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**WOMEN POLITICIANS AND THEIR MEDIA COVERAGE: A
GENERATIONAL ANALYSIS***

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Abstract. Beginning from the premise that gender is a fundamental factor of social organization, not simply a property of individuals, the authors explore the implications of this gender structure for women in historically changing twentieth-century Canadian political culture. In a pilot study prepared for the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform, three generations of women are identified: the rare women in office before 1970, those born from 1940 through the baby boom, and those born after 1960. By means of interviews, historical reconstruction, and narrative content analysis, the authors distinguish the self-perceptions of the three generations and the styles of media coverage that they have typically encountered. The analysis finds that two major forces have shaped this media coverage: the evolving modern women's movement after 1970, and the minority status of women within all political parties. It is argued that political culture has been created by men for men, although women have made a difference in political life, despite their sparse numbers. The report concludes with reflections on the present political generation and with recommendations for a more egalitarian future.

Theoretical Setting

Issues of gender, politics and the media are complexly intertwined, and their study up to now has been piecemeal. This is because gender was previously viewed as a property of individuals, rather than as a principle of social organization that systematically affects a person's behaviour and total life experience (Stacey and Thorne, 1985: 307). Every step in a female politician's career, as well as the description of her political performance by the media, is therefore affected by her gender. Our study will address these interconnections and elucidate the ways in which various kinds of social barriers affect media descriptions. The interlinkages will be investigated under three headings:

- * the media implications of Canadian female politicians' minority status in all political parties;

- * the changing media coverage of women politicians from the 1950s onward; and
- * future media narratives and the social challenge of women in politics.

If gender constitutes a principle of social organization, one must assume that different groups of people living in different historical periods will come to different understandings of social reality. The notion of political generation helps to pinpoint these different understandings, because it raises questions about who, how and when these understandings were developed. Political generations have been defined in two ways: in terms of a "life cycle" and in terms of a "cohort" (Mannheim, 1952). For our purposes the "cohort" analysis is more relevant because it addresses the issue of stability in group outlooks concerning the role of women in public life (Knoke, 1984: 192). In the case of Canadian women politicians, these outlooks, as well as their media descriptions, changed as the three cohorts came into contact with the developing ideas of the women's movement.

The three different cohorts of women politicians who were active in Canadian public life can be divided into those who served before 1970, when they were a tiny minority in provincial and federal parliaments (4.5 per cent) and those who served after this time, when there was a rapid growth in numbers. The former, our interviews show, were born in the 1920s, while of the latter, the second generation was born around the outbreak of the Second World War (1940s) and the third, after 1960. Each of these cohorts was thus born into a unique historical time with its own identifiable set of media description practices.

Women politicians' historical experiences, and the social attitudes they engendered, can be correlated with the rise of an important social movement, "second-wave feminism," that affected the collective social outlooks not only of North American readers and viewers but also of the media. Sara Evans (1979) explains that the women's movement was so important because it provided both a theory (patriarchy) and a method (gender analysis) that radically changed women's understanding of themselves and their social roles.

The relationship between the three cohorts of women politicians (who are differentiated by their birth dates) and their media descriptions is determined by the women's movement's understanding of itself at the time these descriptions were made. According to Francine Descarries and Shirley Roy (1988), the second-wave women's movement underwent three developmental changes during which its goals were modified. In the "egalitarian reformist" stage in the 1960s, well-educated, older professional women, as well as younger activists, spontaneously joined together to analyze

the malaise that had "no name" (Friedan, 1963). Action and consciousness-raising groups focused on the meaning of "equality" in the legal realm and the workplace. Among the 1960s cohort of women politicians there were few avowed feminists, because these women, lacking insider experience, assumed that they were being treated equally. Consequently, first-cohort women politicians focused on the implications of their own minority status and the relation of women to the state. In Canada, this decade was important because it led to the 1967 appointment of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. This Commission, for the first time, focused attention on women's changing social role and showed that women were treated differentially. In its 1970 report, 166 recommendations were offered to make women more equal to men in Canadian life (Brown, 1989: 143-44).

From its focus on gender equality, the women's movement in its second epoch (1970s) became radicalized and turned to issues of systematic discrimination, goaded on by student demonstrations in the United States and Europe, and the anti-war sentiments engendered by Vietnam. Feminist writers of this period began to explain women's differential social status in terms of a social and ideological system called patriarchy, which assigns women to the private sphere of the home and men to the powerful public realm of the state. In the family setting, women perform unpaid domestic labour to maintain the household economy as well as psychological services to maintain the family unit. Women's groups began to demand public-sector support for child care, and that women have control over their own bodies in regard to birth control and abortion. For second-cohort women politicians, it became clear that their minority status was not an accident, but the result of a systematic lack of recruitment into federal party structures and of access to equal party support. Consequently, they called for women's networks in all major Canadian parties and for an active search for women's participation in party caucuses and electoral campaigns.

By the beginning of the 1980s, the neo-conservative backlash that coincided with the Reagan and Thatcher regimes once again changed the emphases of North America's second-wave women's movement. With the demands for legal equality promoted by many organizations across class and gender lines (Hochschild and Machung, 1990), women's groups were now focusing on various other aspects of the social and political agenda. From this period onward, it was clear that feminism did not speak with a single voice. Third-generation women politicians reflected these diversities in their own party ranks, with the Liberal and Progressive Conservative parties less open to change in structures and in personnel than the New Democratic Party. The "pluralistic feminism" of the 1980s was typical of women politicians as well as the public at large (Schneider, 1988: 9). This outlook also penetrated media descriptions, which were sensitized through media-watch

organizations, meetings with editors and demands from other women's groups for fairer descriptive practices.

In the 1980s, the political recruitment of women politicians reached about 20 per cent, and party restructuring haltingly began. Our interviews suggest that, for the first time, a new breed of third-generation self-declared feminist politicians was being elected. In contrast to the other two cohorts, many of these women viewed politics as a career for which specific qualifications were necessary. These qualifications were not acquired through long years of party work, as before, but through scholarly, legal or business training. Militant feminists, the original trail-blazers, have vanished from the public scene as new types of leaders consolidate and extend the social equality agenda of the women's movement.

In addition to the cohort analysis, this study also incorporates a second type of analysis, the "minority" approach, to explain the differential party status of the three cohorts of women politicians. It draws attention to the fact that internal party structures and the "culture" of politics were created by men for men. They are thus neither easy to penetrate, nor comfortable to work in for women aspiring to hold office (Brodie, 1985; Bashevkin, 1985). Therefore, the kinds of barriers that major and minor parties place in the way of women candidates become an important index of the type of social change that has occurred since the 1950s. The three generations of women politicians that have entered politics since then have very different attitudes toward power. While we have more detailed interview material on the outlooks of the first two generations of women politicians, the third generation, which takes feminism for granted, is the most interesting to speculate about because these women will become the "new look" candidates that the Canadian public seems to be looking for in the 1990s. Their new understanding of how to organize and how to become active moulders of new people- and environment-friendly legislation will be important to contemplate in the final section of this study.

A third type of analysis that we have used in this pilot project can be loosely called a narrative analysis. In this analysis we have probed both the context of the media descriptions and the patterns these descriptions have formed. Such an analysis permits us to link the changing media portrayals of women politicians to the historical periods in which they occurred. These periods, we will show, have themselves been marked by the women's movement's changing agendas. To establish the context of media descriptions, we interviewed both male and female journalists concerning their descriptive practices, and inquired whether these were affected by gender. All of the professionals commented that they used the same descriptive practices vis-a-vis all interviewees. Women journalists, however, were more apt to remark that they were particularly interested in highlighting women politicians' professional

backgrounds, which were rarely noted by their male colleagues.

Since this is a gender study, we began with the assumption that gender is an important descriptive characteristic that generates different kinds of narrative patterns for female and male politicians. Three different kinds of narrative styles can be distinguished: the traditional "first woman" approach, the currently used "special interest" mixed approach, and a future "egalitarian" discourse, which will invoke not gender but competence as the major characteristic by which both male and female incumbents will be judged. Time constraints precluded a general comparison of the amount of male and female coverage, although it would be interesting to provide this in a larger, future project. We derived our narrative patterns from a corpus of reports covering the 26 political actors we had identified in the three cohorts. This corpus comprised a total of about 250 newspaper and magazine articles distributed over a 30-year period. Each of these articles was subjected to a simple content analysis that recorded the following three characteristics: choice of adjectives, nouns and personal characteristics associated with women politicians; gender focus - type of headline used; and topics associated with women politicians. Together these characteristics provide the basis for the three kinds of generational stereotypes that we were able to isolate and that are the subject of the rest of the study.

The generational, minority and narrative analyses indicate that media descriptions are not merely passive mirrors of the Canadian scene, but that media institutions, and the journalists associated with them, are active participants in the struggle for social change. We will demonstrate how the media can, and do, through the way in which they describe public issues, retard or advance the cause and legitimacy of some groups of people and not of others. In this process, media institutions and their outlooks themselves undergo change. In the course of the past 30 years, the women's movement has been one of the major forces that, together with media-watch and consumer organizations, have drawn attention to the media's need to overcome their gender biases. As a result of these pressures, the media, which used to denigrate women's political contributions in the pre-movement era, have modified their narrative approaches in the direction of feminist demands. In spite of these changes, however, feminist analyses and their paradigms remain marginalized by the media, as the 1980s' post-feminism rhetoric indicates. Precisely because the styles of media descriptions are so important for a democratic understanding of the public world, pressures for narrative change have to be maintained until all public officials, irrespective of gender, receive the same egalitarian focus and balanced handling that social fairness in a democracy demands.

