

The background is a vibrant, abstract watercolor illustration. It features several stylized faces in various colors (green, purple, pink, blue) with expressive eyes and features. Overlaid on these faces is a faint, detailed drawing of a city skyline with buildings and a bridge. The overall color palette is soft and blended, with pastel tones of pink, purple, green, and blue.

GRIFFITH JOURNAL
OF LAW & HUMAN DIGNITY

**GENDER, CULTURE
& NARRATIVE**

GRIFFITH JOURNAL OF LAW & HUMAN DIGNITY

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WOMEN, SEXISM, AND POLITICS: DOES PSYCHOLOGY HELP?

CARMEN LAWRENCE*

When Julia Gillard replaced Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister, there was, in some quarters at least, celebration that a woman had been accepted as qualified for the job; that we had no problems with a woman in the highest office in the country. Did we? We could say, could we not, that sexism was safely relegated to the past? Similar conclusions were reached when I became Premier in Western Australia — it was marked, not just as a first, but as a harbinger of further change. While Gillard's ascension and the growing numbers of women ministers, state and territory leaders, and members of parliament might encourage the perception that men and women are equally accepted in politics in Australia, other data raise questions about whether this is true.

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I INTRODUCTION

I approached the opportunity to reflect on my experiences in dealing with sexism throughout my political career with some trepidation. In the first place, I resigned my position as member for Fremantle nearly a decade ago, after a political career spanning 21 years and, as is my want, I have not spent much time since then ruminating about my experiences, a practice that I have seen embitter too many people, as they wear tracks in their heads. Nor did I keep a diary or make other contemporary records of sexist and discriminatory treatment which affected me, whether I was deliberately targeted or not. There are some records of interview and commentary by others which have explored sexism toward women politicians, including me.¹ These are a help, but the trail is a little cold — and my capacity to ignore personal vilification has become so well-developed that I stopped responding to sexist behaviour and taunts a long time ago.

I should also start by saying that one of the lessons ingrained in me by my study of psychology is the danger of trying to reach any meaningful conclusions about human behaviour from a sample of $n=1$. My experiences — and the conclusions I have drawn from them — may not be at all representative of women in politics or particularly instructive for neophytes in navigating the perilous shoals of political life in Australia. It is also true that a lot of these experiences are common in other walks of life and many

¹ See, eg, Julia Baird, *Media Tarts* (Scribe, 2004); Susan Mitchell, *The Scent of Power* (Angus & Roberson, 1996); Karen Ross, 'Women's place in 'male' space: Gender and effect in parliamentary contexts' (2002) 55(1) *Parliamentary Affairs* 189.

are “gender neutral”. Politics is a tough trade and there is always plenty of criticism (and hostility) to go around.

It is also very difficult to read the political play: how do we decide when expectations of and responses to politicians are sexist and when they are generic? We cannot say that simply because a woman is disliked or censured she is being singled out because of her gender; that the evaluation of her is sexist. Reaching such a decision requires an analysis of both the content and the intensity of any responses. Are higher — or gendered — standards being set? Are they more fiercely enforced? I will try to explore these questions using any relevant, systematically derived evidence I can find, while referring to my own and other women’s experiences as illustrative.

II GROWING UP IN POST-WAR AUSTRALIA

I grew up in a largely female household (Mum and Dad and seven kids, six of us girls), spent most of my schooling in an all-girls’ school run by Catholic nuns, was cloistered in a women-only college at university, and emerged into adult life as the second wave Feminist movement was gaining voice and momentum. As a young woman, I never entertained the idea that women were less capable than men (except at heaving weights); I was fortunate that both my parents and the teachers who supported and encouraged me did not appear to think my sex should constrain me in any way. Nor did I think of myself as a second-class citizen — at least not until I raised my head from my books and discovered, to my horror, that discrimination against women was deeply entrenched in most of our organisations and in the practices and attitudes of those (males) who held the keys to full participation in Australian life.

I was fortunate that my horizons were expanding as the old verities were being “questioned”, when the tenor of public discussion about a woman’s “place” was changing radically, and analyses of the ideologies underpinning women’s social status were hitting the quality presses (and even the mass media). Like many women in Australia, I was inspired by the international revolution challenging the god-given nature of women’s roles — and inevitably, those of men too. More and more of us began to question our preordained paths and to actively repudiate them; we wanted nothing short of full participation in society, including in our politics.

