Loughborough University

This item was submitted to Loughborough University as a PhD thesis by the author and is made available in the Institutional Repository (https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/) under the following Creative Commons Licence conditions.

creative commons

COMMONS DEED

Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.5

You are free:

- to copy, distribute, display, and perform the work

Under the following conditions:

Attribution. You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author or licensor.

Noncommercial. You may not use this work for commercial purposes.

No Derivative Works. You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

- For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work.
- Any of these conditions can be waived if you get permission from the copyright holder.

Your fair use and other rights are in no way affected by the above.

This is a human-readable summary of the Legal Code (the full license).

Disclaimer

For the full text of this licence, please go to:
http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5/

Gendered Election Coverage

The Representation of Women in British Newspapers, 1918-2010

Emily Harmer

A Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

September 2012

© Emily Harmer 2012

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

This is to certify that I am responsible for the work submitted in this thesis, that the original work is my own except as specified in acknowledgments or in footnotes, and that neither the thesis nor the original work contained therein has been submitted to this or any other institution for a degree.

…… (Signed)

…… (Date)

Abstract

This thesis analysed the representation of women as voters, politicians and relatives of politicians in the newspaper coverage of every elections from 1918 until 2010; in order to offer historical context to the existing literature about women, media and politics. Content analysis and feminist critical discourse analysis were employed to track the changes and continuities in their mediated representations across the twenty five elections studied.

The study shows that across time, the representation of voters changed the least. Voters tended to be constructed as mothers and thrifty housewives whose political views stemmed from their familial roles and domestic responsibilities. The extent to which they were depicted as politically engaged and were quoted did increase over time however they continued to be predominantly written about rather than allowed to speak for themselves.

Contrary to the results of previous studies, politicians were not associated with stereotypically feminine policy areas, but were instead gendered through their construction as important representatives for women voters and their campaign styles. Over time the proportion of items offering negative evaluations increased. The proportion which made personalised references to their appearance or age, and included their voices peaked during the 1960s and 1970s and then declined so that contemporary politicians are as likely to experience both as their interwar forebears. The results from 2010 however suggested that personalisation may once again be increasing.

The role of relatives in electoral coverage changed the most of the three groups. During the interwar years they were depicted as active political campaigners whose contribution was largely welcomed, after war their role became more focused on their personal lives. The coverage also became increasingly focused on the wives of party leaders. By the late 1980s, leaders' wives were once again constructed taking an active role in the campaign but these interventions were portrayed as illegitimate and threatening to democracy. The coverage of relatives became increasingly personalised over time focusing on their appearance and its appeal to the electorate.

The newspaper coverage of women in electoral campaigns has always been, and continues to be gendered in specific ways. Women have consistently had their level of political activity trivialised and their voices marginalised. They were domesticated through the construction of their political priorities and campaign styles and they received personalised coverage which was undeniably gendered. In effect women were routinely linked to the private sphere, rendering their political participation in the public domain problematic.

Key Words: History, Women, Politics, Newspapers, British Elections

Table of Contents

Certificate of Originality 2

Abstract 3

Table of Contents 4

List of Tables, Figures and Images 9

Acknowledgements 12

Chapter 1: Gendered Election Coverage: An Introduction **14**

Media and Politics 15

Constructing the News 16

Constructing Women 19

Gendered Media Politics 20

Structure of the thesis 22

Chapter 2 – The Representation of Women **27**

The Political 28

Voters and Voting 28

Politicians 31

The Mediated 34

Citizens or Subjects? 34

In Office, In Camera 38

A Gendered Effect? 43

The Personal is Political 47

Campaigns and Elections 51

Contemporary 51

Historical 55

Conclusion 58

Chapter 3 – Methodology **60**

Key Questions 60

Approach 61

Sample 66

Analysis 68

Coding Schedule 69

Terms of Inclusion 69

Unitisation 70

Variables 70

Inter-coder reliability 72

Chapter 4 – "The most sexist election since the 1950s"? The 2010 Campaign **73**

Prominence 74

Voters: Subjects or Citizens? 77

Subjects 78

Citizens 83

Mrs Duffy 89

Relatives: The Personal as Political 94

"Seen and not heard" 94

Campaign Stalwarts 97

Politicians: The Political as Personal 99

"Upstaged by wives" 102

"Style over substance" 104

Conclusion 106

Chapter 5 – "Women's Issues": The Voter Perspective **111**

Prominence 112

Keeping Them in the Family: The Domestication of Women 113

"The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that writes the decisive X" 114

"A wife's vote is a husband's vote times two" 117

Policy 120

Housewives' Choice: gendered coverage 123

"The price of an egg and a loaf of bread and a packet of detergent is politics": Home Economics 124

Health and Welfare 128

Equality 129

Active Citizenship? 131

Women's Voices 134

"Women are an unpredictable lot": From unknown quantity to floating voters 138

Conclusion 142

Chapter 6 – Standing for Office: the Politicians and Candidates **147**

Prominence 149

Policy 150

Public Sphere, Private Sphere 154

Reception 156

Sexism 160

A Minority Interest 165

Marginal Voices 166

Personalisation 170

Appearance 172

Bodies 175

Age 176

Family 176

"The Thatcher Factor" 178

Conclusion 181

Chapter 7 – From "Ideal election wife" to "just another political wife": the changing profile of the relatives **188**

Prominence 190

Leaders' Wives 193

Reception 196

Personalising the Political 197

1918 – 1945: "Ideal political wife" 198

1950 – 1983: "On the platform in the background" 200

1987 – 2005: "The Spectre of Lady MacBeth" 202

Politicising the Personal 207

Personal Lives, Political Interpretations 209

Visual Appeal: as long as she "looks every inch a budding Prime Minister's wife" 212

Conclusion 214

Chapter 8 – Gendered Election Coverage: Conclusions **218**

Prominence 219

Voters 220

Politicians 227

Relatives 233

Emerging Themes 238

Presence 238

Policy 242

Perception 244

Reflections on the study 247

Implications 249

References **251**

Appendix A **283**

Appendix B **284**

Appendix C **289**

Appendix D **290**

Appendix E **291**

List of Tables, Figures and Images

List of Tables

Table 3.1	Items subjected to discourse analysis (historical sample)	69
Table 4.1	Percentage of items about each group of women 2010	74
Table 4.2	Items about women in each newspaper 2010	75
Table 4.3	Number and Percentage of items about each group of women 2010	75
Table 4.4	Items about voters constructing them as subjects and citizens 2010	77
Table 4.5	Breakdown of Voters (excluding Gillian Duffy items)	78
Table 4.6	Percentage of items with photos across newspapers 2010	96
Table 4.7	Reference to appearance across newspapers 2010	96
Table 4.8	Politicians Themes 2010	100
Table 4.9	Number of items about policy	101
Table 4.10	References to politicians' appearance across newspapers	104
Table 5.1	Policy Themes of items about voters for 1918-2005 elections combined	120
Table 5.2	Subthemes which make up 'economy' theme	121
Table 6.1	Policy themes of items about politicians for 1918-2005 elections combined	151
Table 6.2	Economy Subthemes Breakdown	152
Table 7.1	Negative Evaluations of female relatives 1987-2005	197

List of Figures

Figure 5.1	Percentage of items about politicians, citizens and relatives 1918 – 2005	112
Figure 5.2	Percentage of items making reference to voters' families 1918-2005	114
Figure 5.3	Percentage of items about the four main themes 1918-2005	122
Figure 5.4	Percentage of items where voters are presented as active 1918 - 2005	132
Figure 5.5	Percentage of items where voters are quoted or summarised 1918 – 2005	133
Figure 6.1	Percentage of coverage about politicians, relatives and voters 1918 – 2005	150
Figure 6.2	Four main policy themes 1918 – 2005	153
Figure 6.3	Percentage of items offering some evaluation of politicians 1918 – 2005	157
Figure 6.4	Percentage of items which evaluate politicians 1918- 2005	158
Figure 6.5	Percentage of items offering some evaluation of politicians 1918- 2005 (without Thatcher)	159
Figure 6.6	Percentage of items where politicians are quoted, summarised or neither 1918 – 2005	167
Figure 6.7	Percentage of items about politicians which quoted or summarised their remarks 1918 – 2005	168
Figure 6.8	Percentage of items which feature references to personal characteristics of politicians 1918 – 2005	169
Figure 6.9	Percentage of items which feature references to personal characteristics of politicians 1918 – 2005 (without Thatcher)	171
Figure 7.1	Percentage of coverage about politicians, relatives and voters 1918 - 2005	191
Figure 7.2	Percentage of items about the three most prominent themes 1918 –	192

2005

Figure 7.3 Percentage of the coverage of relatives dedicated to party leaders' wives 1918- 2005 194

Figure 7.4 Percentage of relatives' coverage containing negative evaluations 1918 – 2005 196

Figure 7.5 Percentage of items that mention the age and appearance of relatives 1918 – 2005 208

Figure 7.6 Percentage of items with an accompanying photograph 1918 – 2005 209

List of Images

Image 6.1 'Scarlet Shirley', *The Sun* 7th June 1983, p.6 163

Acknowledgements

Over the four years it has taken me to write this thesis, there have been more times than I can count that I truly believed it would never be finished. There are a number of people who helped in modest or massive ways that I would like to take this opportunity to thank.

Firstly, I am grateful to the Economic and Social Research Council for funding this research and the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University for ultimately taking a chance on an unknown student by awarding me the scholarship. The department has been an incredibly friendly and supportive environment within which to complete this work and I am also grateful for all the other "CV-building" opportunities I have been offered since starting my PhD.

I would also like to thank the PhD community in particular (you all know who you are!) for providing much needed support in the form of feedback on early chapter drafts, listening to my periodic bouts of moaning about how this thesis will never end, and of course for our trips to the pub. You've all made this journey much more bearable (and dare I say it, enjoyable?) than it might otherwise have been.

I would also like to thank my family and friends, especially my wonderful parents, for their much needed and indeed appreciated love and support (and not just the financial kind!) over the years. Special thanks must also go to Pete for putting up with this thesis and my complaints about it, for as long as I have. Thank you all very much.

Finally, but by no means least, the majority of the thanks has to be reserved for my two supervisors Liesbet van Zoonen and Dominic Wring, both of whom gave me unlimited and invaluable advice and support.

My thanks go to Liesbet for helping me to get myself and my work organised and also for putting up with my bi-monthly crises of confidence during the third year. You probably didn't know this but you were partially responsible (or perhaps that should read 'to blame'?) for inspiring my interest in feminist media studies before we had even met, so for that too I must thank you.

I would particularly like to thank Dominic for being with me from the very beginning and taking a chance on me when I emailed you about my PhD proposal almost out of blue. I am extremely grateful for all the cups of tea and wisdom that you've shared with me over the years. This thesis really would not have been possible without your guidance and support, thank you.

Chapter 1: Gendered Election Coverage: An Introduction

The central premise of this study is that in order for women to be effectively represented in the political domain, they must first be adequately represented in the public discussion of political affairs. In this context, the public discussion of political affairs refers to news media whose role in the political process has been well documented and is summarised briefly below. As feminist scholars have acknowledged, the way women are depicted in news media sends out important messages about their place and role in society and about their lives (Ross, 2010). If women are absent or marginalised from political news this could reinforce the notion that they are outsiders to the political process. It is important to remember that "representation has two central dimensions: politically speaking for others, and mediated presentation through word and image" (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Ross, 1996: 103); therefore this thesis aims to draw these two aspects of representation together by analysing the representation of women in newspaper coverage of British General Elections since women became enfranchised and able to stand for parliament in 1918, up until the most recent election to date, which took place in 2010. This thesis hopes to develop a feminist analysis of electoral coverage in order to map the way women have been subjected to patriarchal discourses in the past and to see how such discourses manifest themselves in the present. It is hoped that understanding the way the news coverage of women in elections has developed over time may offer some explanation as to why women continue to be marginalised in the traditional political sphere.

According to Adcock's (2010) analysis of the 1997 election, women appear in news coverage of elections in three basic capacities: as politicians, as voters and as female relatives of politicians. These three categories of women provide the framework for this study as each will be analysed individually in order to demonstrate how the coverage of women in political news has developed over time in order to assess the quality and quantity of women's mediated representation. The purpose of this thesis then is to analyse the ways in which women as voters, politicians and relatives of politicians have been represented in newspaper coverage of General Elections between 1918 and 2010.

Media and Politics

The development of mass democracy was accompanied by the development of mass communications. As suffrage was extended, the electorate increased and the audience for political news became larger. The journey towards mass democracy and the eventual inclusion of women in the political process required the expansion of political information and news for new audiences; because liberal democratic regimes place much emphasis upon mass media as they function to keep citizens informed of the decisions being made in their names and to hold those in power to account for these decisions (Street, 2001).

The ability of contemporary media to perform this function has been increasingly called in to question in recent years by burgeoning academic enquiry which critiques the content of, and practices involved in, the production of news coverage. Scholars also question the impact of commercial ownership which might act to constrain the capacity of mass media to serve its audiences of citizens effectively. Feminist scholars in particular have questioned the way women are depicted and talked about in media texts and the extent to which this might affect their democratic representation (Norris, 1997b). Such perspectives credit media organisations with the power to influence both audiences and governments.

Concerns about the power of mass media are at their most prominent during General Elections because this is the time when citizen engagement with the political process is most obvious and most crucial (Negrine, 1994). The democratic function of mass media is arguably most important during elections because this is the main time when citizens have the opportunity to endorse or dismiss the incumbent government. Such decisions require citizens to be informed about the government's record and plans for the future. Additionally, the politicians themselves need media coverage to communicate effectively with those that they govern and so accordingly politicians design their campaigns to fit the media's expectations so they can maximise their coverage (Street, 2001).

The relationship between media and politics has been the subject of much academic enquiry. More recently there has been some concern about the way that political journalism in particular has developed. According to Franklin (2004) politics has become increasingly 'packaged' by the media in response to the strategies employed by public

relations specialists who work closely with political parties in order to improve their ability to communicate with the public on their own terms. The 'packaging politics' thesis argues briefly that politicians have increased their commitment to using media to communicate their messages and as a result they have become increasingly adept at doing this. Franklin (2004) argues that this poses some challenge to democracy because it might limit citizens' access to accurate information about politics which they base their electoral decisions upon.

Feminist media scholars argue that political news coverage in particular is gender biased towards men and their concerns and emphasise the view that in order for women to be included in democratic politics, they must be included in the public discussion of politics which takes place in the news media. Research that aims to track the inclusion of women in the news suggests that women have consistently been marginalised, trivialised and ignored by mainstream media (Tuchman et al, 1978). Clearly, where politics is concerned it is important that women are present in the electoral discourse in order for them to be properly taken into account in political decisions or else half of the electorate would remain unrepresented.

News and gender are similar in that they are both socially constructed phenomena whose authority and credibility rely upon their ideological underpinnings being constructed as natural, universal and obvious. Firstly, the construction of news will be discussed in more detail before moving on to a discussion about the construction of gender ideology.

Constructing the News

Across the world an infinite number of events occur every day and the news media select a handful of these and present them as news. Without a routine way of managing this abundance of events and information it would be impossible for any news organisation to function (Negrine, 1994). Therefore, the news media do not simply cover observable events and report facts; they "animate them by turning them into narratives with plots and actors" (Street, 2001: 36) which frames the experience of politics for the audience. This invariably leads to the privileging of one account over another (ibid) in order to

construct an event that the audience cannot experience for themselves. Since news items are traditionally known as stories they are by definition constructed narratives (Bird and Dardenne, 1997) which privilege certain accounts over others. As a result, news becomes a storytelling exercise whereby the audience is presented with a daily roundup of events; either in the morning as is the case with newspapers, or throughout the day on television. This means that political news will be competing with other events that have happened for air time or space.

The audience is encouraged to attach more significance to some issue than others (McCombs and Shaw, 1995). This ability to affect what the audience thinks about allows the media to control the agenda and foreground some issues at the expense of others. News therefore has the ability to present selective view points and marginalise others because it constructs a version of events (Curran, 2002). Street (2001: 40) point out that the very conventions of news reporting enable journalists to do this: "the format, the *style* of the news, does a great deal of work in establishing the status and significance of its content. News reports tend to be written in a dry, impersonal language. Newscasters dress soberly...news reports use film and photos, experts, eye-witnesses and official sources to validate their report" to maintain the credibility and believability of news stories.

The selection of information and the ascribed values that shape the angle of the coverage function as a form of rhetoric that seeks to persuade the audience that an event has actually occurred (Street, 2001). This means that the context in which the story has been presented is instrumental in shaping the way in which the audience understands the event. By rearranging the context or omitting certain details media outlets can transform the way in which an event is perceived (Lloyd, 2004). This perhaps explains the reason why different news outlets can produce radically different coverage of the same event. Taylor (1997) argues that established processes of gathering, assembling and reporting news are necessarily selective so it should come as no surprise that the end result is subjective account of current events.

Key to the gathering, assembly and selection of news is the idea of news values. News values are an ideological structure (Eldridge, 1995) which facilitate the selection and

production of news and ultimately govern the way that an event will be presented to an audience. Possibly the most famous attempt to theorise news values was produced by Galtung and Ruge (discussed in Livingstone and Bennett, 2003). They identified a number of values that influence news selection; frequency, amplitude, ambiguity, how meaningful an event is and consonance; as well as practical considerations such as the logistics of reporting and time constraints. This indicates that an event that is perceived to have magnitude and significance for the audience will be more likely to be assimilated into the news agenda. Perhaps paradoxically, an event that is anticipated and planned in advance (a pseudo-event) is also more likely to be selected. An example would be coverage of a political party's manifesto launch during an election campaign. This means that the media play a decisive role in what citizens are allowed to hear about and as a result help to shape their understanding of a particular event (Meyer, 2002).

The socially constructed nature of news is in contrast to established journalistic values of objectivity, balance, impartiality and fairness. The underlying principle of objective reporting assumes that the truth about an event should be implicitly equated with facts and is therefore kept separate from value judgements (Ettema et al, 1997). This not only implies that there is an objective truth to be reported but also that the criteria which determines whether something constitutes news are free from value judgements, which is demonstrably not the case. As Negrine (1994: 119) put it: "ideological considerations and commonly accepted views and assumptions about the nature of society also feed into the news-making process".

This means that incorporated in all reporting is some version of what is 'normal', what 'usually happens' or how people 'usually behave.' These are based on the assumption that something is 'newsworthy'. Such assumptions are grounded in ideologies which seek to explain the way the world works (Street, 2001). A relevant example would be the representation of women in political coverage. Firstly, their activities receive less coverage than do men's and secondly, descriptions of them refer to their appearance or to the men in their lives rather than according them an independent existence (Norris, 1997a). These representations articulate a particular ideological view about men and women. This suggests that "far from being neutral then, the classic claim of 'objective

journalism', the imagery and language of mediated politics is heavily gendered, supporting male as norm and regarding women politicians as novelties" (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Ross, 1996: 112).

Hall described dominant news values as "based on inferred knowledge about the audience, inferred assumptions about society and a professional code or ideology" (quoted in Negrine, 1994: 120). Where political news is concerned, the marginalisation of women in news forms part of this ideology through the preference of reporting stories about men and the reliance on official sources. Media professionals "tend to 'index' the range of voices and viewpoints in both news and editorials according to the range of views expressed in mainstream government debate" (Bennett, 1990: 106). This can bear very little relation to public opinion generally or the views of women specifically. Official sources have assumed prominence and therefore are given the role of primary definers of political news (Schlesinger, 1989). This leads to journalists offering sanitised and official versions of events (Ross, 2010) and because these sources tend to be men, women are marginalised and their views ignored. Ross (2010: 110) rightly points out that "who speaks is who counts" which means that if certain groups are consistently omitted from the discussion of politics they are at risk of being ignored altogether by policy makers.

Constructing Women

Just as news is a social construction based upon implicit assumptions about the way the world works, so is gender. As Lovenduski (2005: 20) puts it "gender is not a synonym for sex" it is in actuality an ideological construct which attributes certain characteristics to men and women. The distinction then can be described most simply thus: "sex is a biological category that separates men and women. Gender is the set of social meanings attached to the categories of male and female" (ibid: 21).

As far as politics is concerned, gender is important because it has historically determined who can participate in formal political institutions. Feminists have pointed out that the political domain and its activities have developed in contrast to the private, domestic sphere. Van Zoonen (1998b) argues that the distinction between 'public' and 'private' is

a fairly recent historical construction and that it is inherently gendered because it is tied to the division of labour between men and women in the family. This public-private divide separates men's traditional roles from those typically performed by women into two distinct spheres, relegating women to the private sphere. This separation underpins a set of dichotomies (Lovenduski, 2005) which work against women.

These dichotomies were described by Stiltanen and Stanworth (1984: 194) as "an illegitimate superimposition" and were defined as: political-apolitical, public-private, and male- female. Such dichotomies construct the abstract public citizen as male in the sense that he performs traditionally masculine roles and has male characteristics. He is universal, rational and is concerned with the public interest. He is also able to apply abstract standards of justice. In contrast the 'private', female non-citizen's concerns are private, partial and domestic and she is emotional, irrational and weak (Lister, 1997). Feminists have frequently pointed out that "if politics is assumed to be the prerogative of the public sphere, and women are taken to be firmly located within the private domain, then the access of women to politics would appear to be understandably problematic" (Stiltanen and Stanworth, 1984: 195). This is deeply problematic because women are subjected to the decisions made by political actors and therefore deserve to be adequately represented in political institutions. The feminist movement and the incorporation of women into the formal public sphere as political actors and voters have meant that the boundaries between the public and the private, and the political and the personal have become blurred. As a result, matters such as child care and domestic violence which would previously have been considered private have become subjects of political concern and public policy. However, there is some way to go before the association of women with the private sphere is severed as the categorisation of women in electoral coverage makes clear.

Gendered Media Politics

Adcock's (2010) analysis of the 1997 election revealed that women appear in election news in three ways; as politicians, relatives of politicians and as ordinary people. These three categories of women demonstrate the problematic relationship between gender

and the public sphere. Traditionally, the public sphere where politics was conducted and discussed was inhabited solely by men. Women enabled the development of the public sphere by attending to the duties of the private sphere such as childcare. This gendered division of labour was seemingly reflected in the development of news media which confined personal and private matters to specially demarcated sections whilst public affairs dominated the news agenda (van Zoonen, 1998b).

Each of the three categories of women that appear in electoral coverage relates to these two spheres in specific and often problematic ways. Politicians are public and political in the sense that they are candidates for political office who make decisions on behalf of the public whom they represent. They are also private individuals with personal lives that have some bearing on their political views and priorities; furthermore the increased personalisation of political communications also means that the private lives of politicians come under more public scrutiny which emphasises their problematic relationship with the public realm because of their historical association with the private sphere (van Zoonen, 2006). Put simply, politicians' political roles become personalised by the media coverage they receive and the nature of contemporary political communications means that they are required to some extent to politicise their personal lives in order to campaign for office; therefore it is difficult for them to escape the gendered consequences of this form of politics.

Voters on the other hand, are public and political in that they constitute a significant proportion of the electorate as a whole upon whose authority politicians are allowed to govern. They are also private individuals with personal lives that are consistently constructed by political scientists as being the main determining factor in their political concerns and ultimately the decisions they make during elections. Voters too have a problematic relationship with the public sphere because due to their historic confinement to the private sphere, once they were eventually admitted to it, they entered the public sphere on different terms to men because they were still expected to perform their private roles as well as their new public ones (Lister, 1997).

Relatives of politicians are an interesting category in this respect because they seem to simultaneously occupy both spheres in similar ways to the other groups of women. Firstly,

the reason for their inclusion in the coverage is due to their support for their male relation's political career and, like the politicians, their personal lives are constructed as an important political resource for their relation's campaign, allowing them to present themselves as ordinary and human (Busby, 2009; Higgins and Smith, forthcoming). Conversely, these women are also like voters because to begin with, they *are* voters and secondly because they are perceived as of interest to the election due to their private roles and personal lives. Their relationship with the public sphere is problematic because they are not formal political actors and therefore lack the legitimacy required to represent anyone or communicate about policy and yet; they function as ideological symbols of their relatives' credentials as masculine and effective leaders by attending to his private affairs and thus ensuring his ability to conduct his public role.

The three groups of women are clearly interrelated and therefore may share certain types of coverage. Politicians represent both voters and relatives (in their capacity as citizens) politically. They also symbolically represent the inclusion of women in the governance of the nation (Childs, 2008). They are also subjected to scrutiny about their personal lives in very similar ways to the relatives of male politicians. Women voters are important democratically because they make up half the electorate and their mediated representation can impact on the way politicians think about them and how they conceive of the political sphere and its relevance to their lives. Relatives are important because they are a consistent presence on the campaign trail and therefore play some function in the mediation of electoral politics although what this role is remains unclear at this stage. This thesis will analyse the way that these three groups of women have been represented in newspaper coverage of all British General Elections that have taken place between 1918 and 2010 in order to place women's mediated representation in electoral discourse into historical perspective.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is comprised of seven additional chapters, each of which is briefly outlined below.

Chapter 2: The Representation of Women

This chapter provides a review of the existing literature which addresses the relationship between women and politics. This is achieved by focusing in turn on the political dimension of representation for voters and politicians and then the mediated dimension and its importance for both women as voters and politicians. The literature which addresses the mediated representation of the relatives of politicians is then discussed. This chapter ends by summarising the gaps which exist in the literature and how this thesis aims to address them.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter outlines the sampling, data collection and analysis used in the thesis. It will briefly outline the main research questions that this thesis intends to answer which emerged from the literature review before discussing the reasons why the two methods, content analysis and feminist critical discourse analysis, were used and what each method brings to the study. This chapter will also give detailed information about how the data collection and analysis were completed.

Chapter 4: "The most sexist election since the 1950s"? The 2010 Campaign

This chapter analyses the four weeks of newspaper coverage leading up to the 2010 election. The prominence of each group is discussed including an analysis across the five different newspapers. The chapter then moves on to analysing voters in more detail. The chapter makes use of Lewis et al's (2005) work on how citizens are represented in the news. First, their propensity to be discussed as subjects rather than active citizens is analysed with reference to textual examples; secondly voters are analysed in their capacity as citizens by looking at when they appear in 'vox pops' or as activists. Finally, an example of citizen activism and its mediated portrayal is presented in the form of a detailed discussion of the representation of Gillian Duffy.

The chapter then moves on to address the representation of female relatives of politicians. Firstly, the extent to which the coverage focuses upon the wives of the three main party leaders' is discussed. The proportion of items which were accompanied by photographs is then analysed followed by an analysis of the percentage of items which made reference to the physical appearance of the relatives. These are analysed in order to establish the extent to which these women were constructed as visually important to the news coverage. This section is then completed by an analysis and discussion of the role of these women in the coverage and its gendered implications.

The chapter then analyses the way politicians were represented in the newspaper coverage. Firstly, the themes from each item they appeared in are analysed before addressing the extent to which politicians are associated with policy discussion. The chapter then analyses the way that politicians were trivialised and subjected to negative coverage. The discussion of politicians is then concluded by analysing the extent to which they were subjected to personalised coverage about their physical appearance and its gendered implications.

