Prikaz političarki u medijima

Miljković, Mejdi

Undergraduate thesis / Završni rad

2019

Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj: **University of Zagreb, Faculty of Croatian Studies / Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Fakultet hrvatskih studija**

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:111:046886

Rights / Prava: In copyright / Zaštićeno autorskim pravom.

Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-03-29**

SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU
HRVATSKI STUDIJI
UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB
CENTER FOR CROATIAN STUDIES

Repository / Repozitorij:

Repository of University of Zagreb, Centre for Croatian Studies

zir.nsk.hr

dabar
DIGITALNI AKADEMSKI ARHIVI I REPOZITORIJI

UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF CROATIAN STUDIES

MEJDI MILJKOVIĆ

PORTRAYAL OF FEMALE POLITICIANS IN THE MEDIA

BACHELOR THESIS

Zagreb, 2019

UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF CROATIAN STUDIES
COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

MEJDI MILJKOVIĆ

PORTRAYAL OF FEMALE POLITICIANS IN THE MEDIA

BACHELOR THESIS

Mentor: Spomenka Bogdanić, Lecturer

Zagreb, 2019

Content

1. Introduction.....1
2. The Rise of Women to Positions of Power.....2
   2.1. Queens and Gender-related Controversies.....3
3. Equality in Constitutions and the Effect of Media.....5
4. Portrayal of Female Politicians in the United Kingdom, the United States of America and New Zealand.....8
5. The United Kingdom
   5.1. Margaret Thatcher.....10
6. The United States of America
   6.1. Madeleine Albright.....12
7. New Zealand
   7.1. Jacinda Ardern.....13
8. Conclusion.....15
9. Sources.....16

1. Introduction

Female politicians have been around for longer than some think. Although they might not have been considered politicians, they held an immense amount of power in their hands. Ku-Baba, the queen of Sumer, was the first female ruler to be recorded by historians. Sobekneferu was the first female Pharaoh to rule Egypt before the famous Hatshepsut even lived. Perhaps the most famous female ruler of all time was Cleopatra, queen of the Ptolemaic Kingdom, whose character was often portrayed in movies. Mary Tudor was the only surviving child of King Henry VIII and so claimed the throne as the first queen regnant of England and Ireland.

Even though women were acclaimed rulers, there was, and still is, a stigma surrounding their capability of properly ruling a country. Every leader needs the support of their people and the easiest way to get through to them is through media. The media, unfortunately, has a habit of portraying women and men of the same position in a different manner. While adjectives used to describe a male politician are analytical, irresponsible, confident, arrogant, women politicians are defined as compassionate, opportunistic, energetic and temperamental.

The objective of this paper is to exhibit how the English-speaking media have reported on female politicians in the past and why they deserve to be recognized as equals in the field of politics.

In the first part, I will discuss the appearance of female rulers primarily in England and how they were treated as queens by their people. In the second part, I will present the problems that occur when media report on the work of women politicians versus when they speak of male politicians. In the third and final part, I will characterize how the media portrays three female politicians, both former and current, from the United Kingdom, the United States of America and New Zealand.

2. The Rise of Women to Positions of Power

Women have been considered the more gentle and nursing gender, created by God to serve their fathers, their husbands and later on, their sons. The traditional role of a woman as a housekeeper, a cook, a maid, and all-around servant was something that was common and established in society. Under no circumstance were they to question or disobey the decisions made by men in their family or community, but to support them in everything they did. A woman's place was her home, not the city council or parliament.

Due to the ignorance of the male population, political matters and opinions of females were largely hindered and obstructed. Considering them emotional and hysterical, men failed to recognize how important their input was in certain matters. There has been only a handful of women who are known for their governing, even though they have had political power for centuries now. As a matter of fact, the 10th century is commonly referred by historians as a century of women.

Æthelflæ, Lady of Mercians, ruled the English Midlands in the 910s. She was never a queen since women were not allowed to partake in political affairs, leading to not being acknowledged as a ruler by some of her successors. Queens were often regents, ruling instead of the monarch who was a minor until he was of age and ready to take over the throne. Elvira of Leon and Theophanu of Byzantium were Queen and Empress Regent respectively. These women set an example for generations of not only female but also male rulers ahead of them (Jansen, 2008: 4).

Two centuries forward, queens and empresses took reign again, but this time the men surrounding them were not so welcoming. They were often compared to Jezebel, an Israeli queen from the Old Testament associated with immorality and shamelessness. Urraca of Castile and Melisende of Jerusalem were heir presumptive, expected to ascend to the throne regardless of their children being heirs. Empress Matilda, however, took England by force and was named Lady of the English, Holy Roman Empress, and Queen of Italy. Claims against their governing were frequent, they were called weak and changeable with bouts of "feminine perversity". Today their arguments would be called political propaganda (Jansen, 2008: 4).

