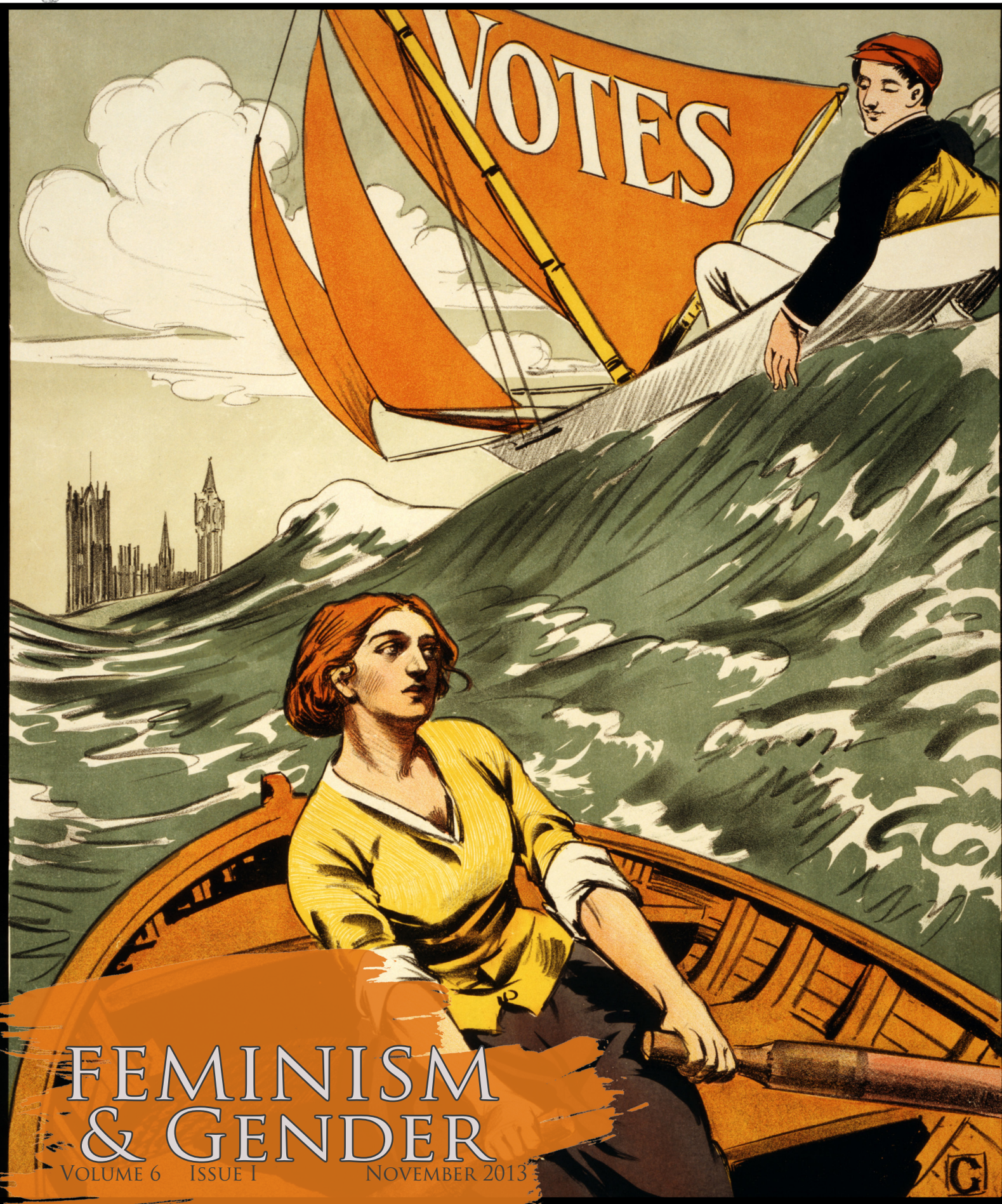




LEVIATHAN

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FEMINISM & GENDER

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EDITOR IN CHIEF

Welcome to the fourth year of Leviathan!

It is with tremendous gratitude and pride that I present to you the first instalment of *Leviathan* for the 2013-14 academic year.

This instalment represents the hard work and thoughts of twenty three students, two members of staff, and a fourteen member committee, making it the largest edition of *Leviathan* yet. As past readers will already have noticed, we have begun a new year with a fresh and, we hope, welcome series of changes to *Leviathan*.

We have introduced a new regional format to the Journal, with articles divided into six regions, and comparative pieces included as International submissions. We hope that this makes it easier to navigate the Journal. We have also introduced a new logo which we hope will make *Leviathan* instantly recognisable on campus. It features the crown, sword, and sceptre, traditional symbols of sovereignty in the West, from the etching of the *Leviathan* that is the cover of Hobbes' seminal work. We hope that the St. Andrews Cross that the sword and sceptre are crossed inside of will evoke the Scottish nature of this Journal and University.

Inside, readers will find the thoughts of students and members of staff on the topic 'Feminism and Gender'. Feminism has affected the political development of all nations, as well as informing the way in which we theorise about politics and international relations. How we interact in society is governed by gender expectations. Different societies have radically different norms and attitudes towards gender. Can we reconcile those norms? Should we? What role, if any, do human rights play in the debate?

The intersection of feminism and gender with politics is contentious and relevant, and I invite readers to challenge their own norms, attitudes, and privilege as they engage with the thoughts of our contributors.

There are a tremendous number of people who deserve thanks, as *Leviathan* is truly a team effort. The editors, production team members, events team, and fundraising team, led by Marcus Gustafsson, Adrie Smith, Tanya Turak, and Naomi Jefferson, respectively, have put in many hours of effort and thought into the Journal. The work before you is proof of their capabilities.

Those Editors in Chief who are my predecessors, Natasha Turak and Uday Jain have also been enormously helpful throughout the crafting of this work. Their legacy and assistance are appreciated by all who enjoy *Leviathan*.

I'd like to thank Adrie Smith, especially, without whom the Journal would surely be lost. She is responsible for crafting the redesign of the journal, production of the journal, for our new brand, and for unrelenting good advice.

The University of Edinburgh and Politics and International Relations Society have the humble thanks of the entire *Leviathan* community for their generous support of our efforts.

We hope that you find this sampling of analysis, opinion, and academic debate from students at the University of Edinburgh thought compelling.

Yours,

Maxwell Greenberg
Editor in Chief

MEET THE STAFF



MAXWELL GREENBERG

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Maxwell is a third year Politics student at the University of Edinburgh. A native of south-eastern Pennsylvania, he has professional experience in campaigns, government, and law. At University, he founded the North American Society, a community for Americans and Canadians abroad, and currently serves as its Chairman. Additionally, he has been elected twice to represent students in the Edinburgh University Students Association, most recently as the representative for International Students. As the Editor-in-Chief of Leviathan, he sits on the Committee of the University of Edinburgh's Politics and International Relations Society. Maxwell likes warm roasted salmon, elections, maps, and hometown pride.



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SENIOR EDITOR

Marcus is from Sweden, and while currently in his second year of Law, it is his third year at the University after a first year of Economics and Politics. Despite transferring degrees, he maintains a strong interest in Politics and IR. Marcus is President of the Model UN Society (EdMUN). Additionally, he coordinates a global youth advocacy team and has attended a number of UN conferences to that effect. He has published in the Journal several times before.



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Marko is a third year student of International Relations and Law and scholarship holder at the University of Edinburgh. An American of Ukrainian descent, he has worked as a fellow to Congressman Brad Schneider and a political intern to Governor Patrick Quinn. In parallel to his work at Leviathan, he also serves as vice president of Politics and International Relations Society, president of the European Union Society, and a student ambassador for the University of Edinburgh admissions office.



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Naomi is a third-year International Relations student who lives in Hawaii despite growing up in the Boston area. She regularly contributes to the journal as a writer and holds a particular interest in the politics of gender within international relations. Alongside her work within Leviathan, she currently is the Vice-President of the University's North American Society.



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MEET THE STAFF



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Lene Korseberg studies LLB Law & International Relations at the University of Edinburgh and BA Pedagogy at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. She is section editor and treasurer for *The Student*, the University of Edinburgh newspaper, and regional editor for Europe for the *Leviathan*. She has written for several other publications, including *BroadwayBaby* during the 2013 Edinburgh Fringe.



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Lynn is a 3rd year student of English Literature and History. A Scottish-born Briton of Eurasian descent, she spent her formative years as an expatriate in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Cairo, Egypt. Having lived within the margins of distinct and unfamiliar cultures, she takes particular interest in hegemonic value systems and the role of mass media within them. In addition to her work with *Leviathan*, she is a volunteer befriender and a student leader of the Peer-Assisted Learning Scheme.



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Phoebe is currently a second year Politics student and is very interested in the media industry. She has worked for charities like UNICEF and Save the Children and has also campaigned for some human rights issues in the past. She is happy to be one of the *Leviathan* team and is looking forward to work with the other committees this year.



ASIA & THE PACIFIC

REGIONAL EDITOR



In the post-Great Recession world, where the Western world is struggling with tepid growth rates, Asia is experiencing some of the greatest economic and industrial expansion.

From Chinese manufacturing and Indian outsourcing, to the encroachment of the tourist industry into untouched land, Asia's female workforce has become an increasingly important economic resource. Economic growth has gone hand-in-hand with increased investment in education which particularly benefits women in the developing world. Additionally, many nations have

noticed an increase in participation of women in the workplace. These are cheerful testaments to the notion that modernity follows development.

With this new generation of working women, however, come a host of social anxieties. Low fertility is a monster of its own which, as Jing Xuan Teng explores in an article on Singaporean population policy, has had unique consequences for the reproductive (and the personal) freedom of female citizenry. However it is not simply the falling fertility rates, strongly associated with female

employment, which spark new and gendered tensions in Asia. In low-fertility nations such as China, Hong Kong and Singapore, high costs of living, a deeply engrained son preference, and female infanticide have come together to create male-heavy birth ratios – and all the social problems of heightened violence, prostitution and misogyny which a society of surplus males entails. In China specifically, the failure of women to stay within the lines of the One-Child policy has led to violent and invasive state action. In India, the rape and murder of a 23-year-old medical student has opened discussions on India's long legacy of sexual violence, prompting anti-feminist proposals to enforce a female curfew or constrain working women to day shifts. Throughout Asia, economic reports proliferate on the underutilization of the female workforce, and the GDP growth that could be (but is not) happening.

Modernity may be destroying traditional gender roles and rearranging the structure of societies, but the 'new' place of women has become a source of remarkable tension between patriarchy and progress. Not only is a woman's right to employment, education or security put under question. Most fundamentally, her independence as a citizen, her freedom as an individual, and her value as a human being continue to be put into question.

Lynn Marissa Davies

THE PRESSURE TO REPRODUCE

JING XUAN TENG explores the coercion, eugenics, and nuclear family constructions behind population policies in modern Singapore.

The prosperous Southeast Asian city-state of Singapore has been many things in the eyes of the international community, from a dystopian 'Disneyland with the death penalty' to an 'Asian miracle' economy,¹ but one thing is generally agreed upon: whatever Singapore's hyper-efficient People's Action Party (PAP)-dominated government wants done, gets done – except when it comes to raising the nation's dismally low total fertility rate (TFR).

In recent decades, many of Asia's most affluent states have experienced birth rate declines that echo demographic trends in Europe following the Industrial Revolution, but within the span of a single generation rather than over centuries. The Singapore government's responses to such changes reveal its willingness firstly to foster divides between the reproductive options of the affluent and the poor in an effort to produce more genetically 'blessed' babies and, secondly, to subjugate women within a patriarchal vision of the family.

Since the 1970s, Singapore's TFR has been well below the replacement rate of 2.10 children per woman, reaching an all-time low of 1.15 in 2010.² Long-term forecasts suggest that, should current fertility levels continue and immigration come to a standstill, the population will begin to shrink by 2025.³ The government has, of course, turned to immigration as a solution, and today non-citizens make up 38%⁴ of the island nation's population. In addition to fears of labour shortage and the high elderly dependent-to-worker ratio that comes with plummeting TFRs, Singapore now faces the task of assimilating masses of newcomers within a short period of time.

To a large extent, this dire situation is of the government's own doing. Concerned about unchecked population growth in the 1960s (an attitude that was, to be fair, not out of place or unjustified in the context of postwar Asia), the PAP took on an anti-natalist policy in 1966. Subsequent developments included the implementation of public campaigns to discourage large families, the liberalization of abortion laws, the encouragement of voluntary sterilization, and the imposition of progressively higher hospital fees for mothers who continued to give birth after their second child.

By the 1980s it had become clear that highly-educated, more affluent women were taking to anti-natalist schemes with far greater enthusiasm than their poorer, less-educated counterparts – a trend that was viewed with alarm by the party leadership. Guided by the belief that more intelligent, productive citizens reared more intelligent, productive children, the government began a 'eugenics' campaign that aimed to increase the fertility rate of educated mothers. Cash benefits for low-income, less-educated women who underwent voluntary sterilization and a Social Development Unit established to match unmarried young graduates were accompanied by warnings that 'levels of competence decline' if the intellectual elite were allowed to cease procreation.

This sat poorly with the electorate, leading to a 12-point drop in the PAP's share of the popular vote during the 1984 General Election.⁵ The actual psephological significance of this figure to the PAP's standing is, as Cherian George points out, diminished by spurious factors including the numbers of contested and uncontested constituencies. The implications for the public image of the party, however, were troubling.⁶ By the late 1980s, the eugenics rhetoric had been dropped in favour of the less offensive slogan, 'Have Three or

More, If You Can Afford It.'⁷

Throughout the evolution from anti-natalism to eugenics to general pro-natalism, population measures in Singapore have consistently stressed that women are both important to the workforce and responsible for solving the nation's fertility problems. Financial incentives and workplace arrangements are targeted at female citizens, and aside from token acknowledgements of fathers' roles, official reports and speeches are filled with lines like, 'It seems that the more we educate our girls the more reluctant they are to have babies.'⁸ Another consistent thread is the focus on failed 'family values' and 'inadequate value transmission'⁹ as the main cause of undesirable population trends.

Also, subtly eugenicist policies continue to be targeted at a specific subset of the female population: better-educated, married women with higher incomes. Tax refunds, and child tax relief make no significant difference to women whose households fall within the lowest income brackets, and who pay as little as 2% income tax or none at all. Pre-abortion counseling is mandatory for all mothers who have less than three children – with the exception of those who fail to meet a particular level of education.

Nation-building in the young state (which achieved independence in 1965) has always been significantly dependent on gendered notions of citizens' duties. Due to the current influx of immigrants and resultant unease about the distinction between citizens and non-citizens, discussions of citizenship tend to uphold a consensus that the rights and privileges of Singaporean nationals must be earned through gendered acts of citizenship – mandatory National Service in the armed forces for male citizens, explicitly, and reproduction for female citizens, implicitly. It comes as no surprise, then, that population and family policies paint a very specific vision of Singaporean femininity and, to a lesser extent, Singaporean masculinity.

As recently as 2004, children born abroad to Singaporean parents were granted citizenship by descent only if their fathers were Singaporeans. Until 2005, only male civil servants could claim benefits for dependents, and when challenged on this, the incumbent Finance Minister in 1993 claimed that 'it is the husband's responsibility to look after the family's needs... This is how our society is structured'¹⁰. Between 1979 and 2003, the intake of female medical students at the National University of Singapore (one of only three public universities in the country until 2009) was capped at 1/3 of the total cohort. This policy was based on the assumption that women were likely to leave the profession to raise a family, and it would thus be a waste of resources to train too many of them.

The government's message has been clear: in the ideal Singaporean family, men are breadwinners and women's identities and careers are of secondary importance. Even today men are legally obliged to provide maintenance to estranged or divorced wives and children – and the same is not expected of women, even if their husbands earn less. This idyllic paradigm of a dominant male provider and a submissive female nurturer is expected to exist within a standard nuclear family. In a country where over 80% of households live in high-quality government-subsidised flats and home ownership is considered the norm for working adults, housing policies prioritize married, heterosexual couples over all other family types. Deviation from the officially endorsed family model is thus unaffordable for many Singaporeans.¹¹

Despite the abundance of targeted incentives and disincentives, Singapore's TFR



continues to decline. Interestingly, polls conducted by both government agencies and private researchers suggest that Singaporeans value family and do not need to be financially persuaded to have children – rather, they need support in balancing family and career.¹² Cognizant of this, the government has recently responded to calls for better work-life balance and a fairer gender distribution of parenting duties – but through tiny, incremental changes that will need to be defended and extended.

Paid paternity leave (three days for each child) was first introduced for male civil servants in 2000, and extended by four days in January 2013's population White Paper.¹³ The one week of paid leave for fathers and one-week 'Shared Parental Leave' (a week that the father can 'take' from the mother's share) is measly in comparison to the twelve weeks' paid maternity leave allocated to women, however. Moreover, the same White Paper introduces a government-paid maternity benefit scheme which provides cash benefits in lieu of leave for female workers not eligible for maternity

leave (such as those on shorter-term contracts), but no corresponding measure is in place for fathers. Such superficial, symbolic concessions do not lessen the double burden of childrearing and economic contribution placed on Singapore's women.

Singapore's population woes are perpetuated by the combined influence of three factors: the government's justified fear of the economic repercussions which accompany a low TFR, the economic and political unfeasibility of encouraging female withdrawal from the workforce, and the desire to preserve a certain ideology of family. A sustainable solution will require a change in the state's notion of the ideal family and a move towards a new model which respects the heterogeneity and equal validity of men and women's reproductive choices.

Jing Xuan is a second year undergraduate student of English Literature and History at the University of Edinburgh. When not writing, she enjoys food, cooking, and exploring different restaurants.

EUROPE & RUSSIA

REGIONAL EDITOR



More than five years after the financial crises, many Europeans still go through their everyday lives uncertain about what the future will hold. This is also true for women. As the articles in this edition of Leviathan shows, women are still facing huge challenges in Europe today. Not only is sexism and discriminatory statements against women becoming more and more common, as shown by the twitter rows in the UK earlier this year¹, they are also facing issues of a more fundamental sort such as financial inequality and, in particular, unequal representation in parliaments.

However, there is reason for optimism. As per 1st September 2013, 24.3% of the parliamentary representatives in Europe were women², a large increase from the meagre 13.2% seen in 1995.³ Here must obviously be made mention of the Nordic countries; 42% of the parliamentary

representatives were women as per 1st September 2013.⁴

However, I find it somewhat paradoxical that we tend to rejoice in the prospect of soon hitting the 25% mark for women in parliaments in Europe. 24.3% is sadly not a lot and still miles away from the 50% mark that surely has to be our aim. It is disgraceful that a region that likes to congratulate itself on being at the forefront of social development seems to be satisfied with less than a quarter of elected representatives being women.

When people in Europe talk about feminism and women's rights today they tend to talk about women in other parts of the world. Although this is obviously important, it might be worth taking a step back and having a look at our own back garden. Europe still has quite a lot of work ahead of it.

Lene Kirstine Korseberg

THE (WEAK) SEX IN ITALIAN POLITICS

PAOLA TAMMA analyzes stereotyping and underrepresentation of women in Italy and how politicians screwed women.

This article will sketch a panoramic of the role of women in Italian politics and society, focusing on issues of credibility, ethics and legality. The picture drawn is a reason for shame for Italian politicians and a cause of grief for Italian women, who are underrepresented in their country and misrepresented abroad.

Until recently, the presence of women in Italian politics were as scarce as a hen's teeth.

