists doing to fight back: (1) How are women and feminist men in politics undermining informal networks and their consolidation? (2) How are women and feminist men in politics resisting gendered informal rules? (3) How are feminists organizing in new ways that target the informally constructed male dominance? (4) How are gender equality advocates using informal strategies to achieve policy change?

Like Bjarnegård (2013), I see male political dominance as the domination of virtually every polity by some elite men, even as some women have temporary broken in. The blueprint also uses Drude Dahlerup and Monique Leyenaar's (2013: 8–10) ideas about the degree and scope of male dominance. By degree, they differentiate between "male monopoly" (less than 10% women), "small minority of women" (10–25%), "large minority of women" (25–40%), and "gender balance" (40–60%). By scope, they refer to the broadening of the number games, to thinking about the relative power of women and their impact. What is different here from these conceptualizations is the prominence of informal politics in the understanding of male dominance: the power of informal

elites networks, the reproduction of old informal rules, and the creation of parallel informal institutions. In contrast to others who argue for reclaiming the concept of patriarchy (e.g. Gabriel 2014), I use the notion of male dominance because patriarchy points our attention toward the power of fathers, whereas I point to male-dominated elite networks.

Unconventional Research in Russia and Iceland

Most Different Systems and the Second-World Perspective

In order to flesh out and consider this blueprint for understanding the gender equality, I use a most different systems comparison in which the researcher traces similar processes of change in diverse cases in order to understand and explain a phenomenon (Przeworski and Teune 1970; Anckar 2008). In contrast to the more common most similar systems comparisons, this method eliminates as possible explanations the large number of differences between the cases, allowing the scholar to reject common types of explanations. Rather than testing theory, the method's strength is developing theory, which is the goal of this project. Here, I offer the comparison of Russia and Iceland. While the countries are both on the edge of Europe, their political histories, political institutional structures, economies, and even sizes are fundamentally different.

Russia is by far the largest country in the world in terms of land. An imperial state, it has a multiethnic population of some 143 million, the ninth largest population in the world, but shrinking dramatically, especially among Russian and other Slavic ethnics. Led by the grandiose Putin since 2000, the country has never been democratic, even if there were mostly competitive elections and a mostly democratic constitution in the 1990s. In the 2000s, most observers characterized Russia as a hybrid regime, with a mix of democratic and authoritarian elements (e.g. Gel'man 2004; Colton and Hale 2009; Sakwa 2011). Crackdowns on protestors and newly repressive legislation following 2011 elections widely seen as fraudulent made it more authoritarian. Giving life to its aspirations to return to the global influence of the Soviet superpower, Russia began cyberattacks, annexed the Ukrainian territory of Crimea, started a proxy war in Eastern Ukraine in 2014, and ramped up nationalism. Though the state is constitutionally federal, part of Putin's strength has been in bringing most regions under strong centralized control. Although citizens do organize and protest periodically, civil society is seen as weak, and

freedom of the press has been greatly eroded by state control of mass media. Russia is seen as one of the more corrupt regimes in the world by corruption observers (such as Transparency International) and scholars alike (e.g. Sharafutdinova 2010; Dawisha 2014). While the economy has undergone substantial changes from the command economy of the Soviet Union—with a marked depression in the 1990s—the economy remains heavily dependent on the exports of oil and gas and subject to arbitrary state interference.

In contrast, Iceland is a small state, with a homogeneous population of only some 300,000. It has never been fully independent, with Danish control until 1944, replaced by a large US military presence until 1996, and then by European dominance, as Iceland entered into the European Economic Area in 1994, making it part of the European Union's free-trade region without being an actual member of the EU (Johannesson 2013). By the 2000s, it was seen as one of the most democratic countries in the world, with regular, highly competitive elections, strong protections of individual rights, and strong rule of law. There is some debate as to whether the system is more semi-presidential, as the constitution stipulates the national election of a president who can call referenda, or more parliamentary, which has been the practice with governments replaced when there is a loss of confidence (Kristjánsson 2004: 153, 163). In the mid-2000s, it was ranked as one of the least corrupt countries in the world, with the ranking declining somewhat over the last decade. Iceland is a unitary state, where two-thirds of the population live in or near the capital of Reykjavik. It has a vibrant civil society and vibrant free press, though the newspapers have long been tied to political parties. Iceland's economy depends on fishing exports, only recently diversifying into tourism, financial services, and exploitation of geothermal and hydropower resources. Similar to the United States, Iceland faced a boom and bust in 2008, followed by a recovery seen as one of the best in the world (Wade and Sigurgeirsdottir 2012).

Despite these differences, both Russia and Iceland have a gender equality paradox. In Russia, the problems of gender inequality are the most evident. While women's labor participation is relatively high, including in the management of small to midsize businesses, there are few women at the top, especially in the lucrative oil and gas industry, but their wages remain less than two-third of men's (Nechemias 2014). In fact, women are still banned from almost 500 jobs, supposedly to protect them, but legally limiting them from some well-paid jobs in construction and mining

as well as from being bus and subway drivers. The puniness of the welfare state leaves many women, especially single mothers, in poverty. Most precarious have been women migrants and others who work in the informal economy, making them more vulnerable to crime and corruption as well as subject to virulent xenophobia. But, even middle-class women have had trouble making ends meet, as families were put on a roller coaster ride of economic insecurity. Pronatalism, wrapped in nationalism and religion, has led to increasing restrictions on access to abortion (Chandler 2013). Sexual harassment, sexual violence, and domestic violence are often cast as normal gender relations, while trafficking women was common enough in the early 1990s that white sex workers in Europe were generally called Natashas (Johnson 2009a: 34). In 2012, with the harsh prosecution of Pussy Riot, feminism itself was on trial during the court proceedings (Sperling 2015). This was followed by new restrictions on women's organizing—as NGOs, online, and on the streets—and restrictions on anyone who engages in "non-traditional sexual relations" under the so-called anti-gay propaganda law.

Yet, the post-Soviet constitution promises gender equality by adding institutions of the rule of law and electoral democracy to Bolshevik-style promises of women's emancipation. The Russia Federation (1993: Art. 19: 1–3) Constitution includes promises that "all people shall be equal before the law and court," "the State shall guarantee the equality of rights and freedoms of man and citizen regardless of sex," and that "Man and woman shall enjoy equal rights and freedoms and have equal possibilities to exercise them." In addition, the Constitution guarantees including extensive social rights, right to health care, housing, education, safe environment, social security, as well as to provide for mothers and children (Chandler 2013). Though there is no freestanding gender equality law, there are international agreements that have the force of law in Russia. These include Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, ratified 1981) and the Optional Protocol (ratified 2004), as well as the European Convention on Human Rights (Art. 14), which prohibits discrimination as a fundamental right. After decades of informal selection processes that brought few women into real power, electoral democracy promised more opportunities for women to compete for office and the possibility that these rights would be realized (Polenina 2003). As I describe in detail in Chap. 3, under Putin, these promises have born surprising fruit, with an increasing number of women in the two legislative houses, a woman head of the upper house,

prominent women in the executive branch, and a woman head of Russia's central bank. After several years of no gender equality machinery, a Gender Council was established in 2011 within the Ministry of Social Development. A 2011 maternity-leave reform made it easier for women to be compensated if fired while pregnant. A 2013 law banned sex-specific and physical appearance-based job advertisements, something that long fostered employment discrimination (Nechemias 2014). Even feminism, after years of being domesticated into NGOs, appears resurgent, not just in Pussy Riot, but in online and in street protests.

In Iceland, there are even stronger promises of gender equality (Iceland Ministry of Welfare 2016). In 1976, the first Gender Equality Act—prohibiting sex-based discrimination and requiring equal opportunities for education and employment—was debated and passed. What we now might call a "women's policy agency," the Gender Equality Council (which is now the Centre for Gender Equality), was founded and was charged with implementing the law. In 1995, gender equality was added to Iceland's (1999: Art. 62) Constitution, such that "[e]veryone shall be equal before the law and enjoy human rights irrespective of sex" and "[m]en and women shall enjoy equal rights in all respects." A 2008 Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men added gender mainstreaming and the goals of "equal influence of women and men in decision-making and policy-making in the society," "[e]nabling both women and men to reconcile their work and family life," and "[w]orking against gender-based violence and harassment" (Iceland Ministry of Welfare 2015: Sec. 1, Art. 1). The 2008 Act also made the Centre for Gender Equality one of the most powerful women's policy agencies in the world, with supporting institutions such as the Gender Equality Complaints Committee and municipal gender equality committees. If municipal governments fail to provide the required gender-based information or gender action plans, they can be fined. In addition to these domestic promises, Iceland ratified CEDAW in 1985 and the Optional Protocol in 2001.

On the surface, these promises appear to have been realized. Most notably, as of 2016, Iceland has topped the World Economic Forum's (2016) Global Gender Gap index for the last eight years, with an estimate that women have about 87% equality in the economy, education, health, and politics. These high assessments reflect an influx of women into politics in 2009, including the world's first openly lesbian (or gay) prime minister who had a gender-balanced government that passed a raft of gender equality legislation. However, Iceland has a significant gender

gap in wages, among the highest in Europe, which only appeared to get better during the financial crisis because the highest-paid men in finance lost their jobs. As I describe in Chap. 5, there are also high rates of violence against women, which, until very recently, the authorities have been unwilling to address.

Of course, there are paradoxes other than gender in both countries. While Iceland is much more homogenous, both countries have made promises of multiculturalism and ethnic/racial equality that remain unfulfilled. Russian elites have been fairly representative of Russia's ethnicity and religious diversity (Semenova 2015: 145), despite the reality of widespread racism against people from the Caucasus, Africa, and Eurasia. Iceland's elites are remarkably homogenous, much like the society as a whole, but those few who are racially, ethnically, or religiously different have had a hard time being seen as equals, rather than as people that Icelanders need to save (Loftsdóttir 2012). Though Russia is better known for its support of anti-gay initiatives, post-Soviet Russia did decriminalize homosexuality. Though Iceland is seen as a relatively progressive place for LGBTQ citizens, there are exclusions, even if sometimes unintentional (Josephson et al. 2016). Both countries have people living in poverty, albeit many more in Russia, despite promises otherwise. My intention here is not to exclude those other paradoxes, but to focus on gender as a social structure in interaction with other structures of differentiation and stratification, such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class (Weldon 2006). Not coincidentally, hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity tend to reflect the dominant race/ethnicity, sexuality, and class.

By drawing upon theories of Eurasian politics and putting Russia (and Iceland) in the center of the analysis, this comparison also inverts the usual direction of theorizing from Western contexts to the rest of the world. Feminist institutionalism especially has been a mostly Western subfield. As Aili Mari Tripp (2006: 261) asserts, there is a special need to study political contexts outside of the center of Europe and North America, especially where data are harder to find. As Louise Chappell (2010: 187) states, "It is only through an understanding of how gender operates within institutions in less advanced democracies and in non-democratic systems that we can fully understand its effects both in terms of policy outcomes and opportunities for feminist action." Using the lens of the second world is particularly insightful about informal politics. As Wedel (2009) explains, "For it was there that I observed the sophisticated practices of dealing under the table, reading between the lines, shifting self-presentations, and

social networking for survival." As Jennifer Suchland (2015) summarizes, the goal of such a project "is not just to reinsert the second world, but to think about why it matters to theorize (from) it."

Finally, like Georgina Waylen (2007) and other feminist institutionalists, I combine the comparative macro-historical method with neo-institutional frameworks that consider the informal and formal rules of the game that shape gender relations (Mackay and Krook 2011). I look for "critical junctures," a period "of contingency during which the usual constrains on action are lifted or eased" (Mahoney and Thelen 2010). As Anna Grzymala-Busse (2010: 311–312) has shown, in such "states of flux," elite competition is particularly important, shaped by informal institutions, "which affects the timing and type of the emergence of formal rules, and which mechanisms of informal influence predominate." Using process tracing to look inside the "black box," the research is both temporal and comparative because "[i]t is only through retrospective analyses that we are able to identify how the gender foundations of an institution can be reinscribed and what forces need to be in alignment to provide a structure of political opportunity" (Chappell 2010: 186). In these ways, my work is part of the comparative politics of gender, examining "how major political processes are gendered" and asking "big questions" about gender equality (Waylen 2010: 223). The research is problem driven, with feminist commitments to women's equality and social justice (Tripp 2010: 191; Waylen 2010: 223).

Knowing Smiles, Double-Blind Interviews, and Women Informants

Collecting data on informal politics presents many challenges (Azari and Smith 2012: 40; Chappell and Waylen 2013; Lowndes 2014). As Helmke and Levitsky (2006) point out, informal rules are often communicated through personal networks, often invisibly to outsiders, and "when they are functioning well, enforcement is rarely necessary." Soviet judges, for example, learned to intuit messages about how to rule in political cases, no longer needing the telephone in "telephone law." Informal rules about gender can be harder to observe because gender has been assumed "natural and immutable," as when women have been seen as naturally less interested in politics or less competitive (Chappell and Waylen 2013: 600). Communication based on homosociality, as Robin LeBlanc (2010) found, is often expressed without words.

But, informal rules, even gendered ones, can be gleaned. Helmke and Levitksy (2006: 21, 26) point to "highly visible (if infrequent) episodes of rule-breaking and sanction," and these "rare instances of deviation and punishment can be telling." As crystallized by a National Democratic Institute's (2016: 17–19, 12) campaign #NotTheCost points out, these sanctions can include "violence against women in politics," including physical attacks and also other forms of intimidation. More often, the rules may be observable in jokes made about women in politics, widespread denigrating rumors, and name-calling, especially when women intrude into male-dominated spaces and transgress an "unwritten code" by claiming authority beyond those afforded to her as a woman (Disch and Kane 1996: 304, 281). In other cases, as Alena Ledeneva (2011: 721, 723, 725) found, informants give us "knowing smiles," expressing ambivalence and pointing to an "open secret," "unarticulated knowledge that everybody who is party of a transaction knows about but that is not discussed in a direct way." The closer I got to informal power, even in Iceland, the more likely I found informants to give such knowing smiles while spouting "the official story" or clamming up. In one case, a Russian informant kept checking out the window to make sure no one saw us, but then invited me to a observe a government meeting where I felt like I should not be there. Often, the most fruitful part of the interview was as I was walking out the door, when the informant would add something she "probably shouldn't say." In contrast, I understood that activist-informants were likely to overestimate the informal politics that keeps them out, so took their ideas mostly as leads that needed following up.

For both cases, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with insiders and activists, as I was trying to elicit information about the workings of politics that are not usually documented, some of which might be illegal (Bjarnegård 2013: 49).[3] Unconventionally, most of my informants were women, as I chose to use their insider–outsider status. I admire colleagues such as LeBlanc and Bjarnegård who target men to understand male dominance, but my experiences in Russia, where I have been harassed by men police officers and politicians, have left me protective of myself (Johnson 2009b: 321–324). In Russia, where I had a harder time reaching insiders, I added a handful of double-blind interviews, in which recent émigré research assistants confidentially interview contacts back home, as well as drew heavily on the work of investigative journalists, a tactic typical of scholars who research informal politics (Sharafutdinova 2010; Dawisha 2014; Ledeneva 2013). These tactics are designed to keep everyone as safe as possible.

To some, these strategies may make the research seem "impressionistic" rather than "rigorous." I argue that these eclectic methods produce evidence that may not be definitive enough to prove how politics operates, but the evidence is enough to falsify the assumptions that informal politics does not matter for questions of gender. As Ledeneva (2011: 723) points out, "the competence in agents' mastery of unwritten rules is highly stratified," so we are likely to never know the whole story. My evidence echoes Chappell and Waylen's (2013) claim that gender operates in the "hidden life of institutions." Based on years of observing Russian and Icelandic gender politics, I argue that assuming the unimportance of informal politics is not substantiatable; hiding behind methodological standards is no excuse.

Explaining the Gender Equality Paradox and Possibilities for Change

Within feminist political science, there have been two main explanations for the gender equality paradox. The first is that power has shifted elsewhere. The influx of women into formal power, the strengthening of the transnational women's movement, and the passage of gender equality legislation came at the same time as, in the words of Banaszak et al. (2003), power was "uploaded" to supranational organizations such as the EU, IMF, and WTO, "downloaded" to regional and local authorities, "lateral loaded" from elected bodies to non-elected bodies, and "offloaded" to private citizens and organizations. For many scholars, the underlying cause is the global dominance of neoliberalism that began in the 1980s, punctuated by a variety of crisis, such as the global economic crisis of 2008–2009 (e.g. Eisenstein 2009; Fraser 2013).

The second main explanation is that institutions have been particularly "sticky," as Fiona Mackay (2014) puts it, that is, hard to change, with new gender equality initiatives "nested" within old, patriarchal institutions that often confound advocates' hopes. As Carole Pateman (1988) argues, democracies had been predicated on a sexual contract of men over women. As Suzanne Dovi (2007) has shown, even centuries later, institutions of representation may be "tools of oppression," benefiting some powerful men and often pitting some women's interests against the interests of other women. Mackay (2014: 549) suggests that "institutional innovation is actively resisted or passively neglected: [by actors] 'remembering the old' and 'forgetting the new.'"

Together, this blueprint and comparative-historical study of Russia and Iceland favors the first explanation for the gender equality paradox, suggesting important dynamics that are often overlooked. Both regimes brought more women into formal politics. However, while the formal institutions have been sticky, the main dynamic is that power had already moved onto informal institutions, laterally loaded into informal advisory boards and offloaded to informal elite networks that sometimes engineered their members' election to create the appearance of democracy. These privileged women were also boxed in through informal rules, even in Iceland, where, for example, one elite was beset by a parliamentary investigation into her mental fitness. These kinds of informal politics—constituted as they are by hegemonic masculinity and homosociality—are also responsible for boxing in newly professionalized feminist movements into NGOs. Using a most different systems design allows me to reject the different political histories, institutional structure, type of economy, and exceptionalism (such as size), upon which most case-specific explanations are based. Instead, I point at the political consequences of radical reforms in the name of neoliberalism, in which the spoils of privatization went to male-dominated insiders because they were part of established, informal elite networks. This political–economic process allowed for the consolidation of informal politics underneath formal institutions of representational democracy.

Not all informal politics corrupt formal institutions; many may complement, support, or reinforce formal politics, sometimes even promoting gender equality (Helmke and Levitsky 2004: 278; Grzymala-Busse 2010: 324). Informal networks of women across parties have been shown to help increase the number of women candidates, for example, in parties as informally organized as the PRI in pretransition Mexico (Bruhn 2003). Sometimes, political parties' leaders informally encourage women to run for office, either directly or through sending signals welcoming women as candidates (Cheng and Tavits 2011: 467). Much of women's organizing, inside and outside the state, is informal, in that it is often based on personal relationships and eschews formalization to foster horizontal ties. As Banaszak and Weldon (2011) suggest, informal institutions may promote gender equality, reinforcing formal rules of gender equality or undermining formal patriarchal rules. Regimes dominated by informal politics may pass gender equality policies "to signal political sympathies of the establishment or ruling party ….to create new patronage networks, or to curry support on a world stage" (Tripp 2006, 260).

However, I argue that, on the whole, informal rules and institutions tend to either undermine or replace the formal rules and institutions designed to promote women and gender equality (Banaszak and Weldon 2011: 262). Undermining formal rules—that is, contravening them directly or exploiting loopholes—allows elites to violate the spirit, but not the letter of the law. Regularized gatherings of male-dominated elite networks may substitute for formal institutions, such as legislatures, where women have made great strides. In both instances, these informal politics subvert the gender equality promises, constraining women and feminist elites' political behavior, serving as ways to make judgments about which elites to let into the inner circle, and preventing the more egalitarian distribution of resources. In both instances, there is a bait and switch in the interplay between the formal and the informal. The male-dominated elite networks are the confidence men, the formal rules of politics are the white lies, and the gendered informal "rules of the game" are the con.

Colloquially, people talk about this as corruption. This is not the bribe-paying conceptualization that prevails among anti-corruption advocates and within political science, but a broader critique that government is not working the way it is supposed to. These ideas were part of the Pots and Pans Protest in Iceland, the Occupy movements, Arab Spring, and Russian Winter of Protests. Like Anne Marie Goetz (2007) and Bjarnegård (2013), I am not making the kind of simplistic arguments that are seen about gender in the corruption literature, that women are less corrupt. Like Wedel (2014: 23), I see a new kind of corruption, which is more systemic and insidious, because it operates under the guise of a reconstituted government that promises to help citizens. It is not just that the "the center of policymaking gravity [has moved] away from formal organizations and toward epicenters of players and networks, that circle in, around, and also away from [formal] organizations," but that this sea change is profoundly gendered.

I would be remiss not to end with at least a note of possibility. The comparison shows that feminists have begun to adapt to these gendered informal politics, offering possibility of progressive change in ways that scholars may miss. While Russia's punk protest group Pussy Riot is more well known, Iceland's feminists have also masked themselves in frustration and embraced a new kind of guerrilla feminism. Russian activists have become more successful at "speaking in code" to insider elites, sneaking gender equality initiatives under national concerns such as protecting the family, while Icelandic feminists have been more likely to use humor and satire. These informal tactics, while not the broad-based mobilization of the 1970s in the West, may be the best hope for challenging this bait and switch.

Structure of the Book

The rest of the book takes these ideas about bait-and-switch male dominance, exploring the four sets of empirical questions through the comparison of Iceland and Russia. Examining the processes of economic liberalization in Russia and Iceland, Chap. 2 explains how the bait-and-switch male dominance came about. In both countries, liberalization in the 1990s created a wheeling-and-dealing economy in which male-dominated elites rewarded those inside their networks with spoils of money and power. I show how hegemonic masculinity and homosociality were essential to the process, even as formal politics offered opportunities for women elites. The 2008–2010 global economic crisis, which at first seemed like a critical juncture testing this neoliberal male dominance, especially in Iceland, has consolidated the bait and switch.

The third chapter explains how the influx of women into politics around the world is part of the twenty-first-century bait and switch. Women in Iceland and Russia have been fast-tracked, both formally and informally, but these women are recruited based on what Connell has called emphasized femininity. They are then boxed in by informal rules related to their gender and into formal policymaking bodies at the same time that policymaking has been informalized. As a result, while both countries now have more women in parliament than ever before, power is more male dominated.

In the fourth chapter, I use the book's blueprint of the interplay between formal and informal politics to show how professionalized NGOs and deradicalized "gender talk" represent the bait and switch of feminist mobilization in the neoliberal era. Comparing feminist mobilization in Russia and Iceland, this chapter shows how activists at first took the bait, leading to similar limitations as on women in politics. However, feminists have become increasingly aware of how they too have been boxed in, with a new stage of guerilla feminism which directly takes on the twenty-first-century form of male dominance.

The fifth chapter examines how bait-and-switch male dominance undermines gender equality policymaking through the examination of the most prominent issue in both countries, domestic violence. I argue that informal politics confounds each of the policy stages used within feminist policy studies, illustrated through the comparison of Russia and Iceland. The chapter shows how issue framing is often accomplished through style-switching (the modulation of language for different audiences and

contexts) and "speaking in code" (encrypting the problem within language about other problems), and getting policy adopted and implemented requires informal rule changes. Evaluating policy is muddled by the politics of statistics, in which both sides manipulate their data, and feminists, boxed in as they are, can sometimes be more successful using "secret handshakes" with elites than formal channels.

The conclusion summarizes the book's argument about twenty-first-century bait-and-switch male dominance. This includes why and how this new form of male dominance came about and the effect that it has on women (and other feminists) in politics, feminist mobilization, and gender equality policymaking. I draw out the implications for political science, showing how taking informal politics seriously extends the study of feminist political economy, women's representation, feminist and women's movements, and policymaking. The final section considers some practical suggestions for promoting equality.

Notes

1. In this book, I generally reserve the term "informal institutions" for phenomena commonly understood as institutions, such as legislatures, and use "informal rules" for the rest, as is now common in the literature.
2. Using Crawford and Ostrom's (1995) grammar of institutions, I use norms to mean culturally constructed patterns of behavior, often connected to identity, for which there are no clearly specified sanctions for violation. Norms about behavior, dress, verbal interactions, and so forth, play a role, but I argue that there is often more than just norms. The informal rules have clearly specified sanctions, even if, as Helmke and Levistky (2006: 21, 26) have specified, enforcement is rarely necessary.
3. Trained as a Russianist with two decades of fieldwork, I conducted fieldwork specifically for this project in Russia the summer of 2013. I interviewed 12 activists, 6 leaders at government women's crisis centers, and 5 insiders. I conducted fieldwork in Iceland in the summers of 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2015. I took an additional research trip to Iceland in October of 2010 for participant observation in a conference on violence against women and a women's day off. Over the five years, I interviewed 16 activists (some more than once), 14 insiders, and 5 scholars (for background since I do not read Icelandic). Because of the sensitive nature of this research, especially in Russia, I include no list of names. Within the text, only for those who gave me permission and for whom it still seemed safe, I refer to them by name.

My strategy for elite women was to ask about their decisions to enter politics, the obstacles they faced, and their strategies to get around these obstacles. I followed up with questions where the answers touched upon informal elite networks and informal practices, especially as they related to gender.

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CHAPTER 2

Liberalization: How Economic Reforms Consolidated a Bait-and-Switch Male Dominance

Introduction

When I first traveled to Iceland in the summer of 2010, average people would explain the recent economic crisis as when "the men stole all our money." Of course, this answer partially reflected populist rage at the virtual collapse of the Icelandic economy in the autumn of 2008, but it also had a pointed and unusual gender critique that rings true when the crisis is viewed through this book's blueprint. In Russia too, there were many ways that the men stole all the money in the years following the Soviet collapse, including the oligarchs and top leaders profiteering from privatization and then offshoring as the 2008 crisis hit Russia, but, as in most places, the read on these processes has been overwhelmingly gender-blind. The Icelanders' gender lens raises important questions about the economic liberalization that began in earnest in the 1990s in both Iceland and Russia and about changing the politics of male dominance.

This chapter examines the history of twenty-first-century male dominance, understood not just as the predominance of men in leading positions but also as the deployment of hegemonic masculinity and reliance on homosociality. Specifically, it investigates the question of how economic liberalization was a critical juncture in the establishment of a bait-and-switch male dominance. It also considers whether the global economic crisis of 2008–2010 undermined this new institutional arrangement. As

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introduced in Chap. 1, gendered informal politics, especially informal elite networks, informal rules, and informal institutions are a big part of this story.

I begin by discussing the critical political economy of liberalization and of the global economic crisis, developing three sets of questions raised by taking informal politics seriously. I then trace the processes of liberalization up through the acute crisis period of 2008–2009 through 2016 in the cases of Russia and Iceland. It is not a complete description of economic reform, with technical details of the economic reforms—sources for this information are referenced—but the detail needed to understand the transformation in male dominance. In conclusion, I tease out the comparison and the implications for understanding the gender equality paradox. In this chapter and the next, the focus is on economic and political elites not because I think that this gilded class deserves so much attention, but because we are all subject to their decisions. It is the core of male dominance that is, in the words of one feminist scholar from Iceland, "serious business, for men, women and all others" (Pétursdóttir 2009: 3). I argue that liberalization reconfigured gender in similar ways in both countries and that, despite heroic efforts and some reforms in Iceland, the resulting male dominance remains mostly the same after the global economic crisis.

Liberalization, Economic Crisis, and Gender

Across the world over the last half century, economies have been transformed by liberalization. By liberalization, I refer to changes that are promoted by advocates of neoliberalism, including deregulation by removing existing regulatory constraints and privatization of public ownership and control. Policies include "fiscal and monetary 'stabilization policies' (to reduce government spending, deficits, and aggregate demand)" and favoring export-oriented policies over development and growth, based on an underlying ideology of "market fundamentalism"—a belief that free markets facilitate perfect competition and most efficiently allocate resources (Peterson 2003). Neoliberals also call for free trade, the opening of borders to the flow of goods and capital. The promise of liberalization for non-capitalist regimes was not just growth for the economy as a whole, but the leveling of old elites—perhaps evening out gender and other inequality—as opportunities for new entrepreneurs were created.[1]

In contrast to these promises, critics of neoliberalism have shown how the reforms created a new wheeling-and-dealing capitalism. The reforms ushered in a period in which

> [s]tateless money was surging unanchored through integrated private financial markets across sovereign borders at lightning-fast speed and volatility, altering national interest rate levels, currency values, employment, savings and investment patterns, growth rates, and everyday human lives as it came and went. Its great size and force overwhelmed all government efforts to control it. Its internally driven financial dynamics often collided with, and effectively vetoed, national economic politics. (Solomon 1995)

As Nancy Fraser summarizes, "The state-managed capitalism of the postwar era has given way to a new form of capitalism—disorganised, globalising, neoliberal" (Fraser 2013). Centered in the economies of the United States, Germany, and Japan, this unfettered capitalism was the context into which communist economies rejoined the world economy. As the developed economies added a new, virtual, finance economy of new-fangled, incomprehensible fabrications, such as collateralized debt obligations and credit-default swaps, transitioning economies embraced the radical privatization of state resources.

Instead of leveling old elites and creating new opportunities for the rest of us, critics, such as Colin Crouch (2011), point out that this wild capitalism did the opposite of liberate. Neoliberal economic theory presupposes that the spheres of economics and politics are separate, but in the real world, elites were able to translate economic into political power and political into economic power. As David Harvey (2005) shows, neoliberalism is a class project, as old elites were able to convert their old power into new wealth and influence, what observers tend to call insider privatization. The release of millions of leaked documents from the Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca in 2016—the Panama Papers—exposed the open secret of how powerful figures across the world use tax shelters to hide the money that they absconded with.

The reforms in the name of neoliberalism also transformed politics. These dynamics shifted power away from governments to financial markets—and from legislative to executive branches, especially finance ministries—with many of the world's key economic decisions now being made by what Janine Wedel (2009) labels "the shadow elite," such as central bankers and informal economic advisors. In the seemingly democratic

United States, for example, not only has the president accumulated law-making powers over the last century, but policymaking has been out-sourced to contractors and federal advisory boards who supersede the Congress in setting federal program priorities and budget requests (Wedel 2009, Chap. 4). Insulated from electoral politics, the functions of these new, unelected elites are arcane to most citizens, their decisions are often made in closed meetings, and they are often partially chosen by the private sector. They are confidence men in that they must inspire the confidence of financial markets, in a world economy divorced from "underlying fundamentals" of resources, goods, and services (Solomon 1995). As Wedel (2009) shows, they are also confidence men in that they are part of the broader con of flexible operators who frequently cross public–private and formal–informal boundaries, disrupting the distinctions in ways that undermine economic justice and democracy. In the language of institutionalism, as elites were able to sometimes promulgate laws to suit their collective goals, liberalization has informalized politics even in systems with ostensibly strong formal institutions. "Formal procedures, hierarchies, and bureaucracies that have stood the test of time are giving way to trust-based informal social networks and ad hoc organizations" that lack democratic accountability (Wedel 2014: 18).

The economic crisis that began in the mid-2000s seemed to undermine the logic of liberalization (Karamessini 2014). The crisis began with the burst of a housing bubble in 2006–2007 in the United States and other developed economies, followed by an acute financial crisis that turned into a fiscal crisis for governments around the world. Countries dependent upon oil as key source of revenue were also hit by the drop in the price of oil, from a record peak in July 2008 to one-fifth six months later. Together, this created a global recession, with a far-reaching decline in economic growth into the next decade. Most economists admitted that the financial capitalism, with its high-risk complex financial instruments virtually unregulated by government, had placed the world's economy in peril (Karamessini 2014: 8). These pressures created political crises, with political entities', most notably the European Union, very survival threatened. The Arab Spring protests in 2010–2011 and Occupy movement in the autumn of 2011 questioned elites' greed and the globalized inequality. Yet, a decade out, there is little to suggest that the economic crisis was a critical juncture presenting a real challenge to the neoliberal system. Crouch (2011) argues that this "strange non-death of neoliberalism" reveals how the

interests and profitability of financial institutions are promoted to the detriment of free markets. Most of what was done in the crisis appears to have propped up elites and the new informality. By 2016, nationalist populism appeared to have won out, with Britain's vote to leave the European Union and the election of Donald Trump in the United States.

In these analyses, gender appears rarely, and when it does, it is only a dummy variable, that is, the category of sex used in cross-national economic analysis (Rubery 2011). As V. Spike Peterson (2003: 26) argues, even the critical international political economy "fails to engage the extensive feminist literature documenting not only how globalization affects gender (e.g. by feminizing labor-intensive employment) but also how gender shapes globalization (e.g. by assuming masculinist priorities)." As feminist political economists have shown, the gender-blind language of liberalization of economic policymakers, nationally and in international financial institutions, is a self-serving "strategic silence" that obscures the gendered dynamics and consequences (Young et al. 2011).

The book's blueprint for gendered informal politics, with gender as a complex phenomenon embedded in and essential to politics, suggests three sets of questions essential to examining the dynamics of the so-called liberalization and the recent global economic crisis.

Gender and Racialized Capture of Elite Networks?

Feminists political economists argue that the elites who came to dominance during liberalization were almost all male and mostly white: white men constitute almost all the "national, international, and global policymakers, financial and investment firm executives; investment strategies of global firms; global-trotting technical and 'knowledge' experts; media moguls; and advertising and marketing agents with global reach" (Peterson 2003: 118; True 2014: 332). A quick look, for example, at a map of the world key central bankers in the late 1980s and early 1990s in the United States, Europe, and Asia finds that not one was female (Solomon 1995: 9–15). In Wedel's (2009) map of core shadow elite under the George W. Bush administration, all were male. Hedge fund managers remain overwhelmingly male (Tilson 2014). Until the crisis, those in charge of economic decisions in the leading international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Group of Eight leading economies have been virtually all men and overwhelmingly white.

On the surface, this has begun to change since the beginning of the global economic crisis. Women penetrated into the domestic financial architecture, with Christine Lagarde as G8's first woman finance minister of France (2007–2011), Russia's head of central bank Elvira Nabiullina (since 2013), and the United States's chair of the Federal Reserve Janet Yellen (since 2014). Lagarde ascended into the global financial architecture as head of the IMF in 2011, replacing Dominique Strauss-Kahn famous for being a playboy and who was brought down in a sex scandal. A myriad of neoliberal actors, such as Credit Suisse Research Institute, now see gender balance as key to sound decision-making and long-term economic growth, recommending gender quotas for corporate boards and regulatory agencies (True 2014: 331–334). The presence of women is now being monitored by a variety of actors, including the World Economic Forum and The Economist, as benchmarks of a country's economy.

This is male dominance in its simplest form, as only the proportion of men to women. Are these claims about the gendered and racialized capture undermined or bolstered if we expand male dominance to flexible, informal elite networks that cross politics and economics? Who are the real power brokers that are dominating elite networks? What role do economic elites, the oligarchs, and the tycoons play? To what degree have the male-dominated elite networks working across government and the economy been undermined by the recent global crisis? Do these newly placed women, who penetrated the most formal part of the financial architecture during the economic crisis, suggest a change in the dynamics of male dominance or has power shifted elsewhere again?

Hegemonic Masculinity and Homosociality as Rationalization and in Informal Rules?

Feminist political economists contend that this gendered and racialized capture of the positions dominating the global political economy is not coincidental. Peterson (2003) argues that liberalization resulted from the ways that gendered and racialized ideologies and symbols were used to excuse egregious behaviors and policy. Just as "the masculinized identity of breadwinner and head-of-household depends on the feminized identity of housewife, care-giver, and helpmate," so does the "overvalorized pay for elites depend on undervalorized pay—or no pay—for denigrated (feminized) labor" (81). The various biases have allowed liberalization, such as fiscal constraint rather than raising taxes, and are gendered in their

consequences (Young et al. 2011). It is the elite men and their families who pay few taxes in the new economy, while non-elite women and immigrants, often relegated to provisional low-paid and/or part-time jobs, often depend on state transfer payments for health, welfare, and education. Many of the terms for economic elites have a gendered core, with magnate meaning "great man" (from Latin) and tycoon meaning "great lord" (from Japanese).

Feminist political economists assert that the global economic crisis has been similarly gendered and racialized in its ideological justifications and consequences. As Sylvia Walby (2015) explains, "After the first wave of the recession when men lost their jobs, women have borne the brunt of austerity." In many countries, the risks that non-elite individuals face were privatized (while financial risks of large corporations socialized), leaving women-headed households, which often lack the wealth in more precarious positions (Young et al. 2011). The Panama Papers' list of tax dodgers included many more men than women (Zarya 2016).

