

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

**A VERY DIM LIGHT, A VERY STEEP HILL: WOMEN IN THE VICTORIAN
BRANCH OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY**

Submitted by

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**A THESIS
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THESIS SUMMARY

This thesis presents a contemporary approach to the problem of the lack of recognition of women in Australian society and politics using the Australian Labor Party (ALP) as background and the Victorian Branch of the Australian Labor Party as a test case. It examines the paradox that women have had the vote in Australia for over a hundred years yet, in the largest political party officially dedicated to social equality, they still fail to hold leadership positions with the exception of Jenny Macklin who is Deputy Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party (FPLP). Several writers have drawn attention to this puzzle of the lack of effective participation in general by women in Australian political life. Authors such as Joy Damousi, Anne Henderson, Marian Sawer and Marian Simms among others have begun the process of theoretical and historical analysis of women in politics in this country. Sawer and Simms are both prominent female academics in the field of Political Science. Their book, *A Woman's Place: Women and Politics in Australia* (1993), is a good example of an emerging genre. Given my own particular academic interests, the thesis is based in the discipline of Political Science. It is not located primarily in the area of Women's Studies, but feminist theories and ideas are applied, as are historical surveys and sociological perspectives to support my arguments and buttress conclusions. The aim of the work is to examine the Victorian Branch of the ALP between 1946 and 2005 and tests the hypothesis that a combination of societal and structural factors has been responsible for the exclusion of women for the most part from leadership positions in the Party. The Victorian Branch was chosen partly for reasons of access and manageable size, but also because it is representative of general trends in Australian politics. Essentially, this thesis is about the role of women in a major political party committed to the cause of working-class people. It does not deal with policy formulation or the dynamics of the parliamentary arena. Rather, it concentrates on the party's culture and the structural and organisational factors which affect the participation rates and levels of influence of women.

This thesis will contribute to knowledge by analysing the reasons for the exclusion of women from positions of power in the Victorian Branch of the ALP; it also draws lessons about the nature of politics in Australia. Indeed, it constitutes the first major study of the role of women in Victorian ALP politics—no such study currently exists. My own personal case studies will determine how and why and if male-dominated 'traditions' (patriarchy) are restricting the progress of women in the public sphere in this country. The research material from interviews with past and present female MPs (including former Victorian Premier Joan Kirner) and State Executive members will provide a great deal of invaluable information and opinion for other students of party politics. The thesis will give an opportunity for female ALP views to be expressed. A further contribution to knowledge will be to establish why injustices, inequalities and constraints have been placed on women which hinder their rise to power in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

It is significant to state that throughout Australia's largely patriarchal history the nonrecognition, or misrecognition, of Australian women has been a form of exclusion resulting in their underrepresentation in leadership roles in the ALP and its Victorian Branch. Therefore, by studying the particular processes of how gender diversities are formed within a historical and ideological context, we can start to hypothesise on how and why women have been marginalised with the male-dominated ALP and the Victorian Branch.

This thesis will examine why women in the Victorian Branch of the ALP have been largely excluded from decision-making positions. Has a combination of cultural, historical, sociological and structural reasons contributed to their exclusion until some thirty years ago when things began to appear to change? Are attempts to make the Branch more inclusive real or are they simply a form of Marcusean repressive tolerance?

Therefore, in order to clarify specific aims of the project, one should ascertain why, despite the attainment of legal, political and social rights, there exists a significant inequality between the genders when it comes to achieving and exercising power and influence in the Federal ALP and the

Victorian Branch. By researching those factors that create inequality, I hope to ascertain why women have been excluded from decision-making positions in the ALP and the Victorian Branch and document what changes have occurred and suggest future directional aims.

CERTIFICATION

I, Veronica Ann O'Flaherty, declare that the PhD thesis titled, *A Very Dim Light, A Very Steep Hill: Women in the Victorian Branch of the Australian Labor Party*, is no more than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

Veronica Ann O'Flaherty

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my grandchildren: Alexander Clarke, Benjamin and Catriona O'Flaherty, Samuel March and Fen Summons.

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INTRODUCTION

Why, after one hundred and five years in which many formal inequalities between women and males have been lessened, does women's participation in leadership roles in the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and its Victorian Branch in particular differ so evidently from that of men? This thesis will argue that women are no more powerful today in the ALP and the Victorian Branch than when feminism's second-wave raised women's chances of accessibility as MPs in the Victorian Branch of the ALP and the federal ALP. In fact, Anne Summers argues that limitations are worse, due to expectations having been raised and hopes lifted (Summers 2003:173). The marked increase in recent years in the number of ALP women MPs seemed to show that all that was required was time for women to take their rightful positions next to men in filling the roles of leadership in the Party. Instead, the same forces that kept women from gaining preselection in the 1950s and 1960s are still there today blocking women from rising to the upper echelons of power.

For instance, Julia Gillard a Federal MP, single and childless, had her chances of gaining support for leadership of the Opposition in January 2005 thwarted by other parliamentary members of her own Party. Arguments raised anonymously by Gillard's ALP male colleagues claimed that women cannot win, suggesting 'people are not going to vote for a single woman'. Activist Anne Summers stated that 'I think it's pure bigotry' (Dunn, *The Age*, 29 January 2005) while Paul Strangio, a lecturer at Monash University's National Centre for Australian Studies, believes the debate was really about the place of women (Dunn, *The Age*, 29 January 2005). It will be shown in this thesis that all female politicians suggested as future leadership material for the ALP have their ambitions read through visions of their private lives, while men are judged through their performances. In Chapter One, the thesis will address the history underlying opposition to women's emancipationist

demands when arguing that women should be protected from the rigours of public life. My argument will suggest that a very rigid form of patriarchy exists in the ALP and the Victorian Branch limiting women's access to leadership roles and therefore their access to full political citizenship is also affected.

Largely unexplored are the cultural and historical obstacles littering the paths of Australian women still struggling to master the steeper slopes of power in this country. Indeed, why are they losing the little power they had acquired in the corporate sector (*The Weekend Australian*, 8-9 February 1997) and in the ALP? Why do women tend to occupy positions of relative weakness in the Labour Movement? Why are they vastly over-represented in casual and temporary jobs, in a narrow range of traditional female jobs at the bottom of occupational ladders? Why are they seen as oddities in Parliament? This thesis will address the injustices, inequalities and constraints placed on women thus restricting their rightful place in a democracy. This is a contemporary question, a feminist question, and a political question: therefore it necessitates new answers.

Dworkin claims that a liberal society is one where a society is somewhat merged around a strategic undertaking to regard people (men and women) with equal respect (Dworkin cited in Taylor 1994: 52). In effect, society in Australia does say that a woman's view is not as important in the eyes of the State as that of her male fellow citizens. Then one may assume there is a demanding philosophical usurpation at the basis of this aspect of liberal democracy in Australia. In other words, although women are now entitled to most of the rights of liberal democratic citizenship in this country, why are they denied the human dignity that exists largely in autonomy? It is not possible for them to be authoritative - to possess power - unless they have access to and the mastery of major organisations (Taylor 1994: 57) and

politics. Leading politicians and government officials dominate constitutional power in Australia, but we do not grant this power equally to all citizens that is, women, members of minority ethnic groups and Aborigines. Likewise, unless we abolish the reasons for, and the circumstances of, the under representation of women from positions of leadership in the ALP and the Victorian Branch, our undertaking to increase the visibility of women politicians will be in vain. In fact, we allow some peoples' deliberations to overrule those of others. Consequently, women are denied the capacity to establish precisely for themselves a vision of their rightful place in the Party; they are denied full political citizenship through misrecognition. As Charles Taylor asserts, the refusal of equal recognition 'can inflict damage on those who are denied it' (Taylor cited in Gutman 1994: 56).

Furthermore, some philosophers have been writing about politics, mostly sadly for women, for many years. For example, the identity of women, slaves and others in inherited poverty situations lacks an understanding as formed in reciprocal exchange, therefore introducing a second-class status which reflects negatively on women seeking leadership positions in the ALP. The views of theorists Jean Jacques Rousseau and John Stuart Mill have been sought to assist in an understanding of women's exclusion from leadership positions in the ALP. The main source of this line of investigation will be Susan Moller Okin (1992), *Women in Western Political Thought*.

It will also be shown in the Introduction and throughout the thesis that psychoanalytical feminist theory is a valuable tool when discussing women's oppression in Australian politics, but it is a partial approach and somewhat limited in nature. A feminist theorist would immediately recognise this, but limitations of time and space dictate that I concentrate mainly on structural reasons for women's exclusion from leadership positions in the Twenty-

First Century. However, this approach does lead to arguments explaining women's exclusion from membership of the Labor Party and the Victorian Branch until the 1980s, at which time things began to change.

Works on the subject of psychoanalytical feminist theory, will include Sherry Ortner (1975), 'Oedipal Father, Mother's Brother, and the Penis', Juliet Mitchell's (1974), *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*; Simone de Beauvoir (1974), *The Second Sex*; Kate Millett (1970), *Sexual Politics*; Jean Bethke Elshtain (1981), *Public Man, Private Woman*, Rosemarie Putman Tong (1998), *Feminist Thought* and Jennifer Rutherford (2001), *The Gauche Intruder*.

Section A: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: THE MASCULINIST WORLD OF WESTERN THOUGHT

From the end of the 1800s, some revered philosophers have contributed to the support or subordination of women as they meditated upon the problems of political life. However, there is considerable evidence to suggest that some modern living philosophers, as well as contemporary scholars, political scientists and feminists believe their illustrious predecessors to be mistaken, as far as their reflections on women are concerned. Rousseau, Mill and Mills are the theorists who have, in my opinion, written the most stimulating serious thoughts and the most interesting work on the study of women. Indeed, Rousseau as a social reformer might be compared with the Australian Labour Movement traditions – both largely blind to women’s oppression. Furthermore, it will be argued in this Chapter that traditional, classical political philosophy is a faulty philosophical tradition. Okin says it has separated from the domain of public life the existence of a decidedly distinct sphere of private, family life. However, women in the Western world, and much of the rest of the world as well, have become citizens in the past Century (Okin 1992: 3).

Virtuous women

Okin believes that this notion of citizenship for women is shown throughout history in the ‘construction and valorisation of the virtuous woman in pre-enfranchisement thought.’ In other words, moral perfection was seen to be the main accomplishment for women if they were to be recognised as ‘good private citizens’. Thus equipped, they might raise their daughters to be good mothers of good citizens and their sons to be great citizens of the polity. Okin writes that this connection with nurture implies that this is the private site at which womanly virtue was supposed to be realised, in contrast to the public site of manly virtue (Okin 1992: 3). An example of women’s misrecognition within the public sphere of

most philosophical thought can be associated with the exclusion of women from the ALP when they are accepted into the Party in greater numbers, but are thwarted in their attempts to reach leadership roles.

Rousseau, in *Emile*, clearly shows Sophie as the good woman of the Enlightenment. She epitomises the highly principled woman who happily serves the requirements of her husband by her docility, her passivity and her subordination:

The man should be strong and active; the woman should be weak and passive; the one must have both the power and the will; it is enough that the other should offer little resistance

When this principle is admitted, it follows that woman is specially made for man's delight. If man in his turn ought to be pleasing in her eyes, the necessity is less urgent, his virtue is in his strength, and he pleases because he is strong. I grant you this is not the law of love, but it is the law of nature, which is older than love itself...

This habitual restraint produces a docility which woman requires all her life long, for she will always be in subjection to a man, or to man's judgment, and she will never be free to set her own opinion above his...

Sophie loves virtue; this love has come to be her ruling passion; she loves virtue because there is nothing fairer in itself, she loves it because it is a woman's glory and because a virtuous woman is little lower than the angels; she loves virtue as the only road to real happiness...

When Emile became your husband, he became your head, it is yours to obey; this is the will of nature (Rousseau 1993: 385, 399, 431, 531).

Thus, Rousseau left no doubt that submissive Sophie should not take part in authoritative debate or lead citizens within the State: notably a State made in the image of the male. Rousseau's values for women are in glaring contradiction of those ideals, equality and freedom, which he claims are values essential to humanity.

Nevertheless, Rousseau's consideration of Sophie's position was the main focus of Mary Wollstonecraft's resounding critique of the education of bourgeois and aristocratic women in the latter part of the Eighteenth Century:

Women, commonly called Ladies, are not to be contradicted in company, are not allowed to exert any manual strength; and from them the negative virtues only are expected, when any virtues are expected, patience, docility, good humour, and flexibility; virtues incompatible with any vigorous exertion of intellect (Wollstonecraft 1792: 58).

Like Wollstonecraft, many later feminists were unsuccessful at influencing mainstream (or 'malestream') theorists. As Wollstonecraft claimed, the virtues 'to which women as a class should aspire are oppressively and familiarly one-dimensional, compared with the multifarious positions acceptable for men'. She adds:

Men are allowed by moralists to cultivate, as Nature directs, different qualities, and assume the different characters, that the same passions, modified almost to infinity, give to each individual. A virtuous man may have a choleric or a sanguine constitution, be gay or grave, unreproved; be firm till he is almost over-bearing, or, weakly submissive, have no will or opinion of his own; but all women are to be levelled, by meekness and docility, into one character of yielding softness and gentle compliance (Wollstonecraft 1792: 95).

Rousseau's philosophy as a whole tends to take the worst view or expect the worst outcome for women. On the other hand, Emile's story is not altogether pessimistic. In the end, Emile does become a citizen, but not the woman. Tragedy is the fate of Rousseau's women; he does not allow them to be either citizen or individual nor to live in the patriarchal world; they are destined to derive their only power from sexual love. Therefore, they are totally deprived of equality and freedom; indeed, Rousseau's philosophy appears to place women in a position of subordination that relates to their exclusion from the echelons of power in the Victorian Branch of the ALP and in the Federal ALP. However, there are male politicians in the ALP and the Victorian Branch at the present time refusing to be convinced that women

have the right to be heard: similarly, they fail to recognise that it is undemocratic to retain working conditions in the Parliament that are largely shaped on men's recommendations.

Additionally, Susan Okin wrote of the male-oriented nature of western political writers:

[Human nature], we realize, as described and discovered by philosophers such as Aristotle, Aquinas, Machiavelli, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel and many others, is intended to refer only to male human natures. Consequently, all the rights and needs that they have considered humanness to entail have not been perceived as applicable to the female half of the human race. Thus there has been, and continues to be, within the tradition of political philosophy and political culture, a persuasive tendency to make allegedly general statements as if the human race were not divided into two sexes, and then either to ignore the female sex altogether, or to proceed to discuss it in terms not at all considered with the assertions that have been made about [man] and [humanity] (Okin 1992: 6-7).

Such a coherent passage is true of the philosophical reasoning and speech of some Australian politicians about women (see Chapter Two below). Some actions interlock and run closely parallel with some of the philosophers' writings as mentioned in this Introduction and further Chapters. One wonders whether the philosophers' assertions to exclude all women from the public sphere has any inherent connection with a patriarchal culture that attempts to justify the continuing unequal treatment of women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch. Actually, the belief that women remain less capable than men excludes them from positions where major authoritative decisions of major consequences are made such as in the Parliament. Yet, C. Wright Mills agrees with Wollstoncraft when he states:

The elite who occupy the command posts may be seen as the possessors of power and wealth and celebrity; they may be seen as members of the upper stratum of a capitalistic society. They may also be defined in terms of psychological and moral criteria, as certain kinds of selected individuals (Mills 1956: 13).

By the elite Mills means those who are able to exercise their intent. He writes:

No one, accordingly can be truly powerful unless he has access to the command of major institutions, for it is over these institutional means of power that the truly powerful are, in the first instance, powerful. Higher politicians and key officials of

Government command such institutional power; so do admirals and generals, and so do the major owners and executives of the larger corporations (Mills 1956: 9).

Accordingly, Mills argues that women must be set free from presupposed types of work and that they should be enabled to reach equal status with men in society. On the other hand, not only does Rousseau's theory regard men as total persons with implicit rights, but he also expands his system of ideas along sex lines by defining women by their duties in relation to men. Therefore, one might argue that women cannot hold leadership positions in the ALP and the Victorian Branch until the Parliament ceases to operate on gender lines and women become equal citizens with equal opportunities and powers.

The forthcoming Chapters will echo a theme used extensively by Pateman and other feminist theorists. It is expressed in the phrase 'The personal is the political' (Pateman 1970: 281). For this reason, some time will be spent (in this Introduction) looking at arguments defined by feminists in relation to giving women equal access to the male world of politics, and the ALP in particular.

Section B: FEMINIST THOUGHT

Feminist thought and explanatory labels have provided useful teaching implements. They assist in arguing the many structural approaches, frameworks and viewpoints of different feminists called upon to share their definitions for women's misrecognition and their suggested solutions for its termination. Thus, in the 1980s, the transformation of the Federal ALP and the Victorian Branch began with an influx of new women MPs. However, their transition into leadership positions failed to eventuate in the 1990s and 2000s. For example, in January 2005, the Australian media sensationalised the treatment of a highly talented ALP female political figure who nominated for a leadership position. A photo of her plain, tidy kitchen upset some critics who stated she lacked interior design skills, furthermore, she was criticised for not having a husband or family (Dunn, *The Age*, 29 January 2005). There is an argument that variance in feminist thought is needed to fight for women's escape from the gender trap when vying for leadership positions in the ALP.

Rosemarie Tong identifies a wide diversity in feminist thought, including the liberal, radical feminist, socialist/Marxist, and psychoanalytical feminists. She writes that liberal feminists insist that to acquire gender justice requires, first, 'to make the rules of the game fair'. Second, the contest for 'society's goods and services' should be methodically advantageous to all. Then liberal feminists argue that gender justice should be evenly divided so that fair competition is the outcome (Tong 1998: 2). Compared with other feminist theories, liberalism might seem *passé*. However, many women have responded to liberal perspectives. Indeed, liberal feminists have woven a course for many women to reach educational standards and judicial reform allowing them to seek leadership roles

At the ordinary level of this perspective, it would seem that the liberal feminist plan lacks the dynamic and strongly calculated measures that some radical feminists believe are required to undo the oppression of women. In fact, they believe that patriarchy is 'characterised' by competitive involvement, power to dominate, influence and authorise (Tong 1998: 2). Consequently, we might assume that an increase in the number of women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch since feminist aspirations partially solved their misrecognition, but it has not led to their chances of becoming leaders of the Party. Therefore, because it drew on Marxist theory, their integration supported a socialist society replacing capitalism where the division between public and private would be overcome. But it failed to offer solutions to the patriarchal problems within the Party because men and women are not equal in the Party. Consequently, the Marxist theory has been unable to solve the exclusion of women in the ALP from leadership roles.

Accordingly, radical feminists believe that patriarchy's political systems and structures based on law must be overthrown before reform and women's liberation can be attained. Tong claims that social and cultural institutions (the academy, the church and family) are obstructions to women's progress.) For a radical feminist, reproduction, sex and gender are the major focus points. In fact, these are the focus for feminist ideas and improvement. Tong divides radical feminists into two separate areas: radical-liberation feminists and radical-cultural feminists. Radical-libertarian feminists believe that no human should be deprived of the sense of wholeness from combining his or her masculine and feminine dimensions (Tong 1998: 3). Radical-cultural feminists are against this in one of three ways:

Some anti-androgynists maintain the problem is not femininity in and of itself but rather the low value patriarchy assigns to feminine qualities such as [gentleness, modesty, humility, supportiveness, empathy, compassionateness, tenderness, nurturance, intuitiveness, sensitivity, unselfishness,] and the high value it assigns to masculine qualities such as [assertiveness, aggressiveness, hardiness, rationality or the

ability to think logically, abstractly, analytically, ability to control emotion] (Tong 1998: 3).

Therefore, according to Tong, radical-cultural feminists believe that if society can be taught to appreciate the feminine as much as the masculine, women's oppression will fade from memory. But other anti-androgynists dissent; they assert femininity itself is the difficulty. In fact, we might ascertain that for patriarchal purposes, male politicians have devised and fashioned its meaning (Tong 1998: 3).

Unlike the radical-libertarian feminists, radical-cultural feminists believe that motherhood is the fundamental origin of women's power, that it is women who ascertain the continuity of the human race, i.e., the alternative of life or no life ascribes power to the radical-cultural feminists. They believe that, if women were to forego this source of power, men would have even less respect for women (Corea 1985 cited in Tong 1998: 78-79, 85).

The radical and liberal feminist theorists do not convince Marxist and socialist feminists. Tong claims Marxist and socialist feminists believe it is not possible for women in a class-based society to attain liberty. That is because the powerful few acquire the wealth produced by the powerless (Tong 1998: 4). Socialist and Marxist feminists insist that the suppression of women commenced with the inauguration of private property ownership (Engels 1972: 103). Thus, declares Tong, whatever fellowship of interests and community fairness existed was destroyed (Tong 1998: 4-5). A few people became the private owners of the means of production and they were mostly male. Thus they initiated a system of class 'whose contemporary manifestations' are imperialistic and capitalistic. Tong reflects that, if all women are to be set at liberty, the 'capitalist' structure must undergo replacement by a

‘socialist’ process in which one and all are affiliated (Tong 1998: 4). Only then will women be financially independent and not reliant on men.

Still, both Marxist and socialist feminists believe that ‘capitalism’ is the cause of women’s subjection. Alternatively, claims Tong, radical feminists uphold that ‘patriarchy’ creates the origin of women’s repression. As a result, both Marxist and socialist feminists see patriarchal capitalism or capitalistic patriarchy as the cause of women’s injustice (Tong 1998: 4). In *Women’s Estate*, Juliet Mitchell points out that the condition of women is adversely affected by the production structures (as Marxists agree), sexual desire and propagation (as radical feminists perceive), and the social activities of children (as liberal feminists believe) (Mitchell 1971 cited in Tong 1998: 5).

Alison Jaggar has undertaken to attain a merger between radical and Marxist feminist thinking. She concedes that all feminist attitudes perceive the incompatible requirements made on workers, mothers, lovers, women as wives, and daughters. Socialist feminism is distinctive, insists Jaggar, because of its attempt to combine the various forms of women’s subordination (Jaggar 1983: 316-317). So we have seen that radical, liberal and socialist-Marxist feminists reflect on ‘macrocosm’ (capitalism or patriarchy) in their appropriate interpretations of women’s oppression. Tong claims ‘psychoanalytic and gender feminists’ recede to the ‘microcosm of the individual’, declaring the basis of women’s oppression is fixed soundly in the mind (Tong 1998: 5). Freudian theory is the basis for psychoanalytic feminists. They concentrate on the capacity of sexual powers when ascertaining the repression of women. They see all babies as ‘symbiotically’ connected to their mothers, whom they regard as supreme. That is called the original pre-Oedipal period. The pre-Oedipal point progresses to the Oedipus complex (Tong 1998: 5). As a result of the

complexity of the Oedipus complex, Tong writes that the boy relinquishes (not always) his initial love – that is, his mother – so that he might avoid the action of castrating by the will of his father. In other words, the lad is completely merged into culture (on most occasions), surrendering his inherited instinctive impulses of the unconscious (desires) to the part of the mind that internalises parental prohibitions (the superego). Consequently, he and his father will manage control over those inherently human qualities of nature and woman. On the other hand, a girl who in the first place had no penis to lose, clings to her first love, her mother, for a longer period (Tong 1998: 5). As a consequence, the girl's consolidation is fragmented.

For this reason, the girl endures specified conditions – she is subject to a culture where she is directed rather than a culture where she is the ruler. Dinnerstein writes that the girl is afraid of her own might as she subsists at the boundary of culture (Dinnerstein 1977: 161). In addition, Simone de Beauvoir sees the man as free while seeing the woman as repressed because of her 'Otherness' (de Beauvoir 1974 cited in Tong 1998: 6). On the contrary, postmodern feminists argue that Beauvoir's theory of Otherness is to be rejected (Tong 1998: 5). They believe woman's otherness permits independent women to censure standards, philosophies and performance that the authoritative masculine culture (patriarchy) tries to force on everybody. Jean Bethke Elshtain in 1981 claimed that psychoanalytic feminism had become a dominant paradigm only within the previous five years (Elshtain 1981: 285).

Thus far, I have argued the power and the frailty of the separate feminist perspectives hopefully with respect to each. Consequently, it is because contemporary feminism has dared to stress the virtues of difference and diversity that it is now possible to understand the sources of women's oppression. Giving women access to the patriarchal world of politics

was indeed a feminist goal, but the dominance of men in the ALP structure and culture has limited women's progress in gaining leadership roles.

**Section C: POWER OF AUSTRALIAN WOMEN
SUBORDINATION OF AUSTRALIAN WOMEN
- IN SETTLER SOCIETIES**

In Australian women's history and politics, one perceives that a young country in the Nineteenth Century showed a liberal ambience for women, yet, in the first seventy years of the Twentieth Century, demonstrated unfavourable hostility to an additional power shift in the position of women. There lies the purpose of this thesis: to try to define and document the reasons why this enigma persists today. Why do women in the Victorian Labor Party remain marginalised in the Twenty-First century?

It is argued in this thesis that female subordination exists in this country. Yet why does it exist? Is it due to patriarchy? The term 'patriarchy' will be applied and investigated for threads which, when bared, might determine why Australian women have suffered inequality, exploitation and subjection. Clare Burton claimed there is no special definition of patriarchy therefore, it cannot be seen as either private (the family) or public (State activities) (Burton 1989: 89). My own view of Australian society has been organised around a definition of men's supposed superiority. According to this conception, Australian society is denying women fundamental rights, liberties, equality and justice that should never be infringed and therefore, should be entrenched in public policy.

What sense can we make of these phenomena? In a way, the politics of 'misrecognition' of women has been neglected for two hundred years in this country. What is new, however, is that the demand for recognition is now explicit. It has been made explicit by the spread of the idea that our identity is formed by the way of recognition. It is with the assistance of feminist thinkers in the past twenty to thirty years combined with other factors including the

reform of the extra-parliamentary Party structure that the politics of recognition have gained strength, enabling women to enter the ALP in impressive numbers in the 1980s and 1990s. On the other hand, this research will show that feminism needs to return to its original demands before women will gain leadership roles in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

Specific reasons for women's subordination in Australian society will be sought by studying Miriam Dixson and Patricia Grimshaw, historians, Anne Summers, writer and activist, and to a lesser degree, John Hirst also a historian. (These writers have been chosen due to their specific work on the subject although there are several others who would also be insightful.) Special attention will be paid to the sex imbalance in the early days of settlement; to the adverse conditions for women; the importance of single sex industries; the unusualness of the male-dominated environment and the form of patriarchy that has developed.

Despite the gains of previous generations of women, the fight for equality continues. Australian business fails women. Andrea Carson reports: 'Less than three per cent of private companies have appointed females to their boards...' She quotes Ms Fiona Krautil, Director of the Affirmative Action Agency, as saying: 'It would be another one hundred and seventy-seven years before Australian women had equal rights and representation in the workplace' (Krautil cited in Carson, *The Age*, 24 August 1999). Therefore, until the legal system, Government and corporations encourage women to enter decision-making roles, the gender vacuum will remain an integral component of public-policy development and corporate decision-making. Thus women will lack the foundations available to male politicians when seeking leadership roles in the Victorian ALP and the Federal ALP.

Australians were late but enthusiastic in investigating their own history. But, before the 1970s, researchers were mainly males who tended to write about male achievements. Dixon states that the early work tended to be about men commemorating their past selves while affirmatively acknowledging their current identity (Dixon 1984: 12). They considered, however, that they were identifying the past and failed to see that they denied that same acknowledgment to women through education, the written word and the media. As a result women figured as insignificant people in this illustrious democracy (Dixon 1984: 12). That situation existed until the 1970s when women interested in the women's movement looked for another kind of history, one that questioned Australia's past from a woman's perspective. They reasoned that the vote is a symbol of power, equality and freedom. Yet Australian women are identified with their private work while their status within the public sphere remains undermined. Therefore, an illusion of equality exists challenging women to hold onto their hard-won gains while insisting gender equity is standard. This thesis claims that this insensitivity to the needs of justice is one reason why women are not part of the ALP leadership in any significant way. (The exception is Jenny Macklin, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition). Indeed, the purpose of this thesis is to address the injustices, constraints and inequalities that most Australian women face now, and have experienced, since the colonisation of Australia in 1788.

The subordination of women is an obvious feature of Australian society (Dixon 1984: 12).¹ The belief that women are physically and intellectually less capable than men has served to exclude women from the 'command posts' of power (Mills 1956: 13). Why should this be so? Dixon claims Australian women suffer from a 'flatness' that is a variant of 'feminine

¹ Marilyn Lake, 'Between Old Worlds and New: Feminist Citizenship, Nation and Race, the Destabilisation of Identity', in C. Daly and M. Nolan (1994). *Suffrage and Beyond: International Feminists Perspectives*, Auckland: Auckland University Press.

conservatism' (Dixson 1984: 12). In addition, Philip Slater writes that feminism conservatism:

is part of a role into which women are inducted by men...Men, like all dominant groups, have generally been successful in getting women [like other 'minority' groups] to accept whatever definition of their essential character has been convenient for men' (Slater 1970: 72).

It is not an easy task, therefore, addressing the issues that have been responsible for the exclusion of women from leadership roles in the ALP. Women would possibly find it beneficial to lobby for the reform of ALP cultures and structures that have led to the misrecognition of women in the Party. Indeed, it would help their cause if Party leaders listened and became aware of these anomalies (advanced below) and responded in a democratic manner.

Class

Edward P. Thompson highlights the relationship, which is being examined here, when he wrote of 'the gentry' and the 'labouring poor' in England in the Eighteenth Century. 'In the first six decades of the Eighteenth Century, one tends to associate the gentry with the land' (Thompson 1991: 16). Dorothy George writes that there were trespassers who had been on the commons in huts they had provided for themselves. They were simply evicted in many cases. These people were spoken of as 'industrious peasants'; others claimed they were all 'marauding vagabonds'. The fact is both classes existed (George 1953: 88). Thompson also states that primitive forms of rebellion followed with many peasants punished by death. However, by the end of the Eighteenth Century, the proportion of convicted offenders brought to execution fell. But, if the death sentence was reprieved, it was generally exchanged with a living death on the hulks or with transportation (Thompson 1968: 65). Additionally, women convicts were assumed to be prostitutes whereas no such moralising

was attributed to their male counterparts. As a result of pre-colonial class structures, therefore, British models mainly affected Nineteenth-Century Australia. A feature of Chapter Three below will be to analyse political frameworks and traditions in an attempt to furnish a basis for the patriarchal dominance of men in pre-colonial and colonial lifestyles and politics. Only then will it become easier to understand why Australian women are jeopardised in their attempts to reach leadership positions - when the US has a woman as Secretary of State hindered not by class or colour or marital status and women hold many of New Zealand's key leadership roles. Then, keeping Thompson's hypothesis in mind, we should clarify pre-colonial and colonial constructions of power showing the subjection of women did not go unchallenged by pioneering women.

An historical past, exceptionally immersed in a misogynous culture, has passed on to Australians some predominantly confined types of man-woman relations. Miriam Dixson suggests antagonism directed at Australian women helps us to understand their unpretentious place in society (Dixson 1984: 12). How is it that Australia attained such a hard culture? To perceive the meaning of how this occurred we can look at Louis Hartz's famous thesis of the founding of new societies. Societies such as Australia's, he notes, were founded at certain times in the metropolitan society's cultural development. The new societies are fragments of the old (Hartz, et al, 1964: 5). Allan Patience notes that the 'process of fragmentation isolates the new society from the developmental trajectories of the old' (Patience 1988: 189-9). A new 'sociopolitical and cultural formation' arises out of the process. Richard Rosecrance has applied Hartz's thesis to the Australian situation: 'He identifies what he believes is a radical reaction against British libertarianism in Australia's nascent cultural fragment in the first half of the nineteenth century' (Rosecrance cited in Hartz 1964: 275-318).

This theory suggests that in a settler society populated by European migrants from overseas such migrants fail to outgrow the conditions of their birth. For instance, Rosecrance states that the ‘cultural fragment of British society implanted in Australian soil in the first half of the Nineteenth Century has retained a remarkable distinctness and fixity’. He states such traits remain discernible and relative influences remain. More than this, he mentions that Australia’s distinctiveness is a consequence of a certain portion of British society. The British aristocracy was not known to reach Australia, therefore, Australia was never an entire fragment of Britain. Furthermore, the significant British middle class did not even succeed in obtaining a place of importance in Australia’s development. Rosecrance believes Australia was and remains a land of toilers in which even the land-owners have not proved an exception to this precept (Rosecrance cited in Hartz 1964: 275-277).

Rosecrance indicates that the expropriated Irish peasantry continued to suffer under the tyranny of external oligarchy and hence they were attracted to the industrial structured system in England. At the same time, the filth and degradation of the factories and mines, caused by the congregating together of men, women and children caused massive discontent.

He states:

The early populace of Australia emerged out of a heady brew of British social ferment. The enclosure movement during the eighteenth century and the factory system that began to develop at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth combined to reorganize the pattern of social existence (Rosecrance 1964: 275-277).

Discriminatory principles developed due to the original economic structure of this country. In New South Wales, during Australia’s formative years, economic values became entwined with the occupation of single men; that is the ‘robber industries’, wool, mining, sealing fishing – where to a degree, the environment is mutilated. From this economic fact an ideology developed that valorised ‘mateship’, that is, the association of men with men. It is

in this historical environment that Dixson finds influential community standards that are hostile to Australian women (Dixson 1984: 22). She quotes Lewis Mumford as seeing the relationship with man and nature and in turn with the earth as essential to his thoughts about woman and consequently to her place in society (Dixon 1984: 22). Kingston writes that 'Australian girls brought up to think of the British [lady] as superior, and men accustomed to think of the colonies as culturally and socially inferior, were not common'. The result was a widely held belief that reinforced the notion that Australian women were not really up to real London 'ladies'. In fact, they were inevitably colonial in their views, their outlook, their experience' (Kingston: 1986: 27). The opinions of Rosecrance, Trevelyan, Thompson, Kingston and Dixson propose a pattern of factors towards identifying historical issues that might explain traditions concerning the identity of earlier settler Australian women, their subordination and their political misrecognition. Such factors may have left heavy traces of modern women's lack of participation in leadership power in the ALP.

Dixson claims that, with the exception of South Australia, women in all States throughout the development years were treated with a form of disdain and, sometimes, with abhorrence. She adds that Australian women have failed to outgrow the original condition of being held in contempt (Dixson 1984: 12). Dixson also suggests that the 'impoverished effect' on women's cultural position is further exacerbated by the high valuation placed on the standing of the single male. His activities (whaling, sealing, fishing, wool and mineral extraction) were highly valued. Dixson claims modern women remain deprived because of this former cultural feature (Dixson 1984: 12).

Alternatively, the early free and convict English women, along with the tragically poor Irish peasant women, were lowly rated socially. In their family-centred agriculture and child-caring

capacity, their contribution to the new society was far less noted. Such forces may be seen providing a breeding ground for a form of patriarchy that remains prevalent in Australia's modern history. However, over a decade later, Dixson notes that by 'pursuing our quarry [women's national identity] into the last decades of the twentieth century, there are real signs 'of progress for women' (Dixson 1999: 296). Such progress, for the purpose of this thesis, is seen in the numbers of women in Parliament since the 1980s. Two women became Premiers for short periods, Joan Kirner and Carmen Lawrence in 1990 in State Labor politics but that was ten years ago and the Northern Territory has a female Labor Party Chief Minister now in her second term. However, the appointment of a female as Deputy Leader in the Australian Labor Party after the November Federal Elections in 2001 has not led to her taking over the leadership when there have been changes in the Opposition leadership. Arguably, the resignation of the first and the circumstances of the second should not be ignored. However, one might conclude that the ambivalent implications curtailing women's progress at the end of the Nineteenth Century, when the Labour Movement emerged, remains prevalent today. Thus, the roles of these four women might indicate progress for women, as indicated by Dixson, as they lay a solid foundation on which to build power for the future.

Emancipation: Australia and its failure

In Australia, votes for women became law after Richard O'Connor introduced a Bill to the Senate in 1902. Thus, the federal vote for all women other than Aboriginal women became law two and a half months later (Lees 1995: 46). William Lyne, (acting Prime Minister), then presented the same Bill to the House of Representatives where it was passed without argument (Lees 1995: 46). That was eleven years after the National Australasian Convention was petitioned by the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) (Lees 1995: 46). Votes for women had become law. Thus, white Australian women could now stand for

election in both houses of Federal Parliament, and vote in all Federal Elections. In spite of that and throughout post-colonial history, men have ruled in the ALP. Alternatively, women obeyed and femininity was passive and subordinate, and therefore women remained misrecognised and less equal political citizens. (Interestingly, this was before women won the right to vote in the ‘mother country’).

Yet Australian women were not the first in the world to receive the vote. A short chronology here might assist readers. Oldfield notes that there were female suffrage clusters in western societies in the 1800s, notably some frontier States in America. However, New Zealand has the acclaim of being the first country to grant the vote to its women. That was in 1893 when it was still a colony. Australia was the second. Full honours are due to Elizabeth Nicholls, Mary Lee and other women who petitioned tirelessly to gain the vote. Their efforts were substantial to the success of the Commonwealth vote in 1902 (Oldfield, *The Weekend Australian*, 4-5 May 1996). But that was not the first time Australian women had voted. Propertied, rate paying women in Victoria in 1863 were moved to the Assembly roll in error and they keenly used the chance and voted at the 1864 Election. The new Parliament quickly reversed the privilege and Victorian women fought a long and bitter State campaign before they were enfranchised in 1908 (Oldfield, *The Weekend Australian*, 4-5 May 1996).

Patricia Grimshaw claims that, politically, women were emancipated in the Australian colonies well in advance of their British counterparts. Furthermore, the colonies proved progressive on an extensive and varied number of fundamental subjects that formed the objective of first-wave feminism: education (tertiary and secondary for women), divorce and legal separation, married women’s right to own property and the right of women to enter the professions (Grimshaw and Willett 1981: 134). Granted that, this thesis will show that we

must look into our past before we can attempt to understand why women are still not equal in gaining leadership roles in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

The 'woman question' agitated the minds of nineteenth century intellectuals, in Australia and throughout the Western world. In 1808 the French socialist, Charles Fourier (1808), expressed the opinion that 'the extension of the privileges of women is the fundamental cause of all social progress'. Karl Marx (1884) declared that the degree of evolution of 'human society was to be found in the quality of the relation of men to women.' In 1869 the English philosopher, John Stuart Mill (1869), indicated that the precept of 'might over right' applied in 'modern society only to men over women, and must be superceded by equality.' Furthermore, Friedrich Engels (1884), wrote that the 'overthrow of the mother-right of our early human forebears are the defeat and enslavement of the female sex; women must be reinstated to equality for the human race to progress'. Shulamith Firestone writes that Fourier was able to expand views rather than:

moralise about existing social inequalities, positing an ideal world where class privilege and exploitation should not exist - in the same way that early feminist thinkers posited a world where male privilege and exploitation ought not to exist - by mere virtue of good will (Firestone 1971: 3).

Therefore, the degree of equality for women had become a valid yardstick by which advanced, radical or liberal intellectuals assessed any particular society. Australian colonial intellectual culture, in its more progressive forms, likewise supported concepts of equal gender rights at this time, but failed to carry it through to women in the Labour Movement.

Nevertheless, it was an impetus that was not perpetuated. Grimshaw and Willett write that the first wave of feminism in Australia was succeeded by a marked metamorphosis. It affected the condition of the everyday lives of the greater number of women (Grimshaw and

Willett 1981: 134). Notably there existed in Australia the certitude that, in the first seventy years of the twentieth century, women possessed considerably less access to degrees of status, or influence, or political power, or administrative authority. Indeed, they held 'comparatively lower rates of participation in the public sphere - the long-range goals of the women's movement'. Nowhere in other Western cultures were such dramatic advantages in the life of women reversed (Grimshaw and Willett 1981: 134). The apparently official obstacles had been eliminated, but not many women showed enthusiasm for participation in the favourable possibilities. As a result, in Australia, it was left to women to fight for their equality and for their human liberty. Moreover, it took the second-wave of feminist thought, in the 1970s, to conceive a new enthusiasm for sexual equality. But, Summers writes that the goal of equality is now absent from the political agenda and that 'feminist' is not a term in favour in Canberra, especially in the Labor Party. Therefore, it is not possible to accept that equality is the norm in politics and that women should be eligible for leadership positions in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

The first Australian historians were male. Patricia Grimshaw attempts to explain the void in our historical awareness. She writes that the role of women is mostly absent due to women's history being written in abundance by women writers, but outside the area of the 'academic mainstream'. Mostly these histories have been written for women and are good tales, but they are not studies of political change or economic analysis (Grimshaw 1990: xxii). Indeed, it is time for women historians interested in gender and politics to move away from studying only the women's role. In fact, it is appropriate for gender in all-historical analysis to reach equal recognition (Grimshaw 1990: xxii); that is, the usual men's history, mentioned earlier, cannot be written without referring to women. Likewise, women's history cannot be written without reference to men and their relations to women. As a consequence, due to

misrecognition, Australian women have remained subordinate to men, of which their underrepresentation in leadership positions of power in the Victorian Labor Party and the Federal ALP is a potent symbol.

Section D: PATRIARCHY/CULTURE

For the purpose of this thesis, the term patriarchy has to be untangled and extended beyond presumptions and explanations of modern usage. Indeed, rather than using the terms ‘masculinist’ or ‘men’s working conditions’ or ‘male domination’ as the problem for women’s subordination and their restrictions in obtaining leadership roles in the ALP, the term patriarchy will be used generally. Patriarchy will be seen here as an historical and cultural variable, therefore, a ‘traditional’ interpretation will be used wherever possible. This exercise will eliminate any thought of bias towards or against men in this thesis. There is another reason.

Gerda Lerner writes that ‘what women have done and experienced has been left unrecorded, neglected and ignored in interpretation’. Up to recent times, historical scholarship has recorded women as marginal and unessential to the making of civilisation. Therefore, the documenting of the past of the human race is only partially complete; it omits the other half of human kind and relates the male half only (Lerner 1986: 4). To extend this argument, one might note that those responsible for historical records would be intellectuals sponsored by small ruling elites. The subordinate groups, such as slaves, proletarians and peasants, also once the victims of patriarchy, have risen into positions in the polity and become part of the recorded history; but females remained excluded (Lerner 1986: 5).

Thus, when referring to men and women, in politics in the ALP and in the Victorian Labor Party in particular, my ultimate aim is to eliminate all relevance in the difference between males and females, so that it is seen that many men have suffered from patriarchy as well as women, i.e., because of their class. Women have been excluded from the echelons of power and full political citizenship, not only because of class but also because of their sex. In

Australia, women have been excluded from becoming the Prime Minister through the politics of misrecognition, they have been kept out of leadership positions in the Victorian Labor Party with only a few exceptions.

Jennifer Rutherford claims that Australian speech continuously pays tribute to the Australian 'good': 'The good stands in as the promised realm, its fantasy structure underpinning, for example the promise made by Pauline Hanson to restore Australia to a capitalism freed from anomie via a return to the Australian way' (Rutherford 2000: 208). Where did Australia go wrong? An explanation is needed for the Hansonite phenomenon of the 1990s when Pauline Hanson was seen to speak for the 'ordinary' Australian. She recognised the 'cow-cockie' who would lend his tractor to his neighbour (a sign of equality). He was seen as a legendary fighter from Gallipoli; he cared for his mates; he refused to cringe; he had values; he was an honourable gentleman and believed in a 'fair-go'.

It is easy to recognise this code of neighbourliness; it is the essence of Australianness as felt by traditionally White Australian society. Rutherford claims this spirit has been called on in genuine and imaginary circumstances to draw distinction between Australians and other nations: 'a neighbourliness, a generosity to the other in times of need, coupled with a spirit of equality and the rejection of visible hierarchies' (Rutherford 2000: 7).

The media, various political commentators and critics have, on the whole, disregarded the intensity with which Pauline Hanson's One Nation followers 'identified with and defended this moral code of the good Australian' (Rutherford 2000: 7). They had favoured the more conservative procedure of viewing that which is readily conspicuous: the xenophobia, racism and the narrow exclusive vision of Hanson and her followers. They basically ignored the

fervour. Indeed, they were depicted not only as simplistic, hate-filled evildoers, but also as holding to the opposite to Australian principles of neighborliness and the 'fair go'. In doing so, they left unchallenged the 'moral code' that underlies the One Nation movement. In point of fact, the media outlets had 'recourse to this same code of neighbourliness in their moral attack upon Hanson'. They called on Australians to counter Hanson's unneighbourly theories and to display the Australians 'traditional virtues' (Rutherford 2000: 7). So here we have supporters and rejecters of the 'political divide' claiming a moral code that is assumed as uniquely Australian. It is this aspect of Australianness that is most questioned by Aborigines, foreigners and the professional intellectual elites. Indeed, 'in the discourse and practices of a group such as One Nation we encounter...the link between aggression and a moral code: a moral code which I call the Australian Good' (Rutherford 2000: 7). But Rutherford sees One Nation members as perceived defenders of a lost good caused by those who have not lived up to 'the canon of Australian virtue' whether it be caused by globalisation, major political parties or foreign or internal Others. Rutherford believes that outside the space of a 'small hand-held mirror' aggression is waiting. Rutherford shows that, Hanson's critics do not engage with her fantasy of a good and neighbourly nation. It is not the symptom, if you like, of a different cause but a phenomenon that is very difficult to confront head-on within Australian culture. Moreover, it is not amenable to argument, and the critics who try to argue with its premises fail to see the point of it. Therefore, they overreacted to what they perceived as a failure in the ideals of Australian society: the same idea, which her critics may well uphold, in many cases did uphold in Coalition politics.

Therefore, extremist politics has been caused through the radical dream that has always been exclusive. Indeed few could now deny the aggressive nature of an entrenched Australian nationalism of Australian exclusion and xenophobia. Rutherford claims these fantasies of

difference have supported 'notions of nation and identity during the two hundred years of colonisation' (Rutherford 2000: 13). Such arguments may be supported by current circumstances where refugees are demonised in barbed wire enclosed prisons in different States in this country. Furthermore, while believing that atrocities occur only in distant countries, it might also be seen as 'endemic to the Australian nationalist fantasy'. Rutherford maintains that the 'chimera of Australia as the country of a [fair go]...continues to circulate despite mounting and irrefutable evidence of the nation's dirty history; fact meets the impossible wall of fantasy' (Rutherford.2000: 13).

Not only were Hanson's ambitions fantasy orientated, but also she tried to promise to revert Australia to the Australian way, i.e., free of 'Otherness'. What emerges quite clearly from the Hanson phenomenon is the parallel one can understand with the almost total exclusion of women from the ALP until the late 1970s. In Australia the study of the ALP (including unions and other pressure groups) has almost exclusively been the study of men. Men dominated the ALP and the Victorian Branch of the ALP until the second-wave of feminism brought with it a worthwhile increase in the number of women taking part in the political public sphere. This transition meant that women were able to come under the scrutiny of orthodox political culture. As a result, women were no longer Other; indeed, feminist scholars' research queries moved into areas paved out by over seventy-five years of research on men.

It has been stressed in this Introduction that women have been excluded from the upper echelons of power in the ALP since it was formed. The Introduction also raises questions about the origins of women's exclusion in the modern ALP political culture, and then it is shown that attempts to transform the exclusion of women in the Twenty-First century must be attempted in

the light of the long histories of misrecognition and recognition. Philosophical processes, principles and practices leading to assumptions that have developed over many centuries support this course of action (see Section A above). So why have so few women been accepted in ALP leadership ranks? The lack of full political citizenship for women, therefore, has meant exclusion and disadvantage since earlier times and remaining prevalent today. This line of reasoning will be taken further, showing that contemporary feminists use patriarchy in a variety of senses that has brought the issue back into academic usage (Pateman 1988:19).

In Section B, it is shown that, by adopting Simone de Beauvoir's reasoning, in the ontological language of existentialism one might see that men were named 'man' the self and 'woman' the Other (de Beauvoir (1974) cited in Tong 1998: 179). So, if the woman is a threat to the self, then a female ALP MP is a threat to the male ALP MP. Therefore, if Julia Gillard's ALP male colleagues wish to gain the leadership roles in the ALP, Gillard must be the victim of subordination as indeed she was. Marxist economists and Freudian psychologists and a diversity of others have been used to illustrate the variance in theories feminists have used to bring about equality in our society and in the ALP. But, due to the ideological opposition to the ALP women MPs gaining leadership roles, the struggle by feminists must continue, or start again.

In Chapters Seven and Eight the additional use of oral sources has provided an important source of information about the roles women have played in the ALP and the Victorian Branch. During the course of the thesis, many people were interviewed and have been highly co-operative, however, twenty-five were particularly helpful. The Bibliography contains the names of those women who agreed to having their names known and the dates of all who were interviewed including those women who wished to remain anonymous.

It will be argued throughout this thesis that the Victorian Labor Party and the Federal Labor Party, normally regarded as parties of reform and progress have, in their attitude to women in the party, been quite undemocratic, unsocialistic and unegalitarian. Thus, the purpose of this thesis will be to show, to explain, how the paradox arose and consider whether the Party has now moved beyond it. Indeed, the thesis will show that for a combination of historical, sociological and structural reasons, women have not attained the roles of Prime Minister, or Leader of the Opposition neither has the Victorian Labor Party had more than one woman Premier.

Chapter One will demonstrate how patriarchal dominance in Australia transpired historically and how the Victorian Branch with a 'socialist' ideology, fashioned a male-dominated socialism.

CHAPTER ONE

WOMEN IN AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY

The bush culture, the dominance in society of white males, two world wars, lack of education and employment opportunities, periodic unemployment, the 'women's place' myth have all in varying degrees and at different times combined to keep women from full participation in Parliament and in public life.

Ann Miller, 1996 cited in Irving 1996: 133

One way of putting Australian history into context is to say that everyone, men and women were oppressed. They came as convicts or they came as miners and farmers hoping to establish an independent fortune. In failing they became employees again and were allowed little say in their own lives or their own futures. Initially, working men and women lived in the worst housing, they had the most menial and most painstaking jobs, they could not accumulate capital and children had the worst education. The whole working class was based on this, and Labor helped them out of it via State intervention. Not only was it through the unions that they advanced, but also the Labor Party provided the political wing and, ultimately, provided emancipation. Indeed, the barriers evident in the wider society became also part of the institutional or ideological structure of the Labour Movement.

But why have women not played any part in the forming of the Labor Party? This Chapter will explore and show in what way Australia became patriarchal, or how it was ideologically and institutionally masculinised before the Labour Movement arose in the latter stages of the 1800s. The Labor Party was constructed within this dominant patriarchy.

In Part One of this Chapter, the traditional Australian history produced by historians such as Manning Clarke, Russell Ward and Brian Fitzgerald will be discussed. Further on, the thesis will look at Australian literature where it will be noted that Henry Lawson gives a much more ambiguous view. He does not show women as subservient – he shows them as abandoned. Furthermore, Lawson views men as weak rather than brutal. On the other hand, it will be shown that Barbara Baynton concludes that women were oppressed as well as being abandoned and she is brutal in her judgement of men.

The history traces both ideology and institutions. The literature shows most clearly the kind of ideological framework which the Labor Party inherits. It is certainly not a well worked-out theory. The vagueness in Lawson's work makes it what French critics called 'socialism without doctrine'.

Following this, Part Two will look at the role of feminist critics: Dixson and Summers and, to a lesser extent, three other feminist writers. In the first instance, they give a historiographical criticism of Russell Ward and company's masculinised type of records, which are limited in their readings of history. Then, on the basis of a different historiography, particularly personal records, Summers and Dixson reverse the male historians' historiography, and so they produce women's history as an alternative, or reverse, history. Their histories are also gendered as they criticise the traditional view of Clark and others because it is biased. They agree with their male predecessors that the Labour Movement inherited the idea of mateship and offered the working class as a whole an escape, yet, by no means, does the whole working class come into their historiographical criticism.

Part Three considers Grimshaw's argument that Dixson and Summers reverse the terms suggesting that they are still trapped in the masculine, feminine dichotomy. She argues that feminist history should record the history of women as seen in its own terms of what women actually say, and not what they say in response to men. Men's history similarly can, if you like, be seen as gendered by their own repression.

PART 1: The traditional view

The rural settlers experienced unpleasantly rough situations in Australia (Encel and Campbell 1991: 20). In fact the harsh circumstances confined women to the family and the home simply as domestic workers and as child bearers and rearers. Such representation is depicted in Henry Lawson's *The Drover's Wife* and Russell Drysdale's painting of life in pastoral Australia (Encel and Campbell: 1991: 20).

Ian Turner wrote of this era that, during the Nineteenth and in the first part of the Twentieth Centuries, the Australian colonies were successful in getting rid of the convicts, not only by discovering great deposits of gold, but also by establishing a standard of living for working people which was believed to be without precedence. Turner wrote that they worked on turning the Colonies into a Commonwealth, experiencing what some named a 'baptism of fire'. They were generating extremely powerful organisations of working **men** (without including women) and the first Labor Governments in the world. This proved that working **men** – or **men** who until recently had been working **men** – could govern (Turner 1968: viii). In this passage Turner has not given any recognition of women being members of the first

Labour Movement, nor in any situation in which they might govern, but he does mention their subservience:

The situation of nineteenth-century women was one of subservience. They were tied to husband and home by children and economic necessity; society offered them little alternative employment and few outside interests; in their sexual relations they were prisoners of a Christian tradition which found something reprehensible in physical pleasure, especially the women's, and of the double standard. It should not be thought that this was a one-sided affair. While it is true that the morality was male-oriented and male-imposed, so long as they had to accept it, women rationalized their acceptance both by carrying the banners of moralism and by professing disgust with the insistent physical demands of men (Turner 1968: 17).

There are notions of women's subservience stressed in the quote from Turner's which present a vivid picture of the patriarchal ideology forming in the Australian society which led to reasons why the Labour Movement as it developed in the Nineteenth Century behaved as it did. It bypassed women as from its formation it represented men.