Chapter 5: **"Women's Issues": the Voter Perspective**

This chapter uses Lewis et al's (2005) study of how citizens are represented in the news to inform the way women have been constructed as voters during general elections between 1918 and 2005. Their pattern of prominence in the coverage compared to other women is discussed first followed by an analysis of the way women are associated with their familial roles as mothers and wives. The chapter then goes on to analyse the policy themes which voters are associated with across time and then discusses the manner in which these are constructed in specifically gendered ways by the coverage. The chapter then focuses on the extent to which voters are constructed as citizens through the language used to describe them and whether they are quoted directly or indirectly in the news.

Chapter 6: **Standing for Office: the Politicians and Candidates**

This chapter first briefly rehearses the existing literature about women, politics and the media in order to show what areas this study addresses. It then discusses the prominence of politicians compared to the other women over time, before analysing the policy areas which politicians are most associated with. The chapter then goes on to examine the extent to which politicians have been evaluated both negatively and positively over time and how this has changed. It then tracks the proportion of items which quote politicians either directly or indirectly across time. The chapter then analyses the extent to which gendered personal references are present across time and offers some examples of this sort of coverage. Finally, Margaret Thatcher is discussed in detail focusing on the extent to which she received very different coverage before and after becoming Tory leader and then Prime Minister, and how her representations differ from her female colleagues.

Chapter 7: **From "Ideal election wife" to "just another political wife": the changing profile of the relatives**

This chapter aims to contextualise the relatives' coverage from the 2010 election by first looking at the prominence of relatives over time. It then goes on to analyse the extent to which the coverage of these women is about them actively contributing to the campaign or whether items focus on their personal roles. The chapter then discusses the proportion of the coverage which is dedicated to the wives of the party leaders across time. The chapter then discusses the extent to which this group are explicitly evaluated in the coverage over time. This is followed by a discussion about the way the representation of their role in the campaign coverage has changed over time before analysing the gendered personal coverage that these women received.

Chapter 8: Gendered Election Coverage: Conclusions

The thesis will conclude by summarising the main findings for each group of women and will then bring together the findings of this study to discuss the similarities and differences in the representations of the three groups of women analysed and what this says about the news coverage of women generally. This will be discussed thematically

before discussing the contributions and limitations of the work presented. The chapter will then conclude by outlining the implications of this work for the continued study of women's mediated representation in political coverage.

Chapter 2: The Representation of Women

Democratic governance is premised on the idea that individuals make decisions on behalf of groups of citizens whom they represent. Media representation, on the other hand refers to the way that certain groups or individuals are portrayed or described in media texts. This thesis unites these two concepts in addressing the way women are represented through the lens of mediated formal politics. Women have increasingly involved themselves in formal politics worldwide in the last century and it has become routine to see female politicians in local politics, national legislatures and on the international stage. Despite the gains that have been made by women, male politicians still dominate the arena of formal politics in terms of sheer numbers as well as in terms of powerful governmental roles. In Britain, the number of women seeking to be members of parliament has increased significantly since 1918 (see Appendix D) but while it is now seen as crucial that women occupy political office, at no point in British history have women MPs made up more than 22% of MPs. Women's portrayal in the news media is similarly marginal and often trivial therefore because of this "double gendering at work – in both the gendered nature of representational politics as well as the gendered nature of media coverage – [they] must be analysed together" (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Ross, 1996: 105).

This thesis aims to do just that by addressing the way women are represented in newspaper coverage of British General Elections from 1918 up until the most recent election in 2010. Adcock (2010) noted in a study about the news coverage of the 1997 election that women appeared in the coverage in three specific ways, as politicians, relatives of politicians (such as wives and daughters) and as ordinary people. The mediated representation of politicians is important because they represent voters' political interests while the mediated representation of voters matters because the issues they are portrayed as caring about affects the way politicians represent them politically. Voters and politicians are discussed to varying degrees in the political science and media studies literature while the relatives are rarely studied. The relatives of politicians are important because they seem to offer an alternative means to appeal to voters and

because they are portrayed as conveying something about the political credentials of their relatives.

This chapter will look at both the political and mediated representation of women. Firstly it offers an overview of the research into political representation and its importance for women as voters and politicians. It will then rehearse the literature which focuses upon the mediated representation of women in politics firstly that of voters and secondly of politicians. It will then discuss the limited literature which exists about the mediated representation of female relatives. The chapter will conclude by summarising the existing literature and identifying the gaps in the research which this thesis aims to address.

The Political

Feminist political scientists tend to focus their political analyses on the participation of women in the political sphere. This refers to ways of theorising, analysing and encouraging women's citizenship in the form of voting or other activism; or analysing the representation of women in political institutions and ways of remedying their under-representation by increasing the numbers of women politicians.

Voters and Voting

Lister (1997) argues that citizenship is gendered because it is based upon an arbitrary separation of the private and public spheres. Women are relegated to the private sphere and so in the public realm men's bodies and concerns became considered the norm because women were not present. Women were in a sense the invisible force which made the public sphere possible because they undertook the provision of care, reproduction and other unpaid (and therefore unrecognised) duties. When women were formally admitted to the public sphere through suffrage, women entered public life on different terms than men because they were still expected to fulfil their private roles as well as their new public ones.

An important aspect of women's citizenship is the study of voting behaviour. It is only a recent development that analyses of gender became the focus of mainstream voting studies (Campbell, 2006). In previous studies "claims were often made on the basis of unsubstantiated assumptions. For example, gender differences were frequently attributed to an assumed link between women and the family. This elision between women and family is common in the traditional literature and is not usually accompanied by any theoretical justification" (ibid: 34). Goot and Reid (1984) outline some of these studies which fail to analyse women and are critical of them for neglecting women. They argue that in these classic studies "women are of interest only in so far as they resemble, or fail to resemble, men" (Goot and Reid, 1984: 123) and, in agreement with Campbell (2006), that "too often, where voting studies have actually looked at women voters, prejudice has posed as analysis and ideology as science" (Goot and Reid, 1984: 125). The authors go further and systematically demonstrate that the suppositions made about women are often informed by untested assumptions. These suppositions meant that women were often presented as being more conservative than men; were considered to be fickle voters because they are more willing to change their vote, and presented women as willing to allow men to decide how they would vote. The authors point out that no systematic evidence was offered to support these ideas.

Traditionally, studies of voting behaviour in Britain in particular were more interested in the impact of social class on voter preference, for example Butler and Stokes' model of partisan alignment (Campbell, 2006). The concept of social class is problematic when it comes to studying women because "it is difficult to fit women into essentially male categories based on income and employment patterns, and the practice of classing women with the male head of the household is highly questionable" (Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 1996: 195). Campbell (2006) argues that the study of voting behaviour has since been transformed from an overtly sexist practice which relies upon untested assumptions about women; through benign neglect where women were not considered at all to "the current state of the discipline, where gender is usually more thoughtfully theorised" (Campbell, 2006: 52) and also highlights the importance of theories about gender difference to the study of sex as a variable.

Recent scholarship has challenged the assumptions outlined by Goot and Reid (1984) and Campbell (2006). Norris' (1999) work undermines the notion that women are more conservative than men by demonstrating that women have become de-aligned in the 1990s and there is now a gender-generation gap whereby older women were more likely to vote Conservative than their male peers while younger women were more likely to vote Labour than younger men. Campbell's (2004) own study of the impact of gender on voting behaviour provides systematic evidence that although there are differences between men and women voters, these differences are complex and relate to other social characteristics such as age. For example, her research highlights differences between men and women's issue preferences in the 2001 election which suggest "that women are more likely to prioritise education and healthcare issues and men are more likely to select the economy as their most important election issue" (Campbell, 2004: 41). On the other hand, her work also showed that younger women are more likely to prioritise education while older women emphasise healthcare. These complexities "highlight the necessity of integrating the study of sex differences with other demographic factors, to avoid making essentialist claims about the nature of the sexes and to analyse rigorously the impact of the sex variable on political attitudes" (Campbell, 2006: 75).

Another assumption about women voters which, according to Winters and Campbell (2007: 199) is "received wisdom' in the media and for some campaign activists" is that women voters are more likely to vote for a candidate based on his personality and charisma than male voters, furthermore "this perception has yet to be substantiated by serious empirical evidence" (ibid: 199). The authors conducted six focus groups in the run up to the 2005 election, three groups of men and three of women. Their analysis of leadership evaluations showed that there was no indication that women had a more personal or emotional way of evaluating candidates than their male peers. Women were however more likely to discuss political issues in relation to their personal circumstances and family members than male voters, although the authors are keen to state that their analysis is only exploratory.

Politicians

Feminists are interested in looking at the reasons women are still marginalised in political institutions and possible ways of remedying this disparity. In recognition that something needed to change in order to improve the representation of women in the UK Parliament, during the 1990s the Labour Party adopted a system of All-Women shortlists (AWS) for the selection of MPs in 50% of winnable seats and 50% of vacant Labour held seats (Childs, 2004). Although the implementation of such a policy was difficult and controversial (Lovenduski, 2005); it resulted in record number of Labour women (101) being elected in the 1997 general election. Labour has continued to use AWS in every election since. The other two main parties have lagged behind, with the Conservative party only introducing priority 'A' Lists (of which 50% were women) for their selection procedure before the 2010 election and the Liberal Democrats have concentrated on encouraging women to come forward rather than implementing measures to tackle the problem (Campbell and Childs, 2010). Another possible solution to improve the representation of women is the use of formal quotas (Lovenduski (2005). Such measures have so far been implemented in over 100 countries worldwide (Krook et al, 2009). There are a variety of ways of executing quotas, for example in France where parties must make sure that 50% of the candidates for election are women (Murray, 2010c) or the reservation of a certain number of seats in legislatures like Bangladesh (Lovenduski, 2005). Quotas are controversial for a number of reasons since they are perceived by critics as undemocratic; however feminists prefer to conceptualise them as mechanisms for correcting the historical privileging of male representatives.

Scholars emphasise the importance of women's participation in formal politics by theorising the extent to which women politicians represent women voters. This is mainly achieved through looking at the ways in which women can be said to represent other women through descriptive and substantive representation. Descriptive representation can be described as "the claim that women should be present in decision-making in proportion to their membership of the population" (Lovenduski, 2005: 17). Childs (2008) argues that descriptive representation has had little purchase in British politics, instead geographic and party representation has been prioritised. This has resulted in political institutions which are overwhelmingly populated by white, middle-aged and middle-class

men. Feminists argue that such institutions cannot adequately represent women and their interests. Scholars such as Lovenduski (2005) and Childs (2004; 2008) point out that conceiving of representation in this manner raises problems because firstly, there may be an unlimited number of groups seeking representation on this basis, so for example famers should represent farmers, and furthermore because individuals occupy a number of positions (age, social class, ethnicity and so forth) as well as sex making the practicalities difficult to imagine. Descriptive representation is also problematic because there is no systematic evidence which suggests women will necessarily represent other women's interests (Lovenduski, 2005). Despite these problems it is difficult to claim that democracy is functioning as it should without the descriptive representation of women and other disadvantaged groups.

The other form of representation that is analysed by feminist scholars is the extent to which women voters are substantively represented by elected politicians. Substantive representation "captures the content of decisions of representatives. The substantive representation of a group is most simply described as the representation of its interests" (Lovenduski, 2005: 18) but there are serious questions about the extent to which women in all their diversity, who share very little in common except their historic under-representation and potential reproductive capacity, have common interests to be represented (ibid). This problem is addressed by examining the difference between women's issues and women's perspectives. Women's issues "may be thought of as issues that mainly affect women, either for biological reasons (for example, breast cancer screening) or for social reasons (sex equality or childcare policy)" (Lovenduski, 1997: 19). Whilst on the other hand women's perspectives are women's views on all political matters (ibid). Thinking about women's political views in this way helps to avoid the tendency to assume that all women share the same political priorities on the basis of sex alone.

The relationship between women's presence and the idea that these women act for women generally (between descriptive and substantive forms of representation) is extremely complex and is still debated among the scholars looking at this area. There is very little consensus about what would constitute proof of women's substantive representation let alone how it might occur (Childs, 2008). Childs' (2004) analysis of the

1997 intake of women MPs suggests that the best way to provide a more nuanced account of the relationship between women's descriptive and substantive representation would be to look at the attitudes and behaviour of women representatives in real political institutions. The research found that a significant number of MPs felt that their presence was important for representing women and their interests and that they had made a difference. Childs (2004) suggests that this representation comes in a number of forms, not all of them explicitly feminist. The author also emphasises the fact that "the most dominant representation of them has been one of loyalty, timidity and tears. Most importantly, they are said to have failed women" (Childs, 2004: 195) particularly due to their failure to rebel against the reduction in the lone parent allowance.

Cowley and Childs (2003) argue that media coverage of the 1997 Labour women accused them of being clones and automatons who would unquestioningly follow the party line in crucial votes. Their analysis of the complete voting record of the 1997 Parliament confirm that there was a difference between the voting of newly elected women and the rest of the parliamentary party and that they were less likely to rebel. Despite this finding, the authors reject the characterisation of these women by the media as feeble and second rate representatives due to the fact that they were not elected on 'merit' but because of positive discrimination. Murray (2010c) notes that similar accusations have been made about French deputies since the introduction of the parity law in 2000 but in this case the evidence refutes the assumption that measures to increase the participation of women is producing weaker politicians.

Childs (2008) formulates mediated representations of women politicians as a facet of the symbolic representation of women. Political scientists in general neglect the importance of the media for the political representation of women, often referring to mediated representations in an impressionistic way without offering any systematic analysis. Adcock (2010: 136) on the other hand argues convincingly that the media play a central role in contemporary politics and therefore "improving women's presence in media(ted) political discourse might be one means of strengthening women's symbolic and substantive representation".

The Mediated

Sreberny-Mohammadi and Ross (1996) argue that the representation of female politicians in the media is doubly gendered due to both the gendered nature of representational politics (which has been described briefly above) as well as the gendered nature of the media coverage of politics. This means that it is crucial that these aspects are analysed together in order to understand women's continued marginalisation in politics. There has been extensive research analysing the relationship between women, media and politics which can be divided into three general areas. First, scholars have conducted research about the representation of female politicians in national and international contexts; secondly, research has focused upon the role of women in the news making process, as journalists as sources in news stories; and third, but much less prominent, there is some research about how women as citizens and voters appear in the news. This will be discussed first.

Citizens or Subjects?

There is a substantial amount of general research about the portrayal of women in the media which gives some insight into the implicit understanding of women as citizens. While this is not the place to discuss this literature in detail, it is important to identify the general trends in order to provide the wider media context in which the representation of women as voters takes place.

Of special interest here is the Global Media Monitoring Project which has been conducted by feminist media researchers worldwide every five years since 1995 (Gill, 2007). It aims to track the representation of women across national media. The 1995 study analysed media from seventy one countries worldwide and the number of countries participating increased to 108 in 2010 (Gallagher, 2010). Every study since 1995 has shown that nowhere in the world has women's mediated representation achieved parity with men who continue to dominate the news. What is perhaps most striking about the results from this study is the lack of variation across countries and the extent to which women were marginal to news agendas on a global scale. The latest study from

2010 shows that after fifteen years of monitoring, the visibility of women as producers and subjects of news has seen some improvement but that men still dominate the news because they receive three times the visibility of women (Ross and Carter, 2011). These reports demonstrate that Tuchman et al's (1978) earlier contention that women were subjected to "symbolic annihilation" in the mass media is still relevant today. The concept of symbolic annihilation refers to the condemnation, trivialisation or absence of women from mass media. Such patterns of representation are central to the means by which social inequality is maintained since they contribute to the overall impression that the public sphere is overwhelmingly male and women therefore do not belong.

The idea that news media somehow represent the public is central to the way the media operate (Higgins, 2008) and yet news discourses are dominated by elite sources (as discussed in Chapter One.) When the public do appear in the news, their views are highly mediated. Their voices are often "edited, cut off in its prime, reduced to polling numbers, confined to banal soundbites, marginalized as background noise, rendered unofficial" (Coleman and Ross, 2010: 45). The news media in particular is supposed to convey information to the public in order for them to make democratic decisions (Street, 2001). The way news is produced has led some authors to question the efficacy of the news media in performing this function specifically when it comes to representing citizens. Lewis (2001) for example argues that when ordinary people appear in the media it is usually in the form of some reference to public opinion such as the results of polls; and that such data are routinely used to construct public opinion in the interests of political elites.

News reportage tends to use the public voice in highly specific ways so many political stories will omit it altogether, "but where it does appear it is highly managed, bounded all round by a journalistic lens which frames our/their words in particular ways" (Coleman and Ross, 2010: 45). Lewis et al's (2005) study examines this process in detail. Their study focuses on the way that ordinary people appear as citizens in the news. This means that they do not account for the way people appear as mere subjects or victims of events. Instead they are concerned about the way public opinion is constructed in news reportage. They argue that despite news being made for citizens, it is very rarely about them because when ordinary people do feature they are usually especially qualified to do

so which means they are not speaking simply as citizens. The two most obvious exceptions are when reporters compile the views of citizens on a particular topic and invite them to speak in the form of 'vox pops'; and when they appear as activists taking part in a political demonstration. In their study of US and UK television news and newspaper coverage they discovered that "the great majority of references to citizens or public opinion – 97% overall – do not involve polls or surveys of any kind" (Lewis et al, 2005: 20) meaning that most references to public opinion have little systematic evidence to support their claims.

According to the authors, there are five identifiable ways in which citizens are represented in the news. 'Vox pops', demonstrations and protests, references to opinion polls and surveys, inferences about public opinion and unspecified inferences about public opinion. The first three categories are clearly self-explanatory but the 'inferences to public opinion' and 'unspecified inferences' requires some elaboration. "The first category of inferences about public opinion involves statements that infer something about public opinion in general, without reference to polling data or other systematic evidence" (Lewis et al, 2005: 91). The second is even vaguer and refers to some form of unspecified opinion without providing evidence. An example would be when journalists use remarks such as "some people say that..." or "many people think" to invoke public opinion which allows them to speak on behalf of the people rather than for themselves. It also allows them to allude to attitudes which exist in the public sphere without having to identify opinion holders or how widespread these views might be.

Lewis et al (2005: 23) argue that from their findings "it is apparent that the most explicit forms of citizen expression – polls and citizen activism – are by far the least common forms in television coverage...Or put another way, 95-97% of references to citizens and public opinion on television news feature vague, impressionistic indicators of public mood or attitude, and are not based on any clear source of evidence". This highlights the extent to which journalists' allusions to the view of the public need to be understood as culturally constructed ideas based on very little evidence.

Moreover, Lewis et al (2005) note that in US and British television, citizens are mainly represented as non-partisan. In the US 90% of references to public opinion expressed no

clear political leaning whilst in Britain the percentage was 95%. This means that even in political coverage "what we see here are citizens being apolitical about manifestly political issues" (Lewis et al, 2005: 34). The authors developed five broad categories of citizen engagement to determine how active citizens are depicted in news coverage. The categories represent a continuum between active and engaged citizen at one end and passive and apolitical at the other. The categories are: citizens making proposals; citizens responding to politicians; citizens commenting on issues and events without making proposals; citizens speaking about personal experiences or as consumers and citizens talking about sports, entertainment or celebrity.

In their study of US and British media they found that the most active category, citizens making proposals, features very rarely on television news making up 5% of references in Britain and 4% of references in the USA. The second category, citizens responding to politicians accounted for 17% of references overall. The most common ways citizens appear, however are lower down the continuum of citizen engagement; "almost half of all references to public or citizen opinion involve comments about a social group or issue: observations about the world that offer no clear recommendations or proposals" (Lewis et al, 2005: 45); furthermore, 25.1% of references represent citizens speaking about their personal experiences or as consumers.

Lewis et al (2005) argue that these findings show that ordinary citizens are portrayed as almost childlike: they are seen to have moods, experiences and emotions, but they are rarely seen making political proposals. Therefore citizens are represented as feeling, desiring or complaining about political situations but they are not depicted as discussing the merits of these ideas. Moreover, in the few examples when they are portrayed as engaged, it is usually in response to an agenda set by politicians suggesting that public opinion flows from the top down rather than the bottom up. They conclude that "citizens are, on the whole, shown as passive observers of the world. While they are seen to have fears, impressions and desires, they don't, apparently, have much to say about what should be done about healthcare, education, the environment, crime, terrorism, economic policy, taxes and public spending, war, peace, or any other subject in the public sphere. The world of politics, in this sense, tends to be left largely to the politicians and the experts" (Lewis et al, 2005: 48-49).

This study is an important contribution to the question of how citizens appear in the news and its potential democratic consequences however, their lack of analysis into the way ordinary people appear as victims or eyewitnesses in the news means they have neglected the consequences of the way ordinary people are constructed as subjects. The authors also do not examine the gendered implications of the representation of citizenship in the news because they do not differentiate between male and female citizens. This suggests that the public is implicitly defined as male which is problematic because it neglects to "acknowledge the distinct economic and social positions of women and men, the gender relations that both determine and result from such positions, and the gender-specific priorities that arise from these positions and relations" (Gallagher, 2010: iii). The way female citizens are constructed specifically in electoral news discourses will be examined later in the chapter.

In Office, In Camera

All research in this area assumes that the representation of female politicians in the news is important for the participation of women in politics. The representation of female political figures has provided important insight into the ways in which newspapers and television news, which remain the dominant media for acquiring political news, construct and shape female politicians and their contribution in specifically gendered ways. The presence of political women in the news is important because it allows voters to conceive of politics as more than just a male dominated arena that is remote to their interests. This is seen as being especially important to engage women voters in the political process (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Ross, 1996). Childs (2004) suggests that seeing women in political institutions helps to normalise the idea that women are involved in politics and may even act as role models for women who are aspiring to become involved in politics. Despite the different understandings of the relation between the representation of female politicians in the media, and the participation of women in politics, the method of choice for research is by and large a form of content or discourse analysis, sometimes combined with perceptions and experiences of female politicians themselves.

Some authors have noted the propensity for women politicians to be associated with political change or renewal. This is linked to their position as political outsiders. Norris (1997a) compared news coverage of a diverse group of female leaders from diverse backgrounds and countries. The coverage of these women was framed in three main ways. The first frame referred to the impact of the women breaking through social convention and the positive affects this has for women generally. Secondly, women leaders were framed as political outsiders whose rise to power was seen as unexpected and their political experience was often downplayed. Adcock (2010) also emphasises the frame of women as outsiders in her examination of British press coverage of the 1997 General Election. A record number of women candidates stood for election (most of whom were Labour candidates) which was reported widely by the national press. Left wing newspapers like the *Mirror* tended to present these women as a positive force for change whilst more conservative titles portrayed these women as "the embodiment of an inexperienced, ruthlessly disciplined or slavishly loyal type of politician" (ibid: 145). Norris' (1997a) last frame portrayed women as agents of change who had the potential to alter the traditional way of doing politics.

Braden (1996) highlights the negative aspects of social expectations that women might positively change politics by noting an example of two female candidates in New York State primaries in 1992. These women were involved in a bitter campaign characterised by much negative campaigning which produced a high volume of media coverage. Braden argues that much of the coverage took for granted the fact that male politicians would be sleazy and personal in their campaigns as there was much discussion about whether it was appropriate or not to expect women candidates to behave differently to their male counterparts. Moreover, Gidengil and Everitt's (2003) analysis of how the direct speech of female candidates was mediated during two Canadian elections in 1993 and 1997 reinforces the idea that women were reported in more negative and aggressive language than male candidates when they adopted the same types of behaviour. When women were behaving in a more low-key and non-confrontational style they were more likely to be marginalised. In a sense women are caught between behaving assertively like traditional candidates and being portrayed negatively for it or behaving in an understated and conciliatory fashion and being ignored (ibid). Ross (2002) argues that women

politicians and candidates are thus required to "square an impossible circle, to be morally superior to their male colleagues, but also to succeed in a highly dubious working environment – to be both as rough, tough and aggressive as men, but to also make politics a more conciliatory and 'nicer' process at the same time" (Ross, 2002: 152).

The status of women as political outsiders lends female politicians a novelty value that makes them particularly newsworthy at certain times. Carroll and Schreiber (1997) sought to investigate claims from female politicians in the US that they received differential treatment to their male colleagues. The data from a content analysis illustrated that there was strong evidence that women who had been elected into Congress in 1992 received more attention than first-term members would ordinarily experience due to their novelty value. Similar phenomena pervades British political coverage; both Childs (2004) and Ward (2000) discuss the impact of the now infamous 'Blair's Babes' photograph that was taken in the aftermath of the 1997 General Election when a record number of female MPs from the Labour Party were elected. Meant as a celebration of this historic event, a photograph of these women and the newly elected Prime Minister Tony Blair soon became imbued with negative stereotypes about the efficacy of the women MPs generally (Ward, 2000). The photograph was immediately given the headline "Blair's Babes" by a tabloid newspaper which served to overtly sexualise them and undermine their political power before the new parliament had even begun. Within days the haircuts and clothes worn by these women were under media scrutiny (ibid) and the legitimacy of their very presence was being questioned by those critical of Labour's use of all-women shortlists to recruit candidates for the election (Childs, 2004). Framing serious politicians in this manner reveals the news media's damaging tendency to trivialise and undermine the status of women as effective political actors (Ross, 2002).

As the unfavourable coverage given to the of so-called "Blair's Babes" demonstrates, women politicians are often subjected to a kind of media treatment not experienced by male colleagues. The attention paid to women's clothes and other aspects of their appearances is one example. When Theresa May, then Chair of the Conservative Party, made a speech at the party's annual conference in 2002 which sought to address why they had failed to win the two preceding General Elections, the media coverage focused

disproportionately on the leopard print kitten heels that she had chosen to wear suggesting that they were part of a new softer image that the Tories were trying to promote to potential voters (Childs, 2008). Childs argues that such examples are common in the British press. Webster (1990) acknowledges that Margaret Thatcher's personal style was the subject of much coverage from her days as Secretary of State for Education in the Heath government in the early 1970s to the very end of her parliamentary career. Her early image as the "Tory Lady in a Hat" (ibid: 28) marked her as a member of the establishment and was used by her critics to ridicule her during the campaign for the leadership of the Conservative Party (ibid).

Female politicians themselves believe that their outward appearance dominates any media coverage that they might receive to the detriment of their substantive political messages and furthermore that they are more likely than men to experience this form of marginalisation (Ross, 2002). Ross' (2002) study compared the experiences of female politicians from the UK, Australia and South Africa and revealed common experiences for these women from diverse political contexts. Many of the women interviewed highlighted the attention that was paid to their age, clothing and make up and how this seemed to be linked to the evaluations they receive from news media whilst the sartorial style of their male colleagues was rarely commented upon (ibid). One of the participants appeared in a photo shoot for a women's magazine wearing a red dress and feather boa. She claims that she had intended to appeal to ordinary people by humanising herself but she was immediately castigated in the mainstream media for trivialising politics and for her lack of political judgement (ibid). Van Zoonen (2006) also notes that this propensity for the news media to employ celebrity style coverage of politicians is incredibly difficult for women. Male politicians may use their personal image and family life as a way of humanising themselves to engage with voters but this form of campaigning has gender specific risks since "it confines female politicians to notions of femininity which are not easily transposed to the political field" (Van Zoonen, 2006: 291).