The Media Implications of Women's Minority Status

in Canadian Party Politics

Much has been written about the minority status of women politicians in Canada, and the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing has heard about this issue from other researchers. Suffice it to remember, here, that at both the provincial and federal levels, the election of female representatives was insignificant until 1970. During the last two decades, however, women have made substantial gains, so that as of 1988, they represent 19.5 per cent of all candidates and 13.2 per cent of all federal laws. On the provincial level, the representation of women politicians varies between an insignificant 2 per cent in Newfoundland and a maximum of 22 per cent in Ontario, with Quebec registering a close 19 per cent. Even though these figures constitute progress for women politicians, they indicate that Canada has only about half the female political representation that is found in selected Scandinavian parliaments, such as Sweden, where 38 per cent of MPs are women.

Sociologists have suggested that it takes a threshold of at least 20 to 30 per cent for a minority to succeed in improving its access to a gendered profession like politics. Sweden has achieved this take-off, but even there, as Ami Lonroth (Canada, Royal Commission, 1990) mentions, the iron rule of power prevails: the greater the power, the scarcer the women. In Sweden and Canada, both department and committee chairpersons are still appointed on the basis of gender. Women have not yet penetrated the top and most powerful finance, economics or defence domains. In spite of these continuing imbalances, feminist pressures have forced health and social issues on to the public agenda, and social support for child-rearing activities is now accepted as the norm in Europe and North America (Burt et al., 1988: 142-43).

The media implications of Canadian politicians' minority status are twofold: women politicians have virtually no visibility in three of the country's ten provinces; and successful women politicians constitute a very small subgroup of candidates available for media attention. In the next section, we will show how, due to the traditional notion that women's place is in the home, women politicians virtually disappear from the television screen. Television's electoral focus on national party leaders further reinforces the trend to ignore women in politics, because more female candidates are sponsored by minority and regional parties than by the two major parties.

Added to these gender-related obstacles caused by the political system (Burt et al., 1988: 154; Brodie and Vickers, 1982: 19-22), there is a further media-specific barrier: the virtual annihilation of women in all types of television programming. Not only are there very few women represented in television programming, but women's perspectives are also left undiscussed. Tannis

MacBeth-Williams et al. (1986) found that nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) of all program characters were male and only one-third female. This discrepancy is further reinforced in news and public affairs coverage where 77 per cent of news readers, 91 per cent of experts and 70 per cent of voice-overs are male (Jeffrey, 1989). Women are also denigrated with respect to their capacities: they are less likely to be featured as leaders; as taking risks; or as powerful, authoritative and knowledgeable personalities.

All of these journalistic selection norms tend to make the appearance of women on the television screen rare and to feature women in their traditional secondary and home-maker roles. Only 38 per cent of programs show women doing non-traditional work of any kind, thus reinforcing the outmoded notion that women's public place is in the "pink ghetto's" low-paying service jobs. Such norms work against the accurate description of women politicians who are engaged in a non-traditional social role. Because these norms have remained constant since the 1950s, one must conclude that the media themselves contribute to an interpretive framework that carries the implicit message that women have only a small, secondary role to play in Canadian public life (MacBeth-Williams et al., 1986).

Television's gendered framework for political reporting is reinforced by the ways in which Canada's parties function. Robert Mason Lee (1989a) argues that television as a medium has drastically changed the strategy, the conduct and the functioning of electoral campaigns. Since the early 1980s, TV has replaced the party as a campaign strategist through its news programming format and national reach. The party's strategic role has been further eroded because the media focus on the federal leaders rather than on other party personnel. Municipal and provincial contestants from smaller or new parties, which are more supportive of female candidates (Brown, 1989: 150), have suffered from this changed focus. Their contestants are now rarely covered, making the real gains of women in municipal governments virtually invisible (Lavigne, 1990: 55-56).

Because women are rarely selected for strategic and visible party positions, they also receive less media exposure prior to their candidacy. This disproportion is the outcome of two sets of gender-related party practices: women candidates have unequal access to the parties' available seats and are also disproportionately assigned to run in "lost-cause" ridings (Brodie, 1985: 113-17). In the 1988 federal election, female candidates were able to contest only 45 per cent of all open seats (133 out of a total of 263).

Both of these gender-related constraints have serious consequences for the media coverage of female contenders. The electronic media, with scarce personnel and a "games" approach to election coverage, associate "winning" with male politicians, while women politicians, whose campaigns are

linked to lost-cause ridings, are associated with the "Flora syndrome." Sheila Copps had to contend with this association in her 1982 Ontario Liberal party leadership campaign against David Peterson. Although she garnered many votes, she was never credited with having done well in the campaign nor with having leadership potential. The scarcity of female contenders also works against women becoming visible in electoral campaigns unless their party achieves a surprise upset. Together, these gender-linked party barriers translate into additional media selection and description biases that do not apply to male politicians.

Women Politicians and Their Media Coverage

A third set of gender-filters that affect female, but not male, politicians arises from the unique narrative styles that the largely male reporting teams develop toward women politicians. Just as politics, until recently, was a largely male-dominated activity, so, too, has broadcast journalism been a gendered profession with traditional notions about women's place in society. A historical comparison, based on generational analysis, permits us to relate changes in styles of thought to professional reporting activities and, thus, to identify changes in reportorial styles concerning women politicians.

The Traditional Period (before 1970): Focus on "Biology"

In the period up to 1970, the general societal outlook continued to be conservative. It distinguished between the private sphere of home and family, for which women had the main responsibility, and the public sphere of politics, business and work, inhabited by men. Although the Second World War had drawn more women into the paid labour force, the ideology of the 1950s once again relegated women to their "proper" place in the home (Friedan, 1963). It was not until the late 1960s that larger numbers of women, both with and without children, were drawn into the labour force to help cover the rising costs of a middle class standard of living. At that time, as we have seen, the North American women's movement was in its infancy, and the contradictions between women's public work and private family roles were not yet well understood. This traditional role assignment provided a formidable barrier to the recruitment of women into the male domain of Canadian politics. Only 17 women politicians were elected to Parliament in the 50 years between 1920 and 1970. Clearly, these conservative social attitudes also affected the ways in which the first generation of women politicians were narrated. Among this group were Pauline Jewett, Judy LaMarsh and Flora MacDonald.

The "traditional" narrative style, which persisted to the end of the 1960s, can generally be described as the biological approach. It uses a typification that emphasizes women qua "biologically different being," and narrates women politicians as "first woman" and "token" in the

non-traditional domain of politics. As such, it perpetuates the gender stereotyping of women's activities and assumes that women politicians are primarily involved with their family and their children, and only secondarily with their political responsibilities. The notion of the restricted social role of women engenders a typification that automatically places women and their concerns into the less important "human interest" classification of public reporting. In the press, this typification places reports on female politicians into the "life-styles" section, while on television, it means that the story will appear in the final third, and therefore less important, segments of the news line-up (Robinson, 1978).

The traditional topic assignment that was associated with the "first woman" approach leads male reporters to query female politicians on a restricted set of what are perceived as woman-related issues. These include social welfare, education and health. Flora MacDonald was distressed by this restricted reportorial topic assignment, a restriction that persists to this day. After the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, The Journal aired a "special" on the condition of foreigners detained in Iraq during which the Tehran hostage crisis was recalled. Instead of drawing on Flora MacDonald's expert knowledge as Canada's external affairs minister during that period, The Journal assigned the complimentary roles to former ambassadors Allan Gotlieb (Washington) and Ken Taylor (Tehran).

In addition to restricting the topic assignment, which marginalizes women politicians and their interests, the traditional narrative style also focuses and frames stories in a way that undervalues women politicians' professional backgrounds and wide-ranging capacities. "First woman" reporting highlights primarily the biological and family relationship characteristics of the female politician fails to illuminate her training and professional qualifications. Judy LaMarsh reports, in her Memoirs of a Bird in a Gilded Cage, that "columnists asked me about anything and everything except about my job ... My home, my cooking, my hobbies, my friends, my tastes, my likes and dislikes, all became public property to a degree suffered by none of my colleagues, including the Prime Minister 'Trudeau'" (1968: 303). When women politicians are constructed as gender "tokens," they are also assumed to be undergoing a great deal of role strain caused by the conflict between their political and family responsibilities. Both Flora MacDonald and Judy LaMarsh report that they were frequently asked by reporters, "Are you a politician or a woman?" as though the two were mutually exclusive.

Through the "first woman" lens, women politicians become identified as the "other," as those who are "different," though their biographies show that they have more in common with male politicians than with other professionals. Women politicians are equal to their male counterparts in their level of education; they have

professional backgrounds in law, political science and management, and have usually worked more years in their parties and ridings (Brodie, 1985: 59-60) than their male contenders. Yet, in spite of this, their visible biological difference becomes the primary point of narrative reference. Judy LaMarsh (1968: 305) sums it up this way: "Where there are twenty-five men, the public's interest is split; when there is one woman, she becomes a focus for criticism and for curiosity."

Communications theorists have generally pointed out that media personnel, who are short of time and have restricted reportorial space, focus and condense social complexity into a series of colourful typifications. These stereotypes crystallize socially accepted values and expectations, and change over time. Because the first generation of women politicians were viewed as playing a conflicting social role, their 1960s typifications were designed to "normalize" these perceived social contradictions between their biology and their social role.