Even worse, their appearance was not a reason to rejoice. 2009 begun as a year of scandal, as Berlusconi's wife wrote a public letter denouncing how her husband's choice of candidates for the 2009 European Parliament elections had nothing to do with political experience, but rather with youth and physical appearance.¹ She asked for divorce shortly after. Moreover, the prime minister was investigated for soliciting prostitution, after several women declared having been paid to spend the night with him.²

2010 only complicated Berlusconi's situation; he got wiretapped while calling Milan's police headquarters to see a Moroccan girl of 17 released, after she had been arrested for petty theft, on the pretext that she was "Mubarak's niece". The girl in question, when interviewed, affirmed that she received consistent sums of money and jewelry from the prime minister in exchange for her company.³ This led to Berlusconi's conviction of seven years imprisonment for child abuse and abuse of office earlier this June, although Berlusconi has pleaded for appeal.⁴

On top of this, Berlusconi has been lambasted by the press, the Left and public opinion for having held private dinners animated by paid "escorts", some of whom are on the state's payroll. Many of these were financially dependent on him, which put him (and the country as a whole) under the threat of blackmail.⁵

This picture is dramatic from several points of view. A country on the verge of collapse, with +40% youth unemployment⁶, is dragged down by one man's illicit pleasures. This has severe consequences for Italy's international image, which in turn affects both the economy and society as a whole. Furthermore, the consequences of the world's negative judgment on one man is primarily born by its crisis-torn citizens. As if this was not enough, a gendered perspective only adds gloom to the picture.

Italy was placed 57th by the 2011 UN report on female participation in governments, with 19.5% women amongst the elected representatives.⁷ In the 2013 elections this percentage grew considerably, with 31.4% of senators

and deputies being women.⁸ This positive trend continued when Laura Boldrini, a woman, was elected head of the Chamber of Deputies. This was certainly a step ahead (making Italy 29th on global rankings) but still a long way behind the Scandinavian countries and champions like Rwanda, South Africa, and Cuba, where women count for more than 40% of the government representatives.⁹ The cabinet formed this February was also more "pink" than ever, with 1/3 of ministers being women.¹⁰ However, a female prime minister or party leader remains yet to be seen.

Looking into female participation at large, Italy is also lagging behind when it comes to the ratio of women in the labor force. For being the 6th largest OECD economy¹¹ – with all the social development implications that this entails – it has a predominantly male labor force, with only 38% of women aged 15+ being regularly employed¹², placing it next to small developing countries in world rankings. This is the result of a number of concurring factors, from cultural reluctance to discrimination from employers. Because of maternity costs, women face a harder time than men when looking for a job, and consequently make up a larger share of the unemployed (9.6% compared to 7.6% in 2011).¹³ Some action has been taken to remedy the situation; in 2011 a law was passed introducing female quotas in the board of directors of companies listed in the stock exchange or which are partly state-owned. By 2015, businesses will need to have 1/3 of female directors if they are to comply with the new legislation, a considerable increase from today's meager 7%.¹⁴ For these and other reasons, more and more Italians (about 100,000 each year¹⁵) flee the "Bel Paese" and the profile of the expat is disproportionately young and female.

So what prospects are there for Italian women? They live in a heavily gendered society, facing unequal opportunities of work and achievement. The female stereotype proclaimed by most media and by their representatives is nauseatingly chauvinist, encouraging young women to cultivate their beauty, attractiveness, and sexual power rather than their brains. But politics is not far from the abuse perpetrated by marketing and media: the general idea is that youth and beauty will get you anywhere. It is sufficient to look at the easy ascent of former soubrettes and aspiring actresses to the status of European Parliamentarians or Regional Council members.¹⁶

On the one hand, there is the "real country", ridden by the intertwined economic and political crises, where efforts and commitment do not pay, cuts to public spending slash social security and education, and prospects for the young are grimmer than ever. On the other, in the



media and in the circles of power, there is a sinister fairytale of lust, easy money and painless success. A woman in Italy has three choices: stay and fight for decent employment and equal opportunities, which will likely face her with frustration and ungratefulness; stay and surrender, giving in to stereotyping practices, and becoming a pawn in a male dominated game; or she can leave, joining the Italian diaspora, choosing to be forever a foreigner, but a free one.

FEMINIST STORYTELLING

DAVID KELLY *looks at how the future of feminism requires a new history.*

Winston Churchill, Britain's iconic wartime Prime Minister, was not just a rousing orator or consummate politician. He was also an accomplished historian and the winner of the 1953 Nobel Prize for Literature for his six volume epic *The Second World War*. Churchill's motivation was highly personal and highly political – "History will be kind to me, for I intend to write it."

It is interesting that Churchill's ostensibly historical work was even considered a legitimate contender for the Nobel Prize for Literature in the first place. Although the Nobel Committee clearly never doubted its veracity, his victory unavoidably implied that Churchill's account of the period owed as much to storytelling as statesmanship; poetry as much as prose.

This is not to say that it was mere propaganda. Churchill the statesman recognised the power of storytelling to persuade and provoke. Churchill the historian exploited it to great effect. For decades, his story, with its inevitable agendas and biases, formed the basis of the Western world's perception and interpretation of the Second World War.

The art of historical analysis is not always a dispassionate academic exercise. History is an intensely political, contested space. Historians often write in pursuit of, like Churchill, partisan ends. It is also a space dominated by male perspectives and stories. Less than 35% of history faculty staff in American colleges and universities are women.¹ Reading many historical textbooks or biographical dictionaries, you could be forgiven for thinking that women were only invented in the latter half of the 20th century. The great historical achievements of women are frequently reduced to glib tales of domesticity and marriage.

In Scotland, for example, while the ideas and exploits of Isabella MacDuff, Mary Barbour and Edinburgh graduate Chrystal Macmillan have fallen into obscurity, the lives of their male compatriots, colleagues and contemporaries are well-known. Dr Dale Spencer has investigated the phenomenon of the so-called "disappearing woman".² She argues that female writers' absence from education syllabuses and the literary canon has distorted the understanding of our collective past.

Given that so much of our understanding of the heritage and culture of nations is derived from literature – Italy as imagined by Dante, England as satirised by Shakespeare, Scotland as re-invented by Walter Scott – this lack of recognition for female storytellers has profound repercussions. As George Orwell wrote in 1984: "Those who control the present control the past, and those who control the past control the future". Churchill and Orwell both remind us that the storyteller is just as important as the story.

However, times have changed. The role of the media and film industries in articulating and disseminating the story of modern life has grown ever larger. But neither industry has particularly aided female storytellers. The medium has changed, but the story has not. Only 13 women made it onto *The Guardian's* list of the "100 most influential people" in the British media in 2012.³ In 2011, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) found that women were "interviewed or cited in only 30% of television news stories" in the UK.⁴ In a typical month, 78% of newspaper articles are written by men, 72% of contributors to BBC *Question Time* are men, 84% of reporters and guests on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme are men and 92% of comedians on *Mock the Week* are men. Female voices and perspectives in British culture and public life are rare.⁵

According to Hollywood, America is also effectively a female-free zone. Of the 100 top grossing films of 2011, only 11% of protagonists were women.⁶ Even in crowd scenes, only 17% of people were women.⁷ Male characters account for 86% of leaders in primetime programmes on American TV in 2010/11, while female characters on the small screen tend to fulfil stereotypical, domestic roles such as "homemaker".⁸ Revealingly, programmes "with at least one woman creator or writer featured more female characters" than those programmes with none.⁹ Eighty-four per cent of programmes fail to employ any female writers.¹⁰ It seems that only creative women are willing to provide a platform for female voices, talents, and experiences, with creative men the enforcers of the status quo.

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But why does this matter? Does any of it even matter at all? The Women's Media Center believes intensely that it does, arguing that the media is "one of the most powerful economic and cultural forces" shaping the 21st century society.¹¹ "By deciding who gets to talk, what shapes the debate, who writes, and what is important enough to report" the media shapes "our understanding of who we are and what we can be".¹²

However, thanks to the internet, the influence of traditional media is waning. Nonetheless, its ability to set the agenda of public life and to control the narrative of mainstream civic discourse – what Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz call the second face of power¹³ – remains immense. Media moguls like Rupert Murdoch and Silvio Berlusconi are its modern manifestation. As proprietors of news channels, newspapers, publishers and film studios, both Murdoch and Berlusconi have an unparalleled ability to shape the parameters of public policy and influence socio-cultural norms. The political class tends to respond far more readily to the shrill heckling of these unified centres of right-wing opinion than the murmurs of discontent that emanate from the disparate, progressive corners of cyberspace.

Consequently, the issue of female disempowerment tends to be viewed solely through the prism of conventional social, economic, and political authority. Liberal feminism seeks a solution to gender inequality through greater female representation within existing, conventional power structures, rather than a fundamental re-ordering of society. However, the goal of gender parity in parliaments, bureaucracies, and businesses, while commendable and necessary, is not enough. Society's transition to a more equal, less patriarchal place is not guaranteed simply by the existence of more female MSPs or CEOs. Sexism cannot be abolished by government decree. A feminist hard power strategy is, thus, doomed to make only marginal, incremental gains. Like those radical feminists who see a female seizure of power as the only means to end male supremacy, liberal feminists also tend to neglect the potential of soft power.

Feminism has a serious image problem. The story told by the media is one of contemporary feminism as a motley collection of social misfits, cultural eccentrics, and political revolutionaries. In reality, should not all those who believe in gender equality be able to call themselves feminists? And yet, such is the power of the media narrative that many will not. The tactics of "guerrilla-feminism"¹⁴ – from Pussy Riot's protests against Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow, to Wendy Davis' pro-choice/anti-life filibuster in Texas – may have attracted ephemeral publicity, but they have also reinforced negative stereotypes of the movement as militant and extreme. Publicity stunts can only do so much – particularly when much of the media is hostile to their cause and its *raison d'être*.

It is only through the use of soft power – through the construction of a new history of defying the "disappearing woman" and an inclusive narrative for its future – that feminism will achieve its goals. This is not to say that feminists should desist from being troublemakers, staging protests, or seeking political power – they should. It is simply to say that a more media-savvy and culturally-focused approach is required. A Hollywood blockbuster has infinitely more power and reach than a ministerial department or a topless protest.

Fundamental changes in public policy and socio-cultural norms are driven by changes in the strength or nature of public opinion, not the other way round. This is not to say that the state should not seek to lead – it must. It is simply to say that the people must demand that leadership from the state. Public policy is always more sustainable and more equitable when the electorate and the elected work in tandem. However, it is not in the Oval Office or Bute House, but in our classrooms and lecture halls, theatres, cinemas and studios, where the power to fundamentally change society truly lies. An ethos of equality will be impossible to achieve so long as our culture of storytelling remains stuck in the past.

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INVISIBLE WOMEN

KARIN VAJTA ENGSTRÖM *discusses how gender blindness obscures the problems of socially marginalised women.*

This summer I interned at the street paper Faktum, based in Gothenburg, Sweden, researching how the paper's female vendors experience everyday life. It was striking how society has failed these women; how it has forgotten the homeless and socially marginalised people that do not fit the stereotype of a middle aged, drunk man on a park bench. Women are not part of this stereotype and are therefore overlooked in favour of the needs of the stereotypical homeless man. These women belong to a group in society that seems to be treated with gender blindness; gender might be reported when counting homeless people, but the differences in experiences are seldom taken into account.¹

One of the women I talked to explained to me that as she was selling issues of the paper, people would come up to her and tell her that she, as a woman, should not be there. Her place was in the kitchen, taking care of her children and doing dishes. I was also told stories about sexual violence, eating disorders, the lack of gynaecological health care support, men not taking no for an answer and what it is like to expect a baby in two months with no stable income.² These are all situations that men are much less likely to experience, and are therefore not given enough support and attention. Several of the women expressed that they felt subjected to settled, stereotypical norms. Norms which they do not fit into simply because of being female. We need to open our eyes to the structural problem emerging from a lack of an intersectional approach, and realise that not only men are living on the edge of society; women do too.

Sweden is one of the most gender-equal countries in the world.³ However it is still a patriarchal society. Examples of this can be found in Swedish power structures: such as the number of women in boardrooms, where masculinity is being constructed and reproduced through closed networks and a history of male hegemony.⁴ Moreover, much of the

gender debate seems to focus on the privileged middle class⁵, ignoring that discrimination against women crosses over societal boundaries and also penetrates socially marginalised groups. Muslims⁶, disabled⁷, LGBTQ*⁸ – just to name a few – are all groups that are discriminated against in Sweden, and these are all groups that include women as well as men. This should be apparent but is easily forgotten. In all of society the man is constantly the norm. This creates a situation where we do not manage to address the need of all women and we instead concentrate on just a few. In the case of marginalised women it also creates an extremely critical situation where urgent needs are neglected. A so called intersectional approach is needed, coined by Crenshaw in 1989⁹, when looking at gender and race. We have to encourage a shift to a plural ground perspective based on the idea that individual's have multiple identities and that experiences are not rooted in a single ground of discrimination. By recognising that different grounds of discrimination intersect, overlap and build on each other, we will reach a higher level of understanding as to what it is like to be a socially marginalised woman.

My experience supports the claim that we often fail to address women's issues in socially marginalised groups since women are first and foremost seen as part of that group. This forces them into male stereotypes, and prevents gender-sensitivity in problem solving. Looking at the problems a homeless woman faces while keeping in mind that she also lives in a patriarchy will provide us with a broader and more relevant picture. This will in turn lay the foundation for a much more relevant debate across society, something which is vital in order to further gender equality, as well as to address all women, not just the most privileged.

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THE CASE FOR UNIVERSAL CHILDCARE IN BRITAIN

JONNY ROSS-TATAM *considers a policy of extensive, affordable childcare benefitting working mothers and the economy.*

The debate about welfare reform over the last few years in Britain has mainly concerned itself with the cost and fairness of unemployment benefits. The Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government have primarily focused on punitive policies, punishing those that are out of work who they believe are "scrounging" off the benefits system.¹ Instead, what the Government should be focusing on is welfare policies that actively support and encourages people to enter into employment. One such policy would be the provision of extensive free childcare for all children aged between one and four years old. This would enable mothers, who are otherwise constrained by the cost of childcare, to find work or increase their hours.

A small provision for free childcare currently exists: the Government provides 15 hours of free childcare for all three and four year-olds, and this has just been extended to 20% of the most disadvantaged 2 year-olds as well.² This is certainly a step in the right direction, but the provision of childcare needs to be far more extensive in order to make a real difference. 15 hours simply does not cut it for the average working mother. Considering that the average part-time job takes up 15.5 hours a week and the average journey time is 42 minutes there and back, you would need at least 18 hours to sustain a part-time working mother with one child.³ Not only is the current provision not extensive enough, but the childcare costs beyond the free provision is so expensive that it often prices women out of work. A recent study by AVIVA showed that a mother with two children under the age of 15, working part-time and earning the minimum wage, would be £98 worse off every month due to the high childcare costs.⁴

British mothers are particularly impinged by the cost of childcare. It is higher than the OECD average and much higher than in the Nordic countries. Across the OECD a dual-earner family will spend 12 per cent of their family income on childcare, whilst in Britain the figure is 27 per cent, the second highest rate in the OECD.⁵ To add to that, childcare costs in Britain have risen by 6% in the last year whilst wages have stagnated, adding to the squeeze on working families.⁶

The lack of affordable childcare is clearly an obstacle to a mother wishing to join the workforce or increase her hours. A recent report by the Women's Business Council estimated that 2.4 million more women want to work and 1.3 million

want to boost their hours, but are unable to due to lack of affordable childcare.⁷ Also, while the percentage of British women in the workforce is relatively high, it is much lower than the OECD average for mothers with children aged three to five, and far lower than the countries topping the list, like Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, Estonia, and Slovenia.⁸ It is clear that in Britain there is a pay penalty for women with children, which could to some extent be alleviated by a greater provision of childcare.

There is also a clear business case for a policy of extensive, affordable childcare. It will increase tax revenues by supporting mothers, who would otherwise be unable to enter into employment. The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) have shown that the net return to the Treasury over four years would be £20,050 for a mother working full-time earning the average salary and £4,860 for a mother working part-time.⁹ Also, according to the House of Commons Library Research, it is estimated that tax revenues would increase by £1.7 billion if Britain enjoyed the average mothers' employment of the best five OECD nations, all of which enjoy extensive childcare provision.¹⁰ Over time an extensive childcare policy would be likely to pay for itself seeing as we would be investing today in order to save tomorrow. It would also help drive GDP growth; by enabling hundreds of thousands of women into work it will increase their disposable income and increase consumer demand. These are the kind of policies which the Government should prioritise in order to bring the budget deficit down in the long-term. It is much more efficient to support people into employment, rather than punish them for being out of work.

A realistic target for Britain is to provide 25 hours of free childcare for all children aged between one and four. The IPPR have estimated that would cost an extra £3.735 billion.¹¹ Clearly in an era of financial restraint some tough political decisions would have to be made in order to find the savings. But for a policy like this, which would have far-reaching benefits for women and the economy in Britain, it would be worth it.

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AN ILLUSION OF EQUALITY

MARTHA DUDZINSKI *assesses the failure of the communist Women's Quota.*

The experience of all freedom movements has shown that the success of a revolution depends on the degree that women are involved in it."

Success or failure of the Women's Quota is decided by a large amount of interdependent factors. The goal of this paper is to question whether or not the Women's Quota can be effective if it is not accompanied by a general social awareness of an existing gender-inequality and the need to overcome it. This article will look at the historical examples of communist countries, where the Quota failed in its goals in society due to persistent conservative media coverage and the contradiction between the progressive stance articulated by communism ideology, and the social expectations imposed on women in reality.¹

"Ostalgy" (a term which refers to a nostalgia for aspects of life in communist East Germany) often conjures the illusion that gender-equality has been accomplished by socialism. Contrary to this belief, the role of women in communist nations was no less conservative than in capitalist Europe. Studies have shown that in the communist era, women still gained respect on the basis of how well they performed family duties, preferably when combined with employment.