I was part of a society permeated by inequality and discrimination against women — what we came to call sexism. Our mothers were fenced in by hearth and home, raising children and caring for their husbands, while burying their own desires and talents in quiet anonymity. Women were diminished by attitudes and expectations which belittled their intellectual capacity and restricted their choices; they were expected to move seamlessly from the role of daughter to wife, from one family to another, barely experiencing real independence between these life stages; in need of protection and without real agency. Often they were trapped by the canon that every marriage should survive and by the fear of social disgrace that divorce represented.

As I later became aware, women were still unable to fully control their own reproduction. Although the pill had made better fertility control possible, it was still extremely difficult and risky to have a pregnancy terminated, no matter what a woman's circumstances. Sexual assault and violence toward women were taboo subjects and under-reported, and women were often portrayed as contributing to their own abuse. There was little in the way of appropriate support or refuge. Some things have not changed much.

Academic underachievement was common among girls and they often left school prematurely; women's employment was seen as problematic, especially if women were married and had children. In fact, for women, paid work was often portrayed as simply incompatible with marriage and motherhood. Images of the "career woman" incorporated the idea that she was in some respects de-sexed, unattractive to men and lacking in "feminine" qualities. Many faced blatant discrimination when they entered — or tried to enter — the workforce. Very few women reached senior positions in any field of work, since they were denied permanence and opportunities for promotion. In neither the public nor the private sector did women receive equal pay and there were no provisions for affordable child-care for those mothers who did work. There were almost no women in politics, in any but back-room roles, or at any level. This struck me as a particularly egregious flaw in our society, since such representation was likely to be crucial to any campaign to improve the status of women.

III WOMEN AND DEMOCRACY

I know now that sexism in politics has deep roots. From the beginning, democracies everywhere, including in Australia, excluded women. Debates on how our democracies should be structured often proceeded as if women did not exist as separate beings; women were routinely excluded from voting and denied the right to stand for political office. They were belatedly included only after hard fought campaigns by the suffragists, often in the face of bitter opposition which questioned women's abilities and suitability for public life.

While the right to vote and stand for parliaments was achieved relatively early in Australia, it was decades before women were elected in significant numbers. The progress toward anything resembling equal representation in our parliaments has been glacially slow. The political parties were particularly resistant to more women being selected to serve as representatives. If women were considered as candidates at all, it was most often in unwinnable seats. I was not challenged for pre-selection in my first attempt at a lower house seat, probably because the seat had not been won by my party for the previous 27 years.

As a result, the forms and procedures of our democracy, like others around the world, evolved without significant contributions from women. Our Constitution, our parliaments, and our political parties were designed by men to suit their preoccupations and convenience. Even something as apparently simple as parliamentary sitting times reflect this history. One of the first things I did as Premier in Western Australia was cut the late night (and sometimes drunken) marathon sittings, starting and finishing earlier so members could spend more time with their families. Although it was generally well-received, the initiative was promptly dumped by my (male) successor. In this and many other ways, our democratic institutions have never really been remodelled to accommodate the female half of the population.

At least as important for contemporary politics is that the very idea of who and what a politician should be has been shaped by this relative absence of women from public life and the stereotyped ideas that gave rise to it. The "politician as male" became normative and women's achievements and interests have typically been measured against this norm, rather than on their own terms. However else women politicians are described, it

is always her gender which is the primary descriptor. She is often defined by what she is not. As Norris puts it, 'she is not simply a politician (male as norm) but a special kind of deviant professional.'² Despite increasing numbers of women in politics, the rulers we run over women's achievements still bear male fingerprints. Many men cannot or will not see that their definitions of merit and expectations about what a competent politician should be may be nothing more than rules they have made up to protect their own positions.

IV GENDER INEQUALITY TODAY

When Julia Gillard replaced Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister, there was, in some quarters at least, celebration that a woman had been accepted as qualified for the job; that we had no problems with a woman in the highest office in the country. Did we? We could say, could we not, that sexism was safely relegated to the past? Similar conclusions were reached when I became Premier in Western Australia — it was marked, not just as a first, but as a harbinger of further change. While Gillard's ascension and the growing numbers of women ministers, state and territory leaders, and members of parliament might encourage the perception that men and women are equally accepted in politics in Australia, other data raise questions about whether this is entirely accurate.

