

Understanding Institutional Change – A Gender Perspective E-Newsletter, Issue 2, December 2013



Welcome to the second issue of the Understanding Institutional Change (UIC) e-newsletter! It has been a hectic six months for the project.

The team now has two new members: Leah Culhane arrived from Dublin having just completed her MSc in Equality Studies at University College to become the PhD student on Work Package 3; and, as mentioned in the last newsletter, Faith Armitage joined the project as the Research Associate on Work Package 5. Their arrival marks the start of one of the busiest periods of data collection for the project with research currently being carried out on all the Work Packages.

Team members have also been active at various conferences and we held our first international workshop on 'new' institutions at the beginning of November. Our next workshop on Bachelet's Chile will be held at the end of April 2014 and we are already planning a workshop on Informal Institutions in early 2015.

For more details of all these activities see the rest of this newsletter and the project website!

May we take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year!

The Project Team



'Gendering' New Institutions Workshop report

On the 7th and 8th of November the UIC project held its first international workshop with the participants coming from all over the UK, Canada, South Africa, USA and Europe. The two day gathering on 'Gendering New Institutions' focused on a number of themes specifically related to work packages one and two of the project and was attended by the UIC team members, the advisory board and a number of interdisciplinary speakers including lawyers experienced in the area of institutional change and redesign in one form or another.



After a welcome lunch on day one, the first panel focused on institutional creation and design at times of transformation. The session featured empirical research on post-conflict areas, specifically Northern Ireland, South Africa and Bosnia-Herzegovina and constitution building in Africa. The roles of female actors within these processes were discussed with lively contributions from commentators and participants who were present during these transitions. This was followed by a round table discussion on gendering institutional design, which was comprised of panelists who had first-hand experience in negotiations (such as devolution in Scotland, the transition in South Africa and the creation of the ICC) as gendered actors. The session facilitated those who played a part in negotiation processes to tell their own (captivating) stories and reflect on their personal experiences. It not only offered a different layer to the empirical research of the first panel but also highlighted lessons that could be learned for future negotiations. The energetic discussion was carried on to the drinks reception and workshop dinner.

Day two began with a panel on the institutionalisation of 'new' institutions. The papers in this



panel problematized the concept of 'newness'. Examining the creation of the constitutional court in South Africa, the ICC and devolution in Scotland, the panelists discussed some of the barriers associated with creating new institutions, particularly the power of the informal and the nested nature of institutions. Following this, a roundtable discussion addressed methods and the different approaches that can be used when researching new institutions. The speakers recounted their own experiences with different methods and highlighted new ways in which institutions could be researched in the future. The

workshop concluded with a roundtable discussion on critical reflections and future agendas. It gave participants a chance to reflect on the two days of dialogue and deliberate where Feminist Institutionalism can go from here. All in all it was a thought provoking, challenging and often inspiring two days and much was learnt by both the UIC team and invited guests. We would like to thank all who took part.

APSA – September 2013

In September 2013 several UIC team members presented research at the [American Political Science Association 109th Annual Meeting in Chicago](#). Georgina Waylen, Louise Chappell, Fiona Mackay, Rachel Johnson (co-written with Laura McLeod) all presented papers as part of a Political Studies Association/Women and Politics Section co-sponsored panel on 'Understanding Newness and Institutional Change: A Gender Perspective'. Emily Davies (paper giver UNSW), Karen Beckwith (Discussant) and Elisabeth Friedman (Chair) also participated in the panel. The papers explored concepts of new and old rules and the making of institutional newness. All the participants would like to thank the PSA for their support for the panel.



Georgina's paper: ['Understanding 'New' Institutions: Gendering Institutional Change](#)

Forthcoming Conference and Workshop Participation

- Faith will be attending the annual Study of Parliament Group weekend workshop taking place in Oxford in January 2014.
- Rachel will be presenting a paper titled 'Everyday Institutional Life in South Africa's Constitutional Court and Parliament' at the Twenty Years of South African Democracy conference, at Oxford University, in April 2014.
- Other team members are also planning to present their work at ISA, PSA and ECPR Joint Sessions over the next six months.

