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FEMINIST THEORY AND PLANNING THEORY:

Lessons from Feminist Epistemologies

Mary Gail Snyder

At the root of any theory of social practice like planning is an epistemology, a concept of what knowledge is, how it is attained, and who may claim to have it. In planning, where the press of work and current issues in the profession leave little time for philosophical examinations, basic epistemological theory gets understandably short shrift. Nonetheless, it is wise on occasion to step back and examine the theories and ideas underlying our practice, for they are important, whether examined or not. This paper is one contribution to that project. It will examine feminist theoreticians' work on epistemology, and the lessons this work has for planning theory and especially planning practice. The aim is not to examine the impact on specific areas such as land use planning, but on the conception of planning and the ways it is carried out.

The challenges and contributions of this work have many implications for planning theory, going well beyond issues of gender and dealing with power, process, professionalism, and ethics. These issues reach to the foundation of many issues of current importance in planning: defining the public interest, citizen participation, equity, justice, and the legitimation of planning itself.

The first section of this paper is a review of the epistemic efforts of feminist theorists, focusing on those works which seem most useful from a social science and planning perspective. The emphasis is exclusively on epistemological questions; the related issues of morality and methodologies are set aside. After a brief overview of some of the central concepts common to feminist theories, it looks in detail at three epistemologies: feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint theories, and feminist postmodernism. The second half is devoted to an exploration of the specific contributions which this field has brought and can bring to planning theory and planning practice.

Feminist Theory

Vigorous debates around feminist theories have been found in many disciplines since the 1960s. All are motivated by a shared purpose: to challenge male dominance, to contribute to knowledge about women, and to construct a science in which gender and gender

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relations are seen as fully social and explanatorily important. This paper will not attempt to review the reasons such a project is considered necessary; the data and documentation establishing the extent to which gender bias has permeated the humanities and sciences and the impact this has had is now extensive and widely accepted.

There is no single "feminist theory." There are many areas of divergence and disagreement between Marxist feminists, radical feminists, women of color, materialists, idealists, postmodernists, and others. Despite the many differences between and within disciplines, there is a consensus on certain central ideas which have direct implications for research and practice:

1. Social experience is gendered. That is, the social order creates, assigns, and influences our roles, values, opportunities, status, environments, and perspectives in part based on gender. Gender itself is a social construct distinct from the biological category of sex.
2. All theory, like all practice, is inherently political; it necessarily either perpetuates or challenges the status quo. The development of knowledge and its application through action are social enterprises, and therefore have political and ethical aspects which cannot be disassociated from them.
3. Theory and practice cannot and should not be separated. Feminist theory is explicitly emancipatory and critical. Most theorists believe that knowledge contains an imperative to action; theory and praxis are seen in a mutually reinforcing, reflexive relationship.
4. Subjects and objects are not and cannot be separated. A relationship exists between knower and the object, and each necessarily affects the other. Theory and practice are more accurate and clear when this reflexivity is consciously accepted, rather than attempting the scientific ideal of objectivity through separation.

A corollary of the above is that personal experience and grounded research are valid forms of knowledge. Feminist thought directs attention to and admits a broader range of experience as legitimate and valid knowledge. Other forms of knowing and other knowers exist beyond the limited authorities and expert status granted by traditional scientific method and the dominant patriarchal culture.

Value-neutrality, another part of scientific objectivity, is rejected. It is thought to be unattainable due to the social nature of science and knowledge, and also undesirable, masking existing tacit value orientations. Rather, commitments to anti-authoritarian, anti-elitist,

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and emancipatory values are seen as increasing the objectivity of science.

Feminist Epistemologies

The earliest feminist challenge to the perceived gender bias in scientific work addressed the dearth of women among the ranks of scientists and academics, as well as the prejudices and obstacles they faced. The critique soon moved to the absence of women as objects of theory and empirical research in the life and social sciences, as well as to the sexually biased results of much scientific work.

The result of this critique is the “women and ...” body of work which added women, women’s perspectives, and women’s concerns to the many fields and disciplines where such research was found wanting. Some of this work aimed to confront already existing androcentric theory directly, but much of it dealt with areas and issues previously ignored. Important and necessary contributions have been made by “women and ...” studies, and the work continues. Nevertheless, such efforts are discipline-specific. They do not address the broader question of why such remedial research was needed in the first place. Neither do they address why research which includes gender considerations tends to be largely a separate pursuit, an addendum to a given field rather than an integral part of it.