Seeing these insights through the book's blueprint translates these assertions about gendered and racialized ideologies into questions about hegemonic masculinity and homosociality used as rationalization, but also embedded in informal rules used to keep elites in line. Did the combination of hegemonic masculinity and homosociality in the male-dominated elite networks help rationalize the purported liberalization? Using the metaphor of the bait and switch, did hegemonic masculinity facilitate male elites becoming confidence men, especially on technical matters in finance (Connell and Wood 2005), or in the ability "to get things done" such as major, risky economic reforms? As suggested in feminist institutionalism, was the power of informal elite networks fostered by informal rules relying on hegemonic masculinity and homosociality? Did the economic crisis delegitimate the neoliberal ideology—especially the hegemonic masculinity and homosociality that sustain it—in any meaningful ways?

Informalization as Gendered and Racialized?

Peterson (2003) points out that the offshifting of power from elected legislatures is gendered because that is where women, if and when they gain access, tend to be located, while power is shifted to the executive and private or semi-governmental entities where men have congregated. Attempts to address the economic crisis, as Walby (2015: 2) asserts, have

missed how the problems are "more deeply rooted, involving the separation of finance from the democratic processes," with gender as the link.

Seeing this process through the book's blueprint rephrases these insights as about informalization of politics. Did liberalization—bolstered as it was by the combination of hegemonic masculinity and homosociality—emasculate formal, deliberative bodies and consolidate new informal rules and institutions in ways that empowered elite men? Does seeing gender and informality reveal how real deliberation may be even more informalized than in unelected advisory boards, but in single-sex spaces, such as the naked sauna or on the golf course? (Until 2008, US women senators were banned from the Senate swimming pool, with the justification that some men senators liked to swim naked [Mundy 2015].) Since liberalization, are these merely informal access points or have they become informal institutions? Has the economic crisis done anything to strengthen formal, constitutional politics, especially within the legislative and judicial branches, and weaken informal institutions and rules? In sum, did liberalization constitute a bait-and-switch male dominance in which formal rules of gender equality are subverted by gendered informal politics?

Russia

Before Liberalization

Before the so-called liberalization, male dominance was shaped by the Soviet system in which informal institutions dominated under a veneer of formal institutions. With women heavily recruited into the labor force, the Bolsheviks promised a revolution in gender relations (Lapidus 1978). The Soviet system even made specific efforts to advance women into politics, establishing a Women's Department within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and adopting what we would now consider an informal party quota of one-third for the highest Soviet legislative body, the Supreme Soviet (Polenina 2003). In lower levels of politics, women constituted almost one-half by the 1970s, surpassing their Western counterparts in their involvement in local politics.

However, even ethnic Russian women rarely succeeded at getting near the pinnacle of real power. The Supreme Soviet was a weak, formal institution in a system controlled by the Communist Party, with elections largely uncompetitive and which rubber-stamped decisions made by the Party

(Rueschemeyer and Wolchik 2009: 8–9). The more powerful Party institutions had what Dahlerup and Leyenaar (2013: 10) call a male monopoly, with men constituting more than 90%. All of the de facto leaders were men. In the next level down, the highest executive and legislative committee of the party, the Politburo, there was only one woman from 1917 until 1986, when perestroika brought in two women.[2] At the same time, the Central Committee, which had been mostly symbolic, reached its historic low with 87% men (Browning 1987).

There were other elite networks working throughout the Soviet Union, especially within the force structures such as the KGB as well as within the economy, but the Communist Party was the fulcrum, with some formalized rules, but a lot of informal networking and personalized exchanges. The whole society was built around networks characterized as *blat*, the use of friendship and family networks as a way to get around often rigid and impossible formal rules (Ledeneva 1998). As Wedel (2009: 53–54) explains about these kinds of systems, "people exhibited stunning disregard for official institutions, [and the] networks and practices typically ascribed to the informal realm … penetrated the workings of the official, formal one … at the system's highest reaches, formal and informal were often fused, as were state and private, bureaucratic and market."

This evidence shows that the male dominance in the Soviet system was "faux emancipation" (Kochkina 2007: 102). There was no bait and switch as the formal realm was not substantial enough to offer credible promise of equality or representation. It was an open secret that women in the Supreme Soviet were "tokens" or "ornaments" in token or ornamental institutions of official government. Their male counterparts were the "professionals," with longer tenure in power and with parallel Party positions.

Liberalization

Changes in the political economy began under Gorbachev, but most of what is seen as liberalization in Russia was undertaken in the 1990s. Liberalization is generally understood as occurring in three stages: (1) price liberalization and the beginning of the privatization of firms in 1992, (2) "loan-for-shares" privatization in the mid-1990s, and (3) the imposition of a flat tax, revision of labor laws to allow for easier termination of employees, revision in the pension system, easing the processes for creating new businesses, and decreased government spending in the early

2000s (see Frye 2010). After two-thirds of state-owned enterprises had been privatized, there has been some backtracking on privatization over the last decade, with government reasserting control over some private companies in strategic sectors of economy, and some increases in state ownership in a number of other important companies (Frye 2010: 190). After a great economic depression in the 1990s, Russia's economy grew between 1999 and 2008, from the 23rd biggest economy to the 9th, mostly because of increases in the prices of oil and gas.

The result of liberalization was not a capitalism of entrepreneurship, production, and consumption, but a type of wheeling-and-dealing political economy of wealth creation and exploiting rivals' vulnerabilities (Hill and Gaddy 2013). Liberalization did not eliminate the informal networking and bartering or unseat the old nomenklatura elites (Robinson 2012). Instead, old elites retained power even as new elites emerged, and the state's wealth was redistributed from the poor to the wealthy, who then sent their wealth abroad. Control of former state enterprises went to insider businessmen and bankers, resulting in "the concentration of economic power into the hands of a group of financiers, who had a considerable media presence and political clout" (Robinson 2012: 34; Frye 2010: 174–179). Observers tend to describe the process as "insider privatization" in which old elites were able to leverage their political status for economic gain and continued political control—or sometimes as "state capture," the "systematic activity of individuals or groups to influence and shape the laws, politics, and regulations of the state to their advantage by providing illicit and nontransparent private benefits to public officials and politicians" (The World Bank 2011: 7). Russia's currency crashed in 1998, weakening some elites, but mostly destroying the emergent middle class. As Wedel (2009: 54–55) explains, "The [Soviet] system was tailor-made for the privatization of power … [with] the under-the-radar dealings, dirty togetherness with a trusted few, playing on the margins of legality, and parallel ethical constructs." While Vladimir Putin promised a less oligarchic economy—symbolized by exiling two oligarchs and imprisoning a third—there was instead a new informal agreement with the oligarchs in which they could keep their wealth if they supported the regime (Dawisha 2014: Chap. 6).

This liberalization process was gendered, most obviously in the makeup of the elites. If we look at top powerholders up to the crisis, virtually all have been men, especially in those positions that allow access to spoils. Every president and prime minister in Russia's formal dual executive has

been a man. All the economic ministers when the state was plundered were men. Until 2010, all but two governors had been men, with one of those two women relegated to a sparsely populated, far-flung region, which has since been merged into a larger one.[3] Virtually all of the super-governors who ruled over federal districts imposed in 2000 on top of the constitutionally federal regions were men.[4] In maps of informal elite networks drawn by think tanks and scholars alike, only one woman in the 1990s and two in the 2000s made it into the outer circle (e.g. Sakwa 2011; Minchenko Consulting 2012). While representing an increase from the Soviet period and mostly remaining a male monopoly, the proportion of men was the least in the formal bicameral legislature (see Table 2.1). In the economy, there was even more male dominance. Virtually all the oligarchs of Russia's wild capitalism in the 1990s were men. The three that Putin saw as the biggest threat were men, as were the top eight left standing. In *Forbes* annual review of the world's billionaires in 2007, 53 had Russian citizenship, only one of which, in the middle of the pack, was a woman, the wife of the powerful Moscow mayor (The World's Billionaires 2007).

Hegemonic masculinity was one linchpin. Even Yeltsin, who later became a sickened drunk and laughing stock, gained power from standing on a tank against Soviet hardliners in 1991. The Western reformers who came to "rescue" Russia (under the mentorship of Lawrence Summers, who later alleged that women lacked the "aptitude [of men] at the high end") and their Russian counterparts had a masculine swagger that was used to rationalize their arrogance and their self-enrichment (Wedel 2009, Chap. 5). The oligarchs, especially those that survived Putin's putsch, made playboy masculinity a big part of their identity. Always-a-bachelor, precious-metals-turned-finance-guru Mikhail Prokhorov, known for his sex appeal, martial arts practice, and penchant for partying, paid the way for so many single women to travel to France in 2007 that the French prosecutor had him arrested for prostitution (the charges were dropped); he then bought a professional US men's basketball team. Roustam Tariko, the chief sponsor of the Miss Russia Pageant, exploited the winners in his company's advertisements and at his lavish parties. Oligarch Roman Abramovich, who was also governor of Arctic Chukotka in 2001–2008, bought Britain's Chelsea Football club and the biggest yacht in the world.

The rise of Vladimir Putin, the former KGB colonel who became president in 2000 and kept his power, even when he stepped into the prime minister position 2008–2012, made the role of hegemonic masculinity

Table 2.1 Men in Russia's executive and legislatures, 1993–2016

President	Prime minister	Years with elections in Duma	Duma	Federation Council
Boris Yeltsin (1991–1999)	Yegor Gaidar (1992) Viktor Chernomyrdin (1992–8) Sergey Kirienko (1998) Yevgeny Primakov (1998–9) Sergei Stepashin (1999) Vladimir Putin (1999–2000)	1993	86.5%	94.8%
		1995	90.0%	99.0%
		1999	92.4%	96.6%
Vladimir Putin (2000–2008)	Mikhail Kasyanov (2000–4) Mikhail Fradkov (2004–7) Viktor Zubkov (2007–8)	2003	90.2%	96.6%
		2007	86.0%	95.3%
Dmitry Medvedev (2008–2012)	Vladimir Putin (2008–2012)	2011	86.4%	95.3%
Vladimir Putin (2012–present)	Dmitry Medvedev (2012–present)	2016	84.7%	82.9%

Sources: Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016); Russian Federation Duma (2016)
Note: Shading based on Drude Dahlerup and Monique Leyenaar's (2013: 8–10) measurement of the degree of male dominance: the darkest color is "male monopoly" (90% or more men in legislature or a man in the executive), next darkest is "small minority of women" (75–90% men), "large minority of women" (60–75% men), and "gender balance" (40–60% men)

spectacularly visible (Johnson and Saarinen 2013; Sperling 2015). What began with a PR campaign to show off Putin's ability "to get things done" because of his KGB history, by the mid-2000s turned into an explicit campaign to play out Putin's manliness. The Kremlin distributed images of tough-guy Putin, often with a bare sculpted chest or illustrating his manly prowess. Putin's image was high-glossed and sexualized as the only man that women—and the whole country—should want. Unlike most statesmen who must appear with their wives at their sides (but not unlike most of his predecessors), Putin made his wife invisible, and most Russians saw no problem when his divorce was made public in 2013—or with his alleged dalliance with a much younger, former gymnast and legislator Alina Kabaeva, perhaps even fathering her children. His command of hegemonic masculinity in Russia relegated Dmitry Medvedev, who briefly interrupted Putin's presidencies, to the position of sidekick.

The power of the personal-professional networks, headed by Putin since the early 2000s (Sharafutdinova 2010; Ledeneva 2013; Dawisha 2014; Hale 2015), was also predicated on informal rules infused with hegemonic masculinity and homosociality. Refashioning *blat* for the new environment, elites mobilized *kompromat,* real or made-up compromising materials, to undermine competition or limit disloyalty (Ledeneva 2006), but these compromising materials mix allegations of abuse of office, disloyalty, or incompetence with titillating questions about sexual behavior, orientation, or sufficient masculinity. For example, when Putin was head of the KGB successor, a video of Russia's prosecutor general—or someone who looked a lot like him—in bed with two women was shown on TV, causing the prosecutor (who had been investigating corruption) to lose his job (Higgins 2016). (As one of my informants from the opposition summarized, "everywhere here—in all politics and economics—is built on corruption … everyone has something on somebody else.") To hold the networks together, elites revived and revised the tradition of *krugovaia poruka*, the enforced solidarity, and mutual cover-up of informal networks, which relies on masculinized violence or threats of violence. (Ledeneva [2006: 106] illustrates the *krugovaia poruka* with a political cartoon of men in suits standing in a circle with guns pointed at each other.) Those who lack "administrative resources"—the Russian term for homosociality—are shut out of power (Popova 2013).

While elites are tied to Putin in various ways, such as having worked with him in St. Petersburg government in the 1990s or having a dacha in the same cooperative, the importance of homosociality and hegemonic

masculinity is most evident in those tied through shared experience in the security or military services (Ledeneva 2013). These *siloviki* call for more order engineered by a strong state, with imported cultural traditions, such as secrecy, that help keep women out (Sakwa 2011). Putin's relationship with the *siloviki* may be uneasy at times, but his idealization of the *siloviki* culture—a homosocial experience impossible for women to share—began in his early childhood. His periodic misogynistic comments—such as praising the Israeli president indicted for rape ("Things You Didn't Know" 2014)—are signals to the *siloviki* that he is one of them. Policy requests are often indicated by implicit rather than clear instructions, allowing for plausible denial. Putin's penchant for slipping in vulgarity into his otherwise quite formal Russian is another way of playing up his hegemonic masculinity (Dougherty 2015). In Putin's informal agreement with the oligarchs—the first step in his consolidation of power—he reportedly told the oligarchs in colorful and sexist Russian idiom, "snatch all you want but don't fuck me."[5] In other words, despite his proclamations of rooting out those who had purloined the national resources, he was giving them permission to keep it up, but just to make it less visible, less likely to reflect badly on him, and establishing a system in which they had to pay up for this protection.

Liberalization, undergirded by hegemonic masculinity and homosociality, fostered the informalization of politics. As evidenced most clearly in Putin's control even after he became prime minister in 2008, formal posts can vary greatly based on the office holder, with real power in other posts lacking formal powers or having other specified formal powers. Over time, Putin's regime also institutionalized parallel, paraconstitutional, or informal institutions. In the executive, for example, there is now what amounts to a second government under the presidency. In the legislature, Russia's Federation Council and Duma have been undercut by the establishment of the Presidium of the State Council (in 2000) and the Public Chamber (in 2005) (Sakwa 2010: 194). Similarly, the United Russia political party was created as a façade to mask the actual political competition that is parapolitical, that is "hidden and factional" between elites without popular constituencies or openly expressed agendas (196). And, the regime "employs unfair electoral practices to an extent that deprives elections of their primary functions of political choice and elite circulation, and reduces them to a mere tool of legitimisation and mobilisation of support" (Golosov 2011: 623). Finally, while constitutionally federal, Putin's Russia is practically centralized, with the exception of Chechnya where governor Ramzan

Kadyrov has not just the constitutionally established powers, but a "virtual monopoly over the legitimate use of force" (Marten 2012).

Russianists have given various labels to the resulting system, some of which accent the political economy—such as "crony capitalism" (Sharafutdinova 2010) or "kleptocracy" (Dawisha 2014). Others, especially before the global economic crisis, emphasize the kind of hybrid politics in which formal, more democratic institutions persist, even as challenged, if not subverted by, informal networks, rules, and institutions (e.g. Sakwa 2011; Gel'man 2004). Gender is most evident—although not to the scholars themselves—in the use of terms such as neopatrimonialism and patronalism to refer to regimes in which personalistic relations place a crucial role, with their seemingly obvious gendered root (e.g. Laruelle 2012; Hale 2015). As Weber pointed out years ago, this kind of rule has a "patriarchal core" reliant on appeals to "political fatherhood;" "family arrangements and symbols are extended into the public sphere and … the ruler [claims that he] 'owns' his subjects as he does his wife and children" (Charrad and Adams 2011: 52).[6] In these ways, by the mid-2000s, Russia had constituted bait-and-switch male dominance—what Sperling (2015: 252) calls "a patriarchal hydra"—in which gendered informal politics sabotaged the postcommunist constitutional promises of equality.

Economic Crisis

Not well integrated into the international markets, Russia was hit by the global economic crisis in the autumn of 2008, following a war with neighboring Georgia and the precipitous decline in oil prices. In 2009, the economy shrunk by 8%, large companies went bankrupt, and unemployment and underemployment surged. Putin's response did not seem liberal, but it also didn't seem to be anti-liberal. Russia did not nationalize during 2008–2009; some state assets were even sold off (Hill and Gaddy 2013). Russia recovered quickly relative to other countries, with the highest growth rates of the G8 in 2011, mostly a result of the oil prices, which rebounded in 2010–2011. Despite the rallying economy, the regime was rocked by protests following legislative elections in December of 2011, in which voters documented widespread fraud and questioned Putin's decision to return to the presidency. The protests were effectively repressed by the summer of 2012. In 2014, following Russia's annexation of Crimea (which had been part of Ukraine) and ongoing interventions in Eastern Ukraine, the United States, Canada, Japan, and the European Union

imposed economic sanctions on Russia. Oil prices took another deep drop and the ruble crashed in 2015, leading the economy into another economic crisis and another round of privatization in 2016.

Though women made some gains in formal politics (see Chap. 3), the gendered makeup, especially among the most powerful, remained a male monopoly headed by Putin. As best conceptualized by Hale (2015: Chap. 1), this is patronalism in which one person heads a system "where individuals organize their political and economic pursuits primarily around the personalized exchange of concrete rewards and punishments … not primarily around abstract, impersonal principles." Though some oligarchs lost their fortunes in this economic roller coaster, the economy remained controlled by a few men. In 2013, some 100 billionaires in Russia owned more than one-third of the economy, "the most unequal of all developed and emerging economies," with all being men except for one woman near the bottom of the list (Dawisha 2014: 1). By another estimate, one quarter of the economy—all the key sectors such as the production and transportation of oil and gas, railways, banks, media, construction, and engineering—was controlled by Putin's close friends, all men (338–339). The power of these political-economic networks was recognized in the US sanctions, which targeted individual Russian citizens, all but one of whom were men (1–3). After spearing another oligarch (Vladimir Yevtushenkov) and taking control of his oil company (Bashneft), Putin reportedly gathered the remaining (male) oligarchs and gave them a renegotiated "contract" (Myers and Becker 2014). With less vulgarity and more mystery, he reportedly told them, "A chicken can exercise ownership of eggs, and it can get fed while it's sitting on the egg, but it's not really their egg." Putin's wealth is one of the many state secrets, but experts estimate that in 2016 he had between $40 to some $200 billion in secret shareholdings, making him the richest man in Europe (Russia BBC Panorama 2016). This wealth is reflected in lavish palaces and expensive accoutrements, such as watches, clothing, and vehicles; the leaks from the Panama Papers suggest how he is protecting his money: through secret, offshore accounts in the names of his most trusted friends (Obermaier and Obermayer 2016). Even sidekick Medvedev appears to have amassed enormous resources, including a $90 million estate near Moscow, using a collective of mostly school chums to hide his assets—gifts from oligarchs—under various private and charitable foundations (Navalnyi 2017).

More importantly, the hegemonic masculinity and homosociality that supported liberalization have been strengthened. As a young initiate into

a women's informal network with ties to power (Otlichnitsy) explained to me in 2013, "all [politics] is under a cloud, and men have long known the political game." On this, the opposition agrees: "there is a macho style of politics. Look at how Putin and [his foreign minister] Lavrov talk with other governments, like hooligans, also how Putin talks to his citizens, threatening to throw them in prison." In government, the network of economic internationalists—where women such as Russia's new central bank head had some sway—has taken a backseat to the *siloviki*. Their ascension is seen not just in the warmongering, but in the redoubling the use of gendered informal rules illustrated in their dramatic enforcement. In 2012, compromising information of Defense Minister Anatoly Serdiukov's affair was released, resulting in him losing the protection of his father-in-law, a former prime minister and friend of Putin, and his job. (As explained by a feminist in an opposition party, Serdiukov violated Putin's unwritten code by living with his girlfriend while still married.) Several opponents were caught in a "honey pot"—in which an attractive woman captures men in compromising positions—while a video was circulated of journalist, Putin satirist, and one-time politician wannabe Viktor Shenderovich masturbating, framed as something shameful for real men. In 2016, a videotape of Mikhail Kasyanov, a former prime minister and key opposition leader for the upcoming elections, was played on national television, which showed him having sex with a female member of the opposition, followed by pillow talk in which Kasyanov appears to admit to skimming money, to dismiss his fellow opposition leaders, and to agree to make sure his lover has position in the Duma "with a fat paycheck" (Klikushin 2016). Other opponents of the regime allege that child pornography has been planted on their computers, casting them as pedophiles, a charge very hard to refute (Higgins 2016).

In the last several years, there was more evidence that the Putin regime uses violent enforcement mechanisms with gendered and sexualized logics. Opposition leader Boris Nemtsov was murdered in 2015, a few steps from the Kremlin, not long after he teased that "Putin found Russia's G-spot" by annexing Crimea (Cullison 2014). Both Spanish Courts and another opposition leader (Alexei Navalnyi) put together evidence of Putin's cronies working with Russia's most violent gangs (Gessen 2016). In contrast, nepotism, with the exception of one of Putin's daughters who appears to have become a billionaire through a Moscow-based university expansion project, tends to go to the sons of the loyal elites. Putin felt compelled to reject these assertions in his end of the year broadcast in 2015, asking

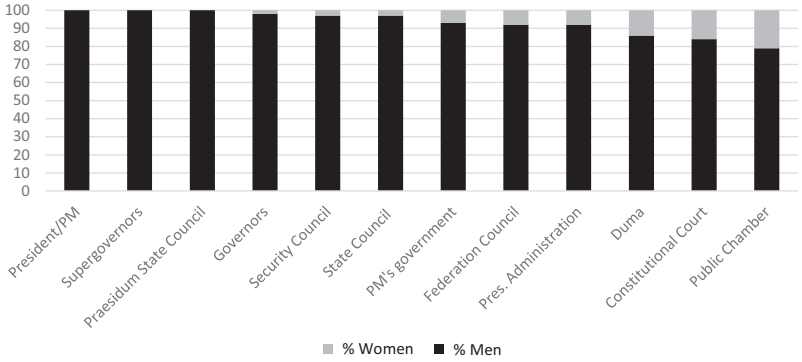

Fig. 2.1 Percentage of men in Russia's political institutions, 2013. Sources: Gosurdarstvennyi sovet (2012); President of Russia Major Staff (2012); Gubernatori.ru 2013; Sostav Soveta Bezopasnosti (2012); Sostav Pravitel'stva Rossii (2013); Sovet po realizatsii prioritetnykh natsional'nykh proektov (2013); Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016)

whether Turkish leaders had shot down a Russian warplane because they had "decided to lick the Americans in a certain place" (Dougherty 2015).

Power remained informalized and gendered, with men over-represented in the institutions of real power, whether formal such as the dual executive or paraconstitutional (see Fig. 2.1). The power of these institutions has shifted over time, with women entering institutions and posts when the institutions lose power. For example, until the crisis, almost all governors had been men because they had to be strong patrons in their own right who relied upon hegemonic masculinity and homosociality to accrue and maintain power. Once Putin established his patronal "power vertical" over the governors, women became more likely in these less powerful posts: governors no longer had to constitute their own regional power bases, but instead are chosen based on loyalty to the regime (Golosov 2011). Similar changes occurred in the formal legislature, especially the Federation Council, which lost its power over time and became less male-dominated after 2013. In this personalistic political system dominated by patron Putin, even these paraconstitutional institutions probably do not reflect the real arenas for deliberation, which appear to be personal sit-downs with Putin, such as with the top oligarchs. After the 2011–2012 protests, power has been further informalized. Igor Sechin—reportedly a former intelligence agent like Putin, a former deputy prime minister in Putin's cabinet, and current head of the state oil company (Rosneft)—is seen

as the second most powerful person in Russia, not Medvedev. Even the Foreign Ministry, headed by Putin's long-term crony, no longer appears in charge of major aspects of Russia's foreign policy (Soldatov 2016). Evidence about the operation of Russia's elite friends trying to skirt laws was found in a box in a sauna belonging to a senior Ukrainian official, suggesting the importance of such spaces to inner elite discussions (Kramer 2014).

In terms of gender, the most important shift has been the consolidation of an alliance with the Russian Orthodox Church based on a shared critique of Western "gender ideology" (Moss forthcoming). (The church's Patriarch Kirill openly supported Putin's return to the presidency as "God's miracle," and Putin had an official celebration for Kirill at the Kremlin [Sperling 2015: 273].) Kirill declared "feminism very dangerous, because feminist organisations proclaim the pseudo-freedom of women, which, in the first place, must appear outside of marriage and outside of the family" (Elder 2013). The new church-state "anti-gender" campaign, which resembles others across Europe, opposes gender equality, reproductive rights, sex education, and LGBTQ rights (Moss forthcoming). Putin and his allies have incorporated this aggressive version of male dominance, defining Russian nationalism in contrast to "Gayropa," that is, degenerate Western democracy where one can choose their gender and sexuality (Riabov and Riabova 2014). With this new legitimation strategy, Putin's party, United Russia, won big in 2016 Duma elections, securing three-fourths of the seats, more than enough to change Russia's constitution.

Iceland

Before Liberalization

Before liberalization, male dominance in Iceland was molded by post-colonial gendered nationalism and clientelism. The country's nineteenth- to twentieth-century pursuit of independence from Denmark, as in other post-colonial resistance, tended to cast the feminine as the opposite of the more superior masculine equated with the quest for democracy and autonomy (Pétursdóttir 2009: 9–10; Gústafsdóttir et al. 2010: 1–9). Specific to Iceland is the Viking heritage, which remained a crucial part of hegemonic masculinity, with the ideal male being involved in labor and having a heritage that could be traced back to the founders. When US troops replaced Danish colonialism after World War II, Icelandic authorities sought and achieved patriarchal and racist provisions as preconditions, reflecting a

nationalistic concern about protecting Icelandic women from the sexual predation of American men (especially black men who were formally banned until 1961) (Ingimundarson 2004). As Iceland focused on modernization—it was one of the poorest countries in Europe after World War II—trying to catch up with other Nordic countries, protecting Icelandic manhood was a key part of the prevailing ideology (Loftsdóttir 2012).

Against this backdrop, the inclusion of women into formal politics was a result of women's collective efforts, part of transnational and Nordic waves of social movements (Johnson et al. 2013). Having gained suffrage around the same time as women in the Soviet Union, women were mobilized again in the late 1970s to push for more women in politics (Styrkársdóttir 1999). In 1980, women's groups supported the election (and thrice re-election) of Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, the first woman president for Iceland and for the world. In 1981, in response to feminists' frustration with the slow progress and the low number of women in government, activists created women's lists for local elections and then created a woman's party, the Women's Alliance. Women from the lists were elected in local elections in 1982. A year later, the Women's Alliance secured 5.5% of the vote and, in 1987, a total of 10.1% in national parliamentary (*Alþingi*) elections (90).

However, despite these remarkable achievements, women's entrance into politics did not destabilize male dominance. Even the formal system remained a male monopoly, with less than 10% women in parliament until the 1980s, markedly more male-dominated than its Nordic neighbors (Icelandic Centre for Gender Equality 2015). Iceland's president, while elected in a national election, is mostly a symbolic role in a system that has functioned mostly as parliamentary (Kristjánsson 2004: 163). More importantly, the whole system was clientelistic (Kristinsson 2012), with politics dominated by one political party, the center-right Independence Party, which was heavily influenced by a few groups of families, colloquially referred to as "the Octopus," which dominated the leading economic sectors (Wade and Sigurgeirsdottir 2010). The second most powerful party, the Progressive Party, was dominated by a second kinship-based group known as the Squid. Party patronage was common, as the Independence Party, the party of "officialdom and the establishment in Iceland," established local party machines that competed for access to services, licenses, and other favors on behalf of the business community and made partisan appointments to public sector jobs (Kristinsson 2012: 189). As Bjarnegård (2013) found about clientelism in Thailand, this clientelistic system was

more male-dominated than formal politics: there were no matriarchs running these families, and homosociality provided important social capital.

This evidence demonstrates that Iceland too had faux emancipation, though the formal institutions and promises of gender equality were more substantial (Johnson et al. 2013). With party patronage and system-wide clientelism being challenged by popular protests in the 1970s (including coming from powerfully organized feminists), and declining by the 1980s (Kristinsson 2012), it began to seem that real gender equality was possible.

Liberalization

Between 1991 and 2003, "Iceland's economy quickly went from being one of the most regulated and state-controlled economies in Europe to being one of the most liberalized in the world" (Skaar Viken 2011: 316). First, corporate tax rates were lowered, and some state-owned enterprises privatized. Second, in 1994, Iceland joined the European Economic Area, the free-trade area that expands beyond the European Union. Most significantly, from 1998 to 2003, the small, mostly publicly owned banking sector was privatized. The government then removed the boundaries between investment and the government-backed commercial banking, allowing the banks to "self-regulate," backed by government protection for failure. These reforms, in the middle of the globalizing finance economy, led the banks to embrace the new finance economy, constructing a Ponzi scheme of consumer and bank loans and then of more complicated financial vehicles. All of this was justified in a widespread propaganda campaign illustrating that Iceland was the neoliberal success story, a new financial capital fortuitously positioned on the continental divide between Europe and North America (Iceland Special Investigation Commission 2010: vol. 1, 212 vol. 8, 192). The apparent results were a booming economy until 2008. However, instead of opening up the economy, the privatization of the banks went primarily into the hands of the Independence Party and their ally, the Progressive Party, as well as their supporters (Wade and Sigurgeirsdottir 2010; Skaar Viken 2011; Tranøy 2011). Similar to Russia, it was insider privatization in which the leaders' well-placed friends reaped rewards through flawed and non-transparent means, including privatized banks and natural resources.

This process was gendered, as liberalizers were overwhelmingly male, especially those who benefited in terms of prestige or money (Gissurarson 2006: 8; Johnson et al. 2013). While women in parliament moved from

male monopoly all the way to "a large minority of women" in Dahlerup and Leyenaar's (2013) measure of the degree of male dominance (see Table 2.2), as one insider put it, "women were strong within a male-dominated society, with men at the top." The key political player was Davíð Oddsson who seized the reins of the Independence Party and became prime minister in 1991, one of the most powerful prime ministers since independence (Kristjánsson 2004: 160). In 2004, he stepped into the role

Table 2.2 Men in Iceland's executive and legislature, 1991–2017

President	Prime minister Political party	Years with parliamentary elections	Alþingi
Vigdís Finnbogadóttir (1980–96)	Davíð Oddsson (1991–2003) Independence Party	1991	76.2%
		1995	74.6%
Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson (1996–2016)		1999	65.1%
	Halldór Ásgrímsson (2004–6) Progressive Party	2003	69.8%
	Geir Haarde (2006–9) Independence Party	2007	66.7%
	Johanna Sigurðardóttir (2009–) Social Democratic Alliance	2009	57.1%
	Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson (2013–16) Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson (2016) Progressive Party	2013	58.7%
Guðni Thorlacius Jóhannesson (2016–present)	Bjarni Benediktsson (2017–present) Independence Party	2016	52.4%

Sources: Althingi-Women in Parliament (2013); Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016)
Note: Shading based on Drude Dahlerup and Monique Leyenaar's (2013: 8–10) measurement of the degree of male dominance: the darkest color is "male monopoly" (90% or more men in legislature or a man in the executive), next darkest is "small minority of women" (75–90% men), "large minority of women" (60–75% men), and "gender balance" (40–60% men)

of chair of the Central Bank (2005–2009), while Halldór Ásgrímsson, who had been foreign minister, became prime minister. His successor, Geir Haarde, was minister of finance from 1998 to 2005, and then prime minister from 2006 to 2009. The tycoons of the new economy were virtually all male. The most prominent were Jón Asgeir Johannesson, a grocery magnate who acquired control of a privatized bank and then bought one of Iceland's two major newspapers, and Björgólfur Thor Björgólfsson, the great grandson of Iceland's first big businessman and Iceland's first billionaire in 2005, having gained control of another privatized bank. (A self-declared "deal junkie," Björgólfsson's first wealth came from his investments, especially in brewing beer, in Saint Petersburg, in the early 1990s when Putin was in charge of foreign licensing.)

Hegemonic masculinity was explicitly used to rationalize radical liberalization (Johnson et al. 2013). Oddsson cast himself as a self-made man, one who had overcome the lack of family ties in politics that had been essential in postindependence politics. Iceland's once left-leaning president Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson claimed authority that Icelandic presidents had never had, and—in his 2005 speech, "How to Succeed in Modern Business: Lessons from the Icelandic Voyage"—explained that Iceland's Viking heritage made Icelandic entrepreneurs into unique "risk takers … daring and aggressive." Transforming old fantasies about Iceland's Viking heritage, this rhetoric of nation-centric masculinity ideals held that only (some) men had what it took to embrace the risks required in business and government (Einarsdóttir and Pétursdóttir 2010). As recognized by Iceland's parliament, this "prevailing social discourse about the unique success of the [male] Icelandic bankers" contributed to the crisis. That they were Vikings justified the enormous wages and profit accruing to a small set of individuals, such as Bjarni Ármannsson, head of Glitnir Bank, whose wages increased fivefold in three years (Iceland Special Investigation Commission 2010: vol. 3, 44). Implicit links were also made between men and the new global finance economy through the use of technical language that only a self-appointed few men were supposed to understand (Wedel 2009).

The tycoons performed playboy masculinity. Jón Asgeir Johannesson was "the face of the Icelandic business community abroad … [had] rugged good looks … with glacier eyes … [and] trademark leather jackets" (Thorvaldsson 2011). Björgólfur Thor Björgólfsson was seen as both physically strong and supremely confident, with questions raised about

his connections with organized crime and violence against competitors (Jóhannesson 2009). These tycoons paraded their plunder—hosting extravagant festivities, delighting in nightclub excursions, yachting, and flaunting their luxury cars and housing—extreme versions of the transnational business masculinity emerging globally, especially among multinational corporations and global finance (Connell and Wood 2005). As a leading businesswoman in Iceland described in 2013, "the boys were playing everywhere … [the new economy was] just a male space, [they were] having so much fun. Little boys in a toy store." These newly minted bankers were bonding through men-only salmon-fishing and hunting trips and golf, and seeing even a single woman among these elites was rare. In 2007, for example, men constituted 91% of the boards listed on the Icelandic Stock Exchange ICEX-15 list, with only one woman chair (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 139).

While the tycoons, especially Johannesson, were scapegoated as bad seeds when the crisis struck, the elites accomplished radical liberalization in Iceland because they created effective political–economy personal networks fostered by homosociality (Einarsdóttir and Pétursdóttir 2010). Most had gone to Reykjavik's exclusive Latin School, and chumminess from shared experiences in this elite high school carried over to Iceland's premier university, University of Iceland, where many of the reformers, including head patron Oddsson, had been part of a collective that had proposed liberalization in a journal called *The Locomotive* in 1973 (Gissurarson 2006). As a news anchor on the politics beat on Iceland's national channel explained, "I see boys' clubs all around." They looked out for each other, rewarding themselves with power and loot. Other men got sinecures, such as on the Board of Governors of the Central Bank under Oddsson, as a woman politician explained, a place before the crisis "for old politicians to sit and eat cakes … a coffee club." Homosociality rationalized the replacement of formal meetings and minute-taking, with personal networking across the divide between the state and private interests (Iceland Special Investigation Commission 2010: vol. 6, 279). Instead of holding formal meetings when danger signs emerged, leaders called former classmates and friends, meeting across their backyard fences and drawing on napkins to discuss the looming crisis (vol. 8, 147). This chumminess also led to unjustified trust in each other's expertise, regardless of evidence to the contrary.