In conclusion, women had proven themselves time and time again as fitting and legitimate rulers. Whether they were appointed as Queen Regents or were expected heirs to the throne, their leadership was as good, if not better, than a man's would be. Therefore, it shouldn't have come as a surprise for the English people when Mary Tudor took over as queen in the 16th century and commenced the growing era of gynecocracy.

2.1. Queens and Gender-related Controversies

Henry VIII of House Tudor, known for founding the Church of England and his numerous marriage annulments, was succeeded by his eldest son, Edward VI. If he had not died from his illness at a young age, his half-sister Mary would never have had the chance to claim the throne and rule in her own right. Her younger half-sister Elizabeth I supported her and subsequently became her heir presumptive and successor. Both queens received harsh criticism from the men surrounding them, but one manifest, in particular, slandered their abilities to rule (Britannica, 1999a).

Mary Tudor was the child of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon and by default the first in line to succession. However, she was proclaimed as an illegitimate child as a result of her father's countless marriages and divorces. When her brother Edward VI died, she was welcomed by the English people as their queen and rightful heir to the throne as Mary I of England. She restored the Catholic religion and reinstated laws against heresy, which was opposing her father's Church of England. Her epithet “Bloody Mary“ was created for executing rebels and enemies of the Catholic Church (Britannica, 1999a).

The fact that a woman was considered qualified to lead was ridiculous to many, especially Protestant reformers who were disputing her religious beliefs. One of them was John Knox who wrote “The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women“ from a standpoint of no previous female rulers. If he knew that there were previous female rulers, he chose to ignore them in favor of his arguments against the fitness and right of women to rule (Jansen, 2008: 3).

In his proclamation he refers to the Queen as “Jezebel, the wicked woman whose birth and reign are both illegitimate“ and insists that “the blood of our brethren is shed most cruelly, we all know the monstrous rule of a woman to be the only occasion of all those miseries" (Jansen, 2002: 12). Knox believes himself to be a messenger of God, the world is in ruins and the only way to save the English people is to repent for what they have allowed to happen and not let history repeat itself. By his standards, a woman is foolish and frenetic, “by nature a faulty creature", her sovereignty an offense to God since her sole purpose in life is to serve and obey the man. Instead, the Englishman bow to a queen, obey her commandments with fear and are less than beasts for allowing a woman to be higher than them in the hierarchy (Jansen, 2008, 12 – 16).

Having anticipated the counterargument of female biblical figures who acted as rulers, Knox argues that Deborah and Huldah were spiritual leaders and prophetesses and could not claim their authority by birth or blood. Contrary to them, the queens of England and Scotland

gained their power as a result of weakness and betrayal of men and therefore tainted what was before the realm in servitude of God. Another counterargument was that if not capable, the queen can transfer her authority, hence allowing a man to rule in her favor. Knox argues that a person can not give away something that was not theirs to give in the first place and even if they could, they would not be able to choose a proper replacement (Jansen, 2008: 17 – 22).

Knox passionately predicted that Mary I of England "shall not reign so long in tyranny as hitherto she hath done, when God shall declare Himself to be her enemy". His work is an example of slandering female rulers through the medium of books without any actual evidence of them being unfit to lead their nation. Shortly after publishing, the queen died suffering from terrible losses from going into war with France. Unfortunately for Knox and his manifest, Mary died without producing an heir with her husband Phillip and by default, her successor was her half-sister Elizabeth (Jansen, 2008: 22 – 24).

Daughter of Henry VIII and his second wife Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth I of England rose to the throne of England and Ireland after the death of her half-sister Mary. As she was heir presumptive, she was educated to one day possibly become the queen. Many of her advisors described her mind as "no womanly weakness" and her perseverance "equal to that of a man", displaying her future role as more of a strong king than a weak queen. When she was crowned, Elizabeth decided to wear her coronation ring on her wedding finger as a symbol of her marriage to her country. She was proclaimed as the Virgin Queen wedded to her people (Britannica, 1999b).

As queen of England, she revived the Protestant religion her father instated and her half-sister abolished, destroying Knox's argument of the Pope easily influencing a woman in charge of their country. There was still a misconception of men being natural leaders with authority and rationality as their traits. With that in mind, her council wanted her to strengthen her position by marrying one of her suitors and producing offspring. That would prevent what happened to her predecessor and quiet down the voices of many unsatisfied men under her rule. She refused to do so in fear that her spouse would use her as a mean for climbing to success and eventually destroy the stability she worked hard to establish. Elizabeth remained unwedded for the rest of her life and rule, as well as without an heir. Her successor was James VI/I, her godchild and the son of her former enemy and threat to the crown, Mary, Queen of Scots (Britannica, 1999b).