Recent Team Publications Relevant to the Project

Faith Armitage (2013), 'Peace and Quiet in the British House of Common, 1990-2010', *Democratization*, Vol.20, Issue 3: 456-478

Louise Chappell and Georgina Waylen (2013), 'Gender and the Hidden Life of Institutions', *Public Administration*, vol 91, no.3: 599-615

R.E.Johnson, 'Disrupting the South African Parliament: Performing Opposition 1994-2010', *Democratization*, Vol.20, Issue 3: 478-500

Fiona Mackay and R.A.W Rhodes (2013), 'Gender, Greedy Institutions and the Departmental Court', *Public Administration*, vol 91, no.3: 582-598

Georgina Waylen 'Informal Institutions, Institutional Change, and Gender Equality, *Political Research Quarterly*, first published on November 18, 2013 as [doi:10.1177/1065912913510360](https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912913510360)

Next UIC workshop:

Gendered Institutional Change in Bachelet's Chile

29th April 2014

We will be holding a one day workshop in Tuesday April 29 at Manchester Museum. Confirmed speakers include Susan Franceschet, Peter Siavelis and Jasmine Gideon. This workshop will focus the efforts of Michelle Bachelet, Chile's first female president, to introduce progressive measures and the institutional constraints that she faced in a context where both formal and informal political institutions could act as barriers to change. It will look at Bachelet's attempts to negotiate them in the political arena such as her efforts to create parity cabinets. It will examine the policymaking process and on the role of SERNAM, the women's policy agency. It will also explore attempts at policy change in a number of policy areas such as reproductive rights, as well as pensions and health.

The workshop programme will be circulated soon. Please let Lisa Jenkins know if you would be interested in attending

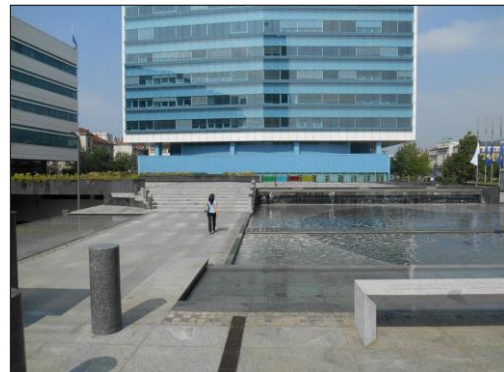
Work package updates

Work Package 1: Exploring post-conflict institutional displacement at the national level

Work package one, on post-conflict institution-building, has had a busy few months. Both Georgina Waylen and Laura McLeod have been on research trips – Georgina to Northern Ireland and Laura to Bosnia-Herzegovina (in July and October 2013).

Georgina gave a paper at the November workshop on her research on the negotiations that took place in South Africa and Northern Ireland in the 1990s. And based on her research trips, Laura is in the process of developing a paper on affect and emotions in contemporary attempts at constitutional reform by gender-change activists in Bosnia. An early version was presented at the project workshop in November 2013.

With Rachel Johnson, Laura has written a joint paper comparing the notion of a "historic future" in institutional change in Northern Ireland and South Africa. Laura and Rachel are also in the process of editing a roundtable conversation between feminist activist-academics involved in institutional change that took place at the November workshop, which will hopefully be published in early 2015. Laura is in the process of finalising two working papers: *A Gender Perspective on Constitutional Negotiation and Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1991-2014* and *Gender and Peace Settlements from a Quantitative Perspective: A Global Survey 1990-2014*. Laura is looking forward to her field research in Northern Ireland in the first half of 2014 to develop



her comparative research on feminist involvement in peace negotiations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Northern Ireland.