Even in an ostensibly democratic Iceland, there was some deployment of informal rules against those who threatened the liberalization program,

especially those who did not fit the new hegemonic masculinity. Critics spoke of Oddsson 's "the blue hand" controlling politics, and there were rumors that he had a little black book of information on people. One of the powerful woman elites, with a decade-long career, told me that the "relatively few women who got ahead and established themselves on their own merit … were branded aggressive, and thus isolated and demeaned. These women were often kept in the dark during the boys-network's decision-making process and then presented with a fait-accompli." Another woman in politics admitted, "I was afraid of Davíð Oddsson," while a third relayed a story of male MP criticizing his female counterpart for preparing her speeches, with the implication that real (male) politicians do not need to do such preparations. Not just used against women, those men who did not meet the hegemonic masculine ideal were undermined or derided, such as the center-left minister for business affairs (2007–2009), who was depicted as irresponsible and talkative through a discourse of unmanliness (Einarsdóttir and Pétursdóttir 2010).

Liberalization, with this hegemonic masculinity and homosociality, reconstituted the informality of the earlier period (Wade and Sigurgeirsdottir 2010; Skaar Viken 2011; Iceland Special Investigation Commission 2010; Wade and Sigurgeirsdottir 2012). Most significantly, Iceland's constitutionally muddled executive–parliamentary relations were manipulated by a powerful prime minister and his cadre, and the important decisions were made outside of democratic institutions and procedures, such as by the two party leaders in coalition rather than the relevant ministers (Einarsdóttir and Pétursdóttir 2010: 4.1). As most of these powerbrokers were men, it was a gendered informalization. As one activist put it, "once women got 30% of parliament [in 2003], power shifted to business," and government policy was now intentionally set to privilege certain sets of male-dominated elites.

The result was a more pronounced bait-and-switch male dominance, as new gender equality promises were made, such as the 2000 paid leave of 3 months non-transferable leave to each parent (and three months to share). The best illustration of this dynamic is when the Centre for Gender Equality was recreated in 2000, the Minister of Social Affairs moved the Centre to the city of Akureyri on Iceland's northern coast. While an important second city, Akureyri is a five hour drive from the Reykjavik metropolitan area where two-thirds of Iceland's population lives, and most of the center's staff quit and women's activists were outraged. Thinly justified as a democratic move to distribute Iceland's administration more

evenly across the country, the move weakened the Centre's policymaking capacity, its ability to oversee the government, and its links with the women's movement, central elements of women's policy agency's authority (McBride et al. 2010). While other government offices may have branches in Akureyri, no other major office is far from the Reykjavik metropolitan area, except for those such as regional development and conservation that have specific geographic ties.

Economic Crisis

Despite some earlier rumblings, global economic crisis slammed Iceland in the autumn of 2008, as US brokerage firms began to collapse. Very quickly, Iceland's three banks collapsed and were nationalized, Iceland's currency lost half its value, and the average gross national income fell by half (Wade and Sigurgeirsdottir 2010). Many Icelanders, having taken mortgages in foreign currency, found their loans worth much more than their homes. After a brief dalliance with the idea of borrowing money from Russia, Iceland called in the IMF in October, the first time in three decades the IMF had been invited to assist a developed economy. People took to the streets in what was known and the Pots and Pans revolution, and in the new year, when Iceland's government became the first in the world to collapse under the weight of the crisis, there was an interim government and then new elections in April, which brought in a Iceland's first center-left coalition. Making unprecedented compromises, the IMF allowed Iceland to raise taxes, not just cut the welfare state (Thorsdottir 2014). With a mix of heterodox politics (letting the banks fail, guaranteeing only Icelandic citizen's bank deposits, capital controls, which limited people's and companies' ability to take money out of Iceland), austerity as required by the IMF, and some social supports (such as some mortgage debt relief), Iceland's economy (both GDP and unemployment rate) returned to its precrisis numbers by 2014, ahead of other countries that had similar crisis. Economists, especially left-leaning ones such as Paul Krugman, saw Iceland's recovery as some kind of economic miracle. The outsized financial economy that dominated Iceland's economy for seven years has been replaced with new revenue, especially tourism and the tech industry. While the economy still has problems—such as lack of well-paying jobs for educated young people—neoliberalism, in its unfettered and virtual finance form, took a big hit.

The collapse of Iceland's government also led to a marked influx of not just women, but feminist women and men, into formal institutions of power (Styrkársdóttir 2013). Women had played a prominent role in the protests, with feminists setting up a Women's Emergency Government, a shadow government that led trainings, for example, on gender budgeting for MPs, as well as engaged in public protests, such as by dressing up Iceland's national hero in pink. The interim government was formed by women politicians, with Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir—once a member of the feminist party, the Women's Alliance, and mayor of Reykjavik—asking Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, the longest serving MP, to be prime minister. Sigurðardóttir's party, the Social Democratic Alliance, along with the Left-Greens, which had "feminist ideology [as] a pillar of the movement, also lots of feminists" (as one member put), then won the elections. Between 2009 and 2013, there was also near gender parity in the new government, and the parliament was less than 60% male the first time in Iceland's history, what Dahlerup and Leyenaar (2013) cast as "gender balance." It was clear to many that gender had been part of the problem (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 138–139). As one politician put it, "it was obvious that men had gotten us into trouble." In the words of a journalist, "There was a general understanding that if women had been in power, then the collapse wouldn't have happened."

This new government took on male dominance (Johnson et al. 2013). To address the gendered capture of the economy, the government pushed a law that required publicly owned companies as well as joint-stock companies with more than 50 employees to have at least 40% of both sexes on their boards by September 2013. The new government's coalition agreement also included gender budgeting, the analysis of the budget for differentials in spending by gender, and in its impact on women and gender equality. The first pilot projects were funded in 2011, and, by 2013, the analysis covered about one-quarter of the government budget. Gender budgeting has the potential for helping to ferret out corruption, asking questions about what rules are being followed and who is benefiting. Similarly, quotas for women in politics have created a right to appeal committee chair assignments and minister appointments.

The government sought to hold the male-dominated elites accountable. The parliament established the Iceland Special Investigation Committee (2010) to investigate the causes of crisis, leading to a 2010 report with a gender chapter. In contrast to the United States where the major banks have paid fines but no one has gone to jail, Iceland also "cleaned up its

banks," initiating 28 cases and achieving 60 prosecutions by 2016—almost all of which were men— including the CEOs of three major banks who received jail sentences (How Iceland Jailed Its Bankers 2016). Using a special parliamentary procedure, former prime minister Haarde was found guilty of one form of negligence, of failing to hold emergency cabinet meetings in the run-up to the crisis (though not sentenced to any jail time). The most prominent politician who faced criminal penalties was Baldur Guðlaugsson, the former permanent secretary of Ministry of Finance, who was sentenced to two years in prison for insider fraud.

The center-left government also tried to strengthen formal democratic politics by reforming the post-colonial constitution, which many citizens saw as a necessary response to the crisis. The government worked to make the process inclusive and transparent, at first randomly selecting citizens to articulate collectively their national values and then creating a non-politician assembly. Much of the decision-making was put online, and the draft of the constitution was posted for comment on Facebook in this most Facebook-friendly society. The constitution was then put to a non-binding referendum in which citizens confirmed the core values, such as altering church–state relations, separation of powers, transparency, and rights to natural resources.

In addition, there were marked changes in the economy. "Overwhelmed with testosterone" and concerned about the lack of soundness in Iceland's economy by 2007, two women entrepreneurs started Auður Capital, a financial services company based on what they called "feminine values" (Tómasdóttir 2010). One founder, in a 2010 TED talk, argued that "women … bring different values and different ways to the table … [as a result, we] get better decision making and less herd behavior." At the same time, with similar gendered ideas, businesswoman Þórdís Lóa Þórhallsdóttir founded an all-woman investment group, Naskar Investments, as a vehicle for a small number of wealthy women to invest their money and then to solicit concessions in terms of women's inclusion at the managerial up to the C level (CEO, CFO, etc.). As "Þórhallsdóttir explained, this strategy is "women using their collective power" to nudge business toward parity." While the law on gender balance in corporate boards lacked sanctions for non-compliance, by 2013, most companies had complied.

These were not unremarkable achievements, but male dominance—as Styrkársdóttir (2013) asserted—did not get broken. Admitting only minor mistakes, former prime minister Oddsson used his new job as editor of one

of Iceland's major papers to undermine the prime minister's proposals at every turn (Johnson et al. 2013). Grímsson, the president who had linked the bankers to the Vikings, twice used his veto power against the prime minister, a power suggested in the constitution but never used by any previous president, and then got himself elected to an unprecedented fifth term in 2012. By the next year, the center-right parties, whose coalition between 1995 and 2007 had created the political conditions for the crisis, returned to power. With impossible promises to address the lingering mortgage problems by extracting wealth from hedge funds held in Iceland under capital controls, the Progressive Party was led by Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, the privileged son of a prominent politician and businessman and the wealthiest member of Iceland's parliament. The election produced no clear victory, and the president appears to have anointed him in a backroom deal, even though the Independence Party got a slightly higher percentage of the vote.

Looking across the key formal political institutions in 2013 illustrates the over-representation of men, even though the parliament remains in the range of gender balance (see Fig. 2.2). The Panama Papers exposed just how well political elites had managed to protect their money from the crisis. While Gunnlaugsson was forced to resign in 2016 when the Panama Papers revealed that he and his heiress wife had established a shell company in the Virgin Islands, other elites more closely tied into the informal elites networks were left standing, even though they also had

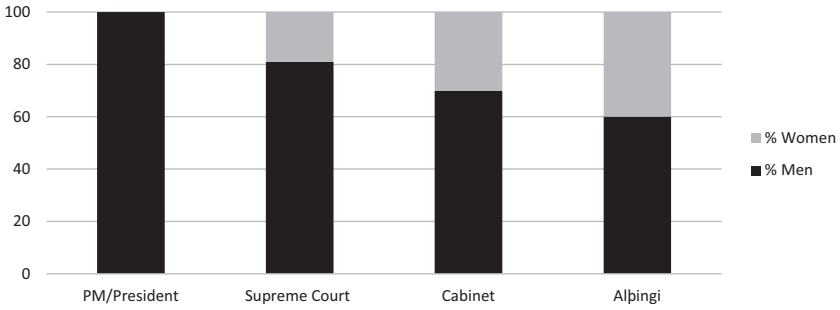

Fig. 2.2 Percentage of men in Iceland's political institutions, 2013. Sources: Alþingi-Kosning (2013); Forseti-Fyrri Forsetar (2013); Hæstiréttur-Dómarar (2013); Alþingi-Ráðherrar (2013); Althingi-Women in Parliament (2013)

undisclosed offshore accounts (Obermaier and Obermayer 2016). (The youngest leader in the world at the time of his election at 38 years and lacking much experience in anything, Gunnlaugsson had only been a front for other elites and within months also lost his role as party leader.) These include many of the top bankers and businessmen, and also the head of the Independence Party and Finance Minister, Bjarni Benediktsson, and the (female) Minister of the Interior, Ólöf Nordal. Also implicated is Finnur Ingólfsson, the Minister for Industry and Commerce during liberalization and then former Governor of the Central Bank of Iceland, along with some 600 other Icelanders, the highest rate of involvement, per capita, in the world. In 2015, Iceland's first billionaire, Björgólfsson, climbed back onto Forbes billionaire list (Forbes Billionaire Listing for Icelander 2015); of the top earners in Iceland, there is only one woman on the list, at ninth position (Who Are Iceland's Top Earners? 2015).

The male-dominated elite networks, backed by hegemonic masculinity and homosociality, were able to reclaim formal power because they had never really lost informal power (Johnson et al. 2013). Their strength was illustrated in Grimsson's long tenure, somewhat similar to Putin's patronalism, managing to enlist the support of business and fishing interests, combined with the Progressive Party, even though he had changed sides many times. Male dominance was also evidenced in the plum positions for former elites. Ásgrímsson (prime minister 2004–2006) became Secretary General of Nordic Council of Ministers in 2007; Haarde, the prime minister at the time of the collapse, was appointed ambassador to the United States in 2014. Deals such as for ambassadorships and EU relations appeared to be negotiated between the guys. Grimsson and Oddsson have been busy burnishing their images. As one insider put it, "the men seem obsessed with their legacies."

Feminist women and men also observed evidence of these networks, even during the gender-balanced and feminist-led center-left coalition. As one insider explained to me in 2010, "political culture is still male dominated … in the way that men behave." Another longtime observer of the parliament stated that she saw no change in the culture and practices of the parliament, despite women's attempts at reform. As an insider and political scientist explained, politics remains a game of "invisible networks." One powerful woman MP told me that President Grimsson is the "godfather of this [current] government," while another explained her experience during the center-left coalition: "You suddenly find out that things are settled and you didn't know anything about it." The first MP agreed,

"men work that way … they take decisions between themselves and then present them … Women are more maybe honest, straight-forward where the guys have worked things out behind the scenes."

Jón Gnarr, non-hegemonic male mayor of Reykjavik 2010–2014, in celebrating a 100 years of woman suffrage in 2015, declared:

> This world has been controlled by men, dominated by men, far too long ….and I've tried to change the face of leadership from Alpha male, determined, quick thinking man to more cooperation and communication … and I was surprised by how many criticized me for not being determined … I've often wondered about admiration for the man, masculine power, especially admiration of men by other men, fascinating … it's almost to a homoerotic degree … I tried to fight the patriarchy, in a way, from the inside, being a man myself, not always sure what it means to be a man. (Gnarr 2015)

Gnarr points out hegemonic masculinity and homosociality are only available to some men.

With the return of the center-right coalition, the informality of power returned to prominence, with gendered consequences. While keeping up appearances of the gender promises, the new government dropped the draft new constitution, ignored gender quota requirements for some government bodies and representatives, and failed to change distribution of revenue or disbursement based on gender budgeting. Despite the democratic pressures and economic crisis, the clientelism that the Independent and Progressive Parties had cultivated since independence has become, as one scholar put it, "more clandestine, more like corruption; parties now more likely to try to colonize the administrative system. Financial interests have become involved in the parts of the state dealing with the financial system." Although remarkable financial regulatory reforms have been passed, a reform of the administration toward an impartial and meritocratic bureaucracy has only just started (Kristinsson 2012; Wade and Sigurgeirsdottir 2012: 142). In 2016, presidential elections brought in an outsider (male) historian, but, in early parliamentary elections, the plurality went to the Independence Party headed by Bjarni Benediktsson with the offshore accounts. After months of talks, the Independence Party formed a coalition, without the next two parties (the Left-Greens and the Pirates), which "seems to only fortify the hold that the special stakeholders, read: the fishing moguls and other IP cronies, have on the collective resources and related profits of this nation" (commentator Alda Sigmundsdóttir, Facebook, January 10, 2017).

Conclusion: Bait-and-Switch Male Dominance

In order to explain why and how male dominance has been reconstituted in the twenty-first century, this chapter examines the process of economic liberalization and the recent global economic crisis in Russia and Iceland. Before the economic and political restructuring, both countries had a kind of faux emancipation, in which male dominance constituted through informal rules and networks overpowered the promises of gender equality. When the Soviet Union collapsed, there were more credible promises in Russia of constitutionalism and gender equality, but by the new century, the new wheeling-and-dealing economy reconsolidated male-dominated informal rules and institutions, with the gendered capture of power, fostered through hegemonic masculinity and homosociality. Iceland's so-called liberalization led to similar results, even though there was a self-avowed feminist government (2009–2013) that attempted to undermine male dominance.

These gendered histories show that liberalization was a critical juncture in that the interplay of informal and formal institutions, infused with gendered rules, was consolidated in new ways. Liberalization provided cover for male-dominated elites, with culturally specific hegemonic masculinity and shared male-only experience, to constitute authority outside of the state. This comparison suggests a causal chain toward bait-and-switch male dominance (see Fig. 2.3). More so than in Russia, the politics of the economic crisis in Iceland challenged this male dominance, but almost a decade out, the underlying institutions remain remarkably unchanged. In the following chapters, I explore how women and feminists have navigated this male dominance, with some success.

I am not arguing that the male dominance is at the same levels in Iceland and Russia. Gendered capture of institutions is more severe in Russia than

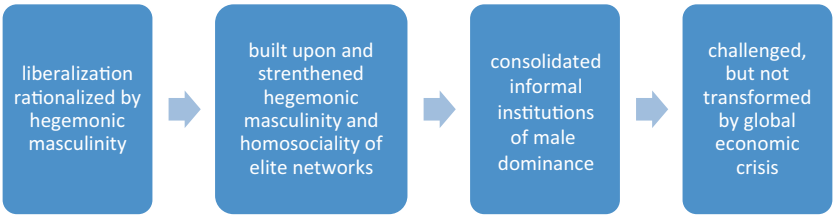

Fig. 2.3 The institutionalization of a new form of male dominance

in Iceland. Constitutional arenas of politics and formal promises of equality are weightier in Iceland than in Russia. Violence or threats of violence, as enforcement mechanisms for informal rules, with connections to organized crime, are much more prevalent in Russia. In other words, no doubt sexism and homophobia are worse in Russia (Sperling 2015). Instead, I am arguing that in both cases, gendered informal politics are essential to male dominance and that the dynamics and causes are similar. The purported liberalization in which state-managed economies were turned into wild forms of capitalism, nested within male-dominated societies, consolidated a new, bait-and-switch male dominance with informal rules and institutions that sabotage formal promises of equality.

Comparing these most different cases and showing similar results undermine arguments that point only to rogue leaders or avaricious tycoons in the creation of the problems facing the society. The comparison also challenges case-specific explanations for the contemporary male dominance, which have undertheorized the role of informal politics. In Russia, male dominance has usually been investigated as a question of decreasing women since the collapse of communism, such as explanations pointing to increased competition or aversion to feminism as pushing women out of the legislature (Matland and Montgomery 2003; Shevchenko 2007; Cook and Nechemias 2009). (When a women's faction, Women of Russia, failed to repeat its success in 1993, the blame was placed on them for failing to form a real political party or enlist enough support [(Buckley 1999].) However, Russian politics has not been marked by increased competition or effective party formation, but by internecine conflicts within and between informal elite networks, which use elections and parties for their own ends (Sakwa 2010: 196; Hale 2006). Broader explanations for gender inequality in the 1990s pointed to the economic reforms, with women particularly ravaged by the economic depression and the neoliberal imperatives (see Johnson 2009; Chap. 2), but the reality is that virtually all sectors of society were devastated, while the male-dominated elites thrived. Still others assert that Russia is simply a sexist society, confirmed by most opinion polls, but this provides little analytical insight (Nechemias 2014).

In the 2000s, studies have tended to identify male dominance in Putin's dedemocratization. For Andrea Chandler (2013), Putin's success has been predicated on the consolidation of paternalistic social policy. For Valerie Sperling (2015), male dominance results from the politicization of sexism and homophobia. Homophobia, Sperling argues, is part of misogyny, as both represent a deepening of the regime's commitment to a narrow

and heteronormative role for men and women; together, they form an important legitimization strategy as Putin began to lose the support of the middle class after the country's financial troubles in 2008–2009. Most similar to my argument is Jennifer Suchland (2015: 11) who draws attention to neoliberalism, arguing that the "dismantling of redistributive economic systems has simultaneously occurred with the *delegitimation* of identity politics." All point to important dynamics of male dominance, but none take informal politics seriously even though Russia never was democratic, not even in the minimalist definition focused on meaningful electoral competition often used by political scientists. My analysis, making male dominance front and center, specifies the mechanisms of the consolidation of informalization as the consequences of liberalization on male dominance.

Informal politics is also peripheral to most theories of male dominance in Iceland. Most of the feminist political science is on women's representation, with a story of increasing proportions of women in politics since the 1980s indicating a decrease in male dominance (see Styrkársdóttir 2013 for summary of the literature). Male dominance can be seen in the structural explanations for Iceland's lagging behind other Nordic countries, with the common wisdom that most of Iceland's problems are due to its smallness or postcoloniality (Bergqvist 1999; Kaplan 1992). Others point to norms about women's representation and formal rules, especially the adoption of open primaries by most of the parties in the 1970s, which added a first-past-the-post mechanism to the proportional representation electoral system that many scholars have seen as more likely to hold women back (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 132, 142). Here, I argue that these formal rules are the architecture through which the male-dominated elite networks maneuver, establishing and negotiating informal rules that still have a big impact on political outcomes even in this ostensible democracy, especially after this radical liberalization.

This comparison of these most different systems shows how to use the insights from feminist political economists to better understand male dominance in the twenty-first century. It shows how informal politics changes the landscape, even as formal institutions and rules promoting gender equality are added. The findings of gendered informal politics, even in ostensible Iceland, raise questions about how feminist political scientists should think about and conceptualize what is usually discussed with neutral terminology such as "elite recruitment." Male-dominated political-economic networks, bolstered by homosociality and making sexualized

threats, is less a process recruitment and more a process of rushing and hazing common in American fraternities.

Notes

1. For the few advocates of neoliberalism that considered gender, it was hoped that these developments would transcend the differences ascribed to men and women just as liberalization was supposed to unseat elites and create economic opportunities for all. The finance economy especially, it seemed to some, held the potential to be genderless as this kind of economy was so far from the ability to do physical labor which had often used as a justification for women's exclusion.
2. Some people include Elena Stasova who was in the precursor to the Politburo. Ekaterina Furtseva, who was a member of the ruling Politburo for four years (1957–1961).
3. Valentina Matvienko was governor of St. Petersburg, 2003–2011; Valentina Broneyich, governor of Koryak Autonomous Okrug, 1996–2000.
4. Matvienko was acting supergovernor for a half year in 2003.
5. According to Artemy Troitsky, "The New Russian Protest Movement and Cultural Policy," at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University, February 21, 2013, reported to the author by Feruza Aripova. In Russian, "Pizdite, no ne pizdite!"
6. Kadyrov, whose rule over Chechnya is best understood as "warlordism" in which Kadyrov commands a private militia and controls local patronage networks (Marten 2012), marked the most extreme version of gendered informalization. Despite a bizarre penchant for posting pictures of himself cuddling cats on Instagram, Kadyrov's authority relies on ruthless violence rationalized by his hegemonic masculinity: his large militia, with ID cards from the KGB successor, engages in gangsterism and state-authorized violence across Russia, while Kadyrov himself has openly defended brutal "honor" killings of women.

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CHAPTER 3

Women's Representation: How Bait-and-Switch Male Dominance Promotes, but Then Boxes In Women in Politics

Introduction

Unexpectedly perhaps, within this context of bait-and-switch male dominance wrought by radical liberalization, there has been an increase in the proportion of women in politics in both Iceland and Russia. This increase received the most attention in Iceland, when a woman became prime minister in 2009 and sought a gender-balanced cabinet, both firsts for Iceland after lagging behind its Nordic neighbors. But Russia too has witnessed a notable upsurge under Putin, with increasing number of women in the two legislative houses, a woman head of the upper house, and a woman head of Russia's central bank. These developments are puzzling given how important hegemonic masculinity, homosociality, and informal politics have been in both regimes.

This chapter examines these seemingly contradictory dynamics. In other words, the chapter examines the impact of the bait-and-switch male dominance on women in politics in the years surrounding the economic crisis. With others at the forefront of this research (e.g. Jalalzai and Krook 2010), I expand the conventional focus on legislatures to other political arenas such as the executive and judiciary. With other scholars, I also consider feminist men as potential "critical actors" likely to undertake "critical acts" to foster gender equality, though men are still less likely than women (Childs and Lovenduski 2013: 497; Childs and Krook 2008; Bergqvist et al. 2016).

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In the following, I summarize the main insights of feminist political science literature on women's representation, broaching three sets of questions from my gendered model of the matrix of informal and formal politics. I then examine the two cases from liberalization in the 1990s, but with a focus on 2006–2016. In this way, I capture the years leading up to, during, and following the acute period of the global economic crisis, including two rounds of elections after the crisis. In the end, I explore the limitations on the opportunities available for critical actors. In this way, I suggest a dimension of the bait and switch, the boxing in of women (and feminist men) in politics.

Descriptive Without Substantive Representation

Since the 1995 United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, a variety of actors have advocated increasing the number of women in politics as a strategy to address all sorts of global problems, from gender equality to corruption and Islamist radicalism (Goetz 2007). Given that "informal obstacles mean that the policy-making process as a whole is biased against the expression of the perspective or interests of marginalized groups," such as women, many political scientists and activists assumed that more descriptive representation of women—the influx of women into politics—would lead to more substantive representation (Weldon 2011). However, while advocacy groups play the number game, highlighting the proportion of members of parliament that are women, it has become clear that there is no "critical mass," a magic proportion after which women are able to easily advocate for women's interests or gender equality (Dahlerup 2006). Even successful women, such as Chancellor Angela Merkel, head of democratic Germany and among the most powerful politicians in the world, have been unwilling or unable to advocate for women (Packer 2014: 52–53).

Within feminist political science, this paradox has typically been framed through Hanna Pitkin's (1967) concepts of descriptive representation ("where the representative stands for a group by virtue of sharing similar characteristics such as race, sex, ethnicity, or residence") and substantive representation ("where the representative seeks to advance a group's policy preferences and interests") (Childs and Lovenduski 2013: 493, 490). In other words, the paradox can be understood as one in which women have made notable gains in descriptive representation without proportionate gains in substantive representation (Jalalzai and Krook 2010). In this

chapter, I explore both parts of the paradox: why it is that women are being recruited into politics and how are they constrained even when they are specifically recruited, with some discussion of similar constraints faced by feminist men. The book's blueprint for gendered informal politics suggests three sets of questions essential to examining these dynamics in the twenty-first century.

Informally, Not Just Formally, Fast-Tracked?

In addressing the question as to why there are more women in politics, it is clear that old explanations for women's advancement into politics do not apply in the twenty-first century. Success stories include countries which continue to have long-term socioeconomic barriers to women's inclusion—including low levels of female education and workforce participation and high poverty rates—as well as cultural barriers, especially inegalitarian views about women (Montgomery 2003: 9–10). With women becoming presidents of Chile, Liberia, Argentina, and Brazil, as well as making inroads in single-member district elections, common institutional explanations—such as women being more likely to serve as prime ministers than presidents or to win elections in proportional representation—no longer prove robust (see Jalalzai 2008: 9–10). Even leftist ideology is no longer a panacea: while center and left parties more often promote women as rank and file, it has turned out that conservative parties have taken the lead on promoting women to top posts (Hawkesworth 2012: 195). Also less common are the "widow's path," in which women come to power within dynasties, replacing dead fathers or husbands or succeeding them once constitutional term limits have been met.

Instead, as Mona Lena Krook and Drude Dahlerup have shown most clearly, the recent influx of women into electoral politics is mostly due to strategies to "fast-track" women, especially legislative and party quotas: over half of all countries in the world have adopted some kind of quota to fast-track women's representation, and all of the top 20 countries (in terms of percentage of women in parliament) have had some kind of quota (Jalalzai and Krook 2010: 15; Krook 2010; Krook and Messing-Mathie 2013). Fast-tracking is a concept that summarizes the formal quota policies used to promote women into electoral politics in the last couple of decades, as opposed to in the "old democracies," such as the Nordic countries, where women tended to advance through conventional elite recruitment mechanisms similar to men (Dahlerup and Leyenaar 2013:

1). Other scholars have focused on a second type of formal fast-tracking, the use of women's and feminist parties, a modern version of women's lists that were used in some countries a century ago (Dominelli and Jonsdottir 1988: 36–60). Given the influx of women into the Rwandan parliament following the genocide, surpassing the quota, and the election of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf (2006–) in postconflict Liberia, scholars have also suggested that women are brought following intense crises or times in which "normal" politics is suspended (Jalalzai and Krook 2010: 7–8, 13, 15; Hawkesworth 2012: 193–194).

The book's blueprint expands the focus on informal politics in these new theories. Can't women be informally fast-tracked into politics, not just formally fast-tracked through formal laws and party procedures? Isn't that what was happening with the widow's path in developing countries, especially in the latter half of the twentieth century? In the twenty-first century, the ties that bind are often less familial, but aren't women sometimes informally recruited as women for reasons that suit elites? Isn't the change that, in the new millennium, the inclusion of women in politics has become a strong norm that most countries want to appear to meet? If, as I have found in both Russia and Iceland after liberalization, politics is dominated by informal elite networks, don't we have to ask whether some women have made inroads into (the outer circles of) these networks in ways that gets them into formal positions of power?

Recruited Through Emphasized Femininity?

Scholars suggest that women are often recruited for specific roles. Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977) found decades ago that women in US businesses tend to be cast as either a mother, a sex object, a cheerleader, or "iron maiden," roles that can carry over into politics. It is common to assert that women tend to be appointed to head legislative committees and ministries identified as "feminine" for their association with care work. More recently, when women are recruited in times of crisis, Anne Marie Goetz (2007) asserts that they are designated "political cleaners," an update of the old idea of women being too pure for politics and an expression of the anti-corruption literature's belief that women are less corrupt. In the language of Raewyn Connell and James Messerschmidt (2005), these reflect "emphasized femininity," that is, the contextually appropriate femininity that complements and complies with male dominance.

Aren't women likely to be recruited for their emphasized femininity, especially when informally fast-tracked? If we foreground informal politics, don't these roles take on a more troubling tone, for example, with women in charge of social ministries made into "workhorses" in times of austerity or temporary "stand-ins" in times of crisis, either with little power or assigned as "political cleaners" to clean up an impossible mess? If informal elite networks dominate formal politics so much that elections and legislatures become theater, might women be recruited as ultimate "loyalists" who advocate legislation to protect the regime or at least "showgirls" who attract citizens to vote?

Boxed In by Informal Rules and Institutions

On the second question about the constraints facing women in power, there have been several theories. Kanter (1977) suggests that these roles are traps for women. Theorists Lisa Disch and Mary Jo Kane (1996: 304, 281) point to the extreme hostility and harassment when women intrude into male-dominated spaces and transgress an "unwritten code" by claiming authority beyond those afforded to her as a woman. Feminist institutionalists have been looking into the impact of quotas, finding that they sometimes backfire (leading to less women in politics) while other times produce unintended consequences (Krook 2010; Franceschet et al. 2012). For example, in South Africa, the African National Congress used quotas to handpick women to toe the party line (Walsh 2012). Even reserved seats can be subverted, as they have been in Uganda where the 1989 reform came at the same time as party competition was suspended, and once in office, the women were beholden to male politicians (Tripp 2013: 525).

Most recently, scholars and advocates have turned the spotlight on what they call violence against women in politics, physical attacks but also other forms of intimation. Krook, as a technical advisor to the National Democratic Institute's campaign #NotTheCost: Stopping Violence Against Women in Politics, defines the violence broadly based on human rights norms, as including not just physical violence, but also psychological violence such as "hostile behavior and … threats of violence" and "economic violence … coercive behavior through the control of a person's access to economic resources" (National Democratic Institute 2016: 17–19). The violence can be perpetrated in person, against the woman

herself or her family, or online. While men too experience violence, advocates point to three ways this violence is gendered:

> it targets women *because* of their gender; in its very *form* it can be gendered, as exemplified by sexist threats and sexual violence; and its impact is to discourage *women in particular* from being or becoming politically active. (12)

An Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016a) study "revealed widespread sexism, violence and harassment of women MPs worldwide." Violence seems to be increasing as resistance and retaliation to the influx of women into politics. At the 2016 launch of #NotTheCost, Ave Maria Semakafu, a scholar and activist from Tanzania, for example, argued that sexual coercion has become a key way that male-dominated party elites allocate special seats for women in parliament. The campaign points to how such violence not only intimidates women from participating or speaking out, but also sends a message to other women about the costs of doing so, decreasing the possibilities for descriptive representation and democracy more broadly.

Bringing informal politics into bas-relief suggests several questions. Are women in politics really serving in *roles*, with the implication that they can opt out with little consequence, much like an actor auditions and then accepts or rejects roles on the stage? Aren't these roles enforced by informal rules, gendered as they target women because of their gender or when the form is gendered, as in sexualized hostility or threats? Isn't what activists are calling violence against women in politics the enforcement mechanisms for non-conformity with these rules, which, as Helmke and Levitsky (2006: 21, 26) point out, are "rarely necessary" when the rules are functioning well? Aren't formal quotas subverted through the informal policies and networking that supports male dominance? In the twenty-first-century politics, don't women tend to get recruited into more democratic institutions such as parliaments or into institutions with little authority or funding, the inverse of the promotion of men into positions of real and informal power identified in the previous chapter? Historically, women have been boxed out of politics, often by formal rules, but now, aren't women and other potential critical actors, such as non-hegemonic or feminist men, being boxed in by these informal rules and institutions? Isn't this another dimension of the con of twenty-first-century male dominance?

Russia

Over the last decade, women's participation in the upper-echelon of executive power in Putin's Russia has been more extensive than during the early Soviet period (when Soviet feminists had some sway).[1] Between 1991 and 2008, only a dozen women served as ministers (Semenova 2012). Prime Minister Putin (2008–2012) then brought in three women ministers (out of 36 individuals he brought in for the 30 posts), more than at any one time in Russia history (see Table 3.1). In 2012, with Putin back in the presidency, Prime Minister Medvedev's cabinet had two women, one of whom was deputy prime minister, only the third in post-Soviet Russia's history. Putin brought three women into his presidential administration and then appointed his former economic minister to head Russia's central bank, the first woman to head the central bank of any G8 country. Women have also been brought in as governors, most prominently with Valentina Matvienko who governed Russia's second city St. Petersburg (2003–2011), but more women governors were recruited in the next decade. There has been no man in elite politics who has identified as feminist in Russia.

There have been similar increases in Russia's bicameral legislature, reaching the highest proportions in post-Soviet Russian history, with 17% in the Federation Council in 2014 and 15.3% in the Duma in 2016 (see Fig. 3.1). The Federation Council especially seems to have experienced an influx, with the percentage of women more than tripling in four years and Matvienko brought in as its chair in 2011, giving her the highest formal post of any woman since Catherine the Great. While the percentage of women was greater in Soviet legislative bodies (with an informal quota of one-third), these bodies had little real power, and by 1990, the quota had been effectively eliminated (Polenina 2003). Beginning in the early 2000s, the increase in the number of women in politics picked up pace around the 2007 Duma elections. Within a few months, all major parties had increased the proportion of women on their lists, a phenomenon that continued through the next two election cycles.