We know that, despite the views of some conservative commentators, society-wide gender inequality is still with us; and it takes many forms — from what women earn and how they are employed, to the violence and harassment they still experience, to how they are publicly represented and judged. While there are more women in boardrooms and parliaments, the disparity in status and power between men and women is tangible. In politics, perhaps more important than the numbers — 30 per cent of lower house MPs are now women — is that fact that politics is still a largely "male space" in which women continue to be seen an aberration. It seemed to me that my own status as the first woman Premier of an Australian state often excited more attention — to both my vices and virtues — than was the case for my male colleagues. I stood out like a "sore thumb", as my mother would put it, an irritating departure from normality. Such "exceptional" status means that when women are in a minority, they are often assessed

² Pippa Norris, 'Women leaders worldwide: A splash of color in the photo op' in Pippa Norris (ed), *Women, Media and Politics* (Oxford University Press, 1997) 6.

as “other”, the classic position from which prejudice arises. Even when, or perhaps particularly when, women achieve positions of power, they are not exempt from the effects of common or garden sexism. Such sexism provides the scaffolding for continuing inequality, driving discrimination and exclusion. Sexism, particularly in its most toxic form, misogyny — the hatred of women — often blights the lives of women who dare put their heads above the parapet in whatever their chosen field.

What is often overlooked is that sexism refers to more than just unpleasant attitudes about male superiority, but encompasses the social structures and institutions which enable gender-based discrimination. The much studied concept of sexism, first given voice in the 60s, covers all the conditions which perpetuate stereotypes about gender roles; in its extreme form, women are depicted as best suited to domestic caring roles and to be congenitally less capable than men, especially in the qualities deemed necessary to make good leaders in business, politics, and academia. Our homes, our workplaces, and our parliaments are designed accordingly.

Although it may be less common than in the past, and less likely to be publicly approved, most of us have little trouble identifying “hostile sexism” — the antagonism shown toward women who challenge the prescribed roles for men and women. There is plenty of evidence that in corporations and in government, women competing against men for high-ranking positions often face such sexism, not least because they are seen as threats to the status quo of male authority. We may have more difficulty recognising “benevolent sexism” when women are stereotyped as nurturing, delicate, and sensitive, needing to be protected and provided for by men, a position that can be just as restrictive as hostile sexism.³ One consequence is that when a woman does not appear to be stereotypically “feminine” her very identity as a woman may be called into question. Coarse reflections on Gillard’s decision not to have children were clearly designed to make her seem somehow less of a woman. A local Sunday newspaper speculated I might be lonely as a divorced woman, and suggested that I was looking for a partner — this at a time when I was flat out carrying out my duties as Premier. One of my Federal cabinet colleagues occasionally called me “luv”; I decided not to have an argument every time it happened, and to ignore the implication that I was somehow not up to the job.

³ Peter Glick and Susan Fiske, ‘An ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality’ (2001) 56(2) *American Psychologist* 109.

In studying the media representation of international women leaders, Norris found few examples of blatant sex stereotyping, but many instances of “conventional wisdom” which highlighted women’s lack of the usual qualifications and prior political experience, with the broader experiences they brought to the office commonly undervalued.⁴ The commentary diminished women’s capabilities and experiences and evaluated appropriate qualifications in terms of the (masculine) characteristics of past officeholders. Although, at the time I was in office I had a PhD in Psychology, had lectured in the Medical Faculty for some years, and had undertaken research in a variety of fields, more attention was paid by the media to my family circumstances than my professional qualifications, with one headline dubbing me “Lawrence of Suburbia”.

It is clear from many years of systematic study that the media often frame women through such stereotyped and traditional values. For example, they stress the compassionate and nurturing qualities of women while men’s competence is underlined. In the past, the media’s starting point was that women belonged at home and they were expected to marry and raise a family. Politics was definitely reserved for men. I will never forget an *Australian* newspaper caption on a photograph of women State and Federal Ministers for Education which described them as “mothers and grandmothers” — and nothing else.