Russel Ward wrote of the concept of mateship in *The Australian Legend*. He depicts Australia as a country of carefree and equal males. Encel and Campbell claim the result has been expressed symbolically in the concept of 'mateship', which gained popularity in the media and in literature in the 1880s and 1890s (Encel and Campbell 1991: 23) and continues to this date. Ward agrees that the unmitigated shortage of women encouraged mateship. It arose originally from the transportation period, but it was worse in the Outback where the populace was predominantly masculine in structure and prospective. The squatters were seen to advertise for men and men with 'no encumbrances' (Ward 1965: 88). Yet, as Lawson's and Baynton's work demonstrates, the price of mateship is frequently the suffering of women.

Clark points out the great disproportion of males to females in the early days of the continent. He traced to the convict period the introduction of a male-dominated society in Australia from which social habits of men and women developed. He said men and women gathered in different groups on social occasions, and decided this showed the humiliations, both great and small, to which men subject women in Australian society (Clark 1969: 124). Clark, in *A Short History of Australia*, makes no mention of the involvement of women in Australia's history in a true sense. Indeed, his history makes only two references to women in the index of his famous work. Likewise, when Fitzpatrick writes on the successes of Macarthur (Fitzpatrick 1965: x) he does not mention that his wife Elizabeth ran their property on his many visits to England and during his enforced exile period.

During the first years of settlement in Australia, few women's names became well known, but Encel and Campbell remind us that Mary Reiby, a convict, opened a successful business in the form of a shop at Circular Quay in Sydney. Mrs Philip King (wife of the Lieutenant Governor) and Mrs William Paterson (wife of the Commanding Officer of the New South Wales Corps) founded the first orphanage in Australia (Encel and Campbell 1991: 21). Indeed, this was both a charitable function and valuable precedent for children's well being. Encel and Campbell note that charitable work and caring for the welfare of children became the main priority of upper-class women for the following one hundred years (Encel and Campbell 1991: 21).

Activists such as Caroline Chisholm set a pattern for those women who pursued public life in Australia. Encel and Campbell suggest it unlocked a new area that Governments had overlooked and caused changes to be made in 'legislation and administrative policy' (Encel and

Campbell 1991: 23). Furthermore, it was guided towards establishing public and private principled behaviour and more stability for family security. But, most importantly, it led to efforts to dampen the tough unpleasant, inappropriate, masculine characteristics of colonial males. These women were, until recently, deemed insignificant in Australian history, although their contribution was actually considerable, as feminist historiography has forcefully revealed. Encel and Campbell write that it showed in the areas of politics, economics and culture (Encel and Campbell 1991: 21). Yet it is only in the last thirty years that women have received recognition in any scholarly way. But, there are other explanations for women's misrecognition in ALP history.

John McLaren, suggests that there is one school of feminist thought in America who would say: 'There is no reason to change, women are no different from men'. Another school would say: 'No, women are different from men; it's not just the numbers that have been excluded, it is the whole qualities of feminist culture that has been excluded by excluding women. (Interview McLaren 2004; French 1997: 500-518; Conway 2001: 46-58). So, if you bring women 'in' things will change; they believe that if women ran the world there would be no wars. So the issue I wish to pursue is: ***Is it the right women we are getting into the ALP and the Victorian Branch?*** The alternative way of putting it would be. ***Is it the right Parliament for getting there?***

Corrigan and Sayer have written of nationalism, democracy and State formation which is really a discussion of the revolution of England - more history than political science. But the common thesis is that England had a revolution in 1640, it was destroyed by the Restoration but, by 1688, they had a more democratic State. Their argument is that it was not a true

democracy, because at no time did it represent a majority – that is fifty per cent of the people. It was the institutions themselves so dominated, first, by land interests chronologically and, then, by men (Corrigan and Sayer 1985: 4). Women in the Middle Ages played a major role in managing the land. They had to because the men were all fighting crusades while the women stayed at home and tended to the economy. This is a reflection of the major role women in the Middle Ages were playing in management. The best women were equally enrolled in production as the best men. But when you had the formed nation you got total domination by men and women's rights were actually legislated away. At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the State started to regulate much more closely, families, States governing marriage, divorce and church and State records kept. But then it regulated away such rights as women had, for example, property. Corrigan and Sayer write that this is 'politics and culture work within capitalism'; capitalism they make clear 'has always been integrally patriarchal' (Corrigan and Sayer 1985: 4). So, what Corrigan and Sayer are arguing is that what you get is an undemocratic and a patriarchal State. The institutions of this State were transported to the new colonies of Australia, and the ALP at its formulation inherited this culture.

Corrigan and Sayer point out that their essay deals with State formation in England; not Wales, Scotland, Great Britain, India North and Central America Africa or Australasia. However, English State forms were extended into Australia and enforced on the people, therefore, the 'imperial' characteristic of 'English State formation was a fundamental aspect of both its materiality and its imagery' (Corrigan and Sayer 1985: 11). In addition, there is one certain 'differentiated and differentiating' aspect of 'English State formation' that

requires general emphasis. This particular notion of the proper public realm organises other 'spheres' – notably those contrasting realms of 'the private':

Familial, dependent and domestic for most women and children; 'independent' and workplace or task related for most men. Of course across both lie further defining divisions – the kind of family form (and domestic duties) for aristocratic and later for high bourgeois 'ladies' is to be as clearly distinguished as the workplace 'occupations' of landed aristocracy, gentry and later, capitalist entrepreneurs...Across the period, the centrepiece of the social fabric was the family, its patriarchal order and society reflecting that of society as a whole; it has been (as it continues to be) a major organizing metaphor of the art of the State (Corrigan and Sayer 1985: 12).

As a result, the Australian parliamentary institutions have developed from 'persisting lineages, routine practices and normalised institutions which were exclusively (in all senses of the word) male for eight or nine hundred years' (Corrigan and Sayer 1985: 12). The patriarchy experienced by women MPs in the ALP and the Victorian Branch has been in the Party since its development and remains until the present time. The greater number of women in the Party, since the 1980s, is reflecting changes, but not positions of leadership for women in the Party. Indeed, Corrigan and Sayer have shown how much more extensive research into the past is involved in the experiences through this misrecognition (hence silencing) of the ALP female politicians with few exceptions.

Australia might be seen as having been established in the era of the Enlightenment sired, one might say, by men, not women, of the Enlightenment. But, it was not until the 1970s that Australian women resisted the discourses of exclusion that had arisen in the foundation of the ALP in earlier history where mateship resounded. This chapter presents a picture of the Australian customs that kept women out of the procedures used in the development of the Labour Movement.

How then can women turn around the exclusion and obscurities of their past in Australia? The thesis will analyse why the ALP is a masculine organisation that excludes women from leading decision-making positions.

PART 2: The Feminist response

As Part One above showed, patriarchy has produced misrecognition and that misrecognition acts on more than one axis. Women have been excluded from their rightful place in traditional history. There is limited mention of women in earlier Australian histories, and many Australians are unaware that women's inclusion in the making of the Australian Constitution was restricted in extremely limiting, narrowing ways. Kirsten Lees writes that women in Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria were unable to vote at the referendum held in 1900 on the proposed Constitution; only women in South Australia and Western Australia, where they had won the vote by the time of the referendum, could vote (Lees 1995: 45). In fact, it is only thirty-five years since feminist historians ventured their interpretations of Australia's colonisation enabling a new historical understanding of mainstream political citizenship and its effects.

The turning point in Australian historiography came in 1975-76 with the arrival of four books. Ann Curthoys writes that *The Real Matilda* by Miriam Dixson and *Damned Whores and God's Police* by Anne Summers, led the written work (Curthoys cited in Cook, *The Age*, 21 July 1995). To a lesser degree, *My Wife, My Daughter and Poor Mary-Anne* by Beverley Kingston and *Gentle Invaders* by Ann Conlon and Edna Ryan add to the Dixson and

Summers thesis. It had previously been argued that the sources were unavailable and therefore the work could not be done, there was no women's history simply because there were no records. Cook shows that there were numerous sources and they were eagerly accepted. *My Wife, My Daughter and Poor Mary-Anne* looked at women as workers in domestic situations incorporating women in authority over others, domestic maids and ordinary housewives. *Gentle Invaders* sought to depict women in paid work (Curthoys cited in Cook, *The Age*, 21 July 1995). The controversy evolved into speculation as to how this kind of history should be recorded. Moreover, new women's histories proved that women had been active in many spheres – including the cultural, the social, the political and the economic since settlement. Cook writes that Curthoys claims the lives of married women could now be contrasted with the lives of unmarried women. Furthermore, *Damned Whores and God's Police* and *The Real Matilda* were 'general characterisations of Australian history from a woman's version' (Curthoys cited in Cook, *The Age*, 21 July 1995). Australian history was now possible from a woman's point of view with extensive character studies of women. Curthoys claims the books caused much discussion in the teaching areas and in academic circles – with *Damned Whores and God's Police* creating a great degree of debate. Curthoys also states that the books' influence increased during the next twenty years and that their publication encouraged more research in women's history. It also encouraged schoolteachers, especially women, to teach 'a different kind of history (Curthoys cited in Cook, *The Age*, 1995).

Anne Summers and Miriam Dixson argue that men's history was biased and that their histories are an attempt to write a new Australian history while condemning the men's history. Anne Summers writes that women were transported from England with the First Fleet under

conditions that fostered whores. The 1,480 people in the First Fleet included officials, seamen, marines, servants, very few wives, a small number of children, 586 male and 192 female convicts (Summers 1993: 313). Portia Robinson wrote that many of the women who had been convicted for major crimes became more infamous than their male contemporaries in New South Wales (Robinson 1993: 5). Summers claims that gradually 'the family' developed its own 'imperatives and rationales that encouraged people to view it as a [natural] institution' (Summers 1994: 217). Still the family evolved and functioned as a socially significant institution – since the white settlement of the colonies. It also became an autocratic group: a structure of common, socially correct rights and responsibilities developed but these were 'determined by a sexual division of labour'. Children and wives 'were dependent on the husband's economic support and this enabled him to exert greater authority over them...' (Summers 1994: 217). This was indicated most manifestly in the Harvester Case judgement awarded by Justice Higgins in the Commonwealth Industrial and Arbitration Court in 1907. In a decision, which became a landmark in Australian labour history, Higgins attempted to create a precedent and allow a reasonable wage for workers to meet the needs of his family. He believed that seven shillings a day should cover the basic needs of an employee for rent, fuel and food for his wife and three children and himself. And so women's ability to earn a reasonable wage, judged by criteria of equity and independent needs, was delivered a serious blow, which would affect their destiny for many years. In addition, the demarcation of men's and women's labour was formally institutionalised. Ideologically, patriarchal traditional values had won through (Grimshaw, Lake, McGrath and Quartly 1994: 200-1). By being restricted to the private sphere women become unaccustomed with the outer circle society and were forced to interpret it through the eyes of their husband and father.' This qualified him to exercise further control over the family and hence the wife and children became isolated socially (Summers 1994: 217). Summers claims that women's subordination was a result of their being

rejected as paid employees, participants in the education system and without payment for their domestic chores; husbands regarded women as possessions and expected sexual comforts in return for their economic maintenance.

God's Police

In a critique of *Damned Whores and God's Police*, Maya Tucker writes that Summers saw the family as a strategy developed by men to give women the illusion of happiness but, in fact, they were compelled to remain colonised (Tucker 1977: 313). In fact she says men ruined women's culture and practised rape (both inside and outside marriage) as the most important instrument in maintaining women's subjection (Tucker 1977: 313). The patriarchal attitude raised women's status inside the circle of the family (hence the creation of the 'God's police' impression) to hand her a position of worth, although the chores she did within the family did not warrant her a place of value.

However, Dixson agrees with Summers that the early work tended to be about men commemorating themselves while affirming current identity. Dixson writes that they failed to see they denied the same acknowledgement to women, as did the written word and media. As a result women figured as insignificant people in this democracy (Dixson 1994: 12). To Summers, women were utilised for advantage in the old society; they were equally exposed to manipulation in the colonising period. According to Summers, therefore, the subordination of women commenced at the time of colonisation or earlier: convict women were totally condemned. Thus some female convicts who had completed their sentences had little or no chance of escaping subjection. Dixson, on the other hand, writes more on the low status of women and their lack of self-esteem rather than on their subjection. In fact, she

believes women inherited characteristics that show in women today, and hence they are victims of the convict period.² One should therefore go on to consider the related views in an effort to determine why women are not in positions of leadership in the ALP and the Victorian Branch today.

The thesis of women's privation

The overall picture created by Dixon shows that citizenship, as it has been itself conceived and understood, continues to create gendered exclusions. Dixon argues that Australian women have never outgrown the aftermaths of the oppression that the former attitudes instilled in them. Australian women remain heavily, almost unconsciously, disadvantaged by this dominant experience of disorientation. Moreover, she claims, women in Australia's developing years, in all States, were extensively viewed with contempt, and frequently treated oppressively (Dixon 1984: 12). Dixon's main thesis tends to illustrate the circumstances of women's early culture as oppressive and demeaning. She accentuates the environment of the colonisation of Australia as regulating and determining the lowly standing of women in the country. Thus, she relates women's experience as being the opposite of men's: the male involvement in colonial development was nationalistic; it fostered mateship; it encouraged male ownership of land and the involvement of men in radical politics. On the other hand, women endured privation, segregation, subjection and exclusion. So, we are seeing Dixon's interpretation of the absence of women in Australia's popular mythology; we are also noting that women were absent from the development of the public domain when the Labour Movement was developing.

² Dixon has modified that view in a recent work.

The question arises whether the new comprehensive picture of Australian women improves their standing. Not according to Dixson, who claims the women in Australia are held in low esteem as in most Western industrial society democracies. She claims Australian women have non-Western characteristics possibly due to the high proportion of Irish in Australia's history (Dixson 1984: 21). Different readers will have different ideas about the Irish, including myself, who would argue against Dixson's criticisms of the Irish. One must say that the Irish in Australia cannot be reduced to a single group; therefore a single ideology is impractical.

Throughout Australian history and leading to the development of the ALP, I have cited the powerful, persistent discourse that consistently shows women and femininity as requiring protection while not governing, and men as masculine, protective and born to rule. There is more emphasis on power and much less on the utterance of motherhood and women's family roles. Not only was the Labor Party founded by men with the exclusion of women, but also on patriarchal ideology. In other words, women had not done anything of sufficient interest to warrant inclusion. But women are now seen as agents of change and not mere victims of men.

PART 3: Later feminism

The Summers and Dixson historiography was recognised as works that challenged masculine historiography. Pat Grimshaw criticises their work as being trapped in an ideological dichotomy of masculine and feminine.

Grimshaw states that women were now 'substantially described for the first time in academia, yet within a very particular vision of Australia's colonial past' (Grimshaw 1986: 84). Yet Summers and Dixson had not broken away from certain elements within the high level of culture within which they worked and lived. They reasserted again the formidable nature of early settlement in New South Wales and the convict experience of Australian history. In fact, some of the colonies had no convicts, and others had few. Grimshaw states that they disregarded the importance of the gold-rush period when large numbers of immigrants who had nothing to do with convictism arrived in the colonies (Grimshaw 1986: 183-184).

Grimshaw, as well as arguing that Dixson and Summers over-emphasised the actual extent of convictism in the colonies, further criticises their understanding of the role convict women played within their families. Grimshaw suggests that Dixson and Summers, like Ward, over-emphasised the effect of ideology in forming the actions of settlers; they failed to express a defined study of the conditions 'of women's actual material lives, particularly within the family' (Grimshaw 1986: 184).

They shared a determination to write history from an indigenous viewpoint, assuming that in order to discover a distinctive Australian past, it was necessary to emphasize differences, rather than similarities, with British and Western trends (Grimshaw 1986: 184).

Furthermore, Grimshaw argues that:

Above all, Dixson and Summers accepted the picture of the overwhelmingly masculine nature of colonial society, and portrayed women as victims of it. There was little sense that women, too, might construct their own history, even if within structures not of their own choosing (Grimshaw 1986: 184).

Grimshaw tells us that, since 1975, feminist history has expanded its original thinking from presenting women as ‘victims in history’ (Grimshaw 1986: 184). This perspective of the victim perpetuated men as the main players in women’s history. More recent feminists have attempted to re-evaluate the basic themes of early history so women may be seen as diligent and central participants in the history of Australia.

Private to public spheres

Women’s history reflects the intricate association of private and public spheres and relationships that change regularly due to the influence of cultural and fiscal changes. Grimshaw claims that, as well as women historians treating the ‘personal, the private and mundane’, women historians are also analysing the degree to which broader social and political forces have:

Set boundaries to the private experience, and, conversely, how the public behaviour of women and men is rooted in cultural notions of gender that were learned in and were sustained by the private sphere. By demonstrating in the process how women’s history is relational, and can only be understood in a broader context, so too is it demonstrating that men’s history must similarly be viewed within the context of ideas of gender (Grimshaw 1986: 184).

Women not victims of male oppression?

What Grimshaw is saying is that in order to understand the participation of women in Australia’s early history, one should ignore the image of women as ‘victims of male oppression’, regardless of the strength of patriarchal influence in the home and society that ‘colonists transplanted from their countries of origin’ (Grimshaw 1986: 184). For this reason, when assessing the process of women’s history, it should be considered in a wider context as belonging to or characterised by relation with men’s history. Thus, we understand that both men’s and women’s histories have to be seen as heavily gendered.

Historical development

Others have argued that Australia's settlers were from the lower classes of the British Isles, from London's poorer inhabitants and, as Dixson frequently notes, from Ireland. Grimshaw claims that the men among these groups were said to be infamous for discreditable treatment of their spouses. Hence Australian women inherited, consciously or unconsciously, deeply held feelings of subordination (Grimshaw 1979: 413). Grimshaw notes that certain experiences absorbed by young human minds while 'strangely pervasive' were conveyed from one 'generation to the next by psychological processes often beyond the conscious control of the individual' (Grimshaw 1979: 413). Grimshaw states that this notion is in part an impression of the ideas promoted by Louis Hartz. He talks of the 'fragments' of the main part of Europe cast away 'in the course of the revolution, which brought the West into the modern world,' (Hartz 1964: 3). Grimshaw comments:

The idea is in essence an application of the theory advanced by Louis Hartz in *The Founding of New Societies* to account for the differences in development of various colonies, although in the Hartz work the emphasis is rather on the political character of the colonial [fragments]. Whatever the merits of the Hartz thesis applied to colonies founded principally after the modern revolution in means of communication and transportation, its application in this instance presupposes an adherence to psychological theories which posit human beings as trapped inevitably in the modes of relationship their parents have represented to them (Grimshaw 1979: 414).

Interestingly, Patricia Grimshaw in assessing the progress of women's history writing since the earlier settlement period relates that these writers' attitudes were harmed by their willingness to accept the (male) 'radical nationalist interpretation of colonial history which they had merely turned upside down'. She points out that they followed writers such as Russell Ward and stressed the power of principles, but 'omitted to present a close investigation of the circumstances of women's actual material lives' (Grimshaw 1986: 183-184). Furthermore, they were determined to 'write history from an indigenous viewpoint,

assuming that, in order to discover a distinctive Australian past, it was necessary to emphasise differences, rather than similarities, with British and Western trends' (Grimshaw 1986: 183-184). Alternatively, Grimshaw writes that exaggerating the pioneering past magnifies the individuality of the 'Australian experience'. This magnification misrepresents the actual efforts of women by regarding them as sufferers instead of energetic participants in Australia's history. Grimshaw indicates that 'Women's history focuses on the complex relationship of private to public spheres, changing constantly under the impact of economic and cultural change' (Grimshaw 1986: 183-184). Grimshaw's study resurrects pioneering women from the invisibility of the male settled and unsettled country written by Hancock, Ward and others. (I am not accounting for what happens: here I am attempting to summarise what happened in an effort to distinguish the reasons why women were excluded when the Labour Movement emerged). However, Grimshaw agrees that men wrote on particular topics: the take-over of the land; production and distribution; a political system for the colonies; or possibly a better version of British life. Indeed, the similarity of these initial history writers, with their account of Australia's past, consolidated a basis for establishing a source of 'Australian national identity' along an avenue that quite definitely excluded the involvement of women. According to Grimshaw women simply posed a problem; they were too few in number. They then clearly became 'historically irrelevant except for the population statistics' (Grimshaw 1986: 183).

By contrast, John Hirst, a Melbourne historian, claims that women controlled the family accounts and the children (Hirst 1995: 35). He also writes that Australian marriages were companionable and not patriarchal: '...the man earned the income and the woman was in charge, and both took decisions which affected the family as a whole' (Hirst 1995: 35). Hirst

is disagreeing with Dixson, Grimshaw is saying something different while not totally disagreeing with Hirst. Hirst is offering a view that we can see in Hal Porter's, *The Watcher on the Cast Iron Balcony*, in which everyone knew his or her position in the family. Porter wrote of a period in which adults were in one group and children in another, where rights for both operated separately. Porter explains that each group knew its own duties, constraints and liberties. He writes '...my parents are generous with their natural love, and exact no more from me than the barest minimum of sensible behaviour in gratitude' (Porter 1993: 13). He portrayed his family home and family by adding that:

The contents and their stylized arrangements are equally an aspect of the Australian lower middle-class of the Great War years and my mother, an indictment of suburban vulgarity and my mother, an indictment, too, of my father, marking him down as an indubitable Australian, one of a nation of men willing to live in a feminised house. My mother says, as Australian women say to this day, my dinner service, my doormats, my umbrella-stand, my pickle-fork (Porter 1993: 13).

Nevertheless, these references to motherly supremacy and the compliance of the father in the home can be taken as quite common but not without conflict and violence. Neither did these habits allow women to step outside the private spheres. So we are seeing Dixson's discussion of an Irish society within Australia where a woman's place was subordinate. She does not show awareness of the power within the family that women held, neither is she conscious of the way women exerted that power within the patriarchal family framework. To older Australians, Porter's account of the companionable marriage is highly accurate, but the old framework of Australian culture in which women were systematically forced to concentrate on the home and family to the exclusion of public activities, might be seen as forced segregation. They were disadvantaged by the patriarchal notion that they needed a home and family rather than leadership positions or full political citizenship. In other words, it is possible that women's subjection in this country may have been intensified by their inability to participate in public affairs due to the sexual division of labour.

Education for women

John Hirst points out that the first-wave of feminism, in the Nineteenth Century, was responsible for the opening of education to all levels of women. As a result, a few became academics. The next wave of feminists, he claims, ‘...want to identify knowledge according to gender’ (Hirst 1995: 35). He admits that women have been excluded or ignored in the past. However, Hirst claims it is not possible for women to find an equal place for women in history and an equal recording of it. He argues that history tells of changes to urbanisation, capitalisation and industrialisation. He says the main participants in this expansion programme were men of power. Therefore, women could not expect equal recognition. He states that such change requires ‘entrepreneurs, politicians, engineers, bankers, inventors, landlords and citizens of expertise and authority’ (Hirst 1995: 36). Hirst rejects women’s roles in producing public power even if they themselves are excluded. Therefore, he is saying: while women were institutionally involved through the activities we have already noted, they were helping to produce the ideology which gave men that elevated position, and not only the position itself but suggested how they should use their power. As for women of the upper classes – despite their welfare work – their husbands were expected to use their power to enhance their status and position and that of their children, mainly in private education. Upper class women produce the ideology that excludes them from power, and perpetuates its existence.

Hirst’s argument is central to this whole discussion. Why did Australian women not participate in the public sphere of Australian society from which the Labour Movement came about and which has, without doubt, led to their exclusion from leadership positions of power in the ALP in 2005? His argument means patriarchy has been prevalent throughout

Australia's history to the point where it is not recognised by men themselves, but merely taken for granted as their right.

Man's own country

Grimshaw claims the real world of the settler valorised in frontier songs depicted a wife as subordinate and not part of the real world. The Australasian colonies were frequently referred to as 'God's own country', but 'man's own country' might be considered more apt due to the lack of pleasure and responsibility men showed in the relaxed pleasures of family life. On the other hand, there was little room for the gentler sex in the masculine environment.

Grimshaw believes that the argument of *The Real Matilda* is based on the belief that 'Australian women, women in the land of mateship, [the Ocker], keg-culture, come pretty close to top rating as the Doormats of the Western World' (Grimshaw 1979: 11). She is saying Dixon's judgement is that the cultural position of Australian women is considerably diminished when compared with corresponding Western societies. In accounting for that phenomenon, Dixon omits two significant factors, 'the character of early immigration into Australia and secondly, the particular nature of the colonial pioneering experience' (Grimshaw 1979: 413). It is interesting to note that Dixon, in 1999, concedes that it is unlikely that Australian women could still be portrayed as 'Doormats of the Western World' (Grimshaw 1979: 413) (see Dixon 1999: Chapter 5 below).

Grimshaw and Willett argue that to study the ideologies of family structure is a wise move when seeking an answer to the otherwise neglected enigma of women's familial authority (Grimshaw and Willett 1981: 135). If one notes that married women's engagement in the paid workforce has been low and marriage figures have been generally high, we see a colonial society in which women's energies have been restricted to the role of the family (Grimshaw and Willett 1981: 135). Despite that, the familial roles of Australian women have had minimal recognition in history. They write that, whereas family models in the Twentieth Century have received some attention by social scientists, the role of the colonial family has received little attention (Grimshaw and Willett 1981: 135).

Grimshaw argues that explanations for women's subordination in the public sphere can be found in strongly instilled contemporary themes of 'modern ideologies of family life' (Grimshaw 1979: 414). She relates:

Such family patterns, and such ideologies, while initially implying an enhanced status for the wife and mother within the family, and offering an often comfortable and personally satisfying life style for many, nevertheless set sharp limits to women's participation in the public sphere, and hence to the full realisation of women's human potential. In the Australian context, the limiting parameters were especially powerful (Grimshaw 1979: 414).

Consequently, the bonds of the private sphere were strengthened, not necessarily for the reasons Dixson raises, but more from women's inability to break the barriers between the public and private spheres that have become even more acute (Grimshaw 1979: 414).

Grimshaw and Willett also note that for a time colonial conditions weakened patriarchal power, as the basis of strong patriarchal control over the young, symbolised by parental control of marriage, was also absent in the colonial family'. Such control was regarded as

substantial where children depended on parents and the family to make provision for their futures (Grimshaw and Willett 1981: 153). Here an important point arises. Colonial children expected to move towards making their own lives; not waiting to inherit the family farm, but seeking to purchase new land and to accomplish new ventures. Grimshaw states that marriage for girls was favourable and suitors sought lasses as young as fifteen years of age. Indeed, the lack of firm patriarchal influence was, without doubt, assisted by the extended and intimate cooperation between child and mother and relief from the restrictions of severe poverty (Grimshaw and Willett 1981: 153).

By the end of the Nineteenth Century, we see evidence of a type of life that is relative to and supporting happy life-styles. Ideologies that stress the rewards of the colonial family home and domesticity, of 'companionate marriage based on partnership and mutual love, of the importance of the child as a focal point of family life' (Grimshaw and Willett 1981: 153). Evidence shows that a rough and maybe a lonely type of life existed in the colonies. Yet, it gave family units an interdependence that was secure, relatively happy, mentally beneficial and peacefully democratic. In fact, it formed the basis for a solid and inclusive type of family unit. Indeed, wives were seen as economic assets and hard work reflected their worth rather than their shame. Nevertheless, the chances education allows eluded both females and males.

However, it is seen that as women in colonial Australia created a domestic sphere, the home, they failed to realise that it would ultimately deprive them of equal participation in major areas of public life. Therefore, we might see equality as a sound but restrictive goal. As Marilyn Lake points out: 'The problem with the pursuit of equality is that, while admitting

women to the world of men, it reinforces the idea that men's way of organising the world is natural' (Lake 1999: 4). Lake believes male writers have lacked the power to see the questionable nature of the sex of their subject due to their own sex-consciousness (Lake 1986: 116). In other words, men became all encompassing: 'Man, White Man, Working Man, Nineteenth-Century Man, the Coming Man'. Lake blames the restricted account of political history, the way of defining class analysis and the national tradition as sex-blind when analysing the binary classification of 'respectability' and 'unrespectability'. Lake suggests that the use of these 'conceptual frameworks' has helped to hide one of the most outstanding aspects in Australian history: the struggle at the end of the Nineteenth Century between women and men for the command of the 'national culture' (Lake 1986: 116).

Radical feminists such as Lake recognised other causes of subjection. Why were men ruling women politically? They asked: if women won full citizenship rights at the beginning of the century and the right to independent income why do they remain unpaid for the most part as housewives? Similarly, why do they accept work that is paid least in conditions that are undesirable (Lake 1986: 116)? Furthermore, men and women are not consistently placed within the labour force. Thus, there is a dual labour market where many jobs within many industries are virtually female or chiefly male. Ann Curthoys points out that the segmentation theorists explain labour market segmentation by employers as the need for low 'labour turnover and high job commitment for certain types of jobs, and for low wages and high turnover for other kinds' (Curthoys 1986: 319).

Similarly, within the home, the division of labour between those who have initiated and cared for their young and those who have ruled society and influenced its meaning has

markedly affected political theory Okin 1992: 313). Grimshaw suggests: 'The gender division of labour sustained the dominance of men in public life, as in private, for decades to come'. She claims women had, nevertheless, constructed a challenge to the mateship theory of men by incorporating the practice of partnerships to advocate the 'heterosexual relationship' (Grimshaw 1986: 208). Thus, a public women's rebellion was required to bring about a just society. Grimshaw maintains that feminists secured legal reform and political changes. However, their attempts for marked improvements in the 'balance of power between the sexes eluded them' (Grimshaw 1986: 208).

Overall, the histories of modern feminists reveal that the very foundations of the Australian colonies have been patriarchal from the beginning; that the subordination of women was obviously apparent, but considered 'natural' and hence it became invisible. It was from this society that the ALP emerged, creating a formal misrecognition of women that has restricted their accessibility to official positions in the ALP, which in turn, limits their influence and access leadership roles.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN IN AUSTRALIAN POLITICS: Why have women been discriminated against/marginalised?

PART 1

Section A: AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL RIGHTS

Early Colonial Women

Early in the last century, Australian women 'enjoyed an international reputation as pioneer(s) of women's rights...Much of Australia's pioneering social legislation was attributed to the effects of women's suffrage' yet, it was 41 years before women were actually elected to the national Parliament (Sawer and Simms 1993: 1). Kirsten Lees observes that few people know much about the 'votes for women story in Australia'. Women did not always reap the benefits of their great achievements and over time the records disappeared. Or was it because, at that period in history, men were in the position to shape the historical records and the struggle for women's rights did not have significance in Australia? (Lees 1995: xii). Indeed, Clarke and White agree and state that little was known about the political interests of colonial women, although it was understood that their interests revolved around their family, friends, charity work and the church (Clarke and White 1983: 16). By contrast, it is now argued that differing accounts have been surfacing in recent years, enabling researchers and historians to analyse how Australian women have fought to overcome subordination and are still fighting to gain leadership roles in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

A number of historians, including Patricia Grimshaw, Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath and Marian Quartly in *Creating a Nation*, have challenged earlier histories of Australia from a

feminist perspective. Patricia Grimshaw writes that in Australia in the Nineteenth Century it was considered inappropriate for women to fight for their rights. Their place had been firmly established because they were expected to perform duties for their men, preferably in the home (Grimshaw 1994: 107). In addition, Marilyn Lake shows that women were expected to devote their lives to the breeding of a supposedly stronger and healthier race. She says that women worked for an improved status within the home and also with difficulty against that which men expected them to be – that is the potential, propagating figure of mother (Lake 1994: 208).

Most men, Marian Quartly points out, were adamant that males were so different from women that they assumed any arguments about the rights of men did not apply to women. She says men could earn their residency status simply by developing their economic status. Women were apparently different and unable to do this. Quartly mentions a meeting in 1853 at which tradesmen and businessmen met in a Mechanics Institute in Perth and discussed for three nights ‘whether women do or would possess the same amount of intellect as men if they had the same advantage’. They decided that they did not and would not (Grimshaw, Lake, McGrath and Quartly 1994: 102):

The debaters believed that women’s lack of intelligence justified men’s rule over women in public and in private: [women are incapable of equaling the man and taking the rules of Government into their own hands, and of ruling over the men domestically or otherwise] (Grimshaw et al.1994: 102).

Consequently, if women were not seen as being capable of matching men in political knowledge, then it must be concluded that politics is basically masculine and one requires a male form to engage in political affairs. Thus democracy must be based on a bodily requisite rather than on intellectual and vocational capacities.

However, we do know that, in the last decade of the Nineteenth Century and the first of the Twentieth, some middle class colonial women emerged to take part in women's semi-political or political groups (Grimshaw et al.1994: 102). (Details of women's non-party activism will appear below.)

Period of Optimism

In the late 1800s in the colonies, a generally optimistic view was felt about the advancement of political achievements for women. In fact, Henry Champion claimed that: 'No one can doubt that the postponement of the time when women will wield great political power over all Australasia is only a matter of months' (Champion, *Cosmos* 1895). Louisa Lawson later wrote in her feminist-republican journal, *Dawn*, 'we have statesmen vieing [sic] with each other in their efforts to place women on terms of political equality with themselves'. By comparison with 'their sisters at the beginning of this century', present day women had won considerable gains. Indeed, she continued, they were destined to contribute a role of importance in 'the great and prosperous nation' (Lawson, *Dawn*, 1900).

Champion and Dawson were overly optimistic. The basic fact is that their assumptions were true to a point given that some women were highly active in temperance and social and political reform. Australian women in the first half of the 1900s did gain political voice; they did raise these issues in order to justify their arguments for women's suffrage. However, this does not mean that their aims were achieved. It simply means that they were heard. In the Twentieth-First Century, there is evidence that women, having gained Affirmative Action are now gaining entry to the ALP and the Victorian Branch in greater numbers. But the question is, are they being heard?

Suffrage

Women's first 'sustained' participation in Australian politics dates from the suffrage campaigns in the colonies from the late 1880s. South Australia was the first to grant female suffrage in 1894 and Victoria was the last in 1908. Yet, some historical accounts of the female suffrage 'campaigns' in Australia relate the 'ease' with which women gained suffrage 'compared with Britain and the United States' (Lees 1995: xiii). However, it is wise to remember that, contrary to such historical versions of the franchise, women's suffrage was sought vigorously. Pateman argues that resistance to political rights for women was 'much stronger, longer lived, and ran much deeper than resistance to manhood suffrage'. Interestingly, manhood suffrage was observed as a challenge to private property while 'universal suffrage' was recognised as a challenge to the 'sexual order itself' (Pateman 1980a: 567).

Clarke and White agree that recent research claims that women did 'organise extensively to campaign for women's suffrage and that they created a unique political force'. They say that this was a unique period and the only period when women 'united across class lines for any length of time' (Clarke and White 1983: 18). Indeed, working class, middle class and upper class women campaigned 'side by side' to lobby Governments to grant the vote to women. Clarke and White state that in the last decade of the Nineteenth Century and in the early Twentieth Century the 'success of the suffrage movement' was partly due to the lack of obvious party divisions in the colonies of Australia. All women had a common bond, indeed a common issue that was 'difficult to dissolve into a party issue' (Clarke and White 1983: 18). By contrast, in 2005, while there have been advances in women's participation in the

ALP and the Victorian Branch there are still barriers to women's representation and presentation particularly in leadership roles.

The 'gendered' nature of Australia's constitutional system

Australia would have advanced earlier had the title 'woman' been recognised in the Constitution-makers' draft for a federated Australia (Clarke and White 1983: 18). This raises the fundamental question as to whether the reasons for the forty-one year time-span between franchise and the actual representation of women in the Federal Parliament may have been due to political or constitutional issues. Considering this background, the following example of indirect discrimination shows cause for Australian women's continuing subordination.

Justice Elizabeth Evatt has remarked that had women been present at the Conventions preceding federation they would have objected to Section 125 of the Constitution. In their absence, the founding fathers placed the federal capital, Canberra, at least one hundred miles from Sydney in New South Wales. Evatt states that women would have perceived the unrealistic notion of leading a normal family life while participating when Parliament was in session (Evatt, *The Age*, 4 February 1994). In addition, one might assume that child rearing and domestic work is for women, not men. Helen Irving claims that, when Federation took place, the chances of a man offering to relocate his work to somewhere as remote as Canberra to accommodate his parliamentary wife was very remote indeed. She writes:

Justice Evatt's intriguing hypothesis makes essentially a modern point: that Australian politics is not yet designed to meet the needs and interests of women, and that our very constitutional detail presents problems for women's participation. This arose in part because women's political interests at the time of the Constitution's drafting were largely defined as lying outside the national sphere, identified as matters not essentially connected with Federation (Irving 1996: 107).

Others have argued that wherever Parliament House was placed it would have presented problems for women expecting to combine a career in politics and a home life. For instance, A Sydney single mother and Labor MP was unable to accept a cabinet role in Canberra when Labor was in power due to her son being settled in school in Sydney (Anonymous Interviewee: 11 September 2002). Indeed, women MPs from Tasmania are without a direct route while actively engaged in a Parliament so strangely situated that the air transport system has not fathomed a daily return flight to return them swiftly to their families. Such examples of discrimination against women, is the result of male decision-making in the last decade of the Nineteenth Century. As highlighted by Dr Evatt's interesting hypothesis, serious doubts are raised advocating that Australian politics is not commonly framed to suit the needs of women and that the lack of constitutional features contains difficulties for women's involvement. In this context, one might speculate that the affairs of the nation are public and male and therefore distinctly Federal. On the other hand, the interests of the women of Australia were, according to the founding fathers, to be the responsibility of the State.

The exclusion of women's political activities from history

Marilyn Lake notes that, until the 1970s, the recording of Australian history was 'marked' by the absence of women. She claims this was not an accident, neither was it an easily reversed oversight. Not until feminists started recording earlier history did Australian women activists reap the benefits of being political actors. Indeed, recordings of Australian politics were (and are) heedless of the years of 'political activity of women' (Lake 1999: 6). Likewise, women were active 'theorists and practitioners' of citizenship; they were outspoken 'advocates of proportional representation, a welfare State, Aboriginal citizenship,

the custody rights of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal mothers and the importance of international law' (Lake 1999: 6). This active participation of women was of no significance to the men who wrote and still document our political history. These women fought for sexual equality in the writing of history and continue to seek power within the public political sphere of history writing today.

The non-party ideal

Most writers agreed with the importance of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) during its development in Adelaide. Clarke and White point out that the WCTU argued for the justice of granting votes to women. They also stressed that women might, through judicious voting and active participation in politics, elevate the tone of public life (Clarke and White 1983: 18). It involved intense suffrage activity with its activities for temperance: 'Empty-headed men, vicious men, selfish and prejudiced men, above and beyond all others, the men interested in the liquor traffic, are in mortal fear of our possessing that sword, the ballot' (Scott 1967: 299-322).

It has been noted earlier that some historians suggest that there was merely mild confrontation leading to votes for women. Others claim that women were granted the vote as a result of manoeuvring by 'conservative' colonial Governments. This, they claimed, would lessen the 'effects' of 'extending the franchise to all males.' Furthermore, they argued 'Women would vote for conservatives and off-set the effects of the increased working-class vote...' (Scott 1967: 299-322). Others argue differently.

Although the political parties were now encouraging women to join their 'organisations', some Australian women preferred to stimulate the 'spirit' of the suffrage movements (Clarke and White 1983: 18). Clarke and White write that they chose to organise themselves into reform groups for women. They formed the Women's Service Guilds (WSG) in Western Australia, the Australian Federation of Women Voters (AFWV) and the United Association of Women. Edith Cowan and Bessie Rischbieth were members of the WSG, a non-party organisation (Clarke and White 1983: 19). It trained women in economic matters, social questions and political rights. Bessie Rischbieth was known for her distinguished career in worldwide feminist circles. Another member was Dr Roberta Jull who practised as the first woman physician (Clarke and White 1983: 19).

In 1914, the Feminist Club of New South Wales was founded to promote 'equality of status, opportunity and payment between men and women in all spheres.' In 1929, the United Associations of Women was formed from the Women's Service Club, the Women's League and the Women Voters' Association. Its forceful president was Jessie Street, a graduate of Sydney University and wife of a Supreme Court judge; feminism and social reform were part of its aims (Clarke and White 1983: 19). Other 'aims' promoted equality of status, 'liberties for men and women' improved legal status for mothers, 'equal pay for equal work', equal moralistic standards for men and women, 'support for selected women candidates for public office, and the promotion of children's welfare.' International peace was another of their aims (Clarke and White 1983: 19).

In 1943, Jessie Street was responsible for a new body in Australia, the Australian Women's Charter (AWC). The AWC worked for a wage for women in the home, rights and pay for

women and equal status. It also promoted health policies along with education and planning. Such non-party organisations gained popularity between the wars but ‘internal friction during and after the World War II eventually led to their fragmentation and decline’ (Clarke and White 1983: 19).

The focus of political writing has been unsatisfactory when examining the work done by women outside Parliament. However, there is a strong case for arguing that, instead of there being merely a narrative of men’s deeds in the public sphere, there should be a study of women seeking equality in the ALP and the whole society.

The emergence of Party Politics as the cause of dissension

There is evidence that, after suffrage, there were bitter arguments between women over points in question such as conflicting issues relating to party politics. Sawyer and Simms claim bitter struggles occurred over ‘[Labor, non-Labor, non-party or women’s party], class politics...’ Also relevant was the importance or reference to the problem of servants or the desire to integrate with the struggle of working-class women. In addition, sexual politics created dissent whether to support prostitution or control ‘sexual traffic’ (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 253).

The second-wave of feminism created quite a debate on prostitution. The Victorian ALP supported the legalisation of brothels; therefore, it might be suggested that the ALP and the Victorian Branch need women in leadership roles to voice their concerns when reforming legislation that concerns women in our society.

Historically, women have been rejected as active members of the public sphere, other than at a supporting level. In fact, the ‘good woman’ has been framed as the ‘embodiment of compliance and passivity’ (Thornton 1996: 10). Consequently, women as citizens have been required to play an invisible role; this is most obvious in Australian politics. However, Labor’s quota of women has increased markedly, but it still fails to give women equal representation overall in the party machine and parliamentary wing.

Women in Australian Parliaments: The pioneers

It was many years from enfranchisement before women turned a formal right into a reality: that is, the right to stand for Australian Parliaments into the right to actually sit. Their entry into the Australian system of an all-male culture was bound by conditions. For instance, Sawyer and Simms claim that the parliamentary institutions lacked a welcome for women by not providing toilets for women politicians or creches for their children (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 75). Before the beginning of World War II, only nine women had been successful in being elected to State Parliaments; Edith Cowan of Western Australia was the first. Two others had served short terms in the NSW Legislative Council. Of the nine women first elected, four were political daughters or widows; a phenomenon called the ‘male equivalence’ (Currell 1974: 164, 166; Valance 1979: 63) and indicates that the representation of women for political influence is justified due to their replacing husbands or fathers. (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 75-76). In other words, women seeking preselection were more favourably accepted when it meant taking the places of the recently deceased males.

The 'halo effect' was a significant factor in the election of the first two women to the House of Representatives in the 1940s; they did so as widows of political males (Sawer and Simms 1993: 75). Enid Lyons was the wife of the deceased Joe Lyons, United Australia Party (UAP) Prime Minister in the 1930s. She was the mother of twelve children and often regarded as the 'active force' behind the Prime Minister. She was, however, a caring conventional wife and mother but, when her husband died, the UAP encouraged her to stand for preselection for the seat where she lived (Clarke and White 1983: 25). She won the seat of Darwin in Tasmania in 1943 and became the first woman to sit in the House of Representatives (Clarke and White 1983: 25). However, she was not the only woman to sit in the new Parliament; Dorothy Tangney, a Labor representative from Western Australia, had been elected as the first woman senator; she joined Edith Cowan in Canberra. When Enid Lyons was appointed to the minor portfolio, Vice-President of the Executive Council in the Menzies Government, she became the first Australian woman Cabinet Member (Clarke and White 1983: 24). Dame Enid's election was generally welcomed by women who had worked for an increase in female representation in Parliament. However, by 1951, Dame Enid had retired from politics due to poor health. Clarke and White point out that her short time in politics seemed to strengthen traditional male opinions that politics was a man's game and too tough for women. Yet, her success at obtaining ministerial rank did not necessarily mean that more women won preselection for winnable seats enabling them to sit in State and Federal Parliaments. In other words, Dame Enid's 'political career had a dampening effect on women's political aspirations for a number of reasons' (Clarke and White 1983: 24).

Dame Enid was not the kind of woman the women's movement contemplated as their representative. According to Clarke and White, she did not represent the 'new breed' of woman whom it was hoped would change the nature of federal politics. She:

deferred to her husband and family; she believed that women were not yet ready to go into politics; and she showed little sympathy for notions popular among women's organisations, of equity in all spheres for men and women (Clarke and White 1983: 25).

One might compare her to Britain's former Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher who gave women little consideration in their aims for equality.

Enid Lyons' political career highlighted the problems associated with women in a public world. Clarke and White state that the only chance 'most women had of getting into politics was to ride on the coat tails of a husband's or a father's reputation' (Clarke and White 1983: 25). They add:

Several other women in State and Federal politics took the same route as Enid to Parliament in the first half of this century. Doris Blackburn succeeded her late husband, Maurice, as Labor member for the Victorian Federal seat of Bourke in 1946. She served one term. In Western Australia May Holman succeeded her father in the southern timber seat of Forrest, in 1925. May, the first woman Labor parliamentarian in Australia held the seat until 1939, when she was killed in a car accident (Clarke and White 1983: 27).

Federal politics was almost a lost cause for most females with political ambitions; for example, women members needed a spouse who could carry out home duties and manage their electorates in their absence. Just as male parliamentarians had been used to a woman who could perform those duties full-time. It was not an accepted practice, but one most feminist's claim needs further attention.

Section B: LITERATURE SURVEY ON THE POLITICAL ROLE OF WOMEN TODAY

Political Science is a social science subject that has reacted slowly to the contemporary feminist impact. Marian Simms writes that, within the discipline, almost all the study on women has been done in the United States of America. American women working in the field of politics agree that the discipline ‘ignored women until around 1973 or 1974’ (Simms 1992: 210). Indeed, it might be seen that there was minor public interest in, and almost no major information about, women candidates and their campaigns in the 1970s. In addition, Jane Jaquette wrote that politics was a type of discipline that by its nature discouraged women:

Political Science has traditionally viewed itself as a male field, and, with the possible exception of economics - it is the social science discipline, which has responded with least enthusiasm to the impact of the modern feminist movement (Jaquette 1974: 2).

One may well argue then that Political Science has been fashioned by a commanding order; that one cannot hope to change that order until you change the dominant factors. Moreover, when we observe the oppression of women in current politics there is a striking resemblance to Aristotelian or Rousseauian reasoning. Aristotle believed that real politics could and did exist in the Greek world alone. Amidst barbarians, ‘females and slaves stand on the same footing’, because ‘natural rulers do not exist among them, and the association they form consists of none but slaves male and female’ (Aristotle cited in Crawford and Maddern 2001: 19). Likewise, Rousseau was adamant that women should not enter in to authoritative debate; additionally, his values were in contrast to the qualities we now require for women to enter the ALP, i.e. equality and freedom (Rousseau 1993: 385, 399, 431, 531). Such is the Australian male’s political behavioural arrogance; it appears to justify their attitude to women, treating them as a class apart. Indeed, it now seems likely that second-wave feminism had limited effect on hardened, patriarchal, male politicians.

Sameness and Difference

Interestingly, with regards to overcoming 'sexual difference', the outstanding paradigm between women academics has been an assimilationist one (Sapiro 1983: 7). For instance, in her study, *The Political Integration of Women*, there is a worthy and an apposite view. Next, after 'integration' took place, issues that concerned women would disintegrate; she believed that women's integration in politics did not take place due to women being judged by dual guidelines, i.e., the standards of politics as well as the standards of femininity. She writes:

It is expected that the actions of women in politics are derived from their central private concerns of wifeness, motherhood and homemaking, although in the public world of politics these concerns are seen as peculiar and, to a large degree, inappropriate...Thus by dint of their marginality, women in politics have two choices. They may view themselves and act in the political world according to the prevailing standards of politics and be seen as unfeminine, or they view themselves and act in politics according to the standards of femininity and be seen at best as peculiarities (Sapiro 1983: 7).

This sameness but different attitude has not saved women from being second-class citizens within the Australian political system. By the concept of assimilation, one would assume that for a woman to become a good politician, indistinguishable from male politicians, she would have to become a political chameleon. In other words, she would have to give up her feminine identity, and accommodate the many differences between men and women until she absorbed and exhibited the dominant political figure. One might label the assimilation concept as unconditional surrender. Similarly, integration must be seen as a period in which a misapprehension would be the true state of affairs.

It might be recalled that the position of women as outsiders in the science of politics is not unusual. It may be likened to the vision of women as subordinated traditionally mentioned

by historians. (Marian Simms (1992: 213) suggests that it was from within existentialist philosophy that Simone de Beauvoir appropriated the notion of the 'Other' to describe the nature of women's oppression:

The enslavement of the female of the species and the limitations of her various powers are extremely important factors; the body of woman is one of the essential elements in her situation in the world. But that body is not enough to define her as woman; there is no true living reality except as manifested by the conscious individual through activities and in the bosom of a society (deBeauvoir 1974: 203).

Marian Simms claims that how women are termed 'Other' is a major conclusion of de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*.

She argued that the relations between the sexes would not necessarily be transformed, consequent upon any socialist revolution. 'Otherness', in other words, was constructed not simply through economics. Psychological, sociological and cultural factors were also crucial. One theory was not enough to explain it and one-dimensional solutions would not solve it (Simms 1992: 213).

Merle Thornton discussed a similar situation, using the voice of political theory:

The first resort of modern feminist theory was the extension of theoretical frameworks ready to hand, especially liberalism and Marxism...Neither framework has been able to accommodate women by simple extension...to common sense it is now evident that formal discriminations are inconsiderable relative to the remaining depth and pervasiveness of gender subordination...Like liberalism, Marxism has no convincing account of the persistence of the subordination of women into the period of advanced capitalism (Thornton 1984: 154, 156).

She also asked 'why don't women exercise their formal freedoms so as to become female social men'? (Thornton 1984: 154). Does this mean that women collude in their own exclusion? Maybe it means that sex equality is limited by sex difference and that full political citizenship and leadership roles for women in the ALP and Victorian Branch are special privileges. Therefore, gender is a social form that divides power; it is also a political system.

Patricia Grimshaw states that thousands of women students have graduated from Universities in the past Century, yet there are few who have made an impact on politics in Australia. It is the same with male graduates in total, though very few political science graduates move into politics (Grimshaw 1982: vii). Still, Australia's political history portrays an aggressive message of male power within the political system.

Conversely, too, there are aspects of former political dissension that have penetrated contemporary feminist political arguments. We are reminded by Simms that:

The present debate over the validity of the distinctions between the socialist, radical and liberal strands of feminism is one example of this; Vida Goldstein's defence of the [woman's point of view] while arguing furiously with conservative women is another. The tendency to categorise certain women as [honorary] men is a good example of the desire to claim women as a separate group while marginalising those women who do not fit the feminist model (Simms 1992: 212).

It is difficult to determine, in the knowledge of these varying divisions and debates between women, why many males in their positions of power have continuously treated women as an amorphous mass. Also, the concept that women are more or less incapable of political intelligence is one general, pessimistic picture. Such a negative hypothesis regarding Australian women as voters, activists and politicians in the ALP is an example of this. As a consequence, one may plausibly argue that it is decidedly unrealistic to believe that the legitimacy of the oppression and exclusion of women from leadership roles in the ALP, or the distortions of their intellectual political abilities is true, much less infinitely so.

In the 1970s and the 1980s, the attention of women scholars was drawn towards solving the question of why women were ignored in the political science discipline. Thus, women in this

discipline were realising that in their own field they were lacking representation in the ‘corridors of power’ (Simms 1992: 212). Moreover, it was thought that politics was a male occupation and in some sense ‘a natural extension of the sexual division of labor within the family’. Sapiro wrote that ‘women and politics’ was looked upon as a ‘contradiction in terms within the dominant political science paradigm’. (Sapiro 1983: 2). Notably, Jean Elshtain insisted that the ‘very dichotomy between the public and the private had been constituted on the basis of gender differences.’ She added that men occupied the public and women the private spheres (Elshtain 1981: 216).

Inequality

Women are an oppressed gender by comparison with men. Maurice Duverger writes that one fact is certainly clear – the ‘existence of great inequality between both sexes in the actual exercise of political rights. Legally, women are on an equal footing with men; they are not so in practice’ (Duverger 1955: 10). He further stipulates that political scientists can do ‘no more than record it and assess the extent of its influence’, but it is for the Governments to form conclusions from such premises (Duverger 1955 10).

Political Leadership

In this instance, ‘political leadership’ is taken as covering ‘all people and groups who, in any given country, at any given time, have a *de jure* or *de facto* share in the exercise of authority, not played that way.

Henderson writes that in earlier decades, when women had entered Parliament in small numbers, it was plausible for the ‘male status quo’ supporters to imply that one woman in

the 'Ministry' was a higher representation of the total of women in the Parliament. It is not so now. The increase in the number of backbenchers has made an impact. Now the effect of leaving female politicians out of the Ministry and especially Cabinet, reflects a 'management culture that is male' (Henderson 1999: 251-2).

The distribution of portfolios and shadow portfolios has, for both major parties, always been a regional as well as a factional game. Once it was a mateship game to divide the portfolios between 'the boys' without causing much questioning, but Henderson suggests that 'gender politics have introduced another layer of inquiry' (Henderson 1999: 252). For this reason, it is now apparent that 51 per cent of the country is inadequately represented in its administrative organisation. Indeed, women are almost invisible at the decision-making levels (Henderson 1999: 252).

True, not many women have gained leadership careers within the ALP and the Victorian Branch. The reason no doubt is due to the conditioning of women's supposed obligations to childcare and housework. It will be seen there is a connection between a woman remaining childless and winning political rights. It will also become obvious that some husbands explicitly forbade their women from putting their talents to public account. Indeed, some men have insisted that productive political work and reproductive work are incompatible.