For these reasons, some feminist scholars, in disciplines as diverse as biology, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and law have sought to go beyond discipline-specific critiques. Going back to basics, they began to examine the epistemologies underlying the conduct of science. The starting point was the recognition that the dominant positivist epistemology, in privileging certain forms of knowledge and certain knowers, is itself structured by societal gender bias. Following Sandra Harding’s elegant classification, the resulting feminist epistemological work falls into three general schools (Harding 1986, 1991). The first, feminist empiricism, may be seen as a specific critique of the dominant paradigm of scientific empiricism, and aims at reforming the conduct of science-as-usual. The second, feminist standpoint theory and the third, feminist postmodernism, constitute general critiques of empiricism. These are powerful challenges not just to the accepted role of the knower, but to our conceptions of the standards for knowledge and the nature of knowledge itself.

Feminist Empiricism

Feminist empiricism identifies the problem of androcentric bias in science as simply “bad science,” correctable through more careful adherence to existing empiricist methodology. Social biases are seen as entering and corrupting the scientific process in the choice of problems, the design of research, and the interpretation of evidence.

With a larger number of women scientists and a growing recognition of the feminist critique, scientific empiricism will be sufficient to create work which is free of gender bias and representative of a broader, more accurate perspective on the world. What is needed is scientists on guard against androcentric bias, who acknowledge the social context of research and the social relationship of subject and object. The answer to androcentric bias is to increase the number of women and the weight of women's perspectives within the scientific establishment, not to challenge that establishment and its premises directly.

Feminist empiricism, in largely accepting the dominant epistemology, is more readily accepted in its turn. It is critiqued by other feminist theorists, however, as contradicting the very base of the empiricism it seeks to uphold and reform. In claiming that women and those aware of the feminist critique will produce superior work, it subverts the empiricist tenet that the scientist, through application of the scientific method, is necessarily separate from any social identity. It challenges the very idea of objectivity as defined by empiricism.

Feminist Standpoint Theories

The feminist standpoint theories reject empiricism entirely. The scientific method is not self-correcting, needing only more careful attention to exclude bias, but rather flawed in and of itself. How can scientific norms be adequate to produce unbiased work when they were unable to detect bias originally? The feminist empiricists' challenge that women as a social group are more likely to conduct inquiry free of the biases of social domination is therefore taken by feminist standpoint theorists one step further.

Ontology has been divorced from epistemology, being from knowing, since Kant. Part of the project of feminist epistemology is to bring them together again, because the identity of the knower inherently shapes the knowledge. Feminist standpoint theorists claim that the position and perspective of women — their standpoint as observers and knowers of the world — can result in clearer and more accurate views of reality.

Feminist standpoint theories originate in the philosophy of Hegel. Hegel posited world views represented by a master and a slave. The master's dominant position leads to a universalizing perspective in which the master's values, rules, and benefit are extended to be held true for all people, places, and times. The slave's position allows a fuller view of reality because it must comprehend both the master's and the slave's perspectives. The master sees the world as an extension of his own being and will, but the slave can see a broader reality and question the unexamined assumptions.

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Thus, the standpoint of the slave, or of any social group to which the slave's subordinated position is analogous, is held to be scientifically superior to that of dominant, powerful social groups. Following Hegel, the structures of social reality are better seen from the outside because this allows the expanded perspectives necessary for clear vision and thus maximizes objectivity, rather than decreasing it. Feminist theorists such as Alison Wylie (1987), Jane Flax (1983), Nancy Hartsock (1987), and Dorothy Smith (1974, 1979) have argued that women's oppression through male domination results in such a standpoint, a position or grounding from which more complete understandings of the world can be developed.

This standpoint is not always restricted in a literal sense to women. For some the important question is whether inquiry is undertaken for women and those oppressed, whether the subject has placed him or herself in the same "critical plane" as the object (e.g., in the same sex, race, class) (Harding 1986). In this sense, a standpoint need not be an ontological given, but rather can be a point of view which is achieved.

The standpoint theories are most commonly challenged by a question they raise internally: what is this standpoint? While women do share the experience of a subordinate position in patriarchal societies, there is disagreement on how to conceptualize this position. Theorists debate the location of the standpoint within and between Marxist theory, psychological theory, and other frameworks. Some define it simply as an oppositional consciousness – an identity based on solidarity and commonality defined against the interests of dominant classes and groups (Hartsock 1987; Harding 1986, 1991). However, as for Archimedes, who thought he could move the earth with a lever if only he could find some other point on which to place his fulcrum, the location of the optimal standpoint may be an abstraction, an unreachable ideal.