Two overall strategies were used for this normalization. The first set of stereotypes - wife of and family relationship designations - make the female politician genderless. Various examples can be given of how a woman politician's "femaleness" was neutered. Women MPs like Martha Black (1935-40) and Cora Casselman (1941-45), who were elected to Parliament, were represented as the wife/widow, and thus as appendages of powerful husbands whose seats they had inherited. This implied that they held power not in their own right but in someone else's name. Golda Meir and Indira Gandhi, two powerful prime ministers, in contrast, were degendered in a different way: as "grandmother Golda" and "Nehru's daughter" respectively. Their political status was lowered because their actions were viewed through a family lens.

The second set - spinster, femme facile and club-woman - all focus negatively on a female politician's sexual capacities. Of these, the spinster stereotype is most widely used for bourgeois women politicians, and it has the longest pedigree, going back to the suffragist movement of the turn of the century. This stereotype is usually applied to unmarried women of a certain age who resemble nurses or teachers and who have led a generally traditional life (Gray, 1989: 19). In politics, the label "spinster" serves to describe someone who is single, has liberal ideas and is free of the obligations usually expected of a wife. Such a label incarcerates older women and subtly suggests their sexual lacunae, their inability to attract a husband. Women politicians viewed through this lens are portrayed as serious, preachy, competent and hard-working because they lack household responsibilities. The label was applied regularly to Flora MacDonald, Pat Carney, Pauline Jewett and others. Carole-Marie Allard (1987: 106) catches the negativism implied in this label: "Comments can label the woman MP. If she is a widow, she is suspected of having

killed her husband. If she is divorced, she is unstable. If married, she neglects her husband, and if single, she is abnormal" Ýtranslation".

Not only were these female politicians implicitly belittled by this label, but three of them acknowledged that reporters had had the audacity to explicitly query them about their sex life. A male contender would have been shocked to receive such an out-of-order inquiry. Linda Goyette (1986), quoting Susan Crean, puts it well: "'The reigning notion is that if you're a man, sex comes with the territory. If you're a woman, you're expected to be celibate.'"

In the same vein, Judy LaMarsh was "neutered" by being accused of acting like a woman. Sheila Kieran (1968: 40-41) explicitly uses this strategy when she denigrates LaMarsh's career in the following words: "What was saddest about Miss LaMarsh's time in Ottawa was her style: she hit on a combination of masculine two-fistedness and a shrewd feminine guilelessness making remarks that would have earned her a sock in the mush if she had been a man. But she seemed unconsciously to understand that she could get away with it - for niggerism means making allowances for one's 'inferiors.'"

In contrast, the "femme facile" label is attached to, and stigmatizes, women politicians who do not play by the traditional social rules. By saying this, we do not mean to imply that politicians labelled in this way were exhibiting looser morals than other people of the time. What we do wish to draw attention to, however, is the fact that this label was applied to certain female politicians because they were attempting to do something unconventional. Women who were labelled in this way did not fit the "spinster" category either because they had been married or because they were still too young and too attractive to be described in this manner.

This label, like all the others, highlights a woman's gender and looks rather than her competence. The coverage of Claire Kirkland-Casgrain, who introduced the revolutionary Bill 16, giving full legal status to married women in Quebec (1964), is an excellent example of this kind of reporting. Under the headline "A striking political heroine plans to save Quebec women from their medieval bondage," Amy Booth (1964) comments, "This charming champion of women's rights, herself the first woman ever elected to the Quebec legislature, has brought two years of campaigning to a climax with a bill she describes as the first step toward first-class citizenship for Quebec women ... The lady from Jacques Cartier ... is a lot easier on the eyes than any of the current inhabitants of ÝQuebec's" Red Chamber."

One final label, that of the "club-woman," is applied to women politicians who espouse opinions that are in

opposition to those of the male establishment (in Parliament and elsewhere) or who breach the traditional demarcations between private and public activities. Although this label is not as negative as the other two, it is by far the most tenacious put-down used to this day. It suggests that women politicians are amateurs in the public realm and that their opinions should, therefore, be disregarded. A particularly drastic example of this type of reporting is offered in Therese Casgrain's autobiography, where she describes a public address she gave in March 1942 to "La Societe d'etudes et de conferences." She suggested that Quebec women become active in public life. "We will emerge from our struggle weakened if we remain turned in upon ourselves with no other horizons but those we have always known and if, led by false teachers, we remain attached to the old traditions alone" (Casgrain, 1972: 106).

The publisher of *Le Bien public* of Trois-Rivieres suggested that Mme. Casgrain tend to her knitting and return to her hearth. "Let her cook, sew, embroider, read, card wool, play bridge - anything rather than persist in her dangerous role of issuer of directives" (Casgrain, 1972: 107).

Biology also provides the basis for gender stereotyping certain departments and portfolios that were considered socially "appropriate" for women incumbents. Women from the first generation were initially entrusted with the departments of Health (LaMarsh); Social Services (Fairclough); Citizenship and Immigration (Fairclough); and Communications (Sauve). Lester Pearson made a "biological" classification when he found nothing wrong with ignoring the external affairs qualifications of Pauline Jewett on gender grounds. "When in 1965 Jewett expressed her dissatisfaction at not receiving a cabinet appointment", Pearson told her: 'You know we already have a woman in the Cabinet.' 'Prime Minister,' Pauline urged, 'Let's be radical. Let's have two ... or three ... or whatever!' But it was not to be" (Anderson, 1987: 44). It took until the late 1970s to open up the "hard" and powerful ministries to female incumbents. Monique Begin became minister of national revenue in 1977; Flora MacDonald, minister of external affairs in 1979; Ursula Appolloni, parliamentary secretary to the minister of defence in 1980; and Jeanne Sauve, first female Speaker of the House of Commons in 1980.

Until the late 1960s, there were so few women politicians that they were generally perceived as the exception to the norm, as tokens in the male world of politics. Their aberrant position was picked up by the media and was reinforced in the media representations of women politicians by confusing "gender" with "sex." Media descriptions that are based on the fixed characteristics of biology erase the fact that gender is a *socially constructed* and therefore changeable set of characteristics that are anchored in the male gaze. The gender focus sets up special expectations with respect to the looks, figure,

hair colour and "proper" clothing a woman politician has to wear in a particular epoch. Because these gender expectations are framed as binary opposites between the sexes, female politicians can, by definition, never be like men "biologically." This creates a classical double-bind situation. The confusion of sex with gender leads to some strange reportorial logic, as Peter Gzowski's (1962) generally laudatory article about Judy LaMarsh and Pauline Jewett demonstrates. In it he concludes that if the two politicians remain elected, the "caucuses of the future will feel the effect of two strong and lively feminine voices. The ideas those voices present won't Yhowever" be feminine at all" (1962: 52). An even more drastic effect of the sex/gender confusion is found in a 1962 article in which _feminine_ behaviour requirements, rather than the mandate of her portfolio, are the substance of a report about Immigration Minister Ellen Fairclough. The article, entitled "Un ministre bien chapeaute," notes:

Our immigration minister Mrs. Ellen Fairclough travels, meets people and wears a hat much more often than do the majority of Canadians. Since becoming a federal cabinet minister in 1957, Mrs. Fairclough has travelled some 240,000 miles, mostly in Canada, and has worn more than three dozen hats. The functions she has attended over the last four years have permitted her to wear several styles of headgear that are not specifically feminine. While flying, she wore a helmet used by pilots for protection in case of accidents Ytranslation". (_La Presse_, 1962)

Such a narrative construction systematically erases women's contributions to the public sphere, and also types these contributions as less important solely because they have been made by women.

The Transitional Period (1970-90): Focus on Power

In the 20 years between 1970 and 1990, political scientists point out, the public view of women's social role has changed. Three occurrences contributed to this change in social outlook: the Royal Commission Report on the Status of Women tabled in 1970; the changing market requirements of the post-industrial society; and the growth and radicalization of the women's movement in the last two decades. Although the research reports prepared for the Commission created a substantial backlash among conservative women, they enabled the Commission to make over 160 recommendations to ensure that women would have legal equality in Canadian public life (Kieran, 1968: 42). Included in these recommendations was the call for parties to recruit more women into politics.

The post-industrial economy, with its multiplication of service jobs, precipitated the widespread entry of married women (68 per cent) and mothers (54 per cent) into the

labour market and coined the concept of the "working mother." Women's experiences outside the home led to calls for pay equality in the workplace throughout the 1970s and initiatives for legal equity in the 1980s, when the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in its initial version omitted this section (Burt et al., 1988: 140-41). The 1979-82 Charter debate, furthermore, sensitized women's groups to the facts that contact with men in politics would not automatically lead to constitutional input and that social and political change needed concerted action from female legislators and grassroots lobbying from women's groups (Hosek, 1989: 507).

Of the three factors bringing about greater acceptance of women's role in public life, the women's movement must be credited with having had the greatest impact. It addressed the mismatch between work opportunities opening up for women in the 1970s and prevailing conservative views about how women ought to behave. In doing so, it provided an overarching and systemic explanation of women's secondary status. During the 1970s, feminist theorists developed an understanding of patriarchy and discovered that it was present in all societies. These theorists also documented that patriarchy took different forms in different historical epochs and in different countries. As a universal system, however, patriarchy always has the characteristic of excluding women from the prestigious professions (including politics and the media) and the top jobs.