PART 2

Section D: WOMEN IN AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENTS

The political question will be why should a woman politician have to act like a man in order to get what a male politician demands simply because he is one? Men have dominated all areas of Australian parliamentary politics. They held 99 per cent of Federal Parliamentary seats between 1901 and 1939; 96 per cent from 1940 and 1969; 90 per cent during the 1970s; 82 per cent in the 1980s; and 80 per cent during the early 1990s (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 56). Therefore, although there has been an increase in the numbers of women members in Federal Parliament, the figures are not encouraging. For instance, Kate Pritchard-Hughes points out that out of the total of two hundred and twenty-four in both Houses at the 1996 Election, women accounted for sixty-five of those seats - up from forty-four in the previous election and thirty-one in the election before that (Pritchard-Hughes 1997:11). Indeed, these people elected to the Senate and the House of Representatives make extremely important decisions about our lives, therefore women should represent 50 per cent of the population.

Given this, how does the nation appear to women over one hundred years on from Federation? At the celebrations for the centenary of Australia's women's enfranchisement, women argued for ways of increasing female representation in politics. Since then, is the construction of Australian politics more women friendly? Looking at female representation in leadership roles in Australia is not encouraging. It is not uncommon for parties to elect women for preselection in marginalised seats they could not possibly hope to win (Sawer 1981: 243-5; Simms 1988: 147; Kelly and McAllister 1983a: 371-3).

No woman won a parliamentary seat in the years 1901 to 1943, although a number stood as candidates. A small number of women held seats from the 1940s to the 1970s, but the percentage of women only started to increase significantly from the 1970s. It remained at about 10 per cent in the 1980s before almost doubling from 12 per cent to 25 per cent between 1990 and 1999 (van Acker 1999: 111). Van Acker claims that State and Territory Parliaments reveal comparable histories of inequality (van Acker 1999: 79). Women's participation also falls short of equality with men in State or Federal Legislatures. Yet their success rate in local Councils has been a little higher (Simms: 1984: 132-3). In other areas of Government, such as Ministries and senior public service positions, women remain under-represented (van Acker 1999: 183). Pritchard Hughes claims 'that if women were elected in representative numbers [if over 50 per cent in both houses were women] they would tend to act [but not always] in ways helpful to women rather than not, these numbers are absolutely appalling' (Pritchard-Hughes 1997: 11).

In Part Two of this Chapter, attempts will be made to answer the puzzle: why is the discipline of political science turning a blind eye to women? Furthermore, why are women noticeably absent from the powerful political positions in Australia? In the following Chapters, the question of bias towards women at the pre-selection level will be studied. Next follows 'the family vote', patriarchy, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and also the question of why women should become like men? These concepts will be mentioned in this Chapter but analysed further in following Chapters; however, it is essential that we explain them.

Women are underrepresented in politics

Why are women under-represented in Parliament? Why do so few Australian women attempt to participate in Australian politics especially as social conditions appear more congenial since the feminist movement of the 1970s? What are the obstacles restraining a large-scale political involvement by women? It was shown in Chapter One above that women are not less talented or less intelligent. Duverger (1955: 10) wrote that women did choose not to be involved and Barbara Wishart indicated that it is because they have been socialised into believing that caring for children will permanently affect their career in politics (Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 65). Duverger also states:

The small number of woman candidates is a fundamental factor in the problem. If few women are elected, it is primarily due to the fact that few stand as candidates (Duverger 1955: 77).

We must therefore consider the problems associated with women as candidates. Duverger adds:

If the majority of women are little attracted to political careers, it is because everything tends to turn them away from them; if they allow politics to remain essentially a man's business, it is because everything is conducive to this belief; tradition, family, education, religion and literature...The small part played by women in politics merely reflects and results from the secondary place to which they are assigned by the customs and attitudes of our society and which their education and training tend to make them accept as the natural order of things (Duverger 1955: 129-130).

Wishart writes:

The choice then open to potential players is to accept the rules of the game, even if the dice are loaded, or to opt out, in which case they have little control over the moves being played (Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165).

In other words, politics in Australia supports the greater power of male players; it is also considered to be a man's occupation, as pointed out by Duverger and reiterated by Wishart twenty years later when she states that:

Politics not only excludes women from the effective exercise of political power but also denigrates the many forms of political activity in which women take part (Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165).

Consequently, this means there are large obstacles in place preventing women entering politics. There is a misleading view that women are believed to be politically ineffectual, not interested or concerned with politics. This is unacceptable because gender is pertinent to representation.

Is Politics a Man's game?

Wishart claims politics is 'a man's game': she continues:

A common saying in Australia is that politics is a man's game. What this really means is not simply that the majority of players are men, but their politics as it has been envisaged by many political scientists and writers, and by the majority of the general public, is in fact a concept that centres on and expresses the male stereotype (Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165).

Such discourse conveys that the continued governance of our society, predominantly by men, leads to the inadequacy of representation. Moreover, the lesser evidence of women (which is gradually changing) has meant that the people of the community have come to recognise the masculine presence as normal. Then why does this misrepresentation lead to Australia being a patriarchal sexist society? The seven points raised by Wishart will be discussed in order.

In practical terms this imbalance of representation implies:

1. Successful participation in politics necessitates equality and freedom to act for all of the society (Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 26)

Parliament is still by and large shaped on men's conditions due to the division of labour in the family and in the workforce. Therefore, freedom to act and flexibility are most commonly available to men irrespective of social gains brought about by the women's movement.

Vanessa Farrer claims that sex discrimination still exists regardless of the liberal feminist strategy to remove formal obstacles (Farrer (1997: 261). She notes that two decades of equal pay plus seven years of anti-discrimination legislation and the more recent introduction of Affirmative Action programmes have not had the desired effects hoped for by women's organization.

- (2) Wishart believes that political participation and success are measured in terms of how well the individual male or female measures up to the stereotypical masculine standards (Cited in Mayer and Nelson: 165).

As experience shows, the Parliament and political life in general still typify masculine attitudes and activities. It is a theory that focuses on most aspects of life as well as on political authority. For instance, Virginia Held claims:

The term 'patriarchy' conveys well the pervasiveness and structural nature of the dominance of men over women. Others think the term obscures the domination resulting from class and race as well as gender hierarchy, and still others find it too vague or ahistorical to be helpful (Held 1993: 5).

Indeed, Sheila Rowbotham has the view that patriarchy indicates a prevailing and historical form of subjugation that returns us to biology (Rowbotham, (*The New Statesman* 21, 8

December 1979). On the other hand, Carole Pateman argues against abandoning the concept of patriarchy regardless of its problems:

Feminist political theory would then be without the only concept that refers specifically to the subjection of women, that singles out the form of political right that all men exercise by virtue of being men (Pateman 1988: 20).

Thus, in patriarchal societies like Australia, most women lack political power compared with men. As a result, and despite the gains of the feminist movement since the 1970s, misrecognition remains, fundamentally, a feature of Australian politics.

- (3) The thought patterns, modes of operation and types of behaviour required for successful participation are those designated as [masculine] aggressive self-confidence; responsibility, ambition, competition, decisiveness, practicality...(Wishart 1973 in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165).

This stereotyping concept is bound with the sex-role theory. Gisela Kaplan notes that it 'has been regarded as one aspect or outcome of assigning sex roles' (Kaplan 1996: 46).

Indeed, Wishart points out:

One very effective constraint on the effectiveness of women in politics that helps to perpetuate the notion of natural male domination or superiority is the value judgement that females who possess by definition the feminine qualities of emotionality, passivity, and inconsistency, cannot be expected to succeed in competition with males; thus women are placed in a classic double bind (Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165).

As a result, if a woman portrays 'feminine' qualities she is seen as less talented than a man. On the other hand, if she portrays 'masculine' qualities she might be termed 'deviant' by males or females. Thus she runs the risk of facing the choice of conformity and acceptance. If she remains a woman in a man's world, there is then the risk of remaining powerless politically. It puts gender at the heart of the power struggle, consistently resulting in women's subordination and oppression.

- (4) Politics is viewed as utilitarian, the individual serving the institution rather than the reverse. The emphasis is also on apparent consensus, masking competition and conflict...(Wishart 1973 in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165).

The proportion of women awarded a significant part in political leadership is minimal; they know the inner circle is a bastion of masculinity. Similarly, in the majority of cases, men support men and continue to be elected as Members of Parliament and to be chosen as Ministers. There are few women in Australia who make political decisions and direct the State therefore inequality still exists resulting in manipulative politics (Wishart 1973 in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165). Wishart also believes that

- (5) The male stereotype is superior to the female stereotype and the important task of politics [seen as formulating policies and making decisions on behalf of the majority] should be left to the *men*...(Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165).

Some active women members claim that it is the result of deliberate discrimination on the part of the men who lead the two major parties and the political groupings/wings in this country. They retain influence in the choice of candidates and nominate their male friends. Duverger points out that 'to nominate a woman is to deprive a man of a place' (Duverger: 1955: 78). Indeed, one familiar hallmark of women's direct part in leadership roles, in the ALP or the Victorian Branch is their absence from these positions. Another argument Wishart mentions is the role in the domestic spheres:

- (6) It is legitimate for men to be involved politically because women have domestic power [theoretically] and are responsible for home and family (Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165).

Women are invariably forced to appear conservative and hold domestic power. In fact, it has been a way of keeping women away from politics. Chodorow argues that 'Mothers and children form the core of domestic organization; domestic ties are based on specific

particularistic relationships among people and are assumed to be natural and biological' (Chodorow 1978: 9) In fact, Coote and Campbell claim, 'It met the personal needs of men to be clothed, fed and kept healthy and sexually satisfied' (Coote and Campbell 1987: 14). Therefore, women's child-care responsibilities are seen as domestic and private. In turn, this gives men freedom to establish political control and it oppresses women; women pay an extortionate price because it disempowers them in a private and a public sense. Then Wishart goes on to mention the structure of the parties:

- (7) The party system of politics is essentially a male structure that again represents stereotypical male goals and values; and becomes the dominant mode against which all other activity is judged (Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165).

It has always been extremely convenient to disregard the view that Australian women have 'always been carefully excluded from the political realm and their attempts to participate obstructed or derided as [unfeminine]' (Wishart 1973 in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165). However, the organisation of the workplace (Parliament) supported the power of male members when Wishart wrote in 1973: the rules of the house 'preclude effective participation by female players...' (Cited in Mayer and Nelson 1976: 165). Nevertheless, feminists created changes in Australia in the early 1970s.

Australian feminists are justly proud when they claim credit for improvement in the attitudes and policies concerning women. Margaret Reynolds argues that the 'second-wave of feminism early in the 1970s coincided with a general call for social change, which led to the election of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1972' (Reynolds 1994 in Nile 1994: 125).

Reynolds states that:

The beginnings of the feminist movement led to the second major influence as individual women sought to challenge male monopoly of power by entering the non-traditional domains of Parliament...(Cited in Nile 1994: 125-6):

Thereupon, one should isolate the sociological factors reached by Duverger in 1955 when he claimed that:

In our society, all forms of political activity were until recently, and to a large extent, still are, the exclusive privilege of men. The notion of their political role that women tend to absorb is thus still very restrictive. More than nine out of ten men do not find it out of place for a man to discuss politics at a friendly gathering or to speak at an election meeting, but only three or four out of ten would say the same for a woman.

And,

Women accept this status and indeed tend to conform to the attitudes of those groups that are most opposed to their taking a part in political life. For instance, when wishing to justify the small part they play, they avoid political rationalizations in two cases out of three [the parties are all the same, politics serves no purpose] and give instead rationalizations reflecting the idea that they are not concerned with politics [it is not a woman's business, politics is too complicated] (Duverger 1955: 193).

However, Duverger did foresee that the political involvement of women was in no way set in stone. In fact, he argued that the development of employment opportunities for women, along with educational opportunities for a higher degree of knowledge would assist to 'do away with the present disparity between the sexes' (Duverger 1955: 193). Twenty years later Wishart was still arguing for greater freedom for women. She states that the participation of women in political parties is seen to be:

Undergoing some marked changes that are not yet visible on the public level, is in fact a threat to the masculine domination of Australian politics for it challenges the male role of decision-maker where female party members are feminists, idealists, or non-conformists, and thus unlikely to accept the existing definition of political structures and issues in [masculine] terms (Cited in Mayer and Nile 1976: 168).

Nevertheless, we are seeing evidence that women are slowly breaking into the public domain; indeed, some are now invoking their new status and rights in politics. But they carry a heavy burden of expectation while the traditional male-dominated image persists. Consequently, and despite the fact that women are officially on an equal footing with men,

they are not equal in practice; the existence of great inequality between the sexes in the performance of political rights is beyond doubt. Therefore, as Wishart asserts: 'In Australia the beliefs of the Sex-role Ideology form a closed system of thought based on the concept of sex differentiation' (Cited in Mayer and Nile 1976: 165).

Despite that, it is child-care that is undoubtedly one of the most complex and intractable obstacles underlying women's under-representation in Parliament today. Jenny Macklin observes that women often do not work because they cannot, due to having no one to care for their children. She says this has been so for a very long time. Furthermore, she adds 'the best we have been able to do is to bridge the divide between home and work by introducing formal childcare. Indeed, child-care is seen as a distinctive issue requiring reform for women's political participation in Parliament (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 60, 141-2, 145, 150, 211, 212-13, 215); (Ryan 1999: 118, 123, 176). Reynolds states that Parliament House does not have a nursery despite changes in attitudes and policies relating to women since the 1970s. Interestingly, she claims, there is no full-time access to child-care in any Parliament in Australia even though work-based child-care has been encouraged for the past fifteen years. Yet, she quips, there is a fully equipped gymnasium and swimming pool (Reynolds 1995: 161). It would seem that the building was simply not designed to hold a child-care centre. Thus it appears that, if we accept federal politics is still structured according to masculinist norms and assumptions, it then becomes easy to locate the obstacles preventing women's participation in federal politics in Australia from becoming widespread and suitably effective. We have seen seven structures that assure us patriarchy has been prevalent in the Parliament, and in Chapters below, despite changes in public values since the 1970s, it

will be shown that there is no doubt that the mechanisms that guarantee patriarchy remain dominant.

The evidence presented in this Chapter shows that it is the combination of unsatisfactory family and child-care facilities, the gender bias associated with pre-selection, sex discrimination, patriarchy and socialisation that restricts women from holding leadership positions in the ALP. These major concepts will receive further attention later in this work. The focus will now be on how women are gaining the momentum to cross the barrier of exclusion from major ranks in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

After World War II, it became clear that wartime gains for women were not to be consolidated. Marian Sawyer states party 'pre-selectors remained reluctant to run women candidates, particularly for lower-house seats' (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 127). A few were compensated for loyal party participation by seats in the Senate and the NSW Legislative Council. Interestingly, they claim:

The paradigm woman MP of this period was middle-aged with grown-up children, now performing paid work (which would still in many cases have been seen as a reflection on the husband's capacity to provide) but sitting on many committees in the women's auxiliaries to the political parties and in voluntary organisations. Such women upheld the prevailing gender ideology including the priority of familial roles for women (Sawyer: 1993 and Simms: 127).

Reynolds writes that feminists deserve considerable credit for major changes in attitudes and policies relating to women since the 1970s. The 1970s second-wave of feminism 'coincided with a general call for social change' that in 1972 led to the election of the Whitlam Labor Government (Reynolds 1994: 125). For instance:

This period provided both the foundation and the incentive for developing policies that would change the rigid gender role divisions of Australian society and start to create recognition of the need for greater equality between women and men. Whitlam recognised the new mood of Australian women and initiated new reforms in employment and childcare. He appointed the first women's advisor, Elizabeth Reid, to head the new Woman's Affairs Section of his department. His administration implemented equal pay for work of equal value in the Australian Public Service, recognised equal employment opportunity through the ratification of International Labor Organisation Convention III and introduced maternity leave (Reynolds 1994: 125).

Most importantly, Reynolds indicates that there were three reasons as to why these reforms were taking place. In the first instance, European and North American feminist movements were influencing Australian women who began to seek basic change at a local level. This led them to organise and seek basic changes by developing women's organisations as we have seen earlier in the Chapter (Reynolds 1994: 125). Secondly, it was the 'beginning of the feminist movement which led to the major influence as individual women sought to challenge male monopoly of power...' Then finally 'Australian political change occurred at a time when the United Nations had set a very determined timetable for reform...' (Reynolds 1994: 125-126). However, it was the development of the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) in 1972 that enabled them to take direct action in the political process (Reynolds 1994: 125). Women were now questioning their place in Australian society and, in particular, their lack of power within the Parliament.

In 1982, a new era involving women in Australian politics began when the WEL took over from the Australian Federation of Women Voters. (AFWV) 'as the Australian affiliate of the International Alliance of Women'. Sawyer states that, by 1992, a well-educated band of one hundred and eighteen energetic women became extremely successful in 'creating a new agenda for public policy and in giving its members the confidence needed for entry into

politics and other arenas of public life. Indeed there were eight with PhDs, nine lawyers and four medical practitioners (Sawer and Simms 1993: 137). Furthermore, claims Reynolds, radical change appeared possible with the success of the first 'socialist Government for a quarter of a century' (Reynolds 1994: 128). Reynolds also notes that the United Nations had set a very determined timetable for reform, so further incentive was given women in setting their demands in an international context (Reynolds 1994: 126).³ One might see that while the political position improved in the first half of the 1900s the Prime Minister's actions displayed a clear indication that the male culture of parliamentarians had not changed.

Despite the promising start where women won the vote in 1902, it might be seen as ironic that it was forty-one years after the passing of the Commonwealth Franchise Act before a woman was elected to the Parliament. Indeed, Reynolds states that the interval between the 'right to stand and the achievement of parliamentary representation was the longest in the western world' (Reynolds 1994: 127). She concludes that it was due to the position of women in Australian society that 'it was not usually acceptable for women to work outside the home' (Reynolds 1994: 127). In other words, life was still by and large shaped on men's conditions.

Therefore, regardless of the development of ideologies, philosophies and other avenues of women's interests through areas such as WEL, generally speaking, women are unable to assert any definite influence within Federal Parliament due to the imbalance of members and the influences of factions, particularly in the Victorian Branch of the ALP, as seen below. Therefore, as the reform agenda was changing gradually in the 1990s to a more egalitarian

³ In September 2000, the Prime Minister, John Howard, refused to sign a UN protocol on women's rights.

society inclusive of women in the Parliament, the reforms have now dissipated as discussed below. Thus, not only is progress for women in 2005 decreasing, but also their chances of gaining leadership positions is lessened; they are generally kept out of the Cabinet and the Executive Committees of the ALP and the Victorian Branch. Consequently, one might realise that satisfactory 'gender gap' strategies have been slow to develop in Australia, and women's continuing subordination to men is typified by their under-representation in leadership positions in the upper echelons of power in the Parliament generally and in the Victorian Branch of the ALP in particular.

CHAPTER THREE

THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY CULTURE: 'SEXIST FROM THE JUMP'.

I try to think of the Labour Movement, not as putting an extra sixpence into somebody's pocket, or making somebody Prime Minister or Premier, but as a movement bringing something better to the people, better standards of living, greater happiness to the mass of the people. We have a great objective—the light on the hill—which we aim to reach by working for the betterment of mankind not only here but anywhere we may give a helping hand.

Ben Chifley 1949 cited in Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: xvii

Section A:

In August 1999, the 'political ambitions of Australian Council of Trade Unions President Jennie George became a public controversy'. George had revealed that she would resign from the presidency of the ACTU in June 2000 and that she would be contesting a seat in the Legislative Council of New South Wales. While acknowledging that she would be a valuable strength to the NSW Government the NSW Labor Party replied by announcing that no seats were available. The Party announced that George should focus on Labor's federal front bench, as her talents would be wasted in NSW politics (Smith 2001: 197). *The Sydney Morning Herald*: 25, 26, 28 August 1999) ran stories claiming that the proposed option did not coincide with George's wish to work and reside in Sydney in order to be close to her ageing mother. (It is interesting to note that George has not been admitted to the Shadow Cabinet since entering the FPLP. Therefore, it is doubtful whether her talents are being utilised as the Party suggested they might be in 2001).

Many commentators saw George's situation as an example of 'gender bias in the Labour Movement'. Jennie George was a talented female leader of the ACTU; she had supported the ALP cause and was now being foiled from taking up a seat in the NSW Parliament (*Sydney*

Morning Herald, 26 August 1999). Writers compared George's treatment by the ALP to that of former male presidents - Bob Hawke, Simon Crean, and Martin Ferguson - who had each been given safe Labor seats (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 25, 26, 28 August 1999).

This occurrence creates many questions relating to gender and ALP political culture. Was the fact that George was female the reason her aspirations were unsuccessful? Or was it because of an entrenched male bias in the ALP political hierarchy? George gave precedence to caring for her elderly mother in a way that a similarly accomplished and talented male may not; certainly he would not be expected to do so. Therefore, were George's political ambitions confined by her gender?

This Chapter examines such ironies. First, it surveys the question of masculinity during the development of the Victorian ALP and the Federal ALP. Then, it investigates some theoretical approaches to gender and political culture that might indicate why gender has played an important role in the exclusion of women from the echelons of power in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

The Chapter also explores the construction of masculinity in Australia. The aim is an attempt to expose its ideology, and the manner in which it is reproduced in Australian males. I am attempting to look backwards, to comprehend people in the past in their own terms, but more extensively by classifying the cultural consciousness they diversely experienced, declined, embraced, or were susceptible to. In other words, we need to understand the meaning of masculinity in order to recognise those times and places in which men saw themselves as

born to rule. The Chapter also sets out some initial arguments regarding the comprehension of Australian political culture, pointing out that the commanding personae of 'Australian national identity', such as the bronzed life saver, the bush worker and the Australian 'digger' have historically been male (White 1981: 83, 127, 155; Lake 1994: 283). Women have been shut out from these roles, or at best allowed a subservient role to men as they perform the supposed lesser task of home duties. This historical background will help to define the patriarchal atmosphere that existed before and after the ALP and the Victorian Branch were founded.

The male bias of historiography and its principal concerns succeeded in rendering women virtually invisible in the Australian Labor Party until the 1980s when things began to change. Nevertheless, blokes and mates still hold a great deal of power in the ALP, but at least many people now recognise masculinist cultural forms. Judith Brett believes that mateship is 'currently alive and well in the faction system'. But, she adds 'it does mean that women can talk about it, understand how they are excluded from it and talk to men about it' (Brett, *Arena*, December 1994). Indeed, it means that no one in the ALP can believe that there are fewer women in Parliament because the blokes are so superior, or the women do not try for preselection.

It will be demonstrated in various ways just how and why Australian society is sexist; then establish how the ALP evolved out of a sexist society. A task for the analyst arguing in this manner is to discover the mechanisms through which the subordination of women is perpetuated leading to why women have little power in the Australian Labor Party. But to do that, one needs to look at the social and cultural trends and the broad range of activities

designed for socialising young Australian males before the outbreak of World War 1.

Section B:

This Section will seek to explore the historical processes in late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century of the middle-class idealism of masculinity in Australia. It is about the efforts of the middle-classes to expand their standards and spread them by concentrating on producing codes of manliness. Crotty has indicated that, in the later part of the Nineteenth Century, there were warnings of ‘masculine barbarism’ on the frontiers, the ‘savage’ race of natives, the frightening waning from the convictions of ‘old-world civilization...’ (Crotty 2001: 221).

Still, Dr. Thomas Arnold, Headmaster of Rugby School from 1827 to 1842, established the approach of moral reform of learning that was to affect early teachers in the colonies. As a result, this gave rise to a version of ‘manliness’ that accentuated ‘morality, religiosity and intellectual development’ (Crotty 2001: 42). A task of the analyst arguing the wisdom of Arnold’s philosophy on manliness may help to discover the mechanisms through which the subordination of women is perpetuated leading to why women have little power in the ALP. However, if in 1870 a young man was identified by the measure of ‘ascetic religious morality and his worthiness for the kingdom of God’, by 1920 cultural and social trends saw this expression of manliness give way to an athletic, anti-feminist, secularist, sturdy muscular alternative. He was gauged by sheer vigour, energy and loyalty; a person who is devoted to and ready to support or defend his country and finally his suitability as a subject of Australia and Empire (Crotty 2001: 11).

Such wide-ranging stages of change were similar to and tied up with developments in Britain, where the process of defining manliness was also progressing and becoming more militarist, secular and physical. Crotty points out that:

Australia often had its own distinct priorities, hopes and fears, such as the fear of racial and moral degeneration in the hot and harsh Australian wilderness, the perceived threat of Asian invasion, and the desire to forge a distinctive Australian identity (Crotty 2001: 12).

He argues that ‘British influence, shared imperatives and exclusively Australian concerns wove a complex background for changing constructions of the ideal male’ (Crotty 2001: 12). However, the Reverend Father Mulhall S.J., spoke of the deterioration of religion, his support for flogging, and his assumption that parents required to be severe disciplinarians was becoming out of favour, but remained typical of many churchmen (Anonymous. Probably 1903-1905 cited in Crotty 2001: 16).

But attitudes were changing. By the early 1880s: ‘Disparagement of English civilization began to find voice in Australia’. Indeed, early in the 1880s some writers in publications such as the *Victoria Review* were beginning to deny Australian inferiority and made forthright statements of colonial superiority (Crotty 2001: 19). W. G. Carroll, for instance, disapproved of an English magazine that had recommended that young English gentlemen who could not succeed in England should immigrate to the colonies. He expressed dismay that the colony was being burdened with a ‘miraculous draught of useless young Britons...poured in upon us by each succeeding vessel from home’ who thought themselves better than colonials (Carroll 1883: 170-5). On the other hand, colonials intensified their arguments that Australia was a country of possibilities for those of proper character who

risked being handicapped by the fixed and 'class-ridden nature of English society' (White 1981: 35-36). Crotty states that 'discourses of moral degeneracy were, by 1900, significantly weaker than they had been thirty years previously' (Crotty 2001: 19). Consequently, by the close of the Nineteenth Century 'the dichotomy between the manly male Australian and the effeminate Englishman was a common theme in Australian culture, suggesting that the [boy problem], physically at least, was less daunting' (White 1981: 72-73, 79). Women stood for justice, religious fervour and courteous respectability, or they could be the 'sexual possessions of men', but they were not able or encouraged to move about and take an active role in the political progress of the colony (Moore: 1998: 43). Therefore, the sexist society, which excluded women from active participation in the public sphere as in the ALP and the Victorian Branch, was evident from the 'jump'.

Additionally, Australia progressively appeared to present opportunities not readily available in England for male subjects. Such a situation was important because Dixon writes that: 'Science made the body the site where fears about racial decline, degeneration and depravity were located, so a sense of Australia as a place where men had more opportunities for physical development tended also to imply that there could be moral improvement' (Dixon 1995: 3). Australia, it was thought, with its bright sunshine and miles of open space, offered opportunities for 'becoming a man' which were not easily acquired in 'over-civilised and effeminate England'. The successes of Australian rowers, soldiers and cricketers, for instance, were pursued with great eagerness in the late 1800s and the early Twentieth Century and their successes seen as an indication that concerns for 'effeminacy and racial decline had been unfounded' (White 1981: 72-73).

Crotty claims that:

Part of the reason for the success, which the Australian middle class was able to convince itself that it was not degenerating through over-civilisation, lay in perceptions of the Australian bush, a ready-made frontier which could be exploited for national mythologies by all classes (Crotty 2001: 20).

The revering of the bush was mainly the result of a fresh generation of ‘artists and writers’ mostly Australian-born, who fought against what they saw as an obsolete and unoriginal ‘cultural world which they identified with Europe’ (Crotty 2001: 20). They endeavoured to advance a fresh and animated culture as the distinctive Australia.

Sunlight, wattle, the bush, egalitarianism, mateship and freedom were the symbolic values which they associated with Australia, and which they located as belonging in the outback (White 1981: 85-7, 97-8).

The emblems and causes the 1890s authors connected to the bush were not, indeed, uniquely Australian. English authors - notably Rudyard Kipling - regarded the frontiers of the dominion as a sight for ‘real men’, revealing a contrast with the ‘effeminacy of the metropolis’ (White 1981: 101). Actually, for much of the Nineteenth Century the city was classified as a threatening area that signaled ‘womanhood out of control, lost nature, loss of identity’ (Wilson 1991: 7). As a comparison, and in the search for types for a reinvigorated masculinity, Europeans viewed the ‘new world and the empire where men were risking their lives in pushing civilisation onwards’ (MacDonald 1993: 5). The frontiersman and the man of the bush furnished an ingenious evasion from the effectiveness of an unmasculine culture. Furthermore, children’s literature and movements such as the Boy Scouts’ (Macdonald 1993: 47) were enlisted as cultural symbols in the construction of rugged masculinity which thus became yet another factor to be weighed in any account of the restricted recognition of women in the public sphere as carried over into the ALP today.

The pure and masculine bush was sharply posted and compared to the ‘foetid air and gritty’ of Banjo Paterson’s ‘dusty, dirty, city’, inhabited by ‘little urchins who would greet you with a curse’ and men with ‘pallid faces’, ‘eager eyes and greedy’ and ‘stunted forms and weedy’ (Paterson 1895: 22, 58). It is important to note that Graeme Davison has pointed out so persuasively that the Australian bush legend was developed not in the outback, but as a refuge by city dwellers such as Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson. They disapproved of the city, viewing it as a ‘negation of the qualities of the Australian ethos of secularism, nationalism and egalitarianism’ (Crotty 2001: 21). The unfolding of the Australian legend was ‘not the transmission to the city of values nurtured on the bush frontier, so much as the projection onto the outback of values revered by an alienated urban intelligentsia’ (Davison in Hirst: 1978: 192-4, 200-2, 208). The bush worker was not typically Australian, but he was made to appear decidedly Australian, serving as a broadly deserving national symbol ‘on to which nationalist ideals could be projected’ (White 1981: 82-83, 99). Such mythical, historical disinformation has been a major societal/cultural force in keeping women confined to the private sphere rather than allowing them to succeed in developing interests in the public sphere and the ALP in the 1980s.

The Australian outback and the ideal Australian manly male were undoubtedly connected, for the bush would, it was anticipated, offer more to ‘manly boys than the city’ (Crotty 2001: 21). W.H. East argued in an article in *The Lone Hand* in 1913:

The settler’s children develop into healthy manhood without the vicious surroundings which breed deplorable vices in the city. Contrast the gaunt, wiry, flexile, virile bushman with the cigarette-sucking factory hand of the big Australian city! His surroundings made him what he is - genius at handling horses and cattle, building stockyards, full of bush craft, Nature-lore and resourcefulness (East 1913: 214).

It is no surprise that *The Lone Hand* should glorify the bush and the males it generated. It was a journal, indeed, an offshoot of *The Bulletin* and of nationalist leanings (Crotty 2001: 22). Its prospectus stated that it hoped to teach Australians how to function in harmony with their own radiant climate, and not in keeping with the harsh and forbidding customs illogically imported from chilly distant regions to our warm and radiant fatherland' (quoted in Taylor 1977: 83).

Section C:

Crotty's arguments suggest that it is not surprising to note that one of the most striking features since the forming of the ALP has been to present to the public an almost totally masculine face, making preselection for women a rarity. The next 70 years saw the continuation of an excessively masculine image which left little space for women. This further demonstrates that the gender issue remains in the ALP and the Victorian Branch where the selection of women for major leadership roles remains bleak.

The Australian bushman was framed in contrast to a group of 'Others', consisting of recent immigrants, Asians, the English and city dwellers. Crotty claims that this national category also rejected women and was looked upon as an answer to the attack by feminism, the movement of the suffragettes and organisations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Movement on 'male privilege' (Crotty 2001: 22). Women could secure a 'surrogate masculinity' by horse riding, or by being tomboyish, but generally established their role as the negation of the ideal, used as the feminine [Other] against which 'Australian manliness

could be constructed' (Crotty 2001: 22). Australian women were mostly pictured as restrained and unfulfilled, while it was the male pathfinders who forged ahead and built the nation. Women were not considered to be 'real' contributors in the legend of the country. The active participants in the national legend were male; he was a 'bushman' and the 'real' Australian. A male who preferred the city, urban life and culture was thought to be effeminate (Moore 1998: 43). In Victoria, until the 1980s, ALP representation was thought to be a strictly masculine prerogative, women's role was defined as domestic but the bush echoed the rhetoric of egalitarianism and mateship.

Especially from Federation, the 'nationalist imagery' of the bush and persuasive language relating to the principles of equal rights and opportunities and 'mateship' were progressively assigned to 'stamp its control on the national culture' (White 1981: 114). The 'respectable' redefining of the bush legend typifies a particular detail voiced by David Walker: that there is not one particular bush culture or bush legend, but that the bush was utilised to promote various 'ideological functions and appeal to different audiences' (Walker 1978: 315). Women are all but invisible in the histories that have studied the masculine image; Russell Ward included. He has recounted the Australian masculine image of the bush legend as:

A practical man, rough and ready in his manners...a great improviser...willing to [have a go] at anything...He normally feels no impulse to work hard without good cause. He is a [hard case], sceptical about the value of religion and of intellectual and cultural pursuits generally. He believes that Jack is not only as good as his master but, at least in principle, probably a good deal better...He is a fiercely independent person...yet he is very hospitable and above all will stick to his mates through thick and thin...He swears hard and consistently, gambles heavily and often, and drinks deeply on occasions (Ward 1958: 1-2).

It was through the approach and quality of the roving bushman that made the nomad tribe 'the principal ingredient of a national mystique' (Ward 1958: 35). Ward illustrates the

predominant description of men's culture that assists them in maintaining a hold on power. The ability of senior male politicians in the ALP to enlist mates for pre-selection, for positions of seniority, as opposed to women, confirms the strength of Ward's definitions of independence and mateship. Henry Lawson, and Barbara Baynton in *The Drover's Wife* and *The Chosen Vessel* reinforce his theories, while Miles Franklin in *My Brilliant Career* challenges the patriarchal system. Lawson and Baynton both challenge the value of mateship; the men desert their wives for their mates. For both of them, also, the bush is hostile, destructive and brutal.

To assist in this study of the culture of Nineteenth Century Australian society from which the Australian Labor Party was formed, I will focus on literature rather than historical analysis. In this way, I will question the behavioural paradigm which portrayed men as subjects and women as 'Other'. In Henry Lawson's *The Drover's Wife* (1892), Barbara Baynton's *The Chosen Vessel* (1896) and Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* (1901), Russel Ward's *The Bush Legend* (1958), images of mateship, freedom and the closeness to nature of the bushman's life are cast. The drabness, loneliness and meanness of life for the woman signify men as the major players and women the alternatives.

The key to the oppression of women, the tension around marital authority can be seen in the work of Henry Lawson where the 'contrast of bitterness and idealism emerge' (McLaren 1989: 50). In *The Drover's Wife*, Lawson, in prose, comes face to face with the most bitter frustrations of reality. *The Drover's Wife* and *The Chosen Vessel* relate tales of marriage tension ridden by distressing destitution. They are filled with impressions of confinement, 'the woman by isolation or the man by constant struggle...and by the responsibilities of the

wife and children whom he is unable to sustain' (McLaren 1989: 53). In *The Drover's Wife*, Lawson avoids the extremes of Baynton's brutal landscapes and shocking stories of its inhabitants (Krimmer and Lawson 1980: xviii). He conveys a more compassionate, tender view of the human hardship as seen by Tommy's heartwarming assurance to his mother, 'Mother, I won't never go drovin'; blast me if I do!' (McLaren 1989: 53). While comforting his mother, Tommy is supporting his father unbeknown to him that eventually he will be forced by financial circumstances to conform to the hardships of the land and go droving despite all. McLaren explains that, in *The Drover's Wife*, Lawson sees the smallholding, that encompasses the vision of pastoral independence, has in itself become the jail. He points out the striving of the mother to defy the character of the situation, by outfitting the family and walking with them through the bushland on Sundays and by nonchalantly gazing at the modern fashions in the *Young Ladies' Journal*. Lawson is stressing her state of being isolated, which is not diminished by any assurance that her laconic spouse will ever abide by his 'good intentions and make enough money to take her back to town'. The lack of success of the bush fantasy is highlighted by the fact that the best ascendancy she could hope for is to getaway to town (McLaren 1989: 53).

Not only is Lawson contributing to the pathos and the loneliness of the bush for the mother who had to brave the danger of the snake in the hut and to protect her children, but also it reflects the masculine image of wanderer as the central concern. In *The Drover's Wife*, women have been perceived to be peripheral as Lawson relates the weakness of Australian men associated with the land. The sociology of the Labor Party was built on that foundation; that a wife earned scant acknowledgement, but gave her political husband strong support from home; her main interest, therefore, has been to remain in the private sphere and

advance the interests of men in the public domain. The Baynton story supports this theory.

McLaren points out that *The Chosen Vessel* is the most gruesome of Baynton's stories:

Ignorance and brutality conspire with the bush to bring about the murder of the mother with her baby still in her arms. Whereas the woman in Lawson's *The Drover's Wife* has her dog and her courage to defy the threat of the swagman, the woman in Baynton's story is completely at the man's mercy. The satirical portrayal of religious superstition only makes more dreadful the story's ending, which denies the woman the help she believes is at hand (McLaren 1989: 56).

If, in *The Chosen Vessel*, the dream of warmth and confidence is overcome by a hostile landscape, so also does the woman/man 'confrontation where women, without choice, become acquiescent victims of men largely without realising it' (Krimmer and Lawson 1980: xix). In *The Chosen Vessel*, the female is seen as motherly, warm and caring but also fearful while the male is shown as savagely cruel. The male's normal habitat is the challenging terrain while the woman is unconsciously connected with culture through association in the town.

Baynton writes a vicious story in *The Chosen Vessel* almost as though she is calling for revenge. At one level, she portrays men as indifferent to human suffering when supporting their views about women. Lawson, on the other hand, portrayed pictures of an unfriendly harsh bush, but Baynton 'studies the psychic effects of that landscape more explicitly' (Krimmer and Lawson 1980: xviii). Baynton frequently depicts the outback as a solitary, isolated lonesome environment, an adversary to its subjects who rely on it for existence. For instance, the bush 'turns the chosen vessel into a ghastly parody of the Virgin Mary while offering her no refuge from her rapist and murderer' (Krimmer and Lawson 1980: xvii). For Baynton, as for Lawson, the bush is often portrayed as bearing an unequivocal effect on the emotional and spiritual, as well as on the tangible lives of its inhabitants. While the story

depicts the extreme loneliness of the bush, it also begs to acknowledge the isolation of the mother from any involvement in affairs other than her domestic responsibilities. She had no power to take part in the forming of the country; she sacrificed all for the well being of her family. Therefore, the misrecognition of women in early Australia led to their lack of recognition in most Australian institutions, including the ALP. Women were no more prominent in the non-Labor parties or the boardrooms of the nation; in fact, they were ignored until the second-wave of feminism fought for their place in the public sphere. Miles Franklin wrote in a similar vein. In *My Brilliant Career*, she experienced but challenged the boredom of the bush and the oppression of the women. Actually, she was born into what Matthews describes as ‘a luxury of squatterdom’ a situation earned by the hard labour of her father and grandfather; they conquered the bush as mother and grandmother made child and home (Matthews 1963: 7). Also in *My Brilliant Career* we imagine a girl, of sixteen years, of strong unrestrained emotions, restless because of her isolation she is cut off from the motions of life; she was oppressed and wrote:

My sphere in life is not congenial to me. Oh, how I hate this living death which has swallowed all my teens, which is greedily devouring my youth, which will sap my prime, and in which my old age, if I am cursed with any, will be worn away! As my life creeps on for ever through the long toil-laden days with its agonizing monotony, narrowness, and absolute uncongeniality, how my spirit frets and champs its unbreakable fetters - all in vain (Franklin cited in Matthews 1963: 7).

The life of Franklin we might see as what was expected of life in the Australian bush, though compared to Baynton and Lawson’s characters, more comfortable. But similar to Baynton and Lawson’s characters, she dreamt of a world beyond the loneliness and narrowness of her own life. But Franklin challenges the patriarchal image of the bush as she challenges the woman’s place; she moves away and becomes a writer and union organiser. The sexual division of labour shown in the work of Lawson, Baynton and Franklin has been the basis of

women's oppression throughout Australia's history. It is also evident from these stories that women's experience of sexual labour has been affected by their class circumstances.

Section D:

As a consequence, how firmly are these historical assumptions promoting modern gender inequalities deeply grounded in the ALP and the Victorian Branch? Within the ALP, discrimination on the grounds of sex remains a bugbear to women endeavouring to enter the Party or to women trying to reach equality within the Party. Yet, while discrimination is now illegal, there is ample evidence to suggest that it survives as a cultural and institutional practice. Therefore, if masculinity has been reformed in the Twentieth Century (Crotty 2001: 233), how is it that the traditional macho bravado of 'Question Time' in Parliament or the sexist displays of masculinity still exist? Is it because Labor's traditional elements are now merely confined to the margins or do they remain central? The task of highlighting concepts of traditional values will follow a brief discussion of the formation of the Party.

Summers, Woodward and Parkin state that the ALP was formed by the Labour Movement, as a 'political strategy, at the time of the great industrial troubles of the 1880s and 1890s' (Summers et al 2003: 190). Not only was the Party comprised of many traditions and many opinions but, also, according to the Party's Constitution of Rules, its origins lay in:

- The aspirations of the Australian people for a decent, secure, dignified and constructive way of life;
- The recognition by the trade union movement of the necessity for a political voice to take forward the struggle of the working class against the excesses, injustices and inequalities of capitalism; and
- The commitment by the Australian people to the creation of an independent free and enlightened Australia (Wahurst cited in Parkin Summers and Woodward (1994).

The platform states:

The Australian Labor Party is a democratic socialist party and has the objective of the democratic socialisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange, to the extent necessary to eliminate exploitation and other anti-social features in these fields (Summers et al 2003: 202).

Further objectives included: the achievement of the political and social values of equality, democracy, liberty and social cooperation inherent in this objective (ALP 2000: sec, 18-22). But I must disagree. This thesis will confirm that the ALP has restricted women's accessibility to leadership positions, which in turn limits their influence. The Party constructed, from the jump, a dominant type of masculinity and sought to suppress the recognition of women. The founders of the ALP were men of their times, shaped by the 'customs and traditions' of a male-dominated culture. So men have been taken for granted as the natural consistent leaders of the ALP, as society as a whole would have expected.

Academic researchers have mostly asked disproportionate questions that show their belief that the male was born to rule. Furthermore, questions on the proportion between family life and public life, for instance, are more likely asked about women, but not husbands. This presumption suggests that men are free to follow a career in the ALP and the Victorian Branch while assuming his wife will care for his family responsibilities. Therefore, he is concluding the caring of his family is not an issue and power is his privilege. Entwined with the culture of male power in the Outback was the emphasis on the 'boy problem'.

Section E: The Boy Problem

As the Australian society developed there was lively debate about whether a strong and honourable nation could be constructed and retained in Australia. Some citizens took the

worst view. For example, James Hogan, a headmaster and schoolteacher, (later to become a politician and journalist), argued 'if the current crop of youngsters was anything to go by, the future for the Australian race was bleak indeed' (Hogan 1880: 102-109). He spoke from St. Mary's Catholic School in Geelong where he had been educated before attending St. Patrick's College in Melbourne. (St. Patrick's College formerly St. Francis' Seminary, became the first Catholic secondary school in Victoria in the year of the establishment grants in 1853). Hogan declared that the 'three main characteristics' of the White Australian were an extreme 'love of outdoor sport' an unwillingness to heed or regard the prerogative of parents or teachers, and an aversion to intellectual endeavour (Hogan 1880: 102-109). If cricket or football supremacy was to be the highest point of the Australian 'native's ambition', Hogan suggested 'the Coming Man will suffer considerably by comparison with his ancestors'. Indeed, he believed that the Australian of the future would 'be peaceably disposed and sportively inclined; rather selfish in conduct and secular in practice, contented and easy-going, but non-intellectual and tasteless' (Hogan 1880: 102-109). Hogan's education ideals within the Catholic system might explain his aversion to athleticism. Furthermore, until the 1900s, the attitude to sport was much stronger in the Protestant educational system than in its Catholic counterpart. Hogan rested the fault with the educationalists who were managing the young with too much laxity and not enough discipline (Hogan 1880: 102-109). Similarly, W. M. Tomlinson argued that Australia's youth 'are copying the habits and manners of larrikins, and have set up for themselves a false and bastard standard of manliness' (Tomlinson 1880: 633-40).

Hogan's attention on teachers rather than parents was extensive in contemporaneous opinions on the youth dilemma. Hogan was afraid that educationalists were paying less

regard to boys' ethical standards and failing to make sure that they graduated with what Tomlinson called 'habits of manliness, order and obedience' (Tomlinson 1880: 633-40). Some wrote of a pattern following English schools.

While looking at extensive survey reviews of 'cultural norms for manhood' as they continue to be considered, a more concise approach to the issue has arisen,

taking its cue from the wealth of local studies in women's history. Some of this writing continues to use sex role language, though it entertainingly shows that expectations are more varied, and more contested, than used to be thought. But the best of this work has gone beyond norms to the institutions in which they are embedded (Connell 1995: 28).

Connell claims that such a theory is indicated in Christine Heward's, *Making a Man of Him*, which detects variation and distinction in an English private school. But difficulties experienced by the English schools had been considerably greater than those affecting the newer Australian schools. It has been claimed that in the mid 1800s:

Sexual morality was very loose, bullying was horrific in its extent and brutality, and recreations were unsupervised, violent and unruly. Boys terrorised the local wildlife through duck hunting, beagling, and even boar hunts, while stone-fighting and matching cats and dogs in fights were popular recreations at Harrow (Mangan 1981: 32).

Mangan writes that the Masters reacted to the disorderly behaviour of the boys with a non-caring attitude. However, to undertake the task of ethical change, Thomas Arnold, the Rugby School Headmaster from 1827 to 1842, established a system that included closer direction over:

the daily lives of the boys, but he did not endorse playing sport as an important element in this process as he believed that the class of boys who attended public schools would be called upon to work with their minds rather than their bodies (Arnold 1845: 119).

Alternatively, men such as Thomas Hughes and Charles Kingsley undertook the bridging of the gap between morality and religious views of ‘manliness favoured by Arnold and what Norman Vance has termed [boy culture], through the ideal of muscular Christianity’. Kingsley applauded ‘physical health both as an index of moral and spiritual well-being and as useful to the performance of his clerical duties’, whilst opposing effeminacy and asceticism. Comparably, Thomas Hughes related that ‘round shoulders, narrow chests, stiff limbs...were as defective as bad grammar’ and that care should be taken ‘if we are to educate the whole man’ (Quoted in Newsome 1961: 213). Crotty claims that most headmasters saw physical activity as a relative necessity, but the spreading of secularisation of society in England and the acceptance of sport with boys, ‘saw athleticism soon succeed muscular Christianity as the dominant ideology of the schools’ (Crotty 2001: 42).

I.V. Hansen has written that Australia’s public schools were a decade or maybe a generation behind England; that from 1828 until the 1870s godliness and good learning endured. He claims that: ‘As a science and the scientific point of view developed in England, the old certainties, both intellectual and, to a lesser extent, moral, were being undermined’ (Hansen 1971: 22).

Hansen continued:

As learning declined, godliness too lost a great deal of its power in the schools. kindness came to be a mark of schoolmasters and this meant the need to meet boys on their own ground. Therefore an often timid fusion of godliness and sporting bonhomie resulted in [muscular Christianity]; the best of both worlds was sought (Hansen 1971: 22).

Education provided a valuable means allowing Governments, the religious organisations and the middle class to advance their concerns by emphasising their values, religious beliefs and worldviews upon the pupils. During the twenty-two years between 1850 and 1872, in Victoria, Geelong Grammar, Scotch College, The Geelong College, Melbourne Grammar, Wesley College, and Xavier College all elected former Headmasters from Great Britain,

apart from Xavier where Father Thomas Cahill from St. Patrick's College became Rector. His first address stipulated that the new college was 'destined for the education of the children of the wealthier class of their own Church and belief' (Hansen 1971: 36).

Though the six schools mentioned above were mainly denominational, they were dedicated to character forming and disciplining of their bodies as well as to the intellectual training required for future leaders. Yet, as the Twentieth Century approached, Crotty claims some changes in the significance of the educational rationale became apparent (Crotty 2001: 34). Following similar changes in the English public schools, the framing of manliness advanced by these schools moved from what David Newsome has identified as 'godliness and good learning' towards a much more physical and muscular type, epitomised by the sportsman (Newsome 1961 cited in Crotty 2001: 34). Manliness had thus been of the spirit and mind, but secular character patterns were surfacing in the formation of boy's manliness.

Within society the need was being sought for a free, compulsory, national or, if favoured, a State system of education: a determined effort between State and Church became inevitable. Actually, an association between the Labour Movement and the Catholic Church stands out as the Australian society developed in the Nineteenth Century and therefore, as it became the society from which the ALP emerged.

Section F: Religion

It is not possible to study the misrecognition of women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch without referring to the history of Australian religious conflicts associated with schools and failing to be influenced by the important link between religion and the ALP and religion and

the Liberal Party. Aitkin explains the background of these confrontations and its connection to ‘occupational class’. He states:

At the turn of the century religion, politics, class and national background represented four overlapping dimensions of Australian society. The Irish settlers in Australia, whether of convict origin or free, were on all accounts disproportionately concentrated in the working class, and overwhelmingly Catholic. The pastoralists of the inland and the urban bourgeoisie dominated the governmental and political structures of the colonies, and were overwhelmingly Protestant (Aitkin 1982: 162).

Aitken states that the Australian party structure unfolded in parallel with this, that Protestants tended to be associated with the Liberal Party and Catholics with the Labor Party. Moreover, ‘within the Liberal and National parties, it was rare ever to find a Catholic preselected as a candidate for a parliamentary seat, whereas Labor has always boasted many Catholic politicians’ (Aitkin 1982: 162). This division becomes more pronounced after the 1916 split over conscription which took many Protestants out of the ALP. This affiliation, as Aitkin points out, was nevertheless mostly a substitute for ‘social class’, and it continued to persist for some time. The social dissimilarities between Protestants and Catholics moderated over time leading to a ‘convergence in terms of socioeconomic profile, so it might be expected that this difference between the two major parties would itself change (Aitkin 1982: 162). This appears to have been happening, but it does not account for the exclusion of girls from the early public school system, nor does it account for their lack of recognition in the ALP before the 1980s when the situation began to change.

This Chapter has shown how the frontier of the male private education system supported a version of masculinity combined with godliness but, at the start of the Twentieth Century, the principles of proficient learning that had depicted an ‘Australian public school education’ in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century had been replaced by the manly qualities of the

athlete. For instance, it was not until the late 1900s that the system was finally transformed and gender dynamics changed making girls' entry to some public schools possible. (Fee-paying private schools in Australia are termed public schools in England). The same logic applies to political organisations such as the ALP. The male role politician took it for granted that being a Member of Parliament was part of being masculine and still does, albeit some females have gained seats in later years but not access to leadership roles.

Section G: Athleticism

Prowess in sport has 'always been equated in Australia with manliness and has contributed to a considerable measure of the young country's international prestige' (Hansen 1971: 120). This seems measurably appropriate as sport jumped the gun on politics the first time round. Politics generally and the ALP and the Victorian Branch in particular have always been slow to catch up with sport. Similarly, women came late to nationalism, therefore they lacked the interest, Government aid and support to challenge male supremacy in politics and sport, being generally confined to the domestic sphere Hansen claims that Australian boys have had the space and better weather than their British forebears in which to practise physical competition. He suggests that 'it is not unlikely that preoccupation with sport has encouraged a strain of anti-intellectualism in the life of schools' (Hansen 1971: 120). The late Donald Horne claimed:

Sport to many Australians is life and the rest a shadow. Sport has been the one national institution that has had no [knockers]. To many it is considered a sign of degeneracy not to be interested in it. To play sport, or watch others play, and to read and talk about it is to uphold the nation and build its character (Horne 1964: 40).

Additionally, Smith points out that surveys done in 1983 and 1994 show that the most popular leisure time group activities involved sports (Smith 2001: 41). Games have been a selling tool in the public schools. Hansen writes that if a school excelled at sport, it was regarded as an accomplished school. However, while it was the one thing the general public knew about their schools', some headmasters are known to disapprove of the competition in sport (Hansen 1971:122). As long ago as 1946, Hone of Melbourne Grammar has attacked the matter:

I think we have to blame the introduction of competitions, which have wisely been avoided in England, for all the worst abuses of school games. The *winning* not only of a particular game but of the competition as a whole became the all-important thing, and it has become one of the duties of a headmaster to restrain the inflamed and misguided enthusiasms of old boys, public and press, and the misdirected ambitions of parents, and to insist that games should take their rightful place as a *means* of education and recreation and not become ends in themselves (Hone 1946: 64).

By contrast, the Headmaster of Melbourne High School, (elite, non fee-paying State Secondary School), Joseph Hocking, was determined to match the public schools in 'examination performance and character'. He claimed sport in particular was 'one of the most effective means of building 'school spirit' and of training character (Cited in Crotty 2001: 225). David Malouf also disagrees; he writes that it was as country against country that the Tests of the 1870s and 1980s were fought for and the Ashes won or lost. Malouf continues:

This is the level at which we first saw ourselves and were accepted by others—the English, no less!—as a single nation. Sport has continued to be the place where we are most aware of ourselves as a people; and when we consider the alternatives there can be few healthier or more benign more civilized ways in which a nation might discover a sense of itself than [*at play* at competitive play with friends and neighbours] (Malouf: *The Australian*, 1 January 2001).

While godliness had lessened in centrality, strength, health and physicality had become eminent traits. The qualities of femininity, once sustained in the godly and moral boy were now the qualities of the inactive or sluggish. Indeed, masculine exalted strengths, stoicism, leadership and proficiency on the rugby field had come to dominate Christian virtues, selfishness and religious dedication, located in the private sphere. Therefore, the manliness society had, by the early Twentieth Century turned against the feminine need for recognition and constructed against them.

Militarism

The Empire sensitivity ran high among the six schools ‘and their contribution of men to World War I is evidence of the patriotic fervour with which they embraced the task’ (Hansen 1971: 49). The glorification of fighting for the country against an outside enemy became the most apparent way where manliness might be explained. Militarism was seen as an important component when defining the ideal Australian boy who was expected to fight for his country in the defence of the British Empire.

Many Australians have identified with the involvement of troops in World War 1, indeed it has been seen as a well-defined test of national identity. Before 1915, service in minor imperial wars such as the Boer War and victories against British cricket ‘test’ teams were seen as important and assuaging Australian feelings of some hesitation regarding their national value, but vital ‘absolute evidence’ was missing (Griffiths 1996: 117).