Feminist Postmodernism

Among those who question the usefulness and the validity of any single Archimedean standpoint are the feminist postmodernists. These writers critique standpoint theory primarily on the grounds of fractured and diverse identities, claiming that there is no one "women's" viewpoint (Fainstein 1992; Harding 1986, 1991; Little 1994; Milroy 1992). While all women share the experience of oppression in ubiquitously patriarchal societies, this experience differs profoundly by race, class, age, and culture. Instead of a single standpoint, there are multiple perspectives, all with equal validity and (sometimes) equal claims to truth.

Thus, feminist postmodernism accepts the critiques made by standpoint theorists of empiricism, but goes beyond them in also

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rejecting Enlightenment goals of finding absolute truth. There is no one true story which is valid for all places and people at all times, rather there are many partial stories. The possibility of universal or totalizing theories is rejected, because all knowledge is seen as temporal, dynamic, and contextual. Postmodernism, feminist and otherwise, also disputes the Enlightenment conception of the transcendental subject who can be outside of the historical and social forces shaping others (Nielsen 1987). If there is no transcendental subject, a reflexive posture is required. The same critical examination given to the objects of research must be applied also to one's own behaviors and beliefs.

Finally, as with so many feminist thinkers, postmodernists challenge such Enlightenment dualities as reason/emotion, subject/object, public/private, theory/practice, and knowledge/ experience. Feminists have long recognized the parallel between these dualities and the male/female duality — and the fact that in all these oppositions it is the second of the two concepts which is devalued (Code 1988, 1991). By placing these concepts in opposition, we miss their linkages; by conceiving of each pair in a hierarchical relationship, we inappropriately privilege one half; and by creating a firm division, we exclude the possibility of an integrated whole or even of overlap.

While much of postmodernism is apolitical, the feminist postmodernists are most decidedly not. They struggle with the need to adapt postmodernism to the aims of a critical theory, and they, like the others, reject value-neutrality. Again, progressive and emancipatory values are considered preconditions to objectivity, not an impediment to it.

Postmodernism is itself critiqued as contributing to a paralyzing dilemma: if all perspectives contain a partial truth, if knowledge is always fallible, temporal, and contextual, on what basis can we make moral distinctions, and on what basis can we judge between competing views? The answer comes in two parts.

First, one may not be apolitical. Recognition of difference and diversity is necessary, but is not an invitation to ethical abdication — injustice and oppression are not simply other valid perspectives (Fainstein 1992). An emancipatory stance can resolve some of this dilemma, remembering always the necessity of self-conscious examination and reflexivity. Secondly, not all knowledge is equally defensible empirically (Harding 1986). Even as we recognize the partiality and fallibility of truth and knowledge, evidence does exist that allows us to say some knowledge and belief is less false than others.

The Challenge from Feminist Epistemologies

This overview of feminist epistemologies shows a progression from essentially reformist critiques to ones which are entirely radical approaches to knowledge and action. Initial concerns that “women have been left out” as objects of research led to the discovery of androcentric bias in research design and in theory construction. Feminist scholars turned from developing the now substantial body of discipline-specific work to a critique of the scientific method, its use, and application. These criticisms, found in feminist empiricism, themselves raised significant questions about objectivity and subject neutrality that challenged the basis of the empiricist epistemology underlying traditional science. These contradictions led feminist standpoint theorists to reject empiricism altogether. The questions of ontological position raised in turn by standpoint theory were taken up by the postmodernists, who are elaborating an even broader challenge to the Enlightenment ideals of universalism and unitary truth.

None of this work is history yet. Theorists continue to develop, assess, and extend all of the epistemologies described above. The debate is an active one, and it leads us to a fresh perspective on both existing social theories and on the idea of praxis and the actions one takes in the world. For planners, concerned at root with the application of knowledge, the practice of transforming knowledge into action, these theories raise many questions. They challenge us not merely to add gender into our research, analysis, and practice but to transform our values, process, methodologies, and our very conception of planning.

Implications For Planning

An awareness of women’s issues and the gendered nature of social relationships has entered the field of planning. Research has been done on women and gender issues in land use, zoning, housing, economic development, transportation, and urban design. Collectively, I will call these “women and environment studies.” In all these areas, the gendered nature of spatial patterns and relationships has been explored, and the disparate effects on women and men from policies that previously had been seen as nongendered have been analyzed.