Informally, Not Just Formally, Fast-Tracked

The only formal fast-tracking of women in the post-Soviet period has been through women's parties, especially the Women of Russia political movement in the 1990s, a collective of women claiming the right to represent

Table 3.1 Key women in Russian politics, 2009–2016

Name	*Official posts (previous important posts)*
1. Elvira Nabiullina	Minister of Economic Development, 2007–2012; assistant to president, 2012–2013; head of the Central Bank, 2013–present, the first woman to head the Central Bank of any G8 country
2. Valentina Matvienko	Deputy prime minister for Welfare, governor of Saint Petersburg, 2003–2011; chair of the Federation Council, 2011–present, and member of the Security Council, officially the highest-ranking female politician in Russia (supergovernor, 2003)
3. Tat'iana Golikova	Minister of Health and Social Development, 2007–2012; assistant to the president, 2012–2013; head of Accounts Chamber, 2013–present
4. Ol'ga Golodets	Deputy to the Moscow mayor, 2010–2012; deputy prime minister for Social Affairs, 2012–present
5. Liudmila Shvetsova	Deputy to the Moscow mayor, 2000–2010; Vice speaker of the Duma, 2011–2014, when she died by natural causes
6. Marina Kovtun	Deputy chair of the Kola Mining and Metallurgical Company, 2009–2011; Deputy of the Murmansk Oblast Regional Duma, 2011–2012; Governor of Murmansk Oblast, 2012–present
7. Natalia Komarova	Deputy, Duma, 2001–2007; Governor of Khanty-Mansi, 2010–present
8. Svetlana Orlova	Deputy chair, Federation Council, 2004–2013; acting governor of Vladimir Oblast, 2013–present
9. Irina Yarovaya	Deputy, Duma, 2007–present; deputy chair, Duma, 2016–present
10. Elena Mizulina	Deputy, Duma, 1995–2015; chair, Duma Committee on Women, Family, and Children (then Family, Women, and Children), 2008–2015; member, Federation Council, 2015–present.
11. Ekaterina Lakhova	Deputy, Duma, 1993–2014; chair, Duma Committee on Women, Family and Youth Affairs, 1993–2007; member, Federation Council, 2014–present

Source: United Russia (2017a, b), Russian Federation (2017), RIA Novosti (2017), "Elena Mizulina" (2017)

Note: A Moscow-based insider ranked the top six women in power in Russia, May 2013. Using the insider's criteria, I expanded the list to summarize the key women for this book

women that won 8% of the party list vote in the first (abbreviated) Duma in 1993 (Buckley 1999). They failed to form a political party or repeat this feat, instead dissipating from the political scene, with other small and temporary women's parties never making it into the Duma. Despite the

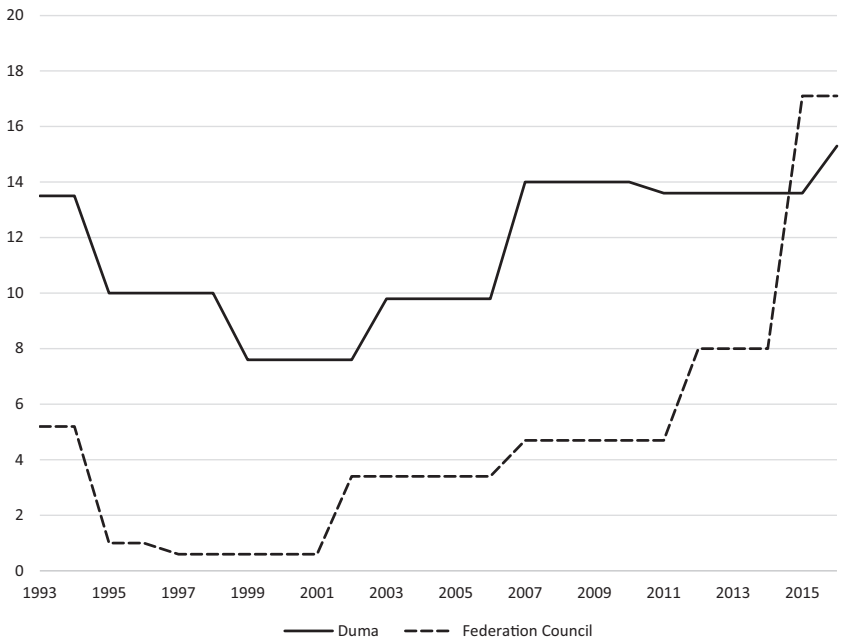

Fig. 3.1 Percentage of women in Russia's legislatures, 1993–2016.
Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016b), Sostav Gosurdarstvennoi Dumy (2016). Note that an additional woman joined the Duma on December 6, 2016, making the proportion 15.6%

historical legacy of quotas and lots of international and women's movement pressure, both Putin and the Duma, the primary formal law-making institution, were openly resistant to formal quotas for women in politics in the early to mid-2000s (Chandler 2013: 112–115). Over time, earlier proponents, such as the head of the Central Electoral Commission, withdrew their support, and the "tone of the debate changed when [Duma] deputies raised concerns about the impact that quotas might have on marriages and families." Another attempt was made in 2005, but deputies voted no, by not showing up for the vote.

However, there appears to have been an informal rule change to promote women by 2007. The most powerful evidence of the rule change was the influx of women that began around the time, with marked increases in the Duma after 2007, and in the governorships and

Federation Council after 2010. In an increasingly authoritarian regime, these electoral outcomes are due less to chance than to regime control. Several parties also created women's sections, including the party of power, United Russia, which incorporated much of the Women of Russia political faction, including one of the founders, Ekaterina Lakhova (Kochkina 2007: 111, 107). As one insider put it, elites that controlled United Russia, the Communist, and Just Russia had accepted that women need to be in their lists. In the 2011 elections, almost one of five of United Russia's party list were women, with 18% of the successful candidates being women, the highest proportion of women in all represented parties (United Russia 2011).

As head patron in this patronalist system (Hale 2015), Putin signaled his desire to increase the number of women in politics in a 2007 press conference, even as he distanced himself from a formal quota:

> Is it necessary to introduce quotas? I don't know, I am not ready to answer that question. It might be even worse to have some kind of discrimination according to sex… But whether we are going to introduce quotas or not, we should certainly aspire to make authorities more balanced. The presence of women in the authorities always makes them more balanced and more capable. (Chandler 2013: 115)

Medvedev too (when president), in encouraging Matvienko to head the upper house, extolled the modernizing effect of having a woman in such a central post, and had mistakenly asserted that women made up 30% of the lower house ("St Pete Governor" 2011). In the 2016 elections, the leader of A Just Russia—one of the loyal opposition parties that typically support Putin—reiterated that there was no need for a formal quota, promising to "put forth many women candidates," and all parties had somewhere between one-fourth and one-fifth women candidates (Mironov poobeshchal isbirateliam 2016).

With the general findings that proportional representation electoral systems are more conducive to recruiting women, it might seem that the most logical to hypothesize that the formal rule change in 2007—from a mix of single-member districts and proportional representation to all proportional representation—might be the primary explanation. However, writing before the change, Robert Moser (2003) concluded that Russia is a "strange case" where proportional representation had been less helpful to women's representation than in most other contexts; women were more

often promoted in the single-member districts than in the closed party-list proportional representation seats, because of party fragmentation, resistance to the communist affirmative action, and various institutional rules. In the 2016 elections, when the elections switched back to a mix of proportional and single mandates, there were more women elected in the single-member districts than on the party lists (36 to 33) (Sostav Gosurdarstvennoi Dumy 2016). More broadly, seeing women's political recruitment through informal politics is more credible than assuming that only formal policies could fast-track women in regimes like Russia where informal politics dominate (Ledeneva 2013; Hale 2015; Dawisha 2014).

Recruited Through Emphasized Femininity

The recruited women served certain functions based on emphasized femininity. Analyzing the key women in Russian politics around the crisis period suggests a variety of boxes for women, as well as the problem of informal politics.

Workhorses

In the 1990s and early 2000s, women were most often promoted for posts identified as "feminine," that is, in care-related issues of family, children, health, and welfare, posts which have been informally reserved for women. As one elite woman explained to me in 2013, "Just as families are better when there is a father and mother, so it is in politics because women are more interested in health and human [social] issues." More recently, women have been promoted into other posts, such as ministers of culture, agriculture, labor, and economics. For Elena Kochkina (2007: 109–110), these women are "stand ins … a demonstration without meaning," with no commitment to real citizen participation in the process or equality, who are brought in during times of change and then moved out (Kochkina 2007: 109–110). I call these both "workhorses," dependable performers without much career advancement. For example, Elvira Nabiullina is the only woman to have served as economic minister, but she was brought in only after the big economic "reforms" of the 1990s and early 2000s when the spoils of the old regime were divvied up. She replaced the more connected and very wealthy German Gref, and during her tenure, the more lucrative trade responsibilities were transferred to a separate ministry (Dawisha 2014: 86). In 2015, facing a tanking ruble and economic sanctions, Nabiullina chaired the Central Bank and was, as an anonymous

insider at the bank put it, a "good technocrat." Tat'iana Golikova, head of the Accounts Chamber, was in a similar situation. (Sergei Lavrov, in contrast, has been foreign minister since 2004, though largely kept out of major decisions since 2014.) This work for elite women is then replicated by women through the bureaucracy: women constitute some two-thirds of entry and mid-level staff (Henderson 2009: 305; Kanap'ianova 2009: 6). Similar dynamics were noted in the Duma for some women, such as Liudmila Shvetsova, the vice speaker of the Duma 2011–2014, who was a "workhorse" on social policy.

Political Cleaners

Other elite women have been recruited as "political cleaners" because, as one commentator put it, "[t]here is the perception that women are less corrupt in Russia." This has been a role especially for governors. Matvienko, for example, was brought in as governor of St. Petersburg because the city had been a hotbed of corruption, the basis for Putin's own corruption networks, and after Putin left for Moscow, his rival in corruption, Vladimir Yakovlev, became governor, continuing the predation and deterioration of the city's infrastructure (Dawisha 2014: Chap. 3). Matvienko was supposed to set things straight, as part of Putin's propaganda that he was bringing order to Russia. Buffeted by activists who prevented her plan to site gas-giant Gazprom's headquarters near the historic center of the city, the last straw for Matvienko was the public uproar over her inability to plan for effective snow and icicle removal, which led to hundreds of deaths and injuries ("Valentina Matvienko" 2011). Her tenure cut shorter than most of her male counterparts, Matvienko's move to head the Federation Council deprived her of much opportunity for patronage perks.

Similarly, in the key oil-producing region of Khanty-Mansi, Natalya Komarova replaced a long-term leader "who knew how to effectively achieve the necessary decisions, even at the federal level, and kept the region, as they say, in his fist" (Osipov 2013). He had had perhaps too much power, and Komarova was less threatening: Putin called her to task early in her tenure for not managing programs well enough, but she was then praised for managing inter-elite conflicts (by including some of her predecessor's team) and heading off protests (by including some opposition party members). In the far northern region of Murmansk, Kovtun, sponsored by Norilsk Nickel, the notorious metal giant that dominates the region, replaced a governor facing protests over cronyism

and misappropriation of funds, which halted the construction of a children's hospital and left residents in the cold (Sokolov 2012). She too has achieved recognition for being able to balance competing interests while keeping the population appeased (such as by taking the unprecedented step of apologizing for a misstep) (Osipov 2013). In Vladimir, a small region a couple hours east of Moscow, Svetlana Orlova replaced a Communist governor, one of the few non-United Russia governors left. In 2016, Natalia Zhdanova, another United Russia member, was brought in to replace the non-partisan governor of Zabaikal'skii Krai on the border of China and Mongolia.

In the 2016 elections, the first since the fraudulent 2011 elections, the political cleaner role was extended to the head of the Central Electoral Commission with the appointment of Ella Pamfilova. With a history of human rights advocacy, Pamfilova established new mechanisms for overseeing the fairness of the elections and promised to resign if the elections weren't fair. The result was that Pamfilova helped to create the appearance of a cleaner election, as the Kremlin engineered a stronger grip on the Duma.

Loyalists

Even more so than their male counterparts, most women in Russian politics strive to be "loyalists" who advocate non-democratic (and often sexist or homophobic) legislation to protect or advance the regime (Aivazova 2008; Popova 2013). Several women Duma deputies, most notably Irina Yarovaya, Elena Mizulina, and Ekaterina Lakhova, are known for sponsoring hastily conceived, ideological bills to signal their allegiance with Putin. For example, Lakhova championed a law banning adoption of Russian children by Americans as a reaction to the US passage of the Magnitsky Act (which imposed sanctions against Russian elites seen as corrupt or having engaged in human rights abuses). Yarovaya co-authored the law calling for NGOs to be labeled as "foreign agents" and has become an outspoken advocate for the annexation of Crimea, calling for mothers to be the key instrument in promoting nationalism in the national family (Nesterov 2016). Mizulina sponsored legislation ostensibly to protect children from the Internet, but which legitimated the regime's censorship (Mostovshchikov 2015). Matvienko, who has the most longevity among women in Russian politics, has been put in all these boxes, most recently, being the loyalist mouthpiece for the regime on controversial issues.

Showgirls

Other women are promoted as "showgirls" to legitimate elections and enlist support for the regime's political party by legitimating and winning elections.[2] This is a feminized version of the Russian practice of "locomotives," nominating big names, such as celebrities, singers, and athletes to attract votes (Semenova 2011: 914, 919). These have included ballerina, a rhythmic gymnast, an opera singer, a figure skater, film actress, television personality, and a former *Playboy* model. Once successful, Duma deputies are often portrayed—in their workplace—as being kissed on the hand by their male counterparts, putting on make-up, or acting beautiful and silly.[3] Newspapers make lists of the "most beautiful women deputies," with comments about their hair, bust, cuteness, softness, and sexiness (Samye Krasivye Zhenshchiny-Deputaty 2012). The most prominent showgirl is the former rhythmic gymnast, Alina Kabaeva, who is alleged to be Putin's girlfriend and who, as recounted in confidential comments from a Moscow-based newspaper journalist, did not do any actual legislative work. She was elected on United Russia's list and served from 2007 until 2014, when she moved onto another sinecure. Another showgirl is Maria Maksakova, a prominent opera singer, who was elected in 2011. In the 2016 elections, nationalism was attached to the showgirl role exemplified by the election of the "sex symbol" Natalia Poklonskaya (Klikushin 2014). Poklonskaya, once a Ukrainian citizen, changed sides when Crimea was annexed in 2014 and was appointed the general prosecutor of Crimea for Russia. This gendered and sexualized electoral discourse has become part of a broader campaign. In the 2011 elections, for example, United Russia, the party of power, ran an ad, "Let's Do It Together," in which women were cast as sexually insatiable (and the only reason to vote is to have sex) (Sperling 2015: 296–300).

Other women may not be explicitly showgirls in terms of their looks, but still recruited because of their apparently friendliness. According to a Moscow-based insider, women are especially well-suited to winning elections: women are "reliable, talkative, and attractive" (or at least know how to use femininity), and they are even cheaper as candidates (because "men tend to appear to loathe their constituents"). As another insider explained, "women bring social capital if they were popular before" in elections, which is much like a market exchange. This became even more important in the 2016 elections when the electoral rules changed back, with more campaigning than has been typical in Russia.

Women in the executive have also looked like showgirls, wearing lavish jewelry beyond their means.[4] A similar phenomenon appears among subfederal elite, in which women are super-responsible performers somewhere in the middle-management level or slightly above: they are "divas" or "eye candy" (Popova 2013). One insider labeled this phenomenon, "the women of Berlusconi," a click of beautiful women. A feminist commentator explained that Putin apparently likes blondes, as illustrated by those whom he invites to be around him, which help him improve his image as a leader that all should want. Another scholar, who knew him in St. Petersburg in the 1990s, reported that Putin had declared that "all women are either smart or beautiful."

Boxed In by Informal Rules and Institutions

On the surface, men elites experience the most drastic enforcement of informal rules, such as assassination, but lacking homosociality—or what Russians call "administrative resources"—women are constituted as more vulnerable, though direct evidence is hard to come by. Even in subfederal politics, success for women in politics requires that they "make friends with the boss … and do what they say," something that is harder for women to do since women are not the same sex—or likely to have similar experiences—as the mostly male bosses (Popova 2013: 24). I got my first taste of how such informal rules might operate during a 2006 European Union–Russian conference marking Russia's clamping down on civil society. During the main event, one of Putin's spokesmen (then a member of Russia's Public Chamber after which he was elected to the Duma) refused to stop talking, even after the Finnish moderator repeatedly requested him to stop. In this way, he was able to bluster, not allowing the Russian feminist who followed to give her talk, and there was nothing that anyone could do. Later, at an informal gathering of Russian feminist activists, a self-identified *silovik* showed off his page in an encyclopedia of military men and then proposed a toast for the women in the room to find a "man who takes a long time to climax, that brings such relief to a woman, that it will take your minds off" of politics, rendering all the women in the room speechless. The next morning, the *silovik* found me in the breakfast line and talked my ear off about his political credentials, with no apparent remorse for his creation of a hostile environment.

I got clearer evidence when I met, in 2013, with Ol'ga Kryshtanovskaia, once a well-regarded political–sociologist of the Kremlin, then a member

of United Russia and "trusted person" who endorsed Putin's 2012 presidential bid (she subsequently resigned from the party). I had hoped to get some inside scoop on how women politicians survive, but instead I got unsupported assertions about how women "want to use our beauty and greater sweetness." We discussed the 2011 founding of a club to support women in politics, the Otlichnitsy, a reference to an obedient star (female) student. According to Kryshtanovskaia, the non-partisan group included some 100 initiated members, including some from the Duma, Public Chamber, and Federation Council. While lobbying for women candidates, they are "post-feminist," "forbid criticism because we want a positive atmosphere," and have added men as "beloved men of Otlichnitsy." Within weeks of Putin's announcement of his plans to return to the presidency, the group posted for Putin a happy birthday video on YouTube. Dressed in virginal white, nine women propose various birthday gifts, from jam to the white umbrella that Kryshtanovskaia offered to Putin, asking him to "please, protect us from all troubles, crises, and obstacles." Kryshtanovskaia had created a group for loyalist and showgirl women, and the interview was surreal, indicating she could not speak the truth to me. As one observer put it, Kryshtanovskaia's new persona was probably driven by either being hit by a tree or have been "made an offer she could not refuse" (Shenderovich 2011). (In some ways, the group was also a tactic to address the male-dominated elite networks that women face. As Kryshtanovskaia explained, the organization was needed because most women in politics act like men.)

Other evidence is the chill I felt while doing the research, worse than any I had experienced since the Soviet collapse. In 2013, an informant who worked in politics and refused to go on the record met me because we had some degree of personal connections, but she kept looking out the window the whole time we spoke and was explicit about how little she could really tell me. In cases where the stakes were low and where there were no explicit threats of violence, such as a 2012 election for human rights ombudsperson in St. Petersburg, one of the woman candidates described what she saw was gendered manipulation of the election when Medvedev forced in a male candidate. She explained, "Of course, it is hard to prove evidence of discrimination … But I had the feeling that it was about gender."

The existence of gendered informal rules can also be seen indirectly, such as in threats made against women leaders of other countries. At one of his presidential residences, Putin let his dog approach German

Chancellor Merkel, seemingly amused at her bracing (she had previously been badly bitten by a dog) (Packer 2014: 58). To Hillary Clinton, Putin made a derisive penis joke: "At a minimum, a head of state should have a head" (Things You Didn't Know 2014). (Putin's apparent cyber intervention into the United States' 2016 election also seems driven by particular animosity for Clinton.) Gendered rules are also suggested in by public rumors. Even Matvienko, held up as the most successful woman in formal politics, has had to dodge allegations that she slept (earlier in her career) or drank (later in her career) her way to the top.

The most direct evidence is what happened to two women deputies who once tried to advocate for gender equality as chairs of the Duma committee charged with women's issues and once identified as feminists: Lakhova and Mizulina. Lakhova, who had headed Women of Russia and advocated family planning and quotas for women, was replaced as chair in 2007 when the regime moved toward pronatalism. As a result, and not long after the Orthodox press linked her to the feminism of Pussy Riot, she put forth the loyalist ban on US adoptions. Mizulina, who had been a member of the opposition and a champion of anti-trafficking legislation passed in 2004, became chair of the committee in 2008 and very quickly did a "U-turn," advocating policies the Orthodox Church identifies as "anti-gender," including laws restricting abortion, a ban on "gay propaganda," and a proposal to tax divorce (Mostovshchikov 2015). (In 2014, she called for Putin's sperm to be available by mail for all Russian women.) Galina Michaleva, head of the gender faction of the opposition party Yabloko, which lost national representation in 2007 and is the only party with feminism in it, explains that "today, there is no place for women in politics who help women." She's not quite right, as the Federation Council has become a dumping ground for women. Lakhova was moved there in 2014 and Mizulina in 2015, joining other elite women politicians (Karelova, who became vice chair in 2014, and Matvienko) who had once tried to represent women's interests.

As a Russian feminist activist described to Valerie Sperling (2015: 190–191), "the few women in the Duma … [are] afraid to lose their power. Therefore, of course they have to stay absolutely within the bounds (v ramkakh), and say what they're told to and no more." These informal rules make these roles into boxes, often temporary (especially the political

cleaner), or only pedestals with little power. Even ultimate "loyalists" who advocate legislation to protect the regime, over-compensating in order to try to save their hides, can end up with only scraps of power. There appear to be direr consequences for showgirls who reject the box. Duma deputy and opera singer Maksakova spoke out against the gay propaganda law (Nemtsova 2017). In October 2016, she and her husband (also a deputy) fled to Ukraine, they claimed, because they had been hounded by the Federal Security Service (the post-Soviet KGB) for their views, even to the point she had a miscarriage (her husband was then shot and killed in 2017).

These informal rules are then potentiated by the domination of informal politics within the larger system. The greatest increases in the proportions of women have been in the legislatures, which have become facades of representation. Matvienko was chosen as the chair of the Federation Council in 2011, which was seen by insiders as a demotion (from being governor) as well as a way to replace a previous (male) head who had been recalled by United Russia. As one opposition activist put it crassly to me, the Federation Council is where "they put the trash," that is, the politicians who are no longer useful for the regime. As another put it, "In Russia, everything isn't how it looks … It looks like Matvienko is very powerful [as head of the Federation Council] but what does the Federation Council do—it is not like [the US] Senate—they just sit and do nothing."

Women have the greatest proportion in the paraconstitutional Public Chamber (which has varied between one-fifth and one-quarter women), which was created as a façade of representation in 2005 and serves as a parallel lower house of parliament, and the Constitution Court (at 16% in 2013), whose weakness was symbolized in its move to St. Petersburg in 2008. (As Thomas Remington [2013: 48] explains, these "parallel parliaments" allow Putin to "divert policy-making expertise and debate from the parliament to alternative arenas, which the president can consult at his pleasure.") In contrast, the most powerful Presidium of the State Council has had only two women (Matvienko and Komarova, each with 2 six-month terms out of a total of 200 posts) since Putin came to power.

This dynamic is similar in the executive where women are often boxed in by more powerful informal posts or posts with informal powers. Of the ministries seen as most powerful (security, economic, and deputy prime ministers), women have had the most presence as deputy prime ministers—Matvienko (1998–2003), Galina Karelova (2003–2004), and Olga Golodets (2012–present)—a post that is less about expertise and more about loyalty; they tend to serve as gatekeepers for access to the prime

minister and sometimes manage regional informal networks (Semenova 2015: 148–149). No woman has headed the most powerful security ministries. The reality of women's power is represented in the fact that few women are included in maps of Russia's elites, and never in the inner circle. For example, in a 2012 Russian think tank map, Matvienko and Nabiullina are the only women among the top 53 political–business elites (Minchenko Consulting 2012). Since then, the formal institutions have become even more hollowed out.

As Kochkina summarizes, this "political landscape prevents [women political elites] from developing their political positions and agency … and their initiatives are riddled with uncertainty, waste of human resources, and simulative political processes" (Kochkina 2007: 110–111). As another observer summarizes, women in power in Russia "are either sexy or old war horses, excuse me for saying this, like Lakhova….the women … are in a corrupted system where there are not enough women to make changes. They must play the Putin game…."

Iceland

Over the last decade, women's participation in politics in Iceland has become among the highest in the world. Between 1922 and 1983, less than 5% of MPs had been women, and there was only 1 woman speaker of parliament out of 52 men and 1 woman minister out of 72 men. From 1983 to 2009, there were improvements on all levels, with women party leaders for the first time, but Iceland still lagged its Nordic neighbors. With the April 2009 elections, Iceland reached what Dahlerup and Leyenaar (2013) identify as gender balance (see Fig. 3.2). Along with Iceland's first female prime minister, Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, there were 6 women out of 14 cabinet members, women served as 45% of parliamentary chairs, and the speaker of parliament was a woman (see Table 3.2) (Styrkársdóttir 2013). For the first time in Iceland's history, a few of these women ministers took their allowed family leave, transforming these roles. Following on the footsteps of Iceland and the world's first woman president (Vigdís Finnbogadóttir), Þóra Arnórsdóttir, a former political reporter who happened to be visibly pregnant for most of her candidacy, ran for president in 2012 (but lost).

After the 2013 elections, which ousted the left-center coalition that had committed to gender parity, the percentage of women MPs only dropped two percentage points. The new center-right coalition government kept

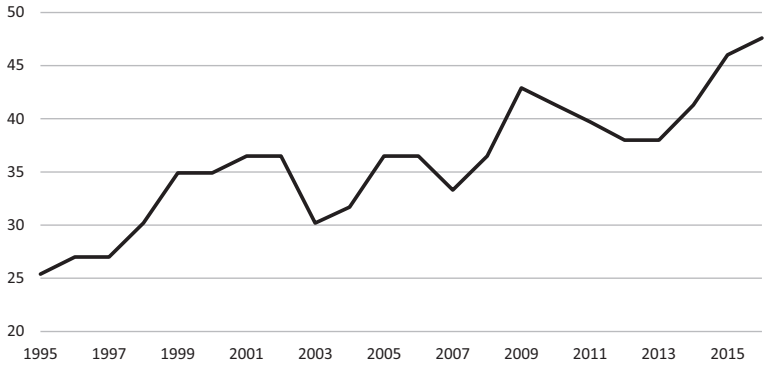

Fig. 3.2 Percentage of women in Iceland's legislature, 1995–2016. Source: "Althingi-Women in parliament" (2013), Inter-parliamentary Union (2016b)

Table 3.2 Key women in Icelandic politics, 2009–2016

Name	*Official posts (previous important posts)*
Center-left coalition in power 2009–2013	
1. Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir	MP, 1978–2013, Social Democratic Alliance; prime minister, 2009–2013
2. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir	Chair, Social Democratic Alliance, 2005–2009; minister for Foreign Affairs 2007–2009 (mayor of, 1994–2003)
3. Ásta Ragnheiður Jóhannesdóttir	MP, 1995–2013, speaker of Parliament, 2009–2013
4. Katrín Júlíusdóttir	MP, 2003–2016; vice chair, Social Democratic Alliance; minister of Industry 2009–2012; minister of Finance, 2012–2013
5. Katrín Jakobsdóttir	MP, 2007–present; vice chair, Left-Greens, 2003–2013; minister of Education, 2009–2013; chair, Left-Greens, 2013–present
6. Svandís Svavarsdóttir	MP, 2009–present; minister of the Environment, 2009–2013; chair of the parliamentary group of Left-Greens, 2013–present
7. Oddný G. Harðardóttir	MP, 2009–present; minister of Finance 2011–2012 (while Júlíusdóttir was on maternity leave), chair of Parliamentary Budget Committee 2010–2011 and 2013
8. Sigríður Ingibjörg Ingadóttir	MP, 2009–2016, Social Democratic Alliance; chair of the Parliamentary Budget Committee, 2011–2012 (in lieu of Harðardóttir); chair, Social Welfare Committee 2012–2013
9. Valgerður Bjarnadóttir	MP, 2009–2016, Social Democratic Alliance
10. Lilja Mósesdóttir	MP, 2009–2013, Left-Greens (but departed from party in 2011)

(*continued*)

Table 3.2 (continued)

Name	*Official posts (previous important posts)*
Center right coalition in power, 2013–2016 (April)	
1. Hanna Birna Kristjánsdóttir	Mayor of, 2008–2010, Independence Party; MP, 2013–2016; minister of the Interior, 2013–2014; chair, Foreign Affairs committee, 2015–2016
2. Ragnheiður Elín Árnadóttir	MP, 2007–2016, Independence Party; chair, Parliamentary Group, 2010–2012; minister of Industry and Trade, 2013–2017
3. Eygló Harðardóttir	MP, 2008–2016, Progressive Party; minister of Social Affairs and Housing, 2013–2017
4. Sigrún Magnúsdóttir	MP, 2013–2016, Progressive Party; minister for the Environment and Natural Resources, 2014–2017; chair, Parliamentary Group, 2013–2015
5. Ólöf Nordal	MP, 2007–present, Independence Party; minister of the Interior, 2014–2017
6. Lilja Alfreðsdóttir	MP, 2016–present, Progressive Party; minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, 2016–2017
Other parties	
1. Heiða Kristín Helgadóttir	Chair, Best Party, 2010–2013; MP, 2014–2015, Bright Future
2. Birgitta Jónsdóttir	MP, 2009–present; chair, the Movement 2011–2012; chair, Pirate Party, 2014–2015

Source: Þingmenn í stafrófsröð (2017)

Notes: Iceland's prime minister resigned in April 2016, with the Panama Paper revelations, leading to some reorganization of ministries. The new ministers, who only served for six months before the elections, are not included here. There was a hung parliament after the October 2016 elections until the beginning of 2017.

a relatively high level of women in politics, with 4 women out of 10 ministers. While both parties in the governing coalition were led by men, women led two of the three opposition parties in parliament, the Left-Greens and the Pirate Party. The character of the parliament had changed so much that a center-right MP (Unnur Brá Konráðsdóttir) nursed her baby while standing at the podium defending her bill. In the next presidential elections, four of the nine candidates that ran were women, and the highest polling recorded (at fourth) was for Halla Tómasdóttir, one of the founders of the financial services firm (Auður Capital) with feminine values. In the 2016 parliamentary election, even more women entered parliament, making Iceland the democracy with the highest proportion of women in parliament (and the fourth highest in the world) (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2016b).

In city government (the only level below the national), women and feminists also did well. Reykjavik, Iceland's largest municipality by far, had its second woman mayor in history, the feminist activist Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir who had been one of the founders of the Women's Alliance, from 1994 to 2003. This appeared to break the male monopoly over the office, as two other women served as mayors (intermixed with men) in the decade that followed. Even the men mayors since 2009 have declared themselves feminists. Jón Gnarr, mayor 2010–2014, was a well-known comedian and actor, who formed the Best Party as satire, but then won enough votes to become mayor. While his comedy derailed serious women candidacies for mayor and some Icelandic feminists have been critical of him for his previous work, he embraced and supported Icelandic feminists and gender equality policy. For example, when one self-identified "extreme feminist" who happened to work in the city administration was being pilloried and threatened online for setting up a Facebook page on "Men who hate women," he immediately offered concrete support, in person. According to the most prominent feminist organization, Stígamót, he was the first from the new city council to show up when invited and gave the organization all the money it asked for. (He also embraced Russia's Pussy Riot, dressing in drag with their signature balaclava, and terminated the sister city from Moscow after the gay propaganda law was passed.) The mayor since 2014 is Dagur Bergþóruson Eggertsson (who was also briefly mayor in 2007–2008) whose parents broke with patriarchal tradition and gave him both a matronymic (son of Bergþóra) and patronymic (son of Eggert). Eggertsson let his image be used, declaring "I am a slut," to support the 2015 Slut Walk.

The fewest women have been in law and law enforcement. At the top of a police force that remains 87% male, a woman (Sigríður Björk Guðjónsdóttir) was appointed in 2009 as a national police commissioner in the second biggest district near the international airport, and then in the capital city region in 2014, where she was joined by the appointment of two other women as national commissioners (out of nine in Iceland) (interview with Guðjónsdóttir). Iceland's Supreme Court had only one or two women at a time out of the nine judges during the years 2009–2015.

Informally, Not Just Formally, Fast-Tracked

In contrast to Russia, Iceland, by the 2000s, already had formal fast-tracking in place. All major parties, except for the Independence Party, had

internal quotas since 1983 (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 134–135). A party led by Sigurðardóttir attempted another fast-tracking strategy in the 1990s, the zipper system in which women are placed in alternating positions on the list. In 1999, there was a major party realignment, with Sigurðardóttir's party merging with the Women's Alliance (among others) into the Social Democratic Alliance, while those who resisted the merger became the Left-Greens. Both parties adopted an internal 40% quota, with the "guiding rule of equal representation on party lists" from the zipper, while the Progressive Party adopted a list quota in 2005.

However, as Styrkársdóttir (2013: 134–135) argues, the influx of women into the parliament is less from the quotas themselves, which came more recently, than from the pressure for the Women's Alliance, women's lists in local elections, and women in the parties themselves. Created in the 1980s, the Women's Alliance was a political party "of women for women, run on egalitarian feminist lines," with an agenda of "eliminating gender oppression and transformation gender relations" to foster "collective, caring values" (Dominelli and Jonsdottir 1988). In addition to being pro-environment and pro-peace, the Women's Alliance specifically called out political parties for being run by "power-hungry men" (Styrkársdóttir 1986: 150, 153). The creation of the party was a ploy designed for Iceland's unique primary system, which seemed to disadvantage women and minorities.[5]

The Women's Alliance "contributed directly to this increase, but also indirectly by forcing the other parties to nominate more women" (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 134–135). Observers have criticized the resulting quotas as soft quotas, quotas within parties often adopted informally, suggesting they are less substantial than hard quotas that are formalized into law, but this formalization downplays the importance of informal rules in politics. Under these informal rules, both the Social Democratic Alliance and the Left-Greens use the zipper and have superseded the outcomes of primaries (although the men often remain first and third on the lists, which can lead to huge differentials across the country if the party wins the top three seats and to fewer women in cabinet). Informally, the founders of the Women's Alliance still gather for a summer barbecue, and this older generation still has a say in the political maneuverings in the left parties, especially about the younger generation of women. As one political observer put it, the "Women's Alliance is still alive and kicking." Informal individual commitments matter, such as Prime Minister Sigurðardóttir's promotion of women across formal posts, and her symbolic gesture of buying pink- and blue-lensed "gender glasses" for all her ministers.

The bait and switch in fast-tracking is more evident in the center-right parties. The Progressive Party, the centrist party of the 2013–2016 prime minister, adopted a 40% voluntary quota in 2005, but with a yawning exception "for obvious and manifest impediments," and no requirement about the distribution of women and men across the party candidate list. In this way, they construct a pretense of gender equality but also retain informal rules against women's equal representation. The relatively strong showing of women in the 2013 election was a fluke, a result of the surprising upsurge in votes for the Progressives who had a higher percentage of women on the bottom of their lists (whom the Party assumed would not get elected). The Independence Party has a strong sector of self-identified feminists, but the Party has been openly critical of the quotas and has never been led by a woman (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 136–137).

Icelandic activists also achieved another fast-tracking strategy just as the economic crisis began to rear its head. In 2007, a change was made in the Gender Equality Act to require 40% quota for the public boards, meaning non-elected committees, councils, and boards of state and local authorities (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 137). The result is that the composition of such public entities jumped from 7% in 1980 to 36% in 2007. Though there are no formal sanctions for violation of the policy, there are sanctions for not reporting the required information to the Centre for Gender Equality, and there is significant social pressure when the information is made public.

By 2013, almost all ministries had complied by providing information, although some like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs complied by appointing additional members. These quotas also created a right to appeal committee chair assignments and minister appointments. After the 2013 elections, the finance committee included all men while the welfare committee had only one man. Complaining both to the speaker of parliament and in the media, the Centre for Gender Equality argued that this violated the spirit, if not the actual public board quota law. The parliamentary leadership argued that parliamentary committees were exempted, but they reorganized the committees in response. The quota seems to be responsible for the influx of women as national police commissioners by 2014, which was achieved while shrinking (rather than expanding) the total number (Árnadóttir 2014). In contrast, in 2015, when it was time to appoint a new judge to the Supreme Court, the nominating committee was composed of five men and chose a man, with the Icelandic Bar Association and the Supreme Court arguing that the public board quota does not apply, while the Icelandic Women Attorneys Association contended that it does.

Powerful institutions, such as the Supreme Court and the power ministries, are able to ignore, or at least circumvent, the quota.

Recruited Through Emphasized Femininity

As in Russia, there seems to be specific reasons why women have gotten fast-tracked into Icelandic politics that relate to emphasized femininity. The boxes for women can be seen through analyzing the key women in Icelandic politics around the crisis period.

Workhorses

When women first became ministers in Iceland, they tended to be placed in care-related field such as education, welfare, health, and the environment, but in the years leading to the crisis, women were brought into other fields, such as industry and foreign affairs, becoming the workhorses of the government (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 136–137). The 2009 center-left government expanded these positions, bringing women in as prime minister as well as a finance minister, speaker of the parliament, chair of the parliamentary budget committee, and in charge of constitutional reforms. In the post-2013 governments, finance went back to the men, but a woman was promoted (and then replaced with a second woman) as minister of interior, with charge over the male-dominated police. On the one hand, these new positions ostensibly signaled a shift in women's representation as women gained formal authority over Iceland's political economy. On the other hand, as in Russia, this influx occurred after the spoils of privatization had already been divvied up.

Political Cleaners

In other words, women were only brought into these new positions when the country hit one of the worst economic crises in modern Western economies. First, there was an unusual and short-lived coalition between the Independence Party and the Social Democratic Alliance, 2007–2009. It was a desperate attempt by the long dominant party to save itself, but this set up the Social Democratic Alliance and its higher proportion of women as complicit in the crisis. Second, when a new government was finally formed in April 2009 (after an interim government from February), they were faced with a stand-by agreement with the International Monetary Foundation as negotiated by the previous government. Other funds were conditional on the IMF agreement. Additionally, one of Iceland's banks had created a scheme for

savings accounts for foreigners, which had gone bankrupt with its bank. The United Kingdom government had unilaterally imposed economic sanctions in October 2008, arguing that European laws required Iceland to at least partially insure British accounts.