Focusing on the physical appearances of female politicians reflects the way that women are generally represented in mainstream media, as sexualised objects. Gill (2007) argues that there is nothing innocent about these sexualised representations of women that appear daily in the news. They are part of an operation of power which trivialises the

perspective of women and serves to 'keep them in their place.' This arguably also motivates the media attention that is given to how women politicians manage their work-life balance and family commitments. Ward (2000), for example notes the way in which the so-called "Blair Babes" received much media attention that focused on their ability to balance their work and home lives. Carroll and Schreiber (1997) also reported limited evidence of the trivialisation of women by focusing upon their appearance or family situation. Some of the women interviewed by Ross (2002) expressed outrage at the way these questions were not asked of their male colleagues. Van Zoonen (2000) compared the portrayal of family pressures on Dutch male and female politicians in gossip magazines. The men were presented as heroically performing their political duties while their devoted wives and children willingly sacrificed their time with him for his career. Conversely, the families of female politicians were presented as suffering from their absence and women were furthermore constructed as somehow pathetic for being unable to fulfil these basic familial obligations (ibid). In essence, the discourse portrays male careers as supported by their families whilst women's careers are cast in opposition to their private lives (ibid). This type of framing sets women politicians up as outsiders who are perhaps incompatible with the demands of the role (Childs, 2008). Women politicians also argued that they are described in highly emotional terms which set them apart from their male colleagues (Ross, 2002). Certainly, this seems to be supported by evidence from Childs' (2008) study of the press coverage of Clare Short MP's resignation, where she was described as being "bossy and mouthy – all heart and emotion" (ibid: 158) and "a moody and brooding woman" (ibid: 158) amongst other things.

Women who do not fall into mediated ideals of femininity are represented harshly. Margaret Thatcher was labelled an unnatural woman when as Secretary of State for Education she withdrew the provision for free school milk for primary school children (Webster, 1990). She was quickly dubbed 'the milk snatcher' and press coverage of her seemed to be particularly harsh because she dared to contradict the stereotype that women are compassionate and nurturing (ibid). Hillary Clinton is also a difficult figure for news media to deal with. In her role as First Lady she was perceived as problematic because she defied the conventions of traditional 'wife' and 'citizen' by advocating her own political agenda (Brown and Gardetto, 2000). When she ran for election to the

Senate she was portrayed as power driven and ambitious and did not receive sympathetic coverage until her husband's relationship with Monica Lewinsky became public and she achieved the status of victim (Parry-Giles, 2000). Gill (2007) cites the example of British MP Clare Short who once lead a campaign to ban the *Sun* newspaper from publishing pictures of topless models on page 3 every day. The press reacted with hostility and used her allegedly unattractive appearance to question her credibility to address this issue. Claims were made that she was motivated by her envy of the models' attractiveness, her prudishness and her want for a sense of humour (ibid). When she eventually resigned her cabinet position in protest at the conduct of the Iraq war, she was once again reported in highly negative terms (Childs, 2008). Framing female politicians in this way as "monsters or nonwomen" (Ross, 2010: 106) is symptomatic of the sexist (and sometimes misogynistic) framing that have long been employed in media discourses (ibid). This also supports the perception expressed by the politicians interviewed by Ross (2002), who claimed that they often had their femininity questioned and yet were still considered too feminine to be an effective political leader.

A Gendered Effect?

Few studies have actually examined whether and how the representation of female politicians does affect the participation of women in politics. Those that do tend to focus on the way in which gender stereotypes operate in voters perceptions of male and female candidates. Murray (2010a) suggests that running for different types of office can impact how much gender plays a role in the campaign. The author argues that women may struggle particularly with being elected to a presidency since the office tends to be more masculinised and personalised which may disadvantage women.

The literature suggests that voters do perceive male and female candidates differently, especially when they have limited information about the candidate (Iyengar et al, 1997). This is supported by the evidence from Lammers et al (2009) who found that where the most important issue in the campaign was one associated with traditionally male attributes such as competitiveness (for example the economy) voters are more likely to prefer a male candidate but that when the most important issue is traditionally female,

voters prefer a female candidate. On this basis they argue that the gender stereotyping of candidates is about predicting the efficacy of the candidate rather than simply a sexist judgement. Falk and Kenski (2006) concur that preferring a male candidate over a female one is at least partially determined by the most important issue in the campaign.

Male and female candidates are perceived to possess different personal traits which affect their image as political leaders (Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993). Women tend to be seen as more warm, gentle and compassionate while men are more likely to be seen as tough, aggressive and assertive (ibid). These stereotypes can work in negative or positive ways for female candidates, for example Herrnson et al (2003) stress that voters do perceive differences between men and women candidates. They suggest that women candidates are more likely to be associated positively with 'feminine' issues such as childcare and education whilst they might be perceived as less effective at managing more 'masculine' policy areas such as law and order. The authors argue that if female candidates run 'as women' by emphasising their grasp of 'feminine issues' and appeal to women voters they can gain a strategic advantage over male opponents. The evidence from Kahn and Gordon (1997) suggests that the female candidates who were elected to the United States Senate in 1992 employed this strategy to great effect resulting in a record number of women being elected. It is important to note however that traits which are associated with masculinity increased the perceived competence of the candidate on a wider range of issues than feminine traits (Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993). Furthermore, women can be disadvantages because the stereotype that they are more compassionate means they may be judged as too emotional, poor decision makers and weak leaders (Winter, 2007).

Although these findings suggest that the candidate's gender can impact on their ability to win over voters, there are some important issues that have not been addressed by the literature. For example, how gender stereotypes come into play when women candidates are competing against other women (Iyengar et al, 1997) and moreover the majority of this literature focuses on American politicians and therefore may not be entirely representative of women's campaigns internationally. The research that analyses the impact of gender stereotyping in other nations presents a mixed picture. Women who have campaigned for executive office such as Ségolène Royal in France and Irene Sáez in

Venezuela were frequently associated with 'feminine' traits and suffered from accusations of incompetence (see Murray, 2010b; and Hinojosa, 2010). On the other hand Helen Clark, former Prime Minister of New Zealand very rarely experienced gender stereotyping in media coverage (Trimble and Treiberg, 2010). Christine Fernandez de Kirchner of Argentina was conversely associated with certain 'masculine' traits (such as ambition) which were sometimes disadvantageous because it gave her the perception of being cold and uncaring (Piscopo, 2010). Such allegations were also famously levelled at Margaret Thatcher who often used gender stereotyping to her advantage (Webster, 1990).

Many authors explain the absence of female politicians and their stereotypical portrayal as the result of the relative absence of female journalists, and of the lack of women as sources for the news. The absence or marginalisation of women from media discourses has been a preoccupation for media scholars since Tuchman et al (1978) complained of women being symbolically annihilated in mass media discourse. This is a feature of many different genres of media but news media are particularly susceptible to the marginalisation, trivialisation and condemnation of women (Gauntlett, 2008). Feminist scholars have noted two main aspects of the marginalisation of women in media; the restricted range of stories in which their voices appear and the position of female journalists in the news making process (Ross, 2007).

The first of these concerns has been widely addressed. Many scholars have argues that the persistent representation of women as either victims (of crime, violence or public policy), sexual objects or the female family members of newsworthy men demonstrates the extent to which patriarchal concerns dominate the production of news (Carter et al, 1998; Ross, 2011; Holland 1998). The use of sources is a fundamental part of the construction of news stories as it indicates the version of events that is being supported; thus, who is allowed to speak in the news indicates something about whose views count in society (Ross, 2011). Ross (2007) argues that although news media are conceptualised as a contemporary manifestation of Habermas' public sphere, the public actually has a very small role in it. Research into the way ordinary citizens are depicted in news media indicates that they are mostly represented as "passive observers of the world, rather than active citizens with views and opinions." (Lewis et al, 2005). Instead, journalists tend

to rely on authoritative, elite sources (ibid) many of whom tend to be male (Ross, 2007). In most studies that have addressed the gendered nature of source selection, men tend to outnumber womanly significantly. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) found that men were twice as likely as women to feature as either news subjects or sources in newspapers. Similarly, Zoch and Vanslyke Turk (1998) whose study looked at source selection in US newspapers over a ten year period suggested that women barely featured in news of national or international importance.

Ross (2007) sought to assess whether women and men were represented differently in terms of volume and status when used as sources in three local British newspapers. The results indicated that the news stories were dominated by elite voices, such as those from business, professional occupations and local government staff. Men were twice as likely to speak as a business representative and three times as likely to speak as a local councillor. Conversely, women were three times more likely than men to speak as a member of the public (ibid). This gendered division of source status was also identified by Adcock (2010) whose study of British press coverage of the 1997 General Election sought to code the ways that women were represented in five national newspapers. Three distinct groups were identified, female politicians, the relatives of politicians and ordinary voters. The results showed that women featured in a third of coded items and only featured as main actors in half of these appearances. Moreover they were only directly quoted in a third of these appearances. Women featured in far greater numbers as voters than they did as professional sources reinforcing the gendered division of sources identified by Ross (2007 and 2011). The results from a Loughborough University study that monitored the 1997 election also support this division, as only four out of the thirty most prominent political figures were women and yet, women made up almost half of the ordinary citizens category (discussed in Stephenson, 1998).

As research that looks at women's representation in news stories shows, men still dominate the news. Despite the fact that many more women now work in journalism than ever before, they are heavily underrepresented in the decision making roles in major news production offices and as a result "because news is made by men, it is thought to reflect the interests and values of men too" (Van Zoonen, 1998a: 34) and will also serve women less well. As well as these hierarchical disadvantages to female

journalists, they can often find themselves confined to rather low status roles in the industry, such as women's sections in newspapers (Gill, 2007), although there is some evidence to suggest that this could be changing (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Van Zoonen, 2000).

The very culture of news journalism may in fact be a barrier to women gaining in the sector; journalists are expected to be at the beck and call of events meaning they have to be available to travel at a moment's notice to get the story, which can be at odds with their familial responsibilities (Gill, 2007). Newsrooms can also tend to be rather masculine environments that women need to negotiate in order to fit in (ibid). Van Zoonen (1998) documents some initiation practices that women have to go through in order to be accepted as 'one of the boys' such as suggestive comments, sexist jokes and some involving pornography. Female journalists seem to be locked in an unending struggle to be perceived as equally professional as their male counterparts (Steiner, 1998).

The male dominance of newsrooms has been blamed for this marginalisation of women's voices in news content. Some scholars have questioned whether female journalists make a difference to the selection of sources. Zoch and Vanslyke Turk (1998) contend that female journalists are more likely to use female sources. On the other hand, Liebler and Smith (1997) studied television news in the US and their findings concur with previously mentioned studies that showed men were more likely to be used as sources than women and also more likely to be shown in their professional capacity (ibid). Crucially their research revealed that the sex of the journalist made no real difference to their use of sources. The results of Ross' (2007) study also failed to find a difference between the sex of the journalists and their likelihood to use female sources.

The Personal is Political

The results from the Global Media Monitoring Project 2010 indicate that in line with previous monitoring days, one of the three primary ways in which women appeared in the news was due to their relationship with a newsworthy man (Ross and Carter, 2011). The results also showed that women are three times more likely than men to be

described in terms of their family status (ibid) so it should not be surprising that the female relatives of high profile political leaders in Britain receive some news coverage, particularly during election times when politicians are most visible. There has been very little literature which systematically studies the presence of female relatives in media coverage of politics. The vast majority of the literature focuses upon the spouses of party and political leaders rather than general politicians. Stanyer (2007) suggests that the United States has a longer history of leaders' wives having a prominent public role which probably began with Eleanor Roosevelt and is evidenced by the ubiquity of the unofficial title of First Lady that has been applied to the wives of the US president (Marton, 2002). In contrast, it is commonly assumed that the wives of British Prime Ministers have been largely confined to the private sphere until the 1990s (Stanyer, 2007) with the possible exceptions of Mary Wilson and Dennis Thatcher (Seymour-Ure, 2003).

Much of the literature that takes politicians wives and families into account is premised on the idea that the increased visibility of these women is a result of the increased personalisation of political communication (Stanyer and Wring, 2004) or more specifically the politicisation of private persona as Langer (2012) would have it. This phenomenon has also been observed in a number of western democracies such as France (Kuhn, 2004) and Germany (Holtz-Bacha, 2004). Seaton (2003) argues that the personalisation of political coverage has intensified in recent years by citing examples of political leaders who would not have survived this kind of heavily personalised coverage due to certain character and behavioural flaws, such as Lloyd George's long running affair with Frances Stevenson. Seaton also contends that Violet Attlee, wife of the Labour Prime Minister was a dedicated Conservative voter, a fact which went unreported but would be the kind of family disloyalty which would cause negative news coverage in contemporary personalised news reporting.

Most of the literature in this area concentrates on the United States and Hillary Clinton in particular. Scharrer and Bissell (2001) analysed media coverage of three first ladies, Nancy Reagan, Barbara Bush and Hillary Clinton and found that the more politically active a first lady was deemed to be, the more negative coverage she received. Winfield (1997) describes the historical development of the first lady role in US politics. She argues that first ladies are framed in four ways. Firstly, they are expected to fulfil the role of loyal

escort, accompanying their husband but not having an independent function. Secondly, they are expected to perform a protocol role, acting as hostess for visiting dignitaries and attending social, ceremonial and diplomatic events. The third frame which developed in the twentieth century emphasises their role in charitable causes and volunteer work and the fourth which is most associated with Clinton, is their role in acting as an advisor and helping to formulate policy. This last role is highly controversial and Clinton's political power and influence were often constructed as illegitimate and dangerous. Brown and Gardetto (2000) likewise examined news coverage of Clinton and draw similar conclusions. They argue that the inherently gendered nature of the public-private split which has dominated western political traditional is particularly salient in terms of the role of the US First Lady who is both public and private wife and citizen. They analysed the case of Hillary Clinton who is thought to have been the first to balance her first lady role with that of public advocacy for her chosen political issues. They argue that news coverage of Hillary Clinton particularly during the Whitewater hearings, constructed her involvement in both the private and public spheres as problematic in a way that it would never be if she were a man. News coverage repeatedly questioned whether her role as a lawyer and policy advocate would conflict with her role as a mother and wife. Women like Clinton who transgress gender norms by choosing to occupy both the public and private sphere are viewed with suspicion and accused of wielding undue power (ibid).

Similar accusations have been levelled at British Prime Minister's wife Cherie Booth, who received conflicting representations in news coverage during her husband's premiership. Clinton and Booth are similar in a number of ways, both women deviate from the traditional First Lady roles described by Winfield (1997) and both women were keen to maintain their own surnames despite news coverage tending to emphasise their married name (Page, 2003). Seymour-Ure (2003) also notes that Cherie Booth is the first wife of a British Prime Minister to have an assistant who acts as a press secretary appointed to her by Number 10 which implies her role has become more akin to that of a First Lady. Stanyer and Harmer (2010) found that Cherie Blair had been mentioned in significantly more newspaper items over Blair's period in office than her two predecessors, Norma Major and Dennis Thatcher. Reyes (2003) argues that Booth was subjected to a high volume of hostile coverage from conservative tabloid newspapers which characterised

her as an excessively influential woman who manipulated her husband's position for her own benefit. This reached new heights during the so-called 'Cheriegate' scandal of 2002.

Reyes (2003) and Adcock (2010) both argue that the mediated representation of Booth and their children are central to the mediation of Blair's public image and therefore any criticism of her is by extension a criticism of her husband. Blair sought to portray his wife as an ordinary working mother in order to enhance his own ordinariness (Reyes, 2003) and as such Booth was presented as an ordinary working mother who understood the issues and concerns of other working mothers (Busby, 2009). Page (2003) analysed the naming patterns used to identify Booth in news coverage and discovered that a greater number of names referred to her marriage status than her professional status meaning that labelling her 'Mrs Blair', 'PM's wife' and 'Cherie Blair' dominated the coverage portraying her role as primarily domestic. Such portrayals were also evident in electoral coverage; during the 1997 General Election, Adcock (2010) argues that news coverage of wives like Cherie Booth (and indeed Norma Major) were presented as "silent, secondary figures, loyally accompanying their husbands on the campaign trail" (p.146) in newspaper coverage of the 1997 General Election. The suggestion here is that contemporary political leaders' wives ought to be loyal companions rather than overtly political actors to avoid criticism in the press which might detract from their husband's careers. Higgins and Smith (forthcoming) argue that the wives of party leaders were presented in a similar way during the 2010 British general election. The authors discuss the deliberate marketing of Sarah Brown and Samantha Cameron during the election and argue that these women were mobilised in an attempt to counteract the negative aspects of their husband's personalities. Samantha Cameron was constructed as middle class and ordinary in order to make her husband seem less upper class and out of touch; while Sarah Brown was intended to humanise her husband by making him appear more warm and caring than his reputation gave him credit for. Winfield and Friedman (2003) make similar conclusions about the representation of the wives of candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency in the 2000 US election. The authors analysed the news coverage of Laura Bush, Tipper Gore, Lynne Cheney and Hadassah Lieberman and their results suggest that three of the four women were introduced as loyal escorts to their husbands on the campaign trail. Furthermore, the wives were central to the campaign as either

compensating for perceived weaknesses of their husband's or fulfilling some other campaign need. Winfield and Friedman suggest that the previously outspoken and high profile women like Gore and Cheney re-cast themselves in this passive and traditional escort role in order to appear unthreatening. They characterised this as the "anti-Hillary" (ibid: 556) frame.

Campaigns and Elections

As has been demonstrated in the sections above, there is much literature that directly addresses the role played by, and representation of elite women such as politicians and journalists. This focus on elite women is obviously an important contribution to the study of women, politics and media and yet; there is an important dimension that has not been significantly addressed – the representation of women as ordinary citizens. Although there has been much scholarship pertaining to the representation of women in media texts generally and moreover the attention paid to women voters and their concerns by political scientists is impressive; what is lacking is a connection between the two literatures which looks at the portrayal of women in mediated political contexts like elections.

Contemporary

There are of course notable exceptions which will now be addressed in more detail. Evidence from media coverage of the 1992 election suggests that despite claims from all three mainstream political parties that they were pursuing the female vote, the campaign was "an almost exclusively male production" (Billig et al, 1993: 114) and on the rare occasion that women did appear it tended to be in traditional roles. Stephenson (1998: 7) also notes that the coverage of the 1992 election marginalised women and quotes Labour MP Angela Eagle's remark that "it was like a glass trapdoor opened up and all of a sudden all the women disappeared."

The bulk of literature in this area however takes the 1997 General Election as its starting point. This election was deemed an important one for women in politics; both in their capacity as voters and as elected members of Parliament. Adcock (2010) found that women were more likely to be represented in the "ordinary women" category in the coverage than as politicians or relatives. Voters were furthermore most likely to be found in "vox pop-style discourse or on-the-stump reports, designed to provide textual 'colour' or representative voter opinion." (Adcock, 2010: 148). The wider representation of women also cast them in narrow and stereotypical roles which reinforce social inequalities. Adcock argues that improving the media presence of women as journalists, news subjects and sources, is vital to help improve women's political representation.

The so-called 'Worcester Woman' identified as the archetypal middle class swing voter received much attention in political commentary on the 1997 election and crucially from the three main political parties (Peake, 1997). Each party produced specific campaign documents or a dedicated section in their manifestos that were aimed at women voters. The Labour Party also sought to target women's magazines as an important means of communicating to women voters (Deacon et al, 2007b). Despite these unprecedented levels of attention, Peake (1997) argues that women's issues were much less visible during the campaign as although all parties incorporated women into the political agenda in some form, these issues remained marginal debates rather than becoming part of the mainstream campaign. In addition, although numbers of women candidates were at their peak in this election; they were scarcely noticeable in the national campaign, with just 7% of media appearances by politicians being made by female candidates during the entire campaign. Peake concludes that despite the increased attention given to women in the political sphere, any substantive discussion of women's priorities or female candidates were conspicuously absent during this campaign. The Fawcett Society's monitoring of the campaign concurred with this reading and added that women voters were trivialised by mainstream newspapers which chose to focus on whether women disapproved of Tony Blair's haircut rather than their political concerns (Stephenson, 1998). This is supported by Ross (2002) whose content analysis of broadcast news that sought to monitor the gendered dimension of the 1997 campaign revealed that only 3 out of 136 news items in

one week addressed the issues that women themselves claim to care about; such as gender equality and the family (Tibballs and Adcock, 1997).

This trend continued during the 2001 General Election where once again women were largely invisible from the political campaign and the mainstream policy agenda which lead some journalists to complain that women politicians were rarely allowed to speak on behalf of their parties (Wring, 2002). The main parties produced election material intended to appeal to women voters, with the Liberal Democrats even producing a separate manifesto directed at women. Once again such attentions failed to translate into any kind of substantive engagement with women's political agendas in the main thrust of the campaign (Ward, 2002). One notable example of a woman being prominent in the media coverage happened when a member of the public, Sharron Storer criticised Labour's handling of the NHS in a filmed conversation with Tony Blair (Wring, 2002). The 2001 campaign was also notable because the results heralded the first reduction in the numbers of women being elected for over twenty years (Childs, 2004).

The period that preceded the 2005 election hinted that it would be a more feminised campaign than 2001 because women's issues and female politicians were fore grounded; however it was not to be (Campbell and Lovenduski, 2005). Childs (2005) argues that once again women politicians were conspicuous by their absence and argued using largely anecdotal evidence that more media attention was given to the wives of the main party leaders than about what each party claimed they would do for women voters. Women's magazines once again became an important media for gaining access to female voters (Deacon et al, 2007b). Conservative leader Michael Howard's interview in *Cosmopolitan,* where he talked about late term abortion, threatened to make it an election issue but once the campaign proper started this was soon forgotten (Childs, 2005).

Throughout the campaign, women voters became increasingly pigeon-holed in media coverage. 'Worcester woman' of course made an appearance along with, 'let-down woman', 'do-it-all woman' (Campbell and Lovenduski, 2005) and 'School Gate Mums' (Deacon et al, 2007b). This emphasis on labelling women voters allowed them to be constructed as a specific target group whose votes needed to be courted by the parties in

order to win the election. This suggests that women were being constructed as passive recipients of political messages rather than actively engaged citizens. On the other hand, 'men' as a specific group of voters were generally absent from both the campaign and media reporting of it (Campbell and Lovenduski, 2005). This general theme of women being constructed as an interest group was pervasive in the news coverage but failed to recognise that female citizens simultaneously occupy an infinite number of social categories that might influence their political priorities. Research conducted by Loughborough University found that out of all the politicians who were featured in the campaign coverage 91% were male and just 9% were female (Deacon et al, 2005), once again showing that women continue to be marginalised in media coverage of contemporary British election campaigns. The Loughborough study also showed that of all actors (voters, relatives and politicians inclusive) present in their entire sample of media coverage of the 2005 election just 14% were women. Furthermore, this matches exactly the percentage of female actors present in the 2001 sample (Deacon et al, 2006). This adds further weight to the argument that women are marginal figures in British electoral coverage.

Douglas Vavrus (2002) contends that the most common construction of women voters during the 1996 United States presidential election was that of the "Soccer Mom", a group of swing voters who were crucial to the success of either presidential candidate. The study argues that this represents a "discursive connection between women voters – reduced to a demographic category characterised by women's relationships to their children – and an ideology of consumerism that reduces electoral politics to personal choices around product consumption and 'lifestyle'." (Douglas Vavrus, 2000, p.193). This propensity to focus on marketing demographics is also evident in the focus upon 'Worcester Woman' during the 1997 election in Britain. Since 'Soccer Moms' became the most visible symbol of political women in the mainstream television and print media, women became actively associated with the domestic, private sphere and this contributed to them being construed as passive consumers of politics rather than active citizens (Douglas Vavrus, 2002). The mediation of women in this narrow fashion allowed news narratives to proscribe what women voters could legitimately express political concern about which served to reduce their political power even further.

Historical

As has just been demonstrated, much of the research that deals with women, media and politics focuses on the last twenty years, which was when scholarly interest in these issues began. There is limited research into the way that the news media have represented women in politics historically. Research which does address this area has mostly been completed by historians who have focused on the women's movement, the campaign for suffrage and early women party activists or occasionally MPs (see Law, 2000: Graves, 1994; Nym Mayhall, 2003; Musolf, 1999). This means that there is a lack of work that maps the way women as voters have been represented in media discourses over time (Adcock, 2010). The limited work that has been done which focuses on the British case specifically looks at the interwar years, just after women gained the right to vote in 1918.

Prior to the Great War popular newspapers were divided over the issue of female suffrage; so that for example the *Daily Herald* was largely supportive of the aims of the suffragettes whilst the *Daily News* was sympathetic to their principles but disapproved of the violent methods adopted by the Women's Social and Political Union (Bingham, 2004). Both Bingham (2004) and Melman (1988) cite the conspicuous contribution of British women to the war effort as an important factor in persuading the sceptical newspapers to support the call for women's enfranchisement in 1918.

This would soon change, however, when young women in particular became criticised for allegedly taking jobs which were perceived as meant for men and contributing to the moral decline of the nation with new and dangerous behaviour. These attitudes were accompanied by legislation that sought to drive women out of the work force and back into the home so that their returning male counterparts could take up their jobs again. Those female workers who had found themselves the subject of fierce praise for doing their duty during the war soon became transformed in the public imagination as "ruthless self-seekers depriving men and their dependents of a livelihood" (Bruley, 1999: 61).

During the interwar period the popular press actively included women in their political discourse and encouraged them to participate in elections (Bingham, 2004). Despite this inclusive discourse, women voters were often stereotyped and patronised in much

political commentary. These stereotypes largely constructed women as domestic and therefore concerned about child welfare and housing. The priorities that were ascribed to women voters and the way in which the newspapers 'feminised' their political rhetoric, varied according to the political persuasion of the paper (Bingham, 2004). The traditionally conservative press placed the housewife or so-called 'domestic chancellor' at the centre of their feminised political discourse. These housewives were seen as being responsible for family expenditure and so were constructed as being in favour of low prices, low taxes and economic stability. The left leaning press preferred to place more emphasis on mothers concerned for the welfare of their families and the prospects of their children. This construction ascribed women voters with the desire for reform to secure better housing, welfare benefits and improved educational opportunities (ibid.)

Wider political issues were not presented as being of interest to women and they were frequently advised to consider the interests of their families before their own. Bingham (2004) argues that this is because journalists believed that women voters were vastly different from their male counterparts and would therefore have a different political agenda informed solely by gender roles. The popular press developed a new political discourse that was designed to engage with women voters and tended to translate political issues into the language of housewifery and motherhood. Alternatively, this could be characterised as an example of a perceived need to reassert 'normal' traditional values after the disruption of the Great War; resulting in the popular perception of the ideal woman based "more decisively than ever on an ideology of domesticity" (Bruley, 1999: 60). As a result, family life was idealised as the pinnacle of British society where women could achieve fulfilment through the caring for their children and husbands (ibid).