During the 1980s, the widespread diffusion of feminism's equality agenda across social class and gender brought feminism to the attention of everyone and generated grassroots activities by diverse women's groups on diverse social issues having to do with reproduction, widely defined. Anna Coote and Polly Pattullo (1990: 77) define reproduction not only as "child-bearing and rearing, but *Ías*" all the work that goes into sustaining human life in the family and the community."

The support for women's legal equality led to qualified public acceptance of women's role in the political sphere. Although there is as yet little proactive support for women candidates in the Liberal and Conservative parties, the NDP introduced gender-related criteria into its party operations and the selection of convention delegations in the 1970s (Brown, 1989: 144). The number of women politicians has grown to about 20 per cent in at least three provincial legislatures and to an average of 20 to 30 per cent in municipal governments in Canada's major cities (Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax) (Lavigne, 1990: 5; Maille, 1990: 14). These figures indicate that since the 1980s, women legislators are coming close to the "take-off" point where a minority can begin to effect institutional change, at least on the municipal level.

Two additional factors have profoundly influenced women's political power in both the United States and

Canada. The first was a change in women's electoral participation; the second, a voting differentiation between women and men. Together these became known as the "gender gap." In the United States, the differential voter turnout, which amounted to 10 per cent in favour of men in 1950, has been reversed - by 1984 women had a 7 per cent lead over men in voter participation (Mueller, 1988b: 22).

In Canada, Janine Brodie (1985: 126) noted a similar numerical shift in favour of women, and additionally discovered that, by 1983, women preferred the Liberal party by a margin of 10 per cent. Flora MacDonald confirmed that all parties in the 1984 election campaign took this gender gap extremely seriously, because it seemed to suggest that women were voting as an interest group. To capture women voters, the Conservatives asked Flora MacDonald to lead "consciousness-raising" sessions for Conservative MPs, while Sheila Copps and other Liberal party women were asked to advise John Turner. He proved as unenlightened as many of his parliamentary colleagues about the government's role in women's quest for equality (Copps, 1986: 156-57). Because both parties had constructed the same platforms for attracting women voters, the gender gap was invisible in 1984. This does not mean, however, that women and their special interests have disappeared from the political agenda. The candidates' debate, organized by Chaviva Hosek, who was National Action Committee (NAC) president at the time, indicates that all parties will have to address women's social and peace agendas in the future.

The transitional narrative approach, with its focus on power, reflects a period in which social and journalistic values are in flux. Old attitudes toward women clash with newer "equality" values; at the same time, women are visibly rising toward middle-level power positions in both the political and the media realms. During this period, therefore, the coverage of women politicians and their activities has moved from the back to the front pages of newspapers, and female anchors are beginning to interview the growing number of female legislators and ministers in a more even-handed manner. But topic selection and narrative frames concerning women politicians still remain differentiated from those of male incumbents.

The second set of stereotypes, which crystallized in the 1970s and 1980s, has been profoundly influenced by the ideology of feminism, which has forced women politicians and others to take a position on women's social identity. As we have seen, feminist research throughout the period identified the nature and origins of the non-symmetrical power relations between the genders and also surveyed the barriers to women's egalitarian progress in the male worlds of business, the top professions and the media (Robinson, 1975; Crean, 1987). Even after 20 years of training and experience, the "glass ceiling" has not been breached by female managers in most media organizations. Nowadays, women make up only 9 per cent of editors-in-chief and 6 per

cent of managing editors in the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association. Furthermore all 33 people promoted to senior management jobs in 1989 were male (Cornacchia, 1990). The situation is no better in television and film production, where, according to an American study by the National Commission on Working Women, "women made up 15 per cent of producers, 25 per cent of writers and 9 per cent of directors of shows aired in 1990. In prime-time shows women held 43 per cent of the roles but were rarely depicted at all after age 40" (Gazette, 1990).

These figures indicate that it remains difficult to integrate a pro-woman perspective into media descriptions and that anti-egalitarian attitudes toward women remain pervasive in Canadian society and in Canadian newsrooms. The four new stereotypes incorporate these ambivalences, although they frame female politicians in a power network, which is superficially more complimentary. Another stylistic characteristic that we found for this period is the fact that all of the stereotypes are inflected by a feminist discourse and by feminist social expectations. Our analyses will show that journalists use this discourse in two very different ways: either as a simple classificatory device or as an interest group argument. As a classificatory device, the label "feminist" is attached to an individual female politician and used as though it describes a type of party membership. When it denotes an interest group, it implies that women as a group have gained political power and influence that is somehow illegitimate. In both uses, the "feminist" designation is shunned by women politicians, who dislike the negative connotations of the "new F-word," as Charlotte Gray calls it (1989: 19).

First, the most spectacular and most visible of the new stereotypes is that of the superwoman. It is applied to a young, intelligent, active and ambitious woman who succeeds on "all levels" and "has it all." She combines a family with her career, and she is as groomed as she is competent in her ministerial responsibilities. The superwoman is a hybrid: she embodies both traditional characteristics (family and children) with the modern traits of the businesswoman (superior IQ, enormous capacities for work, an iron constitution as well as charm and generosity). Arlie Hochschild and Anne Machung (1990) describe the superwoman's advertising image as the woman with the flowing blond hair, attache case in one hand and a child in the other. Canadian politicians described in this manner are Liza Frulla-Hebert, Sharon Carstairs, Chaviva Hosek, Iona Campagnolo and Janice Johnson. Hubert Bauch (1982) of the Montreal Gazette applies this narrative style to Iona Campagnolo: "Iona Campagnolo has been an instinctive climber all her life ... From the time she blew into Ottawa eight years ago, like a refreshing, scented breeze off the western sea, Campagnolo has been tagged as a contender for the whole bag of marbles ... As if to prove them right she made it into the cabinet Yin" less than two years ... She was bright, articulate and a looker with a slightly intimidating touch of class. She

was Iona, 'La Camp' ... who had clawed her way 'from cannery row to Parliament Hill.'

The feminist version of the superwoman is offered in this description of Janice Johnson as reported by Val Sears (1983) in the Toronto Star: "When Janice Johnson, national director of the Progressive Conservative party, was a kid at college in Winnipeg she was sort of radical ... Today, Janice Johnson is 37, tidier, and running a party and her life conservatively, stylishly, but still with that red stripe setting off the blue. As the Conservative party's chief executive, she is an apparatchik with her manicured hands on the strings. She is also a feminist in a nest of Tory male chauvinists."

The second of the four stereotypes for narrating women politicians is that of the champion. This narrative approach is close to that of the superwoman, but tends to be applied to women politicians "of a certain age" who have led a more traditional life. Often a woman narrated in this way has come to politics after she has proved herself in another domain, perhaps business, sports or various charitable organizations. Her children are usually older, and her family obligations more compatible with her public representation duties. She, too, pays attention to her grooming, is open to the media and aware of her previous accomplishments. Among the politicians who have earned this classification are Pat Carney, Monique Landry, Monique Vezina, Lucie Pepin and Margaret Thatcher. Under the headline "Tough Woman Tory Has Skill To Be Party Leader, Next PM," the Montreal Gazette (1975) comments, "The right honorable Margaret Thatcher, 49, is no ordinary woman: that she is being even seriously considered as the next leader of the Conservative Party, a body with more than its fair share of male chauvinists, is in itself a remarkable achievement. Those who have worked with her ... have no doubt that she has the ability to be ... leader ... She has stamina and talent. Her appetite for work is prodigious. She enjoys making decisions. Thatcher is tough, not ruthless." By 1976, she had earned the "Iron Lady" epithet from the Soviet Army newspaper Red Star, which, according to an interview, she did not mind because it well represented her outlook on politics (Maclean's, 1990: 41).

Margaret Thatcher's counterpart, the "feminist" champion, is Lucie Pepin. Her coverage reveals many of the collective themes that make up this image. But she is narrated with greater warmth by Leslie Fruman (1984) in the Toronto Star.

On being a feminist in 1984, Lucie Pepin has a cool-down approach. She's been called a male-oriented feminist, and says women have to be ready to work with men to help the advancement of women ... The elegant but tough former president of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women might offend the feminist establishment with

words like those ... Her father wanted her to go to medical school, but Pepin opted to train as a nurse ... "because" she wanted to be free to get married ... It was her work in nursing that taught her the valuable lessons that put her in contact with issues facing women.

The third label we encountered in our analyses is one we have called being one of the boys. This narrative scheme is applied to women politicians who have been accepted into the ranks by the male political establishment, which counts them as part of the "gang." This type of female politician adopts a "masculine" stance in politics, which means either that she does not resort to what are called "feminine wiles" to achieve her goals (charm, coquetry, wheedling) or that she accepts and operates by the conventional rules of the game. Women politicians who are "one of the boys" benefit from this kind of acceptance but are, at the same time, continually reminded that they are an anomaly and may be placed in the unenviable position of being used as an alibi against women's interests. Examples are legion, such as the woman minister who had to bail out the reputation of a male colleague who had made an unpardonably sexist remark in a constituency speech. Or the situation where the first female Justice Minister was appointed just as anti-abortion legislation (Bill C-43) was being re-introduced. This narrative approach has been applied, among others, to Barbara McDougall, Mary Collins, Kim Campbell, Lorna Marsden and Sheila Copps. In Collins' case, Charlotte Gray (1989) has the following to say about the new female recruits to the Progressive Conservative party:

They exuded sisterly solidarity ... Mary Collins, the bubbly member from BC, now associate minister of national defence and co-host of the party, groaning about her kid's untidiness. There was ... Marjory LeBreton, number two in the Prime Minister's Office ... Finally, the sibling superior of the PC sisterhood strode through the door ... Barbara McDougall, minister for the status of women and minister of employment and immigration. The most striking characteristic of the party, however, was the murmured distaste for anything that smacked of "feminism". Tactics borrowed from the women's movement may have steered the newcomers into the Tory harbour but its ideology left many of them cold. They wanted to join the political system, not change it. 'Why do the press insist on treating women as a special interest group?' snapped Diana Togneri of Montreal. (Gray, 1989: 17-18)

In contrast to the women politicians who consider feminism the "second F-word," Sheila Copps is outspokenly upbeat about being described as "one of the gang" and as a feminist. In her autobiographical Nobody's Baby, she

says, "I take pride in being a feminist. Look at the word itself, it comes from the Latin femina, woman; and being a woman is cause enough for being proud. I take pride, too, in representing my constituency - not only the riding which sent me to Parliament, but my larger constituency, the women of Canada" (1986: 89).