These “women and environment studies” are an important addition to planning. In general, however, gender is not included as a variable in mainstream work, and so “women and environment” remains a peripheral, remedial enterprise. This, as the feminist epistemologies have pointed out, is insufficient. We need to change planning theory to incorporate gender, and we need to change the process and practice of planning. As Harding has said,

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Knowledge is power, and the power of science can be used to improve the lot of the exploited, the powerless, the emiserated. Moreover, belief that is less false comes from looking and seeing the way the world is with the help of theories that are not constructed to justify the condition of those in dominating groups. (Harding 1987, 80).

A beginning has been made by a handful of planning theorists. Of course, many planning academics whose writings admit gender, including many of those who have contributed to the "women and environment" literature, have implicitly and explicitly dealt with the broader issues for planning theory. This paper focuses on work which specifically addresses the lessons of feminist theory for planning theory and practice.

Helen Liggett (1992) suggests three ways in which feminist theory challenges planning theory: first, by including more women within the field; second, by including the analysis of gender in planning education; and third, by breaking down the limits inherent in "planning reason." This is an excellent start for planning theory, but there is of course a much larger territory concerned: the application of this theoretical work to the practice of planning.

Many of the areas which could be positively transformed through feminist theories can be thought of as manifestations of some of the dualities mentioned earlier. This section will discuss three such areas: emancipatory planning practice, the role of the expert, and citizen participation, each of which can be seen as corresponding to the hierarchical dualities of theory/practice, knowledge/experience, and public/private. Having thus identified and conceptualized some of the major areas where gender bias and the standing conventions of domination are reflected in planning practice, we can look for ways to transform and improve both theory and practice through the insights of feminist epistemology.

Emancipatory Planning Practice

All feminist epistemologies hold that emancipatory values increase objectivity and accuracy by enlarging perspectives and aiding critical reevaluation of tacit assumptions and dominant ideologies. Emancipatory planning practice is the obvious and necessary application of these ideas.

As we consider the implications of an emancipatory perspective in planning, an unavoidable question is raised: how can politicized practice, like politicized scientific inquiry, increase objectivity? This is an ethical question, surely, for planners have been wary of admitting bias and subjectivity into their practice for some time. It is also an important question for the legitimacy of planning, because Western

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culture demands a disinterested authority. But as feminist theorists have pointed out, the lack of a consciously political framework for practice does not mean that practice is not political. The social world is political, in the sense that cooperation, competition, consensus, and distribution of resources is political. Blind following of the status quo does not create a "pure," apolitical practice, only an unexamined one.

This dilemma, if there is one, lies in the dichotomies noted above, particularly that of theory and practice. For many practicing planners, ideals of justice or equity are real, but are not often manifested in the actual practice within planning departments for a number of reasons. A reflexivity is needed such that the experience of practice informs theory, and vice versa. If inequalities and domination continue to result from planning practice, as they so often do, one must examine the theory and methodologies behind that practice, and what is discovered there must be applied.

Feminist theorists have argued for an imperative to action inherent in knowledge. This imperative is based in the political and social nature of knowledge, the impossibility of value-free inquiry, and the recursive process by which knowledge and action, theory and practice inform one another. A unity of theory and practice, an integration, is called for; the point is not just to understand the condition of the oppressed, but to change it. This is not, of course, either simple or easy — as feminist theorists and other critical theorists have noted, it requires more than a welfare mentality. What is required is a transformation of the processes, structures, and institutions which limit the power and access of subdominant groups. This transformation must include the organization and practice of planning itself.

Very similar ideas are found in the critical theory of Jürgen Habermas and in the work of John Forester (1989), who applies Habermas' ideas to planning. Their thought has contributed significantly to the debate on emancipatory theory and practice. It is instructive, however, to look at feminist criticisms of their work which highlight how important one's standpoint is, and how difficult it can be to truly see behind the structures of domination in our society.

Nancy Fraser (1987) and Kai Nielsen (1987) have argued that a critical theory must also be a critical feminist theory. In recognizing that women and men do not always experience reality similarly or equally, and that all women do not experience oppression similarly or equally because multiple oppressions such as race and class also exist, feminist theory turns attention to the diversity of dominating social relationships as part of a critical perspective to knowledge and practice.