Bingham concludes that;

> "the popular press generated a self-fulfilling prophecy: assuming that women disliked or did not understand political material, they provided little to persuade them otherwise. Women were mobilised only when it was in the papers' own interests, and then they were usually discursively confined to a particular set of women's issues." (ibid: 143).

Furthermore he suggests that the newspapers were even more unclear about the political interests of unmarried, 'modern' young women when they were enfranchised in 1928, so they merely continued to construct women in the same way that they had from the beginning, as housewives and mothers or aspirants to these roles.

Melman (1988) outlines four key themes that dominated the coverage of young women in the 1920s. Firstly that there too many young women competing for a reduced number of male partners; these were labelled 'surplus' and eventually 'superfluous' women. The second theme is the competition between men and women in the economic sphere. Thirdly, the physical appearance of young women and the final theme was the perceived perils of enfranchising women under the age of thirty. Melman (1988) argues that women voters were at first welcomed into the political sphere by popular newspapers of the period before being openly campaigned against, by the *Daily Mail* in particular, when lowering the voting age for women was proposed during 1927-28.

The author suggests that the increased involvement of women in the economic sphere and eventually the suggestion of reforming the franchise to include young women contributed to them being perceived as threatening to the social order. It is in this context that the *Daily Mail's* campaign to prevent the equalisation of the franchise must be understood. The campaign used alarmist and misogynistic language that sought to convey young women as untrustworthy contenders for voting rights. Melman (1988) argues that the *Daily Mail's* campaign was the result of a decade of press hostility towards young, unmarried women.

Bingham (2002) rejects Melman's assertions about the *Daily Mail* and argues that the reality is more complex and that such accounts, despite offering a strong argument, ignore evidence to the contrary. Apparently, portrayals of irresponsible 'flappers' was only one way that young women were depicted in the *Daily Mail* throughout the decade. Harsh rhetoric about these women's incompetence as voters was, the author contends, largely confined to the editorial and political columns and therefore did not reflect the paper's overall stance upon women. Furthermore, Bingham claims that the *Daily Mail's* campaign to stop the equalisation of the franchise was actually a manifestation of the vehement antisocialism of its owner Lord Rothermere who believed young women would

be more likely to vote for Labour candidates. Since women outnumbered men, allowing them to vote would therefore be disastrous according to Rothermere. Therefore according to this reading of the situation the *Mail's* campaign to prevent the equalisation of the franchise can be seen as an attempt to prevent the threat of socialist government rather than an attack on young unmarried women.

Although it is somewhat limited, the existing literature suggests that during the interwar period women voters received much attention from the popular press; whether this attention was largely negative seems up for debate. What is clear, however, is that although newspapers recognised the importance of including women voters, in practice the presumption that they were interested in particular 'women's issues' such as food prices and child welfare, had the potential to stereotype and restrict the position of women in the mainstream political discourse. Additionally, the authors' accounts of the 'Flapper Vote' campaign demonstrate that there was an apparent lack of trust that younger women would engage with political issues and make decisions accordingly.

Conclusion

What this literature review makes clear is the extent to which the political science literature about women and politics does not engage thoroughly with the way these women are constructed in media discourses which make up the public discussion of politics. The academic literature that deals with the relationship between women, politics and media explores a variety of key themes. The representation of female politicians in news media has been shown to be problematic as these women are often constructed as outsiders who struggle to conform to the dominant expectations of a socially conservative political culture. They are frequently trivialised by having their family lives and physical appearances scrutinised in a way that would never happen to their male colleagues and they are expected to conform to traditional notions of feminine behaviour or they become demonised. Although the experiences of female politicians vary, one thing that is clear is that they are all treated very differently by the news media than their male counterparts. Women generally are also less likely to be used as sources in media stories that favour elite sources over those of ordinary voices. Since women are generally

underrepresented in the upper echelons of most public institutions it is perhaps unsurprising that women are not called upon to speak more. The fact that most news organisations are still dominated by men is surely a factor in this persistent marginalisation of female voices.

Much of the literature about women, politics and media coverage focuses on elite figures such as female politicians and journalists and tends to ignore the ordinary citizen. The small body of work that focuses upon this largely under researched area reveals the media's tendency to focus upon women in their domestic contexts, as mothers or consumers. The limited evidence suggests that women are not being constructed as diverse, intelligent or active citizens.

Moreover, the literature which refers to the way the female relatives of politicians are constructed in media coverage only looks at them in an incidental way as indicators of the increased focus on party leaders or as indicators of the increased personalisation of politics. Furthermore, there has been no systematic analysis or theorisation about the role of female relatives in the British context of political communication.

What is abundantly clear is that there is also a lack of attention to historical representations of women voters and politicians since much of the scholarship focuses upon the last few decades. There is also a lack of literature that looks at the prominence of female relatives in historical perspective and there is no systematic study of mass mediated constructions of women voters over time in the British context. This suggests that the literature about women, media and politics either assumes that the past is not relevant to the present situation or that the results of contemporary analysis are necessarily the same as they always were. Either way, this can only be confirmed by conducting a systematic analysis across time. The work that does take an historical perspective tends to focus on small periods, like Melman (1988) and Bingham (2004). The rest of the thesis will address these omissions by firstly analysing the representation of these three groups in newspaper coverage of the 2010 election and then contextualise the results by analysing the representation of the three groups of women historically between 1918 and 2005.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study aims to find out how women as politicians, voters and relatives are reported in newspaper coverage of elections from 1918 until 2010. It is particularly focused on tracking how women's mediated representation has changed over time. Due to the large sample size, the research takes a mixed method approach so that it is possible to track the changes in representation over time and also to analyse the way that language is used to construct women in electoral discourse. The research combines the use of content analysis and feminist critical discourse analysis to achieve this. There is a burgeoning literature which explores the specific features of, as well as the advantages and drawbacks of these two methods (see Berger, 2000; Deacon et al, 2007a; Gill, 2007; Wimmer and Dominick, 2006) so these issues will not be addressed in great detail here. This chapter will first outline the key research questions of the study before going on to discuss the reasons for choosing the specific methods and will conclude by describing in detail how the research in this thesis was carried out.

Key Questions

The broad concern of this research is to provide an historical analysis of the way women have been constructed in newspaper coverage of elections since 1918 in order to place the gendered representations that have been observed by other feminist scholars into context. All too often it is assumed for example that because contemporary female politicians are marginalised and trivialised in relation to their male counterparts, this has always been true. This research aims to provide empirical evidence to demonstrate that this is not necessarily the case. Previous research into the coverage of General Elections has shown that women can be divided into three distinct groups (Adcock, 2010). These groups are relatives of politicians, politicians and voters. The content analysis was designed to address the following research questions which were generated from the existing literature in this area (see Chapter Two).

- Which women are most prominent and how does this change over time?

- Which policy areas are women most associated with and does this change over time?
- Are women subjected to evaluative coverage and does this change over time?
- Is the coverage of women personalised in terms of references to their physical appearance, age and family roles and does this change over time?
- Are women portrayed as actively engaged in political coverage and does this change over time?
- Are women given a voice in political coverage and does this change over time?

The qualitative analysis on the other hand aimed to look in more detail at the way women were categorised in electoral discourse and the linguistic devices that were used to construct women in politics.

Approach

As mentioned previously, this research combines content analysis and feminist critical discourse analysis to answer the questions above. Content analysis is generally characterised as a quantitative method which enables the researcher to count the instances when certain things occur in a media text, such as the number of times a certain politician is mentioned or how many column inches are dedicated to a specific topic. Gill (2007: 43) suggests that this methodological approach is useful in feminist research because it "measures certain aspects of a media text…it has often been used in feminist research to provide a measure of the kinds of roles which men and women appear in on TV or the kinds of traits they are represented as possessing. Essentially, it involves counting the frequency of particular kinds of portrayals, using a coding framework that has been created and agreed in advance". This approach is particularly effective for this particular project because it allows for the analysis of key characteristics of large bodies of material (Hansen et al, 1998). It is also helpful because it reduces communications phenomena into manageable data from which inferences can be drawn which can then be corroborated by other forms of analysis (Riffe et al, 2005). This study

looks at media content across a longitudinal time frame and accordingly using content analysis offers a "systematic procedure for establishing both what is relatively constant and what might change across that frame" (Deacon et al, 2007a: 139) which makes the method ideally suited for use in this particular research.

Content analysis has been employed in many feminist media studies, the best example of which is the Global Media Monitoring Project which has taken place every five years since 1995, where no fewer than seventy countries systematically analyse one complete day's news output to monitor the representation of women worldwide (Gill, 2007). Content analysis focuses on manifest content only which means that it avoids making inferences about latent content or meaning. This is viewed as one of its main limitations by some critics because it offers only a superficial mode of analysis (Williams, 2003) but for others it is seen as fulfilling scientific ideals by offering a level of objectivity so that the results can be considered reliable and generalisable (van Zoonen, 1994). Deacon et al (2007a) argue that "a degree of evaluation and interpretation applies to all forms of cultural research. For instance, the statistical data produced by media content analysis is very much dependent on the categories selected for coding the material in the first place. There is no infallible checklist for choosing and labelling these categories, and the questions you ask of your material will influence the answers you get and the conclusions you reach. Acknowledging this does not automatically entail dismissing content analysis" (Deacon et al, 2007a: 138). Instead it allows researchers to look at patterns of representation over a given time period by providing a systematic approach because all the material is subjected to the same set of categories. This ensures a reasonable degree of reliability in establishing patterns of coverage and avoids the temptation of choosing material which fit pre-existing arguments. It also allows the research to be repeated and furthermore enables other researchers to replicate the results which advances another means of establishing the validity of the research (Krippendorf, 2003).

Since this research is interested in the way language is used to construct women and their political concerns in electoral discourse, content analysis was not the only method employed. Williams (2003: 158) argues that when content analysis addresses language use it "can only classify and count words, neglecting the ways in which stories or programmes are linguistically constructed" which is why feminist critical discourse

analysis was used to address this aspect of the research. Richardson (2007) notes that content analysis ignores the context that allows for the formation of the content and the use of critical discourse analysis alongside content analysis in this research is intended to reinstate this context in order to understand the way women are represented in election coverage. Both content analysis and critical discourse analysis have also been used successfully in the past for researching the relationships between news, gender and representation (Mendes, 2011). Richardson (2007: 15) argues that CDA can "offer *interpretations* of the meaning of texts rather than just quantifying textual features and deriving meaning from this; situate *what* is written or said in the *context* in which it occurs, rather than just summarising patterns or regularities in texts; and argue that textual meaning is *constructed* through an interaction between producer, text and consumer". Therefore combining this approach with content analysis allows the researcher to garner both the bigger picture in terms of how women's representation has changed over time and crucially also the way language use subtly contributes to the reinforcement of gender relations.

The term discourse is used differently by different researchers and traditions just as there is no one way of approaching the analysis of discourse but all share an interest in the critique of ideology and power in society (Wodak and Meyer, 2001). CDA is an approach which analyses the way that individuals and institutions, in this case journalists use language (Richardson, 2007). The function of concentrating on the study of language is to expose assumptions and values that are implicit in the construction of even relatively simple grammatical forms, such as news headlines (Deacon et al, 2007a). This kind of analysis brings to attention different facets of the structures of media texts and attempts to track the means by which language use in the media contributes to the continued production of social values, identities and relations (ibid). In this case, the way in which news discourses reproduce ideas about what it means to be male and what it means to be female. Fowler (1991: 95) notes that "women are constituted in discourse as a special group with its own peculiar characteristics, set out from the population as a whole for exceptional evaluation" and therefore it is important to analyse how this is achieved in political news coverage in order to challenge these discourses; or as Lazar (2005: 10) puts it "the task of feminist CDA is to examine how power and dominance are discursively

produced and/or resisted in a variety of ways through textual representations of gendered social practices".

Feminists have demonstrated that language is a deeply gendered social construct in a variety of ways. Fowler (1991) argues that this reinforces the subordination of women. This is achieved through a variety of linguistic techniques that designate women as 'other'. These features include the use of male expressions to include references to women such as using the word 'mankind'. Similarly, the use of the masculine pronoun 'he' to refer to women in a generic context, for example when the expression 'each to his own' is applied to women. Fowler (1991) also suggests that the use of marked expressions containing extra words to refer to women – 'lady doctor' or 'actress' for instance – is another example of constituting women as 'other' and therefore extraordinary. Moreover, the use of diminutive or juvenile forms to refer to or address women such as 'girl' and so forth means that women are not given equal status to their male counterparts while the overlexicalisation of women, which refers to there being many more terms to apply to women than men, many of which are sexually abusive or trivializing further demonstrates the sexist nature of language (Fowler, 1991). This is significant because the language used to describe women in electoral coverage has the potential to reinforce existing social equalities between men and women and present them as natural. Employing a feminist critical discourse analytic approach is particularly useful for this research because "language provides names for categories, and so helps to set their boundaries and relationships; and discourse allows these names to be spoken and written frequently, so contributing to the apparent reality and currency of the categories" (Fowler, 1991: 94) which can perpetuate socially constructed differences between the sexes.

Feminist critical discourse analysis aims to expose the subtle and complex ways that taken-for-granted social assumptions and hegemonic power relations are discursively constructed, perpetuated and challenged" (Lazar, 2005). It presumes that "gender is understood as an ideological structure that divides people into two classes, men and women, based on a hierarchical relation of domination and subordination, respectively. Based upon sexual difference, the gender structure imposes a social dichotomy of labour and human traits for women and men, the substance of which varies according to time

and place" (Lazar, 2005: 7). This highlights the need to establish whether women's representation in election coverage has changed over time because "discourses are historical and can only be understood in relation to their context" (Titscher et al, 2000, 146).

The importance of conducting longitudinal studies of news material is further reinforced by Mendes (2011) who argues that "tracking the news over time and space allows us to map changing ideologies and journalistic practices that could otherwise be thought of as permanent, unchanged or unchangeable" (Mendes, 2011: 23). The assumption that news texts must always have constructed women in similar ways to contemporary reportage is problematic and yet seems to be implicit in much of the discussion about women's mediated representation. The UK and its relatively unbroken electoral cycle of democratic elections provide an effective time scale for a study of this nature.

It is important for media studies to be historically aware because analysing historical texts shows that contemporary journalism is similar in structure to news from twenty or even fifty years ago which demonstrates that journalism has developed over a long period of time (Curran and Seaton, 2010) and therefore should be studied in this context. Furthermore because news reporting itself is almost exclusively focused on the latest events and the circumstances surrounding them media studies ought to counter this "present-centred viewpoint" (Deacon et al, 2007a: 170) so that a long-term perspective on events can be developed and understood. Since news does not exist in a vacuum and events almost always have some connection to what has gone previously, it is essential that scholars recognise links to the past to develop a better understanding of the present. In this respect it is crucial that contemporary developments are contextualised properly in order to make them meaningful and to understand their potential implications.

Taking a longitudinal approach to British elections in order to analyse the representation of women is useful because it places the construction of women in political discourse into context. This is achieved through the use of content analysis which enables this research to track the key changes over time. Critical discourse analysis contributes to the study of media texts by helping to demonstrate the various ways in which media language embodies relations of power and authority and their gendered implications for society. It

is hoped that using these methods together will strengthen the analysis by combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to the study of women in newspaper coverage. The practicalities of gathering and analysing the data in this research will now be discussed in more detail.

Sample

This study chose to focus only on newspaper coverage for a number of reasons; the first being that in order to make the results comparable across time and media, there needs to be consistency between sources. Since there was no radio coverage of elections until 1924, when party leaders were only allowed to broadcast one direct address to the audience each (Beers, 2010), it is clear that there would be no radio coverage of the previous three elections to sample for such a project. Furthermore, television channels did not cover general elections until 1959 (Rosenbaum, 1997); therefore, the only media which covered the entire sample period in question are newspapers. Additionally newspaper coverage continues to be an important part of any election campaign and therefore analysis of such media remains essential.

In order to track any continuity and changes in the coverage of women during General Election coverage, this research uses the same newspapers across the entire sample period. These newspapers are the *Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, the Daily Mail, Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Herald* which was re-launched as *the Sun* in 1964. These titles were chosen because they are regarded as opinion formers and have also been published throughout the sample period which allows for comparison across time. They also reflect the British political spectrum with the *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Mail* representing the centre-right and *The Guardian* representing the centre-left. The *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Herald* changed their political persuasions during the sample period, the *Mirror* having started out as a Conservative newspaper before becoming Labour supporting during the Second World War (Pugh, 1998). By contrast the *Daily Herald/Sun* went in the opposite direction. Founded in 1912 as a Labour supporting daily, it came under the editorial and financial control of the Labour Party and its Trade Union Congress allies in 1922 (Beers, 2010). Due to its lack of commercial success, it re-emerged in 1964 as the *Sun* and

eventually became a more populist title following its purchase by Rupert Murdoch in 1969 and subsequently embraced the Conservatives during the run-up to the 1979 General Election (Temple, 1996).

The study used newspapers to gather the sample material rather than just news stories in the form of text that can be found on digital archives like Nexus. This method was preferred for a number of reasons. Firstly, and most importantly, text based digital news sources such as Nexus do not contain newspapers that were printed before the 1980s so in order to have access to earlier newspapers and furthermore maintain consistency, newspapers were coded. Secondly, coding newspapers allowed the study to count political cartoons and when items were accompanied by photographs. Coding newspapers was also preferred due to the validity and reliability problems that have been associated with digital archives such as Nexus (see Deacon, 2007; Weaver and Bimber, 2008).

The *Daily Mirror* and *The Guardian* were coded from online digital databases which provided full page layouts whilst the other newspapers come from microfilm collections and physical newspapers stored at Loughborough University. The few that were not available through these means were located in the British Library of Newspapers, Colindale[1].

The two content analyses in this thesis were sampled slightly differently in that the 2010 study looked at the four weeks of campaign coverage in the run up to the election whilst the historical study only looked at one week before each election. The 2010 content analysis focuses on the four weeks of newspaper coverage before the election starting on the 8th April 2010 up to and including polling day on the 6th May 2010. In the historical sample the six days of coverage up to and including polling day were coded for each election (since Sunday newspapers were not included in the analysis). There are three exceptions to this. Firstly, the *Daily Herald* is excluded from the 1918 data since during the Great War it was only published weekly which limits the comparability with other elections. Secondly, due to strike action by news print workers during the 1970 election, there were no newspapers published between 10th and 13th June 1970. This means two

[1] Newspapers sourced from Colindale were the *Daily Telegraph* for the February 1974, 1983, 1987, 1992, 1997 and 2001 elections and the *Daily Mail* for 1983.

sample days were missing for all titles and therefore the newspapers from the 8th and 9th June were substituted in order to maintain comparability across time. Finally, there was no *Daily Telegraph* printed on 27th February 1974 due to industrial action so this was not coded. The exact coding dates for each election are included in Appendix A.

A week of coverage preceding each election was chosen in order to keep the study manageable and also because it seems likely that the vast majority of the most salient issues for each campaign would be dealt with in the coverage during the final week of the campaign. Four weeks were coded for the 2010 campaign because since this was the most recent election it ought to provide the most up to date indication of the way newspapers construct women in their election coverage, so a more detailed analysis would provide a starting point for historical comparison.

Analysis

When analysing the historical data, all items which were about the election were read through. Short notes were taken about the qualitative content of the article paying particular attention to the language used to construct women and its ideological consequences. It was then coded according to the content analysis coding schedule, outlined below. Once all items had been coded quantitatively, around 11% of the items were selected for qualitative analysis by referring to the notes made during the content analysis stage. Items were selected from across all newspapers and all elections and were chosen if they were deemed to be typical examples of the coverage of the particular election they were drawn from. These items were then subjected to a close reading in order to conduct the discourse analysis.

This was carried out in the same way for the 2010 sample except that all of the items that were coded for content were subjected to qualitative analysis (with the exception of standalone photographs and political cartoons).

The study identified a total of 4427 items which met the terms of inclusion. 4071 of these were drawn from the historical sample and 356 were drawn from the 2010 sample. The

historical sample items which were qualitatively analysed came from across the five newspapers and all elections. Table 1 shows the breakdown of items:

Table 3.1: Items subjected to discourse analysis (historical sample)

Newspaper	Number of Items
Daily Mirror	94
The Guardian	99
Daily Telegraph	92
Daily Mail	83
Daily Herald/ The Sun	80
Total	448

Coding Schedule

This thesis contains two separate content analyses although they are based on the same coding framework. The entire newspaper sample was scanned for items that were mainly about the General Election.

Terms of inclusion

Items were only coded if they met two basic criteria, firstly they must be explicitly about the General Election. Items containing a casual reference to the election but were mainly about another subject were not included. Secondly, they must contain a significant reference to a woman. A significant reference means that the woman appears in at least two sentences within the item. Examples of items which were coded include: an item entitled "No, I'm not glamorous says Labour girl Gloria" that appeared on page eight of the *Daily Mail* on 17th April 2010 which offered a profile of the Labour candidate Gloria de Piero and "Mum's Labour pains" (*The Sun*, 4th May 2010: 28-29) which asked a panel of ordinary mothers their views on the election. Items that only briefly mentioned or quoted a woman were excluded from the sample on the grounds that women were not a

significant actor or subject of the item. This enables an analysis of what proportion of the election coverage features women in significant detail.

Unitisation

The unit of study for the purpose of this research is a complete item, which is noticeably demarcated from other items on the page by a headline, a by-line or by some other visual clue.

Variables

The content analysis recorded for each item the newspaper title, the date and page number in order to identify items for the qualitative aspect of the study. The type of item was also recorded as an article, an article with accompanying photograph, a letter, a cartoon or a stand-alone photograph. Stand-alone photographs were defined when there is no article in close proximity which makes reference to it or to any of the women depicted.

Items then had the type of woman they predominantly featured recorded, politicians, voters or female relatives of politicians. Politicians were identified by some explicit reference to their standing for election or as a member of the House of Lords; female relatives were identified by an explicit reference to their relationship with someone who was standing for election and voters were identified by their status as ordinary women who occupy neither of these categories. On the small proportion of occasions where there were more than one group of women present in the item, the item was designated as being about the group of women who were the dominant group in the item. For example, an item entitled "Women voters are 'discerning' rather than floating" (*The Guardian* 17th April 2010: 12) featured an interview with Harriet Harman. She was quoted at length but the item was coded as being about women voters rather than politicians due to the level of detailed content about voters and their behaviour. Similarly an item entitled "Where are all the women?" (*The Guardian* 10th April 2010: 10-11) discussed how

the main parties were relying on the leaders' wives rather than female politicians for campaign coverage. This was coded as being about politicians rather than the relatives because their absence was seen as the motivation for the item. Grouping the items in this way means that it is possible to discern which group of women featured most prominently in the coverage. Any reference to the Queen was not coded since she is not, related to a politician, an elected political figure and she does not vote and furthermore such references were extremely rare. All politicians and relatives who were named in each item had their names recorded with their corresponding item number.

Next the broad themes of items were recorded; up to two themes were coded for each item. Themes which referenced a particular policy area were put down as the first theme while themes that referred to the process of the election were put down as secondary themes. A full list of theme codes appears in Appendix B. The second theme variable was not systematically analysed because just 36.6% of items had more than one theme and furthermore the inter-coder reliability test (Appendix C) showed that there was less than 90% agreement between coders.

The sex of the author of the item was also recorded. The items were coded as having a female author, a male author, mixed authorship (meaning that there was more than one author of different sexes) or unspecified authorship when there was no by-line given. This was coded in order to ascertain whether women journalists were more likely to write about women or whether the sex of the author made a difference to the representation of women offered in the item. This variable has not been systematically analysed in this study because just 36.1% of items had an identified author and most of these came from later elections so the change over time would have been difficult to capture.

The research also recorded whether or not the newspaper item had made an explicit evaluation of the woman or women present. This was recorded as either negative, positive, mixed or no evaluation made.

There were three variables which related to the personalised coverage of the women present. The content analysis simply recorded whether the item made mention of the physical appearance or age of the woman or women present or whether it mentioned any of their family members or their role within a family. Female relatives like wives were

not coded in this way since their identification as relatives of politicians was incumbent on there being a mention of their relation which renders this variable redundant in their case.

The penultimate variable was only coded where the category of woman present in the item was a voter. These women were recorded as being either actively engaged or as passive recipients of political messages. Women were coded as active when they were depicted as attending an election meeting, discussing their views and opinions, talking to politicians on the campaign trail or in some way expressing some engagement with the election. All other women were coded as passively constructed.

The final variable recorded whether or not the woman or women in the item were quoted or not or whether they had their remarks summarised by the journalist or not. This was intended to measure the extent to which women are given a voice in the newspaper coverage of elections.

Inter-coder reliability

Content analysis is hugely dependent on the consistency with which each category is coded. Although all items in this study were coded by the author, in order to ensure that the categories were rigorously adhered to throughout the data gathering period an inter-coder reliability test was performed by another coder. Such tests are designed to ensure that the same results would be achieved or reproduced by other researchers (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006). Approximately ten per cent of the sample items (400 from the historical study and 40 from the 2010 study) were coded by another person in order to check the reliability of the coding schedule. These items were drawn from the *Daily Mirror* and the *Guardian*. The full results appear in Appendix C. Inter-coder reliability was above 90% for all items except the 2nd theme category which was not used in the analysis as a result.

Chapter 4: "The most sexist election since the 1950s"?[2] The 2010 Campaign

In the months leading up to the 2010 General Election, women were everywhere. In particular there was some discussion about Cameron's use of 'A' Lists to improve the selection of women and minority candidates and women voters who used the website Mumsnet were tipped as being the next big target group for political parties. When parliament was dissolved and the election began in earnest however, women seemed to disappear from the agenda of most news coverage. This lack of representation is implied by the title of this chapter which quotes a newspaper that also emphasises the importance of taking a longitudinal perspective to election coverage. The introduction of the very first televised leaders' debates captured the imagination of the press, with one in four election items making reference to them (Deacon and Wring, 2011). These debates were strictly masculine affairs being contested by all male party leaders and moderated by all male television hosts. Women were relegated to the role of audience members, allowed to ask questions but not to respond. According to Deacon and Wring (2011) just 1% of election items in the press and television news featured coverage of so-called 'women's issues'. One woman who did capture the attention of the press was Gillian Duffy whose encounter with Gordon Brown in Rochdale was a rare example of a woman voter's intervention in the campaign being widely reported and arguably provided the "most memorable moment" (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2010: 176) of the campaign.

This chapter will outline the findings from the content study of the 2010 General Election by first presenting some data about the prominence of each group of women in the news coverage. It will then analyse the coverage of voters using Lewis et al's (2005) continuum of political engagement outlined in Chapter Two; before going on to analyse the representation of relatives and politicians.