Biographical accounts suggest that the representations of women politicians in the media are more inclined to focus on gender-based evaluations of dress and demeanour than on the substance of decisions and actions. A series of interviews with British MPs found that most of the women believed that their outward appearance was the subject of considerably more attention than it was for their male colleagues.⁵ The emphasis is often on their sexual appeal — or lack of it. The daily tabloids habitually referred to women MPs as “Blair’s Babes” and “Cameron’s Cuties” depending on their parties.

Similar observations have been made by Australian women MPs who report that the media almost always report the age and marital status of a woman, what they look like, their domestic and family circumstances, fashion sense, and so on. I recall when I became Premier in WA the Sunday newspaper invited local fashion consultants to do a

⁴ Pippa Norris, ‘Women leaders worldwide: A splash of color in the photo op’ in Pippa Norris (ed), *Women, Media and Politics* (Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁵ Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi and Keren Ross, ‘Women MPs and the media: Representing the body politic’ in Joni Lovenduski and Pippa Norris (eds), *Women in Politics* (Oxford University Press, 1996).

“make-over” of my hair style, glasses, clothing. When I did get a haircut, it became the subject of further comment. Coverage of Prime Minister Theresa May seems as likely to focus on her shoes as on her policies. No wonder Hillary Clinton took to wearing sensible shoes and pant-suits.

Nonetheless, from where I stand, there have been big improvements over recent decades in our attitudes toward equality for women, including in leadership positions. Surveys confirm this, although they also point to worrying signs of that momentum having slowed or even reversed.⁶ During my time as Premier — although not later when I was the target of a full-blown attack culminating in a Royal Commission — I was spared the worst of destructively sexist commentary and behaviour. People were supportive and generous and seemed genuinely pleased that a woman had taken on the role of Premier. However, I know my staff kept a bottom drawer of the filing cabinet for the angry, misogynist rants that some men seemed to find necessary to disgorge. These same people, when faced with the request to give their names and addresses to the letters-to-the-editors or the talk-back producers, appeared to lose their courage. Since then, online anonymity has amplified some very unpleasant sentiments toward women and licenced and publicised the crude comments that once disappeared with the hangovers. There may be nothing new about the nastiness, but it is given much wider circulation than once was the case; in some eyes it has come to be normal.

At the same time, research in the discipline to which I have returned, psychology, reminds me that eradicating sexism will not be easy. Even people who explicitly repudiate gender bias and applaud women’s full participation may harbour unconscious and automatic preferences for male leaders; ones they are probably not even aware of. Using tests that show how quickly a person can pair two concepts (for example, woman and leadership, or man and leadership), researchers have been able to go beyond what people say they believe to tap their implicit beliefs.⁷ In one US study, when asked to sort images rapidly, participants found it easier to pair words like ‘president’, ‘governor’, and ‘executive’ with male names and words like ‘secretary’, ‘assistant’, and ‘aide’ with female names; many people appeared to have difficulty associating women with leadership at

⁶ Marcel van Egmond et al, ‘A stalled revolution? Gender role attitudes in Australia, 1986-2005’ (2010) 27(3) *Journal of Population Research* 147, 148.

⁷ See, eg, Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald, ‘Implicit stereotyping and prejudice’ in Mark P. Zanna and James M. Olson (eds), *The psychology of prejudice: The Ontario symposium* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc Publishers, 7th ed, 1995).

all.⁸ Similar results have emerged in other domains and places, and they matter, since the more difficulty a person has in classifying a woman as a leader, the less likely they are to intend to vote for a woman; some 12 per cent less likely. This suggests that women may need to campaign harder to get the same results as a male colleague.

We are also largely unaware of the biased judgements we make about women's achievement and capacity. In research on hiring practices, one study asked science faculty academics to rate the applications of a student — who was randomly assigned either a male or female name — for a laboratory manager position. Both male and female faculty members judged the 'male' applicant as significantly more competent and hireable than the (identical) 'female applicant' and suggested a higher starting salary and more career mentoring.⁹ This result has been replicated in a variety of workplaces. Differences emerge too in how success and failure are perceived: studies show that among managers, when women produce superior outcomes at work, this is attributed to luck or significant extra effort, whereas men's success is attributed to their personal capability alone. Conversely, failure among women is attributed to lack of ability, but for men, to bad luck.