A 1991 survey organized in the newly formed ex-communist Czech Republic adds to the body of evidence which suggests that women's standing had gained little ground after many years of communism. The survey, organized by a female member of the Czech General Assembly, revealed that 89% of her fellow party-members expected a loss of votes if the first name on their list was female. Especially remarkable is that the loss of votes was expected by a higher percentage of women than of men, suggesting that they were particularly disillusioned by the alleged 'emancipation' of the socialist movement. Additionally, promises of women's emancipation were seen to disintegrate as privatization and capitalism closed in on the Czech Republic - of the ten female political dissidents who suffered repeated persecution during the communist era, only three were still members of the General Assembly in 1993. Two of the women didn't run for office at the following election.²

The prominent intention of Socialist feminists was to define oppression not only as capitalism, but also as patriarchy. Though they were initially ignored, socialist feminists eventually developed theories of power which, rather than being solely totalitarian, were based on relationships of power. With rising theoretical capacities, however, they became isolated between worker's movements who disapproved of an additional enemy, and "regular" women's movement who wanted to separate women's rights from concepts of economy. Most inimical to the success of Socialist feminists was not, in fact, a purposeful desire to keep women subjugated - it was a collective reluctance to put the movement of socialism at stake.³

Although Socialist feminists struggled to be recognized, tremendous improvements in the field of women's rights took place following the October Revolution in the Soviet Union. These included the legalization of abortion and the instalment of laundry services and public cafeterias to free women from their housework duties. Close connections to the political establishment were particularly important for the movement's credibility, because any movements by an independent organisation would have been perceived as bourgeois feminism. One of Lenin's many suggestions was thus to organise the first Working Women's Congress in 1918, which would come to initiate Zhenotdel - the women's organization of the Bolshevik Party.⁴

Zhenotdel rose from a percentage of 7.4 in 1920 up to 26% of the total number of party members. In spite of Lenin's progressive approach, however, those developments were gradually reversed by Stalinism.⁵ Furthermore, the initial improvement of women's rights was not an act of kindness or fight for justice, but a means of abolishing any social group identities which lay outside of being proletarian.⁶ Eventually, gender equality was disqualified as "forced emancipation" and "oppressive egalitarianism."⁷

Analysing the medial depiction of women in communist media, Slavenka Drakulić revises the communist gender equality praised by Western

feminists.⁸ In reality, she states, women were praised and stereotyped as mothers. Exempt from the media, however, were social problems such as the high percentage of female unemployment or, when actually hired, their lack of equal pay. She uses a report on the first brothel in Croatia, claimed to be a symptom of the emancipation of women, as an example of the media's biased position. As example, she names a report on the first brothel in Croatia, whose existence was claimed to have been caused by the emancipation of women. Only political reasons caused media coverage on women.⁹

The failure of media or society to fall in line with the 'feminism' posited by communist legislation may be the reason behind the stagnation and even reversal of female empowerment, both in society and in the workplace. The employment rate among Czechoslovakian women reached almost 94% by 1989. At first the number seems impressive, however a study of 1987 shows that only 5% of Socialist bosses were women, and 6% of companies didn't employ any women in leading positions whatsoever. Emancipation had been reduced solely to the opportunity to gain employment.¹⁰

Croatian Slavenka Drakulić supports this statement. The Yugoslavian Quota of 30% women in parliament, granting women mainly symbolic roles with limited decision-making powers, diminished to a share of between five and ten percent in the republics after 1990.¹¹ Here, a substantial scientific point becomes obvious: without social approval and general acceptance, a norm cannot be implemented. In line with the statement of constructivism, the successful implementation of a norm relies on the norm becoming latent in society - a process which cannot be completed by legal measures alone. Being such a measure, the Women's Quota therefore has no likelihood of successfully changing the man-woman inequality without a social perception of its necessity.¹²

In 1884, Friedrich Engels developed the view that oppression of women was caused by the capitalist transition to private property. In retrospect, it becomes clear that socialist societies did not only fail to overcome the class system. They also failed to establish gender-equality.¹³

In addition to widespread indifference to the women's situation on the governmental level, a second circumstance had made matters worse: the common illusion of having overcome gender inequality. The idea of equality among the egalitarian system of the working class (just as much as our current self-perception of a modern society) creates a climate in which demanding equality of women comes across as system-critical and old-fashioned. Misguided by the assumptions of already having achieved gender equality, the situation is perceived as a redundant and less (if at all) urgent matter, and thus held back from necessary improvement.

How far this general opinion has impaired women's ability to fight for their rights is pointed out quite clearly by Swedish Gender Professor Teresa Kulawic. Kulawic considers Poland to be the only post-socialist country in support of an active women's movement which is "worth the name of it". Not only had Polish women fought in the front rows of the underground worker's union movement, Solidarność, but they had also dedicated themselves to this matter to such a high degree that they didn't protest the anonymity with which their relatively high representation was hidden behind the male heroes of the movement. This helps explain the success with which the Polish Women's Congress were able to impose rules requiring thirty-five per cent of candidates listed on the ballot to be women.¹⁴

This achievement of the Polish women's movement leads this article to its conclusion. The intention of this paper is not to question the need for the Women's Quota per se. It can often be a necessary tool to achieve gender balance. However, it is clear from the historical case studies exemplified above, that for the Quota to be effective, there needs to be a general social acceptance among the public that there is an unjust status quo, and the Quota is necessary to change it.

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AFRICA

At present there are over 50 million children worldwide who receive no formal education. More than 50% of these children are from Sub-Saharan Africa and the majority of them are female. In nations such as Nigeria women from poor rural areas stay around 2.6 years in education. In the Hausa population the average girl attends school for merely 0.3 years. Improvement in the front of women's education has been slow and if existing trends continue, early school leaving rate will hit 25%, as was the case in 2000.¹ The international community and national governments in Africa must awaken to repair the reverse effect of

current developmental policies. Most affected by unequal access to education are girls in deprived rural areas, where exposure to child labour, the effects of natural disasters and political conflicts, disease, disability, ethnicity, and most importantly, gender discrimination prevent them from entering or completing formal education

Education entails more than textbooks, it is vital in making for adults who are capable of taking care of themselves and aware of their rights. For women in Africa education is also the best shield against abuse and exploitation. The statistics are clear: educated women can better care for not only themselves, but also for their families. There are a myriad of reports from Third World Countries of women, when educated, making better financial decisions in terms of their household. This is commonly recognized by humanitarian organizations like Unicef.² By educating girls, we make for smart mothers who spend money more wisely. This way, an enormous difference can be made even if the family's income is still low. Educated women also marry at a much later age and give birth to significantly less children. *ibid* In the Sub-Saharan Africa even a few more years of education can mean the difference between independence and life-long dependency on male relatives or a husband. Educated women are also highly inclined to secure an education for their daughters and thus set in motion a positive cycle for generations to come. *ibid*

Anu Pauliina Hiekkaranta

RWANDAN RIGHTS: BEYOND PARLIAMENT

JESSICA KILLEEN looks at how representation in government doesn't translate to empowerment.

Since 1979, women's representation in the United States congress has more than quadrupled.¹ In contrast, female representation in Rwanda's parliament has increased from one per cent to more than fifty-three per cent since 1960.² However, these statistics fail to represent the relative empowerment of women in these countries, despite the increase in women's political involvement.

The Cambridge dictionary defines empowerment as "official authority or freedom to do something".³ In Rwanda women hold 56.3% of seats in parliament, and in the United States just 17.8%,^{4,5} yet these numbers contribute little to our understanding of the complexity in the status of women's agency in these two nations. It ought to follow that in those countries where women enjoy greater representation in government and the legislature, women's rights would be more prominent. However, the opposite is true.

The Rwandan Parliament has a minimum quota requiring at least 30% of parliamentary seats to be held by women.⁶ Yet this does not reflect the fact that in Rwanda, while now being the world leader in women's involvement in government, many women continue to be victims of cultural prejudice and frequent rape. Perhaps the best explanation for this trend is the fact that women now outnumber men in population by gender.⁷ The Rwandan genocide, which killed more than 800,000 men,⁸ has allowed women to expand into all aspects of society, much like the effect World War I had on women in Western society. Now, women head over 34% of all households in Rwanda.⁷

While women's empowerment is on the rise in Rwanda, it is not nearly as solidified as the empowerment of women in the United States. After the 1994 genocide, the people of Rwanda were left to pick up the pieces of their shattered nation. More than 50% of children that survived the genocide had to discontinue school and

studies in order to support their families.⁹ Although the government continues to implement progressive policies, 44.9% of the population are still below the poverty line.¹⁰ In contrast to the national parliament, women compose only 33.4% of leadership positions in public institutions and agencies.¹¹

While less than a fifth of seats in the US congress are held by women, in many aspects of society, women enjoy the same freedoms as men: they can vote, own land, access healthcare, etc. Prejudice and gender stereotypes prevent Rwandan women from accessing these basic rights on a daily basis. Due to the overwhelming amount of violence during the Rwandan genocide, 50% of women are infected with HIV and 50% have been widowed.⁷ Professional female workers account for only 2% of the working population, less than half of the male statistic.¹² This disadvantage can be attributed to the lack of education within the female population due to the inaccessibility of the education system. These startling statistics indicate the lack of empowerment Rwandan women have, in contrast to their involvement in politics. This shows that while women appear to have an influential voice in politics, in practice, there is a significant gender gap.

The opposite is true in the United States – where women enjoy greater freedom in society despite having a lower representation in the government and legislature – which is precisely why empowerment and political involvement are not synonymous.

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MIDDLE EAST



With a civil war still raging in Syria, and the recent ousting of senior Muslim Brotherhood party-member and Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi, the Middle East continues to live up to its reputation as a volatile area. An important question to consider, however, is the effect these situations have on women living in the region. Women in the Middle East are in a dismal position – nearly always treated secondary to men, and often as property. But will the new regime in Egypt restore the rights of women? Will the Syrian civil war end and a new, equal society emerge? Unfortunately, I do not anticipate that this will be the case. Looking more closely at the

Syrian and Egyptian conflicts, there is little evidence of imminent change.

The rise in cases of Syrian women being sold into marriage highlights the challenges that women face. Often betrayed by their families, these women are 'purchased' by a wealthy buyer. As a result of the civil war, tens of thousands of Syrian families have been driven into refugee camps, with few options – other than buying their

way out. Until a change in this refugee situation occurs, it is doubtful that families will stop the practice of selling their own daughters.¹

While the thought of a post-Islamist regime in Egypt is promising, anticipation of any real change in the near future is too optimistic. With over 80 per cent of Egyptian women having been sexually assaulted, and many Egyptians blaming the women themselves for these attacks, the norm of women being seen as objects is engrained into Egyptian society. Although the former Morsi-led Islamist government was certainly against equality, Egyptian society itself appears to share that view – and until society changes, the circumstances for women will remain the same.²

These are only a few of the many challenges women face in the Arab world. The work that follows will explore them in more depth, and hopefully lead us towards solutions, and a greater understanding of the problem of gender inequality in the Middle East.

Alex Marinaccio



WOMEN OF THE REVOLUTION

IBRAHIM HAMMAM writes on the role of women in Egyptian politics post Mubarak.

Over two years ago, millions of Egyptians took to the streets, demanding dignity, freedom, social justice, and the end of a despotism. In a short time the people of Egypt managed to bring down the 30-year old regime of Hosni Mubarak.¹ Women played an important role in these events. They participated in large numbers in the protests, camping in the country's squares alongside their fellow countrymen for days on end. Women also volunteered as part of medical teams created to care for street injuries that occurred. Additionally, Egyptian women queued for hours in front of election polls to vote in the referendum, for the President, and for the parliamentary elections.² Throughout these events, which took almost three years, it seemed obvious to any outsider that Egyptian women play an important role in Egyptian politics. However, the Egyptian revolution has betrayed women. This article will focus on the political role of the Egyptian women and how this role has been affected.

Since the revolution, the political empowerment of Egyptian women has been reduced under the two consecutive regimes that emerged; those of the military and the Muslim Brotherhood. A brief analysis of the elections confirms this. In the most recent parliamentary elections held in 2012, only twelve women were amongst the 498 members of the Lower House of Representatives, representing less than two per cent. This is a dismal number compared to the twelve per cent women's representation in Parliament pre-revolution.³ More so, of the twelve members, two were appointed while only nine were elected with none of these women holding a leadership role.⁴

Since these elections, the parliament was dissolved on court orders issued by The Constitutional Court as the process was deemed unconstitutional. Similarly, the Shura Council elections (the equivalent of the UK House of Lords or the US Senate), resulted in the election of a body composed of five per cent women, of which more than half were appointed by the former Muslim Brotherhood President Mohamed Morsi.⁵ And finally, the Constituent Assembly, selected by Morsi from amongst the Shura Council members to formulate the new constitution, had only six women from its 100 members. However, many of the members (both men and women) who represented non-Islamists resigned confirming the fears that the rights of women and minorities would not be upheld in the constitution. This was largely the case when President Morsi revealed the final version of the proposed document.⁶

Apart from the electoral process, the executive branch of the government has, in past decades, upheld the tradition of appointing at least one or two women ministers within the cabinet. Former President Morsi continued to uphold that tradition under the Cabinet of Prime Minister Hesham Qandil, by accepting the appointment of Nagwa Khalil as the Minister of Insurance and Social Affairs, and Nadia Zakhary as the Minister of Scientific Research. However, these ministries are not amongst the powerful ministries in the Cabinet and therefore these appointments can be understood to merely appear inclusive.⁷

It is also worth mentioning that under the Islamists parliaments of the Muslim Brotherhood, laws that intended to improve women's quality of life were reviewed in parliamentary committees. These laws included the Khula laws, which allowed women to divorce their husbands, protection against female circumcision, and the age restriction laws banned forcing marriage on girls

before the age of eighteen. The absence of women politicians in powerful roles of government has showed how the voices of women are no longer heard at a national level.⁸

Now that we have reviewed the facts and confirmed that Egyptian women have a largely reduced role in politics, let us try to explain the disparity between the heavy involvement of women in the election process as voters and their weak representation in the legislative and executive branches of government. The rights of women were not even explicitly protected by the constitution that was drafted under the rule of former President Morsi.

First, the decrease in the number of women members of parliament post-revolution can be linked to the revoked set of positive discrimination laws previously introduced that aimed to encourage the political participation of women. Indeed, in 2009, a quota system was introduced requiring at least 64 seats (twelve per cent of the parliament to be given to women. These laws were commonly known as the "Suzanne Laws" referring to former First Lady Suzanne Mubarak. Following the revolution, many of the issues that had been promoted under the old regime were revoked regardless of their benefit or relevance, but simply because they symbolized that regime.⁹

At the same time, this situation worked to the benefit of the Islamists who were of the opinion that a women's place in society is best served from home rather than in taking up public office. Only two female ministers were appointed during the rule of President Morsi whilst several cabinet shuffles took place, each time increasing the overall number of Islamists ministers. As a result, women's rights in Egypt took a backseat from mid-2011 to mid-2013 and became almost irrelevant in the minds of politicians. However, there is reason to hope after the June 2013 popular uprising that led to the downfall of Morsi's Islamist regime. In the current interim Cabinet, there are three female ministers, one of which holds the important portfolio of the Media. In addition, the current Constituent Assembly appointed to draft a new constitution includes five prominent females with experience in women and gender rights.

One of the greatest outcomes of this revolution has been the expansion of civil society. Civil society has created parallel democratic entities in opposition to the Egyptian government's often hostile attitude towards women's rights. Civil society organisations encourage and promote women rights and empowerment, and have put in place self-sustainable programs for community development, delivery of medical assistance, and education programs. Civil Society in Egypt, represented by the likes of the Resala Foundation, The Egyptian Food Bank, The Magdy Yacoub Heart Foundation and Dar El Orman Charity, is thriving.

Egyptians expected immediate change to the better after ousting Mubarak, but we have to acknowledge that sustainable change has to happen over time and hence we need to be more patient and work hard towards stability and progress.¹⁰

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BETTER UNDER STRONG-MEN

ALEXANDER STOLZ discusses why women in the Middle East should fear the political dominance of populist Islamists.

Irony is rife in the streets of the Middle East. Alongside the burnt out carcass of Mubarak's Hizb Al Watani building there is a slew of uncollected rubbish and scores of lugubrious young men milling around the streets of Cairo's Tahrir square.¹ The aspirations of the people could not be sated with the destruction of Mubarak's political headquarters alone. The task of re-modelling the state will be arduous and fraught with complications given the political terrain. In all the exuberance of the Arab Spring, the rights of women, particularly when it came to security, have been a subject overlooked by many commentators and academics. The power vacuum that followed the removal of regional secular autocrats has largely been assumed by Islamists. These men, with a political-Islamic vision for governance, were not the ones who took to the streets and died in the protests leading to the ouster of the likes of Ben Ali, Mubarak and perhaps Bashar Al Assad. These religious actors now hold the reins of power in many countries of the region and are shaping the political landscape in their image. All those who wish to see the promotion of women's rights should take heed. The Muslim Brotherhood, and all those who fall under the Political-Islamic umbrella, is the antinode to women's material and social progress. This article will seek to answer one simple, yet puzzling question: Which political system best serves the interests of women in the immediate post-revolutionary Middle East?

Democracy should be encouraged.² In the West it is believed to be the ideal form of government which guarantees maximum liberty for all. To a large extent that axiom holds true. The recent wave of democratic movements to sweep the Middle East, such as the election of Hamas in the Gaza strip in 2006, or the dominance of Shia political militias in Iraq and Lebanon, have thrown such popular wisdom into serious disarray.³ The self-proclaimed and incessantly stated objective of the Muslim Brotherhood, and their political progeny Hamas, is to create an Islamic state. In such a state, women become legal children, deprived of any liberty and are utterly dependent on men for all necessities, akin to Afghanistan under the Taliban. We have seen this before and there is no reason to believe that the desires of such propagators have changed. The same channels of money from the Gulf continue to fill their coffers and with the petrodollars, come the pernicious ideas of Wahhabism. When the Front Islamique du Salut, an Islamic political group, came to power "democratically" in Algeria in the early 1990s, they passed legislation making women legal children and filled secular state schools with Wahhabi ideology. The parallels to contemporary Egypt are germane and serve as a harbinger. In Algeria, the establishment, le pouvoir, effectively eradicated the Islamist from the political arena. Women in Algeria were part and parcel of the eradicateurs movement



which actively supported the military in their dealing with the Islamists and their terrorist offshoots. The Algerians had the perspicacity then, as some within the military establish in Egypt do now, to appreciate the peril posed by such people.

The dominance by the Islamists will be the graveyard of any progress, especially when it comes to scientific and cultural gains. Any movement predicated upon the belief that the purported "afterlife" is of primary importance and that life on earth is simply a passage to a mythical paradise is not only deeply offensive to rationality but also tantamount to political, economic and social suicide. All accountability to rational governance is lost, and material and social progress take a distant second seat to Islamic inculcation. One only has to look to contemporary Islamic states like Iran or Saudi Arabia to witness the subjection of women by the religious authorities. In such countries, the Imams and Ayatollahs are venerated as little gods on earth and are equally feared.

The nature of the religious beast is such that it preys upon the vulnerable and destitute. In the lead up to the 2012 elections in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, already well-established within the social fabric, ordered the Imams to tell their congregations to vote for the Morsi or hell's gates would await them. Such a message would strike a Western audience as ludicrous, yet in a country with a poverty rate of 40% and an equally high illiteracy rate, the message was taken to heart. There are fewer women now in Parliament in the countries concerned than prior to the revolution. Attacks on women, specifically sexual assault has reached epidemic proportions. 99% of women in Egypt report having been sexually assaulted in the past year. This sickening reality has a multifaceted pathology, yet the prime reason sexual assaults reached such levels is sadly rather simple: the vanguards of stability needed are gone. Policemen and the security apparatus, though venal and subservient to their political paymasters, did ensure a certain level of safety. Sexual harassment has been a mainstay of Egyptian life for many years however, the precipitous removal of the secular state gravely exacerbated the situation. Imams encourage their flocks to purge the impure elements from

Islamic society. Uncovered women become legitimate targets in the eyes of these men. What use is your right to vote if you are constantly sexually assaulted and are unable to move around freely? In the hierarchy of liberties, security trumps all. Without security, all other freedoms quickly dissipate and a climate of fear permeates society, rendering all other freedoms a distant farce. Self-appointed religious mobs prowl the streets and in ad hoc manner, enforce their version of Islamic piety. Rape is used a judicial tool in Saudi Arabia and Iran with the complete blessing of the Mullahs and the judicial institutions. It is now employed by young men in Cairo in an equally brutal manner and enjoys the same sanctimonious approval within the religious establishment.

This menace must be combatted. The reasons enumerated above highlight the toxic nature of religion in politics and its particular rending in the Middle East. The women of the region need enough breathing room if they are to enter the corridors of power. Organic growth can only be achieved if the influence of the clerics is kept at bay. The educational establishment must rid itself of its religious indoctrination, least if young girls strive to be more than housewives and mothers. The courts must also firmly resist temptations to implant Sharia law. It is imperative that the police and the army regain the upper hand in the street and maintain law and order. The young men who rape and assault with impunity must be punished. Likewise those within the clergy who promote such notions must be equally harshly prosecuted. It is self-evident which entity can best accomplish such tasks. Most importantly, the West should refrain from making misplaced value judgements when the military in Egypt, with the overwhelming approval of the people, restores legitimacy. The removal of thousands Muslim Brotherhood supporters is possibly regrettable. That is the price to pay if millions of Egypt's women are to even hope for a chance of equality.