Political power was held by both men and women, even if many decided not to believe historical evidence. In the beginning, queens and empresses were mostly regents for their sons, but eventually, they came to be rightful heirs. Knox's manifest was an angered response to the

expanding rule of women in Europe in which he tried to prove why women were incompetent and their rule blasphemous. This later encouraged humanists to ask themselves what women really are, what is their role in society and are they capable of moral judgment? Mary I and Elizabeth I, although not favored by the men in their countries, proved themselves worthy of the crown. They set a precedent and ennobled the title of a queen.

3. Equality in Constitutions and the Effect of Media

Women were not favored as leaders and opinion makers in the 16th century nor were they favored later on. The phrase of breaking through the glass ceiling as a metaphor of obstacles a woman has to pass in order to advance professionally explains itself. If queens and empresses were misrepresented in the media of their time, the image of female politicians today is tarnished and belittled. The Internet acts as a medium and information is accessible to everyone, whether it be true or false. News web pages publish new articles on politicians every day and therefore paint the picture of them to the average user. But to even start creating an image of themselves, female politicians had to fight to be present in parliament.

In the 1960s a total of three women served as heads of state. In the 1970s there was a jump to six and in the 1980s to seven women. The next decade showed promising results, the 1990s had a total of twenty-six women who were presidents or prime ministers. The 2000s were stagnant with only three more women. In 2010 there were thirteen women around the world who were appointed as head of state, as president, or as head of government, as prime minister. However, the number of women in cabinets increased from under 9% to under 17% of the world's ministers and secretaries of state (Bauer, Tremblay, 2011: 1).

What does it take for women to get access to executive positions and achieve equality with their male counterparts? First, great contributors to their inclusion are “high socioeconomic standards, women's participation in the labor market and access to social welfare“. Concerns that traditionally women would have, such as parental leave and childcare, should no longer be a private, but a state issue. If that is possible, there is no need for companies to enforce the motherhood penalty in order to regain what they might lose if a woman plans on expanding her family. Second, the aspect of culture is crucial for reaching equality, an egalitarian mindset and positive view on women taking part in public service paves the path towards executive power (Bergqvist, 2011: 165).

Third, when and how women got their right to vote is a factor worth noticing. If they got their voting rights early on in the process and if the electoral system is modified to represent all participants equally, there is a considerable chance of them having equal opportunities.

Fourth, gender equality in society, in general, has a major influence on the possibility of accessing political offices. Nordic countries appointed a Minister for Gender Equality as a member of the government, which proved to be a successful political move to give gender equality policies more importance (Bergqvist, 2011: 166). This only proves that law needs to be included in aiding women to achieve both equity and equality.

The Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 was the foundation for protecting men and women in the United Kingdom from being discriminated on the grounds of sex or marital status. Later on, it was modified by the Gender Recognition Act of 2004 to include transsexual people. The Act of 1975 greatly affected general elections in the UK. The Labour Party, having previously been in opposition, established a new organization, Labour Women's Network, set to educate and support women seeking office. They lost by a margin in the 1992 election and reflected on their defeat to prepare for the next election. The major factor appeared to be female voters who voted for Conservatives instead of the male-dominated Labour Party.

The 1997 election was victorious for the Labour Party and skyrocketed the number of women Members of Parliament, from 60 to 120 seats. Tony Blair appointed five women to his first Prime Minister cabinet, which was an improvement considering that Margaret Thatcher had an all-male cabinet (Russell, 2003: 68 – 80).

The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is a proposed amendment of the United States' Constitution which ensures equal rights for American citizens regardless of sex. The battle for this addition to the constitution lasted from 1923 to 1982. Although women were granted the right to vote in 1920, there was a struggle to achieve legal equality in every aspect of life. After World War II, the Supreme Court and Congress acknowledged the importance of women for their country but had no constitutional changes. In response to the outcry of the supporters of ERA, president Kennedy assembled a national commission to analyze the status of an American woman and to also decrease the support for the ERA. The commission exposed “copious documentation of the many obstacles women confronted on account of their sex“ and affected the future ban on sex discrimination in employment.

The triumph of all the efforts of the ERA occurred in 1996 when the Virginia Military Institute was obligated to accept female applicants. Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who played an important role in American feminism, wrote for the majority 7-1 and the Supreme Court ruled in favor of equality of women (Harrison, 2003: 155 – 169).

New Zealand's legislation has exceptional importance to all women since it was the first country in the world to allow women to vote in 1893 and partake in political affairs in 1919. The country was a pioneer in gender equality and equity, the first woman to win an election

was Elizabeth McCombs in 1933 and Dame Jenny Shipley was the first woman to be elected as prime minister in 1997. Equality is enforced by several legislative documents, including the Equal Pay Act 1972, the State Sector Act 1988 and the Human Rights Act 1993. As opposed to the United Kingdom and the United States, there was not much of a debate whether or not to allow women their rights and up to which point (Wikipedia, 2019).