Not only are such biased judgements likely to influence the judgements we make about women, they also influence the women on the receiving end. More than a decade of research has demonstrated that women's performance, like that of other disadvantaged groups, is diminished compared to their capacity when they are reminded that they are stereotyped to do poorly — for example at mathematics or science or leadership; where there is a threat in the air, the so-called 'stereotype threat'.¹⁰ We all carry such stereotypes in our heads — about what women and men are really like — even if we reject them, and they can still be a potent influence on our behaviour, especially when they are constantly repeated.

V JUDGING WOMEN POLITICIANS

⁸ Cecilia Hyunjung Mo, 'What? Me Sexist?' [2011] *UpRising: Innovative Ideas for Gender Equality* 10, 12 <<http://gender.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/upRising%20Vol.1.pdf>>.

⁹ Corinne A Moss-Racusin et al, 'Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students' (2012) 109 *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 16474.

¹⁰ Steven Spencer, Claude Steele and Diane Quinn, 'Stereotype threat and women's math performance' (1999) 35(1) *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 4.

The question of whether sexism continues to blight the lives of women politicians was re-kindled by the treatment of Australia's first female Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, and by the candidacy of Hillary Clinton in the US Presidential elections. As Anne Summers has documented so comprehensively, there was a torrent of deeply offensive sexist commentary — indeed misogyny — directed at Gillard during her time in office by both some sections of the media and the blogosphere.¹¹ Similar patterns have been observed in commentary on Clinton's candidacy. Whatever one might think of Gillard's or Clinton's political records — and criticism is warranted — the angry, gendered nature of many of the attacks is obvious, and very unpleasant. I am only glad that my time in politics largely preceded the explosion of social media and the turbo-charged nature of online media coverage.

However, such malicious sexism, while easy to spot, does not account for all the challenges women politicians face. For example, some of what looks like legitimate political commentary is, on closer inspection, clearly sexist. Take the excoriating left wing criticism of Clinton's foreign policy record, which is prosecuted with a level of vitriol that somehow does not attach to either President Obama or Secretary of State, John Kerry who were also parties to the decisions for which she is held responsible. It seems that she is judged more harshly because such actions are seen as incompatible with what is expected of women.

Does this suggest we hold women politicians to a different (higher) standard of performance than we do their male colleagues? Both anecdotal and research evidence point to the fact that women politicians' mistakes or poor decisions are read differently from those of men. US and Australian research suggests that we are tougher on female than male politicians (and leaders generally) when they are perceived to make mistakes.

According to Australian researchers who had listeners judge political speeches by both men and women, when women politicians faltered they were judged less likeable and influential than equally tentative men.¹² Similar findings emerged from studies by Brescoll and her US colleagues on how people evaluate women who make mistakes in

¹¹ Anne Summers, 'The misogyny factor' (NewSouth, 2013).

¹² See, eg, Renata Bongiorno, Paul Bain and Barbara David, 'If you're going to be a leader, at least act like it! Prejudice towards women who are tentative in leader roles' (2014) 53(2) *British Journal of Social Psychology* 217.

traditionally male occupations.¹³ She and her colleagues gave participants a fictional news story about a police chief in a major city preparing for a big protest rally. After some time, the protest got out of hand and the chief dispatched squad cars. In one version of the story, the chief did not send enough officers, and 25 people were seriously injured. When it was a male police chief, his rating as an effective chief dropped by roughly 10 per cent, but when female, her ratings dropped by almost 30 per cent. Participants reading the stories wanted to demote her, but not him. Both leaders made a risky decision that backfired, but it cost her more. In another version of the story, the protest was successfully controlled when the chief sent in the squad cars; there were no injuries and the protest did not escalate. In that version, both leaders were given high marks, suggesting that the female leader was not automatically seen as a poor fit — just when she was seen to blunder.

Brescoll and her team also found one occupation — Women's College President — which was both high status and usually held by women; men in those roles were also judged more harshly than women when they showed poor judgement. Brescoll's team concluded that we are more accepting of a poor decision when a leader makes it in a gender-appropriate role. This, they point out, would not be such a problem if men and women had equal territory, but they do not. Men's "territory" encompasses almost every area of the professions and public life: finance, law, sports, politics, the military, and the stock market. Until we associate women with leadership roles more broadly, mistakes will remain much more costly for women.