Yet, Australian collective opinions of the Australian Army Corps and New Zealand (Anzac) troops from the first landing at Gallipoli is seen as ‘Australia’s birth, baptism of fire or coming of age’ (Bean 1998b: 910). These messages and opinions accentuated that ‘Australians had passed the test despite, or perhaps because of, the failure of the forces among which the Anzacs numbered to advance far into Turkey territory’ (Smith 2001: 84). It was the duty of men as citizens to fight for their country, but women had objected to the state endorsement of slaughter. Fee paying private schools, some Government-run State Schools and citizen training schemes had been indoctrinated for this duty. The outbreak of World War I saw Adela Pankhurst, Jennie Baines and Cecilia John, associates of Vida Goldstein from the Women’s Political Association, summon their efforts into pacifist campaigns condemning the conscription movement: they protested in the name of responsible motherhood (Lake 1999: 63).

Crotty notes that a wave of patriotism raced through the public schools at the beginning of World War I, ‘including an almost pathetic eagerness to see their old boys showing the school flag on the slopes of Gallipoli or in the mud of the Western Front’. The outbreak of World War I was received with enthusiasm, almost happiness, at most of the public schools. The declaration of war was seen as providing ‘an opportunity for the vindication of the national character, public school training, and the work of the school in emphasizing loyalty to country and empire’ (Crotty 2001: 89). Such sentiments are illustrated in Francis Brown’s remarks about the enthusiasm of old boys at the Geelong Grammar School speech day in 1914:

The readiness with which men answer to the call made upon them in the time of the Empire’s need is the best test of the stuff they are made of and of the training they have received. The sense of duty and responsibility, the subordination of personal interest—that is the very essence of the Public School spirit, which now takes a wider range and

manifests itself in devotion to the service of the country (Brown, Speech Day: December 1914).

Indeed, the sacrifices in World War I were displayed as an exoneration of the public school and its training. By contrast, the Women's Political Association was at the centre of resistance to the war, claiming as early as 7 August 1914:

The association hopes that women everywhere, the lifegivers of the world will work henceforth with one mind to destroy the perverted sense of national honour and demand that international disputes shall be adjusted by arbitration. This association resolves to cable to the President of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance, asking that women of all nations be urged to support the actions of President Wilson and plead for immediate arbitration (Woman Voter quoted in Shute 1986).

But, as things turned out, women in both World War I and World War II were sent to the war as nurses. Roma Donnelly indicates that their bravery in the line of duty was scarcely recognised, nor was their duty in the ordnance factories: 'this was another battlefield altogether, and almost as dangerous as the fields of war where their husbands and sons were fighting and dying' (Donnelly cited in Saltau: *The Age*, 25 April 2001). Donnelly notes that 'they used lathes and presses, filled cartridges with explosives, ground precision lenses and worked in drawing offices, stores and laboratories, overturning the myth that women were passive and unable to make decisions' (Donnelly cited in Saltau: *The Age*, 25 April 2001).

The needs of nation and empire, causing the loss of tens of thousands of Australian males in World War I, were defined by the older middle class generation. It was all the more tragic due to British imperialism and Australian nationalism. The penchant for the public school 'boy culture' and nationalism intertwined with the bush legend played a major part in developing Australian masculinity. Consequently, the nationalist and militarist constructions of manliness brought about the xenophobic and harmful qualities that excluded women.

Granted that, Australians have been outstanding at and enjoying sport since the Australian colonies began competing with each other. Smith points out that, when in 1996 Australians were asked to determine the things in which they took most pride, 69% voted for sport followed by science. Matters to do with politics, including the way democracy works followed. The dominance of the White hegemonic, middle class, athletic male may not be as striking now as at the start of the Twentieth Century, but certain forms of masculinity continue to exercise over the power of women. Men dominate in sport; they still dominate in politics. There has never been a woman Prime Minister and there are no women ready to be elected to that position in the Government, neither is there a woman favoured as Leader of the Opposition. Furthermore, all leadership positions in the ALP Victorian Branch are males with no signs of relinquishing their leadership roles. In addition, and associated with athleticism in the Australian culture, the militarist ideology of masculinity has been highly utilised since before the turn of the century.

The bushman, the athlete, the soldier and the male-power seekers have appeared as the answer to the 'boy problem' and the perceived threats of invasion of the Australian nation. But the adulation of these qualities has been so intense and so determined that the possible support for the Australian life of women has been disregarded or misrecognised. Masculinity is still treated as something essential by leaders of the ALP.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STRUCTURE/ORGANISATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY: women's exclusion from full political citizenship

Section A: The origins of caucus.

One of the major obstacles to gaining women's support for the Labor Party has been its traditional structure: machines, steering committees, complicated trade union connections. These antiquated, unrepresentative, male-dominated hierarchies with their mysterious and indirect ways of getting the numbers for preselections and the election of Party officers deter many women who are otherwise attracted to Labor policies.

Susan Ryan quoted in Curtain and Sawyer 1996: 152

Within the period 1901 and 1943, and then from 1968 to 1974, the Labor Federal Caucus was deprived of female representation (Simms 1991: 43). Therefore, equal formal rights for women in the ALP have not been translated into equal participation in political processes. As a result, the criteria for full political citizenship have excluded and marginalized women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch. This Chapter shows that the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party (FPLP) was founded in a semi-democracy that excluded half of the population.

This is further evidenced by the fact that there has never been a woman Prime Minister in Australia. This study, in essence then, relates to and discusses factors associated with the way in which women relate to politics. More importantly, it endeavours to explain the under-representation of women in the echelons of power in the ALP, particular situations, disincentives, discrimination, anything construed as disadvantageous to women will be sought. The organisation and structure of the Victorian Branch of the ALP will be examined in Chapter Five.

The Party

The ALP, which celebrated its hundredth anniversary in 1991, is Australia's 'oldest political party' (Warhurst 1994: 139). It has kept its name and its place in Australia's political system, its formation and its major relevance while other political parties, both minor and major, has lesser histories of consistency and durability. The ALP has endured periods of intense internal disorder, resulting in three critical schisms and in the desertion to other political parties of a number of its principal national and State leaders (Warhurst 1994: 139). The resulting periods of isolation for the party created doubts as to its survival for its members and supporters. Notably, it is not the most highly successful of Australia's national political parties. Indeed, despite its notable success in the 1980s and early 1990s under Hawke and Keating, it has, during its history, been conspicuously ineffectual in national elections. It has been decidedly more successful at State level in the most heavily populated State, New South Wales, although rather less fortunate in the second-most populous State, Victoria (Warhurst 1994: 139).

The formation of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party (FPLP) in 1901 was the result of 'several decades of experimentation by Australian trade unions with various forms of political activity'. Its early customs and 'first platform' were determined by findings that 'Party activists' had formed from their many disappointing observations and failures of earlier colonial politics, and their appreciation of the basis of the 'Labour Movement's past successes and failures' (Bongiorno 2001: 3). The Party had, by 1901, established within Australian politics a more recent understanding of democracy. Blue-collar voters, in theory at least, were to take part in forming Party policies as well as having the chance to pick prospective candidates between elections and vote for 'Labor candidates at election time.'

The Labour Movement constructed an organized system – Executive, Party Conference, Caucus and Pledge to make certain that ‘Labor Parliamentarians remained securely under the control of an extra-parliamentary organisation representative of the Labour Movement’ (Weller 1975: 54). MPs were to be ‘delegates rather than representatives’; their function was to behave in agreement with the directions given them by their directors, ‘the Party rank and file and the union movement’ (Bongiorno 2001: 4). The misrecognition of women as candidates was not an issue and one that was ignored for many decades; therefore, Australian political citizenship has advantaged men and excluded women.

In point of fact, one hundred and four years later, it is ‘difficult to understand the originality of Labor’s theory of democracy’, but it was determined by the connection between citizenship, party and class that set apart the early Labor Party from its opponents. It actually extended to a refusal to accept notions articulated by Edmund Burke in his renowned speech on representative democracy to the Bristol electorate. In Burke’s view, a delegate should not surrender (Bongiorno 2001: 4) ‘his unbiased opinion, his mature judgement, his enlightened conscience’, which were ‘a trust from Providence’ (Burke 1924: 164). In contrast, an ALP writer insisted:

The man who considered himself in advance of the people had his proper place outside the House as a propagandist agent. But in Parliament he should represent the opinions of the majority which elected him...if a man was out of line with the majority, let him educate that majority to his own opinions, but let him not pretend to represent those with whom he was out of accord (Ferguson, *Australian Workman*, 18 November 1893).

There are two useful sources for this discussion: Ross McMullin (1991) *The Light on the Hill: The Australian Labor Party 1891-1991* and John Faulkner and Stuart Macintyre (2001) *True Believers: The Story of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party*. McMullin’s work is at

times a turbulent study of the Australian Labor Party. *True Believers* is a study of Caucus and the work of thirty writers – Canberra press gallery reporters and columnists, historians, political scientists and past and present Members of Parliament. Of major interest will be a chapter written by Marian Simms. The second concept in the chapter studies the formation of the Labor Party: its historical foundation and the Labour Movement. Parkin, Summers and Woodward's (1994, 2002), *Government, Politics, Power and Policy in Australia* (5th and 7th editions) also Singleton, Aitkin, Jinks and Warhurst (2000), *Australian Political Institutions*, (6th edition) will be consulted. The evidence confirms that the dominance of factions in the ALP remains prevalent in 2005.

Early factions did not exercise the formalities of modern factions, but they were decidedly powerful and over-rigid; they have always been a feature of the ALP and form concept three of this chapter. Journalist Michelle Grattan writes that factions have become a principal organising element of the modern ALP; that they will not disappear but most factional leaders see their strengths as relatively 'benign Party units that no longer possess the sharp and sometimes damaging edge of their heyday' (Grattan 2001: 264). This theory is widely disputed in 2005. (see Chapter 9).

Preselection will be a major topic throughout the thesis and Marian Simm's (2001) work in 'Women in Caucus' in *True Believers* will be consulted. She claims that at the electoral level, by 1990, more Labor women were presenting for preselection, but they were more likely to be competing for marginal seats against other women. Simms (1993) writes in *A Woman's Place*, that not enough is known about the preselection process but she does show tables comparing women and men candidates. In Chapter Three, she also writes about

‘Women as Candidates’ claiming that men will not give up roles of power. According to this opinion, the ALP is a male-dominated party with preselection problems leading to an unsocialistic attitude to women in the Party keeping them from power.

The emergence of the Australian Labor Party

Australian politics was radically transformed by the 1890s. Graziers moved to slash shearers’ rates of pay due to the plummeting prices for wool. The lowering of shearing rates was resisted robustly by the Shearers’ Union with strikes against employers who would not pay the union rate (Singleton et al 2000: 237). A strike by shipping officers in August 1890, though unrelated to the price of wool, triggered a number of strikes in additional industries, including wool. Singleton et al note that, due to the anxiety caused by the relating breakdown in the economy, employers and workers all followed conflicting viewpoints (Singleton et al 2000: 238). The failure of the strikes and lockouts impelled unions to study the political system. Their purpose was to accomplish their aims by the ‘election of union representatives to Parliament and, through them, the formulation of laws that would protect the interests of workers, a strategy that formed the basis of Australian labourism’. Their first attempts were highly encouraging; more than one quarter of the Legislative Assembly seats in NSW were won by the new Labor Electoral Leagues. Indeed, in the next few years the other colonies gained similar success. Yet it was in Queensland in 1899 that the first Labor Government was formed and held office briefly (Singleton 2000: 238). It is worth noting that politics-as-usual at this time was totally men’s politics. In the late 1890s many women in Australia gathered and formed political organizations: the Australian Women’s National League, the National Council for Women, the Australian Federation of Women Voters, the Franchise League and many more (Henderson 1999: 3-4). But they were always alongside or

outside of the Labour Movement. While Singleton writes that Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia had ‘what were then among the most democratic constitutions in the world’ I argue that women were not included in their formation therefore they were not totally democratic (Singleton 2000: 237). Furthermore, from the outset of the Labour Movement, women’s efforts to gain even a foothold in the emerging Party met with failure.

Macintyre indicates that the FPLP was formed in the late autumn of 1901 when twenty-four members of the first Commonwealth Parliament met in Melbourne. The Federal Conference and Federal Executive, with the officers who supported the function of the Party, were formed subsequently (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 17). From the outset, these parliamentarians did so to form a new kind of political Party – the ALP – a national institution. As the new Commonwealth was established at the beginning of the last Century, ‘these forces decided that they should stand candidates in the elections for its legislature’ (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: xx). The successful candidates in the first Federal Elections ‘thus met as the Labor Caucus’ (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: xx).⁴ Faulkner and Macintyre note:

Sometimes this has involved a plebiscite of local Party members, sometimes a central panel: sometimes a combination of both. On occasions state branches or the National Executive have intervened to overturn a preselection or determine a preselection outcome. Aggrieved preselection candidates have the right of appeal to the National Executive. The relationship between Caucus members and the Party workers who help choose them and labour for their election is a pervasive influence on Caucus itself; the member who neglects or defies the Party rank and file is risking the loss of preselection. Members of Caucus have to maintain a presence in their electorate and ensure that its work is explained to the local branch members; they provide a human dimension to the flow of information from the FPLP (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: xxviii).

⁴ The term ‘Caucus’ has a history in Australian political terminology that pre-dates the formation of the FPLP. The first recorded usage by Federal Labor members was on 3 July 1901 when they discussed what would constitute a ‘quorum of caucus’.

The Caucus was formed to provide suitable political representation for working people and remains an integral part of the Labor Party. Indeed, the continuance of Caucus is an impressive aspect of Australian politics. At the outset, because their members were almost all political amateurs who were ignorant of how laws evolved or how Government really functioned, the new Labor Party did not try to take office themselves. The Party plans, therefore, 'were to trade support for concessions – to offer to vote for a particular Bill in return for something that Labor wanted' (Singleton et al 2000: 238). The expeditious result was that the balance of power was held by Labor or, at a minimum, a control out of proportion to its size. There were no women in the original Caucus, therefore their political citizenship status was minimal due to their political inferiority. Thus the political rights given to women (such as the franchise) failed to bring about their equal access to the Labour Movement.

Furthermore, until the early 1960s, there were only fifteen women in all seven Parliaments and just one woman, Senator Dorothy Tangney, in the ALP Federal Caucus. Marian Simms writes that 'the circumstances were patently inhospitable to women performing public political roles'. The wisdom of modern masculine males determined that to be a woman meant that she should be situated in the home (Simms 2001: 220). Indeed, it was a common belief that women were not attuned to politics. Further on in this Chapter, it will be shown that preselection has been a major feature of why women have been excluded from major roles in the ALP.

Members and internal organisation

The Federal Caucus is the basis and functioning activity of the Australian Labor Party's obligation to parliamentary democracy. This agreement was the foundation of its beginning

in pre-federation Australia in 1891. As early as 1904, Labor sought to form a Federal Government with John Christian Watson as its leader. In his 'Light on the Hill' statement, Chifley talked about the Labor structure and its people (Beazley 2001: xix). Beazley notes that the association between the Caucus and the Party's other constituent parts – 'the National Conference, the National Executive, and Party's organisation, the branches and the rank and file; and for Labor in Government, the crucial relationship between Caucus and Cabinet' (Beazley 2001: xix). Faulkner and Macintyre try to work out how these relationships form and decide that they are 'often tense, sometimes tangled but, ultimately, strong and unbroken' (Beazley 2001: xix). It is timely to recall Gough Whitlam's introductory remarks to the Caucus (Minutes 1901-1949s edited by Patrick Weller). Whitlam stated in 1974: 'The Federal Parliamentary Labor Party is the most representative of all the decision-making councils of the Australian Labor Party' (Beazley 2001: xix). Although Beazley claims that the Australian Labor Party is a democratic people's party, this thesis will show that, historically, men gained key elements of citizenship while women have lacked status as citizens. Indeed, the Australian Labor Party remains patriarchal; it has excluded women from leadership positions and is therefore quite undemocratic.

The origins of the party system in Australia

The Federal Caucus is the living and working expression of the Australian Labor Party's commitment to parliamentary democracy (Beazley 2001: xviii).

The concepts of discipline, organisation and ideology of present parties are unlike those which operated in the colonial politics of the Nineteenth Century. 'Responsible Government' operated in the older colonies in the Mid-Nineteenth Century and by 1858 South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales had what were then among the most democratic constitutions in the world, with universal manhood suffrage and the secret ballot applying for elections for

the lower house of the two-chamber Parliaments (Singleton et al. 2000: 237). Women did not have the vote at this time; they were marginalised then and continue to be marginalised now. They were excluded from the challenges of the social and political agitation that gave rise to the Australian Labour Movement and its parliamentary manifestations, the emerging Labor Parties. Therefore, the exclusion of women when the forming of the Australian Labor Party took place has not been an open and democratic process.

The Cabinet: Its origin and Women's participation

As with other political parties, Cabinet is a contemporary creation affixed to the Westminster system. Indeed, Australia functions inside a Westminster legacy, that is with political practice and customs 'modelled on procedures from the Houses of Parliament in Westminster, London' (Davis 1994: 45) and it has consistently marginalised women. In fact, it was 1983 before there was a Labor woman Cabinet Minister but, according to Reynolds, eager women who insist on promoting their point of view in the Cabinet have been classed by some colleagues as 'trouble-makers', 'loose cannons', 'over-emotional' or even 'hysterical'. She says that recently, after a Cabinet meeting, a female Minister was portrayed as 'right over the edge'. Yet, she had simply upheld a portfolio commitment from being weakened by 'economic rationalists' (Reynolds 1995: 120). A similar defence by her male colleagues would normally be considered as a sign of strength and earn respect. This form of inconsistency might be seen as a particular problem for women.

The problem is that men have had things their way for so long that now they are easily threatened, so they retaliate by describing assertive women as 'unattractive' or 'lesbians' (Reynolds 1995: 120).

Alan Ramsey, political journalist, has sought to describe the process of women's limited ability to access political power in the form of leadership roles:

There are rarely any free kicks for women in politics. No matter how much ability they might have and whatever the expedient rhetoric of the time, men run politics and women get only what men allow them to have. Mostly they're manipulated, exploited and patronised (Ramsay, *Ita*, September 1993).

Davis claims that rules afford a consistency in proceedings, planned so that Cabinet contemplates methodologically the 'political, policy and administrative implications of Government business' (Davis 1994: 48). To be full citizens, women need to number 50 per cent to be included equally in the performance of ALP business in the Cabinet. At the time of the 1993 post-election reshuffle of the Keating Cabinet, only three women out of thirty Ministers were chosen (Porter 1994: 341). Therefore, while women represented a mere 10 per cent of the Cabinet it is not possible for Davis to argue that an 'Executive Committee of Government' or Cabinet is considered to be a meeting of equals. This evidence suggests that women's political citizenship is marked by gaps, exclusions and the lack of women in leadership roles.

Granted that, in the Twentieth-Century ALP, Anglo-Celtic privilege and masculine privilege have mainly dominated the discourse of citizenship. In 1983, Senator Susan Ryan was appointed to Cabinet by Prime Minister Bob Hawke, becoming Minister for Education. Furthermore, in the Crean and Latham's leadership roles in 2004 and Beazley's in 2005, it might be noted that Jenny Macklin, the Deputy Head of the ALP has been the second in command to three male heads. Therefore, since the Leader of the ALP has always been male, it must be assumed that the hierarchy is heavily patriarchal. Women in Cabinet in the

ALP need role models for guidance due to their being no clear precedents to follow for access to leadership positions.

Section B: The role of the Prime Minister

Because the Prime Minister's leadership depends on being supported by his party and, in particular, on the reliance of his most senior Ministers, the significance of the Prime Minister's role should be perceived within the structure of the Cabinet system. One relies upon the other – the Government for a leader and the Prime Minister for status. The Prime Minister does not stand alone despite media reflection; he or she must work with or through Cabinet Ministers (Davis 1994: 53). But women might argue that not only is there imbalance in the structural organisation of the ALP but also, to be a democratic system, there would need to be equal numbers of men and women in the Cabinet and Shadow Ministry and preferably equals in seniority. However, politics, guided through Cabinet and Parliament, manifested in the office of Prime Minister, furnishes an unequalled possibility to make a difference in society. But the structure remains a citadel for 'blokishness' and mateship. Julia Gillard observes: 'Women are no longer an oddity in the ALP, but the culture is the product of a history when we were' (Gillard cited in Simms 2001: 232). The paradox therefore limits women's access to full political citizenship.

However, it is significant that the ALP, for all it has reeled from one disaster to another, has not enlisted women in its history. The misrecognition of women has restricted their accessibility to leadership positions in the Party. The power to control decision-making at State and national levels has been monopolised by men, but women are now expecting a share in policy-making and higher participation in more objective power-sharing structures.

Regardless of the changes to the organisation and the operation of the Party, it has been 'argued by the proponents of critical mass theory that women need to make up at least a quarter of the membership of a body in order to have an impact on it. Labor women have just reached that threshold in the Commonwealth Parliament' (Simms 2001: 234-5). Yet, despite the increase of women gaining ALP preselection and entering Parliament, the pronounced general transformation has seldom included women in leadership roles.

Jupp writes that the new leaders in the Hawke Government gave the party a new air of difference in representation. They were more likely to be university-educated, less likely to have a trade union background or to have been manual workers and most probably they would be professionals. They were more than likely to be Australian-born, and less likely to be Catholic (Jupp 1983: 113). Some traditional features remained. Most noticeably, there were no women in the FPLP leadership. In fact, the Party remained resistant to pressure from women.

Throughout the first eighty years of the FPLP, the position of women remained critically low. Indeed, McMullin writes that in 1960 a Queenslander observed that 'In the Labor Party women are not first-class citizens' and yet Labor 'has always sided with the under-dog'. She warned that 'if women in the ALP did not get a fair go soon the party might find the under-dog is prepared to adopt good Labor militant tactics and insist upon their right to strike—they won't make cups of tea and wash up' (McMullin 1991: 305). A similar warning was issued in Tasmania when Phyllis Benjamin MLC claimed that women in the party were 'sick of being kitchen angels' and being marginalised from the positions that mattered. Not only were women excluded from positions of power in the ALP, but McMullin claims that early

in 1966 a Victorian Labor spokesman expressed the view decisively that Labor would 'recruit attractive women to act as glamorous ALP [hostesses], who would form a feminine flying gang to assist Labor leaders and members where necessary in their contacts with the public' (McMullin 1991: 305).

By advocating that there should be women acting as 'glamorous hostesses' to support male MPs confirms that the Victorian Labor spokesman considered women would be better employed as sex objects rather than parliamentary equals. This argument is based primarily on the exclusion of women from power roles in the ALP, therefore they are not recognised as full political citizens. It is also noted that throughout the history of the ALP it is men who have controlled the power structures and only in the last thirty years has their monopoly been earnestly challenged by women members supported by the women's movement. Even so, the capacity to exercise policy decision-making continues to be the prerogative of men with few exceptions.

Ideology

The Labor Party's democratic socialist code of conduct incorporates 'political and social values of equality, democracy, liberty and social co-operation' (Singleton et al 2000: 267).

And they define a series of 'objectives' that include:

- a fairer distribution of political and economic power;
- restoration of full employment;
- the abolition of poverty;
- greater equality in the distribution of income and wealth;
- equal access and rights to employment, education and other community services and activities;
- more democratic control, ownership and participation in Australian industry;
- maintenance of world peace; and

- an independent Australian position in world affairs (Singleton et al 2000: 267).

Singleton et al argue that Labor's ideology is focused on the conception that in significant ways 'people were born equal'; that it is the Australian way of life that causes inequality. Therefore, it is the duty of the party 'to promote equality through its actions in Government' (Singleton 2000: 267). Its targets mirror this 'democratic socialist base to its ideology and include [the abolition of poverty and the achievement of greater equality in the distribution of income, wealth and opportunity] (Singleton et al 2000: 268). From this conviction flow two additional convictions that:

- equality and freedom go together; and
- Governments must have power in order to deal effectively with the vested interests (private groups) which reduce both (Singleton et al 2000: 268).

Labor believes that the poor, the Aborigines, the dispossessed and the jobless cannot seriously be said to be 'free' so long as they are without an income, hungry or jobless. This approach, writes Singleton et al, is the basis of the Labor Party's priorities outside Australia as well as within (Singleton 2000: 268). Labor is therefore, 'internationalist', signifying that it is supportive of the United Nations and corresponding agencies (Singleton 2000: 268). Singleton et al claim the ALP has never been totally socialist, for two reasons:

- the importance in its ranks of [Roman] Catholics; and
- Australia's working class for the last century has been affluent enough to enjoy benefits of private property (Singleton et al 2000 268). [Platform amended from 1970s on].

So, for the Labor Party, socialism is the objective, but only where enterprises are not being run for the common good. Thus, the Labor Party 'platform states its ideology to be democratic socialism' (Singleton 2000: 268). Singleton et al write that:

It also has a labourist foundation because of its relationship with its affiliated trade unions. This adds a particular trade union element to the party's democratic socialist concept of achieving its objectives through the parliamentary process. In practice, its ideological and labourist underpinnings have been modified by a pragmatic tendency to do what is required to gain office or procure its survival in Government (Singleton 2000: 269).

While the ALP organisation calls on greater equality within the structure and ideology of the Party, the current political structures lack balance and insight due to the exclusion of more equitable numbers of women representatives in the ranks and in leadership roles. How then can we develop new ways of talking and thinking about formal citizenship and political and social values of equality in the ALP? For instance, to gain full political citizenship requires equal access to leadership roles with power and authority, but not only is the gendered dimension of the ALP seen as inescapable in 2005, but also the norms of patriarchy as shown to be embedded in the ALP and closely correlated with dominance will continue to resist challenge unless a greater numbers of women Members determine to enforce a political code of equality.

Organisation /Unions

A coherent analysis shows women are persistently misrecognised at all levels of the Australian Trade Union Movement. Rae Cooper writes that men are more likely to join unions and to be more highly represented at all levels of the Union Movement. She states that the more senior the position is in the union organisation and the more political power a position holds, 'the less likely it is that a woman will hold it' (Cooper 2000: 54). She writes that women are most likely to be situated in the less 'powerful positions within the unions' (Cooper 2000: 54). Nightingale adds that women are engaged as specialist officers who occupy elected positions rather than appointed places and, as a rule, are prone to occupying honorary assignments rather than full-time, paid 'officers positions' (Nightingale 2000: 54). (Jennie George and Sharan Burrow as ACTU presidents have been notable exceptions).

However, Singleton explains that it is in the hands of electoral councils the selection and endorsement of parliamentary candidates rests. Furthermore, State Executives and sometimes the National executive have occasionally intruded to succeed in obtaining their own carefully chosen candidate (Singleton et al 2000: 269). But union delegates are significantly represented in the National Conference where the male power networks still exist and the formidable male culture remains evident. Nevertheless, women themselves continue to argue that positions of power in the ALP and the Union Movement should be accessible to women.

Singleton et al point out that Labor's National Conference commands media attention and is now accessible to the community (due to the reforms of Whitlam in 1967). In addition, it meets bi-annually unless there is a Federal Election in that year. At the National Conference in 1994, the ALP members who are predominantly male attempted to redress the gender imbalance by implementing a quota system that 'requires women to be pre-selected for 35 per cent of winnable seats by the year 2002' (Singleton 2000: 269). However, to reach a target by 2002 of women in winnable seats was impossible. As Jill Hennessy writes: 'if every retiring parliamentarian were replaced with a woman, the target would still not be met'.

This thesis is stressing the present imbalance not only between the proportions of women in the ALP and in the electorate, but it stipulates that women are less able than men to participate in leadership positions in the ALP. There is a need to do away with this imbalance and accomplish authentic democratic and demographic standards in the ALP not only for the purpose of the community in general, but in issues that affect women more than men; particularly for women's inclusion in education policies and the structuring of early childhood services and in areas that might be neglected in the absence of women as in trade unionism. Many women have

otherwise seen the ALP as the bastion of male power restricting women's accessibility to official leadership positions of power in the ALP. There would appear to be no justification in denying women the opportunities to gain power in the ALP simply because of their gender. To further understand the functioning of the ALP, the key is to turn to factional structure.

Factions

Parkin stresses that 'faction' is a complex term with meanings that might be seen as pejorative. It is used here in the sense of describing an 'association *within* a party *across* various hierarchical levels and organisational components' (Parkin 1983: 23). Parkin notes that factions vary, some can be 'loose and ephemeral' while others might be 'durable and institutionalised'. Some might have their own caucuses and journals, office-holders and support staff. One faction winning control of party procedures including representation on national party bodies, preselection or policy formulation might dominate executive positions in the Branch. Such a dominant faction might be referred to as the 'machine' (Parkin 1983: 23).

Parkin explains that 'ideological and programmatic commitment' is one plausible origin of factionalism. Yet some party members could advance 'sophisticated ideological positions', but generally the ALP 'has not experienced the refined debates often featured in some of its European counterparts' (Parkin 1983: 23). Many other MPs develop 'less sophisticated ideological associations' formed from a mixture of pressures, personal friendships, family background and political persuasion or life experiences. For instance and very broadly, an ideological image from left to right might be noticeable and the factional agreement might conform (Parkin 1983: 23). One view is that the Labor Party faction process is strictly satisfactory, that consensus will succeed. Another view might be that most of those chosen

will be the best available talent. Additionally, faction warlords may concede to the wishes of the leader of the Party under certain conditions. But certain features of ALP Party culture, such as factionalism, can exacerbate disadvantages for women. Therefore we should reflect more about concepts of full political citizenship values or consider that we want a Constitution which reflects the values of women rather than predominant legal ones excluding women. But factional warlords continue to dominate women in the ALP.

Alternatively, some MPs fail to gain Front Bench promotions chiefly because they are located in the ‘wrong State or the wrong faction’. In other words, generally, the factions mainly choose not only who sits on the front bench, but they also decide the group from which they are selected in the first place. (*The Weekend Australian*, 17-18 November 2001). For instance, in July, 2001, Carmen Lawrence, former Premier of Western Australia, when on the front bench, confirmed her theory that:

In general, factions within the parties control the branches and manoeuvre for control of seats or regions, which then become their fiefdoms. New members [who] they do not control are a threat. Candidates for safe and winnable seats are then chosen from within the group [that] controls the area...Contests for marginal and unwinnable seats are left to the naïve – or to women’ (Lawrence cited in Steketee: *The Weekend Australian*, 17-18 November 2001).

A week later Lawrence added:

I know lots of people who have tried to join the Labor Party and left because they didn’t happen to enjoy the patronage of people (Lawrence cited in Steketee: *The Weekend Australian*, 17-18 November 2001).

She conceded that this was the position in many institutions but indicated that ‘democracy carried with it special responsibilities’. She asked in her July speech:

What kind of representation is it where the candidates are not even remotely typical of the wider society, even using crude indicators such as age, gender, income and occupation? The greater the distance of representatives from electors, the greater the mistrust (Lawrence cited in Steketee: *The Weekend Australian* 17-18 November 2001).

In public consciousness Labor has sustained intolerant perceptions due to the power of factions and trade unions. Therefore, it remains doubtful that, if women who undertake preselection for safe seats, that are not the subject of factional deals will be successful. It is almost always men who negotiate 'deals' in the Labor Party. The Labor Party remains a highly factionalised structure where the dominant factional operatives are men (Hennessy 2000: 224-5). Therefore, one may plausibly argue that women are only successful if they are assisted by or supported by male leaders who control blocks of voting members.

Women have yet to control their progress and the consequences of their own preselection. Sawyer and Simms write that women are, however, 'still welcome as cannon fodder of the electoral process, namely, as candidates in unwinnable constituencies...' (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 64). They mention a campaign leaflet; 'There is a role for women in the Australian Labor Party' (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 64). Floated by the ALP secretariat, it is an attempt to stimulate political major propaganda from the 'Affirmative Action' drive urging women to enter the Party. Some women candidates were not optimistic about their chances. Sawyer and Simms quote one who said 'The big disadvantage of being a woman, I fear, will be when I have reduced this seat to a winnable percentage and I expect then to face serious challenge for the right to stand again'. Another candidate wrote that she procured her 'endorsement' because the seat was considered as unwinnable for a male Labor candidate therefore suitable for a woman. 'A bit of a surprise when I won she claimed...' ((Sawyer and Simms 1993: 70). Additionally, Hennessy writes that formal factions (or subgroupings) within the ALP are firmly established

by the 'weight of history'. She claims that, in recent years, there has been some Party and media debate regarding the professed failure of the factional system, 'anyone who has been closely involved in a preselection will be able to confirm that the tribes are still at war' (Hennessy 2000: 227). She adds that:

For many Party members there is a view that their factional loyalties are a priority, and a culture of [faction before party] often prevails. In the current environment the factions are tightly controlled and obsessively loyal to their leaders, who are almost always men (Hennessy 2000: 227).

Of the official factional bodies, there are few women recognised as the leader or in the positions of leaders or arbitrators in the ALP. What is of concern is that, after the preselection process and after the process of their actual selection, women often remain tied to their faction leader (Hennessy 2000: 227). Considering the faction leaders are mainly men, Hennessy raises concerns that from the inception, the matter of formal political citizenship has been subtly structured in highly exclusive male terms.

Therefore, although it is suggested that factions and preselection matters are being addressed within the Labor Party, an increase in the proportion of women in the Party does not guarantee more power for women in the ALP. Indeed, one can detect through interviews that, after the faction squabbles involved in their preselection battles, some women continue to be beholden to the male power brokers who helped them in their success. Therefore, the perceivable barriers to women proposing to enter the ALP as parliamentarians should be methodically investigated and suppressed. Without this being accomplished, avenues of progress towards women gaining positions of leadership within the ALP remain limited.

Some progress for women

Simms points out that when the FPLP regained office after the 1983 Election, Susan Ryan was elected by Caucus to be the first woman Minister in the ALP. She gained the role of assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women along with her portfolios of Education and Youth Affairs. In the 1983 Election, the ALP fielded eleven women in seats that required a swing of less than six per cent. In addition to the three women already sitting three new women were elected. Helen Mayer (Chisholm, Vic) Wendy Fatin (Canning, WA) and Jeanette McHugh (Phillip, NSW) all won seats from the Liberals. Joan Child, Ros Kelly and Elaine Darling each held their marginals. Yet women ALP candidates felt that their achievements might easily 'generate a backlash' (Simms 2001: 223). An anonymous candidate commented:

A lot of prejudice, much of it unconscious, still exists among male ALP members against women candidates. Women don't get selected for safe seats – I'm sure the competition for my own place on the ticket would have prevented my winning if there had been a realisation that a double dissolution was possible (Sawer and Simms 1993: 59).

In the election of 1983, none of the women candidates stood for safe seats, but the new women members made minor inroads into the masculine culture of the Old Parliament House. In 1983 Ros Kelly, elected in 1980, pioneered a new course for women in the Labor Party, but Simms states that the progress made by those women in the Labor Party during the 1980s did not continue. The total number of women in the FPLP remained stationary at 'thirteen - from 1983 until 1987 - then fell in 1990 to eleven (Simms 2001: 226). Disillusionment continued when no women were granted preselection for 1996 in vacant sound Labor seats. Only two out of 51 safe Labor seats 'in the House of Representatives of the 1996 election', were contested by women (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 August 1996).

In 1998, more than twelve new women were elected to the ALP in the pro-Labor swing. Indeed Labor quadrupled its female representation in the House of Representatives to sixteen (Connolly: Labor Herald, June 1999). Therefore, it would appear that Labor is seeking greater balance in its parliamentary representation. Yet, for the ALP, the practice of dividing portfolios between the numbers men has left many observers dismayed over the lack of women in the front bench. A meeting of the NSW Right Federal Caucus in October 1998 chose 'five men as its nominees for the front bench – and no women' (Connolly: Labor Herald, June 1999). The decision means that Labor's strongest faction will have no women on the front bench (Cumming: The Australian, 13 October 1998). Women voters and women in the ALP require serious consideration. By disregarding their contribution to the ALP by reappointing a disproportionate number of men to senior positions is undoubtedly a major concern to women parliamentarians seeking senior appointments with a view to obtaining leadership positions.

By 2003, Labor Leader Simon Crean had six women in the Shadow Cabinet; Jacinta Collins having been approved in June 2003 by the full Caucus, that is, six out of twenty-nine members in the Shadow Ministry. While it is a definite change in historical terms it remains totally inequalitarian. Women make up one-third of the ninety-two, strong Labor Caucus and almost one quarter of the Government ranks (Crabb: The Age, 14 November 2003). Yet they fail to rate even a remotely proportionate representation in positions of power in the ALP. Therefore, if factional leaders are able to influence the outcome of preselection and to select men for positions of power in preference to women, it is essential to understand how factional leaders dominate the preselection process.

Preselection

Hennessy states that, for preselecting candidates within the Labor Party, all States have at least some 'component of a rank and file ballot'. However, some States have an added 'component where another party unit or elected group has a role in the selection of candidates (Hennessy 2000: 225). For the process of preselection itself for ALP candidates, Hennessy indicates that it almost always involves some measure of anxiety for both the party members who make the choice and the candidates themselves. Although there has been, in recent history, a number of instances of Labor State executives 'imposing candidates without ballots of members' (Hennessy 2000: 225). The failure to do so only reinforces the staunch opinions that Party members have regarding the 'importance of their personal involvement and their active role in choosing their local member'. In preselection ballots, whether for members or councillors, it should be noted that this is the process that should occur according to Party rules. 'There is nothing quite so stirring as a passionately delivered speech by a Party member denied their right to vote in a ballot' (Hennessy 2000: 225).

The Public Office Selection Committee (POSC) is a further component of the process for preselection local ballots and the outcome of the POSC ballots are given the same weighting to ascertain the overall outcome of the preselection. This system is not the same as in some State branches of the Labor Party where they do not have 'a centralised aspect to their preselection process and rely solely on a rank-and-file ballot' (Hennessy 2000: 226).

The structure of the POSC 'broadly represents the numerical influence of each faction or grouping within the party' (Hennessy 2000: 226). It is the factional nature of the POSC which means that members have often chosen whom they will support long before the

process of the selection starts. Often, arrangements between various factions have already determined the results before the majority of members of the POSC even know who the 'competing candidates are' (Hennessy 2000: 226). The POSC, therefore, seldom investigates the worthiness or unsuitability of a specific candidate. Even though the impending candidates are offered the chance to address the POSC prior to voting, this discourse is no more than a mere formality. For instance, when Kerry Chikarovski had taken over the leadership of the NSW Liberal Party a Labor opponent, Deputy Premier Andrew Refshauge, 'likened her to Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth 'on a bloody quest for absolute power'. Another woman who lost preselection was subject to an extraordinary outburst and was told that she had lost preselection because she was seen as a 'hard nosed bitch' (Hennessy 2000: 227). Not only is Hennessy showing that men use diverse means to retard the progress of women in the preselection process but one might argue that they are impeding women's attempts to gain preselection, power and leadership roles.

Therefore, if the Labor Party is to survive as the most influential political influence on the left of Australian society, it must be prepared to change its own political culture and framework: such changes will have effect on ALP factions and preselection procedures as the major components of the party. To democratise the ALP the party should abandon the cult of mateship voting structures and allow all party members a vote in elections for all Party positions as well as parliamentary Party positions. In addition, not only would it be advisable for the ALP to take action to ensure that women are equally represented with men in all key party positions, but having a quota system that comes first and foremost as the way of increasing women's representation is necessary. This evidence suggests that it was due to the quota rule passed in 1994 that factional powerbrokers were forced to recognise the many

talents of women. However, when it comes to preselection and advancement for women anomalies persist. Therefore, it would be advisable for the ALP to reassess its culture of binding caucus decisions and its factions. It would also be worthwhile for the ALP to have women fairly represented in both Houses of Parliament and in decision-making positions within the Party. Furthermore, it is undemocratic to find that women's achievements of freedom within the ALP and the equalities necessary to attain full political citizenship remains a torturous process, rarely proceeding in the same way or at the same time as men's. The next chapter, Chapter Five, will examine the structures/organisation of the Victorian Branch of the ALP, the split of 1955-57 in the ALP, the formation of the Democratic Labor Party and its effect on the power of women.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE VICTORIAN BRANCH OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

We have to find a political language that can recognize heterogeneity and difference.
Anne Phillips, 1991: 168

‘Organisation’, Robert Michels contends ‘is the weapon of the weak in their struggle with the strong’ (Michels 1962: 61). Parkin claims that organisation might be seen as the hallmark of all pre-eminent parties of the ‘Left in modern Western democracies’ (Parkin 1983: 15). Resembling them, the Victorian Branch of the Australian Labor Party is difficult to understand unless one can also appreciate the degree of endurance, weakness and strength, in its culture. One may well argue that in the way in which preselections are determined, the way in which candidates are recruited, and the way in which factions operate, all favour the dominance of men. As noted earlier, the assumption is that men operate in the public domain while women should be providing the coffee and tea and making the sandwiches, while not being involved in the ‘real’ work.

We have seen the link between the patriarchal culture and politics as discussed in Chapter Three, and the structure of the ALP in Chapter Four. I have chosen to write on the Australian Labor Party and its trade union associations in Chapter Five for two reasons: initially, because Chapter Five refers to the Victorian ALP, trade unions can ‘affiliate with the Australian Labor Party in each State, though not at the federal level’ (Singleton 2000: 269). In the second place, it is due to the ALP split of fifty years ago having its deep roots in the Victorian union bureaucracies and the Victorian Labor Government. This chapter also addresses how the

structure/organisation of the ALP Victorian Branch demonstrates further a formal misrecognition of women. Then we should consider how few women have been at the senior decision-making levels in the Victorian Branch of the ALP and what progress they are making now. Research is showing that the trend towards equality between men and women in the Victorian Branch of the ALP has ground to a halt; indeed it may be going backwards.

The Emergence of Organised Victorian Labor

John Faulkner notes that the ALP had been formed with the intention that its ‘parliamentary representatives’ should strive for more satisfactory conditions and wages for labouring people: ‘The principle of working-class solidarity was paramount’ (Faulkner & Macintyre 2001: 203). All Parliamentarians in the ALP from 1901 were compelled to undertake a pledge and support the Platform decided by the Party Conference. Additionally, they were compelled to accede to the greater number of votes in a ‘properly constituted Caucus, where every Parliamentarian had an equal vote and an equal say’ (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 203-4).

The stress of ongoing events on long-standing values lent encouragement to the emergence of a Labor Party in Victoria during the 1890s. The 1856 development and 1880 revitalisation of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council (THC), and the hostilities over protection and Legislative Council powers were influential (Wright 1992: 107). So, too, were conditions in the 1870s and 1880s and expanding demands for better working conditions in the 1870s and 1880s. The problem was the growing difference between the class of people who were employed for wages and the middle-class environment in Melbourne. Moreover, Wright indicates that ‘the conservative, craft-based nature of unionism in Victoria compared with

the industrial radicalism of New South Wales and Queensland' (Wright 1992: 107). They were some of the aspects of a shared labour heritage. It is possible to pursue this line of development in a more precise manner.

William Trenwith, a former THC president and then secretary of the Operative Bootmakers' Union, successfully contested the Assembly seat of Richmond. Heartened by this victory (and even more so by the prominence of Labor in South Australia and New South Wales), the THC proceeded to form local 'electoral committees' (Wright 1992: 108). There was another victory in April 1891, when John Hancock won the Lower House seat of Collingwood. In May 1891, the Trade Hall Councils of Bendigo, Geelong, Ballarat and Melbourne joined with the Amalgamated Miners Association, the Shearers' Union and the Social Democratic Federation to 'form the Progressive Political League' (Wright 1992: 108). Wright claims that the League endorsed candidates for the 1892 'general election' which resulted in the election of the Shiel Government. 'Thirteen of their men were successful. A proto-Labor Party could now be said to exist in Victoria' (Wright 1992: 108). Women were excluded from the formation of the ALP Victorian Branch due to their misrecognition. They were also excluded from voting until the Twenty-Third General Election in 1923.

A salient feature of the ALP Victorian Branch is its lack of electoral success until the 1980s. Compared with other Australian States, Victoria has been led by Labor for the 'shortest period, less than nine years since 1890' (Jupp 1983: 69) and 1982 (Cain 1995: xi). Or, as John Brumby pointed out in 1997, Labor, in the state of Victoria, has governed for fewer than fifteen years out of the past fifty and succeeded in polling more than 50 per cent of the primary vote twice only (Brumby 1997: 87). But, as a result of the success of the Bracks

Government in 1998 and its landslide victory in 2002 (Editorial, *The Age*, 6 December 2002), it is now, in 2005, a total of twenty-two years that the Labor government has been in power in Victoria. James Jupp writes that this poor performance has been somewhat attributed to the 'limited objectives' of the 'small craft unions which set up the party' and to the Victorian electorates rural bias prior to 1952. Catholic influence or, later, the absence of Catholic patronage added to the Party's weakness. Jupp adds that, since the Party was formed, it was usually in Opposition after a short-lived period in Government in 1913 (Jupp 1983: 69).

Whatever the reason, the Labor Party in Victoria has enjoyed little electoral success since its foundation. Some of the unions that supported it and the Party itself were self-destructive. Cain writes that the key dates when the ALP was eroded internally, over points of principle, included the 1916 (conscription), the 1931 (Premiers' Plan) and the venomous and bitter sectarian hostilities, strongly malicious in Victoria, that superseded the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) Split of 1955 (Cain 1995: 4). We should add the events of 1970, when the Federal ALP intervened in the Victorian Branch and introduced proportional voting for 'internal Party elections' (Cain 1995: 4). Each schism had long-term consequences that deeply affected the ideology of the Party while each rift consequently assured electoral triumph for the conservative opposition. Indeed, McMullin writes that:

Labor tended to settle for a subordinate role with a lowering of intellectual, ideological and perhaps moral expectations. Anti-Labor could afford to indulge in factional fights over the spoils of victory in the seedy atmosphere which characterised Victorian State politics for many years (McMullin 1991: 87-8).

STAGE 1

The Victorian Labor Party's history into the 1920s has been told elsewhere, therefore, this chapter will be confined to the four distinct periods it has passed through. Furthermore, it will also focus on how 'the Splits' have affected the Party, but most of all it will seek to convey the Victorian Labor Party's antipathy to women's involvement in the Party, their exclusion from leadership roles and their progress within the Party. Throughout its history, men have mostly dominated the Victorian ALP. After the departure of Premier, E. J. Hogan, in 1932, it was also ruled to a greater degree than before by men. (Jupp 1983: 69).⁵

Until 1955, Catholics largely directed the Party and, for the six years before that, it was under the influence of 'anti-Communist ideologues organised by B.A. Santamaria's Movement' (Murray 1970 cited in Jupp 1983: 69). Because of the success of the Movement, a whole generation of Victorian activists was dominated by this sectarian organisation. This led, after the Split in 1954-55, to the creation of the DLP. From 1949 to 1970, the Victorian Branch of the ALP was 'obsessed with ideological problems which were largely irrelevant or secondary elsewhere in Australia'. Jupp argues that only since 1970 has Labor slowly managed to rebuild an 'organisation and a constituency' and start to bring about the function envisaged of it, both within the Victorian Branch and in the Federal Parliament (Jupp 1983: 69). It started to lose its characteristic air of a 'ghetto' party restricted to the Irish-Catholic working class areas, then to the Trades Hall quarters and, for most of its former history to the 'working-class ghetto of northwest Melbourne' (Jupp 1983: 69-70).

⁵ Discussion on unions, factions, preselection and some progress for women in the ALP Victorian Branch will follow in Chapter six.

The Victorian Party started to gain momentum after its 1970-71 restoration by the Party's Executive in the early 1980s. It now had an effective leadership under a State secretariat that drew on more suitable talent than formerly (Jupp 1983: 70). There was a reduction in factional and sectarian discord, resulting in a fragmentation of the Victorian Liberals after twenty-five years in power. Despite trade union resentment over what they perceived as a subsidiary role, the Victorian Party organisation was larger than for many years and also had a better qualified membership. Furthermore, Jupp points out that the trade unions had submitted to an equal, (if not a secondary), role in the Party organisation. He writes that the settlement of disputes in 1971 by mutual concession and the declining influence of the National Civic Council (NCC) and the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) resulted in the institutionalisation of factionalism within the Party 'rather than involving charges of treachery' (Jupp 1983: 70).

To some extent, this period afforded both incentives and the background for developing and expanding policies that proceeded to alter the inflexible gender, role-playing divisions of Australia's patriarchal society. Reynolds states that Australian feminists are justified in claiming substantial recognition of the necessity for greater equality between men and women since the 1970s. This period afforded both the incentive and the foundation for instigating policies that would alter the previously inflexible 'gender role division' of society in Australia (Reynolds 1994: 125). Women began pursuing alternatives in the workplace, in the home, and their districts and were now questioning their failure to share power within the male-dominated Victorian Branch of the ALP.

Guideline Changes in the Victorian ALP

The Victorian ALP has altered its guidelines, direction, leadership and general features four times throughout the past sixty or seventy years. However, Jupp notes that one might describe as its first major change its period before 1950. This was essentially an Irish-Catholic machine party, 'actively engaged in State and municipal politics'. He says that 'opposition to its leaders came from militant industrial unions and from a small and ineffective Protestant middle-class group in the branches' (Jupp 1983: 70).

STAGE 2

The second stage occurred between 1950 and 1955 and, although it was limited, it was crucial and 'transitional'. The nervous alliance between Left-Wing union officials and Members of Parliament began to break down under pressure from anti-Communist political activists in the industrial groupings and because of the disappointment the unions felt for the State Labor Government. Hence, 'the ideologues pushed for the party's transformation into a purer, more committed vanguard' (Jupp 1983: 70). Yet, while many of the former political machines remained extremely pragmatic, the Party lost the loyalty of many; they lost the support of union officials who saw their own positions threatened by the 'new men'. However, they did not seek the support of the middle-class Left, the Communists or the industrial activists. As a result, these essentially different and once hostile groups united, forming an alliance with self-interest as its main concern. On the other hand, the actual splitting of the party was caused by outside intervention. Such interference emerged from the ALP outside Victoria and 'from the Movement leaders within the State but outside the Party' (Jupp 1983: 71). The divisiveness of the Split was larger than either the Movement or the Party anticipated due to each miscalculating their respective degrees of support.

But the role of women has been neglected as the Party evolved. Indeed, there is little reference to women taking part in the Victorian Branch of the ALP in the emergence of the Party and the next two decades other than in fund-raising. However, they were encouraged to 'bring a plate' and make numerous cups of tea for their menfolk. Another woman relates that, when she was the only woman involved in an all male fund-raising function, she was amazed to witness these phenomena: 'A female platoon marched in from the kitchen armed with the evening's food and then departed, leaving the men to eat it' (Reynolds: 1995: 24). However, Ross McMullin writes that, since women gained the vote, there was some awareness in the Party that women might form Labor women's organisations that showed special interest items that affected women. In Victoria, the PLC Women's Organising Committee had a hazardous start-stop beginning. Originally it was Lilian Locke who brought it into existence, but then others such as Jean Daley and Patrick Heagney's daughter, Muriel, became active (McMullin: 1991: 64). Yet the organisers of the Split excluded women in their organisation and tactics.

The role or equality of women was not a topic for discussion during the split. Indeed, Daniel claimed that 'Santamaria's plan for world order was premised on the oppression of women in an inherently unjust and inequitable family system' (Daniel cited in Ormonde 2000: 51).

STAGE 3

The third period, between 1955 and 1970, saw the formation of the 'Industrial Labor Party' preferred by the rival contenders of 'the machine' in the 1940s (Jupp 1983: 71). Due to the death of Ernie Shepherd and John Cain Snr, and the persistent decline in the ALP vote, the

influence of the ALP MPs became negligible. In addition, the aggressively active ‘militant industrial unions’ and those who had acquired eminence by their former resistance, both to the Movement and the Irish-Catholic machine, now dominated the Party (Jupp 1983: 71). Furthermore, the Party was now susceptible to the pressure of Communism, especially as some of the more powerful officials of some affiliated unions were not members of the ALP, but were in the CPA. Jupp claims this ‘Industrial Labor Party’ was politically futile, but it appeared united (Jupp 1983: 71). From the 1960s, the Party began to disintegrate and, through resistance to its demise, became to a greater degree more ideologically aligned to concepts not shared by the ALP anywhere else in Australia nor in the electorate. The advent of a new national leader, Gough Whitlam, was the decisive factor in the influential Left faction’s decay. Whitlam was firmly resolved to win national elections and he saw the Victorian Branch of the Party as the principal obstruction to this goal (Freudenberg 1977 cited in Jupp 1983: 71).

Jupp relates that, at the end of 1965, the initial meeting of what eventually became known as the ‘participants’ took place and in November they launched a periodical, *Labor Comment*. The participants were strongly opposed to the leftist Trades Unionists’ Defence Committee (TUDC), formed in 1961 by Percy Johnson, apparently, but not necessarily, to thwart the power of the National Civic Council (NCC) in the ALP and the unions (Jupp 1983: 72). The participants, according to Jupp, included men such as Richard McGarvie, John Button, Xavier Connor, John Cain Jnr and Barney Williams. Graham Freudenberg, Barry Jones, Graham Walsh and Race Mathews were later to support the participants. In 1970, following the resignation of McGarvie and the suspension of Jack Galbally, the Federal Executive intervened and the Branch was restructured the following year. Women played little part in

these battles. The struggle over ideology was for men while the absence from senior positions of people (especially women) who, because of ethnic background or gender, seemed to threaten the masculine Anglo-Celtic basis of the Party.

In the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s, there were no female MPs in the Victorian Legislative Assembly, although there had been one from the United Australian Party (UAP), one female Independent and one from Labor in the 1930s (Sawer and Simms 1993: 278). In 1967, the Hon Dorothy Goble (a Liberal) was elected to the Legislative Assembly. However, there were no women in the Victorian Legislative Council until 1979 (Simms 1991: 48). Indeed, women, according to Holmes, played a minor role in the party, to the point that, at the 1971 Conference, one of the delegates from the Women's Organisation brought forward a motion to disband the organisation because of its irrelevance (Holmes 1976: 113). At phase three, in the guideline changes of the ALP, (1955-1970); the Victorian Branch remained a man's world and the circumstances of Twentieth-Century women remains one of subjection. Consequently, a Labor woman was expected to uphold her husband's judgements and accept her role as a recipient of policy rather than as a participant in policy-making.