The mobilization of women in the field of politics has brought gender equality into the general conversation, therefore triggering a worldwide trend of female politicians. Even though women were granted the right to stand for election in their countries, that meant nothing if they were not seen by the public as potential candidates. They had to be seen as fit to make an important decision on behalf of their people. The nation had every right to be suspicious of such a new and foreign state.

For someone to be elected or re-elected, their political campaign needs to rely heavily on the media and their coverage of stories important to politicians. Hence the media has the power to both create and destroy a candidate, making PR experts try to get their person as much air time as possible to promote themselves in the best way possible. That is difficult to achieve when journalists are more interested in writing about what a woman was wearing at a certain event than what her political ambitions are.

Political women's stereotypes are based on female gender-traits, they are commonly used to depict any woman in the political field. Everything they do is tied to their existence as a woman, their private life is dissected and often used against them as politicians. The way a man would act as a politician is the norm a woman is expected to accept and carry out. Studies conducted in Canada showed that political reports are focused on war, sports, conflict, and violence. None of these topics fit the traditionally female roles in society, making it easier for a man to appear well-versed in what is seemingly important for a politician. Problems with education, reproductive healthcare, and welfare are not considered imperative and are not going to be discussed in debates. The accomplishments of women are analyzed through the typical male stereotype, but since their presence is relatively new, there is a chance of modifying traditional female stereotypes (Jalalzai, Tremblay, 2011: 129 – 130).

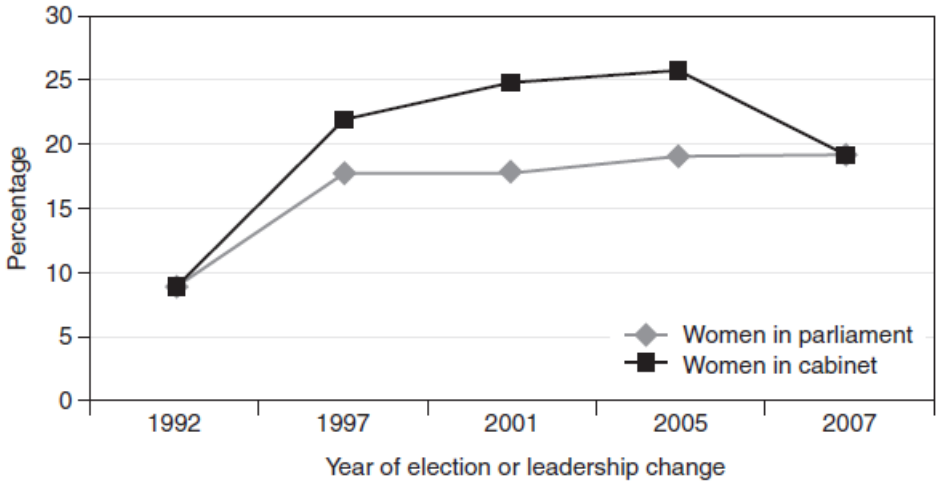
There has been an improvement from the beginnings of the fight for women's rights. The numbers are looking better with each election, which was caused by the legislative acts of every country respectively. However, media tend to take advantage of women being relatively new to the field of politics and push a more masculine agenda forward. The question remains, should women act like their male counterparts to be able to be seen as equals or should they display a new side of politics, created by women?

4. Portrayal of Female Politicians in the United Kingdom, the United States of America and New Zealand

Even though women gained the right to vote in the United Kingdom as early as 1918, they were still not represented equally in the Parliament. Many claimed that it was a matter of fairness, all those who entered an election had an impartial opportunity to access the Parliament. However, having been seen as overly emotional, fickle and unpredictable, not a lot of voters were biased towards voting for such a candidate. This stereotype continued on to pressure women for years, until there was Margaret Thatcher, a woman who completely changed the perception of a female politician.

According to Phillips (Buckley, 2011: 152), there are four arguments to endorse women in politics. First, female politicians are role models for future candidates; second, as they represent 50 percent of the world's population, they should be equal in the number of representatives; third, women's issues are de facto not correctly represented by men; fourth, the political representation of women replenishes democracy in general.

The political arrangement of the United Kingdom is a parliamentary democracy, meaning that for the government to survive, it needs to have the majority in office. The head of the leading party is the prime minister, the "first among equals" and must select a cabinet that would successfully rule over the country for the mandate. Tony Blair, a former Prime Minister of the UK, was in charge of passing the already mentioned Sex Discrimination Act 2002 which authorized positive action to establish equality of the genders. Despite the effort, women were still underestimated and were given socio-cultural roles in the government (Buckley, Galligan: 141 – 155).