[2] *Daily Mail*, 17th April 2010, p.45

Prominence

An analysis of the newspaper data reveals that of the 2951 individual news items that made more than a passing reference to the General Election that were counted in the six newspapers just 356, or 12.1%, featured women prominently (in more than two sentences).

The largest category of women represented, by far were voters who were featured in 45.5% of the 356 items. Politicians, on the other hand were the smallest category represented, appearing as the main subject or actor in just 23% of items about women. The remaining 31.5% of items focused upon the wives or other female relatives of politicians. Furthermore, 92.9% of the relatives' coverage was about the three main party leaders' wives. This means that 3.8% of all General Election news reported was about politicians' relatives whilst the representation of politicians was confined to just 2.8% of the overall coverage. Women voters were represented in just 5.5% of all news coverage of the election. These results are revealing because they serve to emphasise the extent to which women as citizens and political actors were marginalised in the discussion of the election. Such limited representation qualifies notions that women have made significant advances towards equality given that their concerns and opinions are so marginal in the press' political discourse.

Table 4.1: Percentage of items about each group of women 2010

Category	Number of Items	Percentage of items about women	Percentage of election coverage
Voters	162	45.5	5.5
Politicians	82	23	2.8
Relatives	112	31.5	3.8
Total	356	100	12.1

Across newspapers, the *Daily Telegraph* had the largest number of items about women (101) but the *Daily Mail* had the highest proportion of items about women as a percentage of their total election items. In total 17.2% of their news items featured

women in at least two full sentences. This is somewhat tempered by the fact that 43.5% of its coverage of women (30 items out of 69) was about relatives compared to 34.8% of items being about voters and 21.7% about politicians. The *Guardian* featured the smallest proportion of items about women at only 9.3% of their total election coverage which was significantly below that of the other newspapers. The other four newspapers featured similar proportions of women in their election coverage, as the table below indicates.

Table 4.2: Items about women in each newspaper 2010

	Daily Mirror	*The Guardian*	*Daily Telegraph*	*Daily Mail*	*The Sun*
Items about women	51	83	101	69	52
Items about election	461	889	796	401	404
% of total coverage	11.1	9.3	12.7	17.2	12.9

Table 4.3: Number and Percentage of Items about each group of women 2010

Newspaper	*Daily Mirror*		*The Guardian*		*Daily Telegraph*		*Daily Mail*		*The Sun*	
	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%
Voters	29	56.9	33	39.8	45	44.5	24	34.8	31	59.6
Politicians	9	17.6	25	30.1	23	22.8	15	21.7	10	19.2
Relatives	13	25.5	25	30.1	33	32.7	30	43.5	11	21.2
Total	51	100	83	100	101	100	69	100	52	100

The high volume of coverage that the relatives of politicians received is particularly significant. The *Daily Mail* dedicated almost half of its coverage about women to the relatives (43.5%). By contrast, the *Sun* had the lowest number of items about the relatives which made up just 21.2% of their coverage of women. This is interesting because as a

tabloid or popular title, one might expect the *Sun* to thrive on this celebrity style coverage and yet it did not feature as much coverage as the other newspapers. The quality newspapers (*Daily Telegraph* and *Guardian*) actually had a higher proportion of coverage of the relatives than their popular counterparts (except the *Daily Mail*.) This is an interesting development in some respects since this sort of personalised coverage is usually associated with popular or middle market titles. On the other hand, since the two main parties were actively employing the wives of their party leaders in the election campaign it is unsurprising that they received some attention (Higgins and Smith, forthcoming). The focus of most of these items was on the wives of the three main party leaders, Sarah Brown, Samantha Cameron and Miriam Gonzalez Durantez. 104 out of 112 items (or 92.9% of the coverage about the relatives of politicians) featured one of these three women or a combination of them. Sarah Brown and Samantha Cameron appeared almost daily. Arguably the most interesting aspect of this coverage is the fact that with the exception of the *Guardian*, all the newspapers in the sample featured more coverage of the relatives than politicians and the *Guardian* afforded relatives an equal amount of coverage as politicians. The *Daily Mail* actually devoted about twice as many items to photographs and discussion about the relatives than it did to politicians; 43.5% of its items were about the relatives whilst mere 21.7% mentioned politicians. The *Guardian*, therefore offered the highest proportion of stories about female politicians with 30.1% of its items falling into this category. The *Daily Mirror* by contrast had the lowest proportion of coverage with only 17.6% of its items about women being dedicated to female political representatives.

Items discussing ordinary women were the largest category of women, making up almost half of the total coverage of women. The two popular titles *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror*, featured the highest proportion of ordinary women with 59.6% and 56.9% of items respectively being about voters. Much of the election coverage in these newspapers took a personal view of political issues so there were stories about the perceived inadequacies of the NHS or 'vox pop' style items asking voters to outline their main political concerns. The *Daily Mail* contained the lowest proportion of coverage about ordinary voters at just 34.8% of its overall election coverage about women.

Voters: Subjects or Citizens?

The largest category of women represented in the sample was that of voters. This may be seen as a positive state of affairs from a feminist perspective since it shows that female citizenship has some presence in the electoral discourse. This finding offers some support to the findings from existing research which suggests that women are more likely to be represented as ordinary voters whilst men are more likely to be represented in positions of authority in news texts (Ross, 2007). Despite the presence of women voters in the discourse, the quality of their representation was variable.

The coverage of voters constructs women in two distinct ways. Women were either constructed as: subjects of politics and policies or as citizens who express opinions about or actively intervene in the election (see also below). Interestingly, the items which represented women as citizens in the election represented the largest category accounting for 101 out of the 162 items (or 62.3%) whilst the remaining 37.7% construct women as subjects of policies and politics.

Table 4.4: Items about voters constructing them as subjects and citizens 2010

Category of Voter	Number of items	% of Items about voters
Subjects	61	37.7
Citizens	101	62.3
Total	162	100

Although the predominance of women as actively politically engaged could be construed as an indicator of political efficacy; it is important to note that 46 out of these 101 items were dedicated to the discussion of the initial encounter between, and subsequent consequences, of Gordon Brown's unfortunate remarks about voter Gillian Duffy (see later for further explanation and analysis of this incident). The high volume of coverage that this particular incident provoked seems to have exaggerated the number of items that constructed women as actively intervening in the election. Items that constructed other women as active citizens make up 26 of the 162 items about women or 16%. This means that had the Gillian Duffy incident not occurred, the largest proportion of the

coverage would have constructed women as subjects rather than citizens. Table 4.5 shows the same information as Table 4.4 with the Gillian Duffy items removed.

Table 4.5: Breakdown of Voters (excluding Gillian Duffy items)

Category of Voter	Number of Items	% of Items about voters
Subjects	61	52.6
Citizens	55	47.4
Total	116	100

Although this undermines the initially positive finding, women actively intervening in the campaign still accounted for a significant proportion of items about voters. This presents a more positive picture than might have been expected.

The constructions of women as subjects manifested themselves in items which discussed women as a discrete voting block; items that purported to show the consequences of policy decisions for women and a few items where women were merely passive bystanders on the campaign trail. On the other hand, citizens tended to be present in items that invited women to react to or assess the campaign, for example items where panels of readers gave their verdict on certain policies or the televised leaders' debates. Citizens also appeared in items that allowed individual women to discuss issues that concern them; as voters who intervened in the election by actively campaigning for certain issues or items that detailed specific voter interventions on the campaign trail, such as the Gillian Duffy incident. Although these last two categories of items tended to show women as actively engaged in the election, their agency seems to have been confined to specific spheres which blunts their effectiveness as representations of ordinary voters, which will be discussed later in the chapter.

Subjects

Lewis et al (2005) note that news focuses predominantly on the powerful and therefore ordinary people are only interesting when they are witnesses and bystanders who are

victims of crimes and natural disasters. This focus on elites also has gendered implications since elite actors in news stories tend to be male (Ross, 2007). Lewis et al (2005) also suggest that journalists use remarks such as "some people say that..." or "many people think" which allow them to speak on behalf of ordinary people rather than for themselves. This allows them to refer to views which exist in the public sphere without needing to identify who holds these opinions or how widespread they might be. The women who appeared as subjects in the news coverage of the 2010 election fulfil a similar function by allowing newspapers to refer to the political concerns of women in general.

In keeping with previous elections, voters were routinely discussed in relation to their likelihood of being so-called floating voters. Party strategists suggested that the election would be decided by 400 000 women in marginal constituencies (Oliver, 2010). These women were dubbed 'Take a Break Woman' after the best-selling women's weekly magazine that they supposedly read. This voter was identified as being "under 40… likely to be a homeowner living in a household with children, living in a small city or town. These women are likely to live in the Midlands in the new towns and in the M1 corridor. They work full-time and part-time and in retail in particular" (ibid). The opinion forming press reported that "women are regarded as the key group of swing voters" (Winnett, 2010a). A proliferation of stereotypical language followed claiming that "the election would be decided around kitchen tables and in living rooms" (ibid) and women were constructed as caring about issues that pertained to their familial roles such as education, maternity leave and violence against women. Women supposedly want "a society where women are paid fairly, feel safe and are able to share looking after their kids if they choose to" (Watkins, 2010). The implication of such gendered discourse is that politicians therefore need to "charm the nation's mothers" (*Daily Mirror*, 2010) rather than engage with them about serious policy issues. By defining women voters in this fashion, the discourse is reinforced that women are only interested in so-called quality of life issues that relate to their personal lives and will therefore vote for whoever they perceive will provide them with appropriate policies. Women are therefore constructed not only as domestically oriented voters but also as mere consumers of political messages rather than as actively engaged citizens who ask questions and make decisions based upon the kind of society they wish to be part of. Referring to women as a group of floating voters

allowed the newspapers to construct the views and opinions of women without substantiating their claims about what these women care about with any kind of evidence (Lewis et al, 2005). This reinforces patriarchal assumptions about women and their relationship to politics.

The Guardian adopted a more nuanced view of voters and keenly pointed out that the focus of the election became narrowed to address these electorally significant women rather than addressing women in all their diversity. It also recognised that the outcome of the election would impact women significantly; "two thirds of public servants are women: they are the teachers, the doctors, and the much more cuts prone home helps and dinner ladies. They use public services more, and – as mothers and carers – do most of the dropping off at the schools and the surgeries that will soon feel the squeeze" (*The Guardian*, 2010b). Although the newspaper recognised that women made up this large group of floating voters it chose to reflect Harriet Harman's position that "women voters are 'discerning' rather than floating" (Wintour and Edemariam, 2010); a description which affords them much more agency and indeed intelligence.

Voters were moreover constructed as subjects through the propensity of the popular titles in particular to portray individual women as potential or actual victims of certain policy decisions. The policies in question related to health care and law and order. One woman whose mother had died amid poor conditions in an NHS hospital appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Mail* on the same day. Her emotive account served to undermine Labour's claims that the NHS had improved under their administration. The various newspaper accounts claimed that the woman's mother had been "treated worse than an animal" (Rayner, 2010) and was left to "die in squalor" (Wilkes, 2010) which was "horrifyingly undignified" (ibid). A similar example included a woman that had to finance her own cancer drugs to prolong her life since the NHS refused pay for them (Hardy, 2010). Other examples constructed women as victims of crime; a woman whose son was killed in an arson attack complained about the level of sentencing this kind of crime attracts (Newton-Dunn, 2010). Her case had been highlighted by David Cameron in the live televised debates. Furthermore, the *Daily Mail* reported that a young woman who had been disfigured in an acid attack had been used cynically by Home Secretary Alan Johnson to claim that "women like Katie and others would be in greater danger" (Pierce,

2010b) under Tory plans to cut the number of CCTV cameras on British streets. The *Daily Mirror* used similar tactics to discredit Tory plans that would scale back the national DNA database featuring "the mother of murdered Sally Anne Bowman" (Lyons and Ward, 2010) criticising the plans as "suicidal" (ibid). These emotive stories served to cast women as potential victims of the policy decisions made by politicians rather than as citizens.

The quality press also sought out individual women to illustrate the impact of certain policies and also used personalised stories but they tended to use much less emotive language and were less simplistic in their construction. The issues that these papers chose to focus on were foreign policy and social security. The *Daily Telegraph* claimed that Gordon Brown had "fobbed off" (*Daily Telegraph*, 2010d) a woman whose son had been killed in Afghanistan. He met her on a televised audience debate and offered to look into the circumstances of her son's death. This seemed to be calculated to cast Brown in an unsympathetic role, making promises he never intended to keep to a grieving mother whose son died fighting for his country. The *Guardian* on the other hand used the example of an unemployed graduate who struggles to live on unemployment benefit whilst applying for jobs that are not graduate level jobs. This item featured a large picture of her looking downcast (Conn, 2010).

The most high profile issue that was perceived to affect women was the Tory's proposed married couple's tax allowance which put forward the idea that married couples where one of the parents was not working could transfer their basic tax allowance to their partner to make them better off. This manifesto proposal was highly controversial and lead to criticism that the party were trying to promote a traditional model of the family. Most of the newspapers covered this aspect of policy and its impact on women and their families. The quality newspapers discuss the merits and possible drawbacks of the policy and its reception by potential voters who might perceive "the party's focus on traditional two parent families as old fashioned and unfair" (Beckford, 2010b) and the issue was constructed as Cameron's "move designed to burnish his family-friendly credentials" (Watt, 2010). The tabloids on the other hand took a more explicitly partisan and emotive approach. The *Daily Mail* claimed that it was a clear sign of Cameron's "commitment to encourage solid and secure family life" (*Daily Mail*, 2010b) which is important because "areas where unmarried mother figures are highest are in the poorest parts of the

country" (ibid) which makes "single or early motherhood a good career choice" (ibid). In contrast the *Daily Mirror* condemned the plans as a "thoughtless and unjustifiable" (Beattie, 2010) policy which stigmatises and misunderstands the plight of widows and single mothers.

Women were also constructed as subjects of politics rather than active citizens in news items that tended to trivialise women voters and their concerns. The *Sun's* story entitled "Clegg win snog vote" (*The Sun*, 2010a) is a good example of this kind of item. It claimed that "Nick Clegg is way ahead in one poll – the snogging stakes. The Lib Dem chief...is the party leader girls say they would most like to kiss" (ibid). Apparently based upon a survey of young women between the ages of 20 and 30, this story serves to portray voters as frivolous and unconnected to politics since it fails to mention whether or not the survey asked them detailed questions about policy. Furthermore, the newspaper frames voters as "girls" who are immature and more interested in the sexual attractiveness of leaders than political priorities. This kind of trivia was not just present in popular newspapers but was also manifest in the quality press. The *Daily Telegraph* reported that "women's' wardrobes are more influenced by politicians' wives than celebrity wives and girlfriends" and the same survey found that "one in six women would consider dating a politician" (*Daily Telegraph*, 2010a).

News items which constructed voters as subjects tended to portray women as passive victims of policy decisions who cared about a narrow range of issues. They were mostly referred to in the abstract as convenient indicators of women generally and consequently they lacked any opportunity to share views or opinions. Instead they were spoken about by journalists and politicians rather than allowed the opportunity to speak for themselves. Such portrayals reinforce dominant discourses about women's political priorities and their roles in society and casts women as marginal to the mainstream, and therefore important, realm of male politics.

Citizens

Lewis et al (2005) argue that when ordinary people appear in the news it is because they are especially qualified to comment on an issue thereby removing their status as regular citizens. Furthermore the authors suggest that ordinary citizens only appear as such in two situations; in the form of 'vox pops' where people are given the opportunity to comment or in the form of citizen activism such as a protest (ibid). These categories map neatly onto the ways citizen activity was constructed in the 2010 election.

'Vox pops'

'Vox pops' are "the form of news coverage in which citizenship is most clearly expressed" (ibid: 70) because they allow ordinary people the opportunity to directly offer political opinions. There were a variety of items that depicted women's reactions to the election and political affairs generally through the use of 'vox pops'. The majority of these items featured panels of readers that were asked to give their opinions about certain issues or political parties. Nearly all newspapers had items that were constructed in this way. For the most part the panels consisted of male and female voters. These panels were presented as being reflective of wider opinion, "our team of ordinary voters drawn from all walks of life and reflects the opinions and concerns of Brits up and down the country" (Sloan, 2010) but no explanation was offered as to how and why these particular readers were selected to appear. The *Guardian* and *Sun* used this type of item most frequently throughout the election coverage.

The issues that these women were constructed as caring about revolved around their familial roles as carers. The women mentioned issues such as education, nursery places for young children, the NHS and flexible working rights for mothers. The economy and its impact on family life was also a popular theme for women; one was quoted saying "I'm a bit worried about...VAT" (*The Guardian*, 2010a) whilst another commented that "my biggest concern is petrol prices – they are ridiculous" (Battle, 2010). The women in these items tended to address a number of socially conservative issues such as crime and policing levels, immigration, social security benefits and family values (ibid). These issues were often discussed in emotive terms: "I'm worried about immigration too. My partner is an electrician and there are so many skilled workers flooding in from abroad he worries

about finding work. That doesn't make me a bigot – I just worry about my family's ability to put food on the table" (ibid). This particular woman's comments were employed by *The Sun* to construct immigration as a legitimate threat to the interests of British families. She invokes her familial role as evidence for this, suggesting that she is not prejudiced against immigrants per se but is concerned that their presence might reduce her ability to care for her family. The strategic presentation of these points of view by ordinary citizens renders them normal and reasonable and is pervasively employed by the tabloid and middle market newspapers. This sort of rhetoric is pervasive in the *Sun's* women voter's panels in particular. In the same item quoted above, another woman complained that "my husband works incredibly hard for his country while some get money handed to them for doing nothing" (ibid). On the surface, this might appear to be directed at the recipients of state benefits such as unemployment and housing benefits but the use of the phrase "for his country" implies that she may be referring to immigrants as well. The selection of such examples by the newspaper reflects its political agenda but also reinforces the assumption that it is natural for women to be predominantly concerned about their families.

Although a range of topics were addressed by the women in these items, much of the policy detail is distinctly limited. The women tended to vaguely allude to some area of policy in short statements, "my biggest worries are health and street crime" (ibid); "for me education and the environment are very important" (Topping, 2010) and "I would vote for a plain-speaking party who understand the needs of young families like mine" (*The Sun*, 2010b). These brief allusions always failed to identify specific policy details rather they just mentioned vague policy areas of concern. When specific policies were addressed, there was very little deliberation about the merits or drawbacks of these policies. For example, one woman remarked that the Labour party's plan to reform the provision of nursery school places for three and four year olds "is good, but it should be needs tested" (*The Guardian*, 2010a). This evaluation is interesting because the speaker does not state explicitly what is good about the policy or explain why it ought to be "needs-tested". These items offered a superficial insight into the policies that women are interested in and their vague opinions about them which means that voters were being

constructed in narrow terms as merely reacting to the campaign rather than actively engaging with it.

This is furthermore compounded by the way in which most items that featured panels of voters seemed to revolve around the campaign performances of individual party leaders or the voters' disillusionment with formal politics. The women often made statements expressing the view that they felt unengaged with the political process. One claimed "I've never had any interest in politics" (*The Sun*, 2010b). A variety of opinions as to why these women felt apathetic were offered. Some seem to suggest that politicians were corrupt or disingenuous, "until sleaze is removed from politics, I can't vote. They have to reassure me that they can be trusted" (ibid). Others complained that political parties did not engage with them meaningfully, one woman described a party manifesto as "also a bit bland and it describes everything with far too broad a brush" (*The Guardian*, 2010a) suggesting that politicians do not provide enough detail in their communications with voters. One woman felt that there was a real "lack of difference between the parties" (Topping, 2010) which meant her vote was unimportant. Regardless of the newspaper, there were numerous examples of women expressing concern that politics was remote from their lives. The consensus seemed to be that "politics is like an old boys' club where they debate issues that matter to them in a language they understand" (*The Sun*, 2010b). Arguably, the dominant construction of women in these items is not so much active as apathetic or disillusioned.

According to Lewis et al (2005) there are five categories of citizen engagement which they see as "a continuum between active, deliberative and engaged citizen at one end, and the more passive, apolitical citizen at the other" (ibid: 42). These categories are: firstly, citizens making proposals; citizens responding to politicians; citizens commenting on an issue or event without making proposals; citizens speaking about personal experiences or as consumers and finally, citizens talking about sports, celebrity and entertainment (ibid). Clearly, the final category is not applicable to this research since the study only included items which were about the election and will from now on be disregarded so there are in effect four categories of citizen engagement.

The majority of 'vox pops' in the 2010 election tended to be located at the less actively engaged end of this continuum. These items mainly quoted women commenting on policy areas in a vague manner, such as expressing concern about VAT and the exclusivity of political discourse without suggesting a possible remedy for them or they drew directly on personal experience when describing their political concerns. This means that there are negligible examples of women making proposals in these 'vox pop' situations. At first glance these items purport to show active citizens discussing their political priorities and opinions however these constructions of women citizens confine them to specific policy areas which often pertain to their familial roles, such as discussions about nursery places or maternity leave. The level of policy knowledge and the subsequent evaluations displayed by the women in these items were very vague and the women were largely constructed as apathetic or disillusioned. Therefore, the newspapers' construction of voters as active citizens is limited. Instead the women's remarks act as mere sound bites designed to offer a small insight into the views of the public that end up being meaningless. Furthermore, although the women voters involved in these specific items appear to be actively engaged in discussion about the campaign or specific issues; the discursive terrain upon which they are confined serves to limit the extent to which they are depicted as having agency. Such representations position women voters as consumers who are individualistic and self-interested about political matters, which is a recognised limitation of the 'vox pop' for representing citizenship (ibid).

Activism

As previously discussed items that portrayed women in an unequivocally active role were more numerous than the other two categories. The Gillian Duffy incident made up the vast majority of items in this category of coverage and therefore artificially inflated the extent to which women gained this type of coverage. These items tended to be dominated by organisations set up for the benefit of women. The reaction of the Fawcett Society, a feminist organisation, to the electoral campaigns and manifestos of the main parties was only reported by the two quality newspapers and perhaps predictably it received more coverage from the *Guardian*. The *Daily Telegraph's* report was relatively short and quoted Fawcett as labelling the manifestos as "regressive, stagnant and contradictory" (Beckford, 2010c). It claimed that "party leaders have tried desperately to

win over female voters by appearing on websites like Mumsnet [a parenting website], campaigning with their wives and talking about their private lives in interviews" (ibid). The *Guardian* on the other hand went further and stated that Fawcett claimed that the campaign was "concentrating attention on the three male party leaders rather than a wider spectrum of politicians" (Gentleman, 2010) and that the campaign tended to focus on motherhood so that women are only addressed in relation to their familial obligations about issues such "better childcare facilities and child tax credits" (ibid). This is the reason that the Chief Executive of the Fawcett Society Ceri "Goddard believes the way politicians have tried to appeal to female voters marks a regression" (ibid). Such a conclusion is strongly supported by the evidence in this chapter. *The Guardian* also published a letter signed by a host of organisations which expressed "deepest concern that the cause of women in politics is not set back further when a new government takes its place" (Fawcett Society, 2010).

The other organisations that received attention for being active in the election were slightly different in nature. The parenting websites Mumsnet and Netmums were much discussed in the run up to the official campaign period because politicians had been reaching out to the users of these websites by participating in so-called 'webchats'. So-called "cyberwoman" (McSmith, 2009) or indeed, 'cybermums' (Iggulden, 2009) were quickly identified as a key target group for the election. This led to suggestions that it was going to be "The Mumsnet Election" (Sylvester, 2009). This strategy drew much media attention, especially when Gordon Brown was judged to have angered the women when he failed to answer a question about his favourite biscuit (Oliver, 2009). As a result of informal monitoring of the newspaper coverage prior to the sample period, it is possible to determine that most of the coverage of these websites came before the actual campaign period but there were a few stories that constructed these groups of women as actively engaged in the election.

Representatives from Mumsnet and Netmums were mentioned or interviewed in the quality and tabloid press. There were slight differences however in the types of issues that these women were deemed to be active about. Mumsnet users were reportedly hostile towards the proposed married couples tax allowance and made comments such as "I want to vote Tory but I don't believe I'm in the type of family they are supportive of

because I'm a lone parent" (Porter and Winnett, 2010) and stated that they "would like to see support for all types of families" (Beckford, 2010b). Netmums on the other hand were more likely to be exercised by traditionally moral issues such as "Liberal Democrat plans to let 16-year-olds watch and star in PORN films" (Wilson, 2010a, emphasis theirs) which apparently "faced blistering criticism in the chatrooms" (ibid) and was "savaged on the internet" by these women (ibid). Both websites were reportedly outraged by the high street chain Primark's decision to sell padded bikinis for seven year olds, which the Tories claimed was symptomatic of the trend for "fuelling the dangerous sexualisation of young girls" (Poulter, 2010). The emphasis placed upon mothers and their political views is perhaps unsurprising given that they had been identified as key targets by the political parties but nevertheless their dominance seems to exclude the possibility that women might be interested in wider political issues. Focusing on these women as though they were a kind of group that share the same political views is also problematic.

The only prominent example of a woman actively campaigning for a political issue as an individual is the soap opera actor Brooke Kinsella whose brother had been stabbed to death by other youths. She appeared alongside David Cameron to show support for the Tory's plans for tackling knife crime. Reports of her activities were always accompanied with large photographs of her with David Cameron and despite her willingness to be involved with tackling this issue, the reports tended to focus upon the loss of her brother rather than specific policy details (Kirkup, 2010a; Hartley, 2010) which perhaps demonstrates once again the tendency for women to be presented as victims.

There were a number of incidents where ordinary women intervened when politicians were out on the campaign trail. These were small incidents where individual women would raise an issue with a specific politician. This must have happened much more than was reported but the newspapers tended to only report incidents where women were hostile or the politician did not perform particularly well in the ensuing discussion. The vast majority of these stories featured women asking politicians about education policy, such as "Chloe Green" who asked David Cameron about higher education policy and "accused him of letting down working class children" (*Daily Telegraph*, 2010b). These news items tended to be small and were framed as difficult moments for the politicians involved and were once again light on policy detail. Arguably the most active female

citizen throughout the campaign came about as a result of one of these interventions. Gillian Duffy, a pensioner from Rochdale was perhaps the most visible woman in the campaign.

Mrs Duffy

On Wednesday 28th April, a week before polling day, the Prime Minister Gordon Brown was visiting the town of Rochdale in Lancashire to meet ordinary voters and to help the local Labour candidate's campaign. He was involved in a brief conversation with Labour voter Gillian Duffy in which she questioned him on a number of policy areas such as the economy, pensions and benefits, university fees and immigration. Although Brown appeared to cope quite well with her questions, his lapel mounted microphone that had been provided by Sky News recorded him calling Gillian Duffy "just a bigoted sort of woman." This gaffe caused a media storm when Brown's remarks were played back to him on a radio programme and he subsequently returned to Rochdale to apologise to Duffy at her home.