Thus, Prime Minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir and her center-left coalition came to power in an almost impossible situation, especially for parties committed to the kinds of generous benefits of Iceland's Nordic neighbors. The situation was such a mess that everyone in the government was forced to become political cleaners, with enormous levels of responsibility and a different kind of consensus politics. As the speaker of the parliament, one of the only MPs with knowledge of the rules and with some 95% of the parliament's support, explained, "I had a mandate to be president or the speaker of all parties." Yet, in such an intense period in the society, with unrest outside the parliament and new members who didn't want to follow parliamentary procedure, she had to call up her background as a grammar school teacher to keep order. At the same time, she tried to change the ways decisions were made, introducing more transparency, such as requiring written signed agreements on procedures for debate, when earlier verbal agreements had been sufficient, and more consensus building, even as there were so many big, pressing issues during these four years. Another top woman elite from this period described a similar weighty, if not impossible, responsibility to "eliminate every form of injustice and to make sure that ethical standards are applied in all areas of politics. Fighting corruption and total transparency have been at the top of my agenda. And I think it is imperative always to keep in mind that you are in politics to serve other people, not vice versa." Because of these commitments, she pursued almost solely formal mechanisms, such as carefully following parliamentary procedures and empowering formal internal investigative institutions.

The 2014 appointment of Sigríður Björk Guðjónsdóttir as Reykjavik police commissioner also reflects a political cleaner role. The previous male police commissioner had been involved in a scandal (discussed later in the text), and Guðjónsdóttir had credibility as an advocate against violence against women—a newly pressing issue for Iceland whose law enforcement had been lagging behind most democracies—because of her addressing trafficking in women while she was the commissioner near the international airport. She described feeling a great responsibility to reform the institutions of the police—changing the training and addressing the culture of sexual harassment in order to better advance women—as well

as to change the way the police force was responding to violence against women. As she explained, "I didn't start out as a feminist … I believed that gender didn't matter, but then I hit a glass ceiling … I want to fight injustice, I don't want power and pay… I have a vision for a better society especially for those who are vulnerable, protect children, the only real chance to make better lives."

Women being political cleaners was neither new nor an imposition. The Women's Alliance, with ties to cultural feminism, had, in the 1982 Reykjavik election, called for "cleaning up" the city council. Some argue that Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, a former Women's Alliance leader, who became Reykjavik mayor in 1998 was brought in to clean up financial messes in which the previous administration, rewarding his friends in construction, had put up "little erections all over the city." However, by 2009, there was a construct in the society that "when it comes to money, the general public trust women better… [that] women are culturally taught to be less corrupt." A political commentator stated, "women became a less threatening species" in formal posts and institutions in Iceland. As the former prime minister explained, "In my experience, women work hard to create a more just and equal society—when they are given the chance. If that was more often the case, and women were not simply called in to do the cleaning up when the men have made a mess of things, I think the world would become a better place" ("Iceland's First Female PM" 2016).

Loyalists

Loyalty runs high within political parties in Iceland's mostly parliamentary system, but for women, there are even higher expectations, evident when women do not express sufficiently loyalty. For example, Lilja Mósesdóttir entered politics for the Left-Greens in 2009 as a result of her criticism of the faulty liberalization that caused the economic crisis. When she asked questions she was not supposed to and refused to follow the party line, she became "enemy #1" despite the fact that men were doing the same thing. As one observer explained, women enter politics later in life (usually after the university), are asked to join when the parties are looking for more women, and then tend to see politics as a job, but "politics is not a job, but networking; politics is not about merit, but performance."

Showgirls

While not the same kind of showgirls as in Russia, Iceland too has had a version of the showgirl. Jóhannesdóttir's (2009: 44–46) study of

newspaper photos of politicians in the months between the interim government and the postcrisis government in 2009 found that the women leadership was represented in extremely close-up photos in the major newspapers indicating a personal intimacy while the men were shot from a distance. Katrín Jakobsdóttir, the youngest of the party leaders at 33 years, was always shown smiling, with no images of her serious work in the parliament. The showgirl was perhaps most marked in the position of the presidency. In contrast to the patronal Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, president of Iceland (1996–2016), Iceland's presidents have historically been cultural figures. Iceland's first woman president, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, followed in that vein, as a former artistic theater director who used her clothes to both accentuate her equality to and difference from men (Andrésdóttir 2014). Similarly, when Þóra Arnórsdóttir ran for president in 2012, she tried to run as a political cleaner with a message of a "fresh start" of dialogue and harmony versus crisis and corruption. But, the patronal four-term president successfully cast himself as the elder statesman to the young, beautiful, and pregnant Arnórsdóttir. This was despite the fact that she was from a political family, has an MA from Johns Hopkins' Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, and has had a career as a political reporter.

The women at the bottom of the Progressive Party's list in 2013 were also showgirls to the extent that they were there for the appearance of representation. Though elite women, such as the leader of the Pirates, have managed to sidestep the standard, most women in politics are required to wear feminine clothing, although if they dress too fancily, they are also criticized. As one informant explained, even after Iceland's feminist revolt in 2009, there was still a "pantyhose lady" who temporarily set up shop in most of the ministries, so that women could be properly attired. In the words of a long-term woman journalist, women in politics, especially in primaries that operate similar to first-past-the-post elections, are judged by the color of their hair, their shape, and so forth, more so than men.

Boxed In by Informal Rules and Institutions

It is not that these are roles that the women choose for themselves. As one commentator put it, "most of the women in parliament are fighters, as they had to fight even to get on the [party] list." However, women get pushed into boxes, if they want to stay in politics. As in Russia, there are informal rules that create these boxes by penalizing women who do

not stay in line. One woman elite argued, in 2013, that the situation had improved in general because of the influx of women, but there were still problems:

> Even today, opposition MPs still have a tendency to use more demeaning language when addressing female ministers than male ministers – and during Parliamentary debate the women are often accused of making threats when they try to fight with determination for important issues. Since the social media, online blogs and comments came on the scene it has also become clear that public opinion is often more ruthless towards women in Government than their male colleagues. … It is sad how far people have actually gone when writing derogative comments online about women in high political office. It is also sadly noticeable that female opposition MPs sometimes criticize female ministers more viciously than male ministers.

Even in Iceland, there is gendered hostility.

Former Reykjavik mayor Jón Gnarr has been most explicit about this dynamic, which he said he faced too as a non-Alpha male, identifying it with hegemonic masculinity. Gnarr, who has publicly discussed the bullying he faced as a child, writes of the "*freka karlinn*," the greedy, bossy man who gets what he wants by bullying people (Gnarr 2015). Gnarr explains that, though this kind of hegemonic man can show up in many guises in society, he "met him every day" when he was in office. This bully in Iceland has the following characteristics:

> He is a commander. He … stride through airports and take the pulpit. He knows how to preach to people. I have seen him drive around in his car on the road that was mainly built for him… There are few things he enjoys more than giving speeches about himself, unless it is to receive acknowledgements from himself… I have seen him stand up at meetings and shout something, raising a clenched fist. I have seen him bawl out people and I have often been at odds with him, usually in others, but sometimes even in myself. I have seen him elbow his way through waiting lines. I have often been startled when he bangs his fist on the table. … There is one set of laws for him and another for everybody else, because he invented them…. He always has the right of way. He knows everything better than anybody else and he is always right. He has never had enough, not even of himself. He does not know how to be ashamed, has no idea what that is. But he is the first one to tell others to be ashamed of themselves…. Relentlessly, he barges on and he does not care if he bumps into others or hurts them or harms them with his conduct. He does not think about others so much. They make

> no difference to him. He just wants his things for himself. He believes that if he gets everything he wants, others will automatically benefit from it. He will stop at nothing to achieve his goals. He doesn't hesitate to lie, deceive and steal. But when he steals, it is not theft, but rather fairness or justice. At worst, some kind of misjudgment. Sometimes he becomes gentle as a lamb and then he often becomes the protector and advocate of Justice. Then he talks about things like duty, solidarity, security and fairness… There are few people who dare contradict him or oppose him, let alone to stand up to him. Because who wants to come up against him? Who wants to see the piercing glare, hear the sneer and the threats? His justice is injustice. Who wants to be his enemy and feel his anger? Very few. Because he is the most powerful man in Iceland.

Identifying himself as the other, Gnarr describes how this kind of hegemonic man casts "people who don't agree with him are fools and idiots. Especially women." Together, these comments suggest the informal rules behind not just hegemonic masculinity, but emphasized femininity.

One of the woman elites described a similar phenomenon of bullies who drive fancy SUVs and park on sidewalks, which she identified as common among economic elites as well as in old institutionalized elites in established parties. She was feeling pushed out of power by her male counterpart who was putting her in the position of a "housewife where he was coming home and sitting in a lounge chair with brandy." When she returned from getting married, he suggested that she might want to have kids. She said she felt that he was "trying to put her in her place, that there was no part in it for me … that he was seeing himself as the chosen one" after she had built the structure that he wanted to use. She explained that this new kind of sexism is harder than the old style of male chauvinist pigs who are explicitly sexist. For example, it is hard to call men on sexism when something a woman says is ignored (but then seen as "clever" when a man repeats it).

This gendered hostility can be a real threat at least to the career of women in Iceland's politics because women lack homosociality. An illustration is the scandal that brought down Hanna Birna Kristjánsdóttir, seen as the "ice queen," as Ministry of Interior (2013–2014) from the Independence Party. One of her assistants leaked compromising information about an asylum seeker, in violation of Iceland's strict privacy laws, and then Kristjánsdóttir tried to cover it up. Several insiders say that the evidence suggests that Kristjánsdóttir called to ask the (male) Reykjavik police commissioner to drop the investigation. He, in turn, resigned,

listing only some lyrics from the Beatles about "she came in through the bathroom window" on his Facebook page for explanation, drawing attention to Kristjánsdóttir. According to several scholars/political commentators, the situation was handled differently than it would have been in the past, when all the relevant officials were men, as they would have "sat down and solved it." Kristjánsdóttir had already broken the code by going after the male-dominated police force, but then she broke it again by asking directly for protection.

Another tactic seems to be asking for psychological investigations of women leaders, a more tame version of the psychiatric evaluations of dissidents by Soviet authorities (Hafstað 2016). Individual police officers, with help from the former commissioner and the National Police Federation of Iceland, appealed to parliament for an investigation into the management by Sigríður Björk Guðjónsdóttir, the first woman Reykjavik police commissioner. The resulting 2016 report by an internal occupational psychologist suggests that some officers find the work environment unbearable, with the head of the Federation identifying her "demeanor as the problem." Her response in a memo was the following: "Changes are underway which naturally aren't to everyone's liking. In addition to those, there are issues covered in recent days and weeks by the media, and hiring processes for management positions. I don't believe there is anything abnormal going on and await to hear in more detail from the National Police Federation of Iceland regarding the matter." Gender-aware observers see that she is being targeted because she is a woman trying to address male dominance within the police. As one feminist journalist put it, she fears that the new police commissioner "will either be burned or burned at both ends," arguing that she is particularly at risk because she "she is trying to replace a generation of old guys who have been sitting in power for 25 years."

Sometimes there are palpable threats of violence even in Iceland, especially as a result of anger during the economic crisis. One woman elite I interviewed described how a colleague who had wanted her job kept upping the ante in trying to undermine her (female) assistant. He first told the assistant to "come well-dressed next time," made a joke about her being a naked prostitute, and then called her a "cunt," which in Icelandic, as in English, implicitly contains a threat of sexual violence. Another elite was in tears when describing the treatment faced by a counterpart, who had resigned to protect her family after protesters targeted her house. Other prominent women have left politics because of such hostility, with no one having their back—such as Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, who had

formed the crisis interim government—making women's careers usually shorter than men. Former Prime Minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, whose home was egged by protestors and her son hassled by the police, has mostly disconnected from politics. Even Gnarr has left politics, explaining that he did not want to run for president, though many urged him to, because he did not want to meet the bully. In contrast to the women, perhaps also because of his background in show business, he sought to undermine the status quo, dressing in drag as the bully, in a blue suit with red tie, and beard, talking to an empty table, in a video.

In sum, while women entered into the halls of power in new ways in 2009, the gendered rules of male dominance did not fundamentally change. In recognition of this reality, a woman MP from the Independence Party called for temporary, women-only parliament, 2017–2019, suggesting this experiment to see if women really do operate different than men and could really clean up the mess. A stunt more than a real power play, this MP, known for being nice, was bowing out of the parliament, like so many other women. Even in Iceland, informal rules create boxes for women, allowing them only temporary power or facing substantial limitations.

The existence and workings of informal institutions are less well mapped in Iceland than in Russia, but women are more likely to be in most representative institutions, such as parliament. Other formal institutions work informally, such as the Supreme Court, which, as one law professor put it, is "just a group of boys … our corruption in Iceland." Officially appointed by the minister of Interior, they are effectively self-selecting from among former classmates and connected to the Independence and Progressive Parties. The same is true within the executive. For example, the minister in charge of fisheries—in this historically fishing-dominated economy and polity—have all been men, benefiting from connections to the powerful male-dominated fishing interests, which have an outsized role in policy-making (Asgeirsdottir 2009).

Conclusion: Fast-Tracked or Boxed In?

This chapter examines the consequences of the bait-and-switch male dominance created by radical liberalization on women (and feminist men) in politics in Russia and Iceland. In both countries, women have been fast-tracked into politics in the last decade, especially after the global economic

crisis started. In Russia, the fast-tracking was informal after elites balked at legislative quotas. In Iceland, most political parties have adopted some kind of quota, but the influx in women resulted from a variety of pressures, including the establishment of a feminist party in the 1980s. In both countries, women filled the roles of workhorses who do the hard work of politics, temporary political cleaners who cleaned up political and economic messes, loyalists who support party or the regime, and showgirls who bolster the regime's claim of representative democracy. In both countries, women elites were constrained by informal rules and institutions that box women into these roles.

Comparing these most different cases and showing similar impact on women's representation—the influx of women who are then boxed in—raise questions about the case-specific explanations. In Russia, much has been written about the increasing sexism across the spectrum (Sundstrom 2010; Johnson and Saarinen 2013; Chandler 2013; Riabov and Riabova 2014; Sperling 2015), but little has paired this recognition with the reality of the influx of women under Putin's rule. The exception is Svetlana Aivazova (2008: 82–83) analysis of the 2007–2008 election cycle, which finds the increasing sway of the United Russia party producing "contradictory results," with more women in politics but within a "traditionalist and 'loyalist' political culture, not civic or democratic" where the "law of strength—male strength—visibly outbalances the force of law." While Icelandic feminist scholars have been more critical of the reality of Iceland's feminist revolt (2009–2013), global popular press with international advocates such as the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap has extolled the progress, while ignoring the informal constraints on women and feminist men in Icelandic politics. Measures of corruption rely on perceptions of corruption that are tied to cultural assumptions about the West, especially Nordic countries, as clean (Shore and Haller 2005: 3).

Of course, there are differences between Russia and Iceland. There are no feminist male elites in Russia. In Russia, the loyalist box was more extreme, and the institutions and posts to which women are fast-tracked are mere facades, whereas in Iceland, the parliament and formal posts held by women retain more authority. In Russia, the threats of enforcement appear to have more violence attached to them.

However, the similarities suggest new ways of thinking women's representation that take the informal more seriously. There is a bait and switch

in women's representation, just as there is in the broader question of gender equality, in that the very mechanisms that fast-track women often box them in. We cannot assume that inclusion of women in politics means women's representation. While wording of quota laws may matter (Krook 2010: 39), seeing the informal politics more clearly suggests that it is more important how the formal interacts with the informal: if key players want to undermine quotas, the wording may simply provide the scaffolding around which to work. The same is true of women's and feminist parties, which work formally to the degree to which they are designed to operate as real parties, but elites in some postcommunist states have created women's parties and/or lists to undermine competitive elections (Johnson 2007). Fast-tracking policies must identify and disarm the underlying informal rules if they are to come close to advocates' goals. Otherwise, fast-tracking women may be akin to throwing women off a political "glass cliff," as Ryan and Haslam (2005) have identified about bringing women into failing businesses.

Notes

1. Many of the findings in this section on Russia were first reported in Johnson (2016).
2. A feminist activists said something similar to Sperling (2015: 190–191), that women in the Duma are there as "decoration" and "entertainment."
3. This is illustrated in a tongue-in-cheek slide show, online at http://www.kommersant.ru/gallery/2140440#id=842137. Accessed March 26, 2014.
4. Alexei Navalny's anti-corruption organization reported that eight politicians—all of them women—had jewelry whose costs would be prohibitive if they lived on their government salaries: Matvienko has been photographed wearing three pairs of earrings worth at least $23,000 each and a $100,000 diamond watch, and Golikova with two watches worth more than $10,000 ("New Investigation Exposes" 2015).
5. Unlike most proportional representation systems, reforms in the 1970s brought majority vote primaries for most parties to determine the order of the party list.

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CHAPTER 4

Feminist Mobilization: How Bait-and-Switch Male Dominance Undermines Feminism and How Feminists Fight Back

Introduction

The Icelandic women's movement, with a strong feminist core, has been one of the most vibrant efforts in the world. For example, in 1975, two-thirds of Icelandic women walked off their jobs to protest their unequal pay, a walkout that was repeated several times. Russian women's mobilization, once such organizing was possible after the late 1980s' reduction in Soviet control, has been mostly a modest affair, with feminism only a small part. Both movements, however, have been criticized for their reliance on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) rather than on mass mobilization and for the use of technical "gender talk" rather than explicit feminism. Over the last decade, both movements have turned to novel forms of organizing, engaging in guerrilla forms of feminism as exemplified in Pussy Riot. Given the difficulties facing women in politics, might feminist mobilization be more likely to lead to progressive change?

This chapter examines feminist mobilization through the book's lens of the bait-and-switch male dominance, in which gendered informal politics subverts formal promises of gender equality. Such mobilization—the voluntary work of feminist activists in informal groups, NGOs, and interest groups, especially when working in coalition—can also be a critical actor in fostering gender equality, putting pressure on society and the state to respond to its concerns. Granted, classifying mobilization as feminist (or not) is a contentious undertaking, as there are many different ways to approach the task and feminist scholars have deep commitments to

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their approach (Walby 2011). I categorize as feminism "activism to challenge and change women's subordination" (Basu 2010: 4), as opposed to women's movements, "which are defined by their constituencies, namely women" (Beckwith 2000: 413–416). As feminisms have developed differently in different places and times, there is no one feminism, but those who embrace "feminism" share a critique of gender injustice, often critiquing roles assigned to women and men and the public–private divide that institutionalizes these differences (Dhamoon 2013: 89). I also recognize that most feminisms are imperfect, struggling as most movements do, with being inclusive in terms of race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality. Given male dominance in the state, feminist political scientists have argued that this sphere outside of the state has in general proven to be more fertile for women to challenge the state.

In the following, I summarize the criticism of feminist organizing in the neoliberal era and then connect these insights to the book's argument about the gendered informalization of power. I then analyze the most different cases of Iceland and Russia, from the 1990s but focused on the last decade. To illustrate, I provide mini case studies of important feminist organizations, a sample in Russia and, because of its small size, a comprehensive set in Iceland. In the end, I show how bait-and-switch male dominance has created another box for women—the NGO box—but that feminists have begun to reject the staid box.

The NGO-ization of Feminism

Cross-national studies, especially the work of Laurel Weldon and on state feminism, show that promoting gender equality benefits from feminist mobilization outside of the system (Htun and Weldon 2010: 207; Weldon 2011). Political scientists have found most effective to be either a "jaw strategy" of both insider efforts and outside movements or a "triangle of empowerment" with strong women's activism, a critical contingent of feminist politicians, and feminist officials with legal authority to address gender inequality (Ewig and Feree 2013: 447–449). Without outsider mobilization, scholars have pointed to problems of co-optation by the state, the instrumentalization of feminist rhetoric for the state's ends, or just ignoring the insider feminists. In other words, feminists become no longer autonomous. "Autonomous organizations must be self-governing, must recognize no superior authority, and must not be subject to the governance of other political agencies" (Weldon 2011: 37).

However, as pointed out most clearly by Sonia Alvarez, many feminist movements in the post-Cold War era have been professionalized into NGOs, creating an "NGO boom" (Alvarez 1999). NGOs as a form of organizing had been around since the United Nations created the category at its founding after World War II, but the form took off for women's organizing in the 1990s when the UN Conference on Women in Beijing transformed women's rights into recognized human rights. No longer mass mobilizations, marked by street protests and the like, the new feminisms are marked by NGOs staffed by middle- and upper-class women, far from the constituency they profess to serve, focusing instead on advising the government. In comparison to community feminism, NGOs tend to be more bureaucratic in form, with hierarchy of structure and logics of financial accountability and efficiency. Some critics went further, arguing that NGOs are "the handmaidens of neoliberal planetary patriarchy" (Alvarez 1999: 200). By the time of the global financial crisis, "feminism as a social movement seems less visible than the plethora of NGOs addressing gender issues and women's welfare" (Grewal and Bernal 2014).

A related shift also occurred in the way activists spoke as they became "gender experts" using "gender talk," a technical language of development with its ideas stripped of notions of emancipation from patriarchal domination (Alvarez 1999; Banaszak et al. 2003; Alvarez 2009). Similar to political economists who see gender as only a variable, the concept of gender becomes thin, mostly meaning women, or perhaps differences between women and men. This is far from the thick concept of gender used here, in which gender is an intractable part of norms, rules, and institutions that structure society. Both shifts, to most observers, meant a deradicalization of the movement.

This chapter examines this transformation in feminist organizing, using the blueprint of the interplay between formal and informal politics. This blueprint suggests three sets of questions essential to examining feminism in the twenty-first century.

The NGO-con?

The main explanation offered for the shift toward NGO as the mobilizing structure of the feminist movement is the rise of neoliberalism. For Alvarez, it was the new neoliberal states and inter-governmental organizations that constructed NGOs as "surrogates of civil society" (Alvarez

1999: 81). Most problematic is when downsizing states decided to use NGOs to provide social services or, worse, to run self-help groups for the poor. Globally, NGO-ization was fostered by

> a veritable … bonanza of grant funds channeled from Northern-based private donors and bilateral and multilateral agencies to those feminist NGOs willing and able (and judged to be technically competent) to work as intermediaries in promoting the involvement of civil society…. Those funded or consulted were typically those feminist NGOs judged best able to 'maximize impact' with monies allotted or to have the technical capabilities deemed necessary for policy evaluation rather than those judged most *politically* capable of meaningfully involving women citizens. (Alvarez 1999: 193)

The new neoliberal political economy provided powerful incentive structures, but many who drew upon Alvarez's work pointed to NGOs as a big part of the problems (e.g. Ghodsee 2004; Hemment 2004).

More recently, scholars have been more balanced in their assessments of feminist NGOs. As Victoria Bernal and Inderpal Grewal have argued, "neoliberal conditions do not dictate everything that an NGO does or practices … neoliberalism has not eliminated all the desires and projects that might be associated with goals of social justice, equality, and democracy" (Grewal and Bernal 2014). NGOs can sometimes be grassroots even while others are beholden to donors, but, as Nanette Funk points out, it is impossible to generalize about all NGOs in all countries, as the evidence is varied (Funk 2013: 190–191). Some NGOs provided services, such as crisis centers for gender violence, that the state never had and then got the state to incorporate such services. While feminist NGOs cannot be assumed to be outside of, or in opposition to, the state, they also cannot be assumed to always be co-opted by the state. With regard to the global economic crisis, Alvarez (2009) argued that many NGOs resisted these pressures and returned to their grassroots, continuing to do important movement work, such as through the World Social Forum. There is even some optimism that feminist NGOs have developed "new ways of doing politics," engaging in "counter cultural struggles" by contesting symbolic, as well as material, issues (181). Even without the obvious mass mobilization, NGOs along with other activists may work together in informal coalitions that promote change in awareness.

The book's argument is that the problem is not so much liberalization, but the gendered informal politics that resulted, reframing these explanations and developments through the lens of a con. Was the proliferation of NGOs as the mobilizing structure a bait and switch for feminist organizing? Was the bait the promise of a global civil society that would supersede or at least corral patriarchal states, especially as inter-governmental organizations such as the UN—and, later, governments—began to ask for "gender experts," often as subcontractors for grants? While part of the switch is that NGOs were being used as surrogates of civil society without sufficient resources in service of a neoliberal state, isn't the bigger switch that these professionalized NGOs gained access, as I argue in Chap. 2, only once power had shifted locations in ways that reinscribed or even worsened inequalities? Does seeing this sleight of hand, as part of the larger bait and switch of twenty-first-century male dominance, highlight the informal institutions and rules that structure the context in which feminism operates, shifting the blame from feminists to gendered informal politics? Of course, some individuals may have played into the con, seeking their own win. But, the social science of cons shows that cons work because there is a basic instinct to trust, suggesting that feminists, like others, are primed to accept such bait (Konnikova 2016).

Gender Talk Not Just Co-optation, but Resistance?

Feminist theorists have also tended to blame neoliberalism for the deradicalization of the ideology symbolized by the turn toward technical "gender talk." Hester Eisenstein (2009) argues that mainstream "feminism [has been] seduced" by neoliberalism. For example, scholars and policymakers who identify as feminists have embraced the increase in women's workplace participation in developing countries or the rise of microcredit as empowering to individual women, ideas that global capitalists have been advocating. Political theorist Nancy Fraser goes further, arguing that feminism had become a "handmaiden" of neoliberal capitalism and that feminists are not "passive victims of neoliberal seductions … [but that] we ourselves contributed … important ideas to this development" (Fraser 2013). For Fraser, this is seen most clearly in feminists extolling individualist notions of feminism, such as embracing individual autonomy and achievement for women, instead of notions of "social solidarity" and "care" that require a transformation in society. She sees

that feminism has focused on identity politics, allowing neoliberal arguments to hide critiques of political economy. For example, she points to how feminists' ambivalence about the family wage has legitimated the construction of a labor market dominated by low-wage, insecure jobs which lack upward mobility. In other words, there is congruence in ideas between mainstream feminism, especially in the United States, and neoliberal ideas.

Others make similar claims with different names, such as "market feminism" (Kantola and Squires 2012) and "transnational business feminism" (Roberts 2012), and different nuances, but "for all [contemporary feminism] is somewhat suspect, far removed from the challenges of power that underlies the contentious politics of feminist movements" (Prügl 2015). However, as Funk (2013) argues, such arguments misrepresent the second-wave feminism as being more socialist as well as misrepresenting the present in which there is a much wider diversity of feminisms. "[A]lthough feminists may have sometimes made calculated strategic compromises with neoliberalism, weighing the costs and benefits, this was not equivalent to legitimating neoliberalism; some feminists in fact explicitly challenged neoliberalism" (188).

The book's blueprint recasts these developments and explanations through the lens of informal politics. Wasn't this part of the con that activists had to tone down the rhetoric, making it resemble bureaucratese, in order to get official or semi-official status at NGOs, which allowed them to receive grants from international donors or attain media coverage? And while some feminists might have been taken in, temporarily at least by the con, might others eschew the feminist label in favor of using the language of gender to get around feminism's Western heritage and its baggage as "man-hating," "bourgeois," and colonial (Basu 1995; Krook and Childs 2010: 5)? More importantly, might gender talk be one of many tactics of resistance used by activists, in a complex world? Might some activists intentionally play the international grant game, using gender talk to donors and something less feminist to local officials and constituents while being more openly feminist among themselves? Linguistic anthropologists theorize this as a form of style-switching, something all of us do as we modulate for different audiences and contexts (Mendoza-Denton 1999). Might style-switching, instead of consistent framing, be more effective in a world where power vacillates between formal and more male-dominated informal institutions?

Guerrilla Feminisms?

As Elisabeth Prügl (2015) summarizes, there is a "certain nostalgia in these critiques—for socialist feminism" as well as an implicit call for the mass mobilization of the 1970s in the West. Eisenstein (2009: 201), for example, argues for putting "the critiques of capitalism and the possibility of socialism back on the agenda." Sylvia Walby (2011: Chap. 3), more optimistic about twenty-first-century feminism, sees feminism in various socialist projects, including within trade unions, government initiatives, and inter-governmental campaigns. However, as Prügl points out, the feminist "movement continues to be polyphonous.... While the critiques put forward are trenchant, they in a sense do not go far enough: they remain trapped in backward-looking imaginaries." Such nostalgia points to one way of pursuing change, missing how much politics has been transformed by neoliberalism, not just by globalization, but by the consolidation of male-dominated informal politics. Using this book's perspective, liberal feminists try to work within the (formal) system or to change citizens' minds so that they then pressure their representatives for reform; socialist feminists may be more revolutionary and understand better the power of economic structures, but neither has developed theories of how to counter the informal institutions and rules of the twenty-first-century bait-and-switch male dominance.

Further, younger feminists over the last decade are more inclined to embrace online organizing with periodic outrageous public acts by a select few, a kind of guerrilla feminism.[1] These acts include posting radical stickers in public spaces, reclaiming public spaces with radical music, performance art, or flash mobs, and sometimes using partial nudity to bring more attention or using masks obscuring activists' identities to help protect them from repression. (While these tend to be seen as a new phenomenon of the Global North, Nigerian women ridiculed British soldiers by questioning their penis size in the early twentieth century; more recently, some went naked to embarrass oil companies.) While their tactics are different, many do challenge imperialism and racism. And some, as Eisenstein (2009: 207) also calls for, continue consciousness-raising, "the core skill and the capacity for sharing experience, and thus creating bonds for future action," albeit now more often seen as "experiences," and online, instead of in person.

Seeing these developments through this book's blueprint raises different questions and concerns. Are these new forms of feminisms making the

same mistakes of second-wave feminisms or different ones? Are younger feminists engaging in actions that are anti-racist, anti-imperial, anti-classist, and pro-LGBTQ? Like style-switching, are these new mobilizing forms more likely to target and subvert bait-and-switch male dominance because they themselves are more informal and dynamic? Because their tactics sometimes reject formal institutions, are they contributing to the collapse of the public trust in politics, a phenomenon evident in the rise of populists in many democracies? Or are they pointing out the hypocrisy of power?

Russia

Despite some notable dissident feminists in the 1970s/1980s, autonomous feminist mobilization in Russia only re-emerged in the late 1980s, after decades of state-led women's groups were co-opted by the Soviet state. The post-Soviet mobilization began within feminist gender studies and then spread into academic institutions across Russia over the next decade (Khotkina 2002: 4). A second strand emerged with the establishment of women's crisis centers, often by activists associated with gender studies (Johnson 2009; Johnson and Saarinen 2013). At its height in the early 2000s, there were some 100–200 crisis centers providing hotline and other services for women living with domestic and sexual violence as well as labor and sex trafficking. Straddling the divide between women's and feminist organizing—as is typical of activism regarding violence against women around the world (Basu 2010: 18)—their shared goals included increasing public awareness of gender violence as well as enlisting government authorities in responding to the problem. There were also other feminist groups focused on women's economic inequality and women's reproductive rights (Sundstrom 2010). However, though women activists stood at the forefront of human rights activism and women constituted some three-fourths of the staff of the NGOs, women's NGOs made up less than 5% of the total NGOs; feminist ones were far fewer, perhaps several dozen by the end of the 1990s (Kochkina 2007: 118).

The NGO-con

Feminist organizing in post-Soviet Russia quickly NGO-ized in the 1990s (Henderson 2003). After decades of restriction, the bait of joining international civil society through NGOs, modeled so successfully at the 1995

UN Conference on Women in Beijing, was tantalizing. With activism emerging during Russia's great depression, feminists did not really have a choice but to turn to foreign funding. Foreign donors preferred to work with professionalized NGOs because they viewed them as more effective, so that is the form activism took (Hrycak 2006: 82).

But, by the late 1990s, it was clear that the NGO as a mobilizing structure was a con. Most feminist NGOs were weak, lacking the ability to maintain basic infrastructure (such as premises), let alone the resourcess necessary for engaging with either other organizations or the public at large (Henderson 2003: Chap. 4). Though women's NGOs participated in some 25,000–40,000 actions over the next decade and gained visibility in the media (Kochkina 2007: 118), identifying Russia as having a women's movement, let alone a feminist one, was a stretch; the number of organizations was small, protests or other street tactics infrequent, and their collective identity sketchy (Sundstrom 2010: 236). With liberalization as the background, feminist NGOs, like most NGOs, found themselves on a grant-seeking treadmill, pursuing short-term and easily quantifiable projects, rather than the interests of the women they professed to serve (Hemment 2004).

By the mid-2000s, the NGO-con became crystal clear, not because of neoliberalism directly, but due to the informalized authority which imposed increasing and arbitrary regulation of organizations pursuing social change. Putin established the paraconstitutional Public Chamber, an institution that corporatized favored organizations, while excluding others (Johnson et al. 2016). While laws in the early 1990s had created mechanisms for the official status of NGOs, a 2006 NGO law increased the oversight, requiring organizations to report annually to the state bureaucracy, which used its power subjectively to curtail NGOs. Feminist organizations began having increasing difficulties registering, especially if they wanted to use the word "feminism." Simultaneously, the Kremlin initiated state subsidies for NGOs, which, by the 2010s, were directed primarily at promoting socially oriented NGOs, creating a dichotomy between those that the state found useful and others that it did not.

The clearest evidence that NGOs were a con was a 2012 law requiring NGOs engaged in "political activities" and receiving foreign funding to register with the authorities as "foreign agents," a label with a deep connotation of being a traitor against the nation. "Political" was defined broadly and vaguely, as "advocating for policy changes or trying to influence public

opinion" (Human Rights Watch 2017). In 2014, the law was upheld by the Constitutional Court and, a month later, strengthened to allow registration as a "foreign agent" without the organizations' consent. In 2016, "political" was expanded to include any attempt to influence public policy. Groups embracing nontraditional sexualities, such as lesbian groups, were also targeted by the so-called gay propaganda ban passed at the national level in 2013. Also intentionally vague, the national law prohibits positive information about "non-traditional sexual relations" from being distributed in any way that a minor might get it, even if a minor in question might be gay or gender variant. There was a nationwide campaign of investigations in the spring of 2013, with the first organizations registered as foreign agents in 2014. According to Human Right Watch (2017), some 150 groups had been targeted by the end of 2016. Of those, 16 were either organizations that self-consciously organized as women or had a feminist agenda, including some LGBT organizations (see Table 4.1).

One organization caught in these investigations is *St. Petersburg Egida*, a women's labor rights organization that had been established by union activists in 2000. The organization had turned toward women's rights, as the director described, because "men have the tradition of organizing so they can take of themselves in the stronger unions and stronger industries," whereas women do not even get much support from either their families or from the courts. Even after the 2013 "foreign agent" investigation, the director was hopeful, having successfully organized and achieved a 2011 maternity leave reform that made it easier for women to be compensated if fired while pregnant.[2] But, the state persisted in their investigation. In November of 2014, their activities were suspended for 30 days, and they were required to pay a nominal fee, which they paid and were allowed to operate their hotline and legal aid services. However, by 2016, despite their careful accounting, their diligent law abiding, and their well-crafted legal appeals, they were placed on the foreign agent list, with their website blocked and activities on Facebook suspended. In contrast, another internationally funded feminist organization operating in nearly 50 cities in Russia, first investigated in 2015 under the "foreign agent" and anti-terrorism laws, escaped this fate, even as they were chastised for being involved in projects related to "education." The executive director of the American-based umbrella organization (speaking confidentially) hypothesized that this was because the Russian organization diligently follows the law and because mayors of several of the cities wrote to the

Table 4.1 Women's and feminist organizations targeted under Russia's "foreign agent" law (as of December 31, 2016)

Name of organization (location)	*Type of organization*	*Status*
1. Center for Social Policy and Gender Studies (Saratov)	Feminist	Registered June 5, 2014 Shut down May 22, 2015
2. Municipal public organization "Samara Center for Gender Studies" (Samara)	Feminist	Registered February 16, 2015
3. Society of Assistance to Social Protection of Citizens EGIDA (St. Petersburg)	Feminist	Registered February 2, 2016
4. Regional Organization for Population and Development (Moscow)	Feminist	Registered June 23, 2015
5. Coming Out (St. Petersburg)	LGBT/feminist	Won an administrative case against leader, but lost a similar civil suit to the prosecutor's office Closed NGO, still functioning as community organization
6. Side by Side LGBT Film Festival	LGBT/feminist	Won cases against leader and organization Closed NGO and reconstituted as a commercial entity
7. Center for Independent Sociological Studies (St. Petersburg)	LGBT/feminist	Registered June 22, 2015 Lost the administrative suit
8. Rakurs (Arkhangelsk)	LGBT/feminist	Registered December 15, 2014 Their website is blocked, but the VK page is alive and so is the organization
9. Women of Don (Rostov region)	Women's	Registered June 5, 2014 "Foreign agent" status suspended February 29, 2016

(*continued*)

Table 4.1 (continued)

Name of organization (location)	*Type of organization*	*Status*
10. Regional public organization "Ecozaschita! Womens' Council" (Kaliningrad)	Women's	Registered July 21, 2014
11. Soldiers' Mothers (St. Petersburg)	Women's	Registered August 28, 2014 "Foreign agent" status suspended October 23, 2015
12. Women's League (Kaliningrad)	Women's	Registered April 29, 2015 Shut down December 16, 2015
13. Woman's World (Kaliningrad)	Women's	Registered December 11, 2015
14. Women of Eurasia (Chelyabinsk)	Women's	Registered February 15, 2016
15. Regional Social Movement "Novgorod Women's Parliament" (Veliky Novgorod)	Women's	Registered voluntarily March 6, 2015
16. The League of Women Voters (St. Petersburg)	Women's/feminist	Registered December 30, 2014 Shut down May 22, 2015
17. ANNA Center for the Prevention of Violence (Moscow)	Feminist	Registered December 26, 2016

List created with Alexandra Novitskaya

Source: Human Rights Watch (2017), Russian Federation Ministry of Justice (2017)

authorities to support the organization. Given Egida's demise, the latter seems more credible.