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SOCIETY AND SEXISM

LYNN DAVIES looks for answers from the Egyptian Family Planning Campaign.

With 85 million inhabitants and counting, Egypt is the most populous nation in the Middle East.¹ Though recent instability has made the problems of a large citizenry ever more pronounced, contemporary Egyptian demographics are revered as the aftermath of a remarkably effective experiment in Entertainment-Education. The family planning campaign of the late 1980s has been recognised as 'an exemplary model for many developing countries,'² having tackled a widespread shortage of contraceptive services. Most important, however, was its ability to triumph over an extraordinarily high-fertility culture.

Until the 1960s, the idea of 'family planning' in Egypt was both a foreign and a religiously controversial one. High fertility rates at the turn of the century were checked by high infant mortality, and when resources honed in on health and sanitation development throughout the 1920s, static fertility rates combined with declining infant mortality to create a prolonged period of unchecked growth. Although many officials had found these new rates alarming, fears that a diminished peasant population would cause a slump in the cotton industry led government policy to maintain a pro-fertility stance. Additionally, post-war policies still associated the power of the military with the number of men it could dress into uniform, and mothers of large families were given medals in recognition of their role as productive citizens.³ Officials had hoped that smaller families would accompany a pending national shift towards modernity and capitalism, despite research into various nations which proved that development did little to slow population growth.⁴ Providing the essential breaking point was the 1960 Census, which revealed that Egypt's population stood at 26 million, with an average fertility rate of 7.3 and an annual growth rate of 2.34 per cent. ⁵By 1962, a charter had raised the issue of diminished resources and per-capita funds, and population control through systematic intervention became official government policy.⁶

Phase 1: Production and Distribution

Although Egypt's family planning campaign began in the 1960s, the first phase is widely regarded as a failure. Built upon the initiative of American demographers, it saw a narrow and concentrated emphasis on the production and distribution of contraception. The development and assimilation of pills and IUDs was succeeded by a plethora of newly designed 'cafeteria clinics,' in which the presentation of a 'buffet' of contraceptive services coaxed female patients into an illusion of control.⁷ The state opted for a high-visibility promotion in order to broaden awareness of available methods, even going so far as to place an official 'family planning stamp' on the national identification cards of female participants.⁸ This strictly technological approach was at odds with the social outreach advocated by women's groups,⁹ and the project's pioneers have since been accused of 'treating women's minds and bodies as incidental, and social interaction and cultural understanding as secondary.'¹⁰ In 1970, the dismal

shift in fertility rates was seen to have bolstered calls for a more humanitarian approach, and by 1972, the original campaigning model was discarded.¹¹

In examining the reasons for this initial failure, the tension between religion and contraception cannot be ignored. Outspoken opponents feared that unrestricted contraception would guard unmarried women from the consequences of immoral behaviour and thus encourage promiscuity,¹² whilst wider Islamic belief challenged the compatibility of family planning with principles that called for the religion's demographic growth. Shrouded in rumours and mired in negative associations with the West, contraception developed an incapacitating stigma.

Perhaps the most important contributor to this campaign's failure, however, was its sheer incompatibility with the most basic desires of the adult population. Much of the campaign's initial publicity operated on the premise that Egyptian adults would be eased into family planning by the promise of a higher standard of living. Outreach sessions in 1965 instead revealed that higher numbers of children amassed greater social value than a high level of disposable income.¹³ When faced with two opposing images, one depicting a small, affluent family and the other depicting a large, unkempt, and underprivileged family, Egyptian women were more likely to view the latter as happy and the former as 'oppressed.' An outreach session with Egyptian men unveiled similar results. Made to view video footage of a small family and a large family, both of whom lived on 40 Egyptian pounds per month, the only response of the male audience was that they, too, would have ten children if they made the same income. In spite of the higher disposable income they entailed, smaller families were utterly incompatible with what contemporary Egyptians believed to lead to happiness.

Childbearing was an integral part of Egypt's feminine ideal, but it was just as definitive in constructions of masculinity. A host of religious and cultural rituals marked the various stages of pregnancy and infancy, and it was common practice for women and men to adopt the name of their first-born son as a rite-of-passage into parenthood.¹⁴ Offspring were inextricably linked to social status, and access to contraception would continue to be trivial so long as Egyptian culture maintained a pro-fertility stance.

Phase 2: Entertainment Education

Mass media activities only began in earnest in 1978, when the State of Information Services (SIS) in Egypt created a family planning communication centre. Beginning with apocalyptic broadcasts of the problem posed by rapid population growth, these initial attempts at raising awareness failed to bridge the gap between the problem and the listener, neither placing responsibility in the hands of citizens nor informing them of the ways in which their fertility choices could help.¹⁵ By 1985, there was widespread recognition that information needed to descend to



a more human level, and the government launched a new offensive with an emphasis on television. Seeking both to educate and to destroy the stigma of contraceptive use, the campaign progressed from televised advertisements to one-shot, 15-minute dramas which featured relatable Egyptian characters engaged in open discussion about family planning. The reception of these shorts proved to be so encouraging that they culminated in much longer and sophisticated productions.¹⁶

Designed over the course of two years by Egypt's Centre for Development, The Family House was the state's first comprehensive attempt to use television series as health education. Through its accurate depiction of the clothing, lifestyle, environment, moral values and social customs which evince Egyptian culture, the series presented a cast of characters with whom its scattered audiences could develop strong identifications. Additionally, the series included both urban and rural storylines at various levels of wealth, thus curbing the potential alienation of large sectors of the population. Both gripping and climactic, the storyline was rife with the real-world challenges of drug addiction, AIDs, child brides, child spacing, and overcrowded families. In line with its emphasis on health-related and socioeconomic problems, all medical information presented in the storyline was planned by doctors, and simple colloquial Arabic meant that it was accessible at every societal strata. As a result, state-certified medical information and anti-natalist propaganda moulded seamlessly with entertaining plot twists and the growth of well-loved characters.¹⁷

The series was first broadcast across Egypt and Morocco in 1993. When 630 adults were gathered for a survey that year, only 30 of the 630 participants had not seen the show. Results of the survey found that The Family House had reached out to 95 per cent of Egypt's adult population, and that 80 per cent had learned beneficial information as a result.¹⁸

Contraceptive prevalence, having dragged along at 24 per cent in 1980, skyrocketed to 47 per cent by 1992 and 60 per cent by 2000. Although this development coincided with the expansion and increased quality of contraceptive services, studies conducted in the mid-1990s suggest that at least 80 per cent of the increased prevalence of contraceptive use in Egypt was due to an overall shrink in the preferred family size.¹⁹ The case for televised education is made stronger by the fact that rates of contraceptive use lagged so heavily until the 1980s, although contraception had been available since the 1930s, and a comprehensive family planning campaign had functioned since the early 1960s. Causality cannot be guaranteed, but there is certainly a relationship between the development of educational television series and the sudden acceleration of contraceptive prevalence rates from 1980.

Recalling the women in the 1965 outreach session who had associated large, underfed families with happiness and small, well-to-do families with 'oppression', the change in contraceptive prevalence and the dramatic decline of total fertility rates (from 7.3 in the 1960s to 3.0 in 2008) suggest a major shift in what Egypt's cultural hegemony considers to be the ideal family size. Some experts have tried to dismiss this shift as a symptom of modernity, because falling fertility rates are normally associated with women's increased participation in the work force.²⁰ A 2008 study, however, revealed that 79 per cent of Egyptian mothers do not work.²¹ Moreover, hegemonic values stand in the way of the ideal two-child family even in the aftermath of a successful transition towards contraceptive prevalence. The same 2008 study revealed that Egyptian women with one living son are significantly less likely to plan a third birth than those who have only daughters.²² Not only are these figures an affront to postulations of Egyptian modernity, but they are also a strong indicator that the new 'normalcy' posited in the televised campaigns of the 1980s and 1990s (all of whom did little to challenge female domestication) had succeeded in becoming reality.

Such studies reveal that legislation and supply are not enough to incite social change. The value system that governed Egyptian citizens needed to change as well – and the revised campaign of the late 1980s, crowned the 'gold standard for gender-sensitive development',²³ did exactly that.

Controlling information, Manipulating people

The ability for mass media representations of reality to become mirrored in the real world is of little surprise to many. In his 1995 paper, 'The Use of Television Series in Health Education', researcher Farag Elkamel underlines a few of the many cases in which mass media or Entertainment-Education (EE) has been used to instigate social change. It's Not Easy, a Ugandan film that dramatised the harrowing reality of AIDS, was so effective in the message it sent that those who had viewed the film were found to be more than twice as likely to use a condom as those who had not. A planned media campaign in the US popularised the concept of the 'designated driver' through its insertion into TV dialogue and short spots, and a subsequent survey revealed that 52 per cent of Americans under the age of 30 had acted as a designated driver. In Mexico, a yearlong television series titled Ven Conmigo was broadcasted in 1976 to advocate literacy. The series caused an enormous spike in registrations for literacy classes in the Open Education system that year with 840,000 registrants – nine times the number of registrants in the previous year, and twice that of the registrants in the following year. Finally, a music video in the Philippines which called for youths to postpone

sex and avoid unwanted pregnancy was proven to enhance communication between youths and their parents, as well as sparking 150,000 calls to the sexual responsibility hotline which was promoted in the video.²⁴

There is suggestive evidence of a relationship between mass media and societal hegemonies. But acknowledging the positive impact of planned entertainment begs the question of whether mass media may create harmful patterns in reality. Elkamel was quick to underline the potential for unplanned media to have unintentional consequences, citing a United States study which suggested that exposure to violent fictional stories can trigger imitative deaths. Drawing on data compiled by the National Centre for Health Statistics in 1979, the incidences of suicides, motor vehicle deaths, and accidents were seen to rise immediately following 'soap opera' suicide stories.²⁵

While the ability of fictional storylines to trigger imitative deaths may feel like a stretch, questions over the extent to which media can harm public opinion have a long legacy. As early as 1977, concern was expressed over the ways in which the reinforcement of gendered stereotyping in advertisements may be hindering women's progression into the workplace. In a statement that highlighted the media's role in the formation of public opinion, Phylliss Sewell, Vice President of Federated Department Stores, said of the advertisements that 'we will achieve wide acceptance only if there is recognition that women have varying abilities, attitudes, and styles – just as men do.'²⁶

Studies have continued to address the impact of Mass Media on women until today. A 2011 study explored the impact of sexual images on women's self-perception, after the recent departure from sexually passive to sexually empowered images of women in the advertisements had been paraded by promoters as an act of feminist liberation. The results revealed that, immediately after viewing the advertisements, women placed more value in the visual attributes of their bodies – weight, muscle tone, sexual appeal – than the functional ones – coordination, strength, fitness. This shift in attitude was referred to as an increase in 'self-state objectification'. Moreover, all sexualised images, whether passive or 'empowered', were associated with increased weight dissatisfaction among female viewers.²⁷ Another 2011 study, this time into the role of agency in women's use of cosmetic surgery, found that women who had undergone plastic surgery exhibited significantly greater levels of media consumption than those who had not, in addition to endorsing more covert sexual beliefs and exhibiting lower self-esteem.²⁸ An Australian study in the same year found that sexualised images in the media were associated with increased depression, low self-worth, envy, dissatisfaction and other more serious mental health issues amongst ageing women. The researchers also hypothesised that the banishment of older women from mass media may be contributing to their marginalization in mainstream society.²⁹

There appears to be a consensus, among experts and women alike, that the sexualised media we see today is negatively influencing women's mental health and reinforcing their subjugated position within a patriarchy. The impact of sexualised media on men, however, is just as crucial in determining the gender dynamic within societies. The notion that sexualised images of women create primitive responses in men may feel overused, but a recent study at MIT revealed that men actually experience different neurological responses to women, depending on whether they are humoured or sexualised. In viewing these images, the area of the brain which lights up when contemplating the intentions of other human beings remains inactive.³⁰

The extent to which the abundance of sexualised imagery in present day media has caused this (almost literal) objectification of females to spill into everyday life has yet to be put under the microscope, but a 2011 study into consumer behaviour has found that sexualised imagery does have a significant impact on men's pro-social behaviour. The experiment was designed from an evolutionary perspective, in which viewing sexualised imagery is believed to ignite a 'mating motive' within men. This impacts men's consumer behaviour, leading to more conspicuous consumption, but it also has consequences outside of consumer choices and is associated with increased selfishness and the pursuit of instant gratification. Men who had viewed sexualised images were found to endorse less belief statements which showed concern for others, evaluated a product less favourably when an advertisement emphasized the wellbeing of others, and were less likely to choose a green or ethical product. They were also less likely to show an interest in charity or volunteering, unless those activities had explicitly beneficial implications for the men themselves.³¹

This clash of interests between the good citizen and the selfish consumer is scratching the surface of a much deeper issue; namely, the profiteering which determines what type of images will surround us, and thus – to an extent – what type of ideas will become mainstream. Size zero models ignite weight dissatisfaction, and that, in turn, sells diet books and make-up and everything else it takes for women to feel presentable amid many slender, sparkling, surgically and digitally modified beauties. Pornography is a 97 billion dollar industry dominating 12 per cent of all internet space,³² and if increased brutality will sell, then increased brutality will prevail – and, as a host of new research suggests,^{33,34} it is increased brutality that may gradually become normal. Egyptian family planning was a no less capitalist endeavour, aimed at slowing population growth so that resources could hone in on development and



a rising GDP. The wider world of mass media both reflects and reinforces the complex value system in which it is created, and its relationship with prevailing social attitudes must be recognised in order to effect social change. Legislation alone can never be enough. The question of whether or not such endeavours are profitable, however, remains an unresolvable obstacle to the construction of healthier gendered realities.

Real World Implications: The Free Market of Good and Bad Ideas

In light of India's most recent feminist wave, plans to develop new TV series and movies which challenge the singular image of a ruthless masculinity are growing.³⁵ This is a systematic attempt to end India's long legacy of sexual violence, donned with the misguiding title of 'eve-teasing'.³⁶ The results which Entertainment-Education can yield when proliferated through such a dominant medium have been demonstrated through Elkamel's American, Mexican, Ugandan and Filipino examples, and part of Egypt's success was precisely in its use of television as a major medium for the inception of new ideas. Illiteracy rates were so high in 1991, accounting for 65 per cent of women and 35 per cent of men, that print media alone would have alienated a significant proportion of the adult population. Moreover, television ownership in Egypt was astoundingly high, with as much as 90 per cent of nightly viewers habitually tuning in to TV series.³⁷ The control of televised information guaranteed the education of millions, and it is safe to assume that the control of information in any context will lead to a measure of control over people.

The present-day scale of information flow, however, poses a glaring obstacle

to the possibility of such comprehensive interventions into gender issues today. Where the control of information in the pre-internet era lay in the hands of publishers and licensed TV producers, information now is a sublime and autonomous entity which any subculture, extremist, or disconcertingly hormonal teenager can shape around the edges. To complicate things further, terms like 'censorship' crowd the controversial banning of 'Blurred Lines' on our university campus, while 'freedom of information' targets the recent decision of the UK government to crack down on internet pornography.³⁸ In this new 'free market' of good and bad ideas, we can rest assured that censorship is becoming an increasingly intangible concept – but just as increasingly intangible is our ability, and in a sense our right, to contest the exchange of harmful ways of thinking. Expected to tolerate the intolerable in the name of a shaky definition of freedom, formed on the basis of an equally shaky construction of universal human rights, mass media today is not hinged on the empowerment of the oppressed. Media, and thus culture itself, is driven by those who benefit at our expense.

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NORTH AMERICA

REGIONAL EDITOR



It was welcome news on October 9th, when Barack Obama officially announced his nomination for the head of the US Central Bank. Janet Yellen could be the first female head of this organization in American history.¹ In the midst of a government shutdown, a divided Congress, and a tumultuous economy, this news is encouragement for women to influence their government in any way they can.

With more than half of the US population composed of women, it is a wonder why only 46.2% of them actually vote. In fact, with women's rights having radically progressed within the last half century, why is it then, that on average,

a working American woman's salary in 2011 was \$37,118 compared to an average American man's salary: \$48,202?² What errors in rational judgment, what holes in American society, what mistakes allowed this 21st century democracy to enable this blatant disregard for inequality, based on the mere

matter of gender?

Women hold 57.7% of the US labor force, yet only 41.1% of managerial positions.² Somewhere along the line, there is a disconnect between what the legal rights that women are theoretically allowed, and what rights are physically implemented in society. It has been over a hundred years since the Suffragettes fought for women's right to vote, and in this century, the eagerness to involve oneself in politics has done nothing but decline.³ Janet Yellen is a force to be reckoned with, as a leading economic analyst as well as an inspiration for millions of young women afraid of entering territories previously reserved for men.¹ It is up to this generation of brilliant young minds to get their foot in the door. Whether it is in politics, professional careers, leadership, or managerial positions, it is the only way to finally bridge the gender gap, and let the next generations of American women understand the true meaning of equality.

Jessica Killeen

RELUCTANCE TO SMASH THE POLITICAL GLASS CEILING

LUCY HUGHES comments on Anne Marie Slaughter's 'Women Still Can't Have It All'.

One of the most powerful nations in the world ranks 80th out of over 140 countries in the percentage of women in parliament; The United State of America has a mere 20% representation of women in the Senate and an even lower 17.8% in the House of Representatives as shown in the most recent IPU survey.¹ As arguably one of the most advanced societies of the global community and an oft-cited model of Western democracy, how can such a vital part of the American citizenry go without proper representation?

The argument that women simply don't 'want' positions of political power is thrown about with an almost casual shrug of indifference by both men and women as an easy way of avoiding the hard issues of gender and politics. In Anne-Marie Slaughter's words the women that have made it so far to the top of American politics, business, and other positions of social prestige, are all 'superwomen.' Whether Rhodes scholars or ex-first ladies, the majority of women in American politics have had an incredible amount of opportunity and privilege, along with their natural talents, that have come at a higher sacrifice personally than many of their male counter-parts will ever have had to experience.²

The issue of female representation as a whole seems to be a 'non-issue' in American politics. The 90s saw a rise in positive discrimination campaigns, such as the patronisingly named 'Blair's babes' in the UK - a case in which 120 female MPs were elected into UK Parliament 1997³ The Labour campaign was slowly discredited after many of the women became disillusioned and stepped down from their positions. Similarly, the renewed fight for representational equality, slowly receded to the status of a back-burner issue.

So why don't young women throw themselves into politics and get to work on re-defining those poor percentages? Slaughter herself tells us in her recent

and enlightening article 'Women Still Can't Have It All' that the institutions themselves put off women from taking high-powered career paths because family simply cannot be worked into the lifestyle that comes with that commitment – or if they are then at a cost to the time spent with their children either in early or later life. Admittedly, that is troublesome re-answering, reinforcing the notion that women specifically ought to structure their lives around familial considerations first. The structural challenges facing working people aren't limited to women, however. Slaughter is talking from a non-gender specific perspective in the fact that Congress is structured in a way that, for both men and women, their family issues are seen as a distraction, a poor reason to lessen the work-load.⁴ Many other high-powered careers are now able to cater to creating a more balanced home-work ethic, with part-time office hours, use of modern technology, and better management procedures – so why can't the political institutions adapt as well?