STAGE 4

In 1971, the fourth stage began. It was the only one in which the crude 'winner-take-all numbers game' was not played. It was also the beginning of changes in image and style. The Party had begun recently to recruit a well-educated and middle class membership. By institutionalising factionalism, it was intended that the Party could not be driven into yet another ideological dilemma. In addition, the decline of the Catholic and pro-Communist

ideological groups, which had been the dominant forces for a generation, allowed the restatement of winning elections as the party's primary objective. However:

The Victorian Branch of the ALP was still divided between radical socialists and reformist social democrats, but these positions are found in all labour parties in the world. The reconstructed party is based on institutionalised compromise between these two broad views and on a working relationship between its trade unionist and middle-class membership. It now operates through [creative tension] where previously it always veered towards domination by the winner of the 'numbers game' (Parkin and Warhurst 1983: 72).

The subordinate position of women in the Party began to change after the reconstruction of 1970. Arguably, the New Left, which influenced the ALP too, helped the rise of feminism. The New Left was much more sympathetic to women's liberation (second-wave Feminism) than the Old Left. Nevertheless, 'until the mid-1970s, at least 90 per cent of Conference delegates were men' (Jupp 1983: 85-6). Yet, while women members of the Victorian Branch were becoming active to a degree not hitherto witnessed there has been a gradual improvement in their chances of preselection. Still, any success in positions of power for women in the Victorian Branch of the ALP remained elusive and at least a decade away after the mid 1970s.

SPLITS: Consequences and Lessons

The 1916 ALP Split

The Federal Parliamentary Labor Party (FPLP) was severely damaged by schisms, on three different occasions: in 1916 due to the debate over military conscription, in 1931 when 'traumatised by the economic crisis during the Great Depression' and in 1954-55 when a response was called for to challenge communism. These splits caused extreme damage to Labor culminating in political 'irrelevance' that for decades kept it out of office (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 203).

Passing reference will be made in this chapter to the first two splits. However, the 1955 split will receive major attention due to the effect it had on the Victorian Branch of the ALP and the electorate. At the same time, the unfavourable treatment of women and their lack of access to official positions based on preconceived bias in the Victorian Branch of the ALP will continue to be argued in terms of a theory of patriarchy. Nevertheless, women's pragmatic achievements, though difficult to enumerate, were known to make major contributions to the continuing argument about women's expected functions and isolated roles in the Party. Thus, women experienced bias from the patriarchal politics of the Labour Movement and understood they were treated unfairly due to the socio-cultural dynamics of gender. In a response to the demands of World War I and the harsh strains the threat of conscription inflicted on Victorian society, party splits became inevitable. Indeed, 'faith in the efficacy of the parliamentary Labor Party had reached a nadir at the end of 1915' (Feeney and Smart 1985: 278).

As a consequence, underlying political inconsistencies gave rise to schisms. However, other pressures assisted in forming the specific splits and how their particular functions prevailed: that is the way certain politicians in the Party dealt with the problems; the demands of arduous periods or the leadership of the Party at that particular time (Faulkner 2001: 203). Women were also active in political circles outside the Party. Vida Goldstein and Adela Pankhurst repeatedly invoked 'women's maternal responsibilities' as the makers of peace. (Lake 1999: 64). As anti-war leaders and campaigners, Pankhurst, a feminist and socialist, and Goldstein, political activist and feminist, were subject to heavy censoring of their literary works while their political activities were also closely monitored by 'Military

Intelligence' (Lake 1999: 64). As a result, Pankhurst was imprisoned in 1917 after a fiery speech in Yarraville in Victoria (Macdonald 1976: Honours Thesis).

May Brodney, a member of the Women's Federal Political Association (later, the Women's Political Association, formed in 1903), preferred to support the lesser of the doctrinaire strategies of the non-party Women's Political Association (WPA), which she joined and supported during this period. The WPA provided a supportive atmosphere where Brodney could combine her political values with her interests in women (Feeney and Smart 1985: 277). One of Victoria's Labor organisers, Jean Daley, was a member of the Political Labor Council and the Women's Central Organising Committee that aimed to organize women industrially and to educate them politically (Feeney and Smart: 278). While feminists insisted that women should be looked upon as persons rather than as a sex, Daley wrote in her column 'Women to Women' in *Woman's Clarion*, the magazine of the Female Confectioners' Union, that 'in whatever employment – as banker or factory hand, statesman or mother – the woman should be paid for 'her work as an individual' (Daley 1927 cited in Lake 1999: 72). Both women worked energetically in opposition to the processes surrounding the introduction of conscription in a time of crisis; at the same time, they struggled for the recognition of their political ideas but without the support of rank or factions.

In the earlier splits as well as in the 1950s, the factions that could assist in containing degrees of disputes inside Caucus were neither as rigid or formalised as in the 1980s and 1990s. Indeed, the authority of the Federal Conference and the Federal Executive in 1916 or 1931 showed little similarity to the influence of the Federal Conference and the Federal

Executive in 2001 (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 203). These distinctive features of the current Party were convincing effects of the damaging inherent splits of previous years. In addition, when the first schism occurred in 1916, the FPLP and the Victorian Branch were in their early stages of development and facing the most major disunity in the new country. In fact, the actions of the Labor Prime Minister, W. M. Hughes, typified this tension (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 203).

Hughes was adamant about sending large numbers of troops to the war in Europe, ignoring the wishes of the Cabinet and Caucus and the views of the Party as a whole. In point of fact, large numbers in the Party and the Labour Movement as a whole were opposed to Australia's continuing participation in the war (Faulkner 2001: 203). But the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) – 'Wobblies', as they were known – were decidedly determined about their position. There was also a link between Irish Catholicism and anti-war sentiment and this affected a largely Catholic working class party. During World War I, luminaries such as Archbishop Mannix spoke alongside IWW radicals on anti-war platforms. The 1916 Easter Rebellion in Ireland crystallised opposition to support for 'England's war'. They were horrified by the carnage and would have preferred to concentrate on introducing a domestic platform for Labor (Faulkner 2001: 204). These internal processes grew throughout 1916 as Hughes contemplated three methods of advancing conscription: 'by Act of Parliament, by regulation, or by referendum'. All three would necessitate a verdict given by the majority of the Caucus initially. The attraction of a referendum was obvious for Hughes – the broader community was much more likely to offer him support for conscription by referendum than his Party or Caucus or the trade unions

were likely to do; the Caucus, Hughes decided, could be dealt with later (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 205).

By contrast there is another way of looking at this problem for the ALP. What kind of socialist party could tolerate the ‘Hughes’ type’ of politician making the Party adopt such Right-Wing views? The referendum was unsuccessful after bitter campaigning which led to Caucus meeting and debating ‘a motion of no confidence in Hughes’. Furthermore, Hughes and his closest supporters had planned to break and did so taking twenty-three members of the 64-strong Caucus with him including the majority of the Cabinet (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 207). The pro-conscriptionist *Argus* printed Hughes’ version of the break:

After some discussion...I stated that, owing to the fact that members were acting under instructions from outside organisations, and were impervious to all argument, while expressing regret at severing life-long connection with those members who were opposed to me, there was no course left open for me but to withdraw from the chair, and request those who supported me to follow me from the room. (*Argus*, 15 November 1916).

The aftermath of the split was damaging for the ALP due to the long-term impact of changes throughout the Party. Dean Jaensch notes that the process of being divided over conscription affected the whole Party, but was critical in the Federal Caucus. It was from there that most of the Protestant power MPs resigned, leaving the dominant vote to the Irish Catholic members. As a result the Party moved to the Left in policy, ideology and rhetoric (Jaensch 1997: 225).

The split was irreversible: Hughes formed a new Government and continued as Nationalist Prime Minister for a further six years. Faulkner points out that Labor stayed in Opposition for thirteen years after losing the next five elections—1917, 1919, 1922, 1925, and 1928

before Jim Scullin led Labor to a sound victory in 1929. However, only eleven out of a Caucus of fifty-four managed to survive the conscription split of 1916. But 1929 was an unfortunate year to win Government due to the Wall Street sharemarket crash that triggered the Great Depression two weeks after the election (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 9). The position varied in the other States in which Labor held power (McMullin 1991: 9).

In Victoria, where distrust of the Right-winger Hughes before 1916 was more pronounced than in other States, the Political Labor Council (PLC) of Victoria took a firm direction against conscription. McMullin reports that active men in the Victorian Socialist Party (VSP) such as Hyett, Holloway and Curtin (future Labor Prime Minister) organised the large-scale trade union opposition (McMullin 1991: 109). Women throughout Australia also threw themselves into the campaign.

What evidence there is shows a considerable disparity between men and women's membership of influential organisations. However, women were active in the conscription campaign nationwide. Jean Daley and Bella Guerin, (the first woman graduate from an Australian university), coordinated their actions in Victoria (McMullin 1991: 109). Indeed, the restoration of the Women's Central Organising Committee was recognised as a valuable contribution to Victorian Labor. On the other hand, women had no power as leaders at this time in fact they had little power in the ALP Victorian Branch as Guerin asserted that Labor women were still treated as 'performing poodles and pack-horses' (McMullin 1991: 109). Guerin and Daley were political women in non-elected roles but historians ignored them until feminists started writing history in the 1970s. The next split mainly concerned the NSW Government and the FPLP due to the exchange rate increasing and the commodity prices falling, triggering the Great Depression.

The 1931 ALP Split

Throughout the 1920s, the FPLP was eclipsed yet there were times when Labor Governments were in power in five of the six States. Nevertheless, at the 1929 Election, Jim Scullin led Federal Labor to a resounding success over the Bruce-Page conservative Government; the greatest majority since Federation. This formidable result was followed by the success of the Victorian Branch when Labor won more seats than ever before under Hogan. The new Federal Government led by Scullin was soon to face major problems, the most serious being Australia's economic position (Faulkner 2001: 208). The new Government inherited a balance of payments crisis along with a large deficit in the Budget. Additionally, Australia's basic exports, wool and wheat, were affected by declining prices. Bruce Duncan writes that, as the Depression continued into the 1930s, great numbers of Australian workers queued for the dole. Shanty-towns popularly called 'Happy Valleys' sprouted and spread near the large towns and outside the cities. Men took to the bush, desperate to pick up work any way they could (Duncan 2001: 9). Women and children were left alone to make do as best they could.

Economists have written that the period of the Great Depression ranged from 1929-1934, with the lowest point during 1932. Indeed, it is noted that the economic gale was strengthening in 1928, causing prices to fall and accelerating financial pressures for wage-reductions. Not only did the slump in all commodities become calamitous but, also, due to the Australian economy being mainly dependent on primary industry – wheat and wool and associated products – disastrous pressures increased rapidly (Huelin 1973: ix). This situation, in addition to the 'enforcement of restrictive financial policies proposed by Sir Otto Niemeyer', acting for the Bank of England, simply assured the slump in the economy in Australia would last until the

outbreak of war in September 1939. The author, Frank Huelin, has written in his memoirs that the approximate number of people unemployed as a result of the Depression varied according to its source, but the Government announced that one-third of workers were without work. Therefore, it can be asserted strongly that the actual figure would have been much higher. Furthermore, Huelin has indicated that, as far as the work force was concerned, not only did the Depression stretch on until the outbreak of the World War II, but also these battlers for almost ten years, became the ‘backbone of the Sixth Division AIF’ (Huelin 1973: ix).

The social attitudes of people adversely affected by the Depression marked this generation Duncan notes that a vast number of people became ‘trenchantly critical of the capitalist system, and especially of the banks’. Not only did the Bank of England epitomise conspiracy theories concerning ‘money power’, but also returned soldiers from World War I and their dependents felt betrayed. Duncan states that:

Sixty thousand Australians had died fighting Britain’s wars, yet the [Mother country] refused to reduce interest repayments on Australia’s debt part of which was incurred fighting that war. Among the working class, such sentiments translated into strong anti-war feelings, antipathy to capitalism and its press, and a willingness to support more radical alternatives to the current economic system, especially as articulated by the ALP (Duncan 2001: 9).

Dean Jaensch points out that conflict within the party over policies, personalities and principles reached a climax when Prime Minister Scullin adopted the Premiers Plan. The Plan suggested radical cuts in Government spending to prevail over the Depression. One issue was the forming of the Lang Labor Party by the Premier of the New South Wales Premier, J.T. Lang: thus the introduction of Labor populism in Australian party politics took place (Jaensch 1997: 225). Jaensch states that Lang’s attraction was not only to the ‘working class’, but to ‘the people’ He had concluded that as the Premier of New South Wales, he was not prepared to accept what he concluded was the origin of the Premier’s Plan – a proposal

put forward by British bankers to direct their commands to the State Premiers. One component of the Left faction in the national Caucus resigned to join him.

Upheaval in the FLP continued with Lang attracting huge crowds in Sydney's suburbs during his second term as Premier. But after dramatic political manoeuvring by Ward, Beasley, Rae and Dunn, Ward would be excluded from the FLP due to him shunning Federal Labor policy during a by-election (McMullin 1991: 171). Beasley objected strongly insisting that, if Ward was excluded, then others should meet the same fate. Rae and Lazzarini agreed to dissent from Scullin's decision while Ward remained silent. Curtin and Maloney argued that any decisions should be postponed until after the special Federal Conference organised to deal with the 'recalcitrant NSW branch, but Scullin stood firm' When the Rae-Lazzarini motion was put to the vote it was convincingly defeated and sealed dramatically when Eldridge, Dunn, Rae, Lazzarini, Beasley and Ward retreated from the party room (McMullin 1991: 171).

The NSW Executive was 'exorcised' in March 1931 after the special Labor Federal Conference. Meanwhile, Lang was pursuing, with his distinctive code of 'defiance, demagoguery and desperate scrambling, to keep NSW solvent', proving to be magnetic, reckless and resourceful as ever. When the NSW interest payments fell due, Lyons paid the debt after Lang admitted he was unable to do so (McMullin 1991: 180).

McMullin indicates that for a considerable time the NSW Governor, Sir Philip Game, had been urged by 'diehard conservatives' to consider the dismissal of Lang. Despite that, Game

was alerted to and considered the rising chances of civil war in NSW. Within two weeks the New Guard was ready to assemble and the spectre of battle in the streets of Sydney was looming. Game knew of the 'sinister developments' and determined that he had the legal authority to dismiss Lang and did so on Friday, 13 May (McMullin 1991: 181).

While the Depression shattered Labor, Jaensch has indicated that:

The conscription affair saw the Federal and State Labor parties becoming more Left-Wing; the 1930s split saw both Left (to Lang Labor) and Right (Lyons) factions leave the party (Jaensch 1997: 226).

The ideology of the party was to establish a wholesome environment for all but the crisis destroyed this notion. Furthermore, the party had run out of policies to build a fairer society. In the interim the women's lobbying was functioning.

The Labor Women's Interstate Executive (LWIE) was also ratified at the 1930 Federal Conference after being provisionally structured in March 1929. Reynolds concludes that it was presumed that LWIE Conferences would take place every three years, represented by three representatives from each State intending that this structure would function and improve the situation of women in the Party and to 'monitor participation of women at Labor forums' (Reynolds 1995: 30). The organisation of ALP women in between Conferences would be conducted by the LWIE, 'subject to the control and supervision of the Federal Executive' (LWIE, Federal Conference 1930: 10, cited in McMullin 1991: 160). McMullin states that it was precisely indicated in the LWIE's constitution that one of the functions of Labor women was their representation at 'appropriate functions'. Granted that, at the 1930 Federal Conference the 'inaugural president of the LWIE', May Holman,

attempted to gain approval for LWIE representation at the 'next Pan-Pacific women's Conference at Honolulu. But Federal Conference agreed with the opinion articulated by Collings: 'Let them do their job and focus the Australian women's attention on problems in Australia and not talk about extending their operations to Honolulu...' (Collings, Federal Conference 1930: 58 cited in McMullin 1991: 160; Reynolds 1995: 30).

Both McMullin and Reynolds point out the formal but predictable dismissal of such international networking by women representatives. It is clear from the documentation of the Federal Conferences that May Holman, the Member for Forrest from 1925, and other delegates on the LWIE were victimised by the predictable decision of the Federal Executive not to allow their participation in such international networking as the Pan-Pacific Women's Conference in Honolulu. Moreover, even a simple reform proposed by Holman to have women included in the National Conference 'that a minimum of one woman represent each state' was defeated. Holman continued to fight for equality for women when she pointed out in her speech during the 'Jury Act Amendment Bill debate in 1938' she said: 'I believe in equality of the sexes and that women should have the same citizenship rights as men' (Holman 1938: 1478). Additionally, in the history of the Victorian ALP, women were not represented in Parliament at this time during the Depression (1929). The second split in the ALP (1954-1955) reflected a highly rigid form of patriarchy in the ALP.

Many women supported the Labor Movement by contributing vigorously and invaluable at branch level during the Great Depression and the Labor Party's second split. At branch level they organised fundraising and Party functions, but the success of May Holman was not followed by women rising to eminence in the ALP Victorian Branch. In Melbourne, Jean

Daley and Muriel Heagney were members of the Victorian Executive of the ALP in the 1920s (McMullin 1991: 139). Heagney argued enthusiastically for equal pay for women and set up the Labor Guild of Youth, while Daley became the first woman in Victoria to 'stand for Federal Parliament as an endorsed ALP candidate'; Kooyong was the seat and thought with some justification to be unwinnable for Labor. But no Victorian woman emulated Lilian Fowler's firm hold of her seat in the NSW Newtown Branch nor was prominent in the upper echelons of the Victorian Branch of the ALP during the first and second splits of the ALP. The 1954-1955 split follows showing how it was a commitment to uncompromising anti-communism that left the ALP devastated, and in Opposition until 1972.

The 1954-1955 ALP Split: State and Federal

The third split in the ALP organisation occurred due to the Party's strategies regarding Communism and particularly in relation to working with Communists in the unions. This was a markedly unpleasant controversy due to personal and ideological conflicts being given a sectarian, religious flavour. Many of the leading people who opposed Communists 'in the union movement were Catholic members of ALP anti-Communist industrial groups' (Singleton et al 2000: 242).

Faulkner and Macintyre have indicated that it was during the early 1950s that dissension in the Caucus and in the Party over Communism increased, and the Catholic Church started to take a part in the inner Party struggles:

The Church's influence within the Labour Movement came directly from 'The Movement', and less directly through the ALP Industrial Groups (members of which were known as 'Groupers') formed to fight communist influence in the trade union movement (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 212).

The Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, attempted to ban the Communist Party in 1950. He took the issue to a referendum in 1951 and almost succeeded in his aims. H.V. (Doc) Evatt, who had become Labor's leader after the death of Ben Chifley, fought an erratic but in the end effective campaign that Faulkner believes was almost the main reason for the defeat of the Menzies referendum (Faulkner 2001: 212). The referendum loss only encouraged Grouper conspirators, especially from Victoria, to intensify the assault on their Caucus associates who did not favour their rigid anti-communist path. Already effective in restraining communist control of the trade union movement, the Groupers concentrated on strengthening their grip on the power structure within the Labor Party. But disapproval of their influence was developing, especially within 'traditional ALP Right-Wing circles' (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 212).

Nevertheless, Doc Evatt was reasonably confident of winning the 1954 Election. However, Menzies played astutely on fear of communism. The timely desertion of Vladimir Petrov, the Russian 'spy', captured a blaze of publicity at the start of the campaign. Faulkner claims that Evatt's extended campaign strategies, coupled with 'Menzie's opportunism, saw Labor narrowly defeated' (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 213). Tension within the Caucus escalated as Menzies dramatically exploited the Petrov Affair by mounting a Royal Commission into Espionage. Evatt acted as counsel for his implicated staff at the Commission without reference to Caucus, thus raising the mounting factional divisions between Groupers and opponents. Caucus meetings became divided with vilification and fighting (Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 212).

In Victoria, the State ALP executive determined, by the casting vote, to blacklist the special Conference (McKinley 1979: 211). In February 1955, this Conference organised a 'new executive' and this group now began altercations with the already existing 'old' executive. The problems of the two opposing executives were assigned to the Federal Conference in March. McKinley states that, when the 'old' Victorian 'Conference delegation was denied a place at the Federal Conference, Right-Wing delegates from other States boycotted the Conference in protest' (McKinley 1979: 211). Nevertheless, the Conference ignored these protests and ratified the 'new' Victorian Executive as the legitimate power to enforce authority in that State. Now the scene was set for a critical confrontation between rival groups in Victoria. Disruptionists both outside and inside the Party were gaining the support of the acknowledged enemies of Labor. They had the support of the Santamaria group and 'reactionaries such as Sir Eric Harrison and Senator McLeay' (Mercury, 1955 cited in McKinley 1979: 212). The exclusionist philosophy of Santamaria was evident at this time and in Victoria the split became official.

In assisting women to take part in parliamentary politics, feminists again created Women's Model Parliaments (they were first established in the time of Vida Goldstein) with well-known women encouraged to take the offices of Governor and Speaker. In Victoria, the League of Women Voters, formed from a combination of Victorian Women Citizens' Movement, also formed a Women's Model Parliament which advanced the involvement of senior schoolgirl students as well as women interested in political careers. Five attempted preselection in the first year, but none were successful (Lake 1999: 206). Trade union women representatives and feminists kept campaigning during the 1950s and 1960s, but

girls had learnt to be conditioned from an early age to submit to principles of subordination, therefore their participation in the split was nullified.

In a judgement that prefigured the pending split, the ‘new’ Victorian Executive had in late March ‘moved to circumscribe the [old] executive and its supporters’ and

This decision ultimately led, on 7 April 1955, to the expulsion of one hundred and four prominent Party members, including twenty-five members of the State and Federal Parliaments (Victorian ALP Minutes 1955).

The circulation of a combined Pastoral Letter by the Catholic Bishops of Australia exacerbated turmoil within the ALP. McKinley states that they made known their recommendations for the now dispersed ‘ALP Industrial Groups’.

Their intervention came on the eve of the premature Victorian elections caused by the defeat of the Cain Government in the Victorian Parliament. The Cain Government had fallen because of the defection of the expelled former Labor Members who voted with the Liberal-Country Party opposition (McKinley 1979: 216).

In April 1955, *The Sydney Morning Herald* stated it was a known fact that Australian Catholics had, during the last ten years, sought to ‘form a strong public opinion against Communist activities in our community’ (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 April 1955).

McKinley notes that in May 1955 the Cain Government was rejected in Victoria. In December Menzies called an early Federal Election and won an overall victory. However Jim Cairns, ALP MP for Yarra from 1955 to 1969, then Lalor until 1977 bravely stated:

The purpose of Labor is not to make Governments, but to make better social conditions...I believe Labor will long be prepared to remain in opposition rather than give up its policy by identifying itself with the parties of big business and other conservative organisations. I believe Labor, true to its ideals as the Party of opposition

better than some of its political opponents will be able to withstand years of effort with little or no hope of electing candidates (Cairns, *The Age*, 24 December 1955).

From the schism arose the Democratic Labor Party (DLP), a group that had broken away from the ALP. They imagined they were still ‘Labor men’ and were reluctant to believe the idea that they had been ‘permanently excluded’ from the ALP or its Labour Movement connections. Frank Rooney related in November 1956:

The aim of the Democratic Party [that is, the DLP] is to bring the policies of the Labor Party up to date, based on the existing principles, and to make it a Democratic Labor Party, instead of a totalitarian party (Rooney 1956 cited in Rawson 1961: 42).

In 1957, Alan Manning, the vice-president of the DLP, suddenly resigned and shortly afterwards left the party taking with him five members of the executive and other identities.

Manning explained why he was leaving:

Unfortunately the same element that destroyed the unity of the ALP – the die-hard Right-Wing industrial groupers – is now dominating the DLP in New South Wales. They want a few front-men who will appear as broad-minded rational citizens, but are determined that such men shall never have any real say in policy (Manning 1958 cited in Rawson 1961: 43).

Manning’s words go a long way towards explaining why the DLP was unable to win seats in the House of Representatives. However, Singleton goes further and states that it was due to its supporters being spread over the nation (Singleton et al 2000: 242). They were, however, able to gain representation in the Senate due to the proportional voting system for that House. Still, DLP followers rarely gave their preferences to the ALP and DLP Senators mostly sided with the ‘non-Labor Government’ on situations being considered, and ‘always on matters of confidence’ (Singleton et al 2000: 242). Although the DLP followed an uncertain course during the 1960s, the party soon became a type of subsidiary non-Labor or anti-Labor party keeping the Coalition in office, but gaining minimal compensation with

regards to power (Singleton et al 2000: 242). While Peter Love notes that the 1955 Split increased the progression of 'upwardly mobile Catholics from Labor to the Coalition via the DLP, the internal changes to the ALP were also significant and enduring' (Love 2005: 17). He claims: that a more formalised factional system developed after federal intervention in Victoria allowing for the 'orderly negotiation and management of intra-party competition and conflict' (Lees 2005: 17. Still, mistrust, hatred and doubt continued among true Labor Party members.

Evatt was ruined by the schism and resigned from Parliament in 1960. The split was a gift for Menzies who remained Prime Minister until his retirement in 1966. The Labor Party was confused, ruptured and in disarray and did not regain power until 1972. Moreover, Faulkner states that the loss of Catholic 'supporters proved to be a long-term problem for Labor, especially in Victoria' (Faulkner 2001: 213). Not until a new generation of voters emerged in the electorate in the late 1960s and early 1970s did Labor capture the electoral middle ground. The role of women in the Labor Party at this time was basically supportive but without power due to their lack of accessibility to leadership roles within the Party.

The first Labor woman to enter the Victorian Legislative Assembly was Fanny Brownbill in 1938. She retired in 1948, leaving a gap of twenty-nine years before Pauline Toner was elected to the Assembly in 1977 and Joan Coxsedge to the Legislative Council in 1979. Women had little effect on policy and minimal 'representation on the State Executive' (Lake and Kelly 1985: 348). Women were led to believe they could 'win lasting political influence independently of the major male-dominated parties' (Lake and Kelly 1985: 348). Moreover,

the failings of the Victorian party system actually harmed the cause of women trying to enter politics.

It can be seen that Labor women have been the victims of existing, undemocratic power structures within the FPLP and the Victorian Branch. Indeed, while women continue to be a minority in the party, it will not be easy to secure their passage to official positions of power within the Ministry and particularly in the Cabinet before gaining leadership roles. Reynolds states that the Labor Party Caucus selects its own Ministers depending on the 'time-honoured tradition of factional allegiance as promotion depends as much on mateship as merit' (Reynolds 1995: 110-111). Mateship consists of a set of values that has thrived in the patriarchal organisation and structure of the ALP. Women are not part of this mates' world, therefore the mateship and factionalism so notoriously connected with the reactionary side of the Labor Party limits women's ability to access leadership roles.

Factionism

Reynolds observes:

Obviously potential ministers are closely scrutinised by their colleagues and many talents are recognised, but the pressure cooker style of factional power-sharing does, on occasions, result in choices that suggest that factional loyalty is rated higher than specific ministerial qualities. In this climate, women's management style is not necessarily recognised and, like some very able men, their potential for contributing to ministerial leadership is overlooked (Reynolds 1995: 111).

To demystify the factional allegiances within the ALP is essential to observers of politics. In short there are three divisions, Left, Centre and Right, but a variance between States should be noted. Reynolds points out that particular alliances may result in a Centre Left or a Labor Unity grouping, while Labor Left is the consequence of a separation from the Socialist Left.

Joining factions enables members to work from a particular ideological perspective, to get with the strength of the factional leverage or simply to strengthen friendship preferences (Reynolds 1995: 137). A perceived opportunity for promotion or differences of policy may change loyalties, but factionalism exemplifies the wide cross-section of philosophies and circumstances within the core of the party.

Reynolds argues that the ALP has integrated the ‘grass-roots activism of the Australian workforce with a range of diverse individuals and groups who have demonstrated attitudes that range from narrow parochialism to radical social reform’ (Reynolds 1995: 137). The anxieties existing in these bounds during policy development over a century have fashioned a party of ‘strong idealism and commitment – but quite different opinions’ (Reynolds 1995: 137).

McMullin notes that factionalism increased while Whitlam was in power:

...a small group of Left-Wingers had held their own separate meetings to determine the viewpoints which the Left would collectively uphold in caucus, but these factional gatherings were not very regular, not very organised and not at all typical of how Caucus as a whole operated. The adoption of proportional representation to determine the composition of the Party’s most important decision-making bodies accelerated the development of factionalism, which was exemplified by the formation of the Centre Left in 1984 (McMullin 1995: 412-413).

This conflicts with the function of factions in both State and Federal Parliamentary Parties in the past ten years. Factions meet on a regular basis in order to ‘choose ministerial candidates and influential Caucus Committee positions, and negotiate on all major policy options’ (Reynolds 1995: 138). The Victorian ALP is also factionalised to a high degree.

The factions in the Victorian Branch both contend against and collaborate with each other inside the Party's decision-making structures. Hudson explains that:

There are two major factions, Labor Unity (LU) and the Socialist Left (SL), and three smaller factions, Labor Left (formerly the Pledge), the independents and non-aligned (formerly the Independents), and Labor Renewal Alliance (LRA)...Within each faction there are usually a number of sub-groups competing for support within the faction...The factional system provides the party with a flexible mechanism that allows prompt adaptation to changed political and electoral circumstances, whether they be internal or external (Hudson 1999: 101-102).

Hudson concludes that there is, however, an unpleasant component to the ongoing factional processes. Factional activists in their endeavours to 'get the numbers' are in the form of branch stacking or 'multiple recruitment' (Hudson 1999: 103). The State Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union, Dean Mighell, has been a notable critic of the system (Sunday Channel 9, Transcript, 3 May 1998). Before the 1998 'State preselections', there were allegations that extensive multiple recruiting had occurred within the Cambodian, Vietnamese, Latin American, Greek, Arabic and Turkish communities'. With the exception of the minor independents groups, all factions have resorted to branch stacking (Hudson 1999: 103). The question needs to be asked – is it beneficial or disadvantageous to women?⁶

Tanya Plibersek is a Left-Winger, in her early thirties, with a degree in Communications, and holds Sydney, one of the most sought-after safe Labor seats in Australia. She claims that the factional system is favourable to women, for instance:

Wherever there is a certain amount of power to be had, there are people who are more focused on grabbing that power than on doing things with it. What you would have if you didn't have factions is more like a medieval system of warlords. That is a much less transparent system of internal party organisation than a formalised factional system. It's much easier to understand how a factional system works than to understand how, as an individual, you gain power in an organisation as large and diverse as the Labor

⁶ There is major controversy over this at the present time (2005). It is noted in Chapter Nine.

Party....If you know that you've got a system of proportional representation, that there are formal voting procedures for filling those positions and so forth, the situation is vastly improved for women. That takes some finding out as well; I'm not saying that's completely transparent, but there is a system there that is not a total mystery (Plibersek 2000: 41).

However, 'of the formal factional groups in Victoria, there are currently few women recognised as the leader or chief negotiator' (Hennessy 2000: 227). Hennessy explains that this does not mean that men only are chosen to stand for office. It means that women are required to seek support and 'patronage from the male factional leaders prior to any preselection bid' (Hennessy 2000: 227). Similarly, potential male candidates do likewise, but Hennessy suggests that the system is more arduous for many women who are simply not reckoned to be one of the 'mates' and, therefore, not a potential option. (Hennessy 2000: 227). In the short term and in the context of the conflicting nature of preselections, the defects in this approach are not likely to disappear.

On the other hand, it should be noted that not everyone in the Labor Party identifies with a faction or explicitly belongs to one. Hennessy claims that in any preselection there will be certain voters who are not 'aligned to a faction'. Not only is this true of women who are outside this area of information, but also the factional system can act to 'disenfranchise those who for whatever reason are not formally involved' (Hennessy 2000: 227-228). Susan Ryan has indicated that: 'As far as the Labor Party is concerned, factional power play has stymied more women than uproar in the chambers or stoushes in Caucus'. She believes that 'seeking to change these bad behaviours is a proper objective, but best pursued from within' (Ryan 1999 cited in Faulkner and Macintyre 2001: 224). Despite that, Labor women were apt to blame the prevailing 'power structures', particularly the 'preselection processes' and the 'formalised factions' (Simms 2001: 226).

Preselection

By 1990, and at the electoral level more Labor women were ‘presenting for preselection’, yet they were more likely to be competing entirely against ‘other women for marginal electorates’ (Simms 2001: 227). There were few women in safe seats, but Simms explains that this was a consequence of two related trends:

On the one hand, women belonged both by choice and of necessity to the various Party factions, so factional rivalry cut across cooperation among women. On the other, the broad, cross-factional unity evident among Labor women in the early 1980s was breaking down. Consequently, as new women entered Caucus, the tendency was to see others as competitors (Simms 1993 cited in Simms 2001: 227).

If the 1983 election had gone against Labor, rather than against the Coalition, then a number of the Liberal women preselected for marginal seats would have been successful instead of some women from the Labor Party (Simms 2001: 223). Not only had women begun gaining representation in State Parliaments, but also Labor won office in Victoria in 1982 under the leadership of John Cain. A strong contingent of women were among the new Labor members and one of them, Joan Kirner, would go on to become, in 1990, the first female Premier of Victoria.

Hennessy states that, in Victoria, the Public Office Selection Committee (POSC) is a Committee consisting of 100 members and central to the Labor Party. The delegates of the State Conference elect the members of the POSC each two years. The purpose of the POSC is to provide the Party with the chance to recognise candidates worthy of special consideration and alternatively to ‘weed out candidates without merit and/or with other liabilities’ (Hennessy 2000: 226). In other words, the main purpose of the POSC is to furnish

a proportion of balance and approach regarding the 'selection of those who would ultimately make up a Government or Opposition' (Hennessy 2000: 226). In reality, however, Hennessy suggests that the POSC is strongly factionalised, with the greater number of members voting along the lines of factions. Also, it is the centre of 'deal-making for the party power brokers'. Furthermore, in the circumstances surrounding tightly contested local ballots, for instance, the POSC vote will decide who the successful candidate will be. In this situation, a faction 'that controls a small amount of votes on the POSC can wield enormous power, on the basis that they may determine the ultimate outcome' (Hennessy 2000: 226).

Factionalism has been noted as women's major concern regarding the Labor Party. Diana Warnock claims that it affects preselection such that it can become a brutal process, one that potential women MPs may describe as the 'worst experience of my life' (whether they have been successful or not). It is a combat performance devised by men, 'and the rules won't change until there are many more women in there to change them (Warnock 1995 cited in Reynolds 1995: 142). A further incident relates to the ALP when the safe seat of Batman was to become vacant after Brian Howe announced his retirement would take place at the next election in 1996. Jenny Mikakos had nominated, but was unsuccessful due to a male trade union leader, Martin Ferguson, announcing that he was shifting into federal politics (Reynolds 1995: 144). There was no doubt as to who would win preselection for Batman. It is only infrequently that we see the ALP or the Victorian Branch endorse a young woman for a safe seat. Therefore, so long as the culture of male preference persists, the equitable treatment of women for positions of power in the ALP and the Victorian Branch remains a myth

The impact of branch-stacking on women

The shortage of women applying power and influence in their own right on the POSC is duplicated, in many cases at the local ballot level. It is at this level that branch stacking occurs and branch stacking has a decidedly negative effect on women. For example, the result of most preselection ballots, especially in safe seats, are decided by those who control ‘blocks of stacked members or [stacks]’ (Hennessy 2000: 229). Identifying who dominates these ‘blocks of votes, and how they may be influenced, are often a key determinant in the ultimate result of any ballot’. Hennessy adds that she has never known a woman to control a sizeable block of branch members. Therefore, women who have ambitions to be Labor parliamentarians must depend on the ‘favours’ and ‘anointment’ of men of power (Hennessy 2000: 230). Thus, the customs of the Labor Party restrict the potential of women to take responsibility for their own political opportunities or ambitions which in turn limits their influence and access to leadership roles. However, Hennessy writes that:

This is not to say that male power brokers in the Labor Party only ever assist other men. There are men who do hold positions of influence within the Labor Party and seek to use their influence to assist women; they must receive credit where it is due (Hennessy 2000: 230).

However, there are many talented women within the Labor Party who have not been the beneficiaries of such support. Hennessy adds:

This process can conceal the reality of who really controls political organisations and it can obscure the fact that women are rarely able to achieve success in politics without relying upon influential men (Hennessy 2000: 230).

The former leader of the Opposition, (Simon Crean from 2001-2003), set in motion a drive to modernise the Labor Party to assist women in gaining preselection. Dunn has stated that ‘the 35 per cent quota has definitely helped’. He continues ‘There’s plenty of talented

people, [Affirmative Action] just ensures it's not always the blokes that get a leg up' (Dunn cited in Douez, *The Age*, 8 October 2002). Douez believes that 'the decision at Labor's special national rules Conference to lift the quota for women from 35 per cent to at least 40 per cent by 2012 will provide equality of opportunity in the Party' (Douez, *The Age*, 8 October 2002). Crean's reforms mean that '40 per cent of winnable seats and party positions must be held by women and 40 per cent by men with the other 20 per cent up for grabs' (Douez, *The Age*, 8 October 2002).

The matter of branch-stacking within the Labor Party has received publicity in recent times. Crean tried to minimise the capacity of certain individuals within the organisation to improperly influence the result of ballots. Carmen Lawrence as President of the ALP, 2004, also announced her intention to fight for 'legitimate recruitment'. Hennessey states that many members within the Party are opposed to change (Hennessey 2000: 228). This is due to the fact that any attempt to curb the power of war-lords who stack branches will intrinsically affect the fundamental power bases within the Party. As a result, it is realistic to identify that a very rigid form of patriarchy exists within the ALP and the Victorian Branch. Therefore, women have formidable barriers to surmount before they will earn their right to legitimate power and influence in the Party.

Trade Unions

As in other States, the Victorian Branch of the ALP has been:

financially dependent upon trade unions. It had its origins in trade union initiative and reserved many places in its governing bodies and a substantial part of its parliamentary representation for trade union officials (Jupp 1983: 72).

James Jupp claims that:

These characteristics were strengthened by the split of 1916, which brought politicians into disrepute, and by the split of 1955 in which most branches were lost to the DLP and which created the myth that the unions had been the [saviour] of the party from its infiltration by the Movement. Six out of seven State presidents between 1955 and 1970 were trade union officials; trade union representatives were in the majority on the Executive and union delegates made up the great majority of voting members of Conference. At no time have trade unionists failed to exercise a major influence within the Party, although only between 1955 and 1970 could they be described as completely dominant (Jupp 1983: 72-73).

Carmel Shute argues that, historically, the union movement in Australia has notably been a movement for men (Shute 1986: 166). In addition, David Aitkin, a political scientist, points out in his history of masculinity, 'Unionism and Meatworkers', that:

The study of the Australian trade unions shows that, as a cultural and political force, the movement has been largely male, representing male interests and commitments for masculine dominance. The union movement was a product of a distinctive culture of male solidarity and men invoked the collective strength of unions as a buffer against the degradations of capitalism. Trade union culture and industrial strategy were crucially linked to masculine subjectivities (Aitkin cited in Shute 1986: 167).

With the notable exception of officials such as Jenny George (1996 - March 2001) and Sharan Burrow from 2001, as Presidents of the ACTU, women have been slow to gain positions of power in the unions. The movement's response to social change has been notoriously conservative and slow while, in Victorian, trade unions are not united and all battles within the ALP have also included battles within the unions (Shute 1986: 166). She explains that, since the 1970s, feminists have sought to make it a critical source of conflicts:

The massive increase of women in the workforce and the ideological impetus of feminism have compelled the union movement, however reluctantly and hesitantly, to address the demands for equity, justice and power (Shute 1986: 166-167).

But Clarke and White have noted that little has been written regarding women as union delegates (shop stewards) in Australia, but a Monash University Union group completed a

study of women in seventeen blue and white-collar unions in Victoria. In the blue-collar unions surveyed, 26 per cent of shop stewards were women (Clarke and White (1983: 95). However, the percentages concerning white-collar unions were difficult to calculate. Despite that, 'in all unions the percentage of female shop stewards was below that of the percentage of female membership'. Clarke and White agree that the 'higher up the union hierarchy, the lower the percentage of female representation, even in unions whose membership was predominantly female (Clarke and White: 1983: 95). Since the 1990s the union movement has belatedly seen women as the salvation of its future. For women, this represents an unparalleled opportunity to seize power for themselves, both as workers and as social beings.

Therefore, when looking at the historical structure and organisation of the ALP and the unions, it would be simplistic in the extreme to characterise trade union power in the Party as unambiguously equating to male influence. Gillard states that:

In recent times, trade unions have systematically developed Affirmative Action programs in order to better reflect and serve the constituency of working women. However, some historic organisational biases do exist. For example, teachers' unions, nurses' unions, and the unions representing direct public sector workers have not traditionally been affiliated to the Labor Party. These are also unions with high female membership and leadership. The failure to affiliate is explained, in part, by the professional association backgrounds of these unions and, in part, by the political difficulties of developing an organisational link to the political party that may become the Government and the employer. However, the nonaffiliation of these unions does mean that many of the key unions affiliated to the Party have a larger male than female membership constituency and a larger number of male than female officials (Gillard 2000: 241-242)

As a consequence, while the formal structures of the Labor Party in this instance do not altogether show discrimination, there are elements that show those structural ambiguities promote male power rather than female power within the trade union movement in the Victorian Branch of the ALP. On the other hand, women persist in striving to obtain

positions of power within the factional and trade union structures of the ALP Victorian Branch. However, the slow recognition of women in the rank and file of trade unions connected to the FPLP and the Victorian Branch women had little power until the 1980s when things began to change.

The progress of women parliamentarians in Victoria in the 1980s and the 1990s

In the 1980s, there was a period when one might have thought that women were progressing favourably within the parliamentary sphere in the ALP. State Labor Governments had provided Australia's first two female premiers, Carmen Lawrence in Western Australia, and Joan Kirner in Victoria in 1990. But this trend was not to continue. In the Victorian Branch particularly, the illusion was tempered by the crushing defeat of 1992. The fact was women had gained success but were mainly 'clustered in marginal seats' (Gillard 2000: 245). As a result, when Labor was defeated in 1992, the number of women in the Victorian Labor Caucus was halved.

Following the result of the 1992 defeat and the adoption of the Affirmative Action rule change by Victoria, all State branches have:

modified their rules in accordance with this template and applied a comparable scheme for preselections for State Parliament.

The adoption of the Affirmative Action rule has proven that – despite factors like greater male membership than female membership, a preponderance of male union officials in affiliated unions, generally male factional leadership and far greater numbers of men in our various Parliaments than women – Labor Party's culture can incorporate and cater for strategies to facilitate gender equality (Gillard 2000: 246).

Eight new Labor women joined the Bracks cabinet after the 1998 election; Candy Broad, Energy and State development; Christine Campbell, Community Services; Mary Delahunty,

Education, Arts; Sherryl Garbutt, Environment and Conservation; Monica Gould, Leader in the Legislative Council, Industrial Relations, assisting in WorkCover; Lynne Kosky, Post-Compulsory Education, Training and Employment; Bronwyn Pike, Housing, Aged Care and Marsha Thomson, Small Business, Consumer Affairs (Shaw, *The Age*, 23 October 1999).

But women in politics are finding it hard; they are used as targets for criticism. In 2002 there was the public belittlement of Cheryl Kernot – but not of her lover, Gareth Evans. Kernot's credibility was commendable until she left the protective culture of the Democrats, until she protested at the media surrounding her home and slighted political commentator Laurie Oakes in her autobiography. Kernot, in her press conference announcing her switch from the Democrats to the ALP, pointed out in *Speaking for Myself Again* that Oakes had pointedly raised the first question 'How does it feel to be a Demo-rat'? Further, Oakes waited until her autobiography was published before announcing in *The Bulletin* that she had failed to mention in her memoirs that she had been having an affair with Gareth Evans, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, for four years. Kernot's credibility was damaged permanently in Australian politics. Another high-profile female figure, Natasha Stott-Despoja, was once the media magnet until she gained leadership of the Democrats, turned 30, and acquired a steady boyfriend (Rayner *The Age*, 8 November 2002). But what price do women pay for political commitment? This is a more elusive question than readily anticipated. One prodigious price is women's insatiable attraction to the media. Women politicians underestimate the persistence of the journalists and are 'bitterly surprised' when confronted. Imagine the speedy destruction of Bronwyn Bishop's run for the top job – one slip, one ridiculous photo with a football and down she fell; and not only was Carmen Lawrence once predicted as a

future Prime Minister of Australia, but she was also branded as the ‘evil western witch’ during the Penny Eastern affair (Rayner, *The Age*, 8 November 2002).

The task for women in the Victorian Branch of the ALP is not merely to try to reconcile women’s issues with broader social issues. The process of the *Sex Discrimination Act* in 1984 changed public assumptions and needs. Therefore, not only are the internal reforms of the Victorian Branch of the ALP increasing opportunities for women to take more active roles, but also new challenges for Labor women lie ahead.

In February 2005, developments in factions, branch stacking and preselections for women within the Victorian Branch of the ALP became a major issue: the Right-Wing faction targeted Mary Delahunty, an ALP MP, for retrenchment. Anna Burke defended her from within the Party and another female, Kathleen Brasher, from outside the Party called for action. This recent disclosure of the abnormal organisational structure and cultural formation discrepancies within certain electorates of the Party has caused concern. Nevertheless, the agents of change that have occurred during the past thirty years have allowed women to access the Victorian Branch of the ALP, albeit without gaining leadership roles other than Joan Kirner as Premier in 1990 for a short period, are examined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

CONTEMPORARY AGENTS OF CHANGE

Of all the changes that have taken place in the Australian electorate in the past 20 years the most profound has been in the political outlook of women. For generations, women were the mainstay of conservative politics in Australia. They liked the traditional and the familiar; they liked strong and relatively paternal Governments; they were not at all in favor of political and social change in areas such as censorship or immigration or in anything to do with the family. Above all, they were much less likely to vote for the Australian Labor Party.

David Aitkin and Glenny's Bell, 1984: 38-9

Evidence has accumulated since the 1960s indicating a change in politics among women and a considerable reduction in the gender gap in voting. Smith writes that women in the 1960s were about 11 per cent less likely to vote Labor than were men; by 1979, he adds, that difference was reduced to 7 per cent and by the early 1990s to somewhere between 2 and 4 per cent. The gender gap seems to have totally disappeared among the younger age groups (Smith 1993: 330). Moreover, women have often been more likely to vote for the Greens, the Australian Democrats or Independents than men, in recent elections. So why have women turned away from their traditionally conservative non-Labor politics?

Maley writes that the most recognised hypothesis has to do with women's greater involvement in the workforce. Their political dependence on their husbands became less attractive as they became financially independent. Maley has also argued strongly that party loyalty is less pronounced in women's voting behaviour than for men. Also, their 'images' of parties are different from those of men's (Maley 1988 cited in Smith 1993: 330). Aitkin agrees with Maley that the lessening of the gender gap is the result of recent changes in women and men's socio-economic participation including women's advances in greater education participation (Aitkin 1982: 280-1; McAlister 1992: 35. Furthermore, the

tightening of the gender gap in political keenness since the 1960s would undoubtedly reflect the increase in 'women's issues' and the greater number of women in Australia's political groups (Curthoys 1992b; van Acker 1999: 54-67), thus substantiating Maley's hypothesis. Additionally, more women now remain at school for longer, and more girls now advance to tertiary studies. Their employability, therefore, has increased and more women now enjoy an increased understanding of greater collective political skills. These movements may have activated more women to stand as candidates for the ALP and the Victorian Branch in the 1990s, but the leadership roles remain a male prerogative.

Regardless of women's increased participation in the Australian electorate, their numbers in the Victorian Branch of the ALP remain low, although their presence has increased since the 1990s. They make up more than half of the population, but this is not reflected in the Parliament or among the parliamentary leadership. Similarly, although all women – other than Aboriginal women – in Australia gained the suffrage on equal terms with men in Australia in 1902 and Victoria in 1923, they are not represented in political leadership roles. The appearance of an eminent woman in the Cabinet of the ALP and the Victorian Branch, at different times, seems to confirm this proposition rather than invalidate it. On the other hand, one must keep in mind that Joan Kirner was Premier of Victoria for a short time and Jenny Macklin is the Deputy leader of the Opposition at the federal level.

Therefore, having noted in varying degrees of detail the misrecognition of women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch throughout this thesis, it now remains to identify some of the factors that signify their increased participation. In this chapter, women's changing social

roles, women's sexual liberation, women's experience in the educational sector, and their participation in the occupational structure, are examined.

Although women are represented in the Bracks' State Labor Government (currently Jacinta Allen, Candy Broad, Mary Delahunty, Sherryl Garbutt, Lynne Kosky, Bronwyn Pike and Marsha Thomson in its Ministry), not one of these women holds any of the top jobs. The leadership roles are held by: Steve Bracks, Premier; John Thwaites, Deputy Premier; John Brumby, Treasurer, and Rob Hulls, Attorney-General (Hannan and Costa, *The Age*, 6 December 2002). By contrast however, in the late 1990s, New Zealand women were in the favourable situation of knowing that their country had a leader of the Opposition and a Prime Minister who were women. Therefore, whichever party won government at the election in 1999, New Zealand would continue to have a woman Prime Minister (Henderson 1999: 26). Furthermore, not only was Madaline Albright elected to become the first woman Secretary of State in the USA Democratic Clinton administration (Albright 2003: 215), Condoleezza Rice followed as Secretary of State in the Bush Republican government. These two women became the highest-ranking women in the history of the USA. These traditional examples of comparisons between Victoria, New Zealand and America show that Victorian women have a long way to go before achieving equality. On the other hand, women have made impressive changes and this should not be overlooked. What is emerging is the increase in the number of women entering the Victorian Branch of the ALP, albeit that it has been an extremely slow process.

Social Factors: *The Feminine Role*

It would be ineffectual to contemplate the role of Victorian Labor women in isolation from women's roles generally. The significance of the women's roles can swing and the character or significance suggested by such an approach and attitude might change all images on the subject of how women relate to politics and the Victorian Branch of the ALP in particular. Still, there has been an abundance of work written on women in the last thirty years offering many details, discussion and statistics about what is taking place.

In this chapter, I propose to concentrate on women's more active roles in the ALP and the Victorian Branch of the ALP despite their failure to attain leading positions of power within the party. I will demonstrate that between such diverse factors as economic independence, sexual liberation, educational opportunities and progressive political roles there is reciprocal action or influence. I see this approach as the only way that inconsistencies may be brought into prominence. Then it can be decided how the feminist movement – e.g., the influence of Germaine Greer and Betty Friedan, or WEL, Emily's List and The Purple Sage Project – propelled women into entering the Victorian Labor Party in the 1990s, albeit without equal access to the leadership roles.

At the centre of any dialogue on women's place and role in society in general are circumstances pertinent to the sphere which Parsons has called 'the root function of women' (Parsons and Bales 1956 cited in Currell 1974: 8), or, in the language of Banks, (Banks and Banks cited in Zollschan and Hirsh 1964: 549), 'reproductive determinism'. The full

involvement or obligation to family, children and home is implied in women being the childbearing sex. Still, on the other hand, as shown earlier in the thesis, many efforts, both 'philosophical and experimental', have been enlisted to 'free women from the shackles of her biological environment' (Currell 1974: 135). Within a diverse range, there has been Plato's scheme for producing women Guardians, instructed and led in the same way as men and free from child rearing and similarly through the Hutterite communities, to the varied forms of Kibbutz (Spiro 1958: 16-17).

Perhaps also should be added to the list the ways in which a country like Russia, when under Communist control, provided a supportive network of creches, extended school hours and communal provision of meals in order to leave women free for productive work (Currell 1974: 136).

Furthermore, the new familial circumstances for most women have been apparent since the contraceptive pill went on sale in Australia in 1961. Critics and supporters forecast that it would change society forever. Indeed, Mitchell claims that the pill, by giving women control over their bodies, was the initial stage in the liberation of women. It also freed them from unwanted pregnancies and illegal backyard abortions (Mitchell, *The Age*, 30 January 2001). Consequently, women's reproductive health choices have changed and improved considerably allowing women to seek preselection for the ALP and the Victorian Branch in increasing numbers. Moreover, some writers suggest that the disappearance of the gender gap was imminent (McAllister and Ascui 1988: 20) largely due to women's changing roles in society. It is possible, therefore, that the narrowing in the gender gap in recent Victorian elections might reflect the accessibility in workforce participation, income and education of modern women. Images, then, have taken a part in transforming family structures, changes in relations between the sexes and in the professions such as parliamentary careers for women. Images have helped to guide both behaviour and attitudes. In the context of this

approach and other factors such as that of socialisation towards a leadership role in the Victorian Branch of the ALP, education is highly significant.

The Educational Sector

Changes in educational opportunities for young women have become evident. Additionally, the changing ranges of jobs and careers available to women have offered increased incentives enabling women to accept a much wider view of the feminine role. Gerda Lerner (cited in Thornton 1996: vii) in her extensive attempt to (re) identify women's historical contributions quotes Elizabeth Elstob, a self-taught scholar, (1683-1756):

But there are two things usually opposed against Womens [sic] learning. That it makes them impertinent, and neglect their household affairs. Where this happens it is a fault (Elstob 1709 cited in Thornton 1996: vii).

Almost three hundred years later 'as we read Elstob's solemn acknowledgment she has been [impertinent] in challenging male exclusivity in relation to knowledge, the irony remains striking' (Thornton 1996: vi). According to Thornton, this story is one of many told by Gerda Lerner in her attempts to relate women's intellectual contributions in past centuries (Thornton 1996: vi). Lerner's analysis indicates that (a) women were 'almost universally educationally disadvantaged in comparison with their brothers'; and (b) 'that education for women, as for men, represented a distinct [class privilege]' (Lerner 1993: vi). Lerner's findings about women's roles in the interpretation of and distribution of knowledge three centuries ago offer marked similarities to the struggles of women politicians in the ALP Victorian Branch since 1923. Granted that, her findings are mostly positive in relation to the effect of women, on high levels of understanding, in the Twenty-First Century:

We stand at the beginning of a new epoch in the history of humankind's thought, as we recognize that sex is irrelevant to thought, that gender is a social construct and that woman, like man, makes and defines history (Lerner 1993: 283).