Until recently, women's crisis centers remained mostly untouched by the law directly, though by 2013, very few of the once active and feminist centers survived, let alone were thriving (Johnson and Saarinen 2013). One of the most successful is the *Institute of Nondiscriminatory Gender Relations (INGI)*, a feminist-identified NGO operating directly in the field of anti-domestic violence work in St. Petersburg, which had also been inspected in March 2013 wave of investigations. But even as the director refused requests for more information and became one of the most vocal

opponents of the law, the organization was not on the foreign agent list (or "not yet" as the leader likes to say) and has been able to continue its feminist activism, such as performing the Vagina Monologues in 2014, the first performance in Russia following years of resistant by local authorities. The second autonomous crisis center in St. Petersburg, *Aleksandra*, had been closed in 2012, as result of the onerous inspections under the 2006 law and lack of funding.

A Moscow-based counterpart, *ANNA*, the most internationally prominent crisis center avoided investigation as a foreign agent until December of 2016, even as it received a variety of prominent foreign funding (Human Rights Watch 2017). Even though decreased international funding had led to downgraded premises, the director continued to travel and speak widely on the problem of domestic violence and on Russia's civil society more broadly. Perhaps protected by her international prestige,[3] Marina Pisklakova-Parker saw a paradox in being threatened with being labeled a foreign agent at the same time as the organization collaborated with authorities and received finances from the state for some of its activities. There are so many levels of authorities, from local to regional to national, in so many different agencies, that on the one hand, the authorities may be prosecuting, while on the other, they might be collaborating. In 2013, leaders at ANNA pointed to other obstacles: attacks on their website and some sophisticated system of obscene calls, which a programmer had to figure out how to block. In 2015, they managed to coordinate with the Russian Orthodox Church to open up a shelter, but by the end of 2016—after activism supporting legislative reforms in the previous summer and Putin signaling his support for backtracking on the reforms (see Chap. 5)—they were registered as a "foreign agent." The other feminist women's crisis center in Moscow, *Sisters*, which focuses on sexual assault, has been hanging onto a thread for years, with no funding other than individual donations since 2014.

In contrast, *Side by Side*, a St. Petersburg-based feminist organization, run and mostly staffed by women and that runs an annual LGBT film festival, was "onto the con." When investigators came for them under the foreign agent law, it was clear to the leadership that allegations were a farce, as they were based on actions that took place before the foreign agent law was passed. After expending some $3000 to defend themselves, to avoid future hassles—as the leader pointed out, "coming to the festival is a political act"—Side by Side closed its NGO and reconstituted itself into a commercial enterprise. This tactic has allowed them to continue to

operate and expand to other cities, even as there has been bullying from anti-gay activists, including bomb threats.

These cases show that the obstacle is less the "foreign agent" law itself, but its arbitrary use by authorities, creating informal rules that put everyone on alert and require all NGOs to self-regulate. These changes also made it more costly to survive, at the same time as Russia pushed out all important funders of women's NGOs—such as USAID as well as the Ford and MacArthur Foundations. According to leaders of the Consortium of Women's Non-governmental Associations in Russia, there has been decline in their membership, from some 160 in the early 2000s to less than 100 in 2013 (which includes at least 20 new groups). By 2013, as one long-time observer explained, "the women's movement in Russia is fragmented," even as some feminists work constructively and valiantly.

To survive this inhospitable environment, other feminist activists turned to the state, using the mostly public academic institutions as cover or creating women's crisis centers within local government (Johnson and Saarinen 2013; Johnson et al. 2016). On one level, this is co-optation, as the resulting feminism must be less radical. On another level, many activists believed that the state should take responsibility for addressing violence against women, in contrast to the neoliberal arguments about NGOs. In St. Petersburg, self-identified feminist activists began to insinuate crisis centers into city social services in the mid-1990s, and by 2013, public crisis departments for women had been set up in all 18 districts of the city.

Gender Talk Not Just Co-optation, but Resistance

There was a lot of gender talk in Russia by the late 1990s. While academic journals had once been resistant to publishing on gender in the early 1990s, there was a "boom" in articles on gender studies by the 2000s (Khotkina 2002, 11–12). Everyone, it seemed, was writing on gender, though it was often not clear that their idea of gender—transliterated directly into Russian—contained much, if any, feminist critique. Outside of the academy, even staid women's councils, remnants of Soviet state-led organizing, listed promoting "gender equality" as one of their goals, albeit after a long list of other goals, such as promoting "harmony and stability" in society and protecting the interests of the family (Soiuz Zhenskikh Sil 2014).

Activists similarly embraced the language of women's rights. In a survey I (with three colleagues) conducted of leaders of women's crisis centers in 2008–2009, virtually all respondents saw their work as about advancing "women's rights" (Johnson and Saarinen 2013). However, there was relatively little self-identified feminism in women's NGOs in Russia. Sundstrom (2010: 237) notes that there is both a deep resistance to self-identifying as feminist and "widespread attitudes among activists and even mainstream Russian women and men that are recognizably feminist (i.e. advocating gender equality or women's full-fledged status as human beings) to Westerners." This is true even among crisis centers, where there had been more feminism than in most other segments of women's organizing. As documented in our survey, only 5 out of the 36 respondents by 2009 identified their organizations as feminist, all of which had been established in the 1990s, suggesting that self-identified feminism had decreased over time (Johnson and Saarinen 2013). On a broader question, fewer than one out of three respondents agreed that feminism was important to their center's work, compared to our findings of one out of two in the similar questionnaire conducted a decade earlier.

The boom in gender studies and NGOs talking gender and women's rights can be partially explained by the bubble in gender-related funding during the 1990s' recession in which the most esteemed research centers could afford to pay scholars only a couple of hundred dollars a month, and many professional women lost their jobs. Julie Hemment (2007: 12) argues that the international intervention on gender violence, nested as it was within neoliberal triumphalism, was especially problematic in that it tended to "deflect attention from other issues of social justice, notably the material forces that oppress women." This was even worse on trafficking in women, which was about security, "criminalizing women without helping them, and eliding the fact that their exploitation is an immigration and labor issue." Jennifer Suchland (2015) makes a similar argument, that the global women's activist link between trafficking and violence against women minimizes the global structures of economic injustice that create the problem of trafficking. She points to Russian feminists for their individualizing and criminalizing focus: "it was not just the co-opting of feminism by neoliberalism but also the perceived expediency of a liberal feminist approach that supplanted critical economic approaches" (15).

However, there was also a big con in Russia in which banal gender talk was the only way to attain anything close to stability. According to a Russian feminist involved in the beginning of feminist work in Russia, the

very first gender studies center drew upon feminist economic analysis, neo-Marxism of the Frankfurt school, and postmodernism (Kochkina 2007: 96, 102). But to gain access to the academy across Russia, gender studies had to focus on gender differences and eschew political positions related to gender. Further, the root problem that shaped deradicalization inside and outside of the academy was the Soviet legacy of "faux emancipation" that led to a "post socialist patriarchal renaissance." As Sundstrom (2010: 232) put it, the "sense that Soviet equality ruined women's femininity has led to an open resurgence … of some traditional gender ideals of women [making] it difficult for post-Soviet feminists [to frame] political claims as demands for gender equality." As a result, by the time of the financial crisis, Russian women activists had "adopted a fairly moderate, conciliatory outlook in terms of both feminist philosophical approaches and stances toward cooperation and dialogue with the Russian state" (239).

Using this book's blueprint suggests a more complex reality of feminist mobilization than do these neoliberal critiques: feminists understood their complex situation and style-switched. While lacking sufficient funds and espousing the need for criminalization of domestic violence, the concrete help that women's crisis centers most often provided was solving the housing problems that underlay women's inability to escape domestic violence (Johnson 2009). (The Soviet registration permit system—still in effect in major cities—means that ex-husbands retain rights to apartments, so activists would help women who lacked economic resources to buy new apartments or trade their apartments.) Feminists across the post-socialist region helped create and then embrace the notion of "economic domestic violence," which takes seriously abuser's economic exploitation (such as deprivation of women's rights to income) as well as held the state responsible for providing social services (Johnson and Zaynullina 2010). By 2013, scholar and activist Marianna Muravyeva explained that activists were using the language of "protecting unfortunate families" because it fit within the Russian agenda. While ostensibly less feminist than promoting "women's rights," the language holds the state responsible and puts the focus squarely on poverty. At the same time, activists on the foreign stage or speaking privately to me or to their committed core retained feminist language and analysis.

Sometimes such style-switching is co-optation, but my observation of NGOs over time has found that the disingenuous ones last only a few years, as the grant money was not that generous or long lasting. Several activists in longer-surviving organizations have been explicit that their

style-switching was a tactical choice. As one explained to me in 2016, especially in the aftermath of the foreign agent law, it is important to use "Soviet speak," such as promoting "happy families," to mystify their empowering work. The result is a kind of stealth feminism within a policy marked by bait-and-switch male dominance.

Guerrilla Feminisms

In Sundstrom's (2010) overview of women's/feminist organizing in Russia, NGO feminism was the story. Yet, in the years leading up to the global economic crisis, a new kind of feminism among a younger generation began to take off, representing a change in the "tactical palette that the women's movement had used until that time" (Sperling 2015: 215). It began with the 2005 establishment of what became Russia's largest online feminist platform, *Feministki* (http://feministki.livejournal.com/), followed by the establishment of a consciousness-raising group in 2008, the Moscow Feminism Group (Sperling 2015). As described by a founder of a similar group, *Pro Feminism*, these groups see themselves as against "institutionalized feminism … feminism for money" of NGOs, "not wanting to play the games" required by men (or donors or governments). As a result of this organizing, feminisms in Russia, even the more staid anti-gender violence work, have been enlivened with activists embracing Facebook and with the participation of more prominent activists (such as journalist and Internet entrepreneur Alena Popova, and singer Amaria). In the summer of 2016, there was even a virtual flash mob of tens of thousands of women (and then men) sharing their stories of rape, sexual assault, incest, and sexual harassment on social media, started by a Facebook post by a Ukrainian woman using the hashtag #Iamnotafraidtospeakout (#yaneboius'skazat').

Though not a mass mobilization, these groups have networked clusters of Russian-speaking feminists across Russia and abroad and have had a physical presence on the streets that differs from the NGOs. Feminists marched in their own column in a 2012 protest for the first time in post-Soviet Russian history (Akulova 2013: 280), continuing to do so, for example, in the 2014 May Day parade. Pro Feminism has demonstrated on International Women's Day, organized by the gender faction of an opposition party (Yabloko). Much like the NGO feminisms, these groups underwent many reconstitutions over the last few years and shifts in online venues in response to changing laws, but this time, feminists were not

demobilized (Sperling 2015: 215). Similarly, these groups do not embrace banal gender talk. While Feministki began with Gloria Steinem's brand of liberal feminism, the groups have actively debated all types of feminisms, including radical and separatist feminisms, and many of the founders cultivated links with leftist groups and/or with leftists frustrated with the sexism and homophobia within leftist groups (Sperling 2015: 248–250). The groups also aligned with lesbian and anarchist groups.

Pussy Riot—along with the Ukraine-founded FEMEN—signaled a new kind of guerrilla feminism. The punk protest group first took the stage during the protests in 2011 and then briefly occupied Moscow's showplace church calling on the "Mother of God [to] Drive Putin Away." (FEMEN had protested in front of the same church two months before Pussy Riot, with signs saying, "Lord chase away the tsar!" [Sperling 2015: 240]). While some have questioned their feminism, Pussy Riot members have identified as feminist and have espoused feminist ideas, claiming their "feminist orientation" in their explanation for their performance in the cathedral (Pussy Riot 2013). While FEMEN protests topless—distracting men from their faces as well as attracting media attention—Pussy Riot wore balaclavas to cloak their identity, tactics very different from most NGOs.

Most importantly, this guerrilla feminism targets the bait-and-switch male dominance with a "mixed message" about gender and women's bodies (Sperling 2015: 240), infused with parody and satire. Pussy Riot's brief church occupation was a protest of the alliance between the leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church and Putin. Hitting the regime's nerve, three members were arrested and, while allowed very little sleep or food, they were put through a show trial (Gessen 2014). (Part of the prosecution's argument was that feminism was a "swear word" for Orthodox believers [Pussy Riot 2013], to which Tolokonnikova retorted, "Do you know what the word feminist means?") Two of the three served one and half years in the harsh conditions typical of Russian prisons, released half a year early in Putin's amnesty before Russia's 2014 Winter Olympics. In 2013, several members of FEMEN, with "fuck Putin" on their chests, tried to mock Putin's hegemonic masculinity scheme at a German trade conference, but he responded with amusement, if not fatherliness, defusing the protest.[4] Over the next few years as Russia grabbed parts of Ukraine, reinvigorating nationalism, the Putin regime succeeded in branding not just this guerrilla feminism as anti-Russian, but also all who questioned the social construction of gender and sexuality. He took the Orthodox Church's anti-gender movement as national ideology.

After turning to issues of prison reform and police violence, Pussy Riot came back to the issue of gendered informal power in 2016. With a video named for the general prosecutor whose sons appear to have gotten wealthy, Pussy Riot parodies the hypocrisy of the male-dominated elites claiming to be Orthodox Christian patriots but who embrace coercion and purloin resources (Robins-Early 2016). "Be loyal to those in power, cause power is a gift from god, son," Tolokonnikova sing-song chants, dressed as an employee with the prosecutor's office. Linking informal power to gender, Pussy Riot suggests Russia's expansionary moves are so that there is more "mother Russia" for elites to "milk," but they are patriots because they do this in Russia, "not Europe where they have gay people." Pointing to out how anti-corruption campaigns are often used as part of intra-elite conflicts, not transparency, she intones, "I run the war on corruption, or to be more precise, I run the corruption here," with the ultimate loyalty being to Putin. Other 2016 videos critiqued Russian law enforcement and Donald Trump for their abuse of women's bodies and sexuality.

Iceland

Iceland has had remarkably vibrant feminist mobilization, dating back more than a century with the founding of the still vital *Icelandic Women's Rights Association (IWRA)* in 1907 (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 124). Like its Western democratic counterparts, there was a second wave in the 1970s, with the formation of the women's liberation group Redstockings. This second wave took on women's political representation, abortion, and women's unequal status in the labor market. Most powerfully, Icelandic women celebrated the UN International Women's Year of 1975 with a women's strike, the largest outdoor gathering in Iceland's history, and then created the feminist party, the Women's Alliance. Over the next several decades, the movement diversified, taking on other issues, such as violence against women, immigrant women, and LGBTQ issues.

The NGO-con

Despite the vibrancy of the movement, Iceland's feminist mobilization also began to adopt the NGO as its mobilizing structure in the 1990s. The Icelandic Women's Rights Organization was always a formal organization, but others shifted from grassroots groups to a more professionalized organizations. For example, in 1982, activists had founded a volunteer

organization, the *Women's Shelter*, when 200 individual responded to an ad in the newspaper for those interested in providing shelter for women survivors of domestic violence and their children. In 1995, the grassroots group turned into an NGO when the government agreed to incorporate it in to its annual budget. Similarly, volunteer groups working with sexual assault survivors created an NGO, *Stígamót* (Education and Counseling Center for Survivors of Sexual Abuse and Violence) in 1990, a self-identified feminist organization that sees sexual assault as one of the "clearest forms of gender discrimination" and works with a model of empowering women who seek their counsel, seeing them as the "experts" of their own lives.

Most Icelandic feminists were aware of the limitations of NGOs and resisted being boxed in. For example, the shift turned the Women's Shelter's focus toward providing services, despite its mission to raise awareness; when they get attention in the media, as the director rued, they have to "squeeze in" awareness raising. Marking this resistance, young feminists associated with the University of Iceland founded the *Feminist Association of Iceland* in 2003 to re-jump-start grassroots "critical and feminist discussions in all areas of Icelandic society." Enervated by statistics on rape rates collected by Stígamót, the group began to mobilize a new generation of feminist activists. They registered as an NGO, but limited overhead and had no formal leader. In 2013, their temporary spokesperson explained that "they are a small group trying to be a big movement," taking on a variety of issues, including women's representation in the media, gender-based violence, the pay gap, prostitution, and surrogacy. By 2016, the energy had died down, but they had served as the "icebreaker" for the Icelandic Women's Rights Organization as well as incubator for radical organizations.

These are joined by a variety of feminist NGOs. These include the *National Queer Organization* (Samtökin 78), founded in 1978, which now serves as an umbrella organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people (Josephson et al. 2016). In this small, remarkably homogeneous, country, it also includes *W.O.M.E.N., Women of Multicultural Ethnicity Network*, a group for "women of foreign origin living in Iceland in order to bring about equality for them as women and as foreigners in all areas of the society." In 2014, activists created *Taboo* for "intersectional disability feminist activism." Feminist organizations include a men's organization, *Men Take Responsibility*, founded in 1994, which raises awareness of gender-based violence and provides services to men wanting

to stop using violence. There is also an organization for women business leaders, *FKA*, founded because they found themselves outside of existing male-dominated networks, but also takes on gender issues more broadly.

In contrast to the argument that liberalization was pushing for shrinking of the welfare state, these feminist organizations embraced the NGO structure as a way to gain stable financial support from the state. There was also the powerful bait of joining the European and international networks, allowing feminists to travel the world, including to Russia. Because most networks have representation based by country, small Iceland's organizations gained an outsized role. Overall, the movement remained more active on the streets compared to most Western democracies, repeating the women's strike several times, such as in 2005 to bring attention to the gender pay gap and in 2010 to bring attention to violence against women. There has also been frequent and remarkable cooperation, such as in the establishment of a coalition of 15 women's and feminist organizations for the organization of the 2010 event. The web magazine *News Feminist Challenges* (knuz.is) serves as a clearinghouse of information on the movement.

Paradoxically, that NGO-ization was a con was most evident over the course of the four years of the center-left coalition, 2009–2013. At first, activists were enthralled by the opportunities presented by Iceland's first progressive government, which openly consulted with the NGOs. As Stígamót's leader told me in 2011, "We have all the support you can imagine," and they were excited about opening a shelter for women who want to leave prostitution, called Kristína's house. Several members of the Feminist Association of Iceland were elected as MPs, while others were brought in to advise ministers, prominently to address violence against women in the Ministry of Interior and to implement gender budgeting in the Ministry of Finance. By 2013, activists at Stígamót and the Women's Shelter were growing frustrated at the limited resources that the government was able to give, while they were providing concrete services, in essence, for the government. The Women's Shelter was still only able to provide the bare minimum; there were no on-site services for children or money for reaching residents outside of the capital area. Kristína's house was closed in January 2014 due to lack of resources. As Stígamót's director explained, "We never had the funding to run it properly and so we were doing endless voluntary work, which meant that we were not running Stígamót properly either." It also became clear that they were doing the social work of the state, addressing "so many and complicated prob-

lems [of the women they sheltered] that we never got to discuss with them trafficking and prostitution."

On the surface, as pointed to by critics blaming neoliberalism, the problem was the austerity imposed on the government because of the economic crisis, including some IMF restrictions, which meant competition over scarce resources and suspicion (Josephson et al. 2016: 5). However, the deeper problem was the way the center-left government, which seems to have really wanted to promote feminist organizing, had been "set up," that is, conned into cleaning up the economic mess created by the male-dominated networks. Though many of the tycoons and right-wing politicians managed to stash money offshore and then land plum posts (Obermaier and Obermayer 2016), the government coffers were cash strapped. When these elites returned to formal power in 2013, the new center-right government did not turn to coercion, as the Putin regime did; it just turned a deaf ear.

Gender Talk Not Just Co-optation, but Resistance

At Stígamót and the Women's Shelter, all the staff identify as feminist, as do virtually all of the leadership of these NGOs. In 2013, the relatively conservative Women's Right's Association chose a self-identified feminist to head the organization, who hoped to move the organization in an even more feminist direction, addressing violence against women, women in politics, the gender pay gap, and queer issues. Similarly, the president of the women's business association, FKA, told me that, "I'm a feminist by heart, always see gender issue before me." When I asked the leader of Men Take Responsibility if he identified as a feminist, he said, "I've often done that," especially abroad, to demonstrate that men too can be feminists. Overall, a "critical and subversive approach towards gender issues" is quite common to feminists in Iceland (Josephson et al. 2016: 7). Granted, the dominant feminism has some limits that would frustrate many feminists elsewhere, but not because they avoid structural concerns, as critics allege. Most feminists support the Swedish model of regulating prostitution in which the buying of sex is criminalized; pornography and surrogacy are condemned, issues which they see through the Marxist lens of commodifying women's bodies. Some "feminists have assumed that trans identity is dependent upon an essentialist gender binary view of the gendered order and gender identity" (6). Others try to be inclusive of diversity but lack much knowledge.

These self-identified feminists embraced gender talk, not because they had been deradicalized, but because they saw the tactical advantages of style-switching. As Stígamót's leader explained, this was important to reach Prime Minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, who had not identified as a feminist, but did come around to embrace a gender lens and began to "act like a feminist." Using gender talk also helped reach a broader constituency, mobilizing more women and men. For example, in the 2010 women's strike, organizers made a tactical choice to use the language of "gender equality" rather than feminism (Johnson 2011). Many of the people who came out did not identify as feminists, but did want to stand together against the wage gap and violence against women. To Icelandic activists, the word "feminism" was not as important as its goals. As one self-identified feminist said about another group she was involved in, "I don't use the word 'feminism' there. Every woman should be welcome there….[but] when women work together, it becomes feminist."

However, the self-identified feminists grew concerned about the limitations of gender talk. The head of the Women's Shelter raised concerns about the lack of feminism in people's understanding of domestic violence, many of whom would say, "I'm against men beating women up but …." The most biting critiques came from feminists not part of the NGOs. For example, Hildur Lilliendahl, who self-identifies as a "radical feminist," told me that she eschewed even the most openly feminist organizations because she doesn't "want to answer for someone else's opinion." Instead, she created her own Internet-based project on "men who hate women."

Guerrilla Feminisms

Even as feminists in Iceland turned to NGOs as a mobilizing structure, important strands remained outside of NGOs. As the economic crisis hit Iceland and people took to the streets with pots and pans, feminists in Iceland changed tack in response to their frustrations, developing their own guerrilla feminism. Activists quickly organized a Women's Emergency Government, which inserted itself into the street protests. Building from the Feminist Association of Iceland's networks, the activists announced they were a government willing to take over the country, if needed. With astute understanding of the austerity that neoliberals impose at such times, they loudly voiced concerns about how economic crises tend to make women's lives worse, with cuts in welfare and health and more demands put on unpaid work that women tend to do, and that Iceland's first

proposals for the crisis focused on job creation for traditionally male jobs, such as construction. While the individual feminists working within the center-left government saw the complicated obstacles the government was navigating and assessed the government to be trying its best to address gender equality, feminists outside began to embrace more provocative, informal tactics. At the 2010 conference on violence against women that coincided with the women's strike, the head of Stígamót presented the flummoxed Norwegian justice minister with black boxer-briefs with the words "I am responsible" written down the crotch. Some NGO activists thought she had gone too far, but she kept pushing the staid NGO box, for example, inviting officials to a "champagne club" at Stígamót to protest law enforcement's unwillingness to close down the sex clubs, which had been banned under the new administration.

By 2011, activists were becoming involved in a variety of mobilizations and actions that pushed the envelope. Activists participated in the first Icelandic Slutwalk in 2011, which has been repeated every year since then. The Slutwalk is transnational response to a Toronto cop's comment about avoiding rape by not dressing like a slut, an echo of a similar comment by the head of Iceland's sex crime unit in the preceding year. While some at Stígamót were concerned about participating in the event, a young activist from the organization was sent to give a speech at the event. She explained to me that "here in Iceland it's a feminist walk," and its leaders are "extreme feminists."

Similarly, Icelandic feminists embraced the international campaign Free the Nipple, which links the right of women to go topless with deeper issues of inequality. Hundreds of Icelandic women posted pictures of their breasts on social media, including a member of parliament. They were protesting the vitriol hurled at an 18-year-old woman who had posted a topless picture of herself to promote sexual equality and undermine the shaming she and other young women faced when others post provocative pictures without their permission. Other women organized bra-less days at school, while more took to the streets, the central square, and local swimming pools. In a context where some women used to take their shirts off on the rare warm summer afternoon, feminists see the movement as feminist, although older feminists were more wary that the movement was not challenging the gendered order.

Others were organized through a 25,000-person closed Facebook group on "Beauty Tips" that morphed in a group in which young women

revealed rape and sexual abuse. Several high-profile women had come out with stories of abuse, including from the late Bishop of Iceland. The courage of these mostly young women from the regions led other women, such as a filmmaker and former news reporter, to acknowledge publicly their experience of violence. While a virtual mobilization, the results have been a real "social awakening" on issues of violence against women that overwhelmed Stígamót's resources. The Ministry of Welfare consulted the Reykjavik police chief to see what they could do. As a result of these two mobilizations, feminism gained support from young women.

Most controversially, activists began impersonation projects that directly targeted the bait-and-switch male dominance. In 2010, activists posted ads on a dating service using the jargon to indicate an offer of sexual services and received responses that were graphic and crude, even when they indicated that the poster was a minor. In 2011, with funding from an anonymous elder of the feminist movement, feminists added public threats that "Big sister is watching you." When men called the phone number on the ad, activists (of all ages and sizes) roped them in, pretending to be prostitutes and then pronounced that "Don't you know that prostitution is illegal? Big sister is watching you." Other times, they would send the man to a specific place and tip off the police. When the men proved unfazed and the police unresponsive, activists went further, inviting the potential johns to an Icelandic "modeling event." Organized around the same time as Pussy Riot and similarly masked, these *Big Sister* activists met the men who showed up with a press conference with demands that laws against the purchasing of sex be implemented. They played a recording of an adult man soliciting sex from someone he thought was 15 (in fact, one of the adult feminists). Big Sister made a manual for the police about how to identify ads that were offering sex services and then presented a list of the names of the men to the police. For the activists, Big Sister came out of their frustration and outrage, and it was "fun, with lots of support, let out anger, refreshing." One Big Sister explained to me that, "like the Women's Emergency government, they wanted to help where the government didn't have the time, so women will just do it." As an organizing tactic, it was a con, an informal response to the way that women leaders were cast as political cleaners and NGOs as handmaidens of neoliberalism. As another Big Sister put, we know "the police is not a feminist organization," so we wanted to help them.

Conclusion: The NGO Box and Informal Feminisms

This chapter analyzes the consequences of bait-and-switch male dominance on feminist organizing and how feminists have responded in Russia and Iceland. In both countries, the mobilizing structure of the NGO has become a box, another con in which feminists using more technical gender talk were promised opportunities for resources and access to power that would give them influence. In Russia, the NGO proved constraining for feminists through increasing repression from the state that then cut off their resources. With a one-two punch, the Putin regime forced donors out of Russia and undermined any chance of salience within Russia with an anti-gender campaign blaming feminists as the ultimate enemy to Russian civilization. Feminists have responded in two opposing ways, informalizing or insinuating themselves into the state. In Iceland, while some feminists had grown wary before the crisis, the limitations of the NGO became increasingly clear during the postcrisis period in which the center-left was in charge. The government gave feminists more access to the formal political process than ever before, but the result proved vexing. The Icelandic NGO feminists attempted more informal tactics, while feminism grew within informally organized groups. The similarities between these different cases suggest that the main obstacle is the shared bait-and-switch male dominance in which informal rules box in NGOs, with similar dynamics to the boxing in of women in politics. In the next chapter, I show how these constraints limit the effectiveness of feminism, inside and outside the state, in achieving more gender equality, but also how new guerrilla feminism can have small positive effects.

In pointing out ways that feminists in both countries have embraced a new kind of guerrilla feminisms that target the informally constituted male dominance, I am not arguing that these new feminisms are perfect. Two of the arrested members of Pussy Riot engaged in a protest before forming Pussy Riot that involved forcibly kissing women cops, which some feminists found coercive (Gessen 2014). FEMEN and Free the Nipple struggle with not falling into the trap of reobjectifying women's bodies, when much of the attention comes from men who just want to see breasts. The vigilante Big Sister treaded close to entrapment, luring men to violate Icelandic laws. Many feminists around the world see the Icelandic feminists' anti-prostitution stance as creating new problems for sex workers and curtailing sexuality, though Iceland's sexual morality is very different from the puritanical United States. Race and ethnicity, for feminists

in both countries, remain mostly invisible, as most activists are in the unmarked category of the titular ethnicity.

Comparing these most different cases and showing similar dynamics around feminist organizing raise questions about case-specific explanations. There has been much written about the problems of NGOs in Russia, that they were professionalized and ephemeral, because they were more connected to foreign donors than to local populations (Henderson 2003). Scholars of the feminist movement in Russia have been especially critical of the suspicions and in-fighting as well as the ignoring of other pressing problems facing women (Sperling 1999; Kay 2000). They also found that many women's NGOs became, at best, service providers, and at worst, mere mechanisms for obtaining grants to support the NGO staff, often elite women with elite skills, such as English language or computer skills. Some have alleged that Russian NGOs (like other post-communist activists) were using doublespeak, only superficially taking up "foundation feminism" of "equal opportunity" and "gender" to gain funding (Hrycak 2006: 84–85). Others point to the "mixed message" in groups like FEMEN and Pussy Riot, with Pussy Riot seemingly accepting homophobia and hegemonic masculinity in some of their lyrics (Sperling 2015). But, this comparison suggests that the problems within the feminist movement, though partially shaped by the global context of foreign funding, had much more to do with the NGO-con. As Julie Hemment (2004) has argued, even while constrained by the international interest in violence against women and NGOs, activists were able to "reappropriate" transnational feminist framing, leading to "part co-optation, part self-justification, and part testimony to a new formulation." As Sperling has argued, given the "political environment … [i]t was sensible [for feminists] to use multiple methods" (Sperling 2015: 252).

There is less written on Iceland's feminist movement. Much of the literature is fairly descriptive, with Western news stories riffing on Iceland as a feminist success story (Johnson 2011) and much of the scholarly literature highlighting the movement's remarkable efforts to get more women into politics (Styrkársdóttir 2013: 124). Other scholars point to the "harmonies and limitations" of activism, including continuing struggles on the issue of violence against women and on ethnic diversity as a homogeneously white former colony (Josephson et al. 2016: 12; Pétursdóttir 2015; Loftsdóttir 2012). Resembling the argument made here about the NGO-con, a recent dissertation points to the friction created by the institutionalization of gender equality and the dominant state-framing of the problem as one

of human rights, especially during the years of the center-left government (Þorvaldsdóttir 2010). As discussed vis-à-vis gender talk, some scholars point to the shifting ideological tactics. Sigríður Dúna Kristmundsdóttir (1997) has written about the problem of essentialist notions of womanhood in the first wave of Icelandic feminism that coincided with independence, which were replaced with differently problematic liberationist feminism in the second wave, which, by the 1990s, became more "multivocal." While this suggests problems for Kristmundsdóttir, an analysis of the work of the Icelandic singer-songwriter Björk, in relation to Icelandic feminism, suggests the potentials discussed here of style-switching. Casting herself as an "alien anthropologist," Björk "resists normative sexualized feminine stereotypes yet also thoughtfully embody select female archetypes, playing on feminist perspective ranging from equality to difference and occasionally even essentialism" (Goldin-Perschbacher 2014).

I am not arguing that the situations are the same in Russia and Iceland. Proportionally, self-identified feminism is much stronger in Iceland, with more inter-sectionality, whereas very few individuals and organizations openly identify as feminist in Russia. The NGO-con is enforced much more repressively in Russia versus in Iceland where the problem is more co-optation.

Instead, I am arguing that similarities suggest new ways of understanding and theorizing feminist mobilization that consider the informally constituted rules and networks in the neoliberal era. While NGOs may still deserve criticism, we would be remiss not to see the context that created them or the new kinds of feminist activism that are emerging. Though the tendency has been to blame neoliberalism, these kinds of arguments miss important elements of how and why these shifts came about. As Eisenstein (2009) notes, "it is not news that capitalist interest are expert in co-opting social movements, using their language and their ideas to enhance profitability, while at the same suppressing the really radical features of these movements" (197).

This comparison questions the way that our research implicitly assumes that broad-based feminist mobilization targeting public opinion is the best way to promote feminist change, building from the assumption that governments respond to such movements. Certainly, this is not true in less-than-democratic governments like Russia where there is fraud and manipulation rather than representation, but perhaps this is a naïve assumption for those regimes we tend to see as democratic. Disruptive

acts just might work better, or at least just as well, in the long run, in the twenty-first-century kind of male dominance. As argued by Chela Sandoval (2000), the experiences of women of color show us not only that there are many feminisms, but that the most effective resistance is one that constantly shifts its ideological tactics. Varying ideological tactics may be better at defanging the bait-and-switch male dominance, which is similarly modulating. When the rules of the game are not just gendered but unwritten, playing only formal politics seems naïve and unlikely to work.

Notes

1. The feminist art group Guerrilla Girls spurred other groups identifying as guerilla feminists; for example, see http://www.guerrillafeminism.org/about/mission/.
2. Businesses were reconstituting themselves in order to avoid the financial outlays. The reform allowed women to appeal directly to the state when this happened.
3. Marina Pisklakova-Parker was known enough that she was portrayed by Marcia Gay Harden in Vital Voices' play "Seven" in 2010. She also married an American.
4. YouTubevideo:http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/putin-visibly-amused-by-topless-femen-protest-in-germany-a-893128.html.

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CHAPTER 5

Gender Equality: How Bait-and-Switch Male Dominance Undermines Gender Equality Policymaking

Introduction

On most gender equality policies, Iceland stands out. Before the crisis, activists had achieved the government provision of paid parental leaves to be shared by women and men and subsidized high-quality preschools that allow most parents to combine parenting and work. Between 2009 and 2013, the center-left government passed a flurry of legislation aimed at promoting gender equality. Some legislation—such as the criminalization of the purchasing of sex and bans on strip clubs—is controversial among feminists, though not among Icelandic feminists. Other legislation represents what most feminists in the Global North see as best practices, such as extending a 40% quota for women in government boards to medium and large businesses, legalizing same-sex marriage, allowing access to donor egg and sperm for single women and lesbian couples, and authorizing the immediate removal of an accused batterer from the home. In contrast, Russia has passed no national legislation to address gender equality since the Soviet collapse. Yet in both, feminists find real gender equality elusive, especially when it comes to reducing violence against women and advancing women's economic equality.