This area of institutionalised behaviour in Washington that Slaughter brings to light is simply one example of many which exist in a wide range of political institutions in varying cultures of differentiating liberal spectrums. The UK is another case in point, ranking 58th in the IPU representational poll, beaten by countries such as Israel, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and, at the top of the list, Rwanda.⁵ After studying Luke's three dimensions of power, I have come to the conclusion that the majority of those in powerful position are men who are prepared to sacrifice family time to pursue their political careers. Because of this, men inherently have the power, consciously or subconsciously, to shape the attitudes, institutional structures, and societal expectations of politicians and the way in which a successful political career can be achieved by both genders.⁶ However, even though this



issue does affect men and women, many aspects of the current situation are particularly unattractive to young women, even if they have the potential to make a real political difference.

It is now a case of young women battling their way through the current political systems so they can make it to top positions and start the slow process of progressive change. For women in particular, it is not the case that there is a lack of 'wanting' to be involved in politics full stop but it is a frightening thought for young female candidates that they have to step up to the undeniably intimidating political world made up of male-dominated institutions - especially at the highest levels of influence. Also, outside the political institutions themselves, we can all collectively exercise the third dimension of power by having these conversations. We can shape our generations' beliefs that women can not only smash the glass

ceiling of politics completely with their own empowerment but work with men to make the concepts and practices of political careers into a healthier and an emotionally well-rounded life choice for both genders to benefit from. If our politicians are in touch with their own social issues and represent both gender perspectives then surely our political institutions will be able to function at their best.

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WOMEN WARRIORS

MICHAEL WIENBERGER *sheds light on the evolution of the female soldier.*

On May 2nd, 2011, a team of 24 highly specialised fighters took out the world's most notorious terrorist, Osama Bin Laden. Of the many commonalities, it is interesting to note that all of the members of Seal Team Six were male.¹ Even the dog, a Belgian Malinois named Cairo, was male, begging the question of what roles women hold in the military. First, a brief history of women in the military will be provided. With this context in place, the current integration of women in the military will be examined. Lastly, the author will explore what future options can be expected.

For the most part, women have traditionally played secondary, yet indispensable roles in the military. Throughout the Roman Empire, women offered logistical support to male soldiers by aiding in transportation, cooking, and nursing.² Though the stories of the Amazon fighters, Jean d'Arc and Mulan still live on, the first reliable record holds that the first female fighters were 18th century Praetorian Guards of the Dahomey Kingdom.³ The first modern all female squadron, known as the Battalion of Death, was established in 1911 by the Soviet Union, merely serving as a propaganda tool.⁴ During both World Wars, women were again given ancillary roles, avoiding front line combat. The first nation to establish female conscription was Israel in 1948, though women did not handle arms in the same manner men did.⁵ On the seas, Norway was the first nation to put women in submarines, though not until 1985.⁶ However, they still only have mandatory conscription for men.

To date, Israel maintains the most equal policies concerning the treatment of women in the army. In fact, just over half of the officers in the Israel Defense Forces are women, and approximately 90% of roles are open to women.⁷ This can be compared to America, where less than 70% of army roles are open to women.⁸ However, this is set to change as currently in the United States the Gender Equality in Combat Act 2012 is being implemented.⁹ This act will allow women to serve at the front lines, enabling them to take advantage of more opportunities and employment benefits. However, the full implications of said legislation are unknown, as the American military can continue to make exceptions until 2016. Though an increase in the number of female leaders in the American military is expected, as to date America have only appointed two four star female generals.¹⁰

While the trending zeitgeist is one of liberalisation and inclusion, not all have hopped on the bandwagon. Critics point out that had the nations who engaged in both World Wars employed female combatants, repopulation would have decelerated. Put crudely, one man and ten women can have many more children than one woman and ten men. Analysts hold this led to quick repopulation of the Soviet Union after it lost 14 per cent of its population during the Second World War.¹¹ Psychologist Lieutenant Colonel Grossman has also noted that Islamist militants are more likely to fight to the death when faced with a female soldier to avoid the shame of being captured by a woman.¹² This prevents the terrorist from being interrogated, leading to potential loss of valuable information. Some have also noted that the death of a male soldier creates less political turmoil than the death of a woman. Lastly, it is a matter of concern that if captured, women would be more susceptible to rape, though currently the greatest danger lies not in the enemy, but in the fellow soldier, as a woman serving in Iraq had a higher chance of being raped by a colleague than being killed by enemy fire.¹³

It is worth noting though, that conventional warfare with mass casualties is being replaced by technological innovations. Now enhanced bombers and unmanned drones can be used, flying kilometres above the earth or being remotely piloted from a desk in Denver, respectively. Additionally, female troops can aid in the searches of children and women in many parts of the world where men might infringe cultural norms and sensitivities.

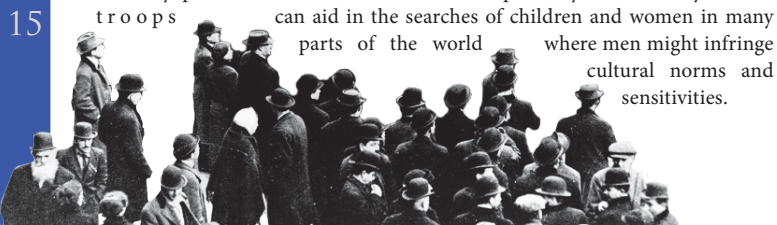
In summation, the inclusion of women in the military reflects an increasingly liberal society. This has been equally noted with the treatment of homosexuals, when American "don't ask, don't tell" policy was brought to an end. The author is of the opinion that despite narrowing inequalities between men and women in the military, many barriers remain. Most notably, the level of sexual assaults that take place in the army reveals an entrenched workplace culture that disregards women as equals. Perhaps an increase in the number of women would make women less vulnerable and isolated. However, not all inequalities should be condemned just by virtue of it being an inequality. In limited situations, discrimination is necessary to fulfil a task in the most efficient manner. Indeed, in the same way women would perform searches, it is the reality that men are better suited to capture Islamist militants. Though it would have been quite the coup de grâce had Osama Bin Laden been captured by an all-female squadron.

On May 2nd, 2011, a team of 24 highly specialised fighters took out the world's most notorious terrorist, Osama Bin Laden. Of the many commonalities, it is interesting to note that all of the members of Seal Team Six were male. Even the dog, a Belgian Malinois named Cairo, was male, begging the question of what roles women hold in the military. First, a brief history of women in the military will be provided. With this context in place, the current integration of women in the military will be examined. Lastly, the author will explore what future options can be expected.

For the most part, women have traditionally played secondary, yet indispensable roles in the military. Throughout the Roman Empire, women offered logistical support to male soldiers by aiding in transportation, cooking, and nursing. Though the stories of the Amazon fighters, Jean d'Arc and Mulan still live on, the first reliable record holds that the first female fighters were 18th century Praetorian Guards of the Dahomey Kingdom. The first modern all female squadron, known as the Battalion of Death, was established in 1911 by the Soviet Union, merely serving as a propaganda tool. During both World Wars, women were again given ancillary roles, avoiding front line combat. The first nation to establish female conscription was Israel in 1948, though women did not handle arms in the same manner men did. On the seas, Norway was the first nation to put women in submarines, though not until 1985. However, they still only have mandatory conscription for men.

To date, Israel maintains the most equal policies concerning the treatment of women in the army. In fact, just over half of the officers in the Israel Defense Forces are women, and approximately 90% of roles are open to women. This can be compared to America, where less than 70% of army roles are open to women. However, this is set to change as currently in the United States the Gender Equality in Combat Act 2012 is being implemented. This act will allow women to serve at the front lines, enabling them to take advantage of more opportunities and employment benefits. However, the full implications of said legislation are unknown, as the American military can continue to make exceptions until 2016. Though an increase in the number of female leaders in the American military is expected, as to date America have only appointed two four star female generals.

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When not studying Law, Michael enjoys politics, traveling and spending time with his family, friends and dogs in Canada.

LEANING IN HALLUM TUCK discusses the Gender Gap and Sheryl Sandberg's Politics.

In the spring of 2011 Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook's Chief Operating Officer and perhaps the most recognisable female face in Silicon Valley, told an auditorium full of soon-to-be Barnard College graduates that men still ran the world. From a statistical point of view she was right: women hold 21.4% of parliamentary seats worldwide and occupy only 4.5% of the CEO positions at Fortune 100 companies.¹ Sandberg's speech indicted Silicon Valley as a boys club for millennial geniuses and provided a dire appraisal of American workplaces, suggesting that the gender revolution was stuck in the mud. Despite a trend towards gender parity in employment throughout the 20th century, recent labour participation data supports this claim: 82% of men ages 25-54 have jobs, while only 69.5% of women of the same age are employed.² In May of this year *Lean In*, Sandberg's solution to lingering inequality, was published. For her, the gap is simple: young women are less likely to achieve than men because of social pressure to favour domestic rather than professional life, and because social standards marginalise ambitious women.

Sandberg's solution, however, is what has differentiated her from other public figures. *Lean In* argues that women are their own greatest obstacles, and that only by forcing themselves to be more ambitious and drive harder bargains can they close the gender gap. Better, Sandberg thinks, to push for the corner office than to press for structural reforms. *Lean In* is equal parts encouragement and challenge: encouraging women facing career obstacles to be more ambitious and more confident about their core skills.

Yet for all of the positive representations in *Lean In*, Sandberg's politics are profoundly coloured by a high-tech conservatism that assumes the corporate world is more or less meritocratic. Silicon Valley might be an ultra-masculine pressure cooker, but Sandberg believes it is one worth saving. This is the central problem with *Lean In*. Sandberg doesn't want to change the technocratic establishment – she wants to change how women behave within the establishment.

On an abstract level, Sandberg's brand of feminism is emblematic of the political ideology that has developed out of centres of technological innovation like Silicon Valley. Sandberg's firm belief in individual ambition belies her faith in cultural capitalism. It is a worldview profoundly suspicious of the powers of the state. Due to fears of Internet censorship, it is concerned with violations of digital privacy and expresses a distaste of bureaucratic regulation of free enterprise. The figureheads of this technocratic movement – Google's Eric Schmidt, Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and Amazon's Jeff Bezos among others – have been outspoken supporters of immigration reform and gay marriage, yet they have been silent on issues like healthcare and tax reform. REF To accept *Lean In*, one needs to suspend any doubt or disbelief in the virtues of Silicon Valley capitalism.

Lean In, both as a book and as a grassroots movement, thus falls flat because of its disregard for communal politics in favour of individual responsibility. Rather than calling on communities to make the distribution of childrearing and family life more equitable, whether through advocating state-sponsored solutions or calling on households to question established gender roles, Sandberg has built her feminist

revolution on individual women. Her distrust of the government and the welfare state cordons off the private sector as the only legitimate sphere for achieving gender equality, ignoring the responsibility of the state to enact reform. A recent study by Francine D. Blau and Lawrence M. Kahn at Cornell University has shown that nearly a third of the difference in female labour supply between the U.S. and other wealthy countries was because of the absence of family-friendly social policies.³ By placing the onus of change on the backs of women, Sandberg distances her gender politics from larger debates over the distribution of childrearing duties and the social construction of domestic life.

In this sense, *Lean In* is vulnerable to the general critique of libertarian ideology developed by Susan Moller Okin in *Justice, Gender and The Family*. Although Sandberg seems to understand the degree to which the burden of reproduction marginalises professional women, her solutions assume a domestic sphere and then fail to compensate women for their contribution. As Okin might suggest, *Lean In* neglects the sex-specific productive capacities of women and promotes a socioeconomic world that assumes a singularly male subject.⁴

Similarly, many of Sandberg's critics have focused on her tacit acceptance of social norms. Anne-Marie Slaughter, Professor of Politics at Princeton University and former Director of Policy Planning at the State Department, criticised *Lean In* for accepting male behaviour as the default and the ideal.⁵ *Lean In*, in effect asks women to double down on their careers within a system of employment that is unabashedly hostile to them.

In a recent appearance on *60 Minutes*, Sandberg recounted the story of how she had pleaded with the editor of her high school yearbook to not be named 'most likely to succeed' because "most likely to succeed is not the girl who gets a date to the prom." *Lean In* is Sheryl Sandberg's solution to this problem. Yet her focus on closing the 'ambition gap' between men and women does little more than encourage women to be supremely unrealistic. Encouraging professional women to pursue a full-time job and maintain parental duty is wishful thinking. A 2009 poll from Pew Research Center showed that 62% of working mothers would prefer to work part-time jobs, yet 74% work full time, and only one in ten believe having a mother who works full time is an ideal childhood environment.⁶ If we want to close the gender gap, we need to make parenting schedules compatible with office hours and provide incentives for men to take on a greater share of the burden. Making paid paternity leave an option for working couples would be a good start.

Sandberg is right to suggest that the gender revolution has stalled. Women ignited that revolution fifty years ago by refusing to conform to cultural stereotypes. If it is to be completed we should stop placing the burden of equality on women, and instead change the way we behave as a society.

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THE SILENT SECOND SEX

ANU PAULIINA HIEKKARANTA discusses how women are giving up their agency by buying into pop psychology's gender myths.

Women have suffered from a lack of agency due to external forces for centuries, but in the modern era this illusion of a lack of power is in most respects, entirely artificial and the gender discrimination of past centuries a mere afterthought. In contemporary democratic states, particularly those in the Western hemisphere, with the introduction of policies such as affirmative action, government quotas, and paid maternity leave, it is no longer the case that external barriers alone prohibit women from excelling in their respective professional fields. As expected, there is legislative work left to be done to assure equal treatment in the labour market. However, women now make up around 55% of all university students in the United States¹ and United Kingdom.² Not only are their numbers growing, but it has also been established that women on average outperform their male peers in educational achievements.³ It would appear consistent that this development would eventually translate into more women in leadership positions of all or most faculties and industries. However, as Sheryl Sandberg, the Chief Operating Officer of Facebook and the author of *Lean In*, a 21st century feminist manifesto points out, these statistics have done little to level out the gender ratio at the top.⁴

Out of the world's 195 independent states, only 17 have female heads of state.⁵ Only a little under 1/3 of student governments at the top 50 universities have a female student government president.⁶ Out of all the parliamentary seats in the world, 20% are held by women.⁷ Out of all the Fortune 500 CEOs, 21 are women.⁸ Paradoxically, these numbers have remained astonishingly steady over the past 30 years despite women's success in academics. Statistically, the number of women at the top is no longer showing clear growth. Rather, growth is stagnating or at an unreasonably sluggish pace. In 2010, at a discussion for students at Harvard, Sandberg presented an alarming predicament for the future: "If current trends continue, fifteen years from today, about one-third of the women in this audience will be working full-time and almost all of you will be working for the guy you are sitting next to."⁹ Generations have passed since the feminist revolution ignited. A century has gone and yet men still irrefutably continue to run the world and women lack voice where most significant decisions are being made. What is it about the psychological reality of today that stands in the way of equality?

Sandberg offers a number of explanations, including the negative success-likability correlation for women, socialization and gender specific parenting, as well as internal barriers which result in only 7% of women negotiating their first salary out of college compared to 57% of men.¹⁰ Additionally, Sandberg raises the issue of the "tiara syndrome", a term coined by the founders of Negotiating Women, Inc., exemplified by women who "expect that if they keep doing their job well someone will notice them and place a tiara on their head."¹¹ This policy is productive in collecting A's but does little to advance career prospects in the actual workforce, where a level of self-promotion and a certain lack of modesty are absolutely essential. In my freshman year of high school, an insightful English teacher provided me with my first glimpse of reality by giving none of the female students in his class the highest grade, "I do not remember the girls' names; I have yet to hear most of them speak. I would be doing you a disservice by rewarding behavior that will ultimately make you invisible in this world", he explained. In university it became obvious that the male students were more assertive, bolder, took more part in conversations and spoke up, often regardless of their level of knowledge on a particular subject. Tutorials exemplified the phenomenon: the male students led discussions and outperformed the women in participation grades. The men were also grabbing leadership positions left, right and centre, as they should. Exceptions and anomalies existed of course, but the overall trend remained astonishingly consistent.

The majority of women had grown accustomed to being rewarded for behaviour that would ultimately make them less successful in the

long run, despite the fact that they were still scoring the highest grades. Women are not making it to the top, not simply because of unfair treatment in the workforce, but because they more willingly give up the fight for their turn to speak and consequently, hand over their seat at the table of executives. Their male counterparts do not have it easier because of favourable treatment, but because they reach for their spot at the top more eagerly than women. The tiara syndrome at the university level is the beginning of the end for many bright female students. Indeed, no such tiara exists in the jungle that is the fast-paced labour market of today.

As it started to become evident that women with the same opportunities as men were still making a consistently smaller salary, and were still barely represented in national governments and other affluent positions, society as a whole began to feel uncomfortable. This created a market for a desirable explanation for the surprisingly persistent social hierarchy. While Sandberg offers a range of causes, she does not comment on the highly gendered reality constructed by psychologists. The common narrative underlying modern psychological research is one where women do not pursue career advancement as aggressively as men because it is not natural for them to do so, because women are more nurturing, more monogamous and more invested in long-term relationships. In other words, less suitable for a successful career. Pop psychology, namely "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus"¹² and the likes have successfully painted a crooked and exceptionally gendered worldview. The idea of a monogamous female for one is a modern invention and certainly rooted in the Victorian era. In Ancient Greece and any epoch prior to the 1700's it was a common understanding that women's passion knew no limits and monogamy was anything but natural to them.¹³ Psychological knowledge has only later been employed to construct a reality where gender differences are highlighted. In the current capitalist realm, effective stereotyping, focus grouping, and certain levelling of the masses results in high gains. The Mars vs. Venus ideology has been heavily marketed to us - and we have bought it. According to this ideology, it makes textbook sense that women are not as successful as men in the same labour market, because men and women are wired entirely differently. Society was thus made to feel better about inequality, handing over collective and personal responsibility for the current state of affairs to genetic predispositions.

Psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists have only recently become aware of the kind of political tool they have created in search for marketable discrepancies between genders, turning a blind eye to the unexciting fact that these alleged biological differences are in fact typically either non-existent or vanishingly small. According to psychologist Christopher Ryan, PhD: "We need to move beyond 'men are from Mars and women are from Venus.' The truth is that men are from Africa and women are from Africa."¹⁴ Monogamy and the illusion of a natural home-maker female may, in fact, be absolutely false, as results indicating insignificant gender differences arguably seldom make it into journals, and consequently never make the headlines.

Pop psychology has made women feel better about waiting to be rewarded and given men the permission to sigh in relief over their guilt. There are no winners in the scenario. Half of the human capital and genius is not being harvested and half of the greatest resources of a society are being wasted. The disconsolate future for generation Y women begs the question: Are the female students of today going to remain witness to the greatness of their male counterparts, or is it time to stop waiting for the tiara? Most importantly, are women going to prove that they are not biologically wired to be powerless?

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INTERNATIONAL

WOMEN IN COMBAT ROLES

PROF. CLAIRE DUNCANSON *explores feminist progresion, equality, and peace.*

In January of this year, the US Secretary of Defense announced that, from 2016, women in the US armed forces will be allowed to serve in combat roles. This lifting of the ban in the States has re-ignited debate in the UK as to whether the same will happen here. Many female British soldiers argue that, if women pass the required tests, all military positions should be open to them. More traditional voices see the move as dangerous, undermining unit cohesion and weakening the military as a fighting force. The issue of women soldiers poses a real challenge for feminists in particular. On the one hand, feminists might be thought to champion the cause of equality and the removal of barriers based on gender. On the other, many feminists have long advocated a strategy of de-militarising foreign policy and working towards non-violent alternatives to resolving conflicts, making it hard to see gains for women in the military as gains for feminism overall. As such, the issue of women soldiers captures neatly the central dilemma of feminism. In seeking to make the world a fairer place, should feminists stress the equality of women with men or the different values that women might bring to political institutions and issues? This brief article introduces the debates over women soldiers, discusses how they perpetuate the equality versus difference dilemma, and asks whether the shift in the focus of western militaries from waging war to peacebuilding shifts the debate beyond the impasse.