This episode poses an interesting challenge to the distinction between citizen and subject proposed above. In one important respect Mrs Duffy is clearly depicted as an engaged citizen in that she took the Prime Minister to task on a number of issues which she chose to articulate. Conversely, the encounter also offers a prime example of the latter category because she is called upon and mobilised by commentators in the press and broadcasting to construct whatever narrative they want to about the Prime Minister. The analysis below argues that the incident was constructed in a very specific way in the newspaper coverage as a an attack on an ordinary, concerned pensioner by a fundamentally flawed Prime Minister who was out of touch with the concerns of his own constituents. Furthermore, Gillian Duffy was arguably the most visibly active woman in the entire sample of campaign coverage and yet the press' construction of this story soon eroded her agency further by instead portraying her as a passive, elderly woman out buying bread.

All the newspapers carried a significant amount of coverage about this particular incident. The day after, this story was the main election related item in all the newspapers which illustrates the extent to which this particular event was considered newsworthy. Most of the newspapers featured numerous photographs from the incident and most included a time line of the event and a transcript of what was actually said. Duffy was portrayed as an inherently good person who had served her community. She was described in sympathetic terms by all newspapers as a "66-year-old grandmother" (*Daily Telegraph*, 2010c), "a widow who spent her career working with handicapped children" (Chapman, 2010) and a "good, intelligent working-class woman" (Parsons, 2010). These biographical details seem calculated to construct this woman as "an ordinary woman" (Carter et al, 2010) or "decent working woman" (MacKenzie, 2010) who had "injected a sorely needed element of authenticity into the sterile" (*Daily Telegraph,* 2010c) campaign.

Much was made of the fact that Mrs Duffy had been "on her way to the shops" (Carter et al, 2010) or was "popping out for a loaf of brown bread" (Wilson, 2010b) when she bumped into Brown on the campaign trail. Emphasising her domesticity also serves to construct her as an ordinary female voter going about her business when the incident occurred. Her questions about pensions, social security benefits and university fees were constructed as a "civilised inquiry" (Letts, 2010a) and a "genuine concern" (*Daily Mail*, 2010d) that she had a right to ask. These questions were also constructed as being relevant to most ordinary voters. The Conservative supporting press in particular emphasised the extent to which "she spoke, I suspect for millions" (Letts, 2010a). Duffy is carefully constructed as an ordinary, hardworking "granny" (Chapman, 2010), who is articulating the political concerns of her fellow citizens. This serves to intensify the outrage that she should have her comments and questions callously brushed aside by the Prime Minister and then be labelled a bigot for her trouble. Although she chose to engage actively with the political discourse by speaking to Brown, his angry rebuff of her entire argument is constructed as an attack on all citizens which is made worse by her status as a retired widow with grandchildren. By emphasising her domestic role and old age, she is construed as vulnerable to the brutish behaviour of Gordon Brown.

Mrs Duffy's views or in particular her choice of language to describe the arrival of Eastern European immigrants was not questioned or criticised by a single newspaper. Her actual

words on this topic were: “you can’t say anything about immigrants...but these Eastern Europeans what are coming in, where are they flocking from?” (*Daily Mail*, 2010c) The newspapers were all far too busy suggesting that Gordon Brown has fatal personality flaws that lead him to despise those that do not share his views to notice the tautology of the question. Her use of the phrase “flocking” is inflammatory and yet not even those newspapers that are considered to be progressive or supportive of the Labour Party question the assumptions that underpin this point of view. Furthermore there were only two items which both appeared in the quality press that actually questioned the ethics or motivations of the television outlets involved in releasing a recording of a private conversation into the public realm, which no doubt caused as much distress to Duffy herself as it did to the Prime Minster. Brown emerged from the incident with very little sympathy, even from the *Mirror* which was the only newspaper to openly support the Labour Party in the campaign, although they did print a small item which tried to explain his overreaction by suggesting that the “PM thought Gillian had said the f-word” (Roberts, 2010) and that this was the reason he labelled the encounter “a disaster” because he thought she had sworn on live television.

Presenting Duffy as a reasonable ‘everywoman’ whose comments and concerns are legitimate and sensible allows the newspapers construct Duffy as a symbolic representation of their readers. The conservative middle market *Daily Mail* (whose editorial line strongly supports the idea of strictly controlled immigration which occasionally manifests itself in xenophobic and jingoist rhetoric) interpreted Duffy’s comments about immigration as evidence of politicians’ unwillingness to discuss immigration in this election campaign. The topic is described as “the great unspoken issue of the election” (Chapman, 2010) which politicians were ignoring despite “immigration [being] among the top two concerns of the electorate” (*Daily Mail*, 2010d). Brown’s private assertion that such concerns are illegitimate is used as evidence that he was “sneering at her and the millions of voters who share her views” (*Daily Mail*, 29th April 2010, p.8). The idea that so many voters were concerned about immigration is taken for granted and the newspapers offer no evidence to support this except vague references to opinion polls, for example by asserting that “polls suggest the issue is second only to the economy” (Chapman, 2010) without any further details being given. Despite Duffy raising

a number of issues such as pensions and student fees, these newspapers chose to focus on the two sentences that she uttered about immigration. These newspapers co-opted her views in order to promote their own political perspective that was critical about the government's handling of immigration.

Across the newspapers, there was a tendency to construct the incident as an indication that Brown is a deeply flawed leader who is unable to accept that other people may not agree with him on certain issues. He is characterised as someone who "smiles in public, vile in private" (MacKenzie, 2010) and that the incident "had given an insight into the hypocrisy of the Prime Minister" (Prince, 2010). Brown is portrayed as "infamous for being a difficult person to work with and was accused earlier this year of bullying staff" (Winnett, 2010b) and someone who "attempts to wriggle out of responsibility" (Gimson, 2010) for his actions and behaviour. These personality flaws are seen as a potential barrier to re-election for the Labour Party since "the Labour core vote would be repelled by his apparent indifference to their concerns" (Wintour and Curtis, 2010).

The Conservative Party supporting middle markets and tabloids portrayed the incident as communicating to the voters "everything in one mouthful about the intolerant, arrogant, authoritarian Labour Party" (Kavanagh, 2010) that privately sneers at voters while asking for their trust. The quality press on the other hand sought to construct Brown's apparent lack of willingness to engage with voters as evidence of politicians in general being out of touch with ordinary voters. They claimed that the incident "revealed, again, the arrogant disdain of the elected for the electorate" (*The Guardian*, 2010c) and that Brown's "attitude represents everything that is reprehensible about many modern politicians: tell voters what they want to hear, but then treat them with contempt" (Lloyd, 2010). This reinforces the cynical view that politicians are only interested in power and not in serving the public.

Gillian Duffy's original intervention in the campaign was much celebrated in all the newspapers as a much needed injection of authenticity into a stage managed campaign. She was portrayed as a thoughtful, hardworking grandmother who had legitimate concerns about immigration and she was rewarded for her political engagement by being branded a bigot by the Prime Minister who had been perfectly pleasant to her face.

Duffy's political concerns were portrayed as representative of a public at large that is concerned about immigration but feel unable to express these concerns. Co-opting Duffy's political views in this fashion and constructing her as a symbolic 'ordinary voter' served to pacify her rather than present her as what she was, an active citizen making an intervention. This process was made easier by her age and gender which meant she could be represented as unthreatening and undeserving of Brown's insults.

Gillian Duffy's intervention in the course of the election is part of a tradition of awkward women voters who capture the attention of the news media as a result of their exchanges with political figures. Diana Gould for example received attention for challenging Margaret Thatcher over the legitimacy of sinking the Argentinean ship the General Belgrano during the Falklands conflict in the run up to the election in 1983 (Coleman and Ross, 2010); Sharron Storrer who famously confronted Tony Blair over his government's record on the health service during the 2001 election (Brookes et al, 2004) and Diana Church who challenged Tony Blair on a televised question and answer session during the 2005 election (Collins, 2008).

Returning to the continuum of political engagement offered by Lewis et al (2005), these items displayed political activity from the more engaged end of the spectrum, citizens making proposals (mumsnet's campaign to prevent the sexualisation of young girls) and responding to politicians (the Gillian Duffy incident and Fawcett's response to the perceived sexism of the campaign). The majority of these items featured women responding to the policy suggestions of politicians rather than them making their own proposals or opinions on how to improve them. These women are constructed as actively engaged in the political process, but only in the context of the agenda set by the politicians (ibid).

The analysis shows that women are depicted as either subjects of election coverage or as citizens. The subjects are constructed as passive and function as a means of invoking the views of women generally. The citizens appear either in the form of 'vox pops' or as citizen activists. An analysis of the 'vox pops' items clearly shows a tendency towards the less active end of the continuum where the majority of items depicted women commenting without making specific proposals or discussing their personal experiences.

In contrast, the citizen activism items displayed the features of the much more politically engaged end of the continuum. There were negligible examples of ordinary women making explicitly political proposals which serve to limit the extent to which women are constructed as political actors in the electoral process.

Relatives: The Personal as Political

A striking feature of the 2010 election coverage was the attempt by some of the newspapers to suggest that the wives of the main party leaders were stealing coverage directly from female politicians, as if the two were interchangeable. Examples include: "women candidates upstaged by wives" (Gentleman, 2010) and "if they enter the political arena as wives they tend to be celebrated but if they enter as politicians they tend to be sidelined" (Walter, 2010). The *Daily Mail* even commented that "never in British history have leaders' wives played the dominant role they now enjoy…in sharp contrast, frontline female politicians have been frozen out" (Oborne, 2010). At first sight this seemed an absurd comparison given the nature of the coverage of the leaders' wives but as this analysis will show, there were a number of similarities between the coverage of the two groups of women.

"Seen and not heard"[3]

The data indicates that the female relatives of politicians received much press attention throughout the campaign. The decision by the Labour and Conservative parties to deliberately mobilise Sarah Brown and Samantha Cameron during the campaign was subject to criticism in the press which simultaneously bemoaned the incursion of these non-political, and yet strangely stage-managed, women into the political discourse, and bestowed them with an unprecedented amount of coverage (Higgins and Smith, forthcoming). 40 of the 112 total items were about Samantha Cameron whilst 30 of them were about Sarah Brown. Miriam Gonzalez Durantez had 11 items dedicated to her, whilst a further 23 items were about a combination of the three women. Just 8 of the 112

[3] *Daily Mail*, 17th April 2010, p.45

items were about other relatives of politicians such as Cherie Blair and Jemima Khan. This means that 92.9% of the coverage about relatives was dedicated to just three women.

The items about the relatives fell into three broad thematic categories. The first category contains items that refer to one or a selection of these women on the campaign trail. This is the main theme of items about the wives, accounting for 65 out of the 112 items or 58%. The second largest category contains items that refer to the personal lives or lifestyles of the women (such as anecdotes about their family or comments about their clothing.) These items make up 27.7% of items about the wives and relatives. The final category contains items which discuss whether or not the way these women have chosen to become involved in the election is legitimate or desirable. This type of item accounts for 16 items or 14.3% of items about the relatives. The items about the relatives on the campaign trail and their role in the campaign (which account for a significant portion of the coverage) place these women in an explicitly political context and are therefore overtly political in that they are about the formal election process and furthermore they discursively construct women's roles in politics in distinctly feminine ways. Moreover, the items which focus on the private lives of these women are personal in their focus because they refer to their personal styles and families but they also employ discourses which construct women in politics as traditionally feminine. Such portrayals remind the newspaper readers of the gendered division between the masculine public sphere and the feminine private sphere.

All six newspapers relied heavily on visual representations when reporting the leaders' wives. This was achieved by employing a large number of photographs and also focusing on their physical appearance and personal style. The vast majority of newspaper items that featured the relatives were accompanied by photographs of them in various campaign settings. An incredible 90.2% of items (or 101 out of 112) about these women were either a stand-alone photograph of one of them, or a text that was accompanied by a photograph of the woman in question. An analysis across newspapers reveals that neither of the two popular titles, the *Daily Mirror* and the *Sun*, featured a single item which was not accompanied by a photograph. The *Daily Mail* and *Guardian* also featured very high proportions of items which contained photographs.

Table 4.6: Percentage of items with photos across newspapers 2010

Newspaper	% of items accompanied by photographs
Daily Mirror	100
The Guardian	96
Daily Telegraph	78.8
Daily Mail	90
The Sun	100

The ubiquity of photographs of these women on the campaign trail suggests that their visual appeal is perhaps the predominant reason for featuring them in newspaper coverage. These photographs were also used by a number of the newspapers to scrutinise the personal style and clothing choices of the women. The content analysis revealed that some reference was made to the physical appearance or clothing in 46.4% of all items about this group. This once again emphasises the importance which was attached to their visual appeal at the expense of any other. The findings across newspapers are displayed in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Reference to appearance across newspapers 2010

Newspaper	% of items mentioning appearance
Daily Mirror	23.1
The Guardian	40
Daily Telegraph	39.4
Daily Mail	60
The Sun	72.7

Table 4.7 shows that the conservative popular newspapers featured significantly higher proportions of references to the appearance of these women than the other newspapers. Almost two thirds of items in the *Daily Mail* and almost three quarters of items in *the Sun* mentioned their appearance. This furthermore emphasises the visual function of these women in the campaign coverage.

Such press treatment of these women is akin to the news coverage of celebrities. Sarah Brown "seems to be heavily reliant on the plain coloured cardigan" (Fox, 2010a), Samantha Cameron "swapped her elegant dress and heels for a more casual high street look" (Phillips, 2010) and "looked the perfect Westminster WAG" (Jones, 2010), an unflattering popular culture reference that means 'Wives and Girlfriends' usually applied to women involved with professional footballers. The *Daily Mail's* regular section called: 'War of the Wives' was the most obvious example of this kind of coverage. A new instalment of this appeared almost daily. Much of the content was scathing in this regard, Sarah Brown for example was described as a "dehydrated Stepford Wife" (Moir, 2010a) and was portrayed as domineering for having her "husband's hand clasped in a kind of Vulcan death grip" (Moir, 2010f). Moreover, Cherie Blair, the wife of the former Prime Minister received this assessment whilst campaigning in County Durham: "Mrs Blair displayed an inappropriate amount of cleavage, read a story to the children, tried to force feed kiwi fruit down the throat of a bawling tot and generally made the usual nuisance of herself" (Moir, 2010d).

Campaign Stalwarts

What is particularly interesting about the mediated representation of these women is not so much the way their physical appearances and personal styles was such a prominent focus in the newspaper coverage but the way in which it was constructed as pertinent to their husband's political campaigning. Examples of this include an item in the *Daily Telegraph* which explicitly stated that "the sartorial prowess of Sarah Brown, Samantha Cameron and Miriam Gonzalez-Durantez...can be read as a metaphor for their spouses' credentials" (Betts, 2010) before going on to analyse the women's attire. This item explicitly connects the wives' clothing and style to their husband's political performance. Sarah Brown is described as "solid, stodgy, with a mumsy approach to fashion" (ibid) whilst Samantha Cameron is "young, polished, slick yet insouciant, but provoking anxieties about style over substance" (ibid). This comparison explicitly emphasises their role as proxies for their husband's political campaigns by locating them firmly in the private sphere of personal style and consumption while the public and political sphere

which they are supposed to be implicitly representing is constructed as male. Further examples also play up the idea that the style choices of their wives are somehow calculated political manoeuvres. For example, “Mrs Cameron’s dress-down outfit of skinny jeans and cotton jacket spoke of the high street and affordability, not privilege and expense” (Moir, 2010b) which was constructed as a self-conscious attempt to parallel David Cameron’s efforts to downplay his upper class background. Sarah Brown, on the other hand, “upped Labour’s sartorial ante in a cropped trench coat in an unashamedly vibrant house red” (Fox, 2010b). These examples show that both women were constructed as adapting their clothing and personal styles in order to assist the campaign. This gendered coverage emphasises their visual appeal and constructs their contribution as explicitly non-party political. Higgins and Smith (forthcoming) also emphasise the fact that both Sarah Brown and Samantha Cameron were used strategically to counter the perceived faults of their husbands and to humanise and soften their public images. As these examples demonstrate, the political influence of these women is constructed in traditionally feminine terms meaning that although these women are not making formal political statements, they are informal representatives of their husband’s political values. This is also ideological because it reinforces the notion that women contribute to politics through their attachment to the informal private sphere.

These women were constructed as appendages of their husbands who were able to drop everything to support their husbands’ political careers. They promoted an image of the traditional nuclear family with male breadwinner and female consort happy to support her man’s political ambitions. Miriam Gonzalez Durantez chose to flout these conventions when she actively complained about the attention that the wives were receiving, branding it frivolous and patronising (Swaine, 2010). She was much admired by the newspapers for keeping a lower profile than the other two party leaders’ wives and for “not forsaking her career for her husband’s” (Moir, 2010a). The *Daily Mail* declared that “Miriam’s our ideal woman” (Tyler, 2010) because she was “acting like an independent, modern mother and wife” (ibid), an interesting reference because it failed to mention her high profile legal career as worthy of praise. She was however praised for supporting “her husband in a way that is loyal and enthusiastic, but not demented” (Moir, 2010g). The coverage of Miriam changed however when she became more involved with the

campaign and she too became vilified for intruding into the political sphere: “she became just another political wife; engaging in photogenic but laughably unlikely things, all in the name of vote catching” (Moir, 2010c). The construction of these women as supportive, non-political women who belong to the private sphere is further reinforced by the overall message in the coverage that “it is one thing for a spouse to play a supporting role to a PM, quite another for them to appear to be pulling the strings” (Richard, 2010). Moreover, Gordon Brown’s own comments about his wife: “she’s doing a great job as a mother and she’s doing a great job as a wife and I think it’s quite unfair [to criticise her] because she’s not throwing herself out with political views” (Kirkup, 2010b) further constructs women as outsiders to the political sphere. It is particularly interesting that the wives’ non-political role was explicitly being affirmed in the news coverage and would suggest that this is an active attempt to distance these women from being perceived as too influential, like Cherie Blair. Winfield and Friedman (2000) make a similar argument about the re-traditionalisation of women like Lynne Cheney and Tipper Gore during the 2000 US Presidential election suggesting that these women tried to avoid being cast in a similar role to Hillary Clinton.

Politicians: The Political as Personal

The news coverage of the politicians can similarly be divided into personal and political domains in terms of what these items focus upon and their gendered consequences. The data suggests that female politicians were side-lined by press coverage of the election since these women featured prominently in just 2.8% of all election news items from the five newspapers. Moreover the coverage that does feature politicians predominantly contains reportage about the election process rather than policy. Just 12.2% of items about women politicians made any reference to policy whatsoever. Table 4 shows the breakdown.

Table 4.8: Politicians Themes 2010

Theme	Number of Items	Percentage of Coverage about Politicians
Campaign trail	6	7.3
Politician profile	23	28
Politicians gaffe or scandal	3	3.7
Politician's political comments or behaviour	30	36.6
Lack of women politicians	10	12.2
Policy	10	12.2
Total	82	100

Table 4.8 shows that women politicians featured most commonly in items where they made party political statements or statements about the election in general (excluding policy information.) The second highest category was politician profiles where these women were introduced or discussed in terms of their candidacy rather than their views and beliefs. Moreover, these two categories account for 64.6% of the coverage. Just 12.2% of items discussed the lack of, or number of women candidates, with 7 out of the 10 items coming from the same newspaper, *The Guardian*. Only 12.2% (or 10) of items about women politicians featured any policy discussion whatsoever. Table 4.9 shows the breakdown of issues discussed.

Table 4.9: Number of items about policy

Policy	Number of Items
Children and families	3
Environment	1
Health and Welfare	2
Equality	3
Employment	1
Total	10

Four out of the ten policy items came from *the Guardian*, three from *the Sun*, two from the *Daily Mirror* and one from the *Daily Telegraph.* The *Daily Mail* then, featured no policy discussion in relation to women politicians. Examples of women politicians discussing policy include Yvette Cooper talking about Labour's key policies about work and pensions (Routledge, 2010); an item where Harriet Harman, Lynne Featherstone and Theresa May are quoted in order to outline the three main parties appeal to women voters (Watkins, 2010) and an interview with Caroline Lucas about the Green Party's key policies (Walker, P., 2010). These items were not common place and instead the coverage of politicians revolved around the election process and events on the campaign trail. Although electoral process coverage is to be expected, items about women politicians seem particularly process oriented in comparison to Deacon and Wring's (2011) analysis which showed that 43% of all election coverage was about process whilst this analysis shows that for women politicians 87.8% of items are about process. The policies discussed in these items seem fairly stereotypically feminine, with emphasis being placed on children and families, health and equality.

Many of these process items reported trivial or unfavourable comments or actions made by these women, for example Joanne Cash's and Sally Bercow's (a Labour candidate for the Westminster council elections taking place at the same time) twitter argument (Pierce, 2010a); the eccentricities of independent candidate Esther Rantzen's campaigning style (Freeman, 2010) or Luciana Berger's decision not to reveal that she had a partner (Walker, T., 2010).

"Upstaged by wives"[4]

Ten items from the sample were dedicated to questioning the apparent marginalisation of female politicians in favour of the leaders' wives. The number of items that were found in this study that focused on the relatives compared to the politicians supports this assumption. This marginalisation of politicians was further compounded by the fact that in the instances that they were actually represented, they were often trivialised or even disparaged.

This is perhaps best illustrated by the adoption of the labels "Cameron's Cuties" and "Dave's dolls" (Platell, 2010) to describe the record number of women candidates standing for the Conservative Party. Such labels serve to trivialise these women and cast them in terms of their appearance rather than their contribution. The word "dolls" is particularly pertinent here, as it compares them to toys that are inanimate and subject to manipulation. This mode of representation recalls the similar labelling of the "Blair Babes" by the *Daily Mail* in 1997 (Ward, 2000). A number of stories appeared which referred to the "cuties" inexperience and political indiscretions. Amanda Platell in the *Daily Mail* questioned whether these women have "really got what it takes to transform politics" (Platell, 2010) and dismissed them as being chosen "because they are women and they know nothing about politics" (ibid) so that Cameron can propagate the message that his party has changed. The author also admits to being "a little disconcerted by some of their gushing apple-pie naiveté" (ibid).

Aside from those news items that focused on trivial elements of female candidates, there were a number of openly hostile attacks on female politicians. Furthermore, there are a number of attacks where gender is particularly important. For example, the *Sun* recycled its scare story from the 1992 election claiming that Labour and Liberal Democrats wanted to ban Page 3 distorting a comment made by Lynne Featherstone at women's campaign event (*The Sun*, 2010c). This unique event featured the three main parties most high profile women candidates debating issues and policies related to women voters but unfortunately this trivial story in *The Sun* was the only coverage it received. Harriet Harman received the most scathing comments disparaging her reputation for political

[4] *The Guardian*, 21st April 2010, p.20

correctness, “spare us, sister” (Letts, 2010b) railed Quentin Letts in the *Daily Mail*, referring to her contribution at Labour strategy meetings as arriving “with a couple of scowling members of the sisterhood” (ibid) and “drones: ‘have we got the gender balance right?’ Her male colleagues have been sorely tempted to rectify the gender balance by hurling themselves off the nearest rooftop” (ibid). Harman is also described as “a clothes-hater of the first order; a woman who always looks like she gets her outfits in a scrimmage following an explosion in the Sue Ryder [a charity shop] bargain bin” (Moir, 2010e). Jacqui Smith was described as “the mythical beast of Redditch” (Gold, 2010) whilst “shamed MP” (Beckford, 2010a) Margaret Moran was criticised for profiting from the sale of her home which was “funded by taxpayers” (ibid). It is important to note how sexist a number of these criticisms are, for example legitimate feminist concerns about the importance of diversity amongst candidates on the campaign and the representation of women in the mainstream media are dismissed as irrelevant and unimportant. Furthermore it seems unlikely that a male colleague of Harman’s would be criticised for lacking in fashion sense.

Despite the fact that the *Guardian* had the lowest proportion of items about women it did feature the most overtly feminist articles which actively questioned the lack of political women in the campaign. In total just 10 items from the entire sample were coded in this way and 7 of these came from the *Guardian*. Items that were coded in this way included letters from readers and feminist organisations deploring the lack of coverage of women in the news media generally and items that interrogated the propensity of political parties to treat women as floating voters. For example, the *Guardian* stated that “surely this election is the most regressive for many years when it comes to women” (Ashley, 2010) since “in previous elections we have actually been allowed the luxury of listening to female politicians” (ibid). An angry comment piece blamed these developments firmly on political parties; “all three parties have been trotting out leaders’ wives, because evidently women don’t analyse policy, or debate issues (excepting domestic ones), so we need other women to help us decide how to vote. Naturally this logic hasn’t resulted in more female candidates; we’re still expected to vote for men. Just give us an attractive, modern-looking woman and we’ll vote for her husband” (Churchwell, 2010).

It is interesting then, that despite the perception that ordinary women voters were "sick to the back teeth of the pages and pictures detailing the style wars between Sam Cam and Sarah Brown" (Ashley, 2010); all of the newspapers in this sample provided at least equal amounts, if not more, coverage of the leaders' wives than they did of female politicians. The *Guardian* may well be the loudest critic of the marginalisation of female politicians in favour of leaders' wives but they were just as guilty of promoting the wives since they dedicated the same number of individual items to the relatives as they did to female political figures. These figures can be found in Table 3 (above).

"Style over substance"[5]

Furthermore, like the relatives, the politicians also had their personal style critiqued. Interestingly, 23 out of the 82 items about female politicians (28%) made some reference to the physical appearance or clothing of the woman in question.

Table 4.10: References to politicians' appearance across newspapers

Newspaper	% of items mentioning physical appearance
Daily Mirror	0
The Guardian	32
Daily Telegraph	21.7
Daily Mail	46.7
The Sun	30

Table 4.10 shows that the newspaper to feature the highest proportion of items which made some reference to the physical appearance of women politicians is the *Daily Mail*. Almost half of its items fall into this category. Interestingly, this is also the newspaper which featured no policy discussion from women politicians. The *Daily Mirror* on the other hand made no reference to the physical appearance of these women. The other newspapers all feature such mentions in over 20% of their items.

[5] Hunt, L (2010) 'Style over Substance', *Daily Telegraph* 14th April, p.22

The day after Labour's manifesto launch the *Guardian* described the event with reference to the abundance of pink clothing on display; "Tessa Jowell, followed the PM's hint of pink lead by wearing a top in a bubblegum hue underneath a rather jaunty floral blazer" (Chilvers, 2010) whilst "the work and pensions secretary, Yvette Cooper, wore a jacket that can only be described as one shade short of riotous fuchsia" (ibid). The focus on the physical appearance of candidates also served to trivialise them. According to the *Daily Mail* Conservative candidate Louise Bagshawe "is surely one of the first would-be Tory MPs to boast a cover-girl figure" (Kay, 2010); the same newspaper also wrote that Labour candidate Gloria de Piero's "looks have never held her back" (*Daily Mail,* 2010a) stating that she "posed topless as a teenager and was once voted one of FHM's 'World's Sexiest Women'" (ibid). *The Guardian* also singled out de Piero for this kind of attention describing her campaigning style as one where "no one escapes, not that many would want to when a telegenic presenter...swoops in with a scarlet coat and red balloons" (Wainwright, 2010). This focus on the physical appearances of female candidates was made even more problematic as it seemed to be promoted by the three political parties when a number of female candidates from all three parties appeared in a stylised glossy photo shoot for weekly women's magazine, *Grazia* (van Zoonen and Harmer, 2011). This personalised coverage makes no mention of the political views or the policies advocated by these candidates. It instead presents them in startlingly similar terms to the leaders' wives discussed earlier. Such coverage further reinforces the notion that women candidates are an awkward fit in the traditionally masculine public sphere (van Zoonen, 2006).