A Maclean's article narrates her leadership campaign in the following manner: "Sheila Copps: As the most vocal member of the Liberal 'Rat-Pack'- a small group of MPs known for their aggressive Question Period attacks during the Conservative government's first term - Copps earned a reputation among her Tory opponents as a shrill firebrand ... Advisers to the 37-year-old MP for Hamilton East say that Copps's campaign will highlight her youth, gender and populist style. She has proven her appeal once before, finishing second to David Peterson in the Ontario Liberal leadership race in 1982" (Kaihla, 1990: 28).

The final set of stereotypes that frame women politicians is the familiar wife of designation. It is a narrative scheme that we have already encountered in the description of first-generation politicians. This stereotype's survival into the 1980s may be a result of the fact that it has been applied to such high-profile women leaders as Corazon Aquino of the Philippines and Violetta Ciamorro of Nicaragua. In Canada, however, it has been given a new twist. Where it was earlier applied to "amateur" wives or daughters of politicians who had taken over their husband's or father's seats in the legislature, it is now applied as well to wives who have previous political or professional experience. Two cases in point are Jeanne Sauve and Maureen McTeer. Norman Laplante (1990) clearly highlights the marital connection and uses it as the organizing principle for an article: "Throughout their respective careers in Canadian public life, Jeanne and Maurice Sauve have shown a keen desire to work for the cause of national unity. The first Canadian couple to be admitted to the Privy Council, they were at the forefront of the Canadian political scene for over twenty years."

A similar narrative scheme organizes the coverage of Maureen McTeer, who ran as Conservative candidate in Carleton-Gloucester (Ottawa) in 1988. In this case, however, the "wife of" label is used to denigrate the candidate's considerable competence through a barrage of innuendo concerning the supposed advantages she gained from her husband's political position. Robert Mason Lee, in a 1989 Saturday Night article entitled "Sorry Mo," attacks McTeer's column in Chatelaine magazine, and McTeer for failing to divulge that her columnist status had been achieved because of her marital connection.

In contrast to the first set of stereotypes - spinster, femme facile, club-woman and wife of - which have to do with the traditional social roles of women, the four new stereotypes, applied to the second generation of women

politicians during the 1970s and early 1980s, are constructed around the "power game." The superwoman achieves in both the private and the public spheres of activity. The champion is accomplished in such activities as business, professional or benevolent organizations. The members of the gang have learned the rules of the political game and use them like a man. The only stereotype that harks back to those used on the first generation of women politicians is the "wife of" label. But even this is now narrated with a different twist, an acknowledgement that it is appropriate for both spouses to have careers. In the 1980s, after all, two-career families are more prevalent than the male-headed household.

Public narrations recreate and incorporate social changes, not like passive mirrors but like active prisms through which our public understandings are fashioned. In spite of the fact that the recent set of stereotypes narrate women politicians in a power-game context, they still fail to evaluate women's political competence in career terms. Instead women are judged on their personal ability to play by the masculine rules of the political game. These include personal aggressiveness, adversarial performance in Question Period, hard-headedness and coolness under fire. Readers are told approvingly that Sheila Copps and Sharon Carstairs are more aggressive than their male counterparts. Such evaluative criteria continue to use the male species as the norm and to construct the female as the exception, the secondary, thus leaving the unbalanced social hierarchy intact.

With a shift in the stereotyping of women politicians came an associated shift in how feminism is treated by the media. In the 1970s, the media discovered feminism for its "novel" and "sensational" characteristics, as having something to do with changing language and changing lifestyles. Media practitioners generally simplified the reporting of this widespread social movement by turning feminism into an individual characteristic, similar to an organizational membership. The media then used the label "women's lib" for easy classification of feminists. Through this interpretation, the movement aspects of feminism were erased and disappeared from public sight. The media consequently concluded, by the middle of the decade, that the women's movement was dead and that the 1980s were the post-feminist era. Such reasoning has no basis in social fact, as even the media people now know. But this interpretation served as a convenient alibi for ignoring women's increased municipal and regional initiatives, as well as the networking that has occurred outside of the state sector.

In the early 1980s, the American media discovered a gender gap in the Reagan election, and by the 1984 campaign, the Progressive Conservatives knew that this gap might affect Canadian women voters as well. Consciousness-raising activities, as we have seen, were undertaken by

first-generation women politicians in their party caucuses, and these activities were picked up by the media. By 1987, a Decima poll confirmed that there was a three-point male/female difference in voting preference, and that the Tories were particularly disliked by working women (only 28 per cent would vote Conservative) (Gray, 1989: 18). A computer-assisted program to reach a riding's undecided voters through customized letters saved the Tories in 1987, and the gender gap failed to materialize once more (Lee, 1989a). The media had, however, learned their lesson and began to report feminist groups as a potential lobby with the power to change the political rules.

This reportorial stance became a prominent aspect of the coverage of Audrey McLaughlin's December 1989 leadership win over Dave Barrett in Winnipeg. The two reasons that were immediately offered for Audrey McLaughlin's NDP convention success were her gender and her feminist support, not her varied professional credentials such as her social work background, her experience with community organizations in the Yukon or her Third World engagement. Both the "sex" and "feminist" themes, as we have seen, have been used to describe and subtly put down women politicians for not being men throughout the 1980s. The Globe and Mail's (1989) Jeffrey Simpson points out that it was McLaughlin's sex that got her elected:

From the moment Ms. McLaughlin declared her candidacy, she became the New Democrat to beat for one simple, compelling and ultimately decisive reason - her sex ... For seven consecutive elections, the NDP has been mired in the rut of 15 to 20 per cent of the national vote. Maybe a woman leader, wondered many New Democrats, would produce a larger number of voters. For the women who supported Ms. McLaughlin, it was time for the political system to confront fully the whole matrix of women's issues through the symbolic message sent by the election of a female leader.

Hugh Winsor (1989), another Globe and Mail columnist, adds the second theme: a "feminist" network had helped her to win over Dave Barrett, when it may, in fact, have been her campaign organization: "Ms. McLaughlin had by far the largest number of workers (many borrowed from the feminist movement), headquarters in each province and territory, and a computerized delegate tracking system that gave her floor captains up-to-the-minute print-outs on each riding's delegates."

A day or two later, Dalton Camp (1989) in the Toronto Star elaborated on the "feminist" connection, suggesting that it was somehow illegal for a candidate to have a women's network to support her bid for the leadership:

Pauline Jewett, mother hen to the feminist cause, put the issue squarely before the Canadian people

through the radio facilities of the Mother Corporation: There was sexism in the media. Speaking from the convention scene in Winnipeg, Pauline said (I wrote this down) she had noticed a lot of 'criticism of Audrey (McLaughlin) because she's a woman' ... I thought the NDP convention suffered from an excess of feminist militancy at the barricades. Against the militants stood the rest of the delegates, as though barefoot on a floor of ground glass, weighing each word, idiom, and simile on the gender scale. (Reprinted with permission. The Toronto Star Syndicate)

Five days later, on 9 December 1989, Peggy Curran of the Montreal Gazette offered McLaughlin's response to the gender accusation: "If the newcomer from the North finished first at the NDP convention in Winnipeg, critics said, her gender would be the only explanation. Friends and supporters say the 53-year-old member of Parliament for Yukon handled the charges of tokenism with her customary wit. Dropping in on campaign workers at the two-storey log cabin 'Yukon skyscraper' that houses her Whitehorse office, McLaughlin said: 'Well, I thought about running as a man, but I decided against it.'"

On the same day (9 December 1989), Graham Fraser in The Globe and Mail confronted and illustrated the condescending coverage of McLaughlin in the "View from the Hill":

The reporter smiled indulgently and asked the leader of the New Democratic Party her first question after she had made her first address to the House of Commons as leader. 'Audrey, tell me,' he said, 'Were your knees shaking when you stood up?' 'No. No,' she said firmly and flatly. 'Really. I've been in Question Period before.' As the first woman to lead a Canadian federal party, Ms. McLaughlin still seemed to be subject to a different kind of scrutiny on Wednesday. One reporter inquired about the mark on her cheek ...; a national columnist noted that she had worn a green silk dress on her first day as NDP leader ... One of the women reporters within earshot did a double-take when the NDP leader was asked if her knees had been shaking. 'Give me a break,' she muttered. 'Do you think that will be his first question to Paul Martin if he becomes Liberal leader?'