Historically (since the World Wars) the debate within feminism has been between two fairly distinct camps.¹ On the one hand, there have been those arguing for the 'right to fight,' drawing on ideas of equality and justice, and, on the other, the anti-militarist feminists, who argue that women entering the military or combat positions merely legitimises an institution which is antithetical to the goals of feminism.

The 'right to fight' feminists make the points that as women are men's equals, they should have the right to do whatever men do; that combat restrictions limit women's opportunities (promotion, perks) beyond access to the particular combat positions; and that they perpetuate stereotypes of women's inferior abilities and social status.² Some draw on theoretical traditions which are more republican than liberal, arguing that women should serve in the military on the same terms as men because they are equal citizens. Given that citizenship is symbolically linked to defence of the nation,³ the only way to be worthy of equal rights is to do equal duty. Moreover, it is wrong to leave the defence of the nation to men; it is thus a matter of democratic participation and justice that women serve as soldiers.⁴ Many feminists have pointed out that, in recent wars in particular where there is no clear division between the front line and the rear, women have been in combat positions for some time; lifting the combat exclusion is thus merely formalising reality and allowing women soldiers to receive credit for risking their lives in the way their male comrades have long done.⁵

Anti-militarist feminists, however, have been sceptical of the claim that participation in militaries can enhance women's equality or citizenship. They have argued that an increase of women in the military and in combat is not good for women, and not good for a more peaceful international order. Far from furthering women's equality, they argue that women are never fully equal in the military. They point to the fact that until recently in many national militaries, women have been barred from combat positions, and, as a result, denied the chance to reach the highest levels of command (with the associated salaries, perks and pensions). Even in national contexts in which restrictions on combat positions have been lifted, women are treated differently: as disruptive or sexualised; as incomplete men. Many studies detail the extent to which women soldiers have to work in order to be accepted – often commenting that they have to be twice as good as the men.⁶

Some feminists point to the way in which military training relies on an opposite, inferior 'woman' to inspire men to attain levels of fitness and aggression. Misogyny, including sexual harassment, is for them therefore almost inevitable, and will not be challenged by an increase in the number of women.⁷ Militaries also depend on feminising the enemy as a means of enabling young men to fight and kill. Joining up legitimises this approach to international relations, increasing the likelihood of war. Furthermore, for some feminists, militaries are implicated in the 'structural violence' that results when public funding goes to military industrial complex rather than meeting basic material needs of the poor.⁸ Finally, rather than accept the conception of citizenship that has it linked to defence of the nation, feminists should criticise and reformulate it.⁹

In making these arguments, many of these feminists draw on an ethic of peace. The claim is not that women are innately more peaceful, but that their position in society – women are often assigned the work of caring – equips them for non-violent responses to conflict situations. In sum, anti-militarist feminists argue that the focus should be on challenging our militaristic society, not legitimise it by joining up.¹⁰

In this brief overview of the arguments, we can see the classic feminist dilemma, dating back to Mary Wollstonecraft's deliberations over the proper basis on which to base arguments for women's citizenship; whether to emphasise equality and fight for the inclusion of women, or emphasise difference, and fight for those different values (in this case peace and nonviolence) to be valorized (Squires 2001).

Over the ensuing decades of feminist work against oppression, it has been clear that both strategies have their limitations. Pursuing a strategy of inclusion means that women are required to assimilate to the dominant gender norm of masculinity – which they are deemed to never quite manage. As such, they are not treated as equal, and, moreover, masculine norms are not challenged. Women exist in the structures as mere tokens, fuelling complacency about further change, including that of challenging masculinities. Yet, pursuing a strategy of reversal risks privileging 'feminine' ways of doing things in ways which are essentialist, i.e. which fix the 'nature' of 'women' as different to men, in ways that oppress women. In other words, it assumes all women are 'naturally' more peaceful. This not only ignores the diversity of women, but has traditionally made women less likely to be taken seriously in public life.

There is a third set of arguments which have been used to argue for women soldiers serving in all positions and in greater numbers in the military. Alongside the liberal and republican arguments, we can identify some more instrumental arguments being deployed – that women should join up because they then can disrupt, subvert, challenge, and even transform the military, and, as a result, international relations.¹¹

Anti-militarist feminists have traditionally responded that such hopes are naïve at best and dangerous at worst. They have argued that there is little evidence that an increase in women or the roles open to them has ever changed militaries.¹² Militaries may use the language of women's rights and equal opportunities to fill the ranks, but women are being duped – there's no commitment to gender change.¹³ Joining up only legitimates and strengthens the institution. Women will not change the military because it is a masculine institution by definition whose central business involves the large scale killing of human beings. It is fundamentally not like other institutions.¹⁴

Yet, arguably the post-Cold War shift in many western militaries to focus on peacebuilding, counter-insurgency and stabilisation operations changes the nature of the debate in interesting ways. If militaries are no longer solely in the business of pursuing national interest through defeating enemies in war, the anti-militarist feminist argument is not quite so compelling. The British military is a long way from being an exemplary peacebuilding actor, but it is worth asking whether women's inclusion in such an institution – one committed to building peace and security in partnership with local actors – would present us with a context in which we can move beyond the traditional debate between equality-stressing 'right-to-fight' feminists and difference-stressing anti-militarist feminists. The instrumentalist arguments – the arguments of those who claim that the entry of more women, to all positions, can be seen as progressive because of its potential transformatory effect – might be worth revisiting. More women soldiers may not be progressive because of any particular 'natural' abilities they bring to the job, but because they challenge fixed ideas about militaries as masculine, and, alongside the shift from militaries from war-fighting organisations to peacebuilding institutions, this has significant implications for global politics. Not only might we have institutions more suited for facilitating genuine peace and security in situations of conflict, but we might start to challenge the gendered dichotomies – such as (masculine)war/(feminized)peace and (masculine)soldier/(feminized)civilian – which underpin and perpetuate conflict and insecurity.

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OLD BOYS CONTINUE TO DOMINATE THE GLOBAL SANDBOX

MARKO SUPRONYUK *on the absence of women in key foreign policy roles and why we need them.*

Women's success in politics, particularly the elevation of female leaders to national legislatures and even to the helm of government, is rightly a cause for celebration. Whenever there is an increase in proportion of female lawmakers and cabinet members, commentators extol these developments as evidence of societal progress. However, it is sometimes easier to note the presence of individuals – often outliers – while overlooking their absence elsewhere. When it comes to women in key foreign policy positions, some of the world's most influential countries, namely the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, can boast of only less than satisfactory records.

A permanent representative serves the crucial and complex function of being the voice of his or her government in the Security Council.¹ This office is indispensable in conducting diplomacy within the international community and may serve as a stepping stone for future foreign ministers. Of the five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the UK, and the US), only the United States has ever had female representatives.² Samantha Power, who began work earlier this year, is America's fourth woman to be appointed to that position.

Considering that the Permanent Five account for over 60% of the global military spending, the job of heading a national defence ministry carries a great deal of responsibility.³ Defence ministers (in the UK, Secretary of State for Defence) are critical in shaping a country's foreign policy, particularly for governments with a history of involvement in foreign conflicts or with extensive networks of military bases abroad. China, Russia, the UK, and the US have never had a female cabinet member overseeing the entire military.⁴ The distinction in this case goes to France, where Michèle Alliot-Marie served as Minister of Defence between 2002 and 2007.

Both abroad and in the United Kingdom, where it is honoured as a Great Office of State, the position of foreign minister or its equivalent is widely regarded as one of the most eminent political jobs.⁵ Between the five of them, the permanent members of the Security Council have had a total of just 13 years of female foreign ministers: Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Clinton each spent 4 years as US Secretary of State; Margaret Beckett was Britain's Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs for 9 months; Michèle Alliot-Marie became the French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs in 2010 only to be forced out 4 months later. Russia and China have never had a female foreign minister.⁶ At present, all five permanent members of the Security Council have a male foreign minister and a male head of government. The field of international relations continues to be dominated by men.

There are of course notable exceptions on the world stage. Baroness Ashton is the EU's first High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy, while UN Special Representative Zainab Bangura has notably spearheaded international efforts to combat sexual violence.⁷ But what accounts for the lack of women within the traditional power structures of the Permanent Five?

During her tenure as permanent representative and later Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright personally encouraged governments to appoint women to top foreign policy positions. In 1993, when she started working at the UN, there were 180 member states and just 7 women serving as representatives.

Albright made a promise to her female colleagues that they could have instant access to her, and therefore to the United States, at any time. When their male counterparts objected to this as an unfair advantage, she advised them that they could resolve the issue by giving up their posts to women. As Secretary of State, Albright annually met with the world's female foreign ministers and encouraged them to undertake common initiatives, which she points out were almost always more effective than the work they undertook separately. In the four years she was on the job, the number of foreign ministers around the globe grew from 8 to 14. The work of this group, which came to be known as the "fearsome fourteen" continues to be a lesson to the entire diplomatic community.⁸

In some diplomatic circles, women's representation suffers not as a result of complacency towards change, but because of strong reluctance to accept the idea that women are capable of holding leadership positions. The Russian foreign policy elite, for example, has been described as "macho" and "virtually all-male." Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov allegedly had a difficult time working with his female US counterparts Rice and Clinton.

A chain-smoking realpolitik adherent, Lavrov shared little with the women in way of political beliefs or personal hobbies, which include hunting and scotch. In meetings he enjoyed angering them and testing their patience. But when John Kerry became America's first male Secretary of State in 8 years, Lavrov welcomed his appointment by calling Kerry "professional" and "pragmatic," a man with whom Russia could finally do business.⁹

The absence of women from positions of power is not accidental, nor is it an error of omission. Rather, it is a reflection of the continuing existence, even in the 21st century, of a system that Foreign Policy's David Rothkopf calls "the most egregious, widespread, pernicious, destructive pattern of human rights abuses in the history of civilization."¹⁰ This involves the attempted exclusion of half of the world's population from having a say in decisions that could influence history in meaningful and lasting ways.

The world stands everything to gain from pressuring governments to appoint competent and qualified women to represent them abroad. Looking beyond simple rhetoric, issues such as female reproductive rights, female poverty, domestic abuse, war rape, honour killings, and the plight of millions of female refugees and their children do not receive sufficient attention or funding. Systematic crimes against women cannot be addressed successfully on the global level unless women are present in the highest echelons of power not as rare anomalies but as immutable, natural, and equal voices of leadership. It is time the Permanent Five set an example for the international community while allowing their foreign policies to benefit from the ingenuity of the many talented people they have so far excluded.

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JUSTICE FOR WOMEN

Prof. LOUISE CHAPPELL *examines the intersection of war, women's rights, and how justice depends on the International Criminal Court.*

The African Union will hold a summit from October 11-13 to consider a mass withdrawal of the 34 African member states of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This would be in response to the trials of Kenya's Deputy President William Ruto and President Uhuru Kenyatta and the perception that the ICC "hunts Africans".

The vote threatens to seriously endanger the ICC and raises questions about what the court has delivered in its first decade of operation. Given the ICC's innovative mandate to advance gender justice, it is worth asking specifically what would be lost in terms of women's rights if the ICC collapsed.

Many women's rights actors greeted the 1998 Rome Statute establishing the ICC with jubilation. Largely due to their efforts at the negotiation stage, the ICC's mandate to address

impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide also included atrocities commonly experienced by women, including a broad range of sexual and gender-based crimes.

These advocates were also successful in securing rules for a "fair" representation of women on the ICC's judiciary and dedicated positions for gender experts across the court's operations, including in the powerful Office of the Prosecutor.

Just over ten years since the court opened its doors, it has produced some important advances in gender justice. We have seen improvements in the way international criminal law recognises crimes against women and girls. Charges of gender-based crimes have now been brought in 11 of the 16 cases currently before the court, a proportion of almost 70%. This is a much better record than the earlier UN ad hoc tribunals for Rwanda and



the former Yugoslavia.

One irrefutable area of progress has been the ICC's record on the representation of women judges. The court's bench is 60 per cent female, standing in stark contrast to the International Court of Justice, which has only ever included four women judges in its 90-year history. Importantly, in line with Rome Statute provisions, most of the ICC's female judges, as well as some of their male counterparts, have a history of investigating or adjudicating issues of sexual and gender-based violence in other settings.

The appointment in 2012 of Fatou Bensouda as the ICC's second chief prosecutor, who came to office pledging to investigate crimes of sexual violence as a priority during her seven-year term, also sends a positive signal that women's experiences of conflict are taken seriously.

Gender justice has also been strengthened through redress measures for victims, including the gradual development of reparation principles that recognise women and men's different experiences of war and conflict and the need to address these in post-conflict settings without reinforcing gender inequalities.

This is not to suggest that the implementation of the ICC's gender justice has been seamless. Numerous problems exist. For example, charges of sexual or gender-based crimes are especially vulnerable to collapse, with 50% of these charges failing to make it to trial. This is the result of two problems: weak evidence presented by the prosecutor and, in some cases, regressive judicial interpretation of the law. Other problems include the lack of prioritisation of crimes of sexual and gender-based violence in the court's investigations and poor resourcing for the critical outreach and victims' services that benefit women.

Given these partial advancements in gender justice in the first decade of ICC, should we care if the AU vote provokes the court's collapse?

The ICC is imperfect, no doubt, but it does offer an unprecedented

framework for advancing women's rights, key aspects of which are gradually being put into place. The full recognition of the Court's gender justice mandate is likely to arrive in small, highly contested steps, but as a whole it does have the potential to be transformative.

In order for such a transformation to occur, three practical steps are required in the next decade. The first is for key actors within the Court to recommit to and fully execute – through investigations, judicial interpretation and outreach and victims services – the strong gender justice mandate that is embedded in the Rome Statute.

The second is for international and national women's rights organisations to build stronger links with the Court; they are needed to pressure states to live up to their statutory obligations and to make the ICC accountable for its gender justice mandate at each critical turn.

Finally, the ICC needs to better co-ordinate with the international architecture on women's rights, including the UN's women, peace and security agenda, which is can act as an important complement to the work of the Court.

The ICC still has considerable room for improvement in addressing women's rights, but we'd be worse off without it. The AU vote is important on many levels, including reminding us that to combat impunity for sexual and gender-based crimes amongst others, the ICC – and the international community more broadly – must not just focus on Africa. It must pay attention to wherever these crimes happen globally and we must acknowledge that gender injustices are an international problem that require an international solution.

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THE IRON LADY VERUS THE SECRETARY

MADELEINE MARSHALL ROTH explores the political comparisons between Margaret Thatcher and Hillary Clinton.

Both Hillary Clinton and Margaret Thatcher are noted as being history makers in regards to women's involvement in politics. Thatcher: the first – and to this day only – female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Clinton: former First Lady of the United States, Senator from New York, a major contender in the 2008 Presidential Primary Elections, and U.S. Secretary of State from 2009 to 2013. The two are often compared to each other regardless of the fact that their policies are on opposite ends of the political spectrum. This comparison exists because there is a large gender gap in global politics.

Throughout her career, Clinton has championed the liberal wing of the Democratic Party. She is an outspoken supporter of women's rights,¹ universal health care,² and same-sex marriage.³ As Secretary of State, Clinton focused on humanitarian aid and the advancement of people's lives in developing countries.⁴ Clinton approached issues with a gentle, but firm style. After the September 11 attack on the U.S. consulate in Libya, Clinton took personal blame for the death of Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans. Clinton focused on how the attacks affected her personally,⁵ which was consistent with her political style of appealing to the pathos of the common man.

Thatcher, on the other hand, is well known across the world as the 'Iron Lady,' famous for her conservative efforts of economic deregulation, sizing down the labour unions, and invading the Falkland Islands.⁶ As controversial as her policies were, she led her parliament fearlessly. Although Thatcher's political decisions were far from popular, she was not afraid of facing revolts, protests, and possible ousting from her position as Prime Minister in order to restore the image of Britain across the globe.⁷ Thatcher stated herself in an interview for the Press Association in 1989, "If you set out to be liked, you would be prepared to compromise on anything

at any time, and you would achieve nothing."⁸

The nature of politics requires women to shed the stereotypical female image and become fierce, unwavering, and unafraid of having their policies and personal lives ripped to shreds by fellow politicians, the media, and the general public. Thatcher, unlike Clinton, was a leader during a time when women in any position of power were virtually unheard of. Both women have been criticised for shedding their gender in the public eye, whether it be their clothing⁹ or their leadership style.¹⁰

To show that Clinton and Thatcher are compared to each other mainly due to their gender one must look at male politicians with the same views as theirs. Thatcher and President Ronald Reagan had almost identical political ideals.¹¹ Obama and President Bill Clinton are quite similar too. Yet there are not many articles comparing Reagan and Obama, nor are there many articles comparing Thatcher to Obama, or Hillary Clinton to Reagan. This shows that the media can understand political identity and style, but someone's gender can override that immediately to create a new, nonsensical comparison.

In an ideal world we would be able to forget about the distinctions between men and women and we would judge politicians based on their policies and not their gender. However, we do not live in a perfect world and gender stereotype and discrimination is real. If there were more women involved in politics, business, law, and other position of power, then the unrealistic lines drawn between female politicians would not be necessary.

Madeleine is in her first year, studying for an MA in International Relations. When not studying at university, Madeline volunteers her time at various camps and grassroots organisations in the United States.

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

FRANZISKA PUTZ asks: Friend or foe of women's liberation?

The 2013 Oktoberfest contained the expected traditional pleasantries of beer, pretzels, and lederhosen, but there was one unexpected element: the conservative Dirndl. Perhaps more shocking is the fact that these very orthodox versions were donned by the younger attendees. Apart from Dirndl fashion, this

surfacing tendency for younger womyn to adopt more traditionalistic ideologies is causing alarm among womyn's rights veterans.

Katrina Benhold, contributor to the "Female Factor" column of the New York Times, exemplifies the return to convention in the context of young mothers voluntarily leaving



their professions. "They all think of themselves as equals to their husbands. In practice, the roles they have assumed still bear a striking resemblance to those of their mothers..."¹ Though Benhold observed this in Germany, the phenomenon that these womyn voluntarily fall back to the role of "home maker," despite having degrees and developing careers, is observable throughout the western world. But that's not the only issue making womyn's rights leaders grey a little faster.

The perceived notion is that young womyn simply don't care enough.² With regressive legislative measures, such as the three consecutive rulings in the United States this June that assaulted the Women's Rights Bill by limiting abortion rights, permitting the discouragement thereof through misinformation by doctors, and supporting a company's refusal to provide contraceptive coverage, the fight for gender equality is not yet won.³ So why aren't millennials stepping up?

Fact is, it's not a matter of sex as much as gender. The western world, despite preaching freedom of speech, has undergone an unparalleled linguistic self-censorship in the form of Political Correctness (PC).

This socialization to avoid offending others in any contexts has led to a neutralization of discussion. Consequently, topics such as politics have become a social "don't" and taboo akin to George Orwell's view that "All issues are political issues, and politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred, and schizophrenia."⁴ And so, it's better to simply avoid such topics at all costs. The pervasion of PC causes a filtering of critical data (lest it be unpleasant), which dilutes meaning and thereby undermines genuine understanding- and that is one of the largest challenges hindering the modern feminist movement.

Authors of *Midlife Crisis at 30*, Kerry Rubin and Lia Macko identify that female empowerment notwithstanding, "...there has been very little honest discussion among women...about the real barriers and flaws that still exist in the system despite the opportunities...inherited."⁵ If it is not even possible to have a clear discussion on (and thereby understand) feminism, then how is an activist movement expected to arise?