This chapter analyzes the effectiveness of feminists inside and outside the state at achieving gender equality. It takes the gender equality paradox head-on, exploring how bait-and-switch male dominance undermines policymaking and gender equality. By gender-related policies, I follow Mala Htun and Laurel Weldon (2010: 213, note 2), who refer to "measures

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through which governments can accelerate progress toward" the ideal of gender equality, a situation in which "all women and men have similar opportunities to participate in politics, the economy, and society; their roles are equally valued; neither suffers from gender-based disadvantage; and both are considered free and autonomous beings with dignity and rights." These include such policies as constitutional equality, prohibitions on violence against women, abortion/contraception legality and funding, parental leave, funding for childcare, and laws on workplace equality. For feminist political science, focusing on policymaking came later than studying women in politics and women's movements; however, this feminist comparative policy theory has grown quickly in the last decade and a half, prompted by Amy Mazur's (2002) *Theorizing Feminist Policy* and several large collaborative projects, such as the Research Network on Gender Politics and the State (RNGS), Quality of Gender+ Equality Policies in Europe (QUING), Multiple Meanings of Gender Equality (MAGEEQ), Feminism & Institutionalism International Network (FIIN), and now Gender Equality Policy in Practice (GEPP). Weldon and Htun, together and separately, have also embarked on a series of large-N cross-national studies of gender equality reform (e.g. Htun and Weldon 2010, 2012; Weldon 2011).

I argue that taking informality as central to politics requires rethinking the findings of this research and even some of the assumptions, much as I have argued about women's representation and feminist mobilization in the previous chapters. The feminist policymaking literature, as most of the policymaking literatures, assumes a formal policymaking process in which interests are articulated, deliberated, and implemented according to constitutional rules, with informal norms and practices as mostly an addendum and obstacle. Taking informal politics seriously raises real questions about whether there is much formal in the policymaking process, suggesting that the formal may be more of a show than a reality.

To tackle this reconceptualization, I use the lens of domestic violence, one form of violence against women, issues which women's movements and international organizations now generally agree are violations of women's human rights (Elman 2013: 237). Weldon and Htun (2012: 552) have shown that these are also issues that are rarely put on the agenda without pressure from feminists. These issues have also been the most prominent in both of the cases. In Russia, domestic violence is the primary gender equality issue receiving attention, the only gender equality law to be considered at high levels since the fraught 2011 Duma elections. In

Iceland, feminists sought and got a set of laws related to violence against women during the 2009–2013 feminist-friendly government. As cross-national comparison suggests that these issues may have distinct form of politics from other types of gender equality issues, it is important to disaggregate gender equality issues (Htun and Weldon 2010).

In the next section, I summarize the literature on gender equality policymaking, especially looking at violence against women, pointing out questions raised by the book's framework of gendered informal politics. Then, I analyze the two cases from the 1990s, with more detail over the last decade. In the conclusion, I argue how gendered informal politics shape the process in ways that must be recognized by feminist political scientists but also how feminists have been able to create some changes in unexpected places.

The Feminist Policy Model

Most feminist policymaking literature takes as its starting place the conventional policy stage model. Amy Mazur (2002) wrote of three basic stages of policy formation: preformulation when "social problems are defined into public problems, for which proposals are generated, by a variety of state and non-state actors"; formulation when "[t]he government … chooses some of these issues to place on its agenda for eventual formation … [and then] makes an authoritative decision reflected in an official policy statement"; and postformulation during which the policy is supposed to be implemented and its effectiveness evaluated, perhaps leading to reformulation (see also Lombardo et al. (2013: 672), who use a similar three-stage model of "planning, executing, and evaluating"). Merike Blofield and Liesl Haas (2013), in summarizing the literature a decade later, suggest a four-stage process separating implementation from evaluation, which I use here. They point out that these stages are "distinct, but interconnected"; in other words, they are more analytical lenses than snapshots in time, as the policymaking process is rarely linear (712). At all stages, scholars are concerned with how feminists overcome barriers to access to policymaking. In the following, I summarize the state of the literature on these five analytical puzzles, raising questions from this book's insights about informal politics as I go along. As Raymond et al. (2014, 181) have argued, "[i]t is increasingly evident that informal institutions…. exercise tremendous influence over social behavior and political choice, and should not be ignored by those seeking fresh approaches to solving seemingly intractable problems."

Issue Framing: From Naming to Style-Switching and Speaking in Code

The first stage is issue framing. Because many gender-related problems have been marginalized not just by government's nonaction but also by their discursive invisibility, the consensus is that they must "first be defined as a political problem," often by giving them names (Blofield and Haas 2013: 712). As Carol Lee Bacchi (2010: 263–264) asserts, even when problems come up for discussion, there is still the issue of problem representation: "how we perceive or think about something will affect what we think we ought to be done about it … assumptions and values….*give shape* to a particular issue." As a result, "struggles over casual definitions of problems, then, are contests over basic structures of social organization," including gender, race, and ethnicity, and different ways of framing problems enlist different stakeholders. While Htun and Weldon (2010: 210–211) downplay framing as secondary, most scholars find lasting impact of framing: "[t]he way an issue is framed has a tremendous effect on the way it is translated into policies and the way those policies are implemented" (Blofield and Haas 2013: 713).

Seeing framing as crucial has led to a lot of discursive analyses, especially on the issues of violence against women (Elman 2013). For most forms of violence against women, scholars argue that activists had to first prove that the problem existed and that it was wrong (239). In the United States, there was a politics of naming problems, but names changed over time as activists sought support from different stakeholders, for example, "woman battery" became "domestic violence" (despite the oddness of linking domesticity to violence). By the 1990s, transnational activists linked various forms of violence against women together and achieved what seemed as a small coup, getting international organizations such as the United Nations and leading human rights advocates to see violence against women as violation of women's human rights (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Moghadam 2005; Merry 2006a). Over the next two decades, there was a major shift in public opinion worldwide, and most states, at least publicly, now condemn violence against women and/or gender-based violence (Blofield and Haas 2013: 714). "What differs are the diagnostics of the problem and the proposed solutions." For domestic violence, in most Western countries, frames "range from encompassing, transformative frames (linking it to broader socio-economic, structural inequalities) to narrow response that focus on the criminalization of physical violence."

In most other places, the frames are often less transformative, with the problem framed in degendered ways, such as a problem for all members of the family or as a result of individual deviance and alcoholism (Fabian 2010; Krizsan and Popa 2014; Blofield and Haas 2013: 714).

However, is naming and framing the problem the best and/or only way to get to more gender equality, especially in the neoliberal era of the interplay of formal and informal politics? As Ledeneva (2011: 722) explains, using a metaphor about a traffic stop, navigating regimes with a mix of formal and informal rules, requires knowing when to apply the right one (e.g. whether to bribe the cop or not), how to switch easily between the two, and "crucially, to negotiate oneself out of trouble if caught" ("oops, that cash just fell out of my wallet, officer"). Is there is a similar dynamic in framing issues in such regimes, in which activists must know when to apply formal framing through naming the problem in gendered ways and when to employ informal tactics, such as style-switching (the modulation of language and framing for different audiences and contexts that I describe in Chap. 4)? Might activists seeking to politicize gender equality issues sometimes even have a higher chance of success if they "speak in code," that is, not name a problem but encrypt it within language about other problems? Or is this capitulation?

Policy Adoption: "Window Dressing" Versus Informal Rule Changes

The second stage is policy adoption, when policy gets adopted within various arenas, especially the legislative, and at different levels of the political system, from local or regional government to national government, and to supranational institutions like the European Union (Blofield and Haas 2013: 715). As Celeste Montoya (2013: 7–8) explains, "[e]xplicit legislation is a crucial means of improving the legal system's response to various forms of violence. It leaves less room for interpretations that may allow violence to be ignored or go unpunished. Legislation is a symbolic means of countering traditional norms that support violence against women." Studies of policy adoption are the most developed of comparative or cross-national feminist policy studies because laws are easy to observe and compare (Blofield and Haas 2013: 715). Gender equality policy adoption has historically been a domestic process, but the new consensus that violence against women is a violation of women's human rights has created a new, transnational pathway

for reform in which local actors appropriate global norms for domestic reform.[1] Reforms may be initiated by subnational governments, especially in federal states, sometimes also with transnational pressures (O'Brien 2013).

For domestic violence, the international norm has been to ask for a comprehensive law against domestic violence (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women/United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2008). This includes adopting the "Austrian model," a mechanism that makes it relatively easy to get a temporary protection order removing the batterer from the home by the police (an expulsion order) as well as forbidding the accused from coming near a certain place, stalking, or even contacting the accuser (a restraining order). International obligations are shaped by the United Nation's CEDAW (especially its 2000 Optional Protocol, which added violence against women), which requires signing, ratifying, and periodic monitoring reports by states, as well as the international norms in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. For members of the Council of Europe (which both Russia and Iceland are), there is also the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), which entered into force on August 1, 2014.

However, is adopting new formal policies the best and/or the only way to get more gender equality? Given the strength of informal politics, should we be surprised that many gender equality laws are only "window dressing," that is, promises authorities make with little intention of applying them to address problems women face in society? The second, transnational path, seems especially likely to lead to gender equality laws, which lack sufficient budget or teeth, leaving informal rules against responding to domestic violence intact (Luciano et al. 2005; Johnson 2009b; Ghodsee et al. 2010; Montoya 2013). Passing domestic violence legislation—often based on international models without accommodation to local dynamics—has been an easy way to signal countries' commitment to gender equality, democracy, or simply that the country is a team player on the international stage (Fabian 2010). For example, in the processes required by CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action, isn't it reasonable to assume countries seeking international approval would write that they are meeting mandated goals in the required reports? Should we know to expect that these reports, in the language of Ledeneva (2011: 721), reflect a "knowing smile," "an expression of ambivalence" that points to the "open secret" that the authorities care only so much about the

problem? Or in the worst cases, where regimes are dominated by informal politics, that there is Orwellian doublethink, in which real policy is the opposite of legislation? Isn't the biggest problem for domestic violence, whether in countries that have or haven't passed comprehensive domestic violence legislation, the informal rules that keep law enforcement and social workers from taking women's rights seriously? In other words, isn't violence against women regulated (or not regulated) by a mix of formal and informal rules, suggesting that this nexus is where the focus must be to assess whether countries are truly responsive (Banaszak and Weldon 2011: 268; Chappell and Waylen 2013: 607–608).

Implementation: The "Wink and Nod" of Formal Outputs Versus "How Things Are Done"

The third stage is policy implementation, often measured by government outputs, such as services provided or cases prosecuted (Blofield and Haas 2013: 717).[2] For the issues of violence against women, early studies focused on the criminal justice system (e.g. Elman 1996), but later studies, such as by Weldon (2011: 42–43), have broadened to examine "government responsiveness," combining policy adoption with implementation, such as national funding for domestic violence shelters, for specialized training for service providers, or for public awareness campaigns as well as mechanisms for interagency coordination. Montoya (2013: 8) measures implementation by looking at "What mechanisms are put into place to ensure its enforcement? How comprehensive is the approach? Are adequate resources allocated? Are nonstate actors included in the policymaking and implementing process?" In consolidated democracies, implementation has been identified as the crucial gap in gender equality policymaking as there has been "widespread formal adoption and development of… gender equality … initiatives … [but only] partial and variable institutionalization in terms of impact on institutional practices, norms, and outcomes" (Mackay, Monro, and Waylen 2009: 254–255). The concept of "decoupling"—the disconnect between various systems and institutions—has been used to describe this paradox of "strong equality policy, weak practice" (Johnson et al. 2013). Montoya (2013: 69) suggests that implementation is often blocked by a lack of state capacity, especially in regimes outside of the Global North where one cannot expect functioning bureaucracies or criminal-legal systems that construct a rule of law.

However, is implementation through formal bureaucratic procedures the best and/or only way to achieve gender equality? If we see informal politics clearly, aren't we likely to see how often street-level bureaucrats only "wink and nod" to new legislation requiring them to change their behavior? Or, the opposite, in which they partially and arbitrarily implement new laws, in ways that further their goals, such as when US police used the criminalization of domestic violence to strengthen their authority, especially against men of color (Dean 2010)? As Fiona Mackay and Georgina Waylen (2014: 491) explain, "[p]art of seeking to ensure that gender reforms 'stick' and do not 'unravel' is a greater understanding not only of how institutional design works, but also of what happens afterward as institutional actors continue to contest rules, using old and new institutional elements." Or, couldn't authorities start responding to problems such as domestic violence without the passage of formal laws, if it was seen in their interest? In other words, rather than formal outputs from formal laws, aren't we more interested in, as Vivien Lowndes (2014: 687–688) put, "how things are done around here," avoiding a "strict separation between informal and formal rules or prejudging their relative significance"?

Policy Evaluation: From "Damn Statistics" to "Feminist Violence Work"

The fourth stage is policy evaluation in which scholars evaluate the consequences of the policymaking process, what might be understood as the effectiveness of policy at meeting its goals. Specific policies, such as maternity or paternity leave, are measured by changes in the number of women and men taking such leaves, but perhaps also by changing rates of women with young children staying in the workforce. As Amy Elman (2013: 240–241) has pointed out, evaluating policy outcomes for violence against women remains especially problematic. Low rates of violence reported to authorities may not mean low rates of violence, but general acceptance of the use of violence or recognition that the authorities will not provide real help. Conversely, increases in the reporting of violence against women could mean increased rates or increased awareness. National surveys of the prevalence are often not comparable, using different questions or conceptualizations. Even if reliable estimates of rates of violence were available, measuring the effectiveness of government responsiveness to violence against women would require assessing the complex relationship between

initiatives, the services provided and received, and the incidence of gender violence (Weldon 2002).

Looking at informal politics raises more damning questions about statistical estimates of policy outcomes. Even in the best case, statistics are often misleading and misunderstood, because of widespread poor math and statistical skills, not least of which are those presented by activists and reporters (Best 2012). Governments and donors require feminist activists to play this number game, but activists, like all stakeholders, have incentives to misrepresent the data, with little mechanisms to hold them accountable. Aren't then these statistics another part of the politics of policymaking? But, without using these "damn statistics," what else is there to really assess the effectiveness of policy? I argue that the method with the best likelihood of providing the necessary evidence of policy effectiveness is ethnography, where scholars can really observe how street-level bureaucrats are responding to domestic violence and what impact this has on victims. This work is incredibly labor intensive, faces limitations on generalizability, and is hard to compare across cases. For domestic violence, I propose a "good enough" strategy of estimating the impact of the policy, in which I try to assess whether the "policies in use." I use as standards the principles of what domestic violence advocates have defined as "feminist violence work," "applying a survivor-centered, empowering work approach, holding the abuser responsible for his actions and seeing domestic violence as a result of women's oppression in the society" (Dean 2010).

Feminists Overcoming Barriers to Access: From Formal Channels to "Secret Handshakes"

At each stage of the policymaking process, feminists must overcome barriers to access, which, as I have pointed out in previous chapters, may be formal or informal. As Htun and Weldon (2010) have shown, the configuration of critical actors is different gender-related issues in different polities. Over the last decade or so, scholars have considered which of the three points of the "triangle of empowerment" were the most important: strong feminist mobilization, a critical contingent of women politicians, and feminist officials with legal authority to address gender inequality in women's policy agencies. Cross-national studies have mostly found that the latter two have proven less successful than had been expected. Weldon (2002, 2011: Chap. 1) finds that feminist mobilization is the crucial point, even for strengthening the other two. This is especially

true for issues that require significant change in policy, such as violence against women. As outsiders, women's and feminist mobilization can help articulate women's interests, even if imperfectly, because the movement provides "an arena where women interact as women to define their priorities" (Weldon 2011: 36–37). Especially when autonomous, such mobilization can hold the government accountable to pass and implement reforms requiring the government to respond to problems in very different ways. More so than in women's and feminist movements, women in politics, often elites themselves cannot speak for all women, as "women (like men) are a diverse group, riven by other social axes like race and class" (32). For countries that follow the second path, there may be additional actors, what international relations theorists call political "entrepreneurs" or what cultural anthropologists call "intermediaries," in that they negotiate between the local, regional, national, and international, such as by translating global rights principles into local contexts and reframing local grievances into global human rights terms (Johnson 2009a).[3]

For most scholars, feminists are seen as most likely to be effective when they have regularized channels and strong policy networks, the linkages between a set of actors with varying levels of interest in and influence on a particular policymaking process (or transnational advocacy networks if the process is transnational) (Montoya 2013). The implicit model is one in which activists traffic in ideas which persuade policymakers to change laws. On domestic violence, there has been some nod to authorities' interests, such as making it easier for police who have voiced concerns about how to intervene and making claims based on the financial costs to the state and the economy. Political-savvy, though, is secondary to making clear the merits of the policy. Scholars see the main obstacle for feminists to be organizations, such as the church, mosque, or clans, that have long held jurisdiction over issues of family and sexuality, especially when there are strong ties between organized religion and the state. Htun and Weldon (2012) argue that violence against women is typically non-doctrinal, meaning that it does not provoke conflicts with such organizations, but this seems less true outside of Western democracies (O'Brien 2013).

However, is establishing regularized, formal channels to those in formal deliberative bodies, working through sustained, transparent policy networks, the best or only way to gain access to power and to pursue gender equality? If, as I have argued, liberalization has consolidated informal networks underneath the formal institutions, isn't access to these informal

networks key as they are most likely to have the authority to enact and implement change? Isn't that access likely to be informal, through "secret handshakes" with well-placed elites or "getting the nod" from the head patron in the system? Aren't personal relationships and informal gatherings the more likely way to get such deals? Thinking about these informal processes points to the towering obstacles constructed by homosociality and hegemonic masculinity, such as access to historically single-sexed spaces (such as the naked sauna or golf course) where these backroom deals are conducted. There can also be huge obstacles when religious authority is stratified based on gender, with only men as leading religious authorities. Powerfully organized feminism may be the key *why* factor, but isn't feminists' access to these networks and spaces the question the key *how* question?

Russia

In Russia, domestic violence was not relegated to a private sphere until recently. For much of the Soviet period, women's councils and comrade courts handled complaints of "improper behavior of husbands in the family," while local branches of trade unions intervened by criticizing perpetrator's behavior or sending the perpetrator to coercive detoxification (Zhidkova 2008). The Soviet police treated at least some cases of domestic violence as a crime of "hooliganism." By the 1970s, among state social service providers, "difficult life situation" or "dysfunctional family" became euphemisms for domestic violence (Muravyeva 2014). Not seen through the lens of gender-based violence, violence was explained by individual perpetrator's abnormal personality combined with alcohol abuse, with reconciliation as the goal. The Soviet state's commitment to women's employment, equal pay, daycare, and universal healthcare also lessened women's economic dependence on their husbands and provided exit options.

Though no credible statistics were collected, the evidence suggests that the incidence of domestic violence got worse in the 1990s, along with most forms of interpersonal violence (Johnson 2005; ANNA National Center for the Prevention of Violence 2010). In the twenty-first century, the most credible survey found that every second married woman had experienced physical violence from her husband at least once, with almost one of five experiencing regular or severe violence (Gorshkova and Shurygina 2003), suggesting a higher rate than the lifetime average of

35% around the world (García-Moreno 2013). The survey also found that psychological violence was used in most relationships. Sexual violence in marriage, although common, was not even regarded as violence by most survey respondents. Some 13% of the female respondents reported having husbands forbid them to work or study or refuse (or threaten to refuse) them use of the family money on account of their alleged bad behavior. Anecdotal evidence suggests that violence against women, including abduction and honor killings, is higher in the North Caucasus, shaped by Russia's brutal campaigns in the region and the radicalization of the resistance (ANNA 2010: 37–41). Even into the current decade, a Moscow police officer admitted off the record that "getting reliable data [on domestic violence] is like casting runes" (Antonova 2013).

Issue Framing: From Naming to Style-Switching and Speaking in Code

As feminist activism against domestic violence began only in the 1990s in Russia—just as transnational women's activism turned toward violence against women—issue framing began with attempts to translate global norms into Russian (see Johnson 2009b: 97–102). Activists began to write about "domestic violence" (translated literally as *domashnee nasilie*) as a problem requiring government responsiveness from law enforcement and social services alike. Human Rights Watch (1997), Amnesty International (2005), and the UN's Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (Erturk 2006) wrote damning reports on the Russian approach to violence against women, framing domestic violence as a violation of women's human rights.

By the second decade of the millennium, Russian activists were more in charge of the process while still leveraging international norms, such as by writing shadow reports for the CEDAW process. While previously Russians had seemed unconcerned, surveys showed that an overwhelming majority of Russians saw domestic violence as a problem worthy of government response (ANNA National Center for the Prevention of Violence 2010: 47; Stickley et al. 2008: 451; Gorshkova and Shurygina 2003). Domestic violence had become a common subject of talk shows and dramas on television, and Russians activists expressed the general sense that the recognition of domestic violence has changed.

However, the feminist notion of domestic violence, stymied by the lack of other related concepts such as "gender" in Russian, gave way to

framing the problem as "family violence" or "violence in the family," with the meaning over time shifting from violence against women to violence against women and children, and now mostly to child abuse (CEDAW Committee 2010: paras. 103–104; Jäppinen 2015). In the public and government discourse, the problem is often subsumed under Russia's demographic problem of too few children, with concerns about families not providing the "proper conditions for raising and supporting children." In contrast to many other contexts where the frame of domestic violence is individualized and/or criminalized, activists' frame in Russia has been more about social services (Johnson 2009).

Some of this frame shifting was intentional, as seen in the case of St. Petersburg, the region in which feminist activists have had the most influence on social services. Beginning in the 1990s, some activists started experimenting with concepts that were more familiar to Russian society (Muravyeva 2014: 56). At first, activists were style-switching, using international norms and feminist language among themselves, but speaking to the regional government about providing "social assistance to women in danger." By the 2000s, it was clear to these activists that nothing would happen with a gender equality plan under consideration, unless they "spoke in code." As explained by a self-identified feminist aware of international norms on violence against women, they chose to use some Soviet-period language updated for the postcommunist transition about "crisis situation" and "difficult life situation." This advocate understood that not using feminist framing had shortcomings, but also that speaking in code would facilitate government funding. Despite its history of professed socialist commitments, social services in Russia have always targeted categories of people seen as "vulnerable," so using this language resonated with social service administrators more than talking about women's rights or gender equality (Jäppinen 2015).

Policy Adoption: "Window Dressing" Versus Informal Rule Changes

The 1990s were marked by an informal rule change in which the Soviet ways of regulating domestic violence were replaced with the privatization of domestic violence (Human Rights Watch 1997; Amnesty International 2005; Johnson 2009: 30–35). The collapse of Soviet control delegitimated the intrusiveness of police, who were only too happy to have less work to do. It was more than just negligence, as police, prosecutors, and judges

justified their non-intervention with strikingly new language about men's rights to their apartments and by blaming women for not being feminine enough. They also refused to see the extent of the injury, arguing that almost all cases fit lesser crimes that did not require public prosecution, but private prosecution in which the victim is in charge of the prosecution herself.[4] Unusual even in Russian law and declared unconstitutional in 2005 (with no impact), private prosecution requires that victims must collect their own evidence according to the criminal procedural code and then represent themselves or pay for their own lawyer. At the same time, the social services that had been providing indirect help were decimated by the radical liberalization and resulting economic depression.

Within this context and reflecting international norms, Russian activists have been calling for comprehensive domestic violence legislation for two decades. In 1994–1995, the first draft law, a comprehensive law based on international models, was introduced by the Women of Russian political faction (Johnson 2009: 105–106). Legislators seemed completely confused about what was being discussed, and the speaker announced that the Duma should not intervene in the family. After four dozen versions, the final version involved the criminal justice system only in forcing women to leave abusive situations if there were children involved and clarified that the planned shelters were "not brothels." In 1999, advocates had a less ambitious agenda, simply to pass amendments to the criminal code, but this too went nowhere. In 2007, another draft federal law included a segment dedicated to the prevention of domestic violence, but with no success.

Russia, unlike almost all other postcommunist countries, passed no national comprehensive legislation, though most of these laws lacked sufficient funding or mechanisms for its enforcement (Fabian 2010). In other words, Russia did not provide window dressing on domestic violence, despite its international obligations through CEDAW. (Russia inherited the USSR's ratification of CEDAW, but did sign and then ratify in 2004 the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, which added violence against women as well as complaint mechanisms.) In fact, in some ways, it did the opposite. Under the radar of most activists in Russia is one small reform in national social policy. Starting in 2006, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection began to mention "violence in the family" as a need that social services should attend (Russian Ministry of Health Care and Social Development 2006). This language was repeated in the major overhaul of social services in 2013, in a 2014 edict on family policy, and in National Strategy of Action for Women, 2017–2022.

The most recent attempt to pass comprehensive legislation began in 2011 after a UN specialist on human rights called for domestic violence reforms: more shelters, a national action plan, more effective data collection, and amendments to the criminal code (Jäppinen and Johnson 2016). In the summer of 2012, the paraconstitutional Public Chamber called for protection orders and, in the next year, charged a working group to move the legislation forward. Two lawyers with experience related to violence against women wrote the law. As one described it to me, "they looked at the Swedish model and the model UN law and chose all that they wanted." The resulting bill, "On prevention of domestic violence," calls for the creation of social and legal protection for women as well as a protection order regime. It is not a punitive law. For abusers who cause only "light injury," there is only a cooling-off period of a few weeks' detention and counseling. But while recognizing that some compromises had been made, the NGO leaders I interviewed thought the bill was a good one. As they admitted to me, getting the authorities' ears has required discussing domestic violence as part of a "complex of problems," with success "always being through the children": you "can't discuss it directly like violence, as a crime, as discrimination against women." Over the next several years, however, the bill went nowhere, and Russia refused to sign the Council of Europe's Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

In contrast to these realities, Russia's 2014 report for the CEDAW Committee is Orwellian in its discussion of the government's legislative efforts (Russian Federation 2014). Cast as part of larger efforts designed to promote gender equality, the report claimed serious efforts to pass domestic violence legislation in consultation with civil society, though provided little detail. There were no details or serious consideration of the concerns and questions raised by the CEDAW Committee about the law. Just how Orwellian was made clear when the Supreme Court pushed the Duma in 2016 to move several provisions of the Criminal Code to the Administrative Code, including the first part of Article 116 (battery), which would have effectively decriminalized domestic violence ("Gosduma popravila" 2016). Activists rallied, and the second and final version of the legislation in July excluded from the decriminalization of battery any forms of battery that were committed by people "close" to the victim (including spouses, children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, or co-inhabitants) (Russian Federation 2016). The changes also made this form of battery by close persons into a private–public prosecution crime

in which the victim must initiate by filing a complaint, but then the state is responsible for investigating and prosecuting. In pushing back against a step backward, activists achieved a reform that made the criminal law used for domestic violence a little bit better. A version of the draft comprehensive legislation on domestic violence was then formally introduced in September 2016, providing for protection orders, batterer treatment, and temporary housing for the victim and her dependents ("V Gosdumu Vnesli" 2016). However, this success was short-lived. In an accelerated legislative process, the small reform was basically undone in January 2017, with comprehensive legislation looking dead in the water (Walker 2017).

Implementation: The "Wink and Nod" of Formal Outputs Versus "How Things Are Done"

As part of Russia's (2014) CEDAW report, Russian authorities claim that there have been remarkable shifts in responsiveness to domestic violence, even without the adoption of a comprehensive national legislation. With a knowing smile, they report that "[w]ith each report of the violation of the rights and legal interests of a woman, law enforcement authorities conduct appropriate investigations" (Russian Federation 2014: para. 97). They assert that these reforms come from the top, from the Russian Federation Ministry of Internal Affairs, which continues to evaluate their practices and monitor regional authorities. There is some precedent for law enforcement in Russia changing their behavior, on trafficking in persons, without using new laws (McCarthy 2015); however, there is little evidence that this is the case on domestic violence about which activists report only small improvements by individual police officers. Instead, a leading lawyer-activist in the movement relayed the following "classic example" of why women do not pursue legal cases (Mari Davtyan, Facebook, May 18, 2016, translation by the author):

> I called the police, the detail arrived, but they did not arrest or take away my former husband. I even scolded the officers. I thought they were obligated to take him to the police station. In the end, [the ex-husband] burst into the dwelling and began to beat my mother. She tried to push him from the apartment, but without success. My mom is five foot five and he's six feet. Then, I grabbed the iron bar we use as a lock for the door and beat the Roman, but he could care less. He dragged my mother onto the landing, hitting her, and broke her nose. I think if it were not for that bar and the pepper spray, we wouldn't have been able to do anything.

Russian citizens are often left to defend themselves in these situations. The official statistics from 2015 substantiate this claim. Less than 20,000 individuals were convicted for battery, with only 357 sentenced to imprisonment ("Gosduma popravila" 2016).

Not just claiming responsiveness of the criminal justice system, the Russian CEDAW report claims that women living with domestic violence are getting the necessary social assistance (Russian Federation 2014: paras. 100–104). With a wink and a nod to the reform of social services that mentions domestic violence, they report the existence of more than 1000 public social services centers (with 21 specialized women's crisis centers), more than 2000 crisis hotlines for families (14 of which are located in women's crisis centers), and some 300 shelters with some 6000 beds (427 beds in 18 women's shelters). In Moscow, for example, there has been a small city shelter since 2010, but with little advertising.[5] In 2014, an 85-bed government crisis center for women was also opened, and in 2015, the NGO ANNA announced that it was opening a small shelter in cooperation with the Russian Orthodox Church. In St. Petersburg in 2013, there were departments for women in difficult life situations in all (18) city districts (six with shelters) and one citywide shelter, but the degree to which they responded to domestic violence varied greatly (Johnson et al. 2016). For one department, physical domestic violence constituted one of five cases that they see; for another, the staff claimed they rarely saw domestic violence. If St. Petersburg is the best case scenario, as activists claim, most of the crisis centers across Russia deal only partially with domestic violence, if they do at all.

Policy Evaluation: From "Damn Statistics" to "Feminist Violence Work"

Without any evidence or explanation, Russia's 2014 CEDAW report states that "the number of crimes involving violence against women is trending downward" from 191,200 in 2010 to 165,800 in 2013 (Russian Federation 2014: para. 97). In response to this Orwellian assertion, activists in a shadow report argue that these are only prosecutions and count only women in registered marriages, while some one-quarter of couples are unmarried (Consortium of Women's Nongovernmental Organizations 2015: 14). Historically, activists have often used a variety of questionable statistics, drawing inferences from their unsystematic samples or from US estimates (Johnson 2005). This is true even for femicide, the number of

women killed by their current or former intimate partners, which should be the easiest to quantify. Authorities have sometimes repeated these questionable statistics, giving estimates of 12,000–15,000 femicides per year, perhaps three to four times too high in the 2000s. One could argue that they were trying to look responsive, but the more credible argument is that the state's number game is just pretense.

At the same time, it would be wrong to assume that there is no feminist violence work being done. Working with two colleagues (Johnson et al. 2016), I examined the implementation of domestic violence services into family crisis departments in St. Petersburg in 2013. We found that in the most feminist center we visited, the staff used the term "domestic violence" to describe the problem, not a euphemism, and although the director believed that women survivors "need to look at the mirror," she did not assume women provoke violence themselves (a common belief), and the center staff taught women that batterers are not likely to change. While the director did not identify as feminist, a self-identified feminist activist, who had once been the director of an NGO crisis center, had been invited to work at the center, even helping to provide trainings on domestic violence. The other centers in St. Petersburg were less likely to empower their victims, hold the abuser accountable, or see domestic violence as a result of women's oppression.

Feminists Overcoming Barriers to Access

Feminist activists pursuing formal avenues to power have been granted access to the showcases of representation. In the 1990s, feminist activists spoke at the Duma when the first comprehensive domestic violence laws were considered, but were met with derision or misunderstanding, which the women deputies in the Duma, including in the Women of Russia faction, could do nothing to forestall (Johnson 2009: Chap. 5). In the 2010s, feminists brought the issue back to the agenda, with help from international pressure and lobbying from the police who had previously argued that domestic violence was not their problem. Activists, most notably a lawyer Mari Davtyan affiliated with the Consortium of Women's Non-governmental Associations who helped draft the most recent legislation, participated in the Duma working group on domestic violence. This access has been facilitated by women in politics, especially following the January 2013 murder and dismemberment of a journalist (whom relatives alleged had been repeatedly beaten over the years) by her

Moscow restaurateur husband (Antonova 2013). Olga Kostina, head of a victim's organization Resistance, Putin supporter, and member of the Public Chamber, brought feminist activists into the Public Chamber, even including several in the working group that helped draft domestic violence legislation. They had support for a law from a United Russia Duma deputy (Saliya Muzarbayeva) on the health committee.

Activists continue to believe in formal policy process, collecting more than 100,000 signatures by 2015 on a petition calling for the law and for the Ministry of Internal Affairs to create a special task force and to create some kind of protection for victims. In 2015, the Human Rights Commissioner in Moscow Tatyana Potyaeva called again for new legislation. When the Supreme Court proposed decriminalizing domestic violence, activists remobilized, writing a brief against the change, enlisting the President's Human Rights Council, lobbied the Public Chamber, and signed a petition.

The small reform in the summer of 2016 seemed to have resulted from informal approval from the very top. Several insiders told me that Putin had given a nod to a domestic violence law in 2013. In early 2016, Putin signaled some concern about decriminalizing the articles pertaining to domestic violence in a speech on law and order:

> Another issue is the proposed decriminalisation of a number of articles in the Criminal Code…. As you may know, I expressed support for this initiative in my Address…. A relevant draft law was submitted to the State Duma last December. However, so far it has evoked a mixed response. Some experts believe that the decriminalisation of these Criminal Code articles would lead to an increase in domestic violence. Let us not forget here that liberalisation should apply only to those citizens who commit their first and only offence, while a repeated similar offence should lead to criminal liability. (Putin 2016)

Insiders read these opaque statements carefully, trying to interpret what this head patron wants. The overwhelming approval for most legislation demonstrates this phenomenon. However, such support can be fickle. At a press conference on December 23, 2016, Putin signaled his withdrawal of support: "Unceremonious interference in family matters is unacceptable" (President of Russia 2016).

Organized resistance to taking domestic violence seriously has been growing, as part of the broader anti-gender movement. The resistance to the 2013 draft legislation was fierce, with the debate monopolized by

top officials of the Russian Orthodox Church who declared that such legislation threatened the Russian family and by the All-Russian Parents Resistance, a recently formed NGO which has garnered support from both Putin and Russian Orthodox authorities. For example, at a 2013 Public Chamber roundtable, an opponent quoted a Russian philosopher, saying that "process of upbringing is violence," and then argued that "slapping a kid below the back" would be seen as domestic violence (and presumably should not be, according to him) (Russian Federation Public Chamber 2013). Kostina backtracked, saying "it would be unwise for the country to prosecute any but the most horrific domestic abuse because it might lead to the dissolution of marriages" (Meyer and Galouchko 2013). The Orthodox Church's resistance was repeated and strengthened in 2016 into formal resolutions, declaring that efforts to prevent domestic violence were based on "false ideologies, conceptions and approaches" to the family that derive from feminists' "gender ideology" (Zezulin 2016). During and after the small reforms in the summer of 2016, the All-Russian Parents Resistance organized protests and petitions in a dozen cities across Russia, questioning whether beating family members should be a crime, arguing that such ideas are Western. Part of the problem had to do with framing domestic violence as a problem of anyone in the family (including child abuse), as protesters were worried about parents being prosecuted for disciplining their children. But the resistance was also about the right to beat women. When comprehensive legislation was formally introduced in September 2016, Elena Mizulina, the former feminist who has become the chief anti-feminist, declared "even when a man beats his wife, it's not as offensive as humiliating a man" ("Elena Mizulina" 2016). In January 2017, it was Mizulina (along with Duma deputy Olga Batalina) who pushed for reforms to be retracted. Supporters held signs with proverbs advocating forms of family violence: "I have given life to you so I can take that life away from you" and "If he beats you, he loves you" (Alena Popova, Facebook post, January 11, 2017). This informal anti-gender alliance between segments of the society, church officials, and the regime made domestic violence into a doctrinal issue.

In contrast, the reforms of social services that allowed the establishment of governmental crisis centers have been under the radar. Without an obvious pressure from activists or fanfare, the Ministry of Health and Social Services added violence in the family to its responsibilities in the mid-2000s, probably with the advocacy of Galina Karelova, who had

various roles in the executive related to social policy and was seen as a champion on women's interests, even after she joined United Russia. She was an advocate of the 2013 social policy reform that referenced domestic violence. This legislation came from the Duma committee on social policy, not the committee related to women and the family, inscribing this change into law, even though she made no public specific mention of domestic violence (Polezhaev 2014).