The charges and countercharges traded among print reporters indicate that the media establishment is as unprepared as the political establishment to admit a new female player on her merits into the game of high-stakes politics. Whether Audrey McLaughlin will become a great leader of Canada's NDP remains an open question. What is not open, however, is her right to be taken seriously by the

press. Rosemary Brown (1989: 171) found that when the press could no longer trivialize her 1975 NDP leadership bid, "there was a subtle shift away from superficial discussions of my 'elegance,' 'private school education,' and 'home in the fashionable Point Grey district of Vancouver' to more thoughtful and serious speculation as to the potential effect of my candidacy on the New Democratic Party and on Canada."

Future Media Narratives and the Political Challenge of Women

Media Narratives of Women Politicians: Differential Approach

In spite of an evolution of stereotypes concerning women politicians and their contributions to statesmanship, any form of stereotypical writing focuses on a set of reductive characteristics that severely limit the details and points of view a text is able to express. The fact that older stereotypes, which characterized the first generation of women politicians primarily in terms of their biological difference (spinster, femme facile) and their social relations to men (wife, grandmother, granddaughter), have been replaced by new ones, does not constitute progress in itself. The bio-social focus of the pre-1960s period depicted the first generation of women politicians as either adventurers or tokens. As adventurers, they had escaped from their "proper" domestic sphere and therefore wielded a different and lesser kind of power than that held by men. As tokens, women's presence was used as proof that minimal openings for "exceptional" women existed in the male domain of politics. In such a narrative frame, women's political contributions are underestimated and marginalized because they are portrayed as exceptions to the socially defined female norms, and the women themselves lose their competence and credibility when they are portrayed as biologically strange "birds in a gilded cage," as Judy LaMarsh tellingly described her political existence.

Even the transitional stereotypes, although seemingly different and more modern, remain restrictive because they refer to power in the public realm. While media reports reflect the liberalized view that women can be integrated into the political realm, the labels indicate that such integration is only possible for certain types of women politicians. Acceptable women politicians are the superwoman, who performs superbly in both her private and her public roles; the champion, who shares a similar background with her male colleagues (business, sports, professions); and the gang member, who has learned, and employs, the male rules of the political game. One additional label, the wife of, is a carry-over from the past, but is now remodeled as a husband's "junior partner" in a dual-career family.

The transitional narrative strategies applied to

second- and third-generation politicians who are marked as feminist or non-feminist by the media, indicate that there is much greater resistance to, and worry about, feminist demands for women's social equality in the 1980s than there was in the 1970s. No wonder such inventions as the "post-feminist era" or the "death of the women's movement" are proclaimed by journalists, although the sociological evidence does not corroborate these interpretations. Some journalists and politicians would like to silence feminist demands for completion of the social revolution, which guarantees women and other minorities access to the public domain. The transitional narrative approaches incorporate a deep-seated ideological ambivalence concerning women's changing social identity. While egalitarian principles promoted by women's groups remain the ideal, a majority of politicians and media personnel have difficulty accommodating women's demands for power-sharing. In such a situation, the conservative backlash against feminism in the Reagan and Mulroney eras must be interpreted as a defensive reaction to women's advances in the public realm.

The reportage of Audrey McLaughlin's leadership win graphically indicates that the majority of media people are just as unaccustomed as most politicians to the appearance of women in the halls of Parliament or in ministerial chairs. Sheila Copps (1986: 38) notes that, as late as the 1982 Ontario leadership campaign, "the press and the party establishment were nowhere near as liberated as the average voting delegate" concerning the candidacy of a woman. This ambivalence is still reflected in both the reasons given for McLaughlin's win (her sex and feminist group support) and the types of questioning she underwent after her first appearance as NDP leader. The fact that women politicians cannot yet be credited with wearing the mantle of power without belittling commentary indicates that "women's political past, like our political future, continues to be contested ground" for interpretation (Vickers, 1989: 18).

Our generational analysis shows that neither the old (up to the 1960s) nor the transitional (1970s and 1980s) narrative prisms reflect much of what constitutes the social reality and political experience of contemporary Canadian women. Female political leaders, representatives and political women in general feel uncomfortable with, and unwelcome in, parliamentary settings designed by nation-building brotherhoods, who are implacably proprietorial of women (Coote and Pattullo, 1990: 274). The major lacunae of the transitional discourse require only summary attention because they have already been discussed. The existing stereotypical narrative conventions treat political women and men very differently. Both the narrative focuses and the evaluative criteria for the two genders are at variance. Four narrative focuses are applied only to women. These focuses:

- * tend to ignore the substance of a female incumbent's speeches in favour of her personal

characteristics (looks, dress, hair);

- * fail to give recognition for prior political activities, with the result that no one knows the stages in a woman's political career, which together signify her "competence";
- * make women politicians responsible for women as a class_ when gender is known to be only one of many factors in interest-group formation; and
- * use "feminism" to denote a negative personal characteristic, and thus erase the group dimensions of this diversified social movement.

The evaluative criteria are also at variance for women and men:

- * Women have to live up to a considerably higher standard of excellence than do men.
- * The political performance of women is judged only by the extremes of the scale (good and bad), while men are evaluated across the whole scale, including the mediocre middle range.
- * Women politicians have to live up to a moral code of sexual abstention not imposed on men.

These differential narrative focuses and evaluative criteria raise a series of questions. Among these are the following: To what extent do the media adequately perceive the difference in attitudes, goals and understandings that motivate female and male politicians? Why are women drawn in greater numbers to local, municipal and regional activity than to provincial and national political involvement? How adequate is the picture that the media construct of the political arenas in which women prefer to operate? And even more fundamentally, is there any difference in the motivations that propel women and men into political life? Since the media provide society with the words and concepts for naming and constructing social and political reality, how adequately are they performing this task for women and women's concerns? The veracity and accuracy with which the media represent women politicians and their views are inextricably linked to the effectiveness with which political women can shape their society. Conversely, inaccurate and elliptical media descriptions deprive both female representatives and citizens of their voice and their input into the public domain.

There is evidence today that women readers and viewers are deeply troubled by the restrictive media reporting of modern women's social concerns and by the irrelevance of many media reports to their common life experience. Recent analyses confirm that newspapers, which supply their readers with an overwhelmingly white, male, middle class view of the

world, have lost 25 per cent of their female readership in the past decade (Cornacchia, 1990; Walker, 1990). These kinds of evidence indicate that women have different notions about the nature of political activity, and that they are becoming alienated from Canada's governing bodies such as Parliament and the Senate. Our own interviews document that women politicians feel uncomfortable operating in the "boys' school" atmosphere of these institutions and come to politics with different expectations. Women politicians also complain that media journalists and politicians alike are unaware of and mistrust the female networks and female solidarity which women's groups of all kinds have generated around women's issues. Many of these women's groups have been labelled "feminist" according to Chaviva Hosek, although the majority are in fact traditional women's organizations that lend their support to feminist causes at certain times. Among these are voluntary organizations (like the Canadian Federation of University Women); groups providing specific services to women (rape crisis centres, etc.); advisory councils to the government (like the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women); and specialized national voluntary associations that lobby in areas of their particular expertise (such as the National Association of Women and the Law) (Hosek, 1989: 494-96).

The Challenge of Women In Canadian Politics

The women's movement theory of patriarchy and the method of gender analysis have played a crucial role in North American women's understanding of their social world in the 1990s and mobilized them by keeping them aware of the continued existence of sexual inequalities (Norris, 1988: 233). In addition, they have alerted researchers that traditional theories of politics are unable to encompass many of women's political activities. New theories must go beyond the conventional political science focus on state institutions and elite politics to incorporate the experiences of grassroots organizers, who have learned to operate within and outside of male-dominated institutions (Vickers, 1989: 22). Our interviews, and those of others who have talked to women politicians in Great Britain and Germany (Lepsius, 1990: 68), confirm that "Parliament is more than an institution of ancient mystique and obscure language; it is a place made by men for men, and still fiercely ruled by them. Women have been admitted, but their presence is acceptable only if they do not draw attention to themselves as women, and only if they divest themselves of any uniquely female preoccupation such as motherhood" (Coote and Pattullo, 1990: 256).

Similar views have been expressed by Canadian politicians like Rosemary Brown (NDP), Sheila Copps (Liberal) and others who have remarked on the isolation of their "token" status. In her autobiography *Nobody's Baby*, Sheila Copps (1986: 28) has the following to say about her experiences in the Ontario caucus: "My colleagues were gracious and friendly, but clearly saw me as an ornament to

the party - nice to have around as long as I knew my place. One of the ironies was that most of the men in caucus thought I enjoyed the publicity ... Some were even resentful when I had anything worthwhile to say. Every time I would rise in question period, one of my colleagues would mutter under his breath: 'There goes Sheila. The cameras are rolling again.' What he didn't realize was that ... I felt isolated and out of place" (as one among thirty-three).

Ordinary women, too, feel alienated from elite politics as it is generally practiced. They have overwhelmingly organized themselves at the grassroots level in order to achieve better housing conditions, recreation for disadvantaged children or battered women's shelters. A political activist explains her alienation this way: "I went to a lot of meetings and listened to the people talking. They weren't talking about what I was even interested in ... They were talking about the wages struggle all the time, about trade-union issues, and I thought, they never talk about housing issues or what are we to do with the kids, stuff like that" (Coote and Pattullo, 1990: 50). Coote and Pattullo comment that, when asked about politics, women felt that the fabric of their lives was not a "proper" concern of politics. No wonder so many women feel that politics has nothing to do with them.