The accusation by older generations of the millennial womyn's disinterest with her rights is rooted in the information gap caused by political correctness.⁶ Feminist conversations are restricted and pushed to extremes: either by convoluted context refraining from offending listeners (thus more commonly simply avoided), or with complete abandonment of PC consciousness in a brash and brazen weaponry of words.

The nature of the latter has led to the label of feminists as man-hating radicals. Though this could be clarified through discussion, it is not - precisely because PC ensures it to be an altogether avoided topic. Thus, with no moderate gradient on the spectrum, is it still shocking that young womyn refrain from taking a position on feminism? Is it not better to be impartial than labeled as a radical? It is not so much a matter of disinterest as it is a misconception due to miscommunication. This lack of context not only causes avoidance, but division within the movement.

Some critics of modern feminism go so far as to say the movement itself is hindering equal advancement by constantly referring to gender. Bascha Mika, author of the controversial "The Cowardice of Women" explains this resentment as a fault that womyn bring upon themselves through inactivity.⁷ History upholds that there is no prerogative to rights; men and womyn alike have had to fight for their causes, simply at different times.

The negligent participation of younger generations can be traced to the "entitlement culture" inspired by political correctness. The tendency to lump individuals into a collective, where all are rewarded equally, regardless of skill, detracts from individual responsibility and motive.⁸ Likewise, instead of standing up for themselves as an individual, some womyn seem to hide behind their gender as a collective wall from which they can point fingers at the uneven playing field, forcing them to remain unequal. This causes great disdain among critics who champion the mentality of ensuring the acknowledgment of equal worth and female capabilities by creating a strong image. In other words, stop complaining and go

beat a man at something; be better.⁹

This concept of earning equal recognition, instead of calling for it, is branded by the other side as a recognition of female inferiority. Their stand? Womyn are equal; there is no need to prove it, just to push for it. And with modern trends, womyn must do so now more than ever.

In a recent case study of gender equity at Harvard Business School, current gender issues were blatant and unavoidable. The extreme disparity between female and male professors is explained in a statement by the dean of faculty recruiting, "As a female faculty member you are in an incredibly hostile teaching environment..."¹⁰

More disheartening yet, is the ever popular feminist topic of wage inequality. Made acute by the University of Chicago's study on salary disparity of Harvard Business School students who had graduated five years ago, the male mean average was 300,000 dollars to the slightly above 200,000 earnings of their former female colleagues.¹¹ Alongside factors like the glass ceiling, harassment cases, and a lack of womyn in executive positions, the reality of gender disparity is undeniable.¹² However, it is not only about statistics, but also sentiment.

When asked by a female student for advice on how to get into Venture Capitalism, presenter William Boyce (co-founder of Highland Capital Partners) answered bluntly, "Don't," and continued to say that male partners did not welcome women in the field.¹³ At a time when the gains in gender equality should be materializing from text to reality, they are still tested by sentiment and legislation alike, but the real danger is the passiveness of millennial womyn. But despite this perception, the feminist cause is alive and well, and so is its activism.

Womyn are still joined by the determination to emerge next to men. The reoccurring criticism that young generations don't care enough can be contributed to PC and the change in activist methods. Technology has moved activism from the streets to the Internet. Contemporary activists like Laura Bates, founder of the "#dailysexism", an initiative for womyn to post daily encounters with sexism, use moderate approaches to increase awareness and accessibility for the new generations. Likewise, comedian Bridget Christie discusses the issue through humor, which erodes any obligation of PC in the first place, thus making the topic more discussable and enjoyable.¹⁴ But does referring to women as womyn, steward/stewardess as flight attendant, or a mailman as letter carrier really make a difference?

In her essay "Cultural Sensitivity and Political Correctness: the Linguistic Problems of Naming", Edna Andrews of Duke University legitimizes the connection of language and thought by asserting that if one is socialized to refer to a female as "woman" instead of "girl", overtime the speaker will begin to see and accept the female as equal to the linguistic counterpart of "man".¹⁵

The benevolent intent of political correctness is undeniable, but it's faults must also be acknowledged along with the role they play in modern politics. Though it is an obstacle, it has not stopped the modern feminist initiative. Say what you want about the millennial generation of feminists - call them meek and passive, criticize them for abandoning the cause, for no matter what is said, they are there - loud and proud.

Feminism is not gone, it has simply changed in method and meaning. When questioned about her decision to tour under her married name and take time off as a mother, female empowerment idol Beyoncé Knowles summarized the modern mentality by saying, "I do believe in equality. Why do you have to choose what kind of woman you are? Why do you have to label yourself anything?" The achievements of past activists are manifested in this principle of freedom.¹⁶ It is the ability to feel comfortable in motherhood or above a shattered glass ceiling. The freedom of choice is all yours, and the freedom of labels, a (debatable) success of political correctness.

Franziska's international background fostered her fascination with human interaction, history, and culture in the international spectrum. Prior to studying at Edinburgh, as an Austrian in an American suburb, she pursued her passion for new experiences by studying Spanish in Barcelona, playing in the Lacrosse World Cup and interning with the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in Washington D.C.



THE UGLY FACE OF POWER

NADEZHDA TRICHKOVA on Lukes' political model which reveals the underlying causes of subsisting gender inequality.

Our world, while modernized and developed, has not uprooted the gender divisions that are the most politically significant social cleavages. Gender inequality is still a major issue that seeks explanation. Steven Lukes' theory of the third face of power provides us with an insightful analysis of the gender gap and the inequality of access to social and political power between men and women.¹ According to Lukes, clear behavioural focus characterizes the first and second faces of power. The former stresses actual political participation and is interested in who wins open conflicts, and the latter concerns the control over the political agenda by more powerful actors. The third face recognizes that an observable conflict is not a necessary condition for power to be present and exercised. Moreover, it provides an account of how people's beliefs are shaped through manipulation and thought control, while their real interests remain unvoiced.²

The patriarchal model displayed in social practices and political ideologies ensure that women's demands are kept off the political agenda. In the first instance, rituals and socially accepted patterns of behaviour are often heavily influenced by patriarchy. An example is female circumcision, a gross violation of women's rights but common in many African countries, where it relates to beliefs of decency and purity.³ If a woman does not practice circumcision, she is ostracized by society. The operations are performed in unhygienic settings by people with no medical training, rendering it excruciatingly painful. Moreover, circumcised women encounter severe complications that include urinary infections and menstrual problems. Despite the ritual's seemingly being in clear contravention to women's interests, many women actually favour it.⁴ Even if they realize what the harm consists of, the fear of punishment hampers their will to change the status quo.

Patriarchal ideas are also embedded in political ideologies. For instance, Nazi ideology defines women in terms of fertility and motherhood, and during the German Nazi regime women's social role was confined to the realms of domestic life.⁵ This effectively prevented gender issues from being voiced. Even non-totalitarian regimes such as liberal democracies have not succeeded in challenging the persistency of patriarchal prejudice. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*⁶ reveals the shocking discrepancy between American democratic ideals of equality and the reality in the 1960s: women being confined to social roles of being tender mothers and docile wives. Friedan presents the methods through which patriarchal ways of thinking are imposed on society. She focuses on the media's impact by criticising women's magazines that are edited mostly by men and are "crammed full of food, clothing, cosmetics, furniture, and the physical bodies of young women",⁷ while completely excluding the world outside the home. A woman who wants to pursue a career will meet the judgmental reaction of society accusing her of disturbing the social balance.⁸ Beliefs are thereby shaped through manipulation and thought control, and women's real interests are replaced by artificial desires to fulfil society's expectations. Lukes' third face of power is clearly evident in patriarchy's establishment of thought control in this manner. However, there are also more formal methods than social practices through which the gender gap is maintained.

Throughout the course of modern history, the ways in which institutional mechanisms deny or limit women's access to politics have undergone clear change. During the twentieth century, general suffrage was extended to women,⁹ whereas previously many states had refused them legal capacity and citizen rights, expecting them to follow their husband's lead. Such beliefs

reflected the patriarchal model that had been imposed on society. Gradually, female parliamentary representation improved. Recent trends show that globally, the average percentage of women in parliament has been increasing at small but constant rates.¹⁰ Although quotas, "affirmative action methods to increase women's representation",¹¹ are sometimes regarded with scepticism, they generally contribute to positive change.¹² However, despite the increased descriptive representation of women in parliament (their number) women's substantive representation (their actual ability to introduce policy changes) has not improved.¹³ This anomaly suggests that women's inability to control the political agenda is no longer a result of institutional restrictions only, since the formal political context in which women operate has changed, while their influence over the agenda has not.

This difficulty in influencing policy changes finds its cause in sexist discrimination. Claire Annesley and Francesca Gains (2010) argue that the discrepancy between female descriptive and substantive representation is a problem rooted in the gendered disposition of politics.¹⁴ They recognise that the number of women in parliament and high political office matter, and they focus on female representation in the ranks of 'critical actors' in the executive core – the place where the power to push policies resides in most countries. Yet patriarchal norms hamper the attempts of women to participate in decision-making processes. For instance, although in 1997 the UK percentage of women MPs rose, they were derogatorily referred to as "Blair's babes".¹⁵ They were seen as non-qualified, non-aggressive, and "too nice to get involved in the dirty business of big boys' politics".¹⁶ Such prejudices limit the ability of women to enter the executive core and to use its resources. Ministerial posts are almost exclusively reserved for men,¹⁷ and female ministers, with a few exceptions, are allocated rather insignificant leadership roles. Traits of Lukes' second face of power are present since gender issues are objects of political conflict usually won by the more powerful. At a more fundamental level however, the problem revolves around the shaping of society's consciousness into believing that women are inferior to men and unsuited to work in politics. Thus, despite being given access to the world of politics, women are still prejudiced through the underlying mechanisms of Lukes' third face of power.

The principles of patriarchy are embedded in all forms of social existence; including African rituals, political ideologies, coverage in media and societal attitudes to women in power. Patriarchal models function through thought control, by which women are confined to inferior social roles. Such forms of manipulation are typical for Lukes' third face of power: inducing people to ignore their real interests in order to meet society's expectations. The same patriarchal principles that historically prevented women from voting and participate politically, remain in up-to-date mechanisms designed to disregard their views when they have become political actors. Although women's descriptive representation is generally improving, their substantive one meets continued opposition. It turns out that gender inequality has always been a product of the third face of power; therefore, it has changed only in context but not in principle.

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NATIONAL SERVICE

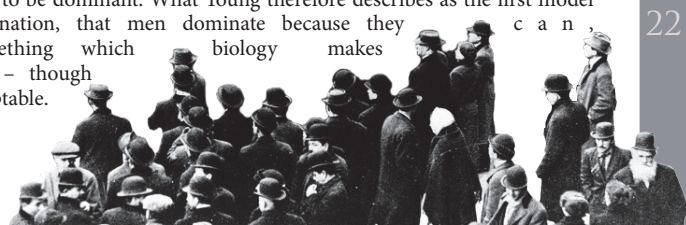
MICHAEL YEOMANS discusses a way to defeat patriarchal domination.

Iris Marion Young posits that domination of women by men occurs by two methods in a system of patriarchy. First, men dominate because they can. Second, men dominate to chivalrously protect women from the attempts of ill-intentioned men. The first mode of domination is utterly unacceptable. The second is tougher to address. It was once of utility in pre-state societies with no rule of law. When the physically weaker in society required protection, it was likely necessary for allocation of gender roles based on physical abilities. Men, as the typically physically stronger sex, were thus better suited to a role where they guaranteed women's protection. This notion was valid hundreds, or even thousands, of years ago. But in the modern world, it is of course out-dated. However, the notion that women still require protection by men remains firmly rooted within patriarchal systems. It is a leftover from a time when might was right, in the absence of the rule of law.

One way to remove the pre-modern notion that women require protection is through unisex national service, which teaches both men and women hand-to-hand combat. Such training would dispel myths that women require protection. By teaching women martial arts – which rely on skill, not physical strength – women would be as physically capable as men. Men attempting

to take advantage of women would face far greater risks, and thus be disincentivised to attempt physical domination.

The first of Young's models of domination, where "masculine men wish to master women sexually for the sake of their own gratification and to have the pleasures of domination"² is explained by biology. This is not to say it is acceptable, simply that it is possible due to the physical power imbalance between the sexes. Francis Fukuyama believed that male domination occurs because women are biologically pacific, whilst men are aggressive.³ Although Judith Ann Tickner has disagreed on this point, believing domination to be an entirely gender-based construct,⁴ greater aggressive tendencies of men are somewhat biological. Testosterone is found in both men and women, and accounts for violent acts and tendencies.⁵ As men have far greater levels of testosterone than women, this naturally inclines them to be more aggressive and seek to be dominant. What Young therefore describes as the first model of domination, that men dominate because they can, is something which biology makes possible – though not acceptable.



Biology cannot, however, account for the second model of domination. This is where "The 'good' man... keeps vigilant watch over the safety of [women]... and readily risks himself in the face of threats from the outside in order to protect the [women]"⁶ The advent of the state has made it unnecessary for the female to, "happily defer to his judgment in return for the promise of security."⁷ The state guarantees the security of all citizens, so should not require women to remain dominated by men. However, this notion continues to be held by patriarchy, so it is up to the state to remove it.

What is needed is a change of culture, and the removal of the belief that women need protection or can easily be dominated. A policy of mandatory national service, with obligatory combat training as a core component for both women and men, would achieve this end. Though seemingly extreme, it has merit, is simple to implement, and has been done in Israel.

Martial-Arts training addresses both forms of Young's domination models. In the first model, it would allow women to protect themselves from attempted aggression by men. Even against greater physical strength, women would possess physical equality. Martial arts often use an opponent's physical strength against them. Aside from making domination physically harder, national service would act as a deterrent for would-be physical dominators.

Assuming the attacker is rational, they realise the risks increase significantly. A deterrent is put in place so fewer men will try to dominate by the first method of using physical force. Simultaneously, those women who still suffer attempts of such domination will have a far greater chance of defending themselves.

The second model of domination is rectified as the physical threat to women is all but eliminated. The chivalrous notion that women need protection from aggressors would clearly become redundant – men having not only witnessed but experienced first-hand that women can defend themselves. Made aware that women are empowered to defend themselves, men will not attempt to dominate women via the first model, using physical force, nor will they feel it necessary to protect, and thereby dominate women, via the second method. Unisex national service, incorporating martial arts, will cause the realisation that domination is impossible in the first instance, as well as wrong and unnecessary in the second. Culture is thus changed, and patriarchy partly undermined.

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TOWARDS A SOCRATIC FEMINISM

UDAY JAIN on why the example of Socrates remains thoroughly relevant for contemporary Feminism.

The next time you find yourself in a discussion at the pub or in a tutorial with someone who argues that the glass ceiling on executive positions for women does not exist anymore, or that woman playing sports is a ridiculous diversion from real sport played by real men, restrain yourself from your justified fury and consider what Socrates might have said in response. More than that: consider how Socrates might have done it.

First of all, why Socrates? Why should we consider his way of responding to deliberately provocative and perhaps consciously wrong-headed positions on the question of feminism in today's society? This is because Socrates was one of the first and one of the most compelling thinkers in the Western - no doubt patriarchal - heritage to genuinely believe in the ability of the market-goer, the slave-boy, the merchant, and even the 1% to arrive at the truth.¹ You could find him in the Piraeus, the seedy port of Athens, enjoying the sights and sounds of the festivals. You could witness him harassing his friends in the marketplace by explaining to them how contradictory their notions of courage were.

As far as we know, Socrates refused to write his thoughts down. He insisted instead on teaching through dialogues and personal conversations because he knew that the passion and creativity elicited in a heated discussion rarely is matched by a dry treatise.² Moreover, a conversation can shape our own thoughts and beliefs much more subtly, and perhaps even more deeply, than any book that we might come to read. This was his philosophy and his politics: to seek in the variety of city life those grains of truth that can emerge in everyday conversation, and be able to reliably tell them apart from mere sophistry.³

Let us now return to the pub, or the tutorial, with that know-it-all who insists that, "feminism doesn't really make sense!" This know-it-all argues that men and women simply are different: "Isn't it obvious?" He pauses briefly for effect and continues, "Aren't men and women naturally, biologically different? If they are, doesn't it make sense that they do different jobs and are good at different things? Why are feminists so concerned with making everyone the same, when it is simply natural that women might be better at raising children than men?"

It could also be a natural phenomenon that women aren't as well-represented in the sciences, and in mathematics; they do make good psychologists, and social workers after all! Women are good at some things, and men are good at others. In fact, it's probably a good thing that people with different skills do different things, so what's the big deal anyway?"

Imagine that the famously ugly, bearded, likely smelly Socrates is in your tutorial as well, sipping thoughtfully on his Deuchars (he would not care if he was in a pub or in David Hume Tower). He would respond: "Aren't bald and long-haired men different? Isn't it obvious that they are genetically, biologically, different types of people? In fact, aren't they opposites of each other? Surely if a bald man is good at something, a long-haired man would be bad at it. Thus, if a bald man is good at making shoes, we should let him do so and prevent any long-haired man from cobbling ever again."

The know-it-all would be hard-pressed to ignore this: "That is ridiculous!

Baldness and having long hair has nothing to do with how good you are at making shoes! A bald person and a long-haired person might be opposites with respect to how much hair they have, but that has nothing to do with what their skills are or what their profession should be."

The game is up. Socrates has won. "But of course. Not every kind of difference matters when we are discussing professions, only the kind of difference that is relevant to the pursuits themselves. Being bald or long-haired doesn't affect whether you'll be good at something. Neither does being a man or a woman. A good doctor remains a good doctor, regardless of whether that person is a man or a woman. The same goes for engineering, mathematics, and every other craft that a human can do.

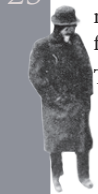
There is no job that belongs to a woman because she is a woman, or to a man because he is a man; our natural capacities are distributed identically to both genders. Women can naturally do any job, and men can do any job too. If we live in a society that doesn't recognise this equality, then we simply consign ourselves to false, conventional opinion. We are then not providing jobs on the basis of the real, natural abilities of our citizens, that is, on the basis of the truth."

This dramatised paraphrase of an exchange in Book V of Plato's *Republic*⁴ does little justice to the excitement of the text and much less to Socrates' own distinctive style of exposition. What we can take away from it is a willingness to engage one's interlocutor on their own terms, and more importantly, a relentless pursuit of the truth, even if it is socially unacceptable and conventionally ridiculous.

In the same book, Socrates advocates for men and women to train naked together for their role as warriors in defence of his ideal city. When Plato's brother, Glaucon replies that it would look ridiculous for men and women to exercise together, Socrates replies that to properly work out in a gym, it has been discovered - probably by the Spartans - that it is better to strip naked rather than dress, and everyone stopped laughing once they figured out how more effective this kind of training was. He concludes resoundingly: "It is a fool who finds anything ridiculous except what is bad, who takes seriously any standard of what is beautiful other than what is good."⁵

The benefits of naked exercise aside, Socrates makes a simple yet profound point. We shouldn't let our ideas of what is ridiculous or what is unbelievable dictate our acceptance of new social practices and our pursuit of new political agendas. Would it look ridiculous to have female generals? Would it be ridiculous for fathers to take paid leave to look after their newborn children? Would it seem ridiculous for women to live in a society where they can dress and behave as they please without fear of sexual violence? Would it look ridiculous for women to be paid the same as men for doing the same job? No, Socrates would say. That would be good, that would be *beautiful*.

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THE POLITICS OF MASCULINITY

ILINCA BARSAN asks if society still prefers a firm masculine grip on issues of international relevance.

