**Abstract**

A recent wave of gender and politics research revisits the concept of “women’s interests,” opening up new ways of thinking about who can articulate these interests and how to avoid essentialism in empirical analysis on women’s substantive representation. This article seeks to advance these debates by integrating them with new work on political theory noting that speaking “for” a group also entails speaking “about” a group. Resolving some of the tensions presenting in existing work, the revised approach expands the range of actors engaged in making claims on behalf of “women” and draws a conceptual distinction between “issues,” broad policy categories, and “interests,” the content given to a particular issue. The contours of this new approach are illustrated via a comparative study of claims-making on behalf of “women” in three countries, revealing some overlaps but also important differences in the issues raised and arguments made regarding the nature of “women’s interests.” This inductive method avoids problems of essentialism by arguing that “women” and “women’s interests” are constructed through, and not simply reflected in, political advocacy on their behalf.