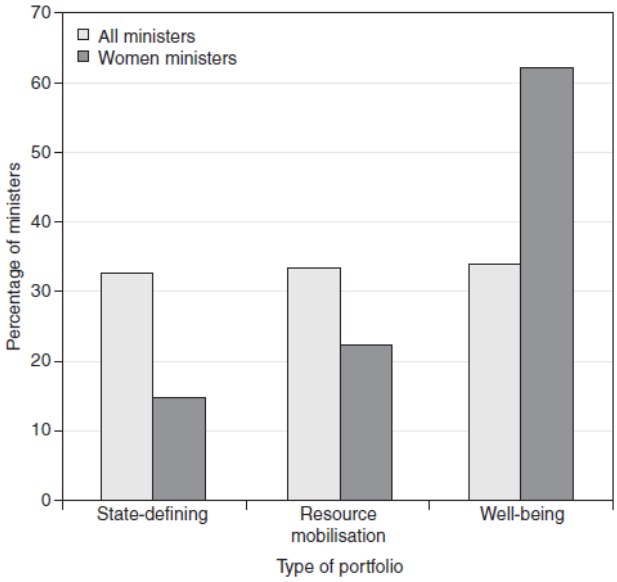
Women in parliament and cabinet in Britain, 1992–2007 (source: authors' own, created using data from Inter-Parliamentary Union (2010a), Centre for Advancement of Women in Politics (2010)).

The United States of America have a presidential system with a federal government with independent structures and officials, who are voted into office by popular vote. There is also the Congress, which controls the legislation department and the Senate, which confirms the nominees for federal executive officers. There has never been a female US president, but the closest to come to that role was Hillary Clinton, who was the Democratic Party's nominee for 2016. Women politicians are usually linked to the left side of the political spectrum, and male politicians to the right. That is why Republicans are considered more fit to acquire a position in the military or defense department and Democrats in welfare and education (Jalalzai, Tremblay, 2011: 122 – 141).

Position	*Women*	*Democrat*	*Republican*	*Gender*
Labor	7	3	4	Male
Health/Human Services	4	3	1	Female
State	3	2	1	Male
Education	2	1	1	Female
Housing/Urban Development	2	1	1	Neutral
Commerce	2	1	1	Male
Transportation	2	0	2	Male
Attorney General	1	1	0	Neutral
Agriculture	1	0	1	Male
Homeland Security[a]	1	1	0	Male
Interior	1	0	1	Neutral
Energy	1	1	0	Male
Health, Education and Welfare[b]	1	0	1	Female
Defence	0	0	0	Male
Treasury	0	0	0	Male
Veteran's Affairs	0	0	0	Male
Total	28	14	14	

US female cabinet appointments, 1933–2010, source: Center for American Women and Politics, 2009

New Zealand is a former British colony, which reflected on its political regime, a unitary system and a unicameral parliament. Starting from the 1970s, gender equality was an important subject for the New Zealand cabinet, Labour leaders often issued guidelines to affect the leading, the National Party. However, the cabinet had male representatives until 1984 when 32 female ministers served in Parliament. There has been a proportionate increase of women members of parliament and cabinet. So far, there have been three female prime ministers, Dame Jenny Shipley, Helen Clark, and the current prime minister, Jacinda Ardern. As is common for parliaments, there are gender stereotypes which are followed almost religiously: female ministers are appointed to social and welfare departments (Curtin, Sawer, 2011: 48 – 58).



Categories of portfolios held by all ministers and by women ministers in Commonwealth, state and territory governments, Australia, November 1, 2009.

5. The United Kingdom

5.1. Margaret Thatcher

Although her first two attempts to enter were unsuccessful, at age thirty-four Margaret Thatcher became the youngest woman in the House of Representatives in the United Kingdom. In 1970, she became Secretary of State for education and science, a decision that was met with approval since she was a chemistry graduate. While Thatcher was Secretary, she revoked free milk in schools, thus creating the slogan “Ditch the Bi*ch“ in the papers.

In 1975, Thatcher was elected as party leader for the Conservatives. As the leader of the opposition party, she expressed loathing towards socialism and the Soviet Union, claiming they were after world domination and would stop at nothing to achieve their goals. The Soviet press then started calling her “The Iron Lady“, which then became the nickname she was most famous for. In 1979, the Conservative party won the elections and Thatcher became Britain's first female Prime Minister. As opposed to many of her successors, she had no women in her cabinet. As the new Prime Minister, she was the one to carry the heavy burden of inflation and record-breaking unemployment. It was not expected of her to solve any of these issues, she was, after all, a woman. Therefore, it came as a shock to many when she successfully resolved the issue with the Argentine military junta seizing the Falkland Islands, a British territory.