However, in spite of this positivity, this writer suggests that certain components of political knowledge continue to be entrenched in the patriarchal paradigm. More specifically, the mere 'letting in' of women as MPs in the ALP and the Victorian Branch cannot change prevailing social structures so that they spontaneously become 'feminised'. But the education of women is challenging their misrecognition in the Party.

The advancement of women's education has been a slow process. This discussion will commence with the views of Duverger (1955) progressing to Mackenzie (1962) then Encel, Mackenzie and Tebbutt (1974), Sawyer and Simms (1984) through to Cox (1996) and statistics for the year 2003 from the Bureau of Statistics.

Duverger wrote in 1955 that 'it would be a long time before women's participation in politics could be regarded as an accomplished fact'. He also concluded, pessimistically, that:

The small part played by women in politics merely reflects and results from the secondary place to which they are assigned by the customs and attitudes of our society and which their education and training tend to make them accept as the natural order of things (Duverger 1955: 8-10, 129-30).

Mackenzie added in 1962 that Australian boys and girls attend a wide variety of schools and that within this series of systems there was formal equality between the sexes. Boys and girls had the same accessibility to all levels of the educational rungs; they undertook of the same examinations and were 'subject to the same regulations about curricula and methods' (Mackenzie 1962: 98). On the other hand, Mackenzie argues that it was society that placed more importance on the education of boys than girls.

He stated that, because of the socialisation within society, i.e. 'all questions of moment in society which accepted the principle of equal educational opportunity for children whose personal circumstances and capacities were in fact unequal' (Mackenzie 1962: 99). But the situations that arose from the differences of gender were less obvious, because they developed through situations that occurred outside the educational system rather than within it. This is the situation where girls and boys of a similar social class, or with a similar range of ability, or associations with the same area, will be provided with the same education 'although their role as adults will not be the same' (Mackenzie 1962: 99). As John Newson wrote on girls' education in Britain:

...the argument, derived from Miss Buss and Miss Beale, was that whatever boys enjoyed, girls should also enjoy; since education was designed to meet the needs of boys, and girls had a right to education, they ended by getting essentially the same education as boys without anyone stopping along the way to ask if the movement was in the right direction. There is much to be said for the belief that secondary education should be non-vocational, and that its primary objective should be to make the child into an integrated adult personality. But as things are now, it is vocational, and designed essentially for the vocational needs of one sex to which the other is tagged on as an afterthought (Newsom 1948 cited in Mackenzie 1962: 99).

Mackenzie shows that these comments are equally relevant to Australia where it has been argued that girls should be 'given an education with a bias to the domestic arts and sciences'. He says it is a fact that parents are less ambitious for daughters than for sons; less likely to provide them with an education that will open careers for them (Mackenzie 1962: 99). Therefore, it was assumed that girls should study biology, home sciences or art courses in order to create a career, but their main purpose in life must be to make good homes.

Despite that, Ross Gittins draws attention to the changes that have taken place in the education of women. He believes that the most discerning social and economic shift in our lifetimes is what he calls the 'economic emancipation of women' (Gittins, *The Age*, 17 July 2002). The trend began with an attitude change among parents back in the 1960s when they decided that girls are equally entitled to an education as boys. Add to that the enthusiasm with which girls have taken to education and you see, in mid-2002, a retention rate of 79 per cent for girls compared with 68 per cent for boys

Earlier circumstances explain the antipathy of many women towards parliamentary participation in the Victorian Branch of the ALP in the 1960s. A very small number of women had any interest or were educated or encouraged to take interest in holding power in the Party other than the voluntary organisations where public opinion approved of women's participation. Encel, MacKenzie and Tebbutt relate that when women do 'succeed in entering politics, their chances of success depend on confirming to male models' (Encel, Mackenzie and Tebbutt 1974: 270). Indeed, Encel et al forecast that: 'Only to the extent that women are successful in their attempts to build a collective awareness will they be successful in their efforts to alter substantially the *status quo* with respect to discrimination by sex' (Encel, Mackenzie and Tebbutt 1974: 270).

A culture of this kind cannot be permanent: it was characteristic of a society in transition. Indeed, much has changed since the words of Duverger, Encel, Mackenzie and Tebbutt were written. According to Sawer and Simms, what women have achieved is a 'modification of the public agenda'. Women have become more conscious of politics, more interested in declaring their independence and autonomy and, in the course of events, they have induced

contemporary issues into the public sphere (Sawer and Simms 1984 cited in Encel and Campbell 1991: 273).

The education debates now point out that there have been programs for girls during the past fifteen years that have assisted in making the school structure more nurturing for them and it has encouraged them to take on non-traditional subjects and wider careers. At the same time, 'retention rates for girls have risen and passed those of boys, ...'(Cox 1996: 212-213). There are also signs indicating that girls have outperformed boys in certain areas and in major academic results. During the same period, boys' 'retention rates' have also advanced along with their overall performance, but not as much as girls' (Cox 1996: 213). Similarly, girls have outperformed boys in the VCE tables in 2003. Not only did more female students finish their VCE than males, but also a higher percentage passed:

More than 25,000 girls finished the certificate compared with more than 22,000 boys. The female pass rate was 95.6 per cent, about one percentage point higher than that for males (Cauchi, *The Age*, 15 December 2003).

Hence arguments follow suggesting that girls are performing better at the expense of boys. If boys are having problems, it is not exacerbated by the changes for girls neither is it women who are doing it to them; it is to do with inequalities. Indeed, it is the system set up by men in power for the benefit of men that constructs restricted confines for femininity and masculinity.

The extent of changes in girls' programs is now evident in that, twenty years after retention rates evened out, we fail to see an equivalent level of progress in Parliament. Women are now gaining considerable representation in the Victorian Labor Party to be in line for major

positions. However, they are not gaining political participation in powerful posts such as the Treasury. It lends weight to the claim that while change has been great the notion is that women belong in areas like social policy; economics and treasury are seen as a 'man's job'. Therefore, their accessibility by appointment to official positions in the ALP and the Victorian Branch is limiting their influence and access to leadership roles. Yet a major change occurred when a Labor Left-Wing female politician became the first woman President.

A Female President of the ALP

In November, 2003 Carmen Lawrence won an historic ballot and became the ALP's first female national President. Labor had introduced a new rotational system whereby the national President is elected to serve one year, after which they hand over to the next-highest placed candidate (Crabb, *The Age*, 14 November 2003). For the first time, the national ballot was open to the ALP's 40,000 members. (Lewis, *The Age*, 8 November 2003). The election of Carmen Lawrence brought a powerful impetus for women in the hierarchies of the ALP.

Furthermore, Dr Lawrence was the first woman President to chair the party's biennial policy Conference. Additionally, she was the first President to gain office on the basis of a vigorous campaign by her own Left-Wing faction (Crabb, *The Age*, 13 November 2003). However, she vowed to gain control of the ALP from factional leaders and return the Party to the jurisdiction of the rank and file members (Wroe and Gordon, *The Age*, 14 November 2003).

Regardless of that, intra-party doubts are being raised about the nature of Lawrence's presidential victory. The ALP national secretary, Tim Gartrell, refuted claims spreading within the Labor Party that the Lawrence victory was due to the voting system. It is said that the voting system exaggerated her level of support within the rank-and-file (Milne, *The Age*, 24 November 2003). Milne reports that the internal apprehensiveness relates to parallels concerning efforts to disregard Lawrence's authority as President. It had been stated that inside the party, on certain issues such as asylum seekers, she would have the capacity to destabilise Simon Crean. Any question mark over the legitimacy of her election to President serves this purpose by destabilising her mandate from the grassroots (Milne, *The Age*, 24 November 2003).

Although the vote was conducted under Victorian Branch rules, such rules vary in a peculiar way from other State rules. Indeed, the method used for the initial ballot was the same procedure as used for the Senate – the traditional proportional representation system. Under this method, when a candidate reaches a set quota of votes, they are counted out and any further ballots in their favour flow on to the next candidate on the ticket (Milne, *The Age*, 24 November 2003).

But the problem, say critics in the case of the ALP presidency, was that many rank-and-file members filled out their ballot papers exhaustively; that is, they allocated preferences to all 11 candidates. The critics say this exhaustive preferencing was not reflected in the final vote. After the first PR count Lawrence won by a margin of about 1200 votes, followed by Jones and then the Right's candidate, Warren Mundine (Milne, *The Age*, 24 November 2003).

Milne claims that Jones was Simon Crean's preferred candidate therefore, it might be noted that there was dissension over the presidential position gained by Lawrence.

It is significant to note that it was rank-and-file members of the Labor Party who voted Lawrence into the Presidency. Some female politicians might see this as justification of their vigorous campaign against 'macho' politics. It certainly is not based on equality given that we have seen that the leadership model that has dominated in the ALP and the Victorian Branch has been based on the misrecognition of women. Therefore, what agents of change are seen to have brought about the success of Carmen Lawrence?

At this stage in the thesis, it is impossible to discuss the agents of change that have enabled Lawrence to rise above the subordination of women in the ALP and become President of the Party. The free tertiary education system of the Whitlam Government would have been relevant since Lawrence obtained a Doctorate in Psychology during those years. A brief summary of the turmoil that pursued Lawrence from 1992 until July 1999 must be mentioned here to clarify the misfortunes that befell this ALP MP, proceeded firstly by her pre-ALP progress.

In 1972, Carmen Lawrence was a member of WEL; from 1974-1978 she was a lecturer and research psychologist. In 1986, she was elected to the Western Australian Legislative Assembly; in February 1988, she became the Minister of Education and in February 1990 she became Premier of Western Australia. But, in November 1992, 'Labor MP, John Halden, tabled in the WA Parliament a petition containing Brian Easton's allegations that Penny Easton his estranged wife, perjured herself in the Family Court' (Ambrose 1999 cited in Wright, *The Age* 24 July 1999). On the 9 November 1992, Ms Easton committed suicide and Dr Lawrence, on 10 November 1992, told Parliament she learned of the petition only when it was tabled. In February 1993, Lawrence was the Opposition Leader of Western Australia

and on 12 March 1994, Lawrence entered federal politics as the Member for Fremantle. She was appointed Minister for Health and Human Services and Minister assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women. However, on 8 April 1995, former WA ministerial colleague, Keith Wilson alleged that Lawrence briefed Cabinet prior to tabling how the petition would harm the then Opposition Leader, Richard Court, who was mentioned in it. It is stated that the petition was comprised of ‘allegations relating to a Family Court matter against Court, the former State Opposition Leader, and Ms Easton’ (Ambrose cited in Wright: *The Age*, 24 July 1999). Moreover, on 8 May 1995, Paul McGeough, of *The Sydney Morning Herald* wrote: ‘For the first time, the Federal Minister for Health, Dr Lawrence, has been directly implicated in a disastrous political strategy said to have contributed to the 1992 suicide of a Perth lawyer, Ms Penny Easton’ (McGeough cited in Wright, *The Age*, 24 July 1999.)

On 9 May 1995, the new Premier, Richard Court, requested a Royal Commission into whether tabling the petition ‘constituted a breach of executive’ (Ambrose cited in Wright, *The Age*, 24 July 1999). In July 1995, Dr Lawrence’s former media secretary, Zoltan Kovacs, then claimed Dr Lawrence knew of accusations concerning Ms Easton two weeks prior to the petition being tabled. A Royal Commission was called in September 1995. It was a scheme contrived by the Premier of Western Australia, Richard Court, to weaken the political position of Dr Lawrence, the Federal Minister for Health and former West Australian Premier (Editorial, *The Weekend Australian*, 23-24 September 1995). Dr Lawrence claimed that she could not recall the incidents narrated in evidence against her. Granted that, in November 1995 the Marks Royal Commission found Dr Lawrence guilty of lying to the WA Parliament in 1992. Subsequently, in April 1997 Dr Lawrence was charged

with three counts of perjury. She stepped down from the Shadow Ministry while bail was set at \$5000. On 5 July 1999 a case against Dr Lawrence began in the WA District Court. Eight days later she pleaded she had no memory of a Cabinet meeting to which the charges against her referred. On 23 July 1999, Dr Lawrence was found not guilty. The Prime Minister, Paul Keating had refused to abandon his Minister, declaring it a 'defining moment in ALP politics' (Wright, *The Age*, 24 July 1999). He portrayed his earlier Health Minister as the victim of an inquisition and stated that he did not regret his decision to keep her on the Front Bench, for 'he judged what happened to her as a political witch-hunt' (Keating cited in Nicholson, Reardon and Costa, *The Age*, 24 July 1999).

Kim Beazley, the Opposition Leader stated that, not only should Dr Lawrence return to the Front Bench when a vacancy arose, but also he claimed that 'there isn't a job in Government she couldn't do'. He said Labor people felt 'a sense of profound relief and joy' at her acquittal. 'Carmen Lawrence's integrity has been vindicated' (Beazley cited in Nicholson, Reardon and Costa, *The Age* 24 July 1999).

There is sufficient evidence in the involvement of Lawrence in the Penny Easton affair to conclude that Dr Lawrence was subject to more scrutiny and abuse than anyone else in the system. What is astonishing, however, and pertinent to the treatment of the former Premier of Western Australia, is the resilience that Dr Lawrence has shown in the political and legal assaults thrust upon her by Court and others. She did rise again to the Opposition Front Bench under Simon Crean (Lewis, *The Weekend Australian*, 24-25 January 2003). Therefore, her comeback role, within the Federal ALP, covers a unique pattern for a woman in the ALP or the Victorian Branch. Lawrence had been a successful Minister in the Lower

House; Premier of Western Australia; a fallen star when charged with perjury over her alleged role in the Penny Easton affair; found not guilty; returned to the back bench; raised to the Front Bench again under Kim Beazley's leadership, only to relinquish that role under the new Labor leader, Simon Crean, when she declared her 'shame' at Labor's failure to oppose John Howard's immigration policies and the treatment of asylum seekers. She quit the Opposition Front Bench, causing anger about undermining her insecure leader. Once again Lawrence drew criticism. Nicola Roxon from the ALP declared that 'Carmen Lawrence's vandalism may harm many of the causes she feels strongly about' (Roxon, *The Age*, 11 December 2003). Roxon could not understand why Lawrence would not support Labor's refugee policy.

Lawrence then became the frontrunner in the party's first direct ballot for its titular post of presidency which she won and went on to play a central role at Sydney's Darling Harbour Convention Centre (Lewis, *The Weekend Australian*, 24-25 January 2004). Lawrence was the first ALP woman to be the presiding chairperson at the National Conference where she guided the proceedings with 'brisk efficiency'. She also carried out the traditional supporting role for the new leader of the ALP, Mark Latham, suggesting he was a 'straight talking leader with a vision for this country' (Steketee, *The Australian*, 30 January 2004). It is now clear that Lawrence was determined to fight on announcing that, in the debate on refugee policy, she would support and strengthen the stand taken by the Left and work for refugees. Along with the Left-Wing members, she would fight to abandon 'temporary protection visas' for refugees and challenge 'mandatory detention' of asylum-seekers after they gain health clearances, security and identification checks. Lawrence concluded by stating that 'I am not going to retreat' (Steketee, *The Australian*, 30 January 2004).

The Royal Commission into the death of Penny Easton proved to be an attack on Carmen Lawrence the person and the right of that female politician to participate in politics. She claims she has been a 'victim of [the two-edged sword] that befell female politicians – extravagant praise and excessive criticism' (Willox, *The Age*, 10 August 1995).

Throughout this thesis it has been shown that women in the ALP are subject to unrealistic expectations and suffer severe damnation when they turn out to be quite human. The political careers of highly professional women such as Joan Kirner, Ros Kelly, Susan Ryan and more recently, Cheryl Kernot, have been destroyed by the 'golden girl' phenomenon in Australian politics, but not Carmen Lawrence. Therefore, since Carmen Lawrence has become President of the ALP her success as a calm, strong woman is now commanding that this author spends additional time and space later in the thesis discussing her success in that area. Dealing with the agencies that have contributed to women's advancement in the area of ALP politics follows.

Further inconsistencies may gain prominence by devoting the remainder of this chapter to highlights of the feminist movement. Some discussion of Germaine Greer's contribution to the second-wave of feminism, also the forming of WEL followed by the introduction of Emily's List and then the influence of the Purple Sage will follow.

Feminist Movement: Germaine Greer

In the 1970s, Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*, took society by storm with its public condemnation of female subjugation. She stripped away the reserve, the sentimentality and the falsehoods that had cushioned women's lives. Wallace writes that Greer expects history will view her as 'having made a substantial advance for women' (Wallace, *The Age*, 4 October 1997). Sullivan quotes Greer:

The older sisters must teach us what they found out. At all times we must learn from each other's experience and not judge hastily or snobbishly, or according to masculine criteria. We must fight against the tendency to form a feminist elite...and struggle to maintain co-operation and the matriarchal principle of fraternity (Greer cited in Sullivan, *The Age*, 4 October 1997).

Not since the publication of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* had the condition of being a woman been so systematically analysed or dramatically exposed. Mitchell writes that, unlike de Beauvoir, Greer 'revelled in a bawdy sense of humour that would have made Chaucer proud. Unlike the first-wave of feminists who, having gained the vote, were then at pains not to disturb society or unsettle the God, this was the real game of Greer's: 'Revolution, not mere rebellion, was her creed' (Mitchell, *The Weekend Australian*, 7 October 1996).

Indeed, while one notes that *The Female Eunuch* was written with flair, intellectual aggression and foresight making her the most formidable advocate of feminism in the 1970s, Barry Jones argued that he disagreed. Jones stated that he preferred the works of Simone de Beauvoir *The Second Sex* (1949, 1950) or Betty Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique* (1963) (Jones 1995, *The Weekend Australian*, 7 October 1995). While *The Female Eunuch* is the best written of the three, Jones suggests that it lacks the political content and passion of de

Beauvoir and Friedan. In *The Feminist Mystique* (1963) Friedan argues passionately that ‘housewifery had expanded to fill all available time, leading to progressive dehumanisation and the comfortable concentration’ (Friedan (1963) quoted by Jones, *The Weekend Australian*, 7 October 1995).

In 1970, Greer judged *The Female Eunuch* as part of the feminist attempt to change the lost chances of women who had gained the right to stand for Parliament, but failed to do so. Jones claims that Greer, in the writing of politics, argues that ‘if women are the true [oppressed minority] their only effective action can be to withdraw their labour [until concepts of work, play and reward change absolutely]’. She says that ‘cooking, clothes, cosmetics and housekeeping must become part of the [pleasure principle], not [compulsiveness and compulsion]’ (Jones, *The Weekend Australian*, 7 October 1995)

In writing *The Female Eunuch*, Greer ensured that the world as we knew it was never the same again. She wanted women to rely ‘on their own guts’ to take on emancipation into the future. Not only was she arguably mapping out a future for the next generation, but also she was influencing women to change their lives by delivering bawdy ideas for the forcible overthrow of the misrecognition of women. But what does this tell us about women in the Victorian Branch of the ALP?

We have seen that women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch are gaining preselection more readily, but they are not winning leadership roles. In March 1996, Greer wrote an essay about what life would be like if women were in charge. It is an article that throws light on

the premierships of Carmen Lawrence, WA, and Joan Kirner, Victoria. Their accession has often been seen 'as a hedge against changing electorate preferences – a chance to throw the switch to something utterly different when the boys have made a mess of things (Henderson 1999: 18). Greer argues that 'for women to gain power, society would first have to be in its death throes'. To enforce her point, Greer gives two examples of hunter-gatherer societies in which women have taken power after men have destroyed themselves through drink and sloth (Greer, March, 1996, *The Sunday Times*, cited in *The Age*, 13-14 April 1996). Not only have these men, through despair, lost their desire and created a power vacuum, but women have taken power when there was, as it were, no power left to take. Their aim is survival which the men have already rejected. So, if women gained leadership positions in the Victorian Branch of the ALP, one would have to assume that it was because men no longer wanted those positions themselves anymore. For example, Lawrence and Kirner gained their places as Premiers when their respective States were in serious trouble.

The Women's Electoral Lobby

Another agent of change has been the WEL. It was formed as a 'political lobby group for the 1972 elections when radical change seemed possible if Gough Whitlam and the Labor Party succeeded' (Reynolds 1995: 67). A well-known Australian feminist, Beatrice Faust, was impressed by an article in the new US magazine, *US*, which demonstrated the reflections of presidential candidates on those items of significant concern to women. As a result she created a small group in Melbourne 'to consider a similar strategy for use in the 1972 Federal Election' (Reynolds 1995: 67).

To determine the viewpoint of parliamentarians and candidates, WEL initiated personal interviews with candidates and publicised their answers to questions on subjects of interest to women:

The survey was a resounding success. In the context of political uncertainty and the probability of a change of Government, few candidates felt sufficiently confident to ignore this apparently powerful new lobby group. There was a very good response rate and form guide was given wide publicity by newspapers such as *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The National Times* and *The Sun Herald*, and *The Age* printed it as a lift out supplement. Local newspapers ran material based on the form guide relating to local candidates. WEL also undertook leafleting of some electorates, produced posters and distributed how-to-vote cards and copies of the form guide at polling booths. *The National Times* in a front cover headline called WEL the [rising new force in Australian politics] (Preddey 1985 cited in Reynolds 1995: 67-68).

Many Labor women later elected to Federal or the Victorian Branch of the ALP positions gained their commitment, their political skills and determination as activists in this period due to this dramatic social change and in WEL.

But not all Governments favour the successes of WEL. For instance, the Howard Government has been de-funding many women's groups including the WEL. This action is weakening the organisation and devaluing the broadness of the advice regarding women's policy. 'There is no doubt this is part of the Government's agenda to weaken these organisations' (Macklin 2000: 172). Anne Summers writes that funding for the Office for the Status of Women (OSW) was slashed from \$5.58 million to \$3.68 million when the fate of OSW declined after the appointment of John Howard as Prime Minister. Summers claims Howard tried to abolish both OSW and the Affirmative Action Agency but Nicole Feely, his Chief of Staff, had talked him out of it (Summers 2003: 127-128). Summers claims that, instead, he cunningly hired as the OSW new head a close friend, Pru Goward, a woman who had no 'qualifications or credentials for the position'. Staff cuts followed and a further \$1

million of payments to women's programs were cancelled two years after having been set up. Up to 50 per cent of staff were restored to their positions after serious protests, but WEL, the main dependable feminist institution that had been allocated money and become a major agent for change under the Whitlam government was denied funding (Summers 2003: 128). Eight years later, WEL remains de-funded, leaving feminists to ascertain that the demolition of equality that this Government is inflicting on the women of Australia is progressing. It has also attacked women's independence through the axing of child-care funds.

After cutting the funds and damaging the prestige and authority of all its forums for listening to women, there was no one to protect the services set up for women's entitlements that were expanded under the Whitlam, Hawke and Keating Governments. Summers suggests that this government took full advantage of the situation by assaulting child-care benefits in its first federal Budget. For instance, between 1996 and 2000, it proceeded to take about \$850 million from the child-care budget (Summers 2003: 126). It would appear that what Howard has done is make it more difficult for women to work outside the home, while setting out to end and indeed possibly reverse more than 'thirty years of women's economic and social progress' (Summers 2003: 125). Yet Amanda Vanstone argues that the Howard Government has made a contribution to child-care allowing women to blend family commitments with study or work (Vanstone, *The Age*, 6 March 2001). Carmen Lawrence contradicts Vanstone saying that only a Government that is out-of-touch could make such a claim. She points out that the Howard Government has presided over policies that have closed 400 child-care centres and provided others where working mothers cannot afford to pay for them (Lawrence, *The Age*, 20 March 2001). This Government has basically ignored the Human rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Report recommending it should end

discrimination against women (Lawrence, *The Age*: 20 March 2001). As a result, there are women in the community who must be experiencing indifference and exclusion from the special services for women such as refuge, rape crisis centers and health monitoring of WEL.

Not only have we seen that women's progress towards equality was considerable after the 1970s but also the decline of support for women's programmes since 1996 has affected women throughout Australia. Thus, we should also note that there are still barriers blocking women from becoming leaders in the Victorian Branch of the ALP. It is essential, therefore, if the agenda for return-to-work programs for women, access to education at reasonable prices, affordable quality child-care or family-friendly enterprise bargaining are to become the agenda for the future in the ALP, that women champion these causes. But, while women's opportunities were greater than ever before 1996, the Coalition has ensured that by restricting child-care most women are helplessly handicapped. Furthermore, by de-funding WEL, the major feminist organisation, women's power of attacking hardship has been diminished. The WEL requires funding to function in a valuable and influential way.

One might consider that having women in leadership roles in the ALP and the Victorian Branch could help to break down these barriers and advance women's equality. It might also launch a collectively cohesive, and a firm economically resilient society, but the Government is forcing women back to formally traditional roles. Therefore, women's accessibility to official positions in the Federal ALP and the Victorian Branch is restricted, which, in turn, limits their influence and access to full political citizenship. The next agency of change to be considered is Emily's List (from 'Early Money is Like Yeast').

Emily's List

There have been feminine groups set up specifically to advance the cause of women in the ALP – one of them is Emily's List. It has been successful in supporting women when running for preselection for the Federal ALP and the Victorian Branch.

In 1990, Victorian Labor's Joan Kirner became Australia's second woman to become a Premier. At the time, Labor was perceived as the 'channel for women to make the grade in politics' (Henderson 1999: 70). The impression did not last long and Joan Kirner retired from politics. However, she became a member of another impressive group of Labor women, Kay Setches, the former member for Ringwood was one of them (Henderson 1999: 70). Kirner and Setches understood that unless Labor women were given more favourable circumstances in which to hold seats their numbers in Parliament would completely disappear. As a consequence, Kirner and Setches were committed to expanding the number of Labor women in Parliament. The party reacted by establishing an 'Affirmative Action working group as a sub-committee of the ministry group', co-chaired by Julia Gillard (Henderson 1999: 71). These women worked through the factions, the Socialist Left, a few Independents and women from Labor Unity. The negotiator for the Left was Julia Gillard; Mary Gillett, the Member for Werribee, was negotiator for the Right. The result of the negotiations meant an arranged 35 per cent rule and targets. Some male MPs bitterly opposed the Affirmative Action campaign (Henderson 1999: 71). It is clear that women, when developing strategies for more female presence and leadership in the Victorian Branch of the ALP, should clarify what they want and take some control. The changes brought about by Emily's List were notably minor in comparison to the percentage of women in the Party.

By contrast, not only did the male powerbrokers vitriolically oppose it at the top level, it became necessary to overwhelm the male leadership of the Left.

At a general meeting of the Left in March 1994, the male protesters succumbed. They had opposed the Affirmative Action campaign but did not oppose the motion put forth at the meeting (Henderson 1999: 73). Yet, following the round of preselections for the Federal Election of 1996, it became obvious that many male powerbrokers were failing to regard favourably the affirmative answer to the '35 per cent quota national rule change' (Reynolds 1996 cited in Henderson 1999: 73). By the 1996 Election, women were objects of ridicule; their critics confident the targets would never be met. After the 1996 federal defeat, they decided to make a serious run to meet the targets as women once again deserted Labor. Then the opportunities would open for Labor women in the next two years (Henderson 1999: 74). Bob Hawke and Neville Wran offered proposals regarding the need for greater participation of women at all levels of the Party; these recommendations dealt with Affirmative Action and candidate selection (Hawke and Wren 2002: 24-25). Yet, while Emily's List is assisting women to enter the Party, the leadership positions in the ALP Victorian Branch remain outside the reach of women MPs.

Henderson writes that in the next two years more opportunities would arise for women candidates. Joan Kirner's newly formed Emily's List appeared, offering modest cheques to aspiring candidates:

...in the tradition of Emily's List in the United States and Britain to pro-choice, pro-equity Labor women candidates before elections, as well as coordinating an invaluable group of women to support Labor women candidates. By the 1998 election, many Labor women candidates from the more conservative Right-Wing of the party were happy to accept Emily's List support regardless of the pro-choice rule. At the 1998 Election,

Labor stood a record number of women candidates in seats, at least eight in safe seats. Joan Kirner's argument – that quality women were ready to stand but just needed the opportunity – had finally won the day (Henderson 1999: 74).

Scammell reveals that, according to the contributors of a new book on Australian politics, *Party Girls: Labor Women Now*, 'conservative women just aren't the [right kind] of women politicians' (Scammell, *The Age*, 19 February 2001). In fact, Joan Kirner believes ALP women should be progressive and feminist (Kirner cited in Scammell, *The Age*, 19 February 2001).

The origin of women's sponsorship groups such as Emily's List (directed at aiding more Labor women into ALP politics) set in motion the quotas for women. Indeed it reflects how difficult it has been within the Victorian Branch of the ALP for women to be heard within the macho setting of ALP politics. It is generally believed that in 2005 women members of the Victorian ALP are not up and running equally for leadership positions with the dominant male members. 50 per cent of women as representatives, Ministers and leaders would be more democratic, socialistic and egalitarian. But there has been some progress.

Organisations : The Purple Sage Project: From the wisdom of the people: action for our times

The Purple Sage Project began in August 1998. It is a partnership project involving such organisations as the Victorian Women's Trust, The Stegley Foundation, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the People Together Project, the Victorian Local Governance Association and the YWCA Victoria (Crooks et al 2000: 1). Group leaders claim it represents an important and new partnership among the six organisations. They reiterate that in coming together they are positively entrusted to the 'conduct of an independent, non-party political program of discussion and action'. They add that this is not to refute their own specified opinions and

particularly their own ‘commitment to a just and democratic society’ (Crooks et al 2000: 5). They write that they were progressively uneasy about processes and directions at the time in Victoria:

A widening gap between the rich and poor continued, high unemployment, reduced standards of community service, increased strain on local communities (especially in regional Victoria), the loss of public assets, racism and social tension, and a serious erosion of our democratic rights and culture.

We detected among many people across the State a deep frustration and alienation, a sense that our elected representatives were not listening and that people could do little to stop what they saw as a marked decline in community well-being (Crooks et al 2000: 5).

The group wanted to establish an ‘opportunity’ for Victorian citizens to congregate, give voice to, and clearly state their favoured perceptions for the future; and to construct the methods by which members of society could form a basis for ideas that were of concern to them. According to Crook et al, some 6000 people became actively involved. They organised small group sessions, group leader meetings, ‘community agency meetings and think-tank sessions’ (Crooks et al 2000: 5). The people’s responses showed great insight in detail and depth relating to the comprehension of numerous issues of importance such as democracy, unemployment, job security and the gradual reduction in community infrastructure. Education, privatisation, reduced services, environmental degradation, gambling, privatisation were also areas of concern. The Purple Sage Project seeks to offer the community a system of identifying a way forward on the issues that concern people (Crook et al 2000: 17). Furthermore, the process of dialogue is established by inviting people to be group leaders. After twenty-three sessions, mostly in country Victoria, over six hundred men and women responded. Of the group leaders 76 per cent are women (Crooks et al 2000: 13).

The changes the Purple Sage Project has brought to Victorians are evident from the reaction of the former Premier, Jeff Kennett, at the Victorian Council of Social Service. Kennett perceived that Victoria was a 'buoyant society' with only some persistent social problems, namely suicide in rural areas, drugs among young people, and the rising incidence of depression in adults. When the Purple Sage Project Director suggested that issues identified through Purple Sage dialogue throughout Victoria involved 'unemployment, inequality, job insecurity, reduced service quality, gambling and erosion of democratic culture', the Premier personally abused the Project Director (Crooks et al. 2000: 16).

The 1999 Victorian Election result was a surprise to almost everyone. The Government was changed. Independents were to play a key role in determining the State's political future. It was commonly believed that the Kennett Government would stay in power. However, some of the swings to Labor and Independents were surprising, causing political commentators to be perplexed while analysts went searching for answers as to why 'the bush' voted against the conservative parties. The new Bracks Government included seven women in the new Cabinet.

While Purple Sage is a totally independent, non-party organisation, there is reason to believe it did play a part in the downfall of the Kennett Government and the success of the Bracks Government. The changes sought by the people through Purple Sage showed an unprecedented exercise in community dialogue. It also created change in the electorate when more women were preselected for the Victorian Branch of the ALP.

What is apparent today is that, although the number of women in the ALP has soared, this has not been matched by a corresponding increase in the women being promoted to leadership positions. In Australia, Clare Martin in the Northern Territory is the only leader of Government – not a Premier but a Chief Minister of the Territory. Does this show that while women might be getting the numbers do they have any power? It would appear that these women might think they are equal to men, but theoretically this is not the position because, in reality, they lack power and are certainly not gaining leadership roles. I see a new line of argument arising here. Are the women who are being propelled into the ALP and the Victorian Branch, sufficiently tough to match the macho male contenders? This research is leading towards a negative response to that question.

The research in this chapter has raised more questions than it has answered. Therefore, an additional chapter, after the case studies in Chapters Seven and Eight, will consider some new factors relating to a woman's political role in the ALP: including how 'gladiatorial' a role might our women display as elected representatives? Still, there is no doubt that Emily's List, in a comparatively short period of time, changed the composition of the ALP and the Victorian Branch and that the Purple Sage Project created a system that highlights the power of communities. We must, therefore, endeavour to ascertain in this thesis the reason why there are no women at the highly professional level of elite decision makers in the very centre of power in the Victorian Branch of the ALP.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CASE STUDIES: WOMEN IN THE ALP AND THE VICTORIAN BRANCH

It is now commonplace to point out that women are alienated from the discourses of Western culture, even the revolutionary ones. Recent French psychoanalytic theorists such as Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva both have suggested that Western cultural discourses are univocally masculinist. They claim that these so-called [phallogocentric] discourses offer no place for women to speak except insofar as they speak in ways that men have preordained. Thus women's only alternatives are to speak in a masculine voice, construct a new language, or be silent.

Jane Sawicki 1991:1

This chapter discusses a number of case studies that depict inconsistencies affecting some women as they strive to reach the upper echelons of power in the Australian Labor Party and the Victorian Branch in particular but opinions differ. Summers claims that women occupy less than 10 per cent of company board member seats and although there has been a large increase in the women elected to the state and Federal Parliaments these MPs have not been appointed to leadership positions. She states 'that ten years ago there were two women state premiers. Today there are none [although there is a woman chief minister – in the Northern Territory]' (Summers 2003: 4). Hennessy is more optimistic and points out that women in the Labor Party have made substantial gains in recent years, 'and Australian women generally can increasingly expect the face of Labor to be female' (Hennessy 2000: 250). However, more has to be done if the culture and organisational structure of the Labor Party is to include women as equals.

The facts are that in a decade, the number of women ALP MPs has jumped from thirteen in 1992 to twenty-eight in 2002 (Parliament Papers: 2002). However, the rising numbers have not been matched by a similar increase in their access to leadership roles. Neither has this increase in numbers of women in the Party been associated with any discernible progression

in the defence of women's hard-earned entitlements. Indeed, the evidence suggests that a decline in women's rights is occurring and their economic well being is being eroded. Summers says that women's rights began to deteriorate in the early 1990s under Labor and it would require a significant cultural change in the ALP to return to the 'pro-woman's stance' it followed under Prime Ministers Whitlam, Hawke and Keating (Summers 2003: 265). On the other hand, more women are needed in the ALP and the Victorian Branch to defend women's interests. However, while increased representation is essential, their appointment to leadership positions is paramount. This is something that appears to be taking a very long time to achieve and requires explanation.

Many explanations have been offered throughout this thesis elaborating the reasons for women's under-representation in positions of power in the ALP and the Victorian Branch in particular. These include their misrecognition due to the historical constraints that have hampered women from even contemplating a 'public life' as shown in earlier chapters. Discussions with interviewees included subjects such as: Women as the child-bearing sex; the absence of suitable child-care facilities; discrimination or harassment; the composition of the preselection system; Australia's electoral systems and the rigid form of patriarchy that exists in the Australian Parliament and in the ALP in particular. There has also been the disinclination of women themselves to enter such a male territory as ALP politics, along with the social stereotype that women should be at home caring for children and husband.

Some MPs, when interviewed, asked for their opinions to remain confidential, others declared their perceptions or experiences openly, therefore all care will be taken to meet the wishes of the individual women.

Body Politics

The case studies in this chapter are based mainly on my own fieldwork, personal interviews with parliamentarians in Canberra, Parliament House in Melbourne or in offices in the Members' electorates, and newspaper and journal articles and questionnaires. Those interviewed were four women from the FLP, Carmen Lawrence, Cheryl Kernot, Julia Gillard and one anonymous MP. In total, sixteen were from the Victorian Branch of the ALP. Two were from the Coalition Party and one was a former member of the Australian Democratic Party, Meg Lees. Two women interviewed were from the legal system and twenty-three answers to questionnaires came from ALP federal members. It should also be noted that this chapter and the next will pay more attention to the views of MPs themselves rather than the structure, organisation or practices of the ALP and its Victorian Branch, which has been covered in Chapters Four and Five. Preslection will be given special attention.

Women as the Child-bearing Sex

Throughout the empirical work in this thesis, reference has frequently been made to the disadvantages women confront when, as the child-bearing sex, they seek to pursue a career in the Australian Labor Party. Women's commitment to the home, family and child-bearing functions remain strong. Indeed, they rank fairly high in the list of reasons which ALP women MPs give as reasons for the lesser political participation of women. It may also be seen as a deterrent to women reaching leadership roles in the Party. However, as we examine the material from interviews and apply it to the case studies, it may be possible to detect that

the pre-eminence accorded to these factors as a positive obstruction to political recognition has moderated in recent years. Others, however, disagreed.

On 6 October 2001, the Prime Minister, John Howard, announced the forthcoming Federal Election. Anna Bourke, the ALP candidate for the marginal eastern suburbs seat of Chisholm, was four months pregnant and pondered her dilemma. Should she announce her condition and risk her chances of promotion within the Labor Party or would she risk her candidature (Shaw, *The Age*, 10 December 2001)? Bourke decided to withhold her news from family and colleagues until after the election results were announced. She argues that:

If it were a bloke having another baby in politics, nobody would know, nobody would care, nobody would comment. Why do we keep having to make this huge distinction between women in politics? (Shaw, *The Age*, 10 December 2001)

If it is socially unacceptable for a pregnant woman to be in an election campaign, then this reveals that the ideological messages of a patriarchal society are forcing women to revert to the private sphere whilst with child. Another ALP candidate, Rachel Powning, agrees. She believes that expectant mothers are seen as unfit for the rigours of public life and are viewed with concern regarding suitability. She claims that, when she was standing for a safe seat in the Victorian Parliament, in December 2001, ALP MPs, not ALP officials, raised questions with regard to her pregnancy (Powning, *The Age*, 11 December 2001). Not only does this reasoning restrict women from gaining preselection, it prohibits women from gaining the experience they need to obtain leadership roles. In contrast, Marie Luckins, a Victorian Liberal MP, has indicated there were no problems with her pregnancy and candidature endeavours. She disagrees with Bourke and Powning and claims she did not conceal her pregnancy when she was selected as a candidate for Waverley province; her parental status was not an issue. She further claims she was supported and encouraged by her parliamentary

colleagues, her Party and her constituents (*The Age*, 11 December 2001). In this instance, the Liberal ideology was the preferred attitude for women contemplating a parliamentary career and the possibility of leadership roles. However, an incident in the Victorian Parliament emphasises the rigid form of patriarchal culture that exists at the present time.

Lynne Kosky is the mother-of-two; she is also a Victorian Labor MP. In her role as MP she works 70 hours per week. In Parliament, on 13 May 1999, she made a request for parliamentary proceedings to be made more family-friendly. A senior Liberal MP (Richardson) rebuked her, telling her to have a 'cup of tea and a nice lie-down'. Ms Kosky had dared to campaign for sitting hours more in line with family responsibilities. Indeed, she suggested that the Parliament should introduce additional weeks per session rather than sit late into the night. She had also called for the Parliament to sit through some meal breaks. That week, the Victorian Parliament sat until midnight on Tuesday and Wednesday, was due to sit until midnight on Thursday and scheduled an extra session for Friday (*The Australian*, 14 May 1999).

It is reported that the then Premier, Jeff Kennett was angry with the Liberal MP (John Richardson) over his comments, declaring they could be taken as 'sexist and not desirable.' However, he defended Richardson the following day by exclaiming to Kosky: 'It's a bit rich to ask that the whole parliamentary procedure...be changed to accommodate your requirements, which were obviously there when you voluntarily offered to serve.' Kennett continued: 'You've got to make a deliberate decision as to whether you want to spend time, while your children are young, with them or whether you want to try and mix the two careers.' Ms Kosky claimed the former Premier was 'living in the dark ages' (*The*

Australian, 14 May 1999). Indeed, it is reasonable to charge Mr Kennett with assuming parenting is the responsibility of the female; and that therefore gaining experience for leadership roles is a secondary consideration.

This incident caused something of a furore. Kennett was criticised by the Victorian convener of the WEL, Anne Hall, who argued that Kennett's comments 'flew in the face of all the progress women have made in terms of combining families and careers' (*The Australian*, 14 May 1999). The incident shows that the organisation of the workplace still rotates around the masculine concept of freedom from domestic responsibilities.

The attacks of Richardson and Kennett on a fellow MP undermine democratic institutions in this society. Two criticisms can be made of the Kennett and Richardson outburst. First, Kosky talks about wanting the Parliament to be more family-friendly. Kennett and Richardson immediately interpret that in terms of being female/mother-friendly. The replies of Kennett and Richardson were grounded in the patriarchal assumption that family-friendly hours and conditions suit only women. (Actually there are male parliamentarians now who object to the family unfriendly nature of Parliament, it interferes with their parenting role (Anonymous Interviewee: 11 September 2002).

Secondly, and most importantly, is the criticism stating that, if she does not want those conditions, she should not be there. Such exclusionary thinking is directly contradictory of democratic rights. It is not her choice; after all she is the choice of the people. Maybe that is

a highly theoretical point, but it is right. What Kennett and Richardson are trying to do is exclude people from being able to choose those who are family representatives.

The case of subordination of women is, first and foremost, an issue of democracy. Therefore, if democracy entails the active participation of all citizens in the decision-making that affects their lives, women must have equal opportunity to participate. Only then will women, within the institutions of Government, stop power being concentrated in the hands of a mainly white, patriarchal, masculine elite. Interestingly, it may be argued that the thoughts precipitating the remarks of Kennett and Richardson about Ms Kosky closely resemble those of some of the Western philosophers discussed in the Introduction. In addition, it shows that some of the philosophies remain prevalent in the ideologies of modern Victorian parliamentary participants. Past and present feminists have highlighted the ambiguity of dominant linguistic usage in a patriarchal culture. Another incident caused an unjust major outburst in the Victorian Parliament.

Kirstie Marshall, a new Labor MP, was forced to leave the chamber on her first day in Parliament because she was breast-feeding her eleven-day-old baby. The reason given was that parliamentary conventions forbid 'strangers' to enter the Chamber. This caused a storm of protest and on account of the incident many comments followed, some sexist and derogatory. But Sheila Kitzinger supported the young mother:

Prominent author and child-birth activist Sheila Kitzinger said yesterday that Ms Marshall's removal from Parliament because she was feeding her baby was a violation of her human rights. Ms Kitzinger in Melbourne for an Australian Breastfeeding Association seminar said the incident showed Parliament was still [an old men's club] (Gray, *The Age*, 28 February 2003).

She further stated:

This is violating human rights – the human rights of babies to be fed, the human rights of mothers and the human rights of fathers...(Kitzinger: *The Age*, 28 February 2003).

The severity of the negative remarks included sexual connotations and even worse; one wonders if the procedure of breast-feeding signaled uncleanness in some minds. The severity of the criticism, the appalling standard of humour in the newspaper columns of short letters makes one wonder if there is an element of atavism at work here, a kind of horror at women's biological functions. Breastfeeding, pregnancy, menstruation are seen as 'unclean' in many societies where women are isolated while they are in such a 'condition'.

Marshall indicated the incident would not be repeated, that her mother would care for the baby and the Speaker of the House arranged for a space near the chamber where Marshall could breast-feed her baby. This was an immediate compromise solution to the problem no doubt, but an undemocratic one due to Marshall being democratically elected to the Parliament. It is vital to remove from the agenda old ideas associated with nursing mothers. Kirstie Marshall was elected to Parliament while expecting her first child. Her constituents knew she was pregnant when they voted for her. They also knew that in all probability the young mother would be nursing her infant. Therefore, it was undemocratic

Still, these studies show that the factual and impartial impressions practised within the Parliament by the ALP are affected by one's bodily persona. For instance, a business suit hides the male sexual aspects considered normal within the public sphere and reflects power. Women, on the other hand, as seen in the case studies, show a flowing maternity outfit or a bulging abdomen or actual breast feeding are conventionally seen as feminine in a way that

pertains to the private sphere and decreases their authority within the Parliament. The male parliamentarian is never critically characterised by his appearance. Then, is it any wonder that authoritativeness normally necessitates edging to the male norm?

Another interviewee raised the question of 'balance' between public/private spheres:

Women are conditioned if not pressurised to believe that being a mother is the greatest achievement of all. Therefore, many women who question this nonetheless seek to strike a balance to do so to appease perceived/actual *criticism* (Anonymous Interviewee: 11 September 2002).

When I asked the interviewee if women are less likely to tolerate these conditions, the reply was 'No'. 'If anything, they are more likely to coalesce these conditions and hope that time will heal and improve the situation' (Anonymous Interviewee: 11 September 2002). It was the view of the interviewee that a balance between the public and the private spheres will never be attained while the question of motherhood prohibits a woman's progress in the ALP and in the world of politics.

It can be seen that the experiences of Kosky and Marshall reinforce the argument that women have been unable to realize the full potential of the formal political and social gains of the women's movement, for example, by participating actively in politics (i.e., women are practicing their democratic rights). Most importantly, they might hinder the arrogant misuse of power as indicated by Kennett and Richardson and others. In addition, by involving themselves in their democratic rights and obligations, women would become more experienced in constraining the power of male-dominated entrenched Government. A political scientist, Allan Patience, claims

Democracy makes us the effective guardians of our own liberties and it educated us to be effective citizens. That is why it is one of the greatest human achievements of all time. Indeed, arguably the evolution of democracy is a measure of the growing civilisation of the human species (Patience 1999).

Yet, in the Australian political environment patriarchy is alive and oppressing at the beginning of the Twenty-First Century. Indeed, women are struggling for working conditions conducive to a career and home commitments. Furthermore, if the sexes were democratically equal, women would have more respect and authority than they have now. It would mean that women would have stronger possibilities of gaining leadership roles in the Victorian Labor Party. They would not be struggling against economic exploitation neither would they be politically marginalised. Instead, the Kosky and Marshall experiences reveal that politics continues to be viewed as a discipline for males. And we cannot rely on the Prime Minister, John Howard, regarding equal opportunities for women as he claims:

We are in the post-feminist stage of the debate. The good thing about this stage is that I think we have broken through some of the old stereotypes. I find that for the under 30s women...the feminist battle has been won. That is not an issue. Of course, a woman has a right to a career. Of course, women are as good as men. Of course, they are entitled to the same promotion and they can do it as well. Of course. That is accepted...(Howard quoted in Hewett, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7-8 September 2002).

To the contrary, Verity Bergmann would argue that feminism remains significant in all its many forms although the women's movement does not exist as it originally did in the 1970s and early 1980s (Burgmann 2003: 162-163). The fact is the Prime Minister is wrong. Unless women in their 30s and 40s are given access to positions of influence in political parties, there is no chance of a woman becoming Prime Minister in the foreseeable future, therefore, the feminist battle has *not* been won.

It is undemocratic for women to be seen by others to be restricted by the body politics classification. Indeed, the biological element is seen by women interviewed and questionnaire information to be a handicap to women's progress in the ALP and the Victorian Branch, despite the advances made by the second-wave of feminism. If women are now seen to be gaining tertiary qualifications, and gaining experience in working careers that might assist their preselection, then it is highly likely they might wish to have their babies rather later in life than was the norm in previous eras. On the other hand, it is essential that they are confident to show their pregnant state in order for them to gain sufficient ministerial experience *and* be young enough to be in line for the leadership positions in the ALP.

Child care/rearing

The situation of parliamentary women's family commitments varies between State and federal politics; therefore it is perhaps foolish to deliberate over women's participatory levels in State political activities with that at the national level. For a woman to become a Victorian parliamentarian in the ALP, she may be able to manage child-care arrangements if she lives in Melbourne. However, if she lives in a rural area, she needs four-day basic caring for her children. Additionally, late-night sittings are a common occurrence as seen in the Kosky case illustration. At the national level, politics is increasingly seen to be a full-time occupation. Becoming a Federal MP, with its prerequisites of partial residence in Canberra, involves physical severance from family and home for a woman MP living in any State. As a consequence, extra pressures and economic demands occur for any woman MP regardless of party.

With regard to the norms of equality, child rearing is a different matter due to it being socially allocated to mothers as a corollary of giving birth, and mostly other women as a replacement for the mother. As an argument against Howard's statement, little progress has been made during the period of second-wave feminism that challenges the system that exonerates men from regular child-care responsibilities. In the ALP, as Carmen Lawrence indicated when interviewed, it can be done but you have to be determined and persistent and energetic. (Interview: 29 September 1999). A second interviewee said it was possible with skill and determination. A third answered 'yes, it could be done with a supportive partner though it remained difficult'. Another added it was a tough job but she expected that before she entered politics. A fifth said that it was possible but actually very difficult to achieve. She thought children begged the question of guilt that should not happen, but she believed it did. (Interviews with three Victorian MPs who wished to remain anonymous). Kelly Hoare, the ALP Member for Charlton stated in response to a questionnaire that many barriers previously experienced by women aspiring to a political career are being broken down as young people both male and female, with young families, enter Parliament (Questionnaire: 1 September 1999). Another woman remarks that those who appear to have gained entry to the ALP do so at a cost of being absent from their young children (Questionnaire: 1 September 1999). One woman relates that paid help is a good idea, but a good husband was the best answer (Questionnaire: 1 September 1999). When Ms Burke and her husband had their first child about a year after Ms Burke was elected in 1998, her husband took a year away from his work to help. Both commuted to Canberra for the first eight months while Ms Burke was breast-feeding (Shaw, *The Age*, 10 December, 2001). Fran Bailey, Victorian Liberal Member of the House of Representatives, told me that she could not possibly manage her responsibilities in her large electorate if she had small children (Interview: 22 November 2002).

While the whole issue of child-caring is more complex than merely managing the social problem of the actual hands-on care, the focus of my study relates to the ideological use of the woman as a symbol of inadmissibility; that it is her job alone to administer the caring role. Indeed, one area of my theory is that the assigning of women to the caring role creates a relatively substantial obstruction to their success in the public sphere: in this case, the ALP and to leadership roles in the Victorian Branch of the ALP. As one interviewee related to me: 'It is difficult to avoid an adverse inference being drawn if one deliberately adjusts and regulates one's career during the child-caring years when most men are extending theirs' (Anonymous Interviewee: 1 September 1999). Moreover, it is evident from empirical case studies that the responsibility of fathers for the care of children has not, on the whole, changed in order to adapt to their partner's increased desires to enter politics. One interviewee was emphatic that: 'Only when men start to take on an equal share of child-care responsibilities will she be able to try again for preselection' (Anonymous Interview: 16 October 2002).

On the other hand, though, case studies show that women have tended to enter politics rather later in life than men. The delayed entrance may, in consequence, illustrate in certain instances the causes and difficulties that women may encounter in becoming well known within the parliamentary circles and within their electorates. Some women indicated it affected their chances of gaining power and had caused distress through their efforts. It might also affect her chances of gaining preselection for a safe seat with any conceivability of success. Late entry into the Victorian Branch of the ALP, therefore, is sometimes seen in my case studies, created from my personal interviews, as a handicap in gaining leadership

roles. As one MP pointed out, one's seniority in length of service is a more likely alternative to age when seeking success in Parliament. Indeed, she claims that those who enter politics early have brighter prospects towards gaining responsible posts. As has been shown, increasing numbers of ALP women have been gaining parliamentary seats but these women, as women before them, are marginalised, discriminated against and denied access to real power. Furthermore, women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch with children require facilities for child-care considerations if they are to achieve equality of opportunity.

Child-care facilities

Despite Affirmative Action initiatives concerning child-care facilities, both the Federal and the Victorian Labor Governments have been extremely reluctant to establish workplace child-care. The stress of finding child-care facilities was a regular problem among my interviewees similar to all women who wish to work.

Cheryl Kernot notes that some women had to find means to care for the infants in Parliament House in Canberra, when new infants presence was rare. The former Senator Jacinta Collins, MHR Jackie Kelly and a member of her own staff brought their new-born babes to work. The office managed quite well while looking after the baby of its own staff mother until the child became a toddler and the arrangement became unsatisfactory (Interview: 29 September 1999). At the time there was no creche in Parliament, merely a family room, a point made by the former member of the Democrats, Meg Lees. The former Senator Collins lobbied for accommodation for her coming baby. Lees says that when she first entered Parliament she was the only female senator with dependent children. She fought for space in the library where her teenage daughters could have spent time reading, but was refused. Lees argues

that there are several places which could be utilised for child-care, but their requests are answered with arguments or excuses such as ‘too expensive’, ‘can’t be organised’ or ‘won’t be utilised properly’. Lees also claims that, apart from members, there are three thousand staff when Parliament is sitting who would benefit from child-care facilities. Lees notes that while Parliament House in Canberra has four gyms, a squash court, a swimming pool, dozens of lunchrooms and massive office space, there is only one space that has been regularly used for children. That, she says, is upstairs and is inappropriate because it has a low wall which children could climb over and fall down a whole storey (Interview: 29 September, 1999). If this is the family room, it shows a total disregard for the support a mother can expect; it shows the depth of the patriarchal atmosphere in the reasoning of the male elite. It also shows the impossible obstacles women must overcome in their efforts to gain the experience required in their quest for leadership roles.