The tendency of national newspapers to focus on the activities of women who happen to be married to someone powerful or the male party leaders instead of providing coverage of a wide range of politicians and their political platforms is a development which threatens to erase women's political representation from the national debate. The striking similarity between the coverage of these two diverse groups of women demonstrates that political parties and the media alike were seemingly complicit in foregrounding images of women that were safely non-political, passive appendages willing to support men's political ambitions at the expense of actively engaged political women who are willing and capable of not only improving the lives of men and women

voters but also of providing role models for other women who may aspire to something more than domesticity.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that press coverage of the 2010 General Election campaign marginalised women as voters and as politicians. Just 12.1% of all election coverage featured prominent coverage of women (as defined in the methodology). This in turn illustrates the extent to which women were marginalised from the public debate about politics. Furthermore, just over one third of the news items that did feature women prominently focused upon the wives or other female relatives of politicians; 92.9% of which was about the wives of the three main party leaders.

Women voters were featured prominently in just 5.5% of all election coverage, despite making up over half of the electorate. The fact that women voters were more prominent in the discourse than politicians or the wives reflects the tendency for women to be constructed as ordinary citizens whilst positions of authority are reserved for male actors. There was a mixture of items about voters many of which constructed them as passive consumers of politics. Items that constructed women in this fashion focused on women as a discrete voting bloc that politicians needed to cultivate in order to win the election such as 'Take a Break woman' or 'cybermums'. The issues that these women were depicted as being interested in were based around balancing their work and family lives and focused predominantly on their roles as mothers. Other items where women were passive constructed them as policy subjects or as victims of policy failures such as coverage of the married couple's tax allowance and its potential implications or much more emotive policy issues such as the unavailability of certain cancer drugs for specific women. These items portrayed women as passive consumers of politics and policies. Such modes of representation serve to construct women as passive and apolitical which marginalises them from the discussion of political affairs. It also reinforces patriarchal notions that women belong to the private sphere while the political decision making is reserved for, and is ultimately about, men.

Those items where women were constructed as citizens tended to be items like 'vox pops', where readers were invited to give their views on either policies or the televised debates, or direct interventions in the campaign. Despite the women being portrayed as actively engaged in politics, these items tended to be superficial and instead of containing rich policy discussion, were laced with vague references to areas of policy such as health or education and opinions of a particular politician's or party's performance. 'Vox pops' offered a limited construction of the agency of these citizens because most of these items came from the least active end of Lewis et al's (2005) continuum of engagement therefore focusing on personal accounts.

A limited number of items did portray women as actively engaged in campaigning for certain issues. These issues tended to focus on motherhood or similarly family orientated issues which served to limit the representation of women's agency to domestic concerns. Furthermore, although citizen activism was portrayed in the coverage, the women tended to be depicted as responding to the agenda of politicians rather than allowing them space to make their own political proposals which Lewis et al (2005) define as the most engaged category on their continuum of political engagement.

The incident with Gillian Duffy perhaps represents the best example of an active woman voter in the entire campaign period, accounting for a significant proportion of items which featured citizen activism. Although her entire exchange with the Prime Minister lasted less than five minutes, his subsequent actions caused much furore with a large number of news items and readers' letters being written about this issue and its implications. Despite the fact that Duffy was obviously politically engaged and eager to share her views with the wider public, the news coverage reduced her to a Labour supporting grandmother who is against immigration and was viciously insulted by Gordon Brown. The way that certain newspapers chose to focus upon one aspect of their conversation to support their own political agenda and presented her as a kindly, sensible senior citizen served to disempower her original activism and portrays her as passive in the wider discussion.

These findings add more weight to Lewis et al's (2005) argument that the news media rarely construct ordinary people as actively engaged citizens who are capable of making

informed decisions. This is problematic given the role of newspapers in helping to construct politics for their audiences. The extent to which voters' portrayal as actively engaged in the newspapers is perhaps limited because the everyday practices of political journalism place more value upon the views and opinions of elites than ordinary people which means there will be less space for the public to express political views. This is arguably made worse by the fact that women tend to be associated with very narrow political interests so their ability to be considered newsworthy is further constrained. Lewis et al (2005) argue that ordinary people are more likely to be represented as self-interested consumers because the ideology of consumerism has become so pervasive that it has transformed the way society thinks about individuals and their identity. This can be demonstrated by the way in which political campaigning has become dependent upon marketing techniques to attract voters. This is of course exacerbated by the commercial imperatives of news media that are reliant upon advertisers to finance their journalistic activities.

Despite the limited extent to which ordinary women were portrayed as active citizens, it is encouraging from a feminist perspective that these voters had some level of presence in the news coverage of the election and that some space was given over to their views.

Female politicians received less coverage than the relatives despite their obviously important role in politics. There are a number of possible reasons for this marginalisation. Firstly, the coverage was dominated by male politicians with the three party leaders in particular accounting for a large proportion of the coverage (Deacon and Wring, 2011). This increased concentration on party leaders was perhaps due to the introduction of the first televised leaders' debates. Deacon and Wring (2011) found that Nick Clegg accounted for 71% of all appearances by Liberal Democrat's during the campaign period while David Cameron made up 60% of all appearances by Conservatives and Gordon Brown accounted for 51% of Labour appearances. This means there was less space for other politicians in general let alone women who accounted for very few positions of authority in any of the parties compared to their male counterparts.

Another reason for the lack of politicians in the coverage of women is probably the dramatic increase in attention of the party leaders' wives, which again might be due to

the increased focus on the leaders themselves. This is perhaps also due to the decision by the Labour and Conservative parties to actively involve Sarah Brown and Samantha Cameron in the campaign (Higgins and Smith, forthcoming). Although this is perhaps part of the reason it does not explain why newspapers felt that the wives of politicians were more newsworthy than women politicians who would be willing to comment on policy and so on.

When female politicians were visible, they tended to be represented as either naive newcomers who were adding a touch of glamour to the election or they were treated with hostility or amusement for their political attitudes and campaign behaviour. This is particularly problematic for less well known candidates who might be standing for the first time but was by no means confined to these women.

Conversely, the leaders' wives were presented as loyal and supportive appendages of their husbands. The coverage effectively marginalised actively engaged political women who represent women and their interests from the public discourse in favour of promoting an image of women as wives who happily support and defer to their husbands political aspirations without question. Despite some disparity in the proportion of coverage devoted to these two groups of women and some disparity in their roles on the campaign trail, there were a striking number of similarities in the coverage they received.

Both groups were subjected to highly personalised coverage which focused on their physical appearance and both were trivialised and disparaged for their behaviour on the campaign trail. The wives were presented as being devoid of political views at all while the politicians were usually associated with incidents on the campaign trail rather than detailed policy discussions. This perhaps reflects the extent to which so-called horse race coverage has come to dominate election coverage. Furthermore, as Gaber (2011) points out there was a distinct lack of policy in the campaigns of the three main parties due to the dominance of leaders debates, an ideological convergence between them and the fact that none of the major parties wanted to address their plans to address the economic crisis. The unique circumstances of this particular election may well explain why the newspapers needed to find alternatives to focus their attention on.

Nevertheless, such representations reinforce the assumption that women are incompatible with the public sphere. The increased personalisation of political communication which widens the information that citizens require about their elected representatives poses some problems for women as any emphasis on their private lives serves as a reminder of their traditional role as occupiers of the private and personal spheres while the public and political continue to be constructed as male. This is deeply problematic for women because it has the potential to limit their ability to be seen as suitable candidates for parliament which not only has implications for women's political representation but also for democracy itself.

The representation of women in the coverage of this election is limited. The lack of prominence afforded to female politicians who have much to contribute to public life is particularly striking. The tendency of newspapers to prefer reporting about the activities of the leaders' wives than political actors needs further interrogation. Chapter Seven will analyse the representation of the relatives in news coverage between 1918 and 2005 in order to establish how such women have been treated historically and whether they have always been so prominent. Politicians will also be analysed historically in Chapter Six to establish whether the existing scholarship focused on contemporary representations of politicians has historical precedent.

The way that voters were constructed in the public discourse of the 2010 election rendered them as passive consumers, or constructs them as predominantly concerned about issues that relate to their families and working lives. By limiting the policy areas that women are allowed to speak about in the coverage, the newspapers are actively reinforcing stereotypes about women's political engagement. The extent to which this has always been the case will be analysed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: "Women's Issues": The Voter Perspective

After the long campaign for women's suffrage, the Representation of the People Act 1918 gave married women or women of independent means over the age of thirty the right to vote in Westminster elections (Cowman, 2010). The newspapers had been divided over the issue of votes for women until after the war when it was felt that women had earned the right after their performance during the war, the *Daily Mail* had famously labelled the more militant members of the movement 'the suffragettes' (Bingham, 2004). After 1918 the women's movement continued its campaign in order to ensure the equalisation of the franchise. This was once again considered controversial by certain sections of the press, particularly those owned by Lord Rothermere. The *Daily Mail* campaigned vigorously to prevent the equalisation of the franchise (Bingham, 2002). Women were finally granted the vote on equal terms with men in 1928. Although women had been involved in political parties for many years, the enfranchisement of women meant that political parties had to appeal directly to women voters for the first time (Jarvis, 1994; Beers, 2010). Although women had become citizens of the public sphere, they continued to be considered responsible for the activities of the private sphere such as housework and childcare which meant that most of the political messages crafted for women assumed that women's political views and priorities stemmed from these domestic activities.

Research into the mediated representation of women as voters in Britain is scarce although there is limited work which surveys the extent to which women have been appealed to by political parties in the 1990s (see Chapter Two). This research aims to correct this by providing an analysis of the way women voters have been constructed in newspaper coverage of elections since 1918. The work of Lewis et al (2005) which is discussed in more detail earlier in the thesis will be used to assess the extent to which voters have been portrayed as actively engaged citizens in election coverage throughout the last century.

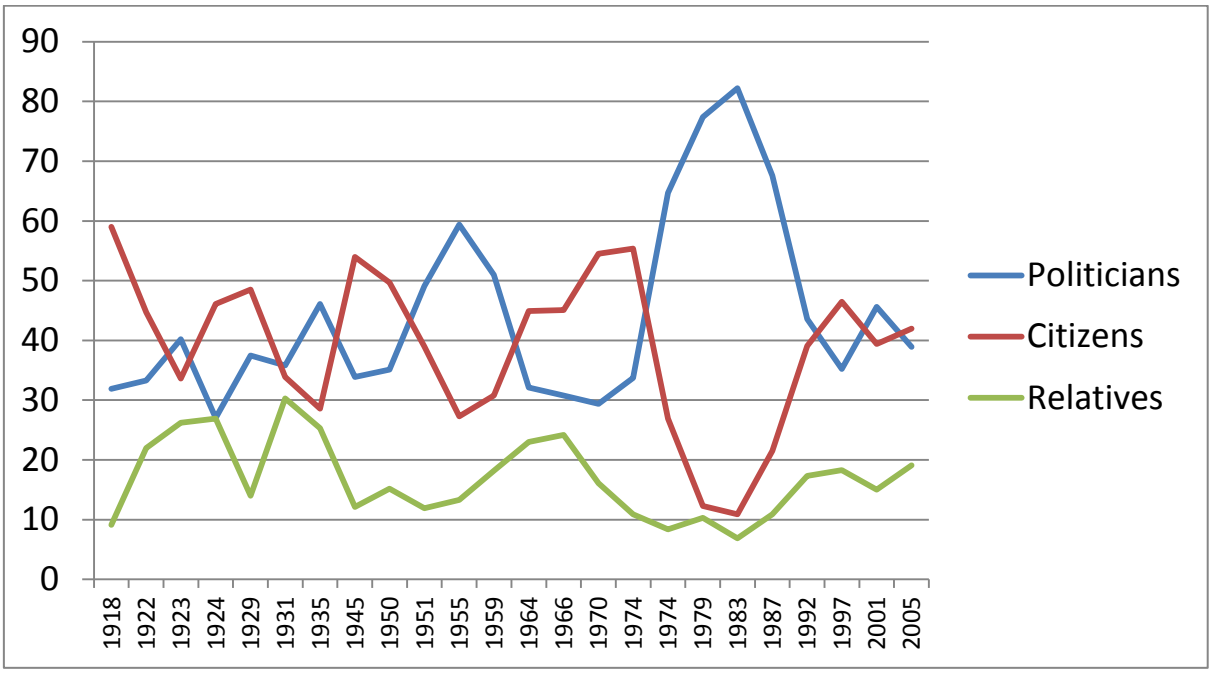
The purpose of the chapter is to demonstrate that the way that citizens are represented in electoral discourse has changed the least of the three groups of women studied,

despite there being some very important social and political changes throughout the sample period. The chapter will demonstrate that women's citizenship is consistently associated with their familial roles as carers and consumers. The chapter will firstly describe the prominence of citizens compared to the other categories of women in the coverage before analysing the way women's familial roles are invoked in electoral discourse. It will then demonstrate the policy areas that citizens are associated with and the gendered implications of these before moving on to analyse the extent to which voters are depicted as active and finally the extent to which they are given a voice in the news coverage.

Prominence

The results from the content analysis show that the prominence of voters compared to other women in the coverage fluctuates considerably across the sample period when the coverage is taken as a whole. This is illustrated in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Percentage of Items about Politicians, Citizens and Relatives 1918-2005



In 1918 voters constituted 59% of the coverage about women in the election and they continued to dominate the coverage compared to the politicians and relatives until 1935 when politicians took over as the largest category. This dominance of the coverage was probably due to their novelty value as new voters, especially in 1918 and 1929 with the impact of the two extensions of the franchise and furthermore because the numbers of female candidates were low during this period. The dominance of politicians in 1935 appears to have been short lived as voters once again dominated the 1945 and 1950 elections. During the 1950s the voters were once again over taken by the politicians and then they became the largest category between 1964 and February 1974. From October 1974 until 1992 the politicians' category formed the largest category of women by some distance largely due to the presence of Margaret Thatcher as Conservative leader and then Prime Minister throughout the 1980s. Voters were once again the largest category, although not by much, in 1997 perhaps due to the emphasis placed on women voters by New Labour. As the graph shows, voters and politicians compete with one another for dominance across the sample period and the most disparity comes during Thatcher's party leadership and premiership.

Keeping Them in the Family: The Domestication of Women

Women voters are consistently constructed as mothers in contemporary political strategies (Campbell, 2006). It is therefore interesting to note that women seem to have always been associated with children and family in electoral discourse; not only in their capacity as housewives looking after families but also because they are constructed as caring about education, health and family policies. Associating women almost exclusively with domestic issues is problematic because it assumes all women share these priorities despite their diversity. Invoking women's political views as resulting from their familial role is also problematic because it fails to recognise that women are also concerned about wider issues. The policy areas that voters are most associated with will be discussed later in the chapter. Figure 5.2 shows the percentage of items which mention the family members of citizens across the entire historical sample.

Figure 5.2: Percentage of Items making references to voters' families 1918-2005

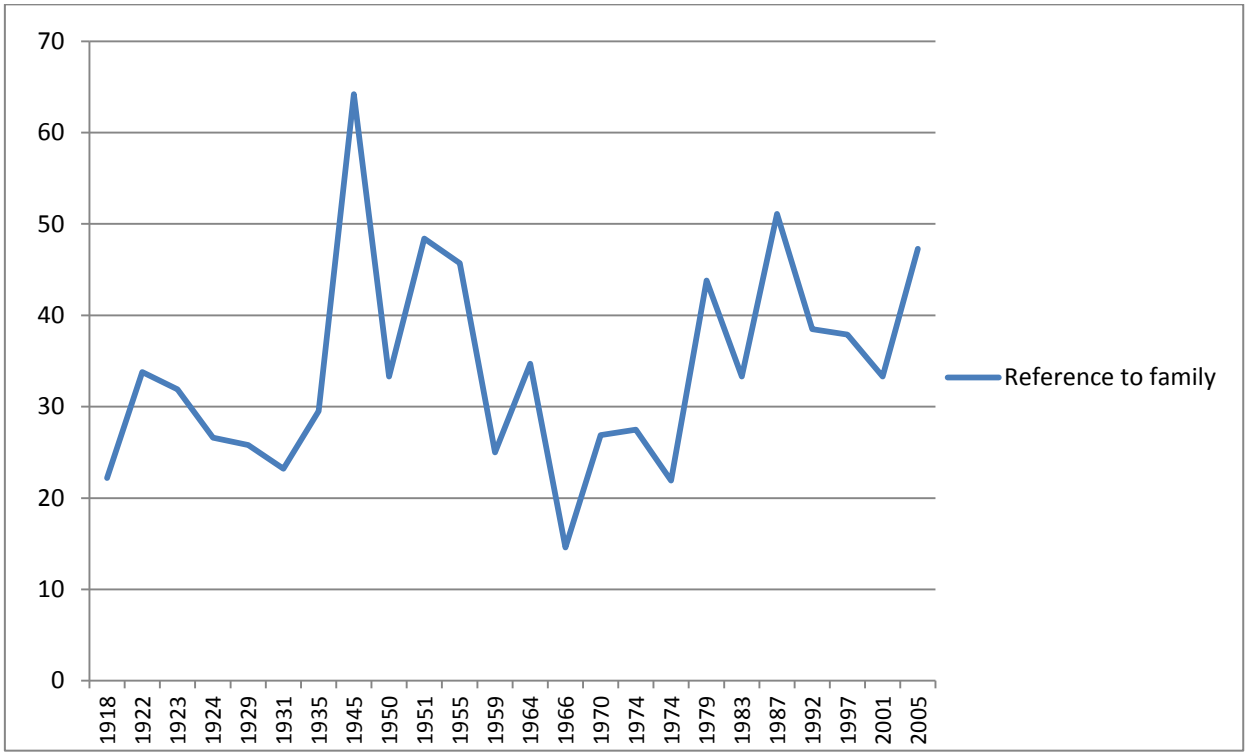


Figure 5.2 demonstrates that the newspapers refer to the families or familial role of voters in a substantial proportion of items. All elections feature references to voter's families in over 20% of items except the 1966 election where they featured in just 14.6% of items. References to citizens' families peak in the 1945 election due to the emphasis placed on women's sons and husbands returning from the war and then decline back to pre- war levels. Between 1979 and 2005, these references appear in 30-52% of items about voters which is the most consistent period and suggests a renewed focus on women's role in the family and their priorities as voters. The full figures appear in Appendix E.2 (p.293)

"The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that writes the decisive X"[6]

From the very beginning of women's citizenship their roles as mothers has been constructed as having an impact on their political views. In 1918 the *Guardian* suggested

[6] Daily Mirror, 5th October 1959, p.16-17

that “having got this power, a power which they can use for improving the conditions of life for their own household, for their homes, and for their children, it is a trust which they ought to exercise” (*The Guardian*, 1918a). Women were often subjected to political messages that aimed to elicit an emotional response: “making a strong appeal to women electors he says that unemployment and decreased wages, coupled with the high cost of living, are having tragic effects on mothers, who are denying themselves to make both ends meet” (*Daily Mail*, 1922a); this kind of appeal assumes that women especially are empathetic towards their peers based perhaps on the traditional assumption that women are naturally caring. These assumptions are evident throughout the interwar period: “there was no section of the community who understood more distinctly than the mothers of the nation the need for healthy conditions in the home, school, factory, and everywhere where children and adults met and lived together” (*Daily Herald*, 1924). Moreover, in 1931 the *Daily Herald* asked “what woman will give her vote for that cutting of the tiny income of the very poor which means, not figuratively but in hard fact, less food and less clothing for thousands of children who even know hardly what it is to be properly fed or adequately clad?” (*Daily Herald*, 1931). Bingham (2004) also observed that women were often represented as mothers who were concerned about social conditions and the welfare of children during this period; although his analysis suggested that this was more prevalent in the left wing press. The results from this analysis however suggest this discourse was ubiquitous across the entire spectrum of newspapers analysed. These generalisations about the political concerns of women based on their familial roles are not corroborated by any form of evidence which makes them akin to Lewis et al’s (2005) inferences about public opinion and therefore shows that early electoral discourse tended to write about voters rather than feature women talking about themselves. Such inferences mean that these political priorities are generalised to include all women without offering any proof that they share such concerns. This mode of representation reinforces patriarchal assumptions about women’s role in society by placing them and their political concerns firmly in the private sphere.

During the post war period, the dominance of motherhood continued but the focus became much more personalised and individualised; so instead of mothers being constructed as anxious to improve social conditions generally, they began to be

constructed as thinking only in terms of their own families. This appeal from the *Daily Herald* demonstrates this tendency: "if you have children...help the Labour party to see that they get the food they need and the education they deserve" (Allan, 1945). During this period motherhood became an individual pursuit rather than an experience women share collectively: "in this election the housewife's fight is to keep what her family already have. She is fighting for family security" (*Daily Mirror*, 1951). This example constructed the housewife as protecting her own family regardless of how others are coping. Women themselves contributed to this discourse by invoking their own roles as mothers in political discussions or reader's letters: "mothers, said Mrs Jones junior, cuddling her baby, 'have got the future of their children to think about'" (Proops, 1974a). During this period mothers were also constructed as an important target group for politicians to win over. In 1979 Prime Minister Jim Callaghan knew that "Britain's mums hold the key to Thursday's General Election – just as they did for Ted Heath's Tories in 1970" (*The Sun*, 1979c). Similarly in 1987 "Labour hopes to woo Britain's mothers last night with the promise of a brighter future for their children" (Bradshaw, 1987). This individualistic emphasis portrayed citizens as self-interested consumers rather than politically engaged voters.

During the 1990s and 2000s the motherhood discourse becomes even more personalised and focused on individuals by using specific women and their opinions to speak on behalf of mothers everywhere. This use of 'vox pops' reflects Lewis et al's (2005: 79) contention that these devices position ordinary people "as self-interested members of society responding to political news by talking about how it affects their personal lives". One woman suggests she will vote for "the party that will help her family the most" (*The Sun*, 2001b). Children and policy areas which directly affect them feature heavily in these personal accounts: "with three children in school, Allyson is naturally concerned about education" (ibid). The use of the word "naturally" here is interesting and reinforces the patriarchal notion that women are inherently nurturing. Another voter's response in the same article is also focused primarily on her role as a mother: "Laura hopes Labour will stick to their election pledges of delivering pre and after school care for 100,000 children by 2004. And she is keen to see the introduction of more breakfast and after-school clubs, holiday places and weekend activities for families" (ibid) and "Tory voter Merika

Robinson has switched sides – after she became an unemployed single mum" (ibid). These examples reinforce the notion that women's political priorities and opinions are discursively bound up with their familial roles and works to exclude women who do not conform to these expectations from the formal discussion of politics. Furthermore the use of the third person narrative serves to disempower these women because their own voices are deleted from the reportage.

This is a common device employed in the coverage and serves to present the women as passive: "despairing Julie Cleminson cuddled her newborn son Paul yesterday...and prayed he will be given the chance to be happy that she has never had" (Corless, 1992). This example pacifies the voter in question and furthermore constructs an idealised version of motherhood, namely a woman nurturing her child and using her vote to ensure his welfare. Similarly, "Louise Hooper believes she has Tony Blair's health policy to thank for the life of her son" (*Daily Mirror*, 2001) which further emphasises the idea that women's main political interests are based around their familial role. Women's own voices were also employed to reinforce these traditional ideas: "I'm appalled,' says her mum Jeannie, 'because of these cut backs, my daughter and other handicapped children like her are going to suffer" (Palmer, 1997). Lewis et al suggest (2005) that the personalisation of political reporting allows reporters to infer that these are universal concerns of citizens without providing more systematic evidence. The authors also argue that using such personalised 'vox pops' depoliticises the public sphere because they position interviewees as speaking from a self-interested perspective rather than as rational citizens engaged in political debate. This is particularly bad for women because being presented as passive and depoliticised reinforces their problematic relationship to the public sphere of formal politics.

"A wife's vote is a husband's vote times two"[7]

Another interesting aspect of the coverage of voters is the extent to which their political choices are constructed as an extension of their male relatives' political concerns. During

[7] This phrase is used by Goot and Reid (1984) to describe the assumption that mainstream voting studies employed when looking at women's political participation.

the interwar years when women were newly enfranchised it was largely assumed by the newspapers that women would vote according to their husband's views. *The Guardian* stated in 1918 that "it is said that many of the wives of absent soldiers will not vote because their husbands cannot advise them, and this, unfortunately means the double disenfranchisement of the soldiers" (*The Guardian*, 1918b). This example is particularly interesting not only because of the assumption that women need male relatives to help them understand politics but also because it suggests that women failing to vote is mainly problematic because it means their men folk will not be represented rather than their own interests not being represented. The statement is additionally attributed to a vague source and no evidence is provided suggesting that such speculation reflected wider attitudes towards voters rather than there being any evidence to support it.

Women's lack of political conviction was also discussed by the *Daily Telegraph* during the 1922 election. It claimed that "the reports show, too that in the present uneducated state of womanhood (the word is used politically) there is a disposition on the part of the married woman voter to accept her husband's view as her own" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1922a). Here it is suggested that women do not understand the issues and are therefore content to accept their husband's views rather than educate themselves sufficiently. The *Daily Mail* is more negative when it states that "one man who has had more than twenty years of election experience yesterday classified the women into three groups: the woman who regards a request for her vote as an impertinence; the woman who takes her politics from her husband and stands by them to the death; the woman who distrusts politics and regards a canvasser in the same light as a tax collector" (*Daily Mail*, 1922b); which portrayed voters as either disinterested, dogmatic or distrustful voters rather than committed and engaged citizens. The suggestion that all women fall into one of these groups served to construct women as difficult to communicate with and uninterested in politics. The author's use of an unattributed source for such comments also allowed the journalist to represent this general impression as someone else's view rather than be seen as responsible for such a sexist characterisation.

After the war, there was a shift and discussion instead centred on the fact that women no longer defer to their male relatives' political demands because they have "apparently less influence over their wives than at one time" (*The Guardian*, 1951a). This further

reinforces that this was once the case without offering any evidence to corroborate it. *The Sun* claimed that an academic, "Dr Durant said that a survey had shown that 12 per cent of women did not vote like their husbands" (Suich, 1964) implying that the other 88% did. This is interesting for a number of reasons since there is no explanation of how the survey was conducted or who was actually asked and seemingly no recognition of the fact that a significant proportion of the female electorate might not have husbands at all. This example also provides a rare occasion when evidence is provided to substantiate claims about women voters. For Lewis et al (2005) references to opinion polls are among the most explicit references to public opinion but represent some of the least instances when it is referred to in the news. This rare examples supports that view.