Winning the Islands back increased Thatcher's popularity and resulted in another win for the Conservative party in the next general election. Britain's economy started to stabilize after her inflation reforms, but she was still pressed about the fate of the Soviet Union. She acted as a mediator between Reagan and Gorbachev, who later on signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, eliminating the Soviet Union as a threat to Western democracy. As the Berlin Wall fell, socialism started to crumble and so did Thatcher's support in her own party. After three consecutive terms as Britain's Prime Minister, she resigned (Berlinski, 2008: 15 – 47).

Being such an uncommon figure, the first female prime minister of Britain, the media acted towards her as they would to any other woman, not a politician. The British press has a history of being brutally honest in their headlines, if not borderline offensive. The media kept quiet until she passed away on April 8th, 2013 and they began to publish articles in her memory, however, not a lot of reporters had positive things to say.

The Daily Mail wrote “Margaret Thatcher proved you didn’t have to dress like a man to be powerful” in which the reporter described how meticulous Thatcher was about the way she presented herself. She wore bows and flounces, pairing them with suits with padded shoulders, allegedly inventing power dressing. The reporter even described the way she did her hair and how careful she had to be not to dent it. Another journalist from The Daily Mail conducted an interview with Thatcher’s personal assistant about every detail and thought that went into planning an evening gown or an everyday suit. Even The Guardian and the Telegraph thought it was suitable to write about her being a fashion icon, not about her accomplishments or wrong-doings, any of which would have been better (Dodds Penncock, 2013).

An item Thatcher was most famous for was her small handbag, where many official and unofficial documents went and disappeared from the public’s eye. There were many articles written about the type of bag, the color, where she had bought it and how she used it to her advantage. After the Falklands War in which Britain defeated the Argentine military junta and restored their claim on the Islands, there was a cover of her iconic bag hitting the country of Argentina (Williams, 2018).

The headline that completely discriminated Thatcher based on her sex was "Margaret Thatcher: A Better Politician than Wife and Woman". Even though it was known she was the first female prime minister of Britain and did nothing to improve the situation for other women, the press should not have issued an article like this. There was severe backlash for The Times on social media, however, they decided to keep the article up on their website, where it can still be found today (Dodds Penncock, 2013).

6. The United States of America

6.1. Madelaine Albright

Marie Jana Korbel, originally from Czechoslovakia, was introduced to politics from a young age since her father was a diplomat who represented their culture in various countries. Having joined the staff of the failed presidential candidate Edmund Muskie, she acquired enough experience to receive an invite to join President Jimmy Carter's National Security Council (Ford, 2008: 23)

Albright played a major role in getting women in the spotlight of education and academics, she also developed programs which helped women secure opportunities in international relations. Her political stardom officially started with President Bill Clinton winning the elections in 1992. As the new ambassador to the United Nations, she advocated for American interests and endorsed a substantial role of the United States in all UN operations. During Clinton's second term in office, Albright was announced as the new and first female secretary of state.

At the time of her mandate, Albright remained an advocate of military interventions in the name of democracy and protection of human rights. In 1999, she campaigned for NATO to bomb Yugoslavia in order to terminate the ethnic cleansing of Albanians in Kosovo. Although this was against international law, President Clinton still issued the order for bombing under the cover of crimes against humanity. In 2000 she became one of the rare diplomats to visit North Korea and the then president Kim Jong Il. After Albright ceased to be the Secretary of State in 2001, she opened the consulting firm Albright Group, later Albright Stonebridge Group. (Britannica, 2019b).

Seeing that she was a close friend of the Clintons, it was only logical that she supported Hillary Clinton in the 2008 and 2016 presidential elections. It was during the campaigning in 2015 and 2016 that the media attacked Albright for stating her opinion. In one of her speeches, she proclaimed that women who don't support other women have a special place in hell. This was a quote that could have been heard from her even before the elections. However, media twisted her words and wrote headlines with the title "Special Place in Hell for Women Who Don't Help Clinton". Even though she tried to explain what she really meant and eventually apologized for her words, the media had a major effect on the way she was portrayed later on (The Guardian, 2016).

During her time in office, Albright had no large-scale issues with the media, on the contrary, people loved her image of a strong woman who pushes the American agenda forward.

Nevertheless, there was one thing about her that the press loved writing about. While she was still an ambassador in the United Nations, Albright pushed forward numerous sanctions for Iraq. The media in Iraq mocked her and made claims of her being a serpent, to which she responded by putting a snake pin on her suit jacket the day after. By turning her presumed weaknesses into her strengths, she showed her power with something as mundane as a brooch. From then on it became a tradition for her to wear a pin that signified some aspect of what was going to happen that day, which left the media curious. For example, during one of the speeches she gave for Hillary Clinton, she wore a brooch with Clinton's name on it and parts of broken glass connected to a golden pin, symbolizing breaking the glass ceiling.