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The difference such a theory makes is exemplified in one major area of Habermas' work. Habermas' social theory is concerned with economic and political relations (the system) and how the system negatively colonizes the lifeworld (everyday family and personal life) through coercive relations of power and money. Because his critical perspective does not extend beyond this concern, he misses gender. Nancy Fraser (1987) argues that Habermas fails to see how some of the crucial categories of social identity in his theory are gendered identities. He addresses the influence of the system on the lifeworld, but does not recognize how the lifeworld, with its gender hierarchy, influences and shapes the system. Most tellingly, he portrays the lifeworld as a simple good, an emancipatory force against the system, ignoring that the lifeworld itself is home to destructive and unjust relations of domination around gender. Beth Moore Milroy (1990) argues that John Forester, in *Planning in the face of power*, falls prey to the same errors as Habermas, despite his stated awareness of feminist theory and concerns.

The Role of the Expert

Another roadblock in constructing a truly emancipatory planning theory and applying it in emancipatory planning practice is the duality of knowledge and experience. This duality privileges scientific and technical knowledge over personal and grounded experience, granting greater authority, credibility, and legitimacy to the former. Experts, such as planners, have knowledge; the rest of us, the public, have experience. Planners ask residents of a neighborhood for their opinions, or for input "based on their experience"; but knowledge, in the sense of cognitive authority, is found only in the final plans.

Lorraine Code (1988) has analyzed this double standard from a feminist perspective. She argues that women have traditionally been accorded a lesser cognitive status due to two epistemological-political patterns. First, of course, is the epistemological distinction between knowledge and experience, based on compliance with the standards of objective inquiry of empiricism. The "knowledge" based on experience is not true knowledge, but considered partial, particular, and tainted by subjectivity or emotion. Second is the existence and persistence of stereotypes by which some are accorded the ability to attain this narrowly defined knowledge and others are considered incapable of it. Women, for example, have in the past been and in more subtle ways are still sometimes considered less rational, logical, or objective than men.

The planning ideal of a neutral, narrow technocratic efficiency is congruent with this privileging of expert knowledge. Ritzdorf (1992) contends that planning is based in a belief in absolute knowledge

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independent of time, space, or social identity, and in the validity of authority for those who hold such knowledge. She charges that planners, to the degree that they are committed to a functional rationalism, are by and large unquestioning of the ideals of objectivity and value-neutrality.

In other words, if knowledge depends on neutrality and traditional conceptions of objectivity, then only experts and professionals operating within a positivist paradigm may have knowledge, and their knowledge is considered to be true for all. In this framework, the public interest cannot be legitimately determined by the citizenry, but only by experts for them.

To Code's analysis of the stereotyping of women, we might add prejudices against the cognitive authority of the untrained, lower class, less educated, powerless, or minority citizens who are among those that planning is supposed to serve. To the degree that planners consider their input to be of lesser cognitive status (more personal, more biased, less well-thought-out, more limited), authority is disproportionately given to planners and those members of the public who resemble them in possession of and use of empiricist knowledge.

Stereotyping devalues personal grounded knowledge, and so limits the input of marginalized groups within planning discourse and reduces the credibility of what input is allowed. Only those with expert status, the professionals within the planning profession and others with cognitive authority, can legitimately contribute to rational discourse. Given the postmodernist view of a diversity of fractured identities, the knowledge/experience duality effectively excludes a majority of perspectives.

The answer to these challenges to planning practice is the development of openness to other forms of knowledge and respect for the validity and truth they embody. Many feminists, inside and outside of planning, have called for a recognition of other voices and other ways of knowing, such as personal experience or sentiment (Sandercock and Forsyth 1992a and 1992b; Fainstein 1992). It is important that such non-expert knowledge and modes of sharing knowledge are not only heard, but listened to.

Citizen Participation

Citizen participation is a planning practice developed in response to critiques of this exclusion of diverse, non-expert input. It is a mechanism through which private citizens are allowed, and theoretically encouraged, to contribute to the public planning process. This is disputed territory, often reduced to a routine of citizen advisory committees and public hearings without power or authority. It

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complicates planning practice, interferes with efficiency, and opens up difficult questions of who may be invited to the table and what weight may be assigned to their words. Here the duality of knowledge and experience and the cognitive authority of the expert are operating. However, another duality also comes into play, further impeding meaningful citizen participation: that of public vs. private.

There are few ideas closer to the heart of what planning means, although planning has traditionally concerned itself solely with the public sphere. Land use planning separated public from private worlds, work from home. Transportation planning historically has dealt with commute patterns, blind to the to-and-fro of trips for shopping, childcare, and children's activities. Urban design interested itself with the aesthetic and symbolic uses of public spaces, often ignoring issues of women's safety or the representation and access of marginal groups. These are all the concerns of private life, personal life, of those without a public face. The public face is that of those groups with power: the business community, men, whites, the middle class. Yet "the public," in the sense of the citizenry, is much more diverse, and has interests which span and blur the distinction between public and private.