During the 1960s in general however, women voters began to be routinely constructed as independent voters who no longer defer to their male relatives choices. The amount of comment about this suggests that women's propensity to vote according to a man's views was still an accepted part of the electoral discourse. It was claimed that "women no longer automatically vote with their husbands and are quite happy to say so on the doorstep" (*The Guardian*, 1964). The newspaper went on to suggest that because "more women are going out to work" (ibid) their "economic independence leads to independent thought" (ibid). This is largely constructed as a positive development across the newspapers although its repetition suggests that it is still considered surprising: "the only amazement of the campaign so far has been the extraordinary number of households in which husband and wife hold opposing political opinions" (*The Sun*, 1966b) and "I have discovered that they are no longer tagging like obedient sheep behind their men" (Proops, 1974b). These constant references to a time when women voted according to their husband's preferences reinforced the idea that women, at least at one time, were not as politically aware or interested as their male relatives. This claim was still being made on the eve of the 1979 election, the first to feature a woman party leader: "fifty years ago, the women won the vote – and then too often voted as their husbands told them" (*Daily Mirror*, 1979). Once again the lack of evidence provided to substantiate such claims suggests these views are based upon prevailing attitudes rather than systematic verification. These claims reinforce dominant discourses about women's subordinate

position in the family by suggesting that male views and opinions are not only more important but more informed.

The assumption that voters' political priorities stem from their familial roles as mothers and housewives is also reflected in the policy areas which they are most associated with in the news coverage.

Policy

The main theme of each news item was counted during the coding process and these themes can be divided into two groups. Items either discuss policy, which would include remarks about health or education proposals for example; or they discuss the electoral process by referring to anything but policy. As far as voters are concerned, policy themes account for a total of 48.8% of items about women while the 51.2% of items were mainly about the electoral process. This study is interested in ascertaining which policy areas voters were predominantly associated with and whether this has changed over time. Table 5.1 shows the percentage breakdown of the total policy themes only when the sample is taken as a whole.

Table 5.1: Policy themes of items about voters for 1918-2005 elections combined

Policy Themes	Percentage of Policy Coverage
Economy	34.7
Health and Welfare	16.3
Equality and Rights	13.6
International Affairs	11.7
Education	4.7
Employment	4.6
Family and Children	4.6
Housing	4.3
Other	1.8
Constitutional Affairs	1.6
Law and Order	1.1
Race and Immigration	1

This demonstrates that four overarching themes dominated the coverage of voters, international affairs (such as matters of war, peace and security), equality and rights,

health and welfare and the economy. These themes combined accounted for 76.3% of the policy coverage. The largest policy area associated with women across the entire sample is the economy, accounting for 34.7% of the policy themes that were coded. The economy was comprised of three subthemes: the cost of living, trade and business and taxation. Table 5.2 shows the number of items each subtheme accounted for.

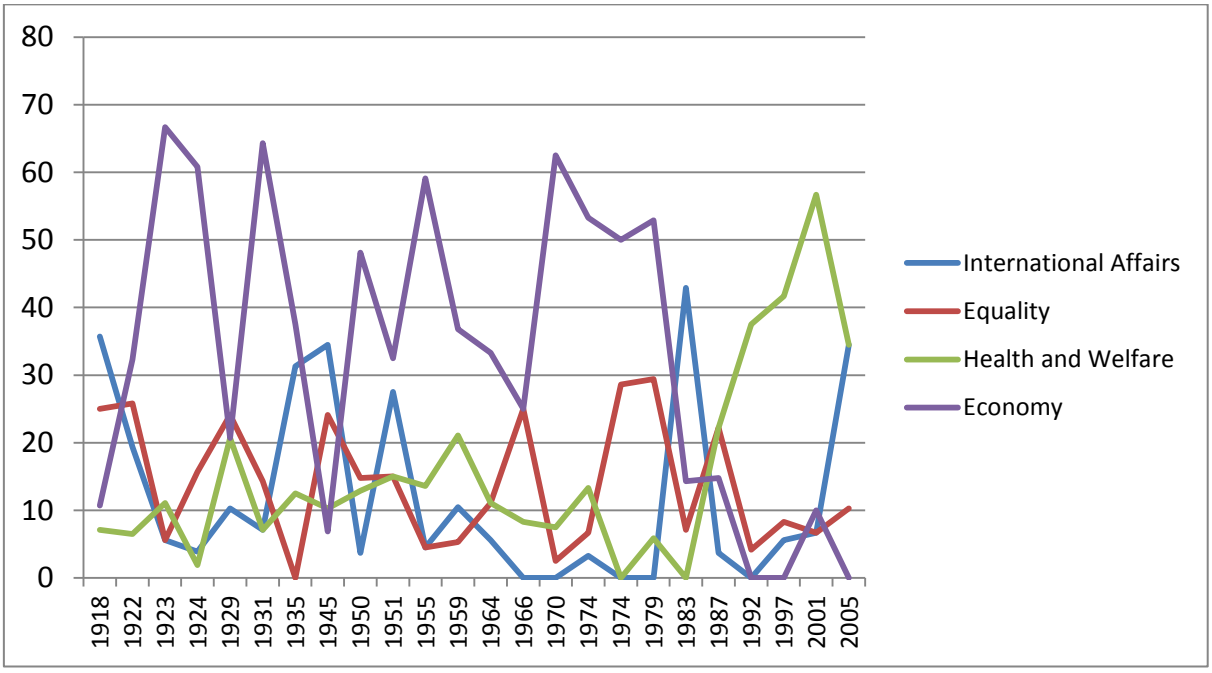
Table 5.2: Subthemes which make up 'Economy' theme

Economy Subthemes	Number of Items	Percentage of Subtheme	Percentage of Policy themes
Cost of Living	201	85.9	29.8
Business and Trade	28	11.9	4.2
Taxation	5	2.2	0.7

The cost of living is by far the largest category of the policy themes. It in fact made up 29.8% of total policy themes coded for voters and as a result was the largest theme coded across the entire sample, including the election process themes. As this chapter will argue later on, women were constructed as housewives eager to balance the family budget for a significant amount of the sample period and therefore this focus on the economy is deeply gendered. The other three main policy themes also reflect stereotypical assumptions about women's role in society. The focus on equality and rights might imply that women have more to gain from equality policies due to their subordinate position. Moreover the focus on international affairs could reflect the assumption that women are more peaceful than men. The focus on health and welfare, which incorporates pensions and benefits in its subcategories, might suggest that women are naturally more caring and that they are in greater need of state support throughout their lifetimes.

Figure 5.3 tracks the occurrence of these main four themes across the entire sample, expressed as a percentage of the total policy themes coded in each election.

Figure 5.3: Percentage of Items about four main themes 1918-2005



The graph demonstrates that although there is some fluctuation, the economy is the dominating policy theme for voters between 1923 and 1974, before declining rapidly. Between 1992 and 2005, the economy only features in one election (2001) and accounted for just ten per cent of policy themes when it was present. On the other hand, health and welfare issues remained a steady part of the coverage but became dominant after 1987 and through to 2005. International affairs tended to peak and trough according to the political situation. It accounted for a large proportion of the coverage just before and after major conflicts in 1918, 1935-45, 1983 and 2005 after the two world wars, the Falklands conflict and Iraq War respectively. Equality which refers to equality matters broadly defined (therefore including race relations, social inequality and so forth as well as women's rights) remained a steady feature of the coverage throughout but never dominated. These themes are broken down by newspaper in Appendix E.3 (p.294).

Housewives' Choice: gendered coverage

The content analysis results revealed that voters tended to be associated with particular policy areas throughout the entire sample period. Apart from the periodic focus on war, peace and security (for obvious reasons) the main themes that voters were associated with were domestic ones such as the cost of living, health and welfare and social equality. Throughout the sample period women were consistently constructed as caring more about domestic matters than any other policy areas, for example the *Daily Mirror* claimed in 1924 that voters "may not particularly care whether we sign a treaty with Albania or not because the whole thing is too distant, but every housewife cares very considerably whether the price of sugar is to be 2d per pound cheaper or not" (Wallace*,* 1924). This discourse is consistently maintained throughout the elections so that in 1970 "for every woman who asks about foreign policy there are 40 anxious about the prices issue" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1970). In another example from 1974, the *Daily Mirror* editorial asked "does the Chancellor think the electorate is soft in the head? Does he think the British housewife is more worried about Reds under the bed than the price of bread under Ted?" (*Daily Mirror,* 1974a); the implication being that women were naturally more concerned about feeding their families than discussing issues of supposedly more grave importance like the Cold War. These generalisations about the policy areas which might interest voters are similar to Lewis et al's (2005) inferences about public opinion in that they portray women as concerned about domestic issues without providing any evidence to substantiate these claims. This serves to perpetuate the idea that women are primarily concerned about political issues which impact on the private sphere.

Later coverage similarly constructs the issues that voters care about as focused on their domestic responsibilities whilst also incorporating the role of women as employees. A columnist in *the Sun* complained that she had "written many times before in this column that women voters – particularly those with children – are interested in education, crime, health and all the issues that affect our families and their future. Not least the decline in the state and private pensions. Yet all these important matters seem to have been smothered into oblivion be repeated bickering over the validity, or otherwise, of the decision to 'liberate' Iraq from Saddam Hussein" (Moore, 2005). Once again voters are constructed as caring more about issues that directly affect their domestic arrangements

rather than matters like foreign policy and potential government dishonesty. Furthermore, women's family roles tend to dominate any discussion of their political views even when other policies are mentioned, for example young women "should also take into account Labour's achievements – the minimum wage, tougher powers on domestic violence, child tax credits, the baby bond scheme, increased maternity pay and the Sure Start programme for kids" (Lawrence, 2005); whilst the minimum wage and domestic violence are issues which can reasonably affect almost any woman, the other policies listed are focused on children and therefore assume that young women are either mothers or thinking about becoming mothers. Examples that deviate from these constructions were rare but an important means of challenging the discourse. One example came from 1979: "women account for more than 40 per cent of Britain's work force – and two out of three of them married. So the true picture of women today is not one of the little wife at home who can't be bothered with anything more than the price of butter" (Cousins, 1979) which emphasises to some extent the diversity among women.

The results of the content analysis showed that the economy was consistently the policy theme most associated with voters between 1918 and 1979, in particular the focus on the cost of living and how this would impact on their families. During the 1980s and beyond this theme disappeared and was replaced by other concerns such as health and welfare. For a detailed breakdown of the content analysis figures please see Appendix E.3 (p.294). These policy areas and their implications for the representation of women voters will now be discussed in more detail.

"The price of an egg and a loaf of bread and a packet of detergent is politics"[8]: Home Economics

The economy, in particular the cost of living, is constructed as the central concern for voters during a long period of the newspaper coverage. MacDonald (1995: 77) suggests that "since the 19th Century women have been particularly associated with consumption and that advertisers in the interwar period frequently constructed women as the capable household manager; the guilt-ridden mother; and the self-indulgent flapper". This

[8] Daily Mirror, 28th February 1974, p.17

corresponds almost exactly to the ways in which voters were constructed during this period (Bingham, 2004). The idea of the housewife and her concerns dominated the discourse: “they will scrutinise the promises and merits of competing candidates solely from the point of view of the housewife, the home, and the needs of the country” (Willoughby, 1922), therefore excluding women who did not have children or were unmarried. Such attitudes also suggested that it was assumed that women did not have any other political concerns to speak of. The economy was constructed as an important policy area because “the women are profoundly concerned at the high cost of living, and the party which is able to convince the army of housewives that it is determined to reduce taxation –and, consequently the cost of commodities – will triumph tomorrow” (*Daily Mirror*, 1922).

During the interwar period voters or more specifically housewives were flattered by constant references to their abilities to run a household and therefore by extension their abilities to understand how to run the country: “the average mother of a family, and especially of a middle class family, is essentially a good manager. She has to make a pound go as far as 210 pence. She wants and gets value for money” (Watkins, 1923). Furthermore these women were frequently constructed as “the Chancellors of the Exchequer of the home” (*Daily Mail*, 1931) and “guardians of the domestic purse” (*Daily Mirror,* 1931) who were keen to “defend [thei]r shopping basket” (Sutherland, 1935). As such housewives were constructed as central to the economic prosperity of the country because “she has the spending of the worker’s wage; she is the biggest employer of labour in the country. The smashing wage reductions in the last three years have restricted her power to buy goods, thereby restricting the home market, creating unemployment, and at the same time bringing want into millions of homes” (*Daily Herald*, 1923). Politicians were frequently reported appealing directly to women voters in these gendered terms, for example in 1923 then Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin was quoted: “I am not surprised that our opponents have given up argument and have fallen back upon a dishonourable attempt to scare the housewife by talking of dear food. Women of every class find their resources straightened by the burdens which their households have to bear in taxes and rates to save the workless from destitution” (*Daily Mail*, 1923b). A year later his successor Ramsay MacDonald “addressing a women’s meeting at Cwm Avon,

Glamorgan, last night, said he had fulfilled the pledges given at the last election to reduce the taxes on tea and sugar" (*Daily Mail*, 1924b) that were deemed so important by voters. Throughout this period, women's concerns were referred to without providing evidence to corroborate the claims that were made which were instead presented as natural and obvious. This construction of the woman voter was particularly evident in the conservative press of the interwar period (Bingham, 2004).

During the immediate post war period the cost of living was central to the political discourse due to reconstruction policies that maintained rationing well into the 1950s and promoted austerity (Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 2002). During this period housewives became an influential political force and their discontent for austerity had important electoral consequences (ibid); therefore housewives continued to be constructed as such throughout this period, at the expense of other policy areas that might have interested women as the content analysis makes clear. This example from the *Daily Mirror* illustrates the importance of the cost of living: "we repeat this regrettable truth for the benefit of any housewives who may have been deceiving themselves with the great illusion that any British Government can suddenly give them more food, or put more buying power in their purses, or slash prices without slashing the standard of living" (*Daily Mirror*, 1951). Here it was suggested that housewives were somehow incapable of understanding the economic situation since they may have been wilfully "deceiving themselves" or taken in by some "great illusion" that they could have everything they wanted. Such overt criticism of voters was rare however and for the most part the newspapers throughout the 1950s to 1970s positioned themselves on the side of the housewife, as did many politicians. For example, then Chancellor of the Exchequer Rab "Butler was questioned by a young housewife who said she could find no cheap food –only that which was rising in price. Mr Butler agreed that the cost of living was a difficult problem" (*Daily Mail*, 1955a) demonstrating that the cost of living was the main issue targeted at women voters during this period. The use of one housewife to illustrate the concerns of all housewives is noteworthy because she was constructed as speaking on behalf of all women. The 1970s would be no different, "Tory leader Mr Edward Heath made a final attempt last night to win the housewives' vote, with a slashing attack on sparing prices and crippling taxation...he blamed Labour for Britain' economic problems and declared: 'Mr Wilson has

made his biggest mistake. He has underestimated the mood of the women of this country" (*Daily Mail*, 1970c) implying that women generally thought along the same lines.

The 1970 election was particularly interesting in this regard because the cost of living dominated the discourse about voters, for example: "prices are going up at the rate of 2s in the £ this year. Wages are going up as fast, if not faster. This is hell for the housewife. It means that we all have to keep running to stay at the same place" (*Daily Mail*, 1970a) and "of course, prices are the biggest election issue for housewives' agree all the party spokesmen, and the candidates in the field" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1970). This second quotation is particularly interesting because party spokes*men* and candidates are deemed to be the authority on women's political views rather than women themselves. Politicians of all parties placed the rising cost of everyday commodities at the centre of their campaign to women voters: "the Tory leader's eve-of-poll rallying cry went out to the housewife. They have been underestimated by Mr Wilson, he said" (Shrimsley, 1970) because "the evidence is there for all to see, clear and beyond dispute. It is the evidence of the shopping basket and grocer's counter. It is the evidence every housewife knows only too well" (*Daily Mail*, 1970b). The Conservative Party in particular sought to appeal to working class women in particular who were not receiving the benefits of her working class husband's improved pay packets under Labour (Day, 1982). This strategy culminated in the first Party Election Broadcast to feature the everyday experiences of an ordinary working class woman which aimed to encourage similar women to vote Conservative, even if their husbands were content Labour voters (Rosenbaum, 1997). Day (1982) claimed that this was the first time that a particular group of women voters were singled out for political attention of this kind and that it was ultimately successful at persuading a number of working class women to vote Tory. This strategy was reportedly why "the Leader of the Opposition last night turned again to the British housewife for his eve of poll inspiration. He is relying on women to vote him into No. 10 on a wave of burning indignation at rising prices" (Lake, 1970).

Prices and the cost of living continued to be an important means of constructing women voters throughout the 1970s: "for the housewives of Britain, the cost of the family's food bill is a major factor as they weigh up the pros and cons of this election" (Burton, 1979) reinforcing the "conventional wisdom...that every election, in the end, turns out to be a

Shopping Basket Election" (*The Sun*, 1979b) as far as women were concerned. Throughout the 1980s and beyond, this discourse gradually changed and as such the cost of living as a policy area declines rapidly after 1979. Once again these prolonged discussions about women's priorities as housewives lack any systematic evidence to support the assumption that women were primarily concerned about the cost of living. This is revealing because it demonstrates the extent to which women's views have been constructed in specific ways by journalists who preferred to speak for women rather than providing them with an opportunity to contribute which corresponds to the way citizens are constructed in political news in more recent times (Lewis et al, 2005).

Health and Welfare

As the results from the content analysis illustrated, after the decline of the cost of living as the dominant theme associated with voters, health and welfare took over. What is perhaps most interesting about this development is the extent to which women have come to be represented as policy victims who are at the mercy of policy makers, rather than active citizens who are able to make political choices (in contrast to their construction as proficient and engaged housewives). The popular newspapers in particular chose to highlight areas where it was felt the government was lacking by introducing such policy victims into their coverage. In 1992 the *Daily Mirror* carried a feature whereby those who were struggling under the Conservative government were interviewed about their living conditions. Examples included: "Daisy is a widow. She lives alone in a spick and span council flat that betrays no outward sign of deprivation" (*Daily Mirror*, 1992) and "Karen Grant had seen iron bars go up at neighbours' windows. She'd watched helplessly as gangs of vandals daubed graffiti on walls in broad daylight. She had heard the groups of giggling teenagers sniffing glue outside her three year old daughter Leanne's bedroom window" (Young, 1992). Such examples functioned as highly emotive appeals to the wider audience by using vulnerable people like senior citizens and young mothers to highlight the inadequacy of the present government. The third person narrative cast these women in a passive role by denying them the opportunity to express themselves in their own words. Such representations persisted throughout this period

around vulnerable groups. “The plight of pensioners on the poverty line” (*Daily Mirror*, 1992) was a common trope: “widow Alice Barham, 85 has to survive on a £63-a-week pension and lives in sheltered accommodation” (*Daily Mirror*, 1997) and “two thirds of women pensioners are scared to leave their house at night” (Smithers and Harding, 1997) due to allegedly rising levels of crime. The NHS was an obvious focus for such coverage and accordingly “a desperate mum who cornered Mr Blair on TV about her dying daughter declared last night: ‘her life is in his hands.’ Alice Maddocks, eight, has a rare condition called severe aplastic anaemia and will die without a bone marrow transplant” (Pascoe-Watson, 2001) which once again constructed voters in highly emotional terms and reinforced stereotypical assumptions about women. The NHS was also frequently commented on by women themselves as an important policy area of concern: “the NHS is something I believe in and yet my experience of it is dreadful” (*The Sun*, 2001b). Lewis et al (2005) do not analyse the representation of ordinary people when they are not representing some facet of citizen opinion, therefore their study would ignore this sort of coverage, however it is important because too often women were being spoken about rather than asked to speak for themselves. This casts them in a passive role rather than acknowledging their status as active users of public services with concerns and opinions about their provision. Since this particular theme became dominant much later in the sample period, when compared to the themes which dominate earlier coverage such as the cost of living, it seems that women voters were constructed as more actively engaged in politics earlier in the sample period than in contemporary elections at least as far as policy is concerned.

Equality

Equality is a very broad theme category which encompassed social inequality, poverty and so on, as well as matters relating to women’s rights but in the context of this research women’s rights dominated the discussion. This further emphasises the extent to which women were constructed as a homogenous group, despite their diversity in terms of age, social class, ethnicity and so forth. The discussion of women’s rights changes subtly across time from formal reportage about women’s improved political rights,

namely their ability to vote and stand for Parliament; to one of their social position and associated rights such as their ability to participate in employment and receive equal pay as well as maternity leave and child care provision. For example, early examples of the discussion of equality state that "up until now the women's aspiration for equality has lacked the impulse and sanction of civic power. By their enfranchisement aspiration in every field becomes a legitimate and realisable demand" (*Daily Mail*, 1918a) suggesting that because women gained a means of formal political representation, they would be able to guarantee their equality by enacting appropriate legislation. The discourse around equality suggested that up until this time "women had been denied equality in politics, proper wages in industry, and had suffered the limitation of social opportunities in every department of life" (*Daily Herald*, 1924). The use of the past tense implies that this will no longer be the case with the enfranchisement of women and the addition of women MPs.

The post war discourse shifts to focus on the wider social inequalities which women continued to face. In 1950 a letter in the *Daily Mirror* proclaimed that "the most important question a woman should ask her candidate is: 'will you support the Married Women's Bill making husband and wife equal partners?' for when the Bill becomes law, all women will have gained equal status of rights and responsibilities and equal pay will be bound to follow" (Woollett, 1950). Here the social inequality faced by women in the private sphere is directly connected to their inequality in the public sphere. Equality for women became less about widening their participation in the public sphere and more about improving opportunities for women to work and live on equal terms with men. These concerns in some way reflect the interventions made by Second Wave feminists who were concerned that social and cultural attitudes about women's role in society were impacting more on women's equality since these informed formal or legal constraints about women's pay and working conditions. In 1979 then Prime Minister Jim Callaghan "made a particular appeal for women's votes. He said his Government had introduced a number of measures to help women, such as equal pay and equal opportunity" (Potter, 1979) and that "women are getting their best ever deal under Labour, Premier Jim Callaghan said yesterday...in the last five years, more had been done to establish women's right than ever before...Labour set up the Equal Pay Act, sex discrimination laws and a woman's right to maternity leave" (Thompson, 1979). These

quotations illustrate that despite some diversification in how women's rights are constructed in electoral discourse, much of the discussion still centred on women's familial responsibilities and how this impacted upon their ability to participate in the public sphere rather than focusing on the differences between women which impact on their equality such as their ethnicity and age for example. Such issues were persistently omitted in the coverage of women's rights: "the Liberal Democrats used national 'Take Our Daughters to Work' day to spell out policies for women, underlining their commitment to equality of opportunity at home as well as work. Launching the party's Fair Deal for Women programme, Diana Maddock MP said women were held back by lack of access to childcare, low pay and poor maternity rights" (Smithers, 1997). This item is interesting because it is supposed to be about policies which aim to improve equal opportunities for women (which are largely progressive) whilst at the same time highlighting women's familial roles as two of the three reasons given for their lack of equality now. This assumes that women are mothers already or aspire to be mothers and moreover this is the main reason for the discrimination against women in the workplace. Such a focus ignores other issues which effect women at work such as sexual or racial harassment and discrimination, or working cultures which may put women off for safety reasons such as late hours and poor transport for example. As well as being primarily focused on women's traditional familial roles, these examples reveal the extent to which notions of equality have become co-opted by political parties as a means of gaining voters rather than a recognition of the importance of social justice. It also serves to suggest that women's rights have been bestowed upon them by political parties rather than recognising that women have been instrumental in improving their own situation through feminist activism. This coverage once again casts women as passive recipients of rights who are spoken about by journalists and politicians alike rather than speaking for themselves.

Active Citizenship?

This research is also interested in whether women voters are constructed as actively engaged citizens or merely as passive consumers of politics. The content analysis

measured this in two ways, firstly whether voters were constructed as actively engaged in politics or the election in each item. This was coded if, for example, they are reported speaking to a politician, attending a political meeting or giving their views on the election or any area of politics. They were coded as passive if they were talked about in the abstract as women voters or if they were reported as actual or potential benefactors or victims of political decisions or if they just happened to be present on the campaign trail as a member of the public. Figure 5.4 shows the percentage of items where women voters were coded as actively engaged across the sample period.

Figure 5.4: Percentage of Items where voters are presented as active 1918-2005

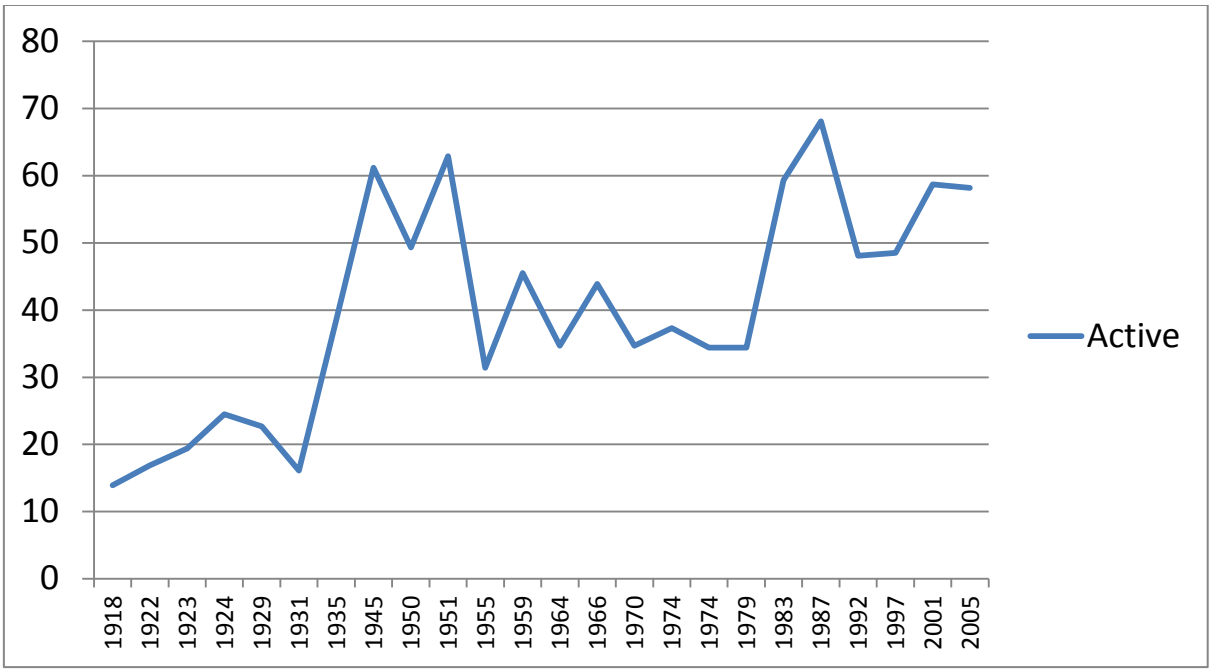