7. New Zealand

7.1. Jacinda Ardern

Jacinda Ardern was heavily affected by the political situation in her town Murupara, a center of gang activities where she was forced to see other children without clothes or begging for food. This was why she decided to involve herself in politics and the Labour Party from the early age of 17. She gained experience by shadowing various members of parliament, notably Phil Goff and former prime minister Helen Clark who was her mentor. In 2007 she became the president of the International Union of Socialist Youth, which was an opportunity for her to explore diverse countries and their cultures (Britannica, 2019a).

As Ardern became the youngest member of the House of Representatives, she advocated for mandatory lessons in the Maori language in New Zealand schools, which was one of the reasons she was interested in politics. She is also an avid supporter of the movement against climate change, stating that New Zealand's lack of response is humiliating. After she lost the race to represent Auckland in the parliament, Ardern became the Social Development spokesperson for the Labour Party (Timperley, 2008: 11).

The Labour Party was not doing well at the time. Their opponent, the National Party, had been in office for nine years and had a much better chance of winning the upcoming parliamentary elections. With the leader of the Labour Party resigning from his post, Ardern was unanimously chosen as his replacement in the 2017 elections. Her charisma, call for free education and decriminalization of abortion lead to an increase of female and young voters. The election results were a tie and the tiebreaker, New Zealand First Party, chose to form a coalition with the Labour Party, making Ardern the new Prime Minister (Britannica, 2019a).

In 2019 a radical group of white supremacists attacked a mosque in Christchurch, resulting in the loss of fifty lives and injuring at least fifty more. The attacker wrote a 74-page

manifest on his social media, claiming that New Zealand permitted an infection of mass immigration and he could and would solve it. Ardern as the head of the country faced a difficult period in which she could either become a hero or a villain, depending on how the media portrayed her next actions. She immediately took a stand and called this event an act of terrorism, condemning the attacker's behaviour and saying that they "were not chosen for this act of violence because we condone racism, because we are an enclave for extremism. We were chosen for the very fact that we are none of these things. Because we represent diversity, kindness, compassion, a home for those who share our values, refuge for those who need it" (Carlson, 2019). She then refused to name the shooter, therefore preventing his goal of spreading hate among others, and decided to speak of the victims and the wounded. Her "fashion choice" of wearing a hijab while giving her public speeches about the attack was looked upon as a statement of inclusion of the dejected Muslim families in the country. Ardern's response was well-received in both New Zealand and international media, including Echoed New Zealand and Reuters (Carlson, 2019).

Like Thatcher and Albright, even Ardern had to endure the intrusion of media in her private life. In 2018 she became pregnant with her partner Gayford and was the second ever prime minister to give birth while still in office. The papers started calling her the "pregnant PM" and writing articles about unnecessary details of her pregnancy and unmarried status, which should have been left private. The media and their reaction encouraged her to commence a discussion criticizing employers who ask women whether they plan to have children while working. By bringing her 3-month-old child to the United Nations with her partner by her side, Ardern proved that being a mother would not hinder her in her everyday life and job as Prime Minister of New Zealand.

8. Conclusion

The objective of this paper was to demonstrate how the English-speaking media wrote and currently write about female politicians and based on examples, why they should not be shown differently from their male counterparts.

Had Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I not been accepted as rightful heirs to the throne, they would not have been able to display why women deserve the opportunity to lead their countries. Although there were many obstacles in the way of them becoming queens, such as Knox's manifest which claimed women to be a "faulty creature by nature", they overcame their hardships and continued on to be successful rulers.

As time went by, women started to rebel against the patriarchal society and demanded to receive equal rights by law. The Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 in the United Kingdom, the Equal Rights Amendment in the United States and the Equal Pay Act 1972, the State Sector Act 1988 and the Human Rights Act 1993 in New Zealand enforced equality regardless of sex. When female politicians obtained their place in politics, they were often assigned traditionally female roles: education, social welfare, and reproductive healthcare.

The political regimes of the countries that are analyzed in this paper are crucial for understanding the role of gender in assigning posts for the cabinet or office. Margaret Thatcher, as a representative of the United Kingdom, was most famous for her nickname "The Iron Lady". As she was the first female prime minister of the UK, she was almost always compared to men and besmirched as not worthy of her post. The media often focused on her outer appearance and the presence of her handbag.

Madelaine Albright, the representative of the United States, was the first female secretary of state. She showed only her strong, more "masculine" side as ambassador in the United Nations and later USA representative in Kosovo. Unlike Thatcher, she encouraged the participation of women in politics and openly supported and helped Hillary Clinton with her presidential campaign. Her affection for brooches was in the spotlight every time the media published an article on her speeches.