These results point to the fragility of the gains made by people — mainly women — in so-called "stereotype incongruent occupations", and that is still most for women. Numerous studies have documented the ways in which people who take up these roles are discriminated against.¹⁴ Indeed, the tension between what it means to be a "nice girl" and what is believed to be required of a successful politician seems an almost universal feature of much of the media coverage of women politicians.

¹³ Victoria Brescoll, Erica Dawson and Eric Uhlmann, 'Hard Won and Easily Lost: The Fragile Status of Leaders in Gender-Stereotype-Incongruent Occupations' (2010) 21(11) *Psychological Science* 1640.

¹⁴ See, eg, Alice Eagly and Steven Karau, 'Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders' (2002) 109(3) *Psychological Review* 573; Peter Glick and Susan Fiske, 'The ambivalent sexism inventory: Differentiating hostile and benevolent sexism' (1996) 70(3) *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 491.

As well as running the risk of hitting the “glass ceiling” in attempting to rise to the top of leadership roles, women often find themselves poised on a “glass cliff” — being promoted to more risky positions which make it more likely that they will fail and fall. Ryan & Haslam found that during a period of overall stock-market decline those companies who appointed women to their boards were the ones that had experienced consistently bad performance in the preceding five months; those who had not, appointed men.¹⁵ It has been remarked on more than a few occasions that Joan Kirner and I were chosen in order to clean up the messes created by our predecessors and, in the eyes of some, would not have been chosen otherwise.

In her study of women leaders, Norris also found that the media often portray women leaders as agents of change who will clean up corruption in politics.¹⁶ In examining the media treatment of women politicians in Australia during the latter half of the last century, Baird reports the many occasions on which women MPs were seen as the housewives of the Parliament — as scrubbing Parliament House clean, ‘bleaching politics of grime.’ Women are represented as being ‘in, but not of, politics...’ as floating above it, ‘gazing with pity and scorn at the muck beneath.’ There are dangers associated with these exaggerated saintly images: such inflated expectations are almost certain to be disappointed. Women politicians are often caricatured — hyped as heroines, then cast as villains or fools. In her book, ‘Media Tarts’, Julia Baird colourfully portrays the way in which so many women in Australian politics have been pursued with unprecedented enthusiasm, then dumped and discredited with equal intensity.¹⁷

In my transition to Federal politics, cartoonists depicted me as “Saint Carmen”, replete with halo and wings. The risks in this apparently benevolent portrayal are obvious and, not surprisingly, such a depiction infuriates some people. Former Prime Minister John Howard castigated me as a “grandstander” for claiming a moral superiority I did not have (although I made no such claims — I simply thought politics could be less adversarial). I have no doubt that his desire to take me down — as well as his own political ambitions — drove him to collude with Richard Court in setting up a Royal

¹⁵ Michelle Ryan and Alexander Haslam, ‘The glass cliff: Implicit theories of leadership and gender and the precariousness of women’s leadership positions’ in Birgit Schyns and James Meindl (eds), *Implicit leadership theories: Essays and explorations* (CT Information Age, 2005).

¹⁶ Pippa Norris, ‘Women leaders worldwide: A splash of color in the photo op’ in Pippa Norris (ed), *Women, Media and Politics* (Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹⁷ Baird, above n 1.

Commission to inquire into whether I had misled the WA parliament about my knowledge of a petition surrounding a dispute over an acrimonious divorce settlement. I was blamed for the young woman's later suicide. In her review of how the Australian press frames women politicians, Julia Baird concluded that part of my appeal was that I was a woman, different from men, 'who then expended considerable amounts of energy and millions of dollars to prove that she was not.'¹⁸

All this matters because these prejudices reinforce the perception that no matter what positions they reach, women are still outsiders in politics, residing at the margins; that women politicians are exceptions, "diversions from the serious male game of politics". While there has been a lot of change, maleness is still the norm. The set of attitudes, ideas, and interests that come with being male are taken as given. But it is critical, if we are to have an open and representative democracy, that men's privileged occupancy of positions of power and influence is no longer viewed as normal. It often appears that community attitudes are shaped by conclusions like Baird's: that women and power are like water and oil — they simply do not mix. Adamantly, repeatedly, and loudly insisting that women must be equal participants in society, and calling out sexism — whenever and wherever it surfaces — is the only way to render such conclusions obsolete.

¹⁸ Baird, above n 1, 220.

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