Although the isolation of elite women politicians has become less pronounced as a result of the 1984 and 1988 elections, their numbers are not yet large enough to enable them to influence federal politics. In the 1980s, women gained access as "helpers" in what scientist Ursula Franklin describes as the political "sandbox," but they are as yet denied the proper tools for the job (Jeffrey, 1990: 73). The picture looks a bit better on the provincial level where 20 per cent of legislators are now women, but the most significant advances have been made in the municipal administrations of Canada's largest and medium-sized cities: there, women number one-third of all representatives. This higher proportion of women's representation at the municipal level of government is a function of the fact that this kind of political service can be combined with family responsibilities. In the 1990s, we can expect not only that women will become firmly entrenched in Canadian political life but also that they will be increasingly able to influence the types and outcomes of legislation. It is additionally plain that the greatest political innovations in the coming decade will originate from municipal experiences.

With these developments in mind, is there any evidence that more women politicians will make a difference to the Canadian political scene? Do they have different motives, attitudes and goals, and thus diversify the points of view from which the political sandboxes of the future will be constructed? Accumulated research from a variety of sources, and our own conversations with representatives from the three generations of women politicians, indicate that

women do seem to have different reasons for running for political office. They also conceive of political power in variant ways. And, furthermore, their understandings of social interaction differ from those espoused by their male colleagues. These differences add up to a differential political profile and a different agenda for women politicians that seems to be perceived by, and gives them an edge with, the Canadian electorate.

In response to our inquiries concerning their reasons for running for political office, the overwhelming majority of women of all three generations, including non-feminist and feminist candidates, said that they were seeking office in order to improve the conditions of human life. Among the conditions mentioned were the rectification of social violence, racism and the plights of minorities. European evidence confirms that, in Great Britain and Germany, too, social involvement is a strong mobilizing force (Grewe-Partsch, 1990: 48). Jill Vickers (1989: 20) explains that what she calls the "service-based" conception of politics has deep roots in the first-wave suffragist movement. First-wave women placed a high value on citizenship, which incorporated both the Christian duty to help others and the concepts of self-help and community building. In contrast, many male candidates view the business of entering national politics as a profession or a career that demands few special qualifications and relatively little expertise while providing them with middle class status. It is well known that men are educated and trained for career building in ways that women are not. Yet, the political establishment is not yet ready to grant second- and third-generation women incumbents with impressive arrays of qualifications a place in politics (Brodie, 1985: 59). One reason why these qualifications are rarely public knowledge, our evidence shows, is that most media reporting does not mention or give women credit for them.

A second characteristic that distinguishes female from male politicians is their attitude toward power. This difference in attitude was noted by Denise Falardeau during the Royal Commission-sponsored symposium in Montreal (Canada, Royal Commission, 1990). Here Falardeau noted that women politicians she knew looked for power, but not at any price and not in general. Women tended to look for power to do something concrete. For many women politicians power is an instrument rather than an object in itself. Therese Lavoie-Roux echoes this sentiment in an interview with Marie-Jeanne Robin (1983: 177-78). She responds: "I cannot answer that. But so far I remain convinced that women do not want power for the sake of power ... I don't think we have the same code of ethics" *Ytranslation*.

Rosemary Brown (1989: 228) expands on this difference in her autobiography *Being Brown* by making a useful distinction between "hierarchical power," which is based in a bureaucracy, and "personal power," which arises from

collective decision-making. In assessing her 14-year provincial NDP career in various Vancouver ridings (1972-86), she says:

I was actually very disappointed by how little real power I had and how often I failed to live up to the expectations of people who appealed to me for help. At first I thought that if I had been a cabinet minister I could have had some direct power, but even of that I'm not sure; often cabinet ministers were forced to introduce and defend legislation to which they were opposed, because it was the will of the leader, majority vote in caucus or recommendation of the party pollsters ... In retrospect, I realize that it was power in the traditional patriarchal context that I lacked, rather than the more personal and compelling power that comes from collective decision-making and the mutual respect people of like mind share with each other. (@ 1989 by Rosemary Brown. Reprinted by permission of Random House of Canada Ltd.)

However, personal power alone is no match for hierarchical team-based power, through which high-ranking bureaucrats or ministerial advisers can, and do, affect legislative decision-making. In these bureaucratic behind-the-scenes realms, women continue to be under-represented (Brown, 1989: 232). Yet, even here people are feeling the 1990s' winds of change. A number of our respondents mentioned that the resistance to women politicians was strongest in one particular stratum, which Sheila Copps (1986: 43) dubbed the "MUPPIES" - male urban professional party workers who view women as a threat to their traditional hold over Canada's party system.

A final distinction between female and male politicians concerns their attitudes toward social interaction and its norms. As "outsider-insiders," minority politicians tend to find that it is more useful to play a catalytic rather than an exclusionary role. Maureen McTeer (Canada, Royal Commission, 1990) echoed these sentiments in her presentation to the Montreal symposium where she advocated the need for a less hierarchical and exclusionary communication style in Parliament. Ami Lonroth (Canada, Royal Commission, 1990), a Swedish representative at the symposium, pointed out that women, through their increased labour force participation, were carrying the conciliatory approach into the realms of industry and business merely by being there. It was time they did the same in legislative councils.

Pauline Jewett confirmed this interpretation in our interview; she noted that Audrey McLaughlin, as NDP leader, was operating in a consensus style in her caucus, following in the steps of Pearson, Stanfield and Douglas. As a result, Jewett mused, McLaughlin continues to disappoint the

media, which expect party leaders to be aggressive, noisy and unruly in the mode of Jean Chretien. Media narratives, as we have shown, continue to code these behaviour patterns as the norm and insist that they are a sign of political competence. No wonder Jeffrey Simpson (1989) of *The Globe and Mail* speculates whether Audrey McLaughlin will be able to reject the aggressive demands of both the parliamentary system and the electronic media to follow her own preference for "grassroots politics" and coalition building. The debate continues on whether women's different attitudes to interaction and power are a result of different socialization and communication patterns for the two genders or of structural constraints. Apologists for the latter view argue that minority status in the political realm demands cunning and a consensus approach in order to get "women-friendly" legislation adopted against majority resistance (Lepsius, 1990: 68). Whatever the reasons, there is good evidence that women politicians will have a leavening effect on Canadian party politics and prepare the ground for fashioning a new style of political sandbox that will be oriented to human needs.

Looking Toward the Future

Mary Collins, Minister of Immigration, when presenting her views on women in politics to a Royal Commission-sponsored symposium (Canada, Royal Commission, 1990), compared the drive for equality to the income tax and noted that neither was very popular. She argued that, because there is no automatic progression from a male-dominated to an integrated politics in which women have an equal voice, the struggle must go on. Women, far from being a liability to Canadian parties in the 1990s, are in fact an asset. Women's variant attitudes toward power and privileges have a fresh appeal to Canadian voters, who have generally lost trust in politicians.

The question for the future is how to translate these differing outlooks into viable programs for institutional change and more women-friendly legislation? Political scientist Carol Mueller, exploring the historical development of women's political agendas, points out that two different strategies have been proposed (1988a: 291). One argues that equal rights are the best foundation for women's needs; the other contends that women have special needs with respect to their reproductive capacities and that "human difference" must, therefore, also be included in fashioning social legislation. By the late 1970s, American feminists involved in lobbying and litigation had discovered the limits of a strategy based on a literal interpretation of equal rights. In practice, equal rights turned out to mean nothing more than treating women like men, despite the differences in their objective circumstances. Wage equity was a virtually irrelevant principle in the face of pervasive occupational segregation. Women's health and child-care needs, the feminization of poverty and household violence could not be addressed in terms of strict gender

equality (Costain, 1988: 150-51). Increasingly, therefore, women's "specificity" became the benchmark for designing women-friendly legislation in the United States. During the same period, Canada, like Europe, also began to combine the two principles, passing the Canadian Human Rights Act (1977) while at the same time funding women's centres, women's research programs and abused women's transitional houses through Secretary of State grants (Armstrong, 1990: 18).

Considerable argument continues over whether these initiatives resulted from what has been called the gender gap in voting. While women today outnumber men by about 7 per cent in North American elections, it turns out that block voting as a pressure group is not very common. It appears primarily between well-educated working women and men at the middle and top ends of the occupational ladder, but not at all among lower socio-economic groups. Furthermore, such voting is issue specific in North America and Europe and manifests itself only on such topics as defence expenditures, abortion, social services and unemployment policies (Norris, 1988: 223-28). A Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women background paper (Maille, 1990) notes that there are no conclusive data about the gender gap in Canada, although women have traditionally favoured the Liberal over the Conservative party by 10 per cent. The reason for its non-emergence, Chantal Maille suggests, is that Canadian women's groups have not yet succeeded in forming a distinct lobby to approach politicians with a single voice, as has been done by the National Organization of Women (NOW) south of the border (Costain, 1988: 168-69).