Jacinda Ardern, the representative of New Zealand, was the third female and the youngest prime minister of her country. Even though she has occupied the post for only two years now, her advocacy for female and minority rights is well-received in her country. In contrast to Thatcher and Albright, the New Zealand media had nothing but praise for their Prime Minister, especially in wake of the recent events in Christchurch. The event and her actions following it could have led to Ardern being shunned by her nation, but their reaction was positive, naming her a prominent parental figure.

The comparison of Thatcher, Albright and Ardern proves the point of women being categorized as either female versions of their masculine equivalent or overly emotional and caring mothers of their nation. While Thatcher and Albright were seen as female versions to the previously male occupation, Ardern challenges that stereotype and shows how a woman can be both a competent leader and a woman in the traditional sense of the word. She is a role model for female politicians all around the world and those who are yet to become one.

9. Sources

1. "Albright: 'special place in hell' for women who don't support Clinton" (2016), *The Guardian*, Guardian Media Group, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/feb/06/madeleine-albright-campaigns-for-hillary-clinton (acquired: May 22nd, 2019)
2. Bauer, G., Tremblay, M. (2011) "Women in Executive Power", New York: Routledge, 1 – 2
3. Bergqvist, C. (2011) "The Nordic Countries" in: *Women in Executive Power*, New York: Routledge, 157 – 170
4. Berlinski, C. (2008) "There Is No Alternative: Why Margaret Thatcher Matters" , New York: Basic Books, 15 – 47
5. Buckley, F., Galligan, Y. (2011) "Western Europe" in: *Women in Executive Power*, New York: Routledge, 144 – 154
6. Carlson, A. (2019) "Meet 'Extraordinary' New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern", *People Magazine*, New York: Meredith Corporation https://people.com/politics/who-is-new-zealand-prime-minister-jacinda-ardern/ (edited: May 3rd, 2019)
7. Curtin, J., Sawer, M (2011) "Oceania" in: *Women in Executive Power*, New York: Routledge, 48 – 58
8. Dodds Penncock, C. (2013) "Please Stop Telling Me Margaret Thatcher Is a Style Icon: Gender and the Media", *History Matters: University of Sheffield*, http://www.historymatters.group.shef.ac.uk/margaret-thatcher-style-icon/?fbclid=IwAR0F6_8xRfTaB3Dm_4ub-VO2oEVqnswosG6LgeYq0unuMO9tIyERL94rkDc (edited: April 9th, 2013)
9. "Elizabeth I" (1999b) *Britannica.com*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. (acquired: April 23rd, 2019)
10. Ford, L.E., (2008) "Encyclopedia of Women and American Politics", New York: Infobase Publishing, 23 – 24, 357 – 358
11. "Gender Equality in New Zealand" (2019) *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. (edited: May 17th, 2019)
12. Harrison, C. (2003) "' Heightened Scrutiny': A Judicial Route to Constitutional Equality for US Women", editors Dobrolowsky, A., Hart, V. in *Women Making Constitutions*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 155 – 169
13. Hurley, E. (2018) „Timeline: How Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's Pregnancy Unfolded", *Newshub*, MediaWorks TV, https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2018/06/timeline-how-prime-minister-jacinda-ardern-s-pregnancy-unfolded.html (edited: June 21st, 2018)
14. "Jacinda Ardern" (2019a) *Britannica.com*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. (edited: March 20th, 2019)
15. Jalalzai, F., Tremblay M. (2011) "North America" in: *Women in Executive Power*, New York: Routledge, 122 – 141
16. Jansen, Sharon L. (2008) „Debating Women, Politics, and Power in Early Modern Europe", New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 3. – 24.

17. “Madeleine Albright“ (2019b) *Britannica.com*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. (edited: May 11th 2019)
18. “Mary I Queen of England“ (1999a) *Britannica.com*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. (acquired: April 23rd, 2019)
19. Russel, M. (2003) „Women in Elected Office in the UK, 1992–2002: Struggles, Achievements and Possible Sea Change“, editors: Dobrolowsky, A., Hart, V. in *Women Making Constitutions*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 68 – 80
20. Timperley, C. (2018) “Jacinda Ardern: A Transformational Leader?” in: *Women Talking Politics*, New Zealand Political Studies Association, 6 – 12
21. Williams, B. (2018) “Media coverage of the UK's female prime ministers has become more gendered from Thatcher to May”, *King’s College London*, https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/media-coverage-of-the-uks-female-prime-ministers-has-become-more-gendered-from-thatcher-to-may?fbclid=IwAR1ZHXSg6OQTdmU58S00w8Q6loUuJ8SCxMxhOp_MRVEkv_R_BO32BXAFI2w (edited: June 26th, 2018)