Joan Kirner managed child-rearing with the support of her husband:

You have to work out where to prioritise: just what time you have to spare but most of all you have to convince yourself – the family – that your kids are not going to become delinquent if you do this important job. The biggest thing women, and probably men also, have to struggle with is the guilt feeling – thinking that you should be doing something else (Interview: 19 September 2002)

But Kirner lived in Melbourne and had the co-operation of her husband, therefore her child-caring responsibilities were lessened. Judy Maddigan, the ALP MP and Speaker in the present Victorian Parliament, claims that:

The political structure doesn’t encourage women with young children to enter Parliament. Here [meaning Parliament House in Melbourne] for example there are no child-care facilities for women who have children, there are very few facilities here at all. And it is very difficult for families to maintain a relationship when Parliament sits for long hours. This affects young men as well, particularly in families where men are

taking more of the child-rearing role. But I think the norm is probably still that the women carry the major role in that area (Interview: 16 October 2002)

Maddigan's suggestions show that it would be much easier if women who are mothers as well as MPs had more facilities at Parliament House. An anonymous interviewee suggests that from her own experience women are inclined to succeed at all costs. But, when children arrive, they are (or must be) prepared to delay advancement in their careers as MPs for a number of years (Anonymous Interviewee: 16 October 2002). Another woman claims that women can succeed in the ALP Victorian Branch 'only if you have good support systems in your life, Mother, Mother-in-law, sisters, nannies, housekeeper etc.' The Government does not provide equivalent support systems (Questionnaire: 1 September 1999).

Leaving the child-care to the women strengthens domination by men in the public sphere. It also sheds light on the manner in which advocacy of mother's rights maintains women's misrecognition in the private sphere; thus it creates contrary social results for the public sphere. It is now ten years since Joan Kirner was Premier of Victoria. Therefore, this research shows that the situation will advance only if men are willing to do more and strive to practise Affirmative Action. Men, who claim they believe in implementing equality, need to show evidence of their commitment and support, by electing women to more leadership roles.

The pervasiveness of discrimination

Margaret Thornton argues that equal treatment means that the law is applied equally to those who are unequal' (Margaret Thornton 1982: 393). Not only are women seen as less worthy

of recognition, they are also not perceived as acting independently or having the ability to do so. For instance, Joan Kirner's reply when asked if she believed that sex discrimination exists in the ALP was:

There have been barriers to women's entry into Australian politics based on the valuing of male experience above female experience and based on hierarchies of power which has been controlled by men. So that has been true in all major political parties but not so true of the Greens and the Democrats. And because over one hundred years of its development, [100 plus now], in the ALP which is the longest established political party in the world that male power hierarchy became entrenched. It developed a reward system for blokes rather than for women and then developed a culture around that about who are good parliamentarians that in turn devalued women's experiences. Moreover, when we were trying to get the Affirmative Action policy up we were constantly being told, that women need to be trained to be MPs. It was not suggested that men had to be trained. We just told them to [go away – stop that nonsense]. [Where would we find the women they said?] We said: [Remove the systemic barriers and they will come forward in their numbers]. We've got there on merit why can't they get there on merit? Well the problem with that was that most of them didn't get there on merit. My line is as you have probably seen in the *Woman's Handbook*, the day they can look around the Parliament and tell me that all the men got there on merit is the day I'll accept the merit argument. So Affirmative Action is actually about dismantling those systemic barriers so that women can actually get an equal chance at least to be preselected (Interview: 19 September 2002).

One might suggest that egalitarian and socialistic mores are not maintained within the ALP. Moreover, whether it is the performance of a male or female politician that rates higher in value, their wisdom should apply regardless of their sex. Some of the women interviewed believed that they would have enjoyed more success had they been men. As Maddigan indicated, there are numerous insults and snubs or scornful abuse or indignities to which women are frequently exposed to in the Parliament. But she argues that, because they are so insidious, these insults are not easily managed under anti-discrimination legislation (Interview with Maddigan: 16 October 2002). Similarly, Carmen Lawrence notes that:

There is plenty of indirect discrimination but that is not easy to pin down; it's more in the way of the same attitudes that you confront every day. So there is nothing in particular about the climate in the political Party. Apart from that characteristic as I

mentioned earlier, the union movement epitomises the male habits in men (Interview: 29 September 1999).

Lawrence is referring to the whole power and reward structure. For instance, women were always welcome to do the work in Unions or any of those male-dominated hierarchies, but, when it came to rewards for that work, it was not rewarded with a parliamentary seat, as distinct from a male who had been the Secretary or President of a Union, who would, in all probability gain a seat. As one interviewee related:

Sometimes it was to get rid of him upstairs to the upper houses of Parliament but often it was seen as a reward and then of course you had the male dynasties; the Ferguson dynasty or the Jenkins dynasty (Anonymous Interviewee: 1 November 2002).

So women have to be seen as better:

And then there is the other cultural bias: now that's not so much a party systemic barrier, that's a social systemic barrier, which is true of women in any high powered position. And then when I got to the Parliament I found that the institutions of the Parliament were the least family friendly I've ever met in my life (Anonymous Interviewee: 1 November 2002).

Such examples show that even the most successful women in the ALP agree that discrimination against women exists and that their personal situations have been structured to some degree by gender inequality. Merle Thornton looks at how women perform when taking on men in the public sphere. Thornton claims that women *should* be accepted and given the chance to do things that men do. Her comprehensive generalisations are about any kind of equality; they are particularly valued regarding the equality of the sexes. She tries to capture the regular argument for 'sex equality', that it has three segments: 'women's nature; the social treatment of women; women's performance'. Therefore, in its arbitrary structure,

Thornton claims, the reasoning revoking the subordination of women might be seen as follows (Thornton 1986: 78):

Dogmatic Argument for Sex Equality

- | | |
|--|---------|
| (a) Women and men have equal natures | Axiom |
| (b) So if women are given equal treatment with men | Program |
| (c) The outcome will be equal performance | Goal |

She adds that each of the ‘three steps is internally complex’ and continues with this explanation:

(a) does not mean that any woman has an equal nature to any man. What is meant by [nature] in this dimension is capacity or potential to perform. And in this mode of thought it is not usual to believe that all persons are equal in potential. What is asserted in the equal nature of the sexes is that the *range* of potential among females is equal to that among men (Thornton 1986: 78),

Therefore,

As raw material for social performance females born as a group are equal in nature to males born as a group. The distribution of potentials in the one group will be equal to that in the other group. It is, if you like, a claim about the equality of the statistics of potential to be found in the respective sex groups. In parallel, (b) is not about equal treatment of every human individual, but about an equal pattern of treatment for the sex groups and (c) about an equal pattern of performance for the sex groups (Thornton 1986: 78).

It is not possible for human potential to be observed or measured directly, not even in a casual sort of way. Thornton stipulates that it is possible to observe the ‘general social treatment’ and the ‘specific training’ of the performer (ALP female politician in this instance) as performance takes place. Execution in one area can, of course, be seen as an example of possibility in others. But ‘here the validity of the inference must depend on establishing a correlation of performance in the two tasks’. One recommendation for instance would be IQ testing. (Thornton 1986: 78). So the ‘axiom of equal nature [or (a)

above] amounts to an absolute confidence that equal treatment [or (b) above] would lead to equal performance [or (c) above]’.

Then we see that, to bring about sex equality, the widely accepted principle of equal nature (a) signifies a total confidence in performance. Indeed, there is no inherent limit to the dimensions to which raising ‘the social treatment of women up towards the level for men will correspondingly raise up the performance of women till [sic] equality of treatment and performance are reached’ (Thornton 1986: 79).

Thornton’s context of a program to bring about sex equality can be seen as a familiar pattern when analysing the progress of women MPs in the ALP and even more so when studying their progress within the Victorian Branch. Women in the Victorian Branch of the ALP are getting the numbers, but this research is beginning to show doubts as to their opportunities to learn the skills?

It has been shown throughout this thesis that the advancement of women into senior positions within the Federal ALP and the Victorian Branch took a relatively long time to start and, as we have seen, it has only just begun to quicken in the past decade. Furthermore, while noting that the increase in the number of candidates elected by voters has become greater, all but a few of these additional women lack influence and access to leadership roles. Similarly, their greater presence does not increase their power in the Party, yet one might expect the opposite. Sexual harassment is also seen as a destabilising influence on some women MPs.

The ineffability of sexual harassment

Margaret Thornton states that the anti-sexual harassment legislation has been formally proscribed and is a matter of public record. (Thornton 1996: 253). Thornton also writes of Mackinnon's views, that the alacrity of the state response arose primarily because of the realisation that sexual harassment affected the productivity of the workplace, rather than because it was unanimously understood as a harm to women (Mackinnon cited in Thornton 1996: 252). Therefore, we experience the confusing association combining the administration of the ALP and the masculine imperatives. In other words, the gender order of things, indeed the acts of sexual harassment, should not disturb the smooth running of the ALP and the Victorian Branch. Not because of the harm that sexual harassment causes women, but because such sexual harassment activities within the ALP might damage the performance of those affected by it. Still, Meredith Burgmann relates how some women often take sexual harassment experiences as being boring and ridiculously stupid. She reports that in 1983 the NSW Labor Premier, Barrie Unsworth, then Secretary of the Labor Council refused a request by women of the NSW Left to get a speaker from the NSW Discrimination Board to speak to the Labor Council about workplace discrimination. However, at the same meeting, he did announce that he had arranged for the Unions' entrant in the Miss Australia quest to address the Labor Council in a week's time. The women delegates were seriously offended and hissed their outrage. Unsworth responded with his infamous, ridiculous comment, 'She wouldn't get any competition from you lot' (Unsworth cited in Burgmann 2000: 79).

To quote Burgmann again, she points out that Michael Hodgeman, Liberal MP, whose media release on the Labor Party's introduction of the Affirmative Action quota in 1994, made another approach:

The mad-as-a-March-hare radical feminists have got the Labor Party firmly by the testicles. Extreme lesbian elements, which have infiltrated the Labor Party, are delighted with their success. Keating has capitulated to the man-haters.

Michael Hodgeman MP, media release on the Labor Party's introduction of the Affirmative Action quota in 1994 (Hodgeman cited in Burgmann 2000: 81).

Burgmann reminds us of another case of harassment. In the House of Representatives, Gareth Evans threatened to leap across the table and garrotte Bronwyn Bishop (Burgmann 2000: 81). Furthermore, Iain Maclean MP uttered discriminatory remarks about women in the Parliament:

They think they are the centre of the universe and will abort a baby just because it's inconvenient or summer is approaching and they want to wear a bikini (Maclean cited in Burgmann 2000: 81).

Martin Ferguson, speaking as ACTU President during the Ninetieth Anniversary celebrations of the Northern Territory Labor Party, 1995 claimed: 'The only women kicking up a fuss [about the ACTU's response to the new maternity leave payment] are hairy-legged femocrats' (Ferguson cited in Burgmann 2000: 81). By making these undesirable remarks public, Burgmann is creating an atmosphere in which politicians might think a good deal harder and watch their language more.

In addition, a female MP told me in an interview that she had been harassed within the Parliament by one of the Labor 'bother boys' as they are known. She claims:

He didn't think I should have been there because I actually defeated one of his best Union mates to get there. He used to verbally harass me but one day he decided he'd

walk up the stairs behind me in Parliament House and make harassing comments. I was just waiting for him to grab me but he didn't because I decided to take the precaution of putting my high heel up before he got too close. So he actually didn't do it. Very rarely did I experience any actual harassment because I guess I established the boundaries pretty quickly (Anonymous Interview: 19 September 2002).

The Shadow Attorney General, Nicola Roxon, states that after making a speech in Parliament on child sexual abuse, the Hon Ian Causley, a National Party MP, while presiding over a parliamentary debate on child protection, made an unpleasant remark to her. He said, 'If you are having trouble having children, I'd be happy to participate and help you'. Ms Roxon claims that this is not the first time Causley had made offensive remarks to her. Roxon remarked that many women suffer such discriminatory remarks and can do nothing about it, but she is in the position to act so she did. She publicised the incident causing Causley to apologise after discussion with the National Party leader, John Anderson (Dodson, *The Age*, 27 June 2002).

Judith Maddigan experiences the occasional smart sexist and suggestive remark and says she always rebukes them, but does not feel threatened by them (Interview: 16 October 2002). Mary Gillett claims she has experienced some bullying but it has only made her stronger (Interview: 17 October 2002). Another MP responded when asked: Question (1). Have you ever experienced sexual harassment?

I've had comments from male Members of Parliament about clothes that I wear. I guess I didn't define it as sexual harassment although some people might have. I guess sexual harassment is a fairly strong phrase because I think a lot of these blokes don't even imagine they are doing something wrong. Maybe they think it's a compliment. It's a form of harassment I suppose because it's a way of reminding me that I am a woman first and a Politician second. We women strive to be a Politician first and work very hard to be treated in the same way as men. However there are often occasions when you are reminded that you are a woman first. Sometimes it's hard to break that down (Anonymous Interviewee: 8 October 2002).

Such remarks, whether flattering or negative concerning the appearance of a female fellow MP in the ALP or Victorian Branch are actually disparaging. They serve to diminish the recipient by the remark, as well as women unconditionally. Therefore, while interviewees might make light of the incidents and feel foolishly idiosyncratic relating them to me, they do occur frequently. It is the consistency of the unreasonable reflective comments, partly subjective, that manages to support the ruling link between politics and manliness as already noted in the ALP patriarchal history.

On the other hand Jenny Mikakos MP in the ALP Victorian Branch says she doubts whether anyone would actually dare to sexually harass her. She says she has been very outspoken on these types of issues in the past when a sexual harassment matter arose concerning a staff member in the Parliament. She says she took the step of taking evidence of the incident to the highest level in the Parliament and made sure it was looked into:

So I don't think it would happen. But I do take it as a very serious issue. I've seen other incidents on my side and even male Politicians on my side have seen inappropriate comments to other women MPs and I've had some harsh things to say to them about it afterwards. We are trying to change attitudes here. I have been fortunate myself in that I haven't experienced it (Interview: 17 October 2002).

However, Margaret Thornton states that, while the occurrences of a woman being the perpetrator of sexual harassment have occurred, it is formidable, clearly defined occurrences, that are performed by men against women (Thornton 1996: 254). Furthermore she relates that:

The subliminal power that men collectively exert over women, regardless of their respective positions, creates an environment that fosters sexual harassment (Thornton 1996: 254).

This reality generates two components for female parliamentarians. Firstly, women are victimised regardless of their standing in the ALP by the outspoken or subliminal power of male MPs. Secondly, the male member is usually in a higher position than the female MP. Both of these types of situations set the scene where sexual harassment of a woman MP in the Federal ALP or the Victorian Branch is warning her to mind her step within the Party.

Another woman MP member answered 'Yes' to the first question that she had been the victim of sexual harassment and left it at that (Questionnaire: 1 September 1999). Another answered 'Who hasn't'? And added that she used the 'crash through' approach and found that it worked (Questionnaire: 1 September 1999). One woman told me by questionnaire that she had experienced serious sexual harassment in the form of physical contact and demands for sexual favours (Questionnaire: 1 September 1999). Yet, 40 per cent of Federal ALP women who returned questionnaires, answered definitely 'No' to the question 'Have you experienced sexual harassment in the ALP?' They offered me no further comment. However, 45 per cent answered 'Yes'. The remaining 15% had been subject to varying degrees of offensive or demeaning comments, jokes and innuendo.

Of the Victorian women ALP MPs interviewed, 53 per cent answered 'No' to the major question, 'Have you experienced sexual harassment in the Victorian ALP? A further 26 per cent added that they had or knew of some women who had experienced sexual bullying. The remainder had been subject to some form of intimidation. For instance, one Victorian ALP woman confessed to me that she had her bottom pinched by the male beside her when she rose to speak in the Parliament (Anonymous Interviewee: 1 November 2002). That is a type of intimidation the women deplore but what can they do? While it is a minor offence, it does

accentuate the barrier to gender equity. For instance, when asked in the questionnaire: Have you ever experienced barriers to gender equity in the Parliament, 90 per cent of ALP women answered that they had. It is also interesting to note that some women in the FPLP answered they had been sexually harassed in their parliamentary experience. Additionally, sexual abuse is frequent in the House of Commons in London.

An English journalist, Jackie Ashley, has reported in *The Guardian Weekly* that women MPs are bullied and abused in the Commons. She points out that when one hundred and twenty new MPs were elected in 1997 the boorish culture of the Parliament worsened. A survey based on interviews with eighty-three recent and current female MPs shows that the interviewees were forthright in submitting testimony regarding male sexual abuse. Such practices as male MPs asking to 'roger' their female colleagues, juggling imaginary breasts and crying 'melons' as women prepare to speak in the Commons are commonplace (Ashley, *The Guardian Weekly*, 10-16 December 2004). One current Member of the Cabinet was asked when she was promoted: 'Oh, you've had a fast rise; who have you been sleeping with?' A former Liberal Democrat, Jackie Ballard, who retired from the Parliament at the last election complains that a leading Tory MP, kept up a stream of innuendo just outside the hearing of the Speaker, possibly about someone's legs or someone being a lesbian...if he worked for me he'd probably be sacked' (Ashley *The Guardian Weekly*, 10-16 December 2004). Officials and male MPs seem to be slow or reluctant to accept the new Labor women, indeed, some simply cannot apprehend that women could be Members of Parliament. Indeed, the experience of women in the Commons signifies the pervasive masculinity of the Westminster system. The reactionary attitudes of male MPs related by Ashley and the case study results in this chapter confirm that the enforced subordination of women is deeply

rooted: no doubt it leads to gender inequality in the Westminster system as inherited by Australia. Therefore, women cannot become equal political participants in the Victorian Branch of the ALP and the Federal ALP until the functionalist recognition of their sex is dead.

Until the second-wave of feminism, Parliaments have been, in the main, exclusively male and men in both the Federal ALP and the Victorian Branch still occupy the leadership positions. Due to the masculinity of politics, the Party can be uninviting because women are often ridiculed or patronised which may discourage them from being full participants when attempting to act with authority and worthy representatives of their electorates. The case studies indicate that the frequent use of sexist innuendo and language minimises women's contribution to the practice of politics. It possibly reinforces the negativism that the Labor Party system has of limiting their progress by restricting their accessibility to official positions and leadership roles.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CASE STUDIES: WOMEN IN THE ALP AND THE VICTORIAN BRANCH: AN UNRESOLVED DILEMMA

Women's attempts to gain a share of power have revealed a defence in depth operated by the men behind the barricades: from...formal recruitment rules that require experience, qualifications or 'merit' that are harder for women to gain, to a rich variety of informal biases and assumptions that work in favour of men.

Bob Connell 1995: 204-5

That the ALP remains male-dominated is not so surprising given the practical lockout of women as recently as fifteen years ago. However, whether the position will improve as the older members of the Party retire is not yet clear. Men have, to a point, accepted at a primary level the growing presence of women in the party but, by and large, the interviewees claim that male politicians in the ALP have not changed their way of thinking about women's roles. This Chapter, combined with Chapter Seven, provides information through the voices of women in the ALP and some outside the Labor Party who talk about their observations and experiences in the Parliament. Granted that, many have experienced obstacles in attempting to achieve their ambitions as Labor Party MPs; their voices and attitudes transmit to me a sense of purpose, of resoluteness in the face of obstruction, and of determination. But preselection for women has proved to be challenging and in most cases continues to be so regardless of Affirmative Action. This Chapter continues to show, both through theoretical analysis and interviews with women MPs, the underlying causes of the ALP and the Victorian Branch's masculine resistance to them holding central leadership positions. The case studies highlight the preselection system, the media and the rigid form of patriarchy that exists. It argues that women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch are entitled to 50 per cent of the leadership roles, but are denied the positions of the select group of decision makers.

PRESELECTION

Quotas and merit

The representation of women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch often conceals the sexist difficulties that aspiring women candidates for the ALP experience before the process of electing candidates has begun. Until the 1990s, prejudice against women remained entrenched at the preselection level, where the ALP's conservatism is stronger. A senior Victorian, female Labor member who wished to remain anonymous states:

Preselection...is quite complex. [It]...depends on the factions. Part of the work on the affirmative action rules has been building awareness within the factions of their responsibilities to promote and encourage women to stand for preselection and trying to find good women who on their merit can be selected alongside men and to reach a quota (Anonymous Interviewee: 1 November 2002).

So the factions, the interviewee is saying, have a role to play in helping to encourage greater gender equity in the political process at the party level, in different committees and different structures and in offices and also in the Parliament. She believes that some factions have been better than others in accepting the right of women to be members of the Party and that others still have a long way to go. That is, some members of the Party do wish to see a move towards greater gender equity. She related that she came from one part of the Left which was very actively promoting women as candidates for preselection. However, it still meant candidates had to go before the whole of the Party, not just their own faction and seek preselection. They still have to put forward what they have to offer and the party with all its different components, factions, unions and members who decide whether to support them. The preselection practice has responded to that pressure with that target hanging over it – the quota. The preselection practices are improving but sometimes the factions create difficulty: one faction may not be pulling its weight in terms of helping to move towards the quota. The anonymous interviewee explains:

I mean the preselection process is an unwieldy beast – it's about putting yourself forward to be promoted and sponsored by others. Most of the time it's about someone having a certain kind of merit but different merit from another candidates, therefore, it becomes a very complex pattern (Anonymous Interviewee 1 November 2002).

Clearly, what the MP is saying is that the preselection process is as merit-based for women as it is for men. But, when confronted with my observation that Members from other parties have said that they do not believe in the quota system, the interviewee responds:

...I think the Liberal and National Party people are assuming you are just giving them the job...(Anonymous Interviewee: 1 November 2002).

The interviewee explains that the selection panel interviews candidates for the position. There may be three men and two women who are being interviewed, so it is opening up the opportunities for women to put themselves forward. This does not mean they will automatically get it, but women have to contest preselection on the same basis as men so the process is based on merit. The interviewee is saying that this system applies pressure on the Party to encourage more women to enter the political process. Additionally, if the selection panel decides that if the numbers required do not reach the 40 per cent quota, then they would declare all those preselections invalid and insist the process should be repeated (Anonymous Interviewee: 1 November 2002). But women in other parties may think differently.

By contrast, Amanda Vanstone, (Minister for Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs), while arguing that the 'blokiess' of the Parliament did deter some women, believes women should make up '50 per cent of the Ministry, 50 per cent of the Shadow Ministry and fifty per cent of the Shadow Cabinet'. Not only does she believe that 'both

major political parties are committed to getting more women into Parliament', but also she claims 'Labor has chosen quotas as a way of doing this'. She goes on to declare that she does not happen to agree with this method as a way of getting more women into Parliament. She indicates that she never wants to see a woman in any job being told she is only there because she is a woman (Vanstone, *The Age*, 13 June 2002). One prominent female parliamentarian who disagrees with Vanstone's view is Independent Senator, Meg Lees.

Lees was the leader of the Australian Democrats when I interviewed her in Canberra. (She later became an Independent Senator). In Canberra she was anxious to discuss the understanding and values of quotas and the merit system when applied at preselection. She says: 'The key to the whole question of preselection is the definition of [merit]' (Lees Interview: 29 September 1999).

She further argues that in the Liberal Party only thirty or forty people make the decisions where the idea of merit is ingrained. It is as old as the Liberal Party and it is carried on by tradition. However, it does not have the flexibility to find merit in someone. For example, someone who has been out of the workforce for, say, five years raising a family before going back into a profession? Lees relates that professionals in the Liberal Party are at the top of the preselection merit ladder. Further down the ladder are semi-professionals or white-collar workers, then further down the merit list again are the blue-collar workers. Lees also mentioned that a member of the Liberal Party had recently told her that, at a recent preselection meeting, applicants' spouse's had been asked to come along presumably to be seen and to answer questions about their partners. Consequently, it would appear that the

Liberal Party preselection panel is using this method to gauge merit (Lees Interview: 29 September 1999).

Lees spoke next about the Labor Party saying that their system of gauging merit involves Union membership as a useful tool; a staunch commitment to Unions would be appreciated. Which branch you may have belonged to would be a leading question and whether you held a position of importance or not. Were you a State Secretary perhaps? What was your commitment to the union movement and so on? So Lees is saying that it is a very different issue of merit (Lees Interview: 29 September 1999).

With the Democrats' selection process, the system is markedly different. For instance, every member receives a ballot paper so every member needs to have some knowledge regarding merit. They might be asked: How can you do the job or how can you speak in public? Can you assimilate complex information and actually come up with some idea of what legislation is about? The Party would be interested in assessing your commitment or knowing whether you have qualifications. Lees is demonstrating a third version of what is merit (Lees Interview: 29 September 1999).

However, while the information Lees offered was extremely helpful, there are other methods used for preselection. For instance, after the wilderness years of the 1950s and the sacking of the Whitlam Government in the 1970s, the message from the second-wave of feminism for women was to get into the Parliament and make changes later. This was clear from interviewing others. When signing up media stars Cheryl Kernot and Mary Delahunty, the

Party showed it had embraced the new pragmatism. Cheryl Kernot, former Democrat Leader, was narrowly elected as the Member for Dickson in Queensland, as the ALP's candidate at the 1998 General Election. She had been given a marginal seat to contest after leaving the Australian Democrats and defecting to the ALP the previous year. She failed to retain the seat at the federal election in 2001. Kernot had encountered a Party conceived by men to protect men's interests. In doing so she sacrificed her own ambitions, interests and conscience in the pursuance of the ALP seat (Kernot Interview: 29 September 1999). At the press conference announcing her switch to the ALP, she gave her reasons as her sense of outrage at the damage being done to Australia by the Howard Government (Kernot 1997 cited in Kernot 2002: 36). On the other hand, a cross-factional deal enabled Mary Delahunty to be preselected for a safe Labor seat (Henderson et al 2000: 30). Delahunty was preselected and entered the Parliament from a public career of her own with no previous Labor experience and was given the safe seat of Northcote within months (Henderson et al 2000: 27). The bitter contrast associated with the two entrants starkly illustrates the underlying influences of the ALP and the Victorian Branch on preselection and electoral development unnoticed by Meg Lees when discussing 'merit'.

For some women the preselection process is not such a precarious experience. For instance, Jenny Lindell won preselection and entered Parliament unopposed at a time when Carrum was a safe Labor seat. Carrum is now a marginal seat given that property values along the foreshore have risen. The district now contains a significant number of affluent Liberal voters along the Nepean Highway and at Patterson Lakes (Lindell Interview: 22 August 2002). Carmen Lawrence, Member for the Federal seat of Fremantle, entered Parliament at a by-election. Judy Maddigan gained preselection and claims she was never challenged; that

factions are not a problem in her electorate, in fact the electorate is not factionally based at all. However, her seat of Essendon was a marginal one when she first stood for election in 1992 and she was defeated. But Maddigan states she won it back in 1996 with a three per cent swing and in 1999 she increased the swing to eight per cent (Maddigan Interview: 16 October 2002). She is now Speaker in the Legislative Assembly. On the other hand, an anonymous interviewee claims that, when she was first involved in preselection, a number of 'progressives', both male and female, entered into an arrangement and voted for her opponent, a male Right-Wing nominee, because this figure agreed with the factional leanings of the preselection panel, No consideration was given to the suitability of her opponent, his merit, or who was the most suitable applicant for the electorate (Anonymous Interviewee: 8 October 2002). Similarly, the preselections for the safe seats of Holt in Victoria and Blaxland and Lowe in central Sydney prior to the 1998 election, exemplify the difficulties for Labor of the imbalance in its outdated preselection process. (Holt and Blaxland were highly sought after seats having previously been vacated by the former Foreign Affairs Minister, Gareth Evans, and former Prime Minister, Paul Keating). Kernot considers that in these seats women were disturbingly discriminated against. Evans and Keating were replaced by male Party faithfuls in these safe Labor seats (Kernot 2000: 29). It is noted that these male candidates are without specific merit, but are able to hold these comfortable seats in Parliament until they retire. Therefore, it is in theory only that women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch are equal to men while, in reality, there is a definite gap. Indeed, one may argue that the claim women are the political and civil equals of men disregards the presence of widespread and ingrained subjection. Women, therefore, in the ALP and the Victorian Branch are simply not treated the same as men, although some succeed in their preselection bid.

Jacinta Allan, at the age of twenty-nine won a seat for the ALP from a former Liberal Minister in her first attempt to become an MP, then increased her lead from three points to thirteen in her second attempt (up by 9.8 per cent to 62.8 per cent). Her preselection is now secure, but claims that it is far more difficult for women than for men to gain preselection for seats considered to be 'safe'. (Allan Interview: 8 October 2002). Allan is a member of the Left faction and exemplifies the manner in which women must be strongly determined to develop ambition in order to raise above and encounter any remaining residual bias in the Victorian Branch of the ALP. The unfolding overall picture, however, shows that this is not always successful. Lindell offers a plausible alternative point of view. We must appreciate that some Victorian MPs work extremely hard in their electorates mainly to remain in what are termed marginal seats.

Joan Kirner believes it is the male-dominated power structure that is still bedeviling the Labor Party despite the Affirmative Action policies and despite the existence of Emily's List. She argues that in 2002 women in the Parliament sought to raise the minimum target of thirty-five per cent of women in the ALP to forty per cent, with the eventual aim being fifty per cent. Kirner claims that women had to fight the same old arguments as previously; the same preselection battles for the Senate where there is only one woman Labor Senator. These Interviewees believe that attracting more women to the Victorian Branch of the ALP is actually about democracy; therefore, fifty per cent of the Party members should be women, contributing the value of their experience and sharing their knowledge with a view to be coming leaders in the Party.

Joan Kirner agrees that gaining a range of views is basically about democracy:

We are talking about modernising the Party and being democratic. Our leader won't acknowledge that democracy and equity go together. Unlike Whitlam who said that a Party [sic] who does not have women as equal partners is not a party (Kirner Interview: 19 September 1999).

She also relates an instance where Lees' interpretation of preselection as shown above is not followed in the ALP preselection process. She states that:

In the last round of Senate preselections one of the Left unions believed that they owed this particular male person a seat in Parliament that is despite the fact that would mean the Left didn't have a woman in the Senate they put him up (Kirner Interview: 19 September 1999).

Here she explains the Party's attitude in this instance: 'Now he's a nice bloke but he's never going to set the world on fire, but he got rewarded.' Kirner claims that she has never seen a woman rewarded for her Union or community contributions and offers an example:

For various reasons they might put a female up such as Mary Delahunty and Cheryl Kernot and me because they needed my community standing but not because we had done a good job for the Union or the community standing. Now I don't go along with the reward system but it is just stunning. Until Affirmative Action came along, and this is why some blokes still oppose it, it was like some of our male power brokers, factional leaders, used the Parliamentary preselection system as a base for the patronage and for their power. I never want to see women get there that way (Kirner Interview: 19 September 2002).

Yet the Party does need factional leaders. My interviewees insist it is very hard for females to gain preselection without the factional system in the Labor Party. However, it should not have to be a patronage barrier. This is what could be called a patriarchal barrier. When Simon Crean was Leader of the Opposition, he claimed that he would have more women in the Parliament because he would make sure it happened. However, that is not what it is about in the Victorian Branch of the ALP. Raising women to the leadership positions in the ALP and Victorian Branch should be a democratic process. Women need the support of the leadership, but should be able to rely on preselections being a democratic process. Therefore,

it would appear, to assist significantly disadvantaged groups such as women, women themselves gaining access and being strong in the decision-making processes can only achieve change in the ALP and the Victorian Branch. Still, controversy persists as university-trained bureaucrats often control trade unions before standing for preselection for the ALP.

One anonymous interviewee claims that working class bureaucrats have now been isolated because tertiary educated trade union officials often control the union organisations. Moreover, they claim and win preselection for safe Labor seats (Anonymous Interviewee: 1 October 2002). Another interviewee claims that there are more varying selection requirements for women than for men when attempting preselection (Anonymous Interviewee: 8 October 2002). An interviewee, Mary Gillett, speaks favourably of the preselection process. She has been through it twice, once she was challenged and once she was not and she claims she has had no difficulty. Therefore, one might conclude that the ALP is retaining its masculine bias while losing its class prejudices. However, 75 per cent of my interviewees have told me that the 'boy's club' atmosphere of the Federal ALP and the Victorian Branch persists.

Jennie George, the former President of the ACTU, claims there is a male distortion in preselection for Labor seats. Ms George failed to win preselection on her first attempt for a seat in the NSW Upper House. George volunteers a severe assessment of the ALP's progress in advancing talented women, a criticism affected by the failure of party faction leaders to support her venture into the FPLP in 1995. Nevertheless, she emerged from that bitter experience with her principles and self-respect intact after a factional deal kept her out.

However, on becoming the third former ACTU President to be in the Labor caucus after her substantial win in the NSW electorate of Throsby, in 2001, George claims she was very happy with the result and was looking forward to federal politics. She then joined Simon Crean, Martin Ferguson and Bob Hawke as high profile ex-ACTU Presidents turned politicians. Crean, Ferguson and Hawke were endorsed without preselection hassles and were all promoted immediately into Shadow Cabinet places on the Opposition Front Bench when they turned to politics, but George went to the Back Bench. George remarked on the boys' club nature of the ALP, but believed she would be happy to be a team player and work in any capacity she could and stated 'I was just happy to be elected'. However, Ms George queries Labor's treatment of women saying it should be more inclusive.

I think it's always tough for women. In many ways I think the ALP is not as advanced in the representation of women in cultural terms as even the Union Movement – and we always need to do better on that score (George cited in Bachelard, *The Australian*, 12 November 2001).

There is no doubt that in the ALP and the Victorian Branch the preselection process can mean prolonged and difficult battles, which are often worse for women than men. In 2005, in answer to the ALP's pursuit of women to fill the quota system, the concept of 'merit' should apply, but there are exceptions. For instance Mary Delahunty won preselection that was not based on merit; she had no former ALP or union experience but was considered a popular choice.

However, the interviews indicate that the ALP is steeped in masculine values and that women are not treated equally with men. Therefore, as Anne Phillips notes, the abstract 'individuals' of liberal theory - 'persons' seeking personal impetus towards personal goals –

'are presented as if they refer indiscriminately to women or men, but have written into them a masculine body' (Phillips cited in Gunn, PhD thesis: 215). Thornton notes:

It is clearly not in the interests of a male identified polity to alter the comfortable state of affairs in which the socially necessary caring and cleaning infrastructure underpinning social and political life continues to be performed mainly by women (Thornton 1995: 213).

Marilyn Lake argues in a similar vein:

Public programs must be aimed at integrating men into the work of care...just as Affirmative Action has been implemented to achieve equal opportunity in the public domain, so programs to achieve equality in the private domain must also be devised and promoted as a matter of public policy (Lake 1995).

Theories encompassing women's 'sameness' and 'difference' have been prominent in the ideology and practices of the ALP, as Margaret Thornton points out in general terms but relevant to the ALP in this instance; Lake is equally concerned with the sexual division of labour which leads to women's inequality. These writers conclude that the second-wave of feminism emerging in the 1970s criticised male domination and demanded equality and justice for women. Indeed, interviewees ask: Why is it that, twenty-five years on, women still struggle for preselection. If there is to be definite and effective involvement of women in leadership positions in the ALP and the Victorian Branch, structural and cultural 'behind the scenes' encumbrances that can make it difficult for Labor women to gain preselection for a safe seat must be addressed.

After preselection

ALP women who answered questionnaires and interviewees for this thesis offered a unique insight in their responses to engaging in the preselection processes showing resentful,

pragmatic, or resigned attitudes leaving little doubt that the ALP has an entrenched male bias not helped by the fact that the leadership and factions are mostly run by men. Therefore, in order for women to reach leadership roles, organisations within the ALP and the Victorian Branch, must practice without constraint and assert and stimulate the need for women to be active members. Furthermore, to gain official top positions in the ALP and Victorian Branch, women must have autonomy and conviction to set in motion the preselection process without having to rely on the approval of powerful men. Moreover, women must be able to compete for preselection fairly and freely and not rely on the powerful faction influences.

Evidence to date suggests that there are, in the ALP and the Victorian Branch, preselection processes and practices that can affect women in the party by creating situations that are quite undemocratic, limiting women's access to full political citizenship. In addition, some prominent women are exploited for publicity purposes.

MEDIA

During the past three decades the media, by treating women as 'supergirls', has had some devastating effects on women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch. How the 'supergirls' classification has been used will be demonstrated by using information from interviews at Parliament House in Canberra and Parliament House in Melbourne, texts and newspaper reports. Subsequently, the effect media intrusion has had in the destruction of some women's run for power in the ALP and the Victorian Branch will be demonstrated.

According to Sawyer and Simms an original victim was Elizabeth Reid who was chosen to become the advisor to the Prime Minister (Gough Whitlam) on 'matters relating to the welfare of women' (Whitlam 1974: 5). They point out that Reid's resignation in 1975 was undoubtedly due to press harassment that focused on the unimportance of her position (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 236). At the same time, at State level, Penny Ryan was pursued relentlessly before being effectively hounded out of her 'advisory position to Victorian Liberal Premier Rupert Hamer by the press'. In addition, in the 1970s and 1980s there were women politicians elected to the Victorian Branch of the ALP who were aware of their distinctive positions. Joan Coxsedge, the former Labor MLC, was one of two Legislative Council pioneers, said that it was extremely difficult being one of the 'first' women politicians. The press criticism of women reached its peak when the Government-funded Women and Politics Conference came under scrutiny during International Women's Year in 1975 (Sawyer and Simms 1993: 237): The Prime Minister's Office reported that:

Media coverage of the conference was generally poor; it focused on a few minor items, often intended as humorous comment but interpreted as aggressive dissent, and ignored the value of the conference. Further the press highlighted the divisions which occurred at the conference...During the week editorials and feature articles in Australian newspapers continued to criticise the discussion at the conference and the funds spent on holding it, the implication being that any money spent would have been money wasted. Yet the negative nature of the press coverage formed a uniting force for the women at the conference, many of whom for the first time appreciated the omnipresence of sexism in the media (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet 1977: viii).

Clearly there was discord between the media's understanding and reactions and women's views of their political participation. As a result, Zelda D'Aprano, feminist, saw 'male' and 'hierarchy' as having the same meaning (D'Aprano 1977: 110). This discussion has highlighted the angst that the media created towards women with feminist and political

leanings since the early 1970s. However, since that time, significant progress has occurred in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

Alternatively, Jacinta Allan, the ALP MP for Bendigo, claims she has had favourable treatment from the media:

Bendigo is very interesting because we have a local situation. We have a daily newspaper; a daily TV service and radio service and I have quite a close affiliation with the media. That comes back to be a country town where we work closely together. So that is very comfortable. The media in Bendigo is very good but that is very different to how the State and the national media operate because they obviously focus on different things. I get cross from time to time about how they portray women Politicians in the media at a state and national level. You look at the way people like Meg Lees, Natasha Stott Despoja and Cheryl Kirner and Bronwyn Bishop have suffered at the hands of the media. Any numbers of women have suffered. And now the media have knocked Natasha off her perch – who's the next woman they will go after (Allan Interview: 8 October 2002).

The extent of opportunities accessible for active women in politics has become broader, yet few Victorian Labor women are conspicuous in the upper echelons of the Party and none in leadership positions. Furthermore, not only are those who have preferred to remain maternally adjusted in relation to political circumstances but also there have been others who have adapted to the political life psychologically. Two Labor women, Carmen Lawrence and Joan Kirner, proved to be popular with women voters when they became Premiers, Lawrence in Western Australia and Kirner in Victoria. They proved that women politicians are not political liabilities in the ALP or in the Victorian Branch. Sawer and Simms write that they had proved themselves as strong politicians (Sawer and Simms 1993: 255). Furthermore, Paul Keating, a former Prime Minister, commended Premier Kirner with the accolade; 'Joan understands the power business...she is a safe practitioner...I like her act' (Keating, *The Age*, 23 September 1991). Still, at a media conference in 1991, the two women Premiers announced unequivocally that they were critical of treatment they had suffered at

the hands of the media. Joan Kirner announced that ‘women are still judged in different terms in the media and news’ (*The Canberra Times*, 10 March 1991). At an interview in her Treasury Place office on the 26 September 2002, she discussed some personal media experiences with me:

The Herald Sun attempted to devalue my competence and my potential by the constant cartoons they ran of me in polka dots when I have never owned a polka dot dress in my life. And the interesting connection was the symbolisation between the polka dot dress on me and the polka dot shirts on the suffragettes one hundred years ago (Kirner Interview: 19 September 1999).

Once again the comparison led to the image of a large but matronly woman rather than a very competent politician. Additionally, Kirner believes that many ways are found to devalue women’s contribution to politics by male media personnel. For example: ‘Look, she’s getting emotional’. There were many times they tried to suggest that she (Kirner) cried when she did not, and yet people thought it was lovely when Bob Hawke ‘cried on telly’. Kirner attributes such remarks not so much to the women journalists, but to the men. She notes that some of the offensive publicity she was subject to was the work of Right-Wing journalists. For instance, when she was Premier the Right-Wing Editor of *The Herald Sun* was Piers Akerman, a noted critic of the Left-Wing and Kirner when she was Premier. She also argues that people such as Cheryl Kernot and Natasha Stott Despoja who are attractive in the traditional sense, blonde and blue-eyed, are the media darlings one minute, and the next they might be dragged down after having been built up by the media. So Kirner thinks that the devaluing of women shows there is much more concentration on which women are rather than what they can contribute; and women have to manage that. She thinks also women are more likely to take things personally, rather than to say they are just being political. Not until she realised that the media were just using the personal to devalue her politically, did she get on top of this. This media persecution she depicts happened to her

when she was Premier, not when she was Minister for Education nor Minister for Conservation. She believes it happened because she dared to be Premier (Kirner Interview: 19 September 1999). In spite of that, it might be mentioned that Kirner suffered because of the perception that the ALP was incompetent and had been in office too long, regardless of the gender of its leader.

During Kirner's time as Premier of Victoria, the cartoonists were illustrating women as interesting subjects in the ALP. Therefore, not only was Joan Kirner depicted as a dowdy woman or a primitive housewife rather than the successful politician she proved to be, the editor and his cartoonist were showing their own prejudices – their view of how a housewife should behave and would cope once in Parliament – to get at her politically (Kirner Interview: 19 September 2002). Kirner indicates that they were not in favour of her style of politics, so they got at her not by attacking her political style, but by personalising the method of attacks (Kirner and Rayner 1999: 22). It appears to be difficult for writers of satire to define the difference between the personal and the public. Similarly, Cheryl Kernot was to be haunted by the media.

Cheryl Kernot had made a name for herself as leader of the Australian Democrats. She made the Democrats relevant with a jump of 11 per cent, following a 5 per cent swing towards her Party. While she was seen to represent her Party with competence, commonsense and reason, *The Sunday Telegraph* displayed its excitement by declaring her 'SUPERWOMAN'. She was widely praised for her political skills in negotiating the 1993 Budget by winning almost \$500 million in changes. *The Sydney Morning Herald* called it 'the Kernot Budget' (Baird 2004: 166) while Richard Farmer of *The Canberra Times* indicated that she 'looked

and sounded like sweet reasonableness itself', and had appeared as 'a person of substance': 'A new force has arrived in Australian politics. She just looks and sounds so refreshing.' According to Farmer, the basis of her 'absolutely beautiful politics' was due to her accepting 'Governments should be allowed to govern while reserving the right to look after all the little people' (Farmer, *The Canberra Times*, 27 August 1993).

On 15 October 1997, Kernot's political life was doomed to failure when she switched to Labor after having led the Democrats with unrivalled success. Pictures of Kernot with the Leader of the Opposition, Kim Beazley, and Gareth Evans, the Deputy Leader, were on the front pages of newspapers across the country. Gough Whitlam announced that Kernot could be Australia's first female Prime Minister. According to the author Julia Baird, journalists' reactions were hesitant, while the public response was astounding. Peter Maher, the managing director of the media-monitoring organisation, Rehome, indicated that 'no issue has generated as much concentrated caller comment since the death of Princess Diana'. *The Sunday Telegraph* Quadrant poll found 60 per cent approved of her decision, 70 per cent said it was good for Labor, thirty-seven per cent were more likely to vote for Labor, and sixty per cent said they would like to see her become the first woman PM (Baird 2004: 171). *The Australian's* Paul Kelly applauded her 'for having the courage to seek executive power...that decision is a bonus for Australian politics.' Laurie Oakes praised the way the 'Queen Rat' had handled her news conference with 'extraordinary strength and calm...' On the other hand, *The Daily Telegraph's*, Piers Akerman, who was forever sarcastic when he wrote about Kernot, whom he called 'Senator Moonbeam', wondered what benefit she might be to the ALP (Baird 2004: 17). True, the party gained popularity overnight while the ongoing phenomenon continued to sell newspapers, but Kernot's fame was about to be

tarnished (Henderson, Kernot and Delahunty 2000: 24-25). *The Sydney Morning Herald* had published a story of a relationship Kernot had had with a twenty-year-old former student some twenty years before. During our personal interview I asked Kernot: ‘Who would bring up something personal that happened to a politician twenty years ago?’ She answered that such ‘mud slinging’ would not have happened once, but she drew my attention to the fact that times have changed and she demonstrated several instances where this has occurred in politics in the US and in other countries in recent years (Kernot Interview: 19 September 1999). She points out that her belittlement came at the beginning of the Australian scene; that she does not know of anyone else in Australia to have suffered the personal persecution experience as she did and added that it was a most unpleasant period. Significantly, the scandal emerged on the day Kernot was due to be preselected for the Queensland seat of Dickson, but the possibility of her being Australia’s first female Prime Minister was destroyed.

Fran Kelly, an ABC reporter, related at the time that she understood Kernot’s move from the Democrats to the Labor Party was no public crime and the relationship with the former student was finished years ago. While Kernot won her marginal seat against the odds, she had boosted Labor’s image and beaten the critics of her private life. However, after Kernot was made Shadow Minister for Regional Affairs an anti-Kernot commentator, Christopher Pearson, attacked her on 27 October, 1998 on Adelaide’s 5AN. He exclaimed:

What is the message that Labor is sending to rural Australia by appointing Cheryl Kernot Shadow Minister for Regional Affairs? I think the only answer is, [Lock up your apple-cheeked sons].

An avalanche of stories was to follow. According to Kernot, Party leader Beazley declined to defend his beleaguered colleague. She claimed that Beazley had not given her sufficient

support and had not provided her with media minders. At the next election, Kernot lost her seat in Dickson and then wrote her autobiography, but failed to disclose a personal secret. Laurie Oakes in *The Bulletin* accused her of having an affair for some years with the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party, Gareth Evans (Oakes, *The Bulletin*: 9 July 2002). Moreover, Evans had lied about the affair to Parliament. He resigned from the Party, disappeared to Brussels and left Kernot to manage the medias' torments. As one interviewee said to me: 'As though two people can't have a love affair without being eaten by the media' (Anonymous Interviewee: 1 November 2002), the inference being that the male, Gareth Evans could have an affair, but not the woman, Cheryl Kernot. Therefore, one might conclude that the affair was the concern of the couple involved and the media (Oakes) was out of place in disclosing it. Another interviewee saw the media in another light.

In the ALP women now have numbers but ostensibly no power. It is ironic when one considers that Kernot was considered to be a politician with extreme leadership potential. in the ALP but, as the number of women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch has risen, their power has not; they are not in leadership roles. Therefore, to be heard they must act more assertively, but with discretion, and rise above the torments of the media as in the experiences of Carmen Lawrence. (The trials of Lawrence have been discussed above; only the part the media played in her parliamentary career will be highlighted here).

Four years after becoming Australia's first female Premier, Carmen Lawrence transferred to federal politics in 1994. The media hype from the press was profound. The Prime Minister at the time, Paul Keating, encouraged her with promises of a position in Cabinet having identified her ability as a signal of advancement and success. She was called 'St Carmen' by

journalists and swept into prominence by cartoonists who depicted her with angel-like wings and halos fit for saints. On 15 November 1994 a close-up photograph of her face was displayed on the front page of *The Bulletin* with the caption: ‘Carmen Lawrence: Is she Labor’s Next Prime Minister?’ Greg Turnbull, former senior consultant to Prime Minister Keating, compared the media acclaim to the type of hype Elvis Presley might have received. Her own press secretary, Brenda Conroy, compared her adulation to that of another famous pop star (Baird 2004: 216).

Five years later, when I travelled to Canberra to interview her, she was on the Back Bench. Since her arrival in Canberra in 1994, she had suffered the blame for Penny Easton’s suicide; one Liberal MP had announced that she had ‘blood on her hands’. In 1995, when Premier of Western Australia, she had appeared before a Royal Commission that found she had lied. She was also accused of exploiting a suffering family for political benefit. The media scrutinised her acutely and protractedly before a District Court jury declared she had not lied to the court and exonerated her (Baird 2004: 216).

Paul McGeough, a journalist originally from Perth, described Carmen Lawrence as ‘a truly remarkable politician’ who was ‘held in awe by many in the national press gallery...[and] treated with a reverence that has blessed few Australian politicians’ (McGeough 1995: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 April 1995). There is strong evidence that the stalking of Lawrence was certainly politically provoked. However, it was worse because she was a female politician, but not totally due to her being a woman. Her position in the Party was extremely powerful so, for this reason, she had the ability to lead her Party and win Government again. Who else apart from Cheryl Kernot, has been lethally targeted by the

press for having ‘saintly’ qualifications? Such exaggerated hype is forever likely to turn into damning disappointment. As a result, the case study of Kernot reveals that Kernot’s political future was doomed by her fall from ‘princess to whore’ in the public eye and, more rationally, one might say she was caught in a political cycle she could not control. The press, on the other hand, fiercely followed Lawrence, and although she was acquitted of any perjury charges, the ghost of the late Penny Easton will shadow her for the remainder of her political career. It is difficult for female politicians in the ALP to advance to leadership positions.

PATRIARCHY

To the question asked of female ALP politicians in my interviews: ‘Do you believe that patriarchal behaviour is responsible for some women’s disillusionment with the ALP and the Victorian Branch? A question from me suggesting that there had been some comments in this regard brought the following response from a Victorian interviewee:

I think that is absolutely true. We didn’t have time because we were all trying to do family and keep the men going and do everything else as well. We didn’t have time to sit down and study the ideology of the Party as well. I think this has been very much a boy’s club here and I think the men would be very happy to continue that. I think they quite like that idea. And it’s not that their conversations are anything that you feel excluded from; it’s just not interesting – they are really boring – about the football or jokes...but they are happy with the all male company – not because they want to exclude us just that they are all happy together. I think they have accepted us – it doesn’t seem to worry them but I think they would be just as happy to go back to what it was. You only have to wander around this building and see how male it was. All the red and dark colours and there is a shoeshine box and the shoeshine box is for the men to clean their shoes. I mean it has been a very patriarchal community and the Upper House in particular has been very entrenched with a whole lot of old men’s habits. They are stodgy and very conservative men who have had, I would suggest, a very patriarchal approach. But it is changing (Anonymous Interviewee: 16 October 2002).

Another Victorian interviewee stated:

I agree patriarchy is certainly a problem for women. It should also be noted that the media constantly present proceeding as combative – it's not always competitive, it can be really positive but you only see the combative side of it. If you only see men in suits shouting at one another then it's only going to be very cynical for most people particularly women. It's good to find more women in Parliament because it breaks down the adversarial behaviour. We are now getting the critical numbers that will bring about change (Anonymous Interviewee: 8 October 2002).

Answering the same question another Victorian interviewee claimed:

I don't experience this patriarchal behaviour in the State Parliament and I haven't experienced it in Local Government. People get disillusioned for all sorts of reasons. One of the things is also – it's hard work and it's relentless and people have to understand the nature of the job before they go into it. We are in an adversarial political system and that has its problems inside Parliament and outside Parliament (Anonymous Interviewee: 16 October 2002).

This interviewee had highly positive views about her position, but one thing she did admit was the aggressiveness of the Parliament. She was told by a male MP to go 'get on your bike' as in 'shove off on your bike'. She did ride a bicycle to her office at Parliament House and assured me that there was venom in the remark. Another female interviewee had strong views of the patriarchal atmosphere:

I think the whole debating chamber and style of interchanges are actually patriarchal. It's not that they have deliberately contrived it, but it's an outgrowth of modern male characteristics and interests. I think that's what all of them think. You're talking about average tendency but some women are quite happy to shout and yell and punch the air. I mean there is nothing wrong with that because if you don't do it then you don't actually get your point across. Some men and women find it particularly unappealing so they don't do it and that can sometimes mean that they lose strength in their argument – not necessarily but it can mean that. If you are not able to adapt sufficiently to perform in that environment you may not choose it or like it but as we have learnt in other areas of life you have to adapt. If you sit there and say you don't like it you won't be there for long. Well it means that the first time you get to your feet if you are not reasonably assertive and able to deal with the boys yelling at you, you will probably collapse in a heap. The way the media treats that and your own colleagues in the opposition you'd be mincemeat. You may not like it but you have to cope with it (Anonymous Interviewee: 16 October 2002).

Mary Gillett has outspoken answers for most questions but for those on patriarchy she believes and is confident that:

I can't speak for any women other than myself. I can't say that I have experienced any patriarchy. I had a particular background – five years in an all male union. It's a powerful series of lessons that you learn. Through a good union where you have good progressive views, and you have good teachers, that's excellent training for a parliamentarian.

But certainly the women in the Victorian Labor Party are doing very well. One learns to manage the patriarchal traditions but the problem for women in the Party is the media. The media is almost entirely owned and operated by men. They make it very difficult for women. That's my honest assessment (Gillett Interview: 17 October 2002).

The replies to my patriarchal question in the interviews with Victorian women appeared rather innocuous as though these women are experiencing patriarchal behaviour as something they have to endure without complaint. As Rod Cameron argues: 'The general point is that 'sheilas' are going to be generally better viewed, and a good female candidate will these days, generally speaking, beat a good male candidate' (Cameron cited in Baird 2004: 229).

Cameron is indicating that the feminisation thesis suggests that male leaders are generally more approachable and human in the Twenty-first Century. Women are being more successful at the grass-roots level. (Note the interview with Jenny Lindell, above). And, while I have detected during the course of this study that Victorian Labor was placing factional barriers before women candidates, most of these women appeared to show enthusiasm and confidence until the beginning of 2005 when the severity of bullying by factions became disturbing.

The issues raised in this Chapter are crucial, complex and lead down many paths. They lead us inexorably to contemplate how our political frameworks may have to be modified if women are to gain true equality in the ALP and the Victorian Branch in the future. The grass-roots success of women is to be admired but what is stopping women from gaining leadership positions in the Victorian Labor Party? In the new century, it is impossible to believe that it is all the fault of the women. The following Chapter will discuss and contemplate explanations for this phenomenon.