There seem to be plenty of advantages to female leadership. Women are said to have a more inclusive approach to problem solving and decision making, as well as better team-building capacities than men, leading to success in a more empathic and cooperative way. Yet, the reality of power politics fails to reflect this. Only 10 per cent of world leaders are female,¹ leaving the playing field of International Relations almost entirely to men. This underrepresentation is a complex issue. Worldwide, women face social, financial, and cultural obstacles that make it hard to achieve positions of power and responsibility. Yet, one of these obstacles is especially intriguing. It isn't just that women face obstacles on their way to power. Actually, society prefers a firm, masculine grip on issues of international security and financial stability, demanding leaders with masculine qualities.

This is a bold claim and one that especially women might be reluctant to agree with. Why would women sabotage their own gender? Yet there is evidence that in contemporary society, there is a demand for masculine qualities in a world leader. Potential female leadership is regarded in a highly critical manner by men and women alike. There seems to be little space for leaders displaying stereotypically female qualities in power politics and a high demand for authority, ambition and dominance, and these social dynamics often operate beneath the surface.

In his book *Leading Men: Presidential Campaigns and the Politics of Manhood*, Jackson Katz takes a look at presidential campaigns in the United States, arguing that Americans will vote for a candidate who succeeds at embodying the ideal of American masculinity.² He explains that during the campaigns, issues of class, race and gender are played out between two versions of American masculinity. And if one remembers the 2012 election, then it is indeed images of masculinity that are still very present. Mitt Romney presented himself as an old-fashioned, religious family man, fighting for stability and conservative values, whereas Barack Obama embodied a more progressive masculine ideal as a feminist and supporter of gay rights, while at the same time a devoted father and husband with a passion for basketball. Being the "commander in chief" of the United States has, according to Katz, clearly been defined as masculine terrain, making it very hard for women to establish themselves. The president of the United States is traditionally the most powerful man in the world.

This could be something specific to the macho-culture of the United States – but unfortunately, it is not. It is a problem deeply entrenched in Western culture and society. Are Leader Stereotypes Masculine? A Meta-Analysis of Three Research Paradigms examined the extent to which stereotypes of leaders are culturally masculine.³ It refers to the concept of "role incongruity": What are usually perceived as stereotypically female qualities do not match society's expectations of leaders.⁴ Leadership is connected with stereotypically masculine qualities such as assertiveness and competitiveness, while women are assigned more communal qualities.

The study comes to a sobering conclusion. Even though the female cultural stereotype is perceived as more positive – as nicer and kinder – than the male one, this in fact poses a barrier to women's success as leaders. "Despite some overall change toward more androgynous beliefs about leadership"⁵ in recent years, it still holds that "men fit cultural construals of leadership better than women do and thus have better access to leader roles".⁶ Additionally, women who are trying to adapt to the cultural stereotype of a leader are often criticised for neglecting their traditional gender role: a dangerous double-standard pushed forward by the media's professional scrutiny of female politicians' family life and appearance.

This harsh reality is also illustrated in *Measuring Stereotypes of Female Politicians*.⁷ Monica Schneider and Angela Bos surveyed undergraduate students about the characteristics they ascribe to women generally and female politicians more specifically. They came to the conclusion that women in politics are not ascribed stereotypically female traits such as compassion and sensitivity – but they are not connected with stereotypically male traits such as assertiveness and competence either.⁸ While male politician stereotypes largely overlap with male stereotypes more broadly,⁹ "female politicians lack leadership, competence, and masculine traits in comparison to male politicians."¹⁰ Female

politicians seem to make up a "subtype" of their own, deviating from the female stereotype.¹¹ Furthermore, some qualities that are seen as positive in a male politician become negative in the context of female leadership,¹² illustrating the double bind that women have to face. Constant negotiations and trade-offs between leadership and gender roles are an inevitable part of being a woman at the top of the power hierarchy.

Angela Merkel, Germany's chancellor and Europe's leader, is an interesting case of a woman conforming to the male demands of international politics. The conservative politician isn't exactly known for her charms or looks. She prefers to wear a suit instead of a dress, even at black-tie dinners with the US president and she does not consider herself a feminist – merely "an interesting case of a woman in power".¹³ She might be called the "mum" of the German nation by her supporters, but it is hard to detect that caring mother figure on the international stage, especially when she imposes harsh austerity measures on Greece and Spain as Europe's leading woman, and makes it very clear to Putin – the epitome of the hyper-masculine political leader – that Germany wants Russia to return looted artwork.

While some of her female party colleagues openly embrace their femininity, Merkel cannot afford to focus on stereotypically female areas of politics. She might be subtle and low-key in her way of leading, but while Merkel appears to avoid confrontation and might not display stereotypically masculine qualities very openly, she certainly still acts on them. And she only admits to one advantage that her male colleagues have on her: a deep voice. "It matters in politics. And I tend to use deeper tonalities more often",¹⁴ said the German Chancellor.

But a confident voice might not be men's only biological advantage. Research suggests that the gender-stratification of power politics goes beyond the social structure – and might therefore be even harder to eliminate. *Caveman Executive Leadership: Evolved Leadership Preferences and Biological Sex*, a study on the relationship between leadership and biological sex, claims that society's preference for male leadership is not merely socially and culturally constructed,¹⁵ but must at least partially be understood as the product of evolutionary adaption.¹⁶ The research assesses "individual support for a presidential candidate when the biological sex of the candidate and economic threat are experimentally manipulated",¹⁷ as well as assessing the preferred biological sex of a political national leader in manipulated conditions of war.

Coming to the general conclusion that threat triggers the preference for male leaders, who are naturally perceived as more "physically formidable",¹⁸ the research implies "that the bias in favor of male leaders may have an evolutionary component that has made it difficult to extinguish".¹⁹ Whether or not this is a biological or rather a social phenomenon, these results are enlightening when one considers that we live in times shaped by economic instability, and threats to national and international security are very much present in our minds. If male political leaders are preferred under such circumstances, as suggested, then it should come as no surprise that international politics is shaped by masculine figures – or women who have learned to adopt masculine qualities on the international stage.

There is no quick fix for problems that are as deeply embedded in both social structures and people's minds. A first step is to recognise the importance of factors beyond history, culture and economics. Blaming the past for the gendered reality of power politics is comfortable, when in fact, very contemporary social attitudes contribute to the fact that aspiring female leaders might have to compromise their femininity in order to be taken seriously. It is crucial to take responsibility for those obstacles and restrictions that we as a society create, and to reflect on one uncomfortable question. When it comes down to it, who are you more inclined to trust with your best interests on the international stage?

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IS CAPITALISM GOOD FOR WOMEN?

AURORA ADAMS explores the impact of capitalism on women.

In this article I will follow Anne E. Cudd's rejection of pure capitalism as a defensible position for feminists, and instead use her formulation of a 'feminist' capitalism as a starting point.¹ At its core, feminist capitalism is an argument for women's integration with current worker's structures, protected by a welfare state and improved by regulation aimed at removing discrimination. I will argue that capitalism has actively weakened feminism, the major ideology that fights in women's interests, by integrating it into consumerism. This co-optation of women's liberation into a simplistic consumer-based model creates a discursive reality in which emancipation is translated into the ability to buy things, making real gains for women more difficult to mobilise towards. It should be clear from my critique that democratic control of institutions and structures is crucial if women and other oppressed groups are to be liberated, and it is telling that even a 'feminist' version of capitalism cannot fulfil this requirement.

Ann E. Cudd offers a useful definition of 'feminist' capitalism. She posits four criteria an economy must fulfil in order to be considered capitalist:

- (1) private ownership of capital condition;
- (2) free and open, decentralized market condition;
- (3) free wage labour condition;
- (4) nondiscrimination constraint.

Number (4) here is of particular interest, as Cudd's use of it requires a step away from free market capitalism and an appeal to social welfare and regulation to protect against capitalism's more obvious forms of harm. However, it is important to understand exactly why Cudd considers the elements contained in (1), (2) and (3) – recognisable elements of traditional capitalism – to be good for women.²

At the heart of her argument is the claim that the various technological and scientific leaps of the last two centuries would not have been possible without entrepreneurial capitalism, which has encouraged rapid and 'revolutionary' innovation.² Without a meaningful counterfactual, this claim is difficult to argue against, and if it is accepted then capitalism should be considered responsible for the improvements in length and quality of life, infant mortality rates, and fertility control for women.¹ Many of these leaps, and in particular those that apply mostly to women such as contraception and abortion provision, have required some form of state control to make them widely accessible, but as Cudd is in favour of public healthcare, this does not seem to pose much of a problem to her argument, though it would for pure capitalism.

Cudd also emphasizes that she sees capitalism as the best way of creating freedom, by opening up the opportunity to interact with the market, particularly to traditionally oppressed groups. Cudd claims that part of capitalism's freedom is intrinsically valuable, but that it is also instrumentally valuable for women in that it can provide ways for them to autonomously improve their lives where before they could not. This includes personal economic freedom through the accrual of capital, which in turn leads to freedom from dominant men in their lives.¹

However, much of Cudd's support for capitalism is not specific to women; the focus is in providing them with equal opportunities to access capitalism's structures. Gender is most present in her awareness of the need for the nondiscrimination constraint and the provision of social welfare. She acknowledges that capitalism causes people to suffer both individually and collectively, and that many of those people are women.¹

Cudd argues for "enlightened capitalism, which includes government interventions during recessions;¹ the provision of public education and healthcare; collective systems for pollution reduction;¹ and government correction for the under-valuing of care work.¹ She also acknowledges that there are some who will almost always find capitalism inaccessible, such as elderly and disabled people, and proposes a "welfare minimum"¹ to protect them. This reformulation seems a reasonable method for alleviating unfair disadvantage present at birth, allowing for social mobility between classes.

Cudd's argument for capitalism is based on the premise that both capitalism and the welfare state are not patriarchal in themselves.¹ Cudd rightly points out that patriarchy could be at home in both state socialism and capitalism, however her main argument for its incommensurability with capitalism is that capitalism is an ideology of individuals, whereas patriarchy functions in the interest of the group and seeks to limit individual's freedom.¹ Cudd believes that capitalism "offers women a way out of patriarchal, traditional culture."¹ A Marxist would deny the premise that capitalism does not function in favour of groups – the rhetoric that justifies capitalism may be individualist, but capitalism works for the benefit of the capitalist class.^{2,3} However, we must go further than a classical Marxist critique to show that the structures that

constitute and support capitalism are gendered, though it is clear that those who own and run the means of production are predominantly men.⁴

Misra and Akins have critiqued feminist scholarship around the welfare state for its lack of intersectionality, focusing on women as a unit in either positive or negative light without acknowledging the diversity of women's experiences. In these texts, the welfare state is either an extension of patriarchy, shifting women's dependence from a male breadwinner to the state, or it is an historical victory for women's liberation.⁵ The former position casts women as victims, the latter as key agents in the formation of the welfare state. The correct position seems to be somewhere in between – women were both involved in the creation of the modern welfare state and have benefitted from it, but they have also been victims of it.

Many policies of the welfare state were created in the wake of political struggles led by women's rights groups.⁶ These women – predominantly white and upper or middle class – often made use of the rhetoric of gender, appealing to ideas such as the importance of motherhood for the state.⁶ Within a framework of maternalist rhetoric, the purpose of the welfare state was partly to support women in giving birth to the next generation of workers;⁶ when this concern became less pressing or overtaken by labour needs, welfare was cut back. This is reflected in contemporary pro-market policies; the International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies for 'developing' countries, and austerity in Europe that have forced "the sharp reduction of welfare state social protections", further evidence that where the market and welfare seem at odds, the market is given precedence.⁷

The welfare state, then, is "not just a set of services, it is also a set of ideas about society, about the family, and – not least importantly – about women."⁶ It is certain that welfare programs tend to assume a social system in which families are composed of a heterosexual couple, with the man as breadwinner and the woman as carer providing unpaid domestic work.⁴ Misra and Akins cite studies of old-age benefits in the United States, where single-earner couples receive more money than two-earner couples.⁵ This is because ideas that motivate welfare programmes are strongly influenced by gendered concepts of the role women should take in capitalism.

Cudd's vision of welfare seems to be one which gives women an equal opportunity to access capitalism's benefits. In reality, its success has been imperfect. The welfare state has both helped women escape the nuclear family, and reinforced conceptions of their value as instrumental, either as carers for working men and mothers of future workers or as labourers themselves. At its worst, welfare upholds the role women take in supporting capitalism, and thereby creates and perpetuates patriarchal gender roles. However, it may provide real opportunities for some women to enter the labour force more freely.

Whether this is a trade-off feminists should be willing to make it an important question in assessing capitalism's positivity for women. The question then is whether when women do enter the workforce, they do so on a level playing field with their men counterparts.

Key to Cudd's argument is the idea that women may move through the workforce free from structural discrimination. She believes it is crucial for governments to ensure that women are not discriminated against by regulating capitalism.¹ Firstly, it's useful to point out that current legislation exists in states such as the United Kingdom – such as the Equal Pay Act of 1970 and the Equality Act of 2010 – and yet a significant gender pay gap remains.⁶ More importantly, though, the equalities policies that seek to integrate oppressed groups into structures as a form of liberation assume that the structures are in some way neutral, unrelated to oppression. Acker has formulated a strong case for conceptualising workplaces, jobs, and the way organisation works within capitalism as quite the opposite.⁵

Acker seeks to show that not only are organisations not gender-neutral, but that the reason we perceive them to be is that the premises upon which they are built are gendered themselves, but this is obscured by "gender neutral, commonsense discourse".⁵ In Marxist analysis, organisations form systems of class control; similarly for feminism, they may be considered systems of gender control and policing.

The removing of the worker from the creation of a job description does not remove assumptions about workers and their capacities. Jobs still "carry characteristic images of the kinds of people that should occupy them",⁵ and those characteristics are gendered. The abstracted workers for which the majority of jobs are created are assumed to have no obligations outwith their job that may impinge on their ability to perform at maximum efficiency.⁵ Acker argues that the closest this comes to a real worker "is the male worker whose life centres on his full-time, life-long job, while his wife or another



woman takes care of his personal needs and his children”⁵ The concept of ‘a job’ contains a gender-based division of labour⁵ and women workers are still assumed to have obligations outside of the workforce.

Workplaces are subject to ‘organisational logic’; ideas of jobs without workers are placed into hierarchies based on a perception responsibility and difficulty. Those deciding the roles are managers, themselves affected by hegemonic masculinity.⁵ A job such as caring for children, or juggling the demands of several bosses, is positioned low in the organizational hierarchy. Connell and Messerschmidt revisited the concept of hegemonic masculinity in 2005, offering a useful explanation of the way gender ideals are embedded in local level structures, such as organisations.⁷ Acker describes the hegemonic masculinity currently present in organisations as one of “the strong, technically competent, authoritative leader”, a virile man with a family who keeps his emotions under control.⁹ Managers’ decisions initiate processes that are maintained by structures,⁵ and gender becomes an essential part of workplace organisation.

This is why more women work part-time or in low-paid, more precarious jobs. Nina Power describes the way precarity is sold to women as ‘flexibility’, as “a kind of liberation.”⁸ Cudd wishes women to be able to choose their involvement in the labour market, but in reality the language of choice is used to defend women’s positions in insecure jobs at the bottom of organisations.^{5,10} Power focuses on agency work, which she argues has developed as a particularly ‘feminized’ form of labour as women have entered the workforce.¹⁰ These jobs appeal to a particular femininity in which women are seen as natural communicators, embodying a professionalism that is adaptable and effortless.¹⁰ However, these gender ideals interact with organizational structures in a way that keeps women in part-time work that on average pays women 37% less than men.¹⁰

Women in agency work are shifted from position to position, ostensibly accruing valuable experience while never able to stay long enough in a company to collectively organise and gain bargaining power. This allows managers to take on young women without having to bear the potential cost of maternity leave, or any other intrusion of a woman’s ‘private’ life into her job. Rather, events that remove women from the workforce are subject to the language of individual choice; women make ‘decisions’ about their ‘work-life balance’, and “any general social responsibility for motherhood” is rejected as a concept.¹⁰

My argument here is not to say that organisations and structures that do not side-line women or create and perpetuate oppressive gender norms could never be developed within a market framework. Democratic organising within profit-making ventures is not unheard of, and Cudd herself claims workers’ cooperatives as an example of “cooperative interaction within capitalism”.¹ However, these organisations are much rarer than their traditionally hierarchical counterparts, and as Cudd’s original proposal for regulation was assimilatory, we cannot overlook the way assimilation has already occurred. It seems that further assimilation of women in the vast majority of capitalist organisations and structures will merely place them in roles that reflect oppressive ideas of their capacities and limit their control, all the while paying lip-service to liberation.

It is this “perky, upbeat message of self-fulfilment and consumer emancipation”¹⁰ that Power also credits with the weakening of feminism as a

political force. This discourse not only tells women how to earn their money, but how to spend it. Power argues that consumerism, the ideology which links human identity and status to capitalism and its products, has tried to teach women that they can buy liberation, co-opting feminism into a liberal, individualist rhetoric that cannot fight deep structural inequality.

Nina Power critiques the kind of feminism that consumerism has helped create by analysing the “remarkable similarity between ‘liberating’ feminism and ‘liberating’ capitalism”.¹⁰ She focuses on contemporary liberal feminists such as Jessica Valenti, author of *Full Frontal Feminism: A Young Woman’s Guide to Why Feminism Matters*, who wrote in the *Guardian* that feminism is good for women because, among other things, feminists make better decisions and have better sex.⁹ Feminism, this rhetoric tells us, empowers individual women to do what they want – and what they want is to get jobs and spend the money they earn on chocolate, sex toys and magazines.¹⁰ This formulation of feminism deals only with the individual, who is liberated not by the collective destruction of oppressive structures, but by self-confidence that stands in for self-ownership. This ‘liberation’ is epitomised in Debra Curtis’ documentation of sex-toy parties, which she describes as a blend of “the original Tupperware home demonstration parties and feminist consciousness-raising groups”.¹⁰ Not only is this feminism useless for those with insufficient capital to take part in consumerism, it actively obscures structural inequality.¹⁰

This is by no means Cudd’s feminism; she critiques commodity fetishism as producing “unjustified beliefs that support the status quo in capitalism and are generated by the oppressive conditions of capitalism”.¹ However, she is nevertheless continuing the co-option of anti-capitalist ideas into a capitalist framework, through her championing of individualism. Power argues that this ‘conditioning’ of women to believe all their behaviour is individual – expressions of their liberated self-ownership – means that “we miss the collective and historical dimensions of our current situation”.¹⁰ Thus women under capitalism define themselves through where they work and what they consume, and liberal feminism fails to challenge this paradigm to include analysis of wider structures.

I have aimed to prove that Cudd’s call for liberal feminist reform of capitalism is really a call for women’s integration into gendered structures, supported by an ideological discourse that blinds them to oppression and offers consumption instead of liberation. This is not to definitively exclude some limited version of capitalism from an ideal feminist future. A market acting through democratically organised workplaces, with an extensive welfare state and public sector that seeks to actively subvert and challenge gender norms might provide enough democratic control and opportunities for feminists to break down oppressive gender roles. However, the current trajectory of capitalism and capitalist ideology actively works to obscure collective action towards such radical changes, and so capitalism as it presently exists both in reality and in liberal feminist ideology should be considered a barrier to systems that we could consider feminist or good for women.

This piece is an edited version of a longer article. *Aurora* is a 4th year Philosophy and Politics student. Originally from Australia, during her time in Edinburgh she has been involved in activist groups locally and nationally, campaigning against the marketisation of education and the growing xenophobia of the UK immigration system. Last year she was President of the Edinburgh University Feminist Society, and her interest in feminism guides her ongoing involvement in activism and academia.

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