It seems, however, that this may be remedied in the 1990s, because diverse women's groups have set up about forty action committees across the country to recruit more women to run for office and to develop voting blocks around a welfare-state agenda, which today benefits women more than men (Maille, 1990: 26-30; Mueller, 1988a: 299). Women's historical support for the Liberal rather than the Conservative party may, thus, be revived and become a new gender gap in the coming decade. What this says is that women's vote as a potential block vote will require Canadian parties to pay attention to women's welfare, peace and human rights concerns in substantial rather than propagandistic ways. Social legislation based on both equality and specificity considerations highlights an ambivalence in feminist thinking, which will only be overcome by what Jill Vickers (1989: 32) calls a "double vision" for the future. Both the older concepts of service, duty and responsibility, and the newer ones of rights, entitlements and claims vis-a-vis society and the state will have to be accommodated in designing future, more women-friendly legislation. This also requires a reconceptualizing of the existing theory of justice to encompass both equality and equity, sameness and difference.

In looking toward the future, a final question that has

been implicit in much of our argument now needs explicit confrontation. It concerns the state and women's relationship to it. On the one hand, we have argued that state institutions as they exist today are male designed and dominated, and therefore exhibit a culture that is difficult for women to penetrate and to live with. On the other, we have shown that Canadian feminists and others look to the state for policies and programs supporting women's special needs. The latter attitude implies that state institutions are malleable and open to change. Our evidence confirms that the women politicians we have talked to were generally of the opinion that state institutions are reformable. Each one of them has, with the help of supportive male colleagues, achieved some success in rectifying the disproportionate gradient of male influence.

This leads us to conclude that women in government do make a difference. The women ministers we talked to or whose biographies we consulted all have provided stepping-stones for improving women's condition: Claire Kirkland-Casgrain legally established married women's rights in Quebec; Monique Begin introduced universal health insurance; Pat Carney provided for greater job equality in the federal bureaucracy; and Flora MacDonald inserted a women's equality clause into the latest Broadcasting Act. Second- and third-generation politicians like Audrey McLaughlin, Lea Cousineau, Chaviva Hosek and Sheila Copps, among others, are continuing this agenda. Extra commitment will be needed in the 1990s as women's issues are submerged in the North American economic recession. It is at these times that the growing number of feminist politicians among third-generation incumbents in municipal and provincial councils will make the greatest difference, for they will have the fresh ideas and, thus, will set the course for the future.

The possibility of transforming state institutions is also documented by Scandinavian women's groups, where much has already been achieved, and in Great Britain, where the Scottish Constitutional Convention of 1989 provided an opportunity for summarizing the latest ideas on re-designed state institutions. In a ringing manifesto, Scottish women's groups called for "user-friendly" institutions catering to the needs of everyone: women, men, immigrants of different ethnic backgrounds, the young and the old. Mary Fyfe, Labour MP from Glasgow Maryhill, defined user-friendliness in legislative institutions for politicians and constituents as "a normal working day, with time built in for constituency activities, time off to match school holidays and take account of family needs, adequate salaries with additional allowances for 'ycareers', proper child-care and working facilities for members and their staff, procedures that would be seen to be fair, democratic, open and easily understood by newcomers, and a minimum of ritual" (Coote and Pattullo, 1990: 275).

What the Scottish women were trying to do, in effect,

was to import into the mainstream of representative democracy the political culture of the margins and the operating procedures of campaigns, social movements and community actions where women were already strong. These proposals for exercising power, and interacting with it, are much more in tune with everyday experience than anything that has ordinarily become associated with politics.

In such a re-designed system, socially responsible media will also be transformed and changed, because readers and viewers will demand a common reportorial focus and point of view for all public officials. Gone will be the reportage which deals with the presence of women in reductive terms, and gone also will be the stereotype-based media narrations that perpetuate a vision of women (in politics) based on gender difference rather than on equality, on strangeness rather than on parallel or similar interests. Furthermore, both the traditional and transitional narratives would have to shed their anti-social bias toward women and minority groups, which is manifested by not giving them credit for their contributions to public life.

Media personnel will also have to become mindful not to apply the four discriminatory narrative focuses and differential evaluation criteria discussed previously. These include the focus on a female incumbent's personal characteristics rather than on the substance of her statements and ignoring prior career activities, thereby making competence more difficult for her to establish. It would also no longer be considered fair to make a woman politician responsible for her gender nor to use the feminism label to discredit her as an individual, let alone to discredit the women's movement as a whole. Even-handed application of performance criteria on a uniform scale for women and men will also avoid the oppression of excellence as well as differential standards for female and male sexual behaviour.

Lest this scenario sound overly rosy, it is important to remember that social institutions are just that, socially constructed and therefore intimately related to changing social attitudes toward women's role in the public domain. These attitudes will undergo further pressures at home, during the recession, and abroad, as a result of the Eastern European migration and of the declining nation-state role as the 1992 European Economic unity project progresses. At this juncture, it is important to remember Rosemary Brown's admonition: "Women's most stubborn enemy 'is' not misogyny but paternalism" (1989: 130). Male legislators in caucus and in Parliament continue to believe that they know better what women's needs are than women themselves. Since overt discrimination is no longer publicly condoned, this attitude leads to a strategy of passive resistance that is equally effective, because the male bias of political institutions is able to derail many female-sponsored initiatives. Angela Miles's dictum must therefore remain the guiding principle

for concerned political women in the 1990s: "We must continue to insist on our right to participate fully in public life, but must at the same time challenge its very shape and underlying logic" (as quoted in Vickers, 1989: 16).

Recommendations

1. One of the basic manifestations of discrimination against women resides in the ways in which the presence and role of women politicians are discussed. Therefore, we recommend that all sexist language be eliminated from government and public documents; namely, the Canada Elections Act.
2. Women need to be informed and properly trained in order to make maximum use of information tools and the media to further their political endeavours. Women politicians have to be taught how the journalistic system works, how to answer questions and what the print and production values are. Therefore, we strongly encourage all Canadian political parties to offer a foundation course on media literacy in order for women within their ranks to become media wise; that is, to be able to deal more adequately with reportorial interviews, expectations and biases. Similar courses are already available in certain universities; namely, l'Universite du Quebec a Montreal, where women from different associations receive training specifically designed for their needs in relation to the media.
3. We are well aware that in the field of media, the notion of freedom of the press does not permit the implementation of restrictive rules concerning editorial policies. However, we believe that the media can be systematically invited to make better use of the human resources and women's political expertise presently available. It is also recommended that the media be invited to systematically cover women's progress, or activities within political parties, and to keep in touch with women's extra-state activities on all levels of politics: national, provincial, regional and municipal.
4. Since it has been established that women in key power positions have a direct influence on the presence of other women at all levels of an organization, concrete measures should be considered to break the "glass ceiling" beyond which women have not been able to advance. Therefore, we recommend that affirmative action programs be designed to promote women to top positions in media outlets and political parties.
5. We also believe that goodwill gestures on a symbolic level can have important effects. Such gestures can be triggered by actions that help to raise consciousness and create a climate of awareness and co-operation. The following recommendation deals with two such initiatives.

We recommend the following:

- * that a national journalism prize be instituted, to be named after a prominent woman and adjudicated through the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women in co-operation with journalists' associations. The aim of the competition would be to award a substantial monetary prize, to be sponsored by the Secretary of State, to the best media coverage of women's political activity during the year.
- * that the Secretary of State sponsor particular and specific research projects on the media coverage of women's political activities, both within parties and outside. Such sponsorship should, in particular, favour research projects dealing with women's political initiatives on the municipal level in Canada's large and middle-sized cities, where women already represent one-third of city councillors. Most new political initiatives will emerge on this level where women's issues (such as peace, the environment and the welfare state) are going to be highlighted.

Appendix

Women Politicians Interviewed or Studied Through Biographical Material

First Generation:

Doris Anderson (ex-president of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women)

Monique Begin (Liberal Party of Canada, former minister)

Rosemary Brown (NDP, British Columbia, leadership candidate)

Therese Casgrain (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, Quebec, Senator; autobiography)

Judy Erola (Liberal Party of Canada, former minister)

Pauline Jewett (New Democratic Party of Canada, Chancellor of Carleton University)

Therese Lavoie-Roux (Liberal, Quebec, former minister)

Judy LaMarsh (Liberal Party of Canada, former minister; autobiography)

Flora MacDonald (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, former minister)

Jeanne Sauve (Liberal Party of Canada, former minister,

Governor General; biography)

Second Generation:

Mary Collins (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, minister responsible for the status of women and associate minister of national defence)

Sheila Copps (Liberal Party of Canada, leadership candidate; autobiography)

Francine Cosman (Liberal, Nova Scotia)

Lea Cousineau (president of the executive committee, City of Montreal)

Christine Hart (Liberal, Ontario, former minister)

Chaviva Hosek (Liberal, Ontario, former minister)

Therese Killens (Liberal Party of Canada)

Aldea Landry (Liberal, New Brunswick, vice-premier)

Audrey McLaughlin (New Democratic Party of Canada, leader of the party)

Maureen McTeer (candidate in 1988 for the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada)

Third Generation:

Marlene Catterall (Liberal Party of Canada)

Dorothy Doley (PC, Saskatchewan)

Sheila Gervais (Liberal Party of Canada, secretary-general)

Shirley Maheu (Liberal Party of Canada)

Sandra Mitchell (NDP, Saskatchewan, president)

Louise O'Neill (candidate in 1988 for New Democratic Party of Canada)

Journalists and Academics Consulted:

Nicole Belanger (directrice regionale, Radio-Canada)

Gretta Chambers (Montreal Gazette)

Ami Lonroth (_Svenska Dagbladet_)

Robert Mackenzie (_Toronto Star_)

Trina McQueen (director of CBC English Network)

Francine Pelletier (_La Presse_)

Carolle Simard (Department of Political Science, Universite du Quebec a Montreal)

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