CHAPTER NINE

WHY SO FEW? TOWARDS EXPLANATION

AUSTRALIAN POLITICAL CULTURE

More of an irritation than a major problem as a female politician is that you still get that eye-rolling response when you talk. It means, you're really an interloper you shouldn't be here, and no one knows quite how to deal with you...but, there's no sense in which you can just be a competent person or a good politician—you're always a woman.

Carmen Lawrence 1996: 143-4

Carmen Lawrence and Joan Kirner - two women Premiers - attained the leadership at a time when their parties suffered significant problems in Government. They soon gained the impression that they were honoured and should clean up the mess. For instance, when Lawrence gained power in Western Australia, her two former ALP Premiers had been held accountable for improper business dealings which came to be known as 'WA Inc'. Her own career was tarnished as she proceeded to clean up the corruption as discussed above. In Victoria, Kirner met with immense economic difficulties and financial incompetence (van Acker 1999: 78). Both politicians proved their political strength by succeeding to stabilise their States' economy and eventually challenging the notion that female politicians are political encumbrances; they also proved to be very popular with voters.

This Chapter takes up such incidents, first looking into theoretical suggestions or proposals relating to gender bias and Australian political culture, gender, factions, equality, democracy and citizenship. (These concepts have been highlighted by the case studies in Chapters Seven and Eight above). It then attempts to appraise the scale to which the result of these investigations have restricted or benefited women's accessibility to leadership positions in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

Conceptualising gender and political culture

This section focuses on a small number of the principal points in order to test their reliability for comprehending political culture and gender. There are two instances in this review that should be kept in mind. Firstly, the theorists outlined below do not specifically examine political culture. Smith observes: ‘the conceptualisations of political culture presented are therefore often extrapolations from wider theories of gender, power and culture’ (Smith 2001: 198). Secondly, the discussion draws on some elements of feminist theory. This procedure is well documented (see Walby 1990; Jaggar 1983; yet it has been criticised by Kensinger 1997: 178-97; Franzway *et al.* 1989.) It is used here because it continues the concept discussed in Section B, Introduction, in this thesis, by contrasting the wide inferences for an individual’s perception of different feminist analyses when applied to the case studies in Chapters Seven and Eight. It will be shown that a very rigid form of gender bias is seen to exist in the ALP and the Victorian Branch, limiting women’s access to leadership roles within the Party.

Flax writes that gender is not biological difference ‘but the meanings given to that difference in any society’ (Flax 1993: 97). Moreover, gender identification varies during different periods and between cultures (Riley 1988: Ch. 1). Therefore, current Twenty-First Century women politicians in the ALP and its Victorian Branch have a gender identity or set of identities that differ from the cultural identities available to the women in medieval Europe or modern Russia. Similarly, non-Aboriginal Australian women will have different cultural identities to Australian Aboriginal women.

Furthermore, Rodney Smith writes that historically it was not seen as important perhaps for political scientists to study gender and its effect on political culture. In addition, historians were prone to assume women's interests were restricted to the domestic or private life. On the other hand, if women did participate in the public realm, Smith claims they were thought to show similarities to men through imitation. They were also seen to be lesser adaptations of men due to being 'inferior versions of [political man]' (Smith 2001: 199). Such arguments were built on 'centuries of political philosophy asserting women's physical, intellectual and emotional unsuitability for public life.'⁷

Following Okin's arguments and keeping in mind the philosophy of Rousseau's *Emile* it follows that the recording of the history of the ALP, the Government and political institutions (including unions and pressure groups) has mostly been the study of men. Women did not gain any degree of recognition within the Party until the 1970s, but they were, in fact, making history through the roles they played while men dominated the Party machine of the Federal ALP and Branches. Before the 1970s, the role of women was mostly confined to community organisations, women's auxiliaries or informal political activity and feminist groups. However, as Simms states: 'if we define the political broadly, then clearly those earlier roles of women were political' (Simms 1984: 236). Yet, within the ALP and the Victorian Branch, women and women's priorities have been characterised as outside the political area: indeed the political has not been determined in ways which defined the interests of women. Still women are now making some progress, but leadership roles in the ALP and the Victorian Branch escape them. They are also struggling to obtain preselection and to retain it.

⁷ See Okin in this thesis p, 7, also Eisenstein 1981; Elshtain; Flax: Chapter 4.

Liberal feminist accounts of political culture

Mary Delahunty was a prominent TV presenter and journalist, a political outsider, when Labor recruited her into the Victorian Labor Party in 1998. Not only was she a high profile public face when studied from a traditional Labor perspective but also by preselecting prominent identities, rather than party performers, might be seen to be more in keeping with Liberal strategies. In NSW the debates over who should step aside to accommodate the ACTU president Jennie George in 2001 is an example of just how ‘competitive the pecking order is for parliamentary positions’ (Henderson, Kernot and Delahunty 2000: 29). In the case of Delahunty, it was a signal that the Victorian Labor Party was fast-tracking high profile celebrities into its higher ranks, therefore, what is it doing about a structured ‘feminisation’ of the party? By fast-tracking people like Delahunty, it looks like a rather cynical cosmetic ‘change’ rather than a step towards equality. In addition, Joan Kirner believes that it should broaden its membership as the Coalition has done over the last ten years, if Labor is to ‘market itself as an inclusive rather than exclusive and narrowly based party of Government’ (Kirner cited in Henderson et al. 2000: 30).

But the transition element to a broader and more attractive party for women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch creates argument. Senator Kim Carr has indicated that he is against the deal that securely enthroned Mary Delahunty in the safe seat of Northcote. He argued that Delahunty should have been offered a marginal seat like Cheryl Kernot and ‘in a manner that was acceptable to almost all sections of the party’. He added:

It is difficult to understand the values and priorities of those who are the Labor Party without spending a bit of time being part of the membership, debating, engaging and appreciating the breadth and variations of Labor culture and Labor people (Carr cited in Henderson, et al. 2000: 30).

It was through an alliance between certain sections of the Left, Labor Right and some Independents that the former State Leader, John Brumby, was able to promote Delahunty. It involved a certain amount of moving Party faithfuls to other seats but, in the end, it was a cross-factional deal 'that made it possible for Delahunty to be preselected for a safe Labor seat' (Henderson et al. 2000: 30). It also seems that the way Delahunty entered public political life was dubious and subject to criticism as to the way the ALP machine depicts women. Not only was the election material scarcely 'political', but also it stressed social engagements such as her attendance at 'debutante balls' and other social gatherings. A broader question is, what kind of party selects people for Parliament (male or female) with no history of involvement in the Party or in the broader labour, social, women's, or community movements?

Yet, on joining Labor, Delahunty did not formally join a faction, however, she finds her independence has its benefits:

A lot of ex and would-be party members say, terrific, you're independent, we'll support you. In Victoria it's been something the Government has hit Labor about the head with - the factions. Although it's fascinating to watch them rear their heads in the preselection battles. But when I went into Parliament I didn't ask what faction people belonged to. I wanted to make my judgements free of that sort of labelling (Henderson et al. 2000: 35).

Henderson et al. write that, for long-term Labor Members, Delahunty's frank admission that she can survive without factional support must be something to envy (Henderson et al. 2000: 36). Moreover, barely twelve months after joining the Victoria Branch of the ALP, Delahunty became Minister for Education in the new Bracks Government showing clearly the Party appreciated the personal identification she had brought with her when signing up. Additionally, after the 2002 Election, she became Minister for the Arts, Women's Affairs

and Planning (Harari, *The Weekend Australian*, 22-23 April 1995). Delahunty's progress within the Victorian ALP has been an important symbol of how Labor might change in this decade. However, her critics are now saying she has yet to shine. Indeed her history is reading like the decline of other ALP female politicians, Susan Ryan, Joan Kirner and Cheryl Kernot. (Carmen Lawrence might be mentioned here, although she was not defeated totally after the Western Australian (WA) Royal Commission and has remained in the Party. In her favour, she was elected to be the ALP President in 2003-4 but she was not supported for the leadership after Simon Crean and Mark Latham stood down in 2004 and 2005 respectively) Not only were these women seen to be dynamic, competent, ALP women, but also in some circumstances they were considered to be actual or potential leadership material. So where is the problem? Why have women been excluded from leadership positions in the ALP? Why is the media seeing Delahunty as a falling star? Should they not show some compassion to a woman still grieving over the death of her husband? Arguably, she needs support, not a ruthless campaign against her.

A speculative journalist, Royce Miller, wrote that rumour was rife in political, media, planning and arts circles about the future in politics of Delahunty. He argued that 'the Opposition was gunning for her. Senior figures in the world of planning were pushing for her replacement. Some say Premier Bracks wanted to dump her in a Cabinet reshuffle' (Miller, *The Age*, 3 July 2004). In fact, the Premier, Bracks, did remove her from the politically sensitive planning portfolio early in 2005, but she remains the Minister for the Arts and Women's Affairs (Ellingsen, *The Sunday Age*, 27 February 2005). Ellingsen writes that Delahunty is targeted and will be asked to step aside from her secure seat of Northcote due to the ruling Right faction hastening to offload supposedly under-performing MPs. He

states that Delahunty still has the support of one senior head in the Right faction, but it is unlikely that her struggles to survive will guarantee her endorsement (Ellingsen, *The Sunday Age*, 27 February 2005).

In response, Delahunty has launched an attack on the 'faceless' factional leaders who, it is reported, will insist on her standing down for the 2006 Election. Tomazin, a political reporter with *The Age*, has pointed out that Delahunty has vowed to recontest her Northcote seat in 2006, but admits to being vulnerable due to her not being aligned with a faction (Tomazin, *The Age*, 27 February 2005). It is very difficult for women to gain leadership roles in the ALP and the Victorian Branch for many and variable reasons. It is also clear that high profile faction leaders support their own mates for winnable seats.

Kathleen Brasher, President of the Box Hill Victorian ALP Party Branch and a researcher about to complete a PhD, quotes Anna Burke, who was successful in gaining preselection for the seat of Chisholm only because the factional warloads thought Chisholm was unwinnable. She says that Burke claims the problem is all about safe seats'...patronage and numbers and handing safe seats to mates...' (Ellingsen, *The Sunday Age*, 20 February 2005). Additionally, an unnamed official of the ALP has said that: 'More than 50 per cent of the 15,000 members statewide were bogus' (Munro, *The Age*, 10 March 2005). The former Labor Premier, Joan Kirner, has added her concerns by accusing factional warlords of creating 'power fiefdoms' to debilitate sitting MPs in the lead-up to preselection. She has named Mary Delahunty and Elaine Carbines as targeted MPs (firmer cited in Munro, *The Age*, 10 March 2005). The Community Affairs Minister, Sherryl Garbutt, is another high powered woman reported as likely to retire after being severely criticized (Ellingsen, 27

February 2005). Ballarat Upper House Member, Diane Hadden, has also announced her retirement from the Victorian Branch of the ALP and will stand as an Independent at the next election. Hadden has quoted factionalism as one of the reasons for her resignation (Tomazin and Murphy, *The Age*, 8 April 2005). Ann Cororan also complains that faction war-lords want her seat at the 2006 election and declares: 'I occupy a seat that the Right regard as theirs and they want it back again'; she points out that she is not quitting (Koutsoukis, *The Age*, 25 May 2005).

There is another problem recently highlighted in the Victorian ALP. Moira Rayner, lawyer, writer and feminist activist, states that factional turf wars are destroying the ALP and proceeding to lessen the voices of women. She says that Kirner, who was Premier for two 'horrible years', acts for Emily's List (as discussed above) and for nearly ten years helped 'progressive' women gain selection for the Labor Party. Emily's List works well, but is not faction bound therefore it is resented. It is begrudged because it supports and financially helps women 'outside the club' that regulates Victorian preselections. As Rayner indicates, branch-stacking is a 'blood sport' of which the factional balance of local branches is an integral part (Rayner, *The Age*, 18 March 2005). Others are disturbed by Victorian branch-stacking.

Ian Munro, Ewin Hannan and Shaun Carney - all notable writers - are disturbed at the circumstances which involve branch-stacking in the Victorian Labor Party. They write that bogus meetings, forged signatures, bogus records and mass sign-ups of new members are prevalent. Membership means control, power and security in a safe Labor electorate where these warlords can determine who the local MP will be, who is employed by that MP and

how that ‘MP votes in the caucus’ (Munro et al, *The Age*, 19 March 2005). Munro et al mention that, for selection of members to the party’s State Conference, the vote was in an MPs office where Turkish party members went to one room, Vietnamese to another, and others to a third room. The ethnic members are assisted with their vote while many were known to hand over their voting paper for the official to complete. The service is a form of ‘quality control masked as translation services’ (Munro et al, *The Age*, 19 March 2005). The ALP State President, Brian Daley, describes the situation as: ‘These issues are a bit like powder kegs waiting to explode at the worst possible time’ (Daley cited in Munro et al, *The Age*, 19 March 2005). This selective outrage is quite undemocratic; in fact it limits women’s access to full political citizenship positions and leadership roles in the ALP.

The President of the Geelong West Branch, Phil Flaherty, suggests that 15 per cent of members had their votes overseen by the person escorting the voter to the booth – at times it is the State Member who is the escort. Flaherty notes that written complaints to the returning officer remained unanswered (Flaherty, *The Age*, 19 March 2005). Furthermore, due to a number of ethnic groups having close cultural and social ties, Labor practitioners see it as reasonably easy to convince a large proportion of ethnics to sign up in large numbers (Munro et al, *The Age*, 19 March 2005). But Jerzy Zubrzycki warned of this manipulation of ethnic groups by Politicians in 1995.

Polish born Zubrzycki, a sociologist, served as an adviser to various ministers for immigration between 1970 and 1986. Zubrzycki also advised the Government on the policies of multiculturalism. In 1995 he wrote that ‘multiculturalism’ had outlived its purpose and advised that:

The brutal reality of positive discrimination programs not specifically targeted at refugees and other victims of oppression is that they can be abused by promoting an [ethnic] approach to minority groups – an approach which, it is not too cynical to suggest, has its roots in the recognition by Politicians of every stripe, that the [ethnic vote] is worth wooing. The effect of this approach is to emphasise the things that divide us instead of the things that bind us together.

The blatant wooing of the [ethnic vote] represents a grave distortion of the concept of multiculturalism for all Australians... (Zubrzycki, *The Weekend Australian*, 8-9 April 1995).

This aspect of the post-war immigration programme and the policies of assimilation, integration and multiculturalism are subjects outside the range of this thesis. But, not only is the warning issued by Zubrzycki important to this work, it warns of the possibilities of the cheating that is occurring at the present time within the Victorian Labor Party. It would appear that the faction heads are allowing Emily's List to assist women entering the Labor Party in a number of unwinnable electorates. After these women are successful at gaining some of these marginal seats, pressure is applied to remove them and install their mates. This theory explains a number of variables that will be seen in the Conclusion. Not that this theory applies to Delahunty, as she was head-hunted by the former Labor Leader, John Brumby (Austin, *The Age*, 19 March 2005).

The criticisms of Delahunty often are that she lacks clarity and leadership. She was compared to the former Minister for Planning, Rob Maclellan, who her critics say was more decisive. But is there really a problem with the performances of Delahunty, Garbutt and Carbines or have the Opposition, factions, the media or some colleagues convinced each other there is a problem requiring a solution? If so, is it style or substance, gender or the motive of factions to gain power? Is it simply a matter of gender bias or could male members envy Delahunty's Arts and Women's Affairs Portfolios, Carbine's Geelong Upper House seat

or Garbutt's Community Affairs portfolio? It is plain to see that factional czars target these women. It is also clearly visible that women in the ALP's Victorian Branch will not progress to leadership roles unless and until the Right-Wing Premier, Steve Bracks, and the Opposition Leader, Kim Beazley, are prepared to disarm the factional warlords who are doing great harm to the very principle of liberal democracy.

Smith expresses concern that 'men often remain the yardstick against which women's political attitudes and actions are measured'. This instance of assuming, without proof, that male politics as a yardstick is not unlike that implied though not plainly expressed in much liberal feminism (Pateman 1992; Young 1990 cited in Smith 2001: 199). Liberalism's focus on 'individuals, liberty and equality of opportunity' proposes that inconsistencies in the political adjustments in relation to circumstances of men and women are due to the way male and females are treated from childhood by 'discriminatory laws and practices'. The construction of these laws and practices create 'sex-roles', these being private roles for women and public roles for men (Eisenstein 1985: 106).

Eisenstein insists that, once discrimination laws are adjusted and sexist preconceived bias and practices against women and girls disputed or denied, gender will no longer continue to be appropriate in political culture (Eisenstein 1981: 177-97, 1985: 106-7; Connell 1994: 141-2). Therefore, what Eisenstein and Connell are saying is that when women are permitted the liberties and advantages in the public sphere already experienced by men they will utilise those liberties and pursue those opportunities. Likewise, Smith believes that dissimilarities between women and men's macro-level political assumptions and their meso-level values about political techniques will gradually disappear (Smith 2001: 199). Indeed, these

inconsistencies should be no more significant to the political culture than an outcome between other groups.

We have seen that there is no doubt that women in the ALP and Victorian Branch are the victims of double standards; yet the problem persists. In the role Delahunty plays, she is subject to ridicule or denigration and the perception is then developed that she is not a satisfactory player on the political scene. Or, even worse, the really high-profile women such as Delahunty are subjected to media smear campaigns of an exceptionally severe kind, designed to unsettle them, and cause them to believe that in the public eye they are unfit for high office. For instance, Delahunty has believed that some of her factional enemies in the Victorian Branch of the ALP were circulating false rumours about her private life; that they inserted in a Melbourne gossip column that she was about to remarry. She retaliated strongly and exclaimed: 'Politics is competitive...but I draw the line on this' (Delahunty cited in Austin, *The Age*, 19 March 2005). ALP women seem to be particularly exposed to this form of political assassination, but in the ALP and the Victorian Branch it remains rampant preventing their progression towards leadership roles in the Party

Gender equality in Australian public life

The high value people attributed to men's actions has been spoken of by Margaret Mead:

In every known human society, the male's need for achievement can be recognised. Men may cook or weave or dress dolls or hunt humming-birds, but if such activities are appropriate occupations of men, then the whole society, men and women alike, votes them as important. When women perform the same occupations they are regarded as less important (Mead 1962: 157).

In many ways in this thesis, we have seen that the Labor Party has not forfeited its standing as a time-honoured 'blokey' Party forced to implement Affirmative Action to make sure women get consideration when the parliamentary seats are distributed. However, in 1998, Cheryl Kernot, the former Democrat leader, the popular media star of the Centre, within twenty-four hours of joining the Labor Party in 1997, had appeared to change Labor's polling fortunes. Yet she was given the difficult Liberal-held seat of Dickson in Queensland.

In the 1998 Election, and after two weeks of nerve-racking vote counting, she had won the very marginal seat by 176 votes (Henderson et al. 2000: 36). She had gained her position in Labor's Shadow Cabinet, but everyone inside and outside the Labor Party was mystified as to how Kernot could have found herself in such an uncoveted seat considering she had been a high profile recruit. She lost the seat in 2001 and retired from the ALP following a campaign of character assassination. Yet, true to Mead's philosophy, another star recruit in 2004 was given a joy ride into a safe seat in Sydney.

In June 2004, Labor courted a new member purported to be the highest-profile recruit since Cheryl Kernot. This was the lead singer in the Rock group, Midnight Oil, Peter Garrett. The Leader of the Opposition, Mark Latham, was determined that he be given maximum support and the safe seat of Kingsford Smith in Sydney (Gordon, *The Age*, 12 June 2004). Contrast this with Kernot's treatment by Kim Beazley who led the Opposition when Kernot quit the Democrats; he played only a minor role in her recruitment to the ALP where she was left to fight for the marginal Liberal held seat of Dickson. Anne Henderson points out in *The Age*, 10 February 2001 that Labor aimed to win elections like never before. She claimed that the Party was prepared to support women candidates if it seems to be popular with the electorate, therefore, Kernot was used as a vote winner. Yet, not only was Kernot popular

with the electorate, she won the Liberal seat of Dickson only to be deserted by the Leader of the Party. By contrast, Garratt was granted preselection for a safe seat as soon as negotiations with the Leader of the ALP and advisors took place. Therefore, it would appear that if you are a celebrity male you can expect a safe seat and a ‘dream run’, but if you are a female with high profile political experience and success the ‘dream run’ eludes you. True equality still escapes you in the ALP. In addition, as depicted in the faction branch-stacking episode, structural reasons prevent women from gaining leadership positions.

Radical and difference feminism and patriarchy

In liberal feminist accounts of political culture discussed above, we saw how a number of the feminist theorists have interpreted the relative invisibility of some women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch. Other feminist theorists have seen this ‘invisibility’ as a feature of patriarchy: ‘...a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women’ (Spender 1985: 15; Connell 1994: 142-3). For this concept, the experiences of two ALP women parliamentarians will be discussed: one from the Victorian Branch of the ALP and the other from the FPLP.

Political journalist Bill Birnbauer has written that Monica Gould became the first full-time Industrial Relations minister (in Brack’s State Labor Government) since the mid-1990s, when the unions moved as many workers as they could onto Federal awards (with the consent of the Federal Labor Government) to escape the ‘clutches’ of Liberal Premier Kennett and the State system. Gould became Victoria’s most senior female politician. Her responsibilities increased after the Government legislated for the state to have a stronger role in industrial conflicts, dispute settlements and award coverage. Yet it was Neil Pope, the

former Cain Government Minister, who had been instructed to arbitrate negotiations between the unions and Yallourn Energy, an action which appeared to by-pass the Minister. In 2000, Gould was criticised for failing to act sufficiently early in the power dispute, and for being invisible (Birnbauer, *The Age*, 10 February 2000).

However, David Gregory, the general manager of workplace relations with the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry, claimed that there was surprise at Gould taking a 'relatively back seat' in the power dispute, but indicates that it was typical of the way the Government treated women. He also pointed out the fact that Bracks' former chief of staff, Tim Pallis, is a former ACTU assistant secretary. He concluded that '...Tim is having a very significant role in terms of providing background concerning industrial relations issues as well as running a traditional chief of staff function' (Gregory, *The Age*, 10 February 2000). It appears that Gregory is insinuating that Pallas is the preferred negotiator in this situation.

This perception is of concern to women particularly in light of another fact: that union heavy-weights became accustomed to regular meetings with the former Premier, Jeff Kennett, at a time when there was no Industrial Relations Minister. As a consequence, Birnbauer suggests that they had come to expect regular consultations with the Premier and became offended at being diverted to a woman, Ms Gould (Birnbauer 2000: 10 February).

Professor Millicent Poole, Vice-Chancellor of Edith Cowan University in Western Australia, has commented on such a predicament when discussing the demotion of Amanda Vanstone

from Howard's Cabinet in 1997 to become Justice Minister. The remarks apply equally to Gould in 2000. Poole claims that it is the old story – 'women have to be twice as competent to be considered half as good'. Poole refers to the phenomenon of 'the glass room', endured by women in power: you are scrutinised far more, because there are fewer of you, and more people are watching you. The Cabinet Room in Canberra or Parliament House in Melbourne now seems to be a similar 'glass room' (Poole cited in Richard Yallop, *The Weekend Australian*, 11-12 October 1997).

The Age considered Ms Gould was seen as not handling her responsibility well in the first Bracks Cabinet and she was demoted after the second was formed in 2002 (Editorial, *The Age*, 6 December 2002). Indeed, she disputes this. Ms Gould rejected the view that she lost her portfolio because she was not sufficiently competent in dealing with the tough top representatives of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union, the Electrical Trades Union, the Construction, Forestry and Mining and Energy Union (Birnbauer, *The Weekend Australian*, 10 February 2002). But, in the 55th Parliament Gould was elected to become the Upper House President; a position she currently holds in 2005.

Susan Ryan, the former Federal Labor Minister, has written of the injustice of 'continually having to justify your whole gender on the basis of a single example; knowing that anything less than perfection will count as a black mark against half the human race, not only now but for the future generations' (Ryan cited in Bone, *The Age*, 10 February 2001). It would appear that equality is not yet fully defined in the Victorian Branch of the ALP. It also means that, for patriarchal reasons, women are under-represented in positions of power and influence in the ALP.

The second subject of this study is Jenny Macklin. As Deputy Leader of the ALP, she is aware of the pitfalls of being a woman in the patriarchal atmosphere of the ALP in Canberra or in the State Parliament. Political journalist Stuart Rintoul describes the preselection of Jenny Macklin for the Victorian marginal seat of Jagajaga in 1994 as a 'dirty preselection' even for Labor. He mentions that it demonstrates how 'factions and unions exert themselves within the Labor Party' that is the FPLP or the Victorian Branch (Rintoul, *The Weekend Australian*, 17-18 November 2001).

By the time Jenny Macklin was chosen to be the Deputy Leader of the ALP in 2001 she had spent nearly six years in Parliament as the Member for Jagajaga, and three of those years as Shadow Health Minister. Annabel Crabb writes that Ms Macklin's rise to ALP influence began in August 1999 when she was elected 'joint senior Vice-President of the ALP at its biennial National Conference'. Not only is she an economics graduate, and former researcher and political adviser but she has worked from the Party's Left and has also worked for the Right as assistant to the former Victorian Labor Minister, David White (Crabb, *The Age*, 13 November 2001).

Karen Kissane regards Macklin as an intelligent Left-Wing feminist who has the social-justice fire of old-time Labor. She adds that the acerbic Simon Crean chose her for his running mate, according to one ALP insider because he knew he needed her particular knowledge and expertise (Kissane, *The Age*, 17 November 2001). Macklin refuses to ruminate publicly about her future ambitions, but the Labor Left women, known as her 'Praetorian Guard', are readily outspoken. The ACTU president Sharon Burrow hopes

Macklin will be Australia's first female Prime Minister. 'She's a strong woman, she's tenacious. She's extremely articulate and her knowledge base is incredible. She's also courageous in terms of speaking out on what she believes in' (Burrows cited in Kissane, *The Age*, 17 November 2001), but others disagree.

For instance, some anonymous detractors in Macklin's Party have attempted to diminish her standing by saying she is not sufficiently tough to make hard decisions. However, this undoubtedly stems from chauvinism. Others on Labor's Right 'have warned that she is a closet radical whose 'Leftie' urges would be uncaged if ever she won power'. This second criticism reflects disagreements where factional lords are drowning out the voice of women. Other critics queried her dilemma whether to be Shadow Treasurer or not – the traditional entitlement of a Deputy Opposition Leader. Not all Deputy Leaders have taken Treasury but, in Macklin's case, it would be a dilution of the feminist victory was she to refuse (Kissane, *The Age*, 17 November 2001). It is clear that Macklin has her critics within the Party, most of them of a faction and gender other than her own. It is also noted that her biggest problem is that she is a woman. To be a woman with higher than average ability can be a target in the very patriarchal atmosphere of the ALP. In the meantime, Macklin has established herself as a key member of Labor's leadership team.

Anne Summers believes that Macklin's brilliant success faded when she declined to take on the traditional Deputy's job of Shadow Treasurer. Maklin had argued that she preferred the prestigious portfolio of Education, Training, Employment and Science. She stated that her favoured portfolio represented the future economic success of the country, rather than the more traditional Treasury. The difficulty is 'the Treasury is where the political power and the

economic base is' (Summers 2003: 211). In addition, it is beneficial for your profile to be seen raising arguments with the Treasurer regularly during TV appearances; it boosts your profile, your confidence and media experience. Macklin declined the portfolio, giving the Shadow Treasurer's portfolio instead to Bob McMullin, another high profile MP.

Initially, Summers writes that she imagined Macklin's decision was a creative and brave one. However, after more than twelve months of watching her moving away from public appearances and becoming a minor media and political personality, one may come to the conclusion that she had made the wrong decision. It may be argued that she has chosen a sophisticated course by quietly influencing her fellow Shadow Ministers and doing policy work rather than heralding 'the savage Costello beater' approach. Summers doubts the wisdom of Macklin's method, because visibility is paramount in politics (Summers 2003: 212). In addition, an editorial writer (Editor, *The Age*, 25 June 2003) claimed that Jenny Macklin had been a disappointment that she has not managed to contribute greatly on a 'heartland Labor issue and in her other area of responsibility, the overseeing of the party's new policy agenda, she has been tardy'. Therefore, by not performing as an able Deputy Leader, Macklin is not assisting other women in the ALP by her example; neither is she helping herself to become Leader of the Opposition.

On the other hand, Laurie Oakes quoted a senior Government Minister as saying Macklin 'wussed it' when the portfolios were made public. Oakes himself remarked that '...it is hard to resist the suspicion that there is a whiff of sexism about the decision. It conforms too closely for comfort to the notion that women belong in social policy while economics is a man's job' (Oakes, *Bulletin*, 4 December 2001). If Oakes is right, then we must note that we

have a system built on patronage and favours to mates. Therefore, this is a bankrupt system where stars like Macklin and her supporters have to fight ruthlessly for the highest professional level of elite decision makers – the Prime Ministership and in all probability fail.

These case studies suggest that women are not being assimilated into the traditional culture of ALP politics in the FPLP or in the Victorian Branch, neither are they bringing with them the innovations exhorted by feminist philosophers. Recognition of this can be attributed to another senior Labor Politician in an interview. She suggested to me that if you act like a man and match the rhetoric of Costello, Abbott or Howard then you are more readily acknowledged. She was emphasising that authoritativeness generally entails moving closer to the male norm. But Macklin is echoing a stance by refusing to believe that, to be a productive senior Politician, it is necessary that one has the ability to be loudly authoritative. So, is there any explanation for this discriminatory treatment in women's political activities in the ALP? It is becoming clearer that within the ALP and the Victorian Branch a patriarchal culture is dominant. As radical feminist analysis signifies, it is in political cultures like Australia's that 'male values will be dominant and pervasive' (Smith 2001: 200).

Smith writes that, when women enter the public sphere, they must 'work within patriarchal political structures' (Smith 2001: 200). Indeed, they must 'conform to and uphold patriarchal values' (Daly 1978: 333-6). Outhwaite adds that productive anti-patriarchal politics 'can only be found outside established political institutions in women-centred political activity that values inclusiveness, nurturance, care, peace and nature' (Outhwaite 1989: 203-5;

Bacchi 1990: 86-7), or movements that ‘undermine patriarchal institutions’ (Eisenstein 1981: 220-48). Yet some countries have women as leaders. Summers relates that when it comes to women political leaders, other countries including Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom (UK), the Philippines, Canada, India, Israel, Norway, Iceland, Turkey, and Ireland have surpassed Australia (Summers 2003: 212). An interesting explanation for these phenomena comes from Gloria Steinem, former editor of *MS Magazine*. She writes that some women have been elected Heads of Government in countries where the overall status of women is low. It is also interesting to note that these countries are known to have wide social differences mainly based on class and /or caste. She refers to both India and Britain, where women have become ‘dominant political figures, but comparable phenomena have developed in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Philippines (Steinem 1984: *MS*, October). Steinem’s analysis reads that ‘when existing interests don’t have a suitable man to serve them, class or caste may mitigate the disaster of sex and allow a woman to rise’ (Steinem: *MS*, October 1984). We can then see that the Conservative Party interests represented by Margaret Thatcher, and the ruling family tradition originally represented by Indira Gandhi, have allowed these women to become outstanding women in national politics. Contrary to that, we have a situation in Australia that, despite reforms, we have women who remain economically disadvantaged, subject to male violence and largely excluded from positions of political power. Therefore, not only is Australia a patriarchy, but also in the ALP and the Victorian branch men systematically exercise power over women. For one thing, succession is not only ordered but also guaranteed.

To date there is no mention of a woman being advanced for leadership of the Opposition. Indeed, we have seen that a degree of hostility to women’s interests in some parts of the

ALP exists. Summers suggests that this is best enunciated by the former MHR from NSW, Mark Latham. He was raised to Shadow Treasurer in the July 2003 reshuffle and, until January 2005, was the new Leader of the Opposition, which makes his views more disturbing. He claims: 'Feminists identify primarily with the gender politics of Affirmative Action, while most people – male and female – want a society based on merit and equal opportunity' (Latham 2001: 239). Feminism is based on equality for men and women, so Latham's argument would make 'most people' feminists. Therefore, if the purpose of Affirmative Action within the ALP is to attain more winnable seats for women candidates, how is it that a lot of people who do not call themselves feminists support the policy of Affirmative Action – Paul Keating, for instance, when he was the Prime Minister? Latham also proposed that 'a feeling in the electorate that we were addressing social issues more through identity politics than socio-economic need' was the reason Keating lost the 1996 election (Latham 2001: *ibid* 240). Thus, we might deduce that the same feminists who supported the introduction of quotas into the Labor Party were a major cause of Labor's demise at the 1996 Election. That was not the case: in the Election of 1996, Labor won only 34% of women's votes because the Keating Government ignored them (Summers 2003: 217). In other words, women were entitled to say that the Party in the late 1990s that once supported women's rights was viewing these policies as unnecessary. Furthermore, after the crushing defeat of the ALP in the 2001 Election, Susan Ryan, in her submission to the subsequent inquiry, stated the following:

In its recent campaigns, Labor seems to have forgotten its achievements for women. It has failed to remind female voters of what was delivered, as a basis for building contemporary successful policies for women. The offer during the 2001 campaign to remove the GST from tampons was a rather pathetic appeal to women facing exorbitant childcare charges, unpaid maternity leave, inflexible work situations, and the worry of caring for aged parents who can't find proper care. Whatever good intentions were held, the message was wrong, and women rejected it (Ryan cited in Summers 2003: 218).

Further information, which highlights the subordination of women MPs, refers to their submission to the same inquiry. They pointed out that ‘neither the National Secretariat nor the Party leadership has ever endeavoured to design a broad strategy around the use of its women MPs’. The women added that, in 2001, the policies for women were announced merely two days before polling day (Summers 2003: 218). In this instance, it was impossible for women to take advantage or make effective use of policies that would affect the greater percentage of the electorate. However, it might be seen that, despite increased numbers of women MPs in the ALP and the Victorian Branch, numerical proportionality cannot be identified with any radical change in the patriarchal political culture. Indeed, patriarchy remains a factor in limiting women’s access to full political citizenship. So the mere ‘letting in’ of women into the Party has not transformed existing social structures.

Consequently, because more women are winning seats in the ALP should their style include the attribution of qualities stereotypically associated with women such as empathy, relatedness, nurture and care? Understandably, we need more women in leadership roles in the ALP and Victorian Branch to counter the sexist and boorish culture as developed since colonization, but there is a problem. Apart from some women, Margaret Thatcher or Amanda Vanstone, for instance, most women are considered to be less contentious than men. Therefore, as an alternative to mildness of nature, should women develop adversarial styles similar to the antagonistic leanings preferred and displayed by many males in the Westminster form of Government this country inherited from England?

The result of these findings might mean that Australian women members (with few exceptions) in the ALP have simply resigned themselves and accepted male ways of

practicising and understanding politics. The explanatory discussions in this Chapter involving Delahunty, Kernot, Gould and Macklin mainly support such an assumption. Then this continuing support for patriarchy in Australian culture within the Labor Party can be detected in the resistance of many men to women entering the Party as equals. So, this widespread assumption possibly accounts for women's failure to gain leadership positions in the Victorian Labor Party. Therefore, women are not presumed to be equal 'citizens' in the Party, neither are they assumed to be equal 'citizens' in Australian democracy. In fact, despite the rhetoric of equality women supposedly experienced within the ALP and the Victorian Branch, it will remain ill-founded unless the dominant patriarchal political culture, and the factional tribal loyalties are fought by further feminist activists. The comprehensive survey of Lawrence and Kirner and other female MPs in the ALP and the Victorian Branch has laid bare the Party's reactionary attitudes to women. Based on interviews and questionnaires, it contains frank testimony about such practices as male MPs' and officials' reluctance to accept Labor women as equals. Not only is it difficult for most male Members of the ALP and the Victorian Branch to comprehend that women of all ages could be Members of Parliament but also it appears women are dismissed as unworthy of the elite decision making roles as in leadership positions.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis, the data has confirmed the hypothesis outlined in the Introduction: that women have been excluded almost totally from leadership positions in the Australian Labor Party and the Victorian Branch in particular. Ultimately, theories are proved by displaying evidence that women are not gaining leadership roles in the Party for reasons outlined in the progression of each Chapter. When this knowledge was integrated into the holistic way of looking at the problem, the writer has concluded that, for a combination of sociological, structural and historical reasons, women had little power in the Labor Party until the 1980s, at which time things began to change. Additionally, it concludes that women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch in particular continue to remain marginalised.

It has been argued throughout the thesis that it is the dominance of men in the ALP and the Victorian Branch that curtails women's ambitions; that the strength of patriarchy has forced women to suffer inequality that has led to their subjection and exploitation. There is insensitivity to the needs of justice that causes men to assume that they are superior. Furthermore, while it is acknowledged that there are larger numbers of women in the ALP and the Victorian Branch in recent years, the implications drawn from my research attest that the reform of cultures and structures has not lead to a more democratic process. The thesis has argued that, within the Party, there remains a draconian attitude to women that has been quite unsocialistic, inegalitarian and undemocratic, and it is that which has kept them out of leadership roles. Philosophical reasoning supports this conclusion.

In the Introduction, it was argued that a degree of inequality exists in the ALP and the Victorian Branch that manifests itself in a form of patriarchy that is discussed throughout the

thesis leading to the conclusion below. 'Mateship' is seen as a derivative of inequality and patriarchy stemming firstly from the British historical background of the early settlers as discussed in Chapter One; than from the male-dominated history of the settlement of the Colonies and possibly the masculine type of single industries pursued by men, that is, whaling, shearing, sealing and droving, et cetera, that kept men away from their families in the 1800s. It is evident that the Westminster System of Government added to the patriarchal background of the nation. Women were exclusively, personally and privately oriented limiting their access to full political citizenship. Another question raised in the Introduction refers to the formal and political enfranchisement of women which has not led to significant equality between the sexes; power and leadership roles have eluded them. It is also shown in a minimalist manner that a diversity of feminist theorists and activists has had limited success in removing barriers to women gaining leadership roles in the Victorian ALP.

The historical and historiographical study of early times in Australia presented early in the thesis provides a context for the whole study and explains the development of Australian history and the reasons for women's exclusion from it. Indeed, it shows a pattern of Australian society out of which the Labour Movement emerged in the late 1800s. It also shows how an exclusive mateship environment grew and from which the misrecognition of women developed. Indeed, it indicates how barriers in the wider society became part of the ideological and institutional structure of the Labour Movement. As the thesis progresses, one gains the knowledge that the Labor Party was constructed within a patriarchy: that the country was masculinised before the Labour Movement formally appeared. This knowledge strengthens the belief that the gender division of labour entrenched the predominance of men in the public life, as in the private, until the emergence of feminism in the 1970s. This

misrecognition of women throughout the history of Australia has limited their accessibility to official positions in the ALP and the Victorian Branch, which, in turn, limits their influence, and access to leadership roles. Chapter Two traces the discrimination against women in the Parliament.

It is now seen that the Parliament, as a gendered space, feeds off the patriarchal powers of males making it an institution for masculinity and advantaged men. One of the reasons for this is the gendered nature of Australia's Constitution; women were excluded from its formulation and mentioned briefly in its completed form. It is also seen that pioneering women entering into Parliament were met with rejection and oppression.⁸ Additionally, women's representation in the Parliament has been stymied due to their supposed primary roles of motherhood, childcare and housework. Next, the concepts of Australia's rigid form of patriarchy and through its sequence of offshoots, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, the question of 'difference' and the preselection system are followed throughout the thesis. The results are analysed in Chapters, Seven, Eight and discussed in Chapter Nine where it is shown that the feminist challenge to the patriarchal structure of the ALP has not had sweeping success. It is also shown that gender bias, when applied to preselection, factions and branch stacking, creates a culture antithetic to productive power sharing. Therefore, powerful patriarchal males within the faction system exclude women from the roles in which they might gain experience for leadership positions in the Party and the Parliament in general.

⁸ The Victorian Parliament has its own Constitution that predated the Federal Constitution. In this instance I am referring to the Australian Constitution.

As pointed out early in the thesis, the ALP through its legislative actions did bring to the working class better standards of living, but the Party has been 'sexist from the jump'. This entrenched male bias has already been questioned but the information gained through the research of this concept leads to the question of the education and militarist ideology of masculinity brought to mostly fee-paying schools in the Colonies by English Public School Masters as discussed in Chapter Three. It had an effect on Australian culture, and it also affected the philosophy of the Victorian Branch of the ALP in the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century. This history clarifies and shows how, when combined with the literature of Henry Lawson, Barbara Baynton and Miles Franklin, shows the combination of historical and sociological reasons that have led to women having little power in the ALP and the Victorian Branch.

As the thesis develops, it has been shown that women in the Victorian ALP are restricted by recruitment rules that require women to have qualifications including experience or 'merit'. These prerequisites are harder for women to gain, but there have been movements towards equality in the Party before the recent decline began. The number of women in the Victorian Labor Party had increased dramatically in the late 1990s and the beginning of the Twenty-First Century, but the leadership roles have remained a male prerogative. One positive reason for women's increased recognition was the intervention of the Federal Labor Party to imbue cultural change within the Victorian Labor Party in the 1970s. It was a step forward because it had unwittingly lifted the malaise that had prevented the Party from being accessible to women. Additionally, women have gained seats since the 1980s due to feminist influences and particularly due to the availability of feminist literature. Affirmative Action policies, *Sex Discrimination Act*, now the *Equal Opportunity Act*, *Anti-Discrimination Act*,

Emily's List and the Purple Sage have been some of the agents of social change. However, in the past nine years, the equality of women generally has gradually foundered due to the male-dominated policies of the Howard Government. Furthermore, in recent times the Victorian ALP is further restricting women's influence due to the Left and Right factions becoming increasingly destructive. This thesis shows the increasing disjunction between what happens in the preselection of men and women in the Victorian Branch of the ALP. The fruits brought about through feminism have withered and lessened in strength. Yet, another destructive cycle of internecine warfare has developed into a rich variety of informal biases that are strengthening and working in favour of men. Women are no closer to gaining leadership roles in the Victorian ALP in 2005 than they were twenty years ago.

The objective of this thesis was to analyse how a formal misrecognition of women has restricted their accessibility in gaining leadership positions in the Victorian Branch of the ALP. The first two-thirds of the thesis shows that male dominance is seen to generate a masculine or patriarchal style and ambience in the Party: the atmosphere as consistently pointed out in the studies is repeatedly adversarial and aggressive. Since the formation of the Victorian Labor Party, political power has been associated with men and therefore it is assumed that men should lead the Party. Most women are seen as outsiders and many women face hostility from men because they are considered intruders therefore, their power is extremely limited. Indeed, interviewees suggested to me that women have difficulty having their voices heard in the Parliament. As a result, it is concluded that the Victorian Branch of the ALP is an organisation that restricts power and decision-making to a specific group – middle-class, middle-aged, white males. Furthermore, although the Victorian

Branch of the ALP has a greater number of women in the Party in recent years, a rigid form of patriarchy continues to exist limiting their access to leadership roles.

Between men and women equality exists formally, yet women in the Victorian Branch of the ALP are frequently subjected to different forms of subordination, coercion, ridicule and they are less likely to be taken seriously than men. Not only should women showing special aptitude in the Party appear to have additional restrictive reins kept on them since they have been 'let in', but also to appoint a woman to a leadership role could show hints of abjection. It could also have the potential to allow women too much power – Rousseau's Sophie must be docile and obedient. Indeed, I think that in the present climate in the Victorian Labor Party one needs to be a 'bloke' in order to succeed; you must belong to the club. The ALP needs more women entering the Party to change the masculine atmosphere and that is supposedly evident. But what is also needed is more women in leadership roles, and this is not happening.

The data gathered through interviews and questionnaires show that there are women in the Victorian ALP who are prevented from reaching their full potential within the Party due to either the pervasiveness of discrimination or the ineffability of sexual harassment. Indeed, I see the case studies leading toward confirming that a majority of male politicians in the ALP and the Victorian Branch are excessively masculine in manner and ideology and are retaining masculine prominence at any cost, therefore, we have to find a political language that can recognise difference and respect. So, regardless of the changes brought about to enhance women's chances of success in the ALP in recent years there are not many women MPs who are successfully demanding the same power as is accorded to their patriarchal

contemporaries. It is concluded that women are still the minority in areas of major authority and leadership positions regardless of their negotiating ways of being successful agents for change. Another source of anxiety to women MPs is the preselection process as shown in Chapter Eight.

The case studies covered twenty-five women, sixteen of whom were Victorian ALP MPs, additionally three were FPLP MPs, two women MPs from the Coalition, one was an Independent and three women were from outside the Parliament. Of the total of twenty-five interviewed, perhaps significantly, 50 per cent of those from the Victorian Branch wished to remain anonymous. Their wishes have been strictly adhered to but the reasons for their desire for anonymity concern me. It is possible that in recent years a high percentage of these women are under the influence of factional 'warlords' to the extent that they are willing to speak anonymously to me at length. They wish to have their problems documented, but they are afraid to speak loudly, clearly and positively in the Parliament or to the media for fear of losing their parliamentary seats. In other words, they are working hard in their electorates in order to hold on to their marginal seats while remaining seemingly invisible in the Parliament. More optimistically, it might be concluded that nothing or no one can forever hold back the dedicated, capable, strong, profoundly enthusiastic and determined group of Victorian Labor Party women MPs who were interviewed in the course of this study, other than patriarchal males and factionalism.

Due to factionalism and masculine bias, the improvement of the situation for women in the Victorian ALP will not be improved simply by adding more women to the Party: the Party needs to be completely reformed. So far, the Bracks Government seems to have weathered

the factional war that is displaying unrelenting rivalry between factions that are confined and supposedly ideologically based. Each of these factions is safeguarding the oligarchic order and is determined to gain supremacy and remove women from marginal seats in Victoria, as discussed in Chapter Nine. The goal of equality for women has been removed from the Victorian Labor Party: women should act now for this reason alone.

While it has been stated that it is only a matter of time until women gain leadership roles in the Victorian Branch of the ALP, it is time to decide how much time. In 2005, the steep hill is still there and the light in the tunnel is but a glimmer: women in the Party are called upon to defend the progress they have made against patriarchy and particularly virulent attacks from factions. Why should women have to keep re-fighting the same inequalities over and over again? It is time to move forward positively. The result of the research in this thesis shows that women need to have constructed a practical 'Bill of Rights' for women. It should contain a constitutional guarantee of equality so clear that even the High Court cannot mistake its meaning. Only then might women gain leadership roles in the Victorian Labor Party.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|---------------------------------------|
| ACTV | Australian Council of Trade Unions |
| AFWV | Australian Federation of Women Voters |
| ALP | Australian Labor Party |
| AWC | Australian Women's Charter |
| CPA | Communist Party of Australia |
| DLP | Democratic Labor Party |
| FLP | Federal Labor Party |
| FPLP | Federal Parliamentary Labor Party |
| IWW | Industrial Workers of the World |
| LRA | Labor Renewal Alliance |
| LU | Labor Unity |
| LWIE | Labor Women's Interstate Executive |
| MP | Member of Parliament |
| NCC | National Civic Council |
| NSW | New South Wales |
| PLC | Political Labor Council |
| POSC | Public Office Selection Committee |
| SL | Socialist Left |
| THC | Trades Hall Council |
| TUDC | Trade Unionists' Defence Committee |
| UAP | United Australia Party |
| UAW | United Association of Women |
| VSP | Victorian Socialist Party |
| WEL | Women's Electoral Lobby |
| WIE | Women's Interstate Executive |
| WCTU | Women's Christian Temperance Union |
| WPA | Women's Political Association |
| WSG | Women's Service Guild |

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 11 September 2002
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 1 October 2002
 8 October 2002
 15 October 2002
 22 November 2002

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Total 23, 1 September 1999, FPLP women

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**Appendix 1 – Percentage of Women in Victorian Parliaments
1979 – 2004**

| Parliament | Leg Assem | Leg Council | Total No | Leg Assem | Leg Council | Total % |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 48th May 1979- Feb 1982 | 5/81 | 2/44 | 7/125 | 6.2% | 4.5% | 5.6% |
| 49th April 1982- Jan 1985 | 7/81 | 5/44 | 12/125 | 8.6% | 11.4% | 9.6% |
| 50th April 1985- Aug 1988 | 9/88 | 7/44 | 16/132 | 10.2% | 15.9% | 12.1% |
| 51st Oct 1988- Aug 1992 | 10/88 | 7/44 | 17/132 | 11.4% | 15.9% | 12.9% |
| 52nd Oct 1992- March 1996 | 11/88 | 7/44 | 16/132 | 12.5% | 15.9% | 12.1% |
| 53rd May 1996- Aug 1999 | 16/88 7 ALP 7 Lib 1 Ind 1 Nat | 10/44 2 ALP 8 Lib | 26/132 9 ALP 15 Lib 2 other | 18.2% | 22.7% | 19.7% |
| 54th Nov 1999- Nov 2002 | 22/88 14 ALP 7 Lib 1 Ind | 12/44 8 ALP 3 Lib 1 Nat | 34/132 22 ALP 10 Lib 2 Other | 25% | 27.3% | 25.7% |
| 55th Feb 2003 - | 27/88 24 ALP 2 Lib 1 Nat | 13/44 11 ALP 2 Lib | 40/132 35 ALP 4 Lib 1 Nat | 30.7% | 29.5% | 30.3% |

Source: Gray 2004: PhD Thesis: 279

Appendix 2 - Women Members

55th PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA
(Total 40 - 27 Assembly, 13 Council)
as at 10 December 2003

| ASSEMBLY | | | Electorate | Year first elected | |
|-------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| ALLAN, Jacinta | Hon.(Ms) | ALP | Bendigo East | 1999 | 24 ALP Members in the Legislative Assembly |
| BARKER, Ann ¹ | Ms | ALP | Oakleigh | 1988 | |
| BEARD, Dymphna | Ms | ALP | Kilsyth | 2002 | |
| BEATTIE, Liz | Ms | ALP | Tullamarine | 1999 | |
| BUCHANAN, Rosy | Ms | ALP | Hastings | 2002 | |
| CAMPBELL, Christine | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Pascoe Vale | 1996 | |
| D'AMBROSIO, Lily | Ms | ALP | Mill Park | 2002 | |
| DELAHUNTY, Mary | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Northcote | 1998 | |
| DUNCAN, Joanne | Ms | ALP | Gisborne | 1999 | |
| ECKSTEIN, Anne | Ms | ALP | Ferntree Gully | 2002 | |
| GARBUTT, Sherryl | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Bundoora | 1989 | |
| GILLET, Mary | Ms | ALP | Werribee | 1996 | |
| GREEN, Danielle | Ms | ALP | Yan Yean | 2002 | |
| KOSKY, Lynne | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Altona | 1996 | |
| LINDELL, Jenny | Ms | ALP | Carrum | 1999 | |
| LOBATO, Tammy | Ms | ALP | Gembrook | 2002 | |
| MADDIGAN, Judy | Mrs | ALP | Essendon | 1996 | |
| MARSHALL, Kirstie | Ms | ALP | Forest Hill | 2002 | |
| MCTAGGART, Heather | Ms | ALP | Evelyn | 2002 | |
| MORAND, Maxine | Ms | ALP | Mount Waverley | 2002 | |
| MUNT, Janice | Ms | ALP | Mordialloc | 2002 | |
| NEVILLE, Lisa | Ms | ALP | Bellarine | 2002 | |
| OVERINGTON, Karen | Mrs | ALP | Ballarat West | 1999 | |
| PIKE, Bronwyn | Ms | ALP | Melbourne | 1999 | |
| POWELL, Jeanette ² | Hon. (Mrs) | National Party | North Eastern | 1996 | 1 National Party Member in the Legislative Assembly |
| ASHER, Louise ² | Hon. (Ms) | Liberal | Brighton | 1999 | 2 Liberal Members in the Legislative Assembly |
| SHARDEY, Helen | Mrs | Liberal | Caulfield | 1996 | |
| COUNCIL | | | | | |
| ARGONDIZZO, Lidia | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Templestowe | 2002 | 11 ALP Members in the Legislative Council |
| BROAD, Candy | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Melbourne North | 1999 | |
| BUCKINGHAM, Helen | Hon (Ms) | ALP | Koonung | 2002 | |
| CARBINES, Elaine | Hon. (Mrs) | ALP | Geelong | 1999 | |
| DARVENIZA, Kaye | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Melbourne West | 1999 | |
| GOULD, Monica | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Doutta Galla | 1993 | |
| HADDEN, Dianne | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Ballarat | 1999 | |
| HRSH, Carolyn ⁴ | Hon | ALP | Silvan | 2002 | |
| MIKAKOS, Jenny | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Jika Jika | 1999 | |
| ROMANES, Glenyys | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Melbourne | 1999 | |
| THOMSON, Marsha | Hon. (Ms) | ALP | Melbourne North | 1999 | |
| COOTE, Andrea | Hon. (Mrs) | Liberal | Monash | 1999 | 2 Liberal Members in the Legislative Council |
| LOVELL, Wendy | Hon (Ms) | Liberal | North Eastern | 2002 | |

Source: Women Members 55th Parliament: <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/women2/html>

Appendix 3 – Major Questions for Women ALP Members of Parliament

Do you believe sex discrimination exists in politics?

If so, is this underpinned by other forms of direct, indirect, or systemic discrimination and cultural bias?

Have you ever experienced sexual harassment? (Sexual harassment may involve a single incident or several incidents, be subtle or explicit).

Have you ever experienced barriers to gender equity within politics?

Within the political organization are you satisfied with:

- (a) Flexible work practices?
- (b) Supportive maternity-leave practices?
- (c) 'Merit-based' promotion that modern organizations appear to promise?
- (d) Age related issues?

In what ways do women and men find balancing work and home difficult to manage in the political profession?

In what ways do men and women differ in their critical views of politics?

In what ways do men and women pursue success within politics? Do they differ in their endeavours?

Are women more likely than men to leave politics because of family commitments?

Do women and men in your area of employment have equal choice when balancing work and domestic commitments?

Given the data that most women take the prime responsibilities for their children, is it possible for them to priorities work success?