Work Package 2: New Institutions: a Multi-Level Comparison



The research on new institutions that forms Work Package Two is well under way. Rachel began her fieldwork with a trip to South Africa in September/October 2013. She spent some time in the South African Constitutional Court archives and met current and former staff. A second trip is planned in February 2014. Rachel is exploring three avenues of research on the Court, an institution newly established in 1994 as part of South Africa's transition to democracy. She will be exploring the politics of

appointments to the Court since 1994, the Court's developing equality jurisprudence, and the shifting everyday practices of the Court in its early years. The aim is to produce a gendered analysis of institutional establishment and legitimation; examining the ways in which the presence of women and the non-sexism of the Constitution have been entangled with the newness of the Court. Early ideas on this were presented to the project workshop in November in a paper titled: "'Transforming a notorious icon of repression into its opposite': The South African Constitutional Court and the Transformation of the Judiciary 1994-2013'. (If you would like to read a copy of this paper please email Rachel).

The comparative aspect of the Work Package is being pursued through collaborative work with external team members Louise Chappell (UNSW) and Fiona Mackay (Edinburgh). Rachel and Louise are working on a comparison of the gendered nature of the judicial appointment processes of the South African Constitutional Court and the International Criminal Court that have shaped both Courts in their early years. Rachel and Fiona are exploring the ways in which gender equality mechanisms and practices have been embedded and/or uprooted within in the Scottish and South African Parliaments since their establishment in the mid-to-late 1990s.

Work Package 3: Institutional Layering at the Micro-level

This work package officially began in September this year. Leah Culhane, the new PhD student is currently finalising her PhD topic. Francesca Gains and Vivien Lowndes have begun a three year research project examining the formation of institutional arrangements supporting the work of the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in the UK. Work package 3 considers institutional change arising



through the layering of new institutions. The new Police and Crime Commissioner role, developing alongside the existing national authority of the Home Secretary and the current organisational structure of local police and local authorities, therefore provides a valuable insight into layering of institutional change and the creation, borrowing and remembering of institutional rules. Initially the research team have worked to develop a theoretical framework specifying the mechanisms through which institutions are gendered and asking what are the micro-foundations to the proposition that political institutions are gendered? How is it that

gender becomes inscribed within the design and operation of political institutions? The three year research design takes a mixed methods approach and involves collecting key institutional indicators every year from 2013 to 2016 for quantitative analysis, case study visits to selected PCCs in year 2 and follow up ethnographic work possibly in year 3 to gather qualitative data. This framework has been operationalized through the identification of key concepts and indicators and initial empirical data collected and a data set has been developed using publically available information through the PCC websites. The team will discuss their early findings at the UK PSA conference in Manchester in March.



Work Package 4: Institutional Change in Bachelet's Chile 2006 - 2010

Although the Research Associate has not yet been appointed to work on this project, Georgina Waylen has conducted some preliminary research. For the first time in nearly twenty years, she visited Chile in August to collect some preliminary data. It was a fascinating time as the election campaign was in full swing with two women – Michelle Bachelet and Evelyn Matthei – as the leading contenders who shared a history stretching back to the Pinochet era and beyond. Newly returned from her time in New York as head of UNWomen, Bachelet appears to be maintaining a commitment to gender equality this time around. At the launch of her gender policy for the campaign she declared that if elected she will set up a fully -fledged women's ministry and promote more women in politics. The work package will be holding its first workshop on April 29 – see the separate piece in this newsletter for more details.

Work Package 5: Change to informal institutions: UK and South African parliaments

Since joining the project in September 2013, Faith has been reading up on the burgeoning political science literature on informal institutions, and developing her research strategy for the work package. Parliaments are commonly understood as highly rule-bound institutions, but it is clear that much of what happens within parliaments is also shaped by informal norms and expectations, many of which are gendered or have gendered implications. Faith is critically interrogating the existing theoretical work that attempts to define, distinguish and characterise formal and informal rules, and she expects to develop a set of definitions and criteria which will help to map and interpret legislative domains.



Faith has begun researching MPs' expenses schemes and disorder by MPs, the two specific areas within parliamentary institutions that are the focus of analysis for this work package. She is currently 'embedded' within the British parliament, observing a wide range of formal proceedings as well as more casual settings within the Westminster village, meeting people and conducting interviews. Her first field work trip to the National Assembly in Cape Town will be in February 2014, where similar work of observation and interview will take place.