The actual practice of citizen participation depends heavily on the concept of pluralism, the idea of essentially similar people resolving differences of interest in an open and even political marketplace. This Enlightenment concept is in part saying that it is our public selves as citizens that matter, that our private selves hold no real differences. The pluralist model would counsel planners that such techniques as citizen participation, by facilitating the collection of inputs and the resolution of differences, are sufficient to include the perspectives and experiences of women and other subordinate groups.

Pluralism has been challenged by feminist theorists and others on two grounds: that the playing field is neither open nor even, and that people are not essentially similar. Not only do resources of power and access differ, but people differ in real and important ways. In contrast to pluralism is the postmodern concept of essentialism, which holds that there are fundamental differences between people at the level of being. The result is that varied interests and values cannot be assumed to be commensurable or resolvable. Our public role as citizens may be similar, but our private selves and private lives not only shape our views, but significantly shape and sometimes limit our public voice.

In terms of planning, Milroy (1992) argues that this means that "alternative images of the good life must be actively encouraged and sought out," and that "social technologies need to be fostered for working with more than one image at a time while resisting the urge to

reduce one to another." Citizen participation processes, then, would be more interactive and collaborative, less routine, and less focused on singular consensus or majority solutions. Sandercock and Forsyth (1992b) similarly argue that planners must develop theory and practice of "planning for multiple publics," through the "acknowledgment and celebration of difference." At the least, the consideration of different perspectives and the closer integration of public and private voices would move planners toward citizen participation processes in which outreach becomes more important and institutional or organizational credentials are not necessary to be heard.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper has been to explore the wealth of ideas offering new visions for an emancipatory planning which incorporates gender and challenges relationships of domination. To this end, it has covered a variety of competing theories and a diversity of perspectives. Nonetheless, there are commonalities throughout the literature: the rejection of the separation between theory and practice, subject and object; the idea that objectivity is never value-free; the validation of forms of knowledge which are not scientific or technical; and the acknowledgment that all theory and practice is implicitly political.

The impact these epistemologies could have on planning theory and planning practice is profound, and an attempt has been made to illustrate some of the implications. Planning practice informed by feminist epistemologies would be critical, emancipatory, and conscious of gender and other differences. It would cease to inappropriately privilege expert, professional knowledge, and it would discourage unitary, majoritarian, and partial processes of citizen participation.

Theorists inside and outside of planning are working on many of the areas discussed. There are no solutions presented here, no specific methodology, no exact answer as to what planning theory or planning practice should be. But this is part of the point — we must accept the fluid, dynamic nature of knowledge and action and the complexity of their relationship. Reflexivity, self-consciousness, political awareness, value commitments, diversity, the legitimacy of experience, the significance of private life: all of this must be kept in mind, balanced together. It is a lot, and it questions, challenges, and overturns traditional theory and practice across the board. It is not, however, a set process or an exact program of so many steps or principles.

What then can we do to bring the insights of feminist theory to planning? As Sandercock and Forsyth (1992a), Jacqueline Leavitt (1986), and others have pointed out, planning theory, practice, and education remain largely male-dominated. The majority of decision-

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makers inside the planning department and the majority of those with influence on it are middle-class men, and it is they who select the problems, set goals, and make policy. This bias is reproduced in planning schools, with the result that "in the planning profession, to be a feminist or interested in women's issues is to reject explicitly much of the professional socialization of one's training" (Leavitt 1986).

Leavitt makes a case for establishing and increasing courses which deal with gender and women's issues. Her solution is an excellent one, but as the epistemological critiques we have reviewed have made clear, simply "adding women" is only a first step. Separate courses on gender issues are a partial remedy; far better for theory courses to incorporate feminist theories and for substantive courses to incorporate gender as the integral issue which it is. Planners within the profession must also begin to address the reconception of the underlying values, beliefs, and conceptions of knowledge in the field. The result of such rethinking would be an adjustment and alteration of the practice of planning: the roles planners take on, the methods they choose, and the way they relate to the public they serve.

By way of closing, we turn to some final thoughts on what a feminist planning practice would look like. One such vision, going beyond a simple awareness of gender bias, beyond a "women and ..." perspective, has been offered by Susan Fainstein (1992). A planning practice from a feminist perspective would be one "that starts with concepts of communal relations and incommensurable values, that substitutes the development of consensus for adversarial approaches, that protects the weak and recognizes the importance of sentiment." There is much work to be done.

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