In St. Petersburg, some feminists were specifically willing and able to navigate the interplay of formal and informal politics game. While there were formal social and gender policy councils in which they participated, it was finding insider allies through personal connections that made the difference. The citywide shelter was established because of a personal decision by the mayor/governor at the time, Anatoly Sobchak, a mentor of Putin and a regional patron who ruled through personalistic relations, including with organized crime (Dawisha 2014: Chap. 3). The incorporation of domestic violence into social services across the city was the result of the commitment of the next mayor/governor Valentina Matvienko, a long-time Putin ally. As one advocate explained, it was Matvienko (and her vice-governor Liudmila Koskina), who "personally oversaw the process … Matvienko immediately got it. She had a son, no husband. She understood women's rights… Matvienko gave the green light." Another activist explained that "Matvienko supported all these things."

Iceland

The relatively few studies on domestic violence in Iceland before the 2000s suggest that domestic violence, as in other democracies, was relegated to the private sphere outside of government intervention (Gurdin 1996: 131, 134; U.S. Department of State 1996). Authorities chose not to see the problem among real Icelanders, using postindependence arguments that cast the problem as either foreign or of lower-class men who drink too much. The relegation of most domestic violence to the private sphere was true even into the 1990s, especially when it occurred within marriage, with police responding with either indifference or interrogation of the victim.

The first serious study on the incidence of the problem was conducted in 1979, as a result of feminist activism; the first survey was in 1996 (Iceland Ministry of Welfare 2012: 7, 10–11). A more systematic national survey in 2008 found that slightly less than one-quarter of Icelandic women reported

having experienced domestic violence in their adult lives, and 1.6% in the previous year, including both physical and sexual abuse. The violence was more commonly from previous partners than current partners. Two-thirds of the women who reported violence stated that the violence had taken place in or near their home. Three-quarters assessed the violence to be very serious, with more than half reporting scratches, one-third bruising, and others reporting broken bones, cuts, or burns. Problems were worse for non-Icelandic women, especially those from outside of the European Economic Area, which allows free movement of labor, because their visas are likely to be dependent upon their husbands (Guðmundsdóttir 2009: 1–68). The rates are surprisingly high given Iceland's ranking of being one of the most, if not the most, gender equal country in the world, but all Nordic countries also have high incidence of domestic violence compared to other Western democracies (Gracia and Merlo 2016: 27–30).

Issue Framing: From Naming to Style-Switching and Speaking in Code

As activism began in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the framing of domestic violence was at first a domestic process, albeit shaped by second-wave feminist organizing around the world. To increase their chances at getting funding from the maternalist welfare state, activists at the main advocacy organization, the Women's Shelter in Reykjavik, used discourse about motherhood, including protecting women and children, a kind of speaking in code that worked fairly quickly and effectively (Gurdin 1996: 133). In order to get more attention from police and the criminal justice system, activists began style-switching, also taking on the term "domestic violence" (*heimilisofbeldi*).[6] As one observer put it, they were "forced into the position of translating their concern from an issue of male domination and privilege to one of criminality and broken laws" (Gurdin 1996: 136). However, police resisted responsibility for the problem, "stating that the shelter was better equipped to handle domestic violence than the police. Because abusive husbands repeat the abuse, it is preferable to enable women to leave their husbands, rather than arrest the husbands for assault." More recently, there has been a move toward the term "intimate partner violence," which is more inclusive, for example, of same-sex couples, but takes the focus off the gendered dynamics.

At the same time, there were some foreign interventions, such as the United States' State Department and the CEDAW Committee critiquing Iceland's limited response, framing the problem as violence against women

and a violation of women's human rights (U.S. Department of State 1996; CEDAW 1996). As a result, Icelandic feminists began to leverage global norms by the 2000s, using language of "gender-based violence" and "violence against women." Some feminist anti-violence activists heard about the Austrian model on a trip to Austria in 2001, and that model became the goal.

By 2010, there was such a strong consensus among Iceland's feminist organizations around gender-based violence that this was the focus of that year's women's strike, rather than economic inequality that had been front and center of the 1975 original and 2005 anniversary women's strikes. Some 50,000 Icelandic women and their supporters—one-sixth of Iceland's population—participated, suggesting a shift in popular opinion (Johnson 2011: 18–22). The feminist officials were also there, including mayor of Reykjavik Jón Gnarr, who had sent a letter to all the city agencies to encourage women to participate, and Prime Minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, who had published a letter in the newspaper asking women to come out. Weekend TV shows focused on the event while the radio stations played the old women's liberation music.

Policy Adoption: "Window Dressing" Versus Informal Rule Changes

With this politics of framing, activists in Iceland have been somewhat successful at getting reforms. By the mid-1990s, the Ministry of Justice began to take on systematic research to understand the problem. A 2000 law created the possibility for exclusion and restraining orders, but it required both extreme circumstances and the police to request the order from the court (Iceland Ministry of Welfare and Social Security 2006: 1–25). These were supposed to complement the most commonly used criminal laws for domestic violence, assault, and battery (Articles 217 and 218 of the Criminal Code), with the police more likely to see domestic violence as the former, which allows police to decline to intervene and offers a fine, not a period of imprisonment. In 2006, the government secured small reforms to these articles in order to recognize "that offense between persons in an intimate relationship are off a specific nature," strengthening the punishments under Article 217 and introducing a new provision for insulting or denigrating one's spouse (Article 233b) (CEDAW 2007: 16). With these laws, women experiencing domestic violence were likely to call the police for help, but few were successful at getting their partners to court (Gurdin 1996: 137).

In the mid-2000s, advocates in Iceland and in the CEDAW Committee were pressing for more significant reform. In 2011, two years after the feminist-friendly government came to power, a reform created an expedited process for temporary protection orders (exclusion and restraining), based on a reasonable suspicion of a criminal offense, without requiring the victim to wait three days for a court judgment (CEDAW 2014: 24–25). The order can be requested by the victim, his or her family, state social workers if the victim is a child, and the chief of police. Iceland was then one of the first members to sign the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention, in 2011, and the center-left government was considering how to bring legislation into line in order to ratify the law (Council of Europe 2016).

By 2013, with the feminist-friendly government out of power, feminists were growing concerned that these changes had only been window dressing. As the spokesperson for the Icelandic Feminist Association explained, "the most important legal matters were pushed through with the last government," but they tended to be those that did not cost a lot of money. The director of the Women's Shelter explained that one of the key opponents to the law previously was now supporting it, and the law was made so quickly that she wondered if there was something wrong with the law. She had also wanted more: a law against stalking and specific comprehensive law on domestic violence to replace the criminal statutes. The head of the Centre for Gender Equality pointed out the reality that the strongest component of the new law was the requirement that the authorities call child protective services. In other countries, feminists have seen such a provision as paradoxically likely to harm women and the children, as it disincentivizes women from reporting domestic violence for fear of losing their children. According to a feminist legal expert, the key problem remains the lack of a stand-alone, comprehensive domestic violence law. In contrast, the new Icelandic government waxed Orwellian about its reforms in its most recent CEDAW (2014: 25–26) report, while still not ratifying the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention.

Implementation: The "Wink and Nod" of Formal Outputs Versus "How Things Are Done"

In terms of Weldon's measures of responsiveness, Iceland had begun to implement reforms even in the 1990s, marked by the Women's Shelter being put on the annual government budget in 1995. By Iceland's 2014

CEDAW report, the center-right government reported several big steps in terms of implementation, such as establishing interagency collaboration between the Ministries of Welfare and Interior, the Centre for Gender Equality, and the Women's Shelter (CEDAW 2014: 26–27). The government pointed to a pilot project by the police in Iceland's second most populated police district. Called "Keeping the Window Open," when police suspected domestic violence, they called in social services and provided a lawyer for the victim, to empower her to use her legal options, such as the restraining or exclusion orders. In terms of social services, the government pointed to the Women's Shelter whose aim it is to provide refuge for women and their children as well as to raise awareness of the problem.

These claims mostly represent a wink and a nod to implementing new procedures and practices following the 2011 law. While no numbers were given for the pilot project, the government reported outputs in terms of the number of women at the Women's Shelter and at another NGO, Men Take Responsibility (which provides batterer treatment), with the government suggesting some improvement despite the numbers being too small and too variable to make any generalizations. Whereas the 2008 CEDAW Committee called for shelter services across Iceland, the 2014 report boasts about the Women's Shelter without acknowledging that it is only in Reykjavik. The government's wink and nod became more Orwellian when the male foreign minister announced that Iceland would host (with Suriname) a men-only barbershop conference on violence against women at the United Nations in January 2015. This was after the new center-right government considered undoing some of the gender equality laws, while openly flouting others.

At least through 2014, the ways that things were being done were nowhere as good as reported. Even in the two years under the ostensibly feminist-friendly government, there were only eight cases where women used the Austrian model law, while estimates are that some 1000 women in Iceland are abused every year. According to the director of the Women's Shelter, the police were still requiring an impossible amount of evidence for removing the batterer. The police force remains overwhelmingly male and, according to studies and insiders, rife with sexual harassment. As one woman senior police officer said to me, "there is no gender equality in the police," but instead backstabbing and glass ceilings. The second obstacle is the Supreme Court (the only court of appeals), which, as male dominated and informally constituted as it is, has been particularly biased against gender-based violence cases.

Small changes, however, began with the 2014 appointment of a new police commissioner, Sigríður Björk Guðjónsdóttir, the first woman commissioner of the capital district. Guðjónsdóttir, the architect of the pilot project on domestic violence policing, brought "Keeping the Window Open" to Reykjavik in January of 2015. With a different intention than her predecessor, she changed some personnel and practice, working with the Women's Shelter and actively using the new protection order, despite resistance from within the department and from the Supreme Court. By all accounts, she has made a big difference in the way that the police in the city are responding to domestic violence. By the end of the first year of the new initiative, the number of domestic violence cases being reported had doubled, from 300 to 617 ("Domestic Violence Cases Double in One Year" 2016). Working with the National Commissioner's office, she hoped to spread the program throughout Iceland's six districts.

As with the passage of the law, the new implementation has been driven by the desire to protect children, the "most vulnerable." As the Commissioner explained to me, we must "protect children, the only real chance to make better lives … we've been seeing new research in trauma for children [in households with domestic violence] it's like being in war." The clearest changes have been the coordination with child protective services. Of course, protecting children is an important goal in itself, but as a feminist legal scholar summarized, "violence against women is something else."

Policy Evaluation: From "Damn Statistics" to "Feminist Violence Work"

On the one hand, Iceland's 2014 CEDAW report makes no unsubstantiated, quantified claims that new policy has been effective at decreasing the incidence of violence against women. On the other hand, the 2014 report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action asserts, without evidence, that the new protection orders

> gives victims undoubtedly increased protection since the police are able to arrest the offender right away in the beginning of the case and hold him for up to 24 hours or until formal decision has been made on an exclusion order and the ejection of the offender from the home. The process of these cases is now more efficient and increase protection [sic] for those who are victims of offences and seek the assistance of the police. (Iceland 2014: 12–13)

The open secret is that the reality is likely the opposite. In one of the most extreme cases of abuse according to the director of the Women's Shelter, the woman got a six-month restraining order against her batterer, but after six months, because he had done nothing explicitly abusive (though he had contacted her), the judge refused to renew the restraining order. However, under international norms, by six months, the batterer should have been brought up on assault and battery charges, convicted, and imprisoned. The protection order is supposed to be a stopgap measure until the criminal justice system acts, especially since research in the United States has shown that such orders can put women in more danger in the short run. In Iceland, having these new protection orders may be putting women more at risk.

Evaluating the criminal justice response is virtually impossible with the data available. There does not appear to be enough data to make any claims, even on femicide, as they are (fortunately) too few to evaluate impact of policy over time (11 femicides out of 56 murders from 1980 until 2015) (Fontaine 2016). The honesty at not making claims might seem admirable, but it also may indicate little real concern for policy evaluation. Yet, there is some indirect evidence that supporting the Women's Shelter has had some positive impact on the problem of domestic violence. More so than in Russia, the shelter staff are committed to the principles of feminist violence work. The shelter's primary goal is to empower the women, to help them make their own best decisions. The abuser is held accountable, and, as an organization which is still run by activists, domestic violence is connected to the structural oppression of women. Yet, this work is being done by an NGO, albeit mostly funded by the government.

Feminists Overcoming Barriers to Access

Before the crisis, in the years of center-right dominance, feminists had only the appearance of access. Investigatory committees on violence against women were appointed and plans of action written, leading either to no or mostly meaningless reforms. For example, the Minister of Justice claims that the small 2006 reforms were initiated "in reaction to information he had received on the matter and public discussion that had taken place" (CEDAW 2007: 16). The government resisted reforming the restraining orders for a decade, claiming commitment to protect property rights (of men), and refused to see domestic violence as having anything to do with gender.

On the surface, this all changed when feminists were granted historic access to the formal political system during the rule of the center-left coalition, 2009–2013, as Iceland's strong feminist mobilization and women's policy agency were now matched by many feminists in government. The center-left government came to power with domestic violence reforms as part of its planned portfolio, proposing and shepherding the Austrian model to passage. This was not just window dressing, as the minister in charge of the newly reconfigured Ministry of Interior (Ögmundur Jónasson) brought in a former spokesperson for the Feminist Association of Iceland (Halla Gunnarsdóttir) to help him make important changes regarding violence against women. The minister wanted to address gender violence, and "it wasn't his specialty." The Centre for Gender Equality created deep connections with the Ministry of Welfare as well as developed new procedures to work with most other ministers, including Foreign Affairs, that the director saw as institutionalized. Several feminist activists told me that they got all they asked for, suggesting that they had good access.

This access was not only formal. The feminist activist embedded in the Ministry of Interior saw a process of reform that had a lot to do with personalistic politics: "It all comes down to individuals," and when she would hit a wall, the minister would "step in and move things forward." Activists at Stígamót, the sexual assault part of the coalition against gender-based violence, tried to create inclusive, informal gatherings for solving problems, inviting stakeholders to an afternoon tea (and once for champagne when authorities were not enforcing new laws regulating "champagne clubs," Iceland's euphemism for what in English we call "Gentleman's clubs"). The organization's director also explained how she used her previous political–personal relationship with the center-left coalition's prime minister, having been coordinator for the Women's Alliance for several years with an office across the hall and having been classmates with the prime minister's wife. I have heard other feminists admit to lobbying through chance encounters with policymakers at the public swimming pools that most Icelanders frequent on a regular basis (I too have encountered ministers and legislators there). While the changing rooms are single-sexed, the amenities are clothed, coed spaces, helping to explain Iceland's ostensible gender equality progress.

There were important feminist men, such as two most recent Reykjavik mayors, but in general, women were more likely than men to be the

critical actors, especially in male-dominated institutions. It was a woman police officer who served as the informal liaison to the Women's Shelter—sometimes sleeping in the house to provide security—and a new woman police commissioner who reformed police procedure. However, this access only got feminists so far in attaining the final goal of increasing gender equality. The promise of gender equality is important enough to the regime that the resistance to addressing violence against women is not explicit and direct, but police officers and the courts are able to resist in practice, with support from well-placed insiders who continue to protect them despite not enforcing the rule of law. The informal politics of male dominance, constituted by informal rules and networks, kept the promises from being realized, even in this ostensibly most gender equal society. The strength of the resistance, which Gyða Margrét Pétursdóttir (2015: 4) labeled as "[c]ircling the wagons and preserving patriarchy," became apparent in 2013 when the University of Iceland tried to terminate the hiring process of a very prominent former politician who had been publicly accused of sexual abuse. The alleged sex offender reacted by linking the university to the Taliban and Nazi Germany, with more moderate assertions about his human rights and constitutionalism articulated by other prominent men in the mainstream press (6). One of his loudest defenders was the former Left-Green minister of the interior (Ögmundur Jónasson), who had been a feminist ally on gendered violence. Support for gender equality, even in Iceland, can go only so far when it threatens elite men.

Conclusion: Speaking in Code, Secret Handshakes, and Other Informal Policymaking

This chapter analyzes the consequences of bait-and-switch male dominance on feminist policymaking through the issue of domestic violence. In terms of outcomes, though neither case has yet had comprehensive domestic violence legislation, the cases are markedly different. Iceland has a more pronounced gender equality paradox with its greater promises of gender equality, including new legislation granting protection orders and a prominent police commissioner committed to addressing domestic violence. In Russia, feminists were able to increase attention to domestic violence and gained some small victories, but now face an active anti-gender movement seemingly in support of domestic violence.

Yet, the cases reveal some several similar dynamics when informal politics comes into focus. In terms of issue framing, activists in both countries did not use only the conventional naming, framing, blaming, and shaming tactics; they chose style-switching in the way that they framed issues in order to garner support from different powerbrokers, sometimes even speaking in code such that they were barely talking about gender equality at all. In terms of policy adoption and implementation, there was window dressing legislation and wink and nod implementation, if not Orwellian doublethink, in the claims by authorities from both countries, especially in their reports for international audiences. Authorities in both countries also played number games to try to back up their storytelling. While feminist activists were important in any of the progress that was made, the process was at least somewhat personalized, and real change required secret handshakes with well-placed elites. Together, the accounts suggest that informal politics is a decisive part of policymaking. This has probably been true in most times and places, but the consolidation of informal politics, based on hegemonic masculinity and homosociality, makes this even more the case.

As in the previous chapters, this comparison raises questions about other explanations for the gender equality paradox for violence against women. Following in the vein of seeing feminism as co-opted by neoliberalism, scholars have argued that neoliberalism has individualized the framing of violence against women, bringing even more state coercion on the disempowered while giving only a slap on the wrist to the perpetrators and missing the broader ways that violence, especially trafficking in women, is constituted by the neoliberal political economy (Bumiller 2009; Suchland 2015). Even in the best case scenario, the framing that wins out is only the right to live free from bodily harm, not a transformation in society in which all people have the privilege of joy, pleasure, and the intimacy they seek. Seeing and understanding the informal reveals the complicated bait-and-switch game that feminists are forced to play, putting the blame where it belongs, on the authorities who are always trying to meet their own interests even while paying lip-service to gender equality.

This comparison also challenges some cased-based explanations. Looking at the issue of trafficking in women, Jennifer Suchland (2015) argues that Russian activists have adopted "carceral feminism" calling for more law enforcement response to violence against women, but I show that activists' attempts at domestic violence reform have been social policy oriented. As Lauren McCarthy (2015) shows, incentives and informal

practices have shaped the Russian police response to trafficking in women, suggesting similar dynamics as with domestic violence. On the broader issue of gender equality in Russia, the explanation tends to be about dedemocratization under Putin. For Chandler (2013), the limitations on gender equality are part of the consolidation of paternalistic social policy, which she argues had been important to Putin's success. As Putin replaced "a narrative of citizenship rights with a top-down narrative of a strong state, providing a *wayward society* with strong paternal control … Putin's regime replaced the idea of women's equality with the idea of the state's protection of motherhood" (112). For Valerie Sperling (2015), the inability to promote gender inequality results from the politicization of sexism and homophobia, both of which form an important legitimization strategy as Putin began to lose the support of the middle class after the country's financial troubles in 2008–2009. These arguments miss the way that activists have leveraged paternalism and sexism with some limited degree of success as well as the intricacies of how informal politics, not just authoritarianism, operates as the key obstacle.

Nordic countries have long been seen as ahead on gender-related policy, but Iceland is typically seen as the worst of them, usually because of its smallness (Kaplan 1992). Looking at social policy, scholars have argued that Nordic countries' women-friendliness is because of the dominance of social democratic parties in the second half of the twentieth century, which Iceland did not have. More recently, social scientists have pointed to a "Nordic paradox" in which Nordic countries like Iceland rank highly on many gender equality measures, but have lagged their Western counterparts in responding to violence against women (Gracia and Merlo 2016; Elman 1996; Weldon 2002). Elman, looking at Sweden in comparison to the United States, suggested that the lag was more related to limited access points, as these countries are unitary, not federal. This study suggests that even these supposedly transparent democracies have informal politics that shaped gender equality and opportunities for reform.

More than just raising questions about each stage of policymaking and about feminist access, as I have discussed earlier, this analysis raises some fundamental questions about the way feminist political scientists think about policymaking in their general models. For example, informal politics may confuse the Htun and Weldon's (2010) framework of gender equality policies as well as their explanations (state capacity, institutional legacies, vulnerability to international pressures, and degree of democracy) because their model looks only at formal politics. As the gender

equality minister in Poland made clear to me in 2015, there is a benefit in the politics of hypocrisy—abortion is restricted in Poland, but widely available and relatively inexpensive—especially in regimes with lots of informal politics and strong resistance to gender equality. Informal politics is even more pronounced when the policies of policymaking is a two-level game. Feminists must navigate formal and informal contexts at both the national and international levels. For example, in framing, they must define the issue as a political problem domestically in a way that satisfies those invested in global norms at the global stage and mobilizes domestic actors. There are so many players to appease and enlist, with different needs. Further, when norms are imported, the naming of the problem may not even work because in most languages, the key feminist concepts are seen as foreign imports, leaving "gender," "empowerment," or "privacy," let alone "domestic violence" or marital rape, as empty gender talk. The Russian and Icelandic cases show just how much this process is informed by informal politics.

Notes

1. Keck and Sikkink (1998) suggest boomerang model in which local activists blame and shame, putting pressure indirectly on their states through NGOs and international organizations. Kathrin Zippel (2006) saw a ping-pong process in which policy efforts bounce from country to supranational level and back, especially within the EU. I have characterized the process as a pitcher throwing a ball: various donors and advocates hurl a variety of interventions at target countries, hoping that some get caught by local stakeholders (Johnson 2009). Montoya's (2013) model is similar, a kind of reverse boomerang (or umbrella) in which target countries mostly get international pressure without preexisting or powerful domestic advocates.
2. The language of the policy shapes the institutions involved, such as defining whether violence against women is constructed as a criminal or civil matter (Blofield and Hass 2013).
3. These include consultants working for international donors or inter-governmental organizations like UN Women, transnational NGOs, nonnative academics who work as activists too, lawyers for international human rights and rule of law advocates, and governmental officials assigned to work with inter-governmental agencies such as the Council of Europe, the Nordic Council of Ministers, and the United Nations. These activists are entrepreneurial in their sharing of information, their networking, and their drive to attract broader publics and create new channels of institutional access based on

their commitment to norms and policy reform (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 14). They are intermediaries in that they are simultaneously powerful and vulnerable, working "in a field of conflict and contradiction, able to manipulate others who have less knowledge than they do but still subject to exploitation by those who installed them" (Merry 2006b: 39–40, 48). They operate within global, national, regional, and local structures "whose commitment to women's rights is at best ambivalent."

4. The only laws that regulate domestic violence in Russia are general provisions within the criminal code for light assault, battery, torture, or grave injury to health (Articles 115–119) and a law against "minor hooliganism," which is part of the administrative code (similar to misdemeanor) (The Advocates for Human Rights 2014). None of these provisions takes into consideration the dynamics of repeated abuse mixed with intimacy that marks domestic violence. There are no provisions for temporary protection orders. In large cities where authorities maintain the Soviet system of registration permits, the alleged perpetrator cannot be removed from the apartment, even through divorce or selling of the apartment. There are no legal requirements for perpetrators to attend treatment. If the violence is seen as severe enough for public prosecution, there is no provision for protecting the victim during this often dangerous process.
5. Much of the responsibility of social policy is at the regional level (Johnson et al. 2016).
6. Women's Shelter now uses a variety of terms, but mostly "domestic violence." See http://www.kvennaathvarf.is/um-ofbeldi/.

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CHAPTER 6

Conclusion: A Feminist Theory of Corruption

Male Dominance's Bait and Switch

Through a most different systems comparison of Russia and Iceland, this book is an exercise in theory and concept building for feminist political science, demonstrating how to integrate fully informal politics. It focuses on the big question of the worldwide gender equality paradox, in which great strides have been made formally toward including women in politics and legislating gender equality, but real equality remains elusive. The introduction lays out a blueprint for analysis that foregrounds the interplay of formal and informal politics. Drawing upon concepts from the study of masculinity, especially hegemonic masculinity and homosociality, it suggests how informal rules and institutions, in their subversion of formal ones, constitute a new form of male dominance in the twenty-first century that resembles the con of the bait and switch. Formal promises of equality, including mechanisms to fast-track women into politics, NGOs, and gender equality legislation, represent the bait, while the consolidation of even more male-dominated informal politics constitutes the switch.

Chapter 2 explains how this bait and switch came about, drawing out the institutional implications of feminist political economy's critique of the so-called economic liberalization. Instead of the promised gender-neutral free market of jobs, goods, and services for all, economic reforms created a wheeling-and-dealing economy enriching and empowering a small set of male insiders and disempowering formal rules and institutions. Most obvious in the creation of the virtually all-male oligarchs that came

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to dominate Russia's economy and polity, I show that Iceland's transformation was remarkably similar, even as there was a feminist revolt when Iceland tottered on the brink of economic collapse in 2008–2010. The global economic crisis, instead of toppling the new political–economic structures, led to their consolidation, including the dominance of a small set of male elites who monitor and discipline each other through informal rules, enforcing hegemonic masculinity and homosociality.

The next several chapters look at the consequences on women, feminism, and gender equality, using the book's blueprint of the gendered interplay between formal and informal politics and finding multiple dimensions of bait-and-switch male dominance. Chapter 3 shows how fast-tracking women into politics is accomplished through both formal and informal mechanisms, but that women (and feminist men) are then boxed in by gendered informal rules and institutions. Recruited based on the dominant notions of emphasized femininity, women are relegated to the limited and often temporary roles as workhorses doing the hard work of politics that must get done, political cleaners who temporarily step in to clean up the man-made messes and then take the blame, loyalists who betray equality and democracy to protect the regime and their own (limited) power, and showgirls of democratic representation whose beauty and/or friendliness attract voters but who are not allowed to exercise the power of their posts. The comparison illustrates that, though women (and feminist men) may resist, there is powerful gendered and heteronormative hostility, even violence, that keeps most women in line most of the time. These potentially critical actors are further boxed in by informal institutions, controlled by the male-dominated economic-political networks empowered by liberalization, that substitute for the institutions of representative democracy where women have made the most inroads. These dynamics too are the most obvious in Russia, but even Iceland's much lauded first female (and openly gay) prime minister, Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, 2009–2013, was boxed in as a temporary political cleaner in an impossible situation and then replaced by men prime ministers who had placed their money offshore to avoid the costs of their economic debauchery during liberalization.

Chapter 4 shows how the lens of the bait-and-switch con clarifies the problems faced by feminists who have been professionalized into NGOs and whose language has been deradicalized. The form of the NGO and gender expertise, with new prominence following the 1995 United Nations conference on women in Beijing, was the bait, which many activists took,

as all of us are primed to do according to the psychological literature on cons (Konnikova 2016). The switch was the marginalization of feminism to the sidelines of politics, as critics such as Sonia Alvarez (1999, 2009), Hester Eisenstein (2009), and Nancy Fraser (2013) have alleged, but I argue that the blame should be placed on the architects of the con—the male-dominated elite networks—much more so than on the feminists who fell for it. I also argue that many feminist activists caught onto the con and have been using what anthropologists call style-switching, modulating their language to take best advantage of the limited opportunities that they were offered. Russia's punk protest group, Pussy Riot, is an example of a new kind of guerrilla feminism that takes on informally constituted male dominance. As of 2017, male-dominated elites in both countries have thwarted the guerrilla feminism, but women's mobilization worldwide, including the day after Donald Trump's inauguration, illustrates the way that feminist tactics reveal the hypocrisy and the potential for collective resistance.

Through examining the effectiveness of feminists inside and outside the state at creating real gender equality, Chap. 5 shows how the book's blueprint reconceptualizes the conventional model of the stages of policymaking. Feminist social scientists especially have seen naming the problem as an essential first step, as many gender equality problems have been invisible. On the one hand, I argue that the dominance of informal politics means that naming problems can often lead to window dressing legislation, especially when the pressure for reform comes internationally. Implementation in such circumstances is also often similarly empty, just a wink and a nod, with states using dubious statistics to back up claims of their progressivity. On the other hand, informal politics can play an important part in getting reform. Feminists can use style-switching or speaking in code to get policymakers to make reform that may end up being more radical than policymakers intended. Activists can push informal rule changes, often through informal or personal relationships with key insiders (what I call secret handshakes), with or without formal legislation, that leads to measurable change in how things are done. In sum, there are many informal obstacles to gender equality, but some possibilities for change.

The Gender of Informal Politics

In these ways, this analysis pushes many of the literatures within feminist political science to think deeply about how gendered power has been informalized, even as more equality has been formalized, especially in

ostensible democracies such as Iceland. This analysis foregrounds the reality that there was no economic liberalization—even if we use the definitions from neoliberal economics about the establishment of free markets that empower entrepreneurship—but instead insider privatization that consolidated power structures. Feminist political economists have shown how gender was crucial to liberalization and to the global economic crisis. I urge us to keep front and center the male-dominated elite network that cross politics and the economy who are the agents of these transformations. Feminist institutionalists have revealed how much rules and institutions hinder gender equality. I recommend that we not think that informal politics is only an addendum to formal politics in established democracies. This is especially true given the changes wrought by liberalization.

The literature on women's representation, focused on gender quotas, has turned to deeper questions about the impact of increases in the proportion of women. I counsel us to dig even deeper into all the ways that informal politics shapes and subverts representation. Some of the literature assumes that women in politics equal representation, even as parliaments have decreasing policymaking authority. Those who study women's and feminists organizing have been critical of NGOs and the new kinds of guerrilla feminisms alike. I agree that both have their problems if the end goal is more gender equality. I also advise that we see more clearly the complex, often informal, terrain that activists have to navigate and incorporate this terrain better into our policymaking models. Our models tend to assume that feminists inside and outside the state have to persuade policymakers through rational arguments, ignoring the power plays and compromises that are the real stuff of politics. In my analysis, I examine violence against women, which is only one type of gender equality policy. While the specific constellation of politics may vary by gender equality policy, I see no reason why the book's blueprint cannot work for these variations, asserting that the questions raised about informal politics are important for all policy types.

This book can also help transform other subfields of feminist political science. For example, the synthetic literature on the impact of regime type on gender equality, with its focus on "engendering democracy/transition," remains shaped by transition theory, which presumes a linear progress toward democracy and undervalues informal politics, which can preclude or subvert democracy. This can be seen in the study of gender and postcommunism in Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia and studies that look for correlations between regime type and gender equality, where democracy to authoritarianism remains the ideal types. Informal

politics complicates these typologies, and my book shows how informal politics may be the primary structure of gender inequality today. The book also challenges the common wisdom about the greater women-friendliness of Nordic regimes. There are measurable achievements, including greater proportions of women in politics and work–family reconciliation policies (such as paid leaves for mothers and fathers), but we have been blinded by these states' self-representations as strong democracies and not investigated the informal politics sufficiently. Especially for those studying advanced democracies, informal politics has been seen as being less important and less stable than formal ones, but bringing gender into focus shows the opposite is the case. For policy theorists who think about policy networks—the linkages between a set of actors with varying levels of interest in, and influence on, a particular policymaking process—I argue that this approach downplays the ways in which official processes are subverted and accountability mechanisms sabotaged by these clusters of actors from government, business, media, and NGOs. Those who use the metaphor of policy networks have also tended to be less critical of these networks, seeing them as a less hierarchical form of policymaking and downplaying the questions about how people are excluded. For the more philosophical feminist political science, I have shown how concepts such as hegemonic masculinity, emphasized femininity, and gender roles do not capture the coercion with which gender may be enforced.

Most broadly, for political science as a whole, seeing the gender of informal politics confronts the common assumption that gender is apolitical. Many political scientists see gender as "natural and immutable," as when women have been seen as naturally less interested in politics or less competitive (Chappell and Waylen 2013: 600). This book shows how gender—in the homosociality, hegemonic masculinity, and emphasized femininity essential to informal elite networks—may facilitate the informalization and the consolidation of power. Gendered rules, as Helmke and Levitsky (2006: 18) argue about informal institutions more broadly, are created to "pursue public (or internationally) unacceptable goals," including now gender inequality. Gender, I argue, is central to informal power.

What Is to Be Done?

Understanding the primary obstacles facing gender equality through the lens of bait-and-switch male dominance has practical applications for those who advocate for more women in politics, support feminist mobilization,

and pursue gender equality legislation. In terms of women in politics, advocates have been observing and documenting the persistent obstacles facing women in politics despite formal fast-tracking efforts, especially "violence against women in politics." In the end of 2016, this led the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016) to develop "a self-assessment toolkit" for evaluating parliaments. These are important steps forward to mapping and addressing the informal rules that obstruct women in power. However, this book's findings suggests that the explicit harassment and violence that women face may be only the tip of the iceberg, the rare use of the enforcement mechanisms within an intricate system of male dominance that includes the informalization of power away from constitutional politics. We must map the whole power structure. Recommendations for formal fast-tracking such as quotas must be balanced by targeting informal rules, such as by training women to negotiate informal elite structures and/or to create social capital with the mostly male powerbrokers, as well as by continued pressure for democratic practices.

Women who are brought in as political cleaners—based on the gendered truism among anti-corruption and good governance advocates that women are less corrupt—are particularly at risk to politically motivated charges of corruption, as illustrated in high-profile cases in 2016. In September, Brazil President Dilma Rousseff was impeached and removed from office, ostensibly for moving funds around in the government budget, an illegal, but commonplace, practice in Brazil ("Brazil President" 2016). There is no evidence that she benefited from the kickbacks that most of her male counterparts took. In December, Christine Lagarde, the IMF chief who replaced the previous male chief who had been caught in a sex scandal, was convicted of the misuse of public funds when she was France's finance minister a decade earlier ("Guilty Verdict" 2016). The case, observers suggest, was politically motivated, targeting her for things that others, mostly men, get away with. As is most clear in Russia, corruption charges can be used against opponents, but rarely take down the head patron in the network. We must see how this phenomenon leads to the gendered trimming of the power structure.

We need to think differently about feminist mobilization. NGOs will probably remain an important organizing structure, given how supranational organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union operate, but informal politics should also lead us to think differently about how to fund feminism. Foreign donors and inter-governmental institutions have expected NGOs to be staid organizations that eschew radical

organizing and use consistent, technical language, setting advocates up for failure. (Their inability to see the informal framing politics is surprising, given the reality that the UN human rights process is one in which countries do not deliberate directly over norms, but instead wordsmith draft documents, fighting over what seem to be inconsequential words such as "the" versus "a" [see Merry 2006: Chap. 2].) Seeing the con in the form of the NGO should also change the way we assess its work. Many of us have been critical of some NGOs' different framing in different contexts. Such style-shifting is not a sign of shiftiness, but, as anthropologists tell us, a common strategy for negotiating different contexts. The new guerrilla feminisms may not look like the mass mobilization of the 1970s in the West, but nor does the politics in most countries. The best strategy against the new misogynist and populist leaders—such as Putin and Trump—may be a combination of mass mobilizations, which put obvious pressure on the leaders, mixed with small, provocative acts that reveal the cons that gave them power.

Finally, we need to see and maneuver around the informal politics in the gender equality policymaking process. As others have noted, informal rules are key obstacles, but I have also argued that informal mechanisms need to be part of attempts to reform. We have focused too much on formal legislation, often with disappointing results. Informal pathways to those who implement and enforce policy may be more likely to promote real reform, getting state agents on your side more subtly. In Russia, the resistance to activism and laws against domestic violence points the backlash in the insidious "anti-gender" ideologies common in right-wing populist movements around the world. We should hold them responsible for their misogyny while also seeing how pushing formal gender equality legislation and blaming and shaming governments for not meeting international goals may make gender equality as easy scapegoat.

I am not arguing that advocates for gender equality should abandon their strategies, such as gender quotas for women in politics, organizing within NGOs to gain access to formal power, mainstreaming gender into formal institutions, and using human rights mechanisms to blame and shame governments for failing to live up to their promises. Instead, I am arguing for a more sophisticated and realistic understanding of politics in order to figure out how to make these reforms more effective. If we consider whether there is a bait and switch, we can see how the male-dominated elite networks may subvert the promises of formal politics. As Maria Konnikova (2016) argues in her summary of the literature on cons,

we must follow the details, especially the ones from which we have been distracted, to see fully and extricate ourselves from the con. In these ways, I hope we can get closer to our goals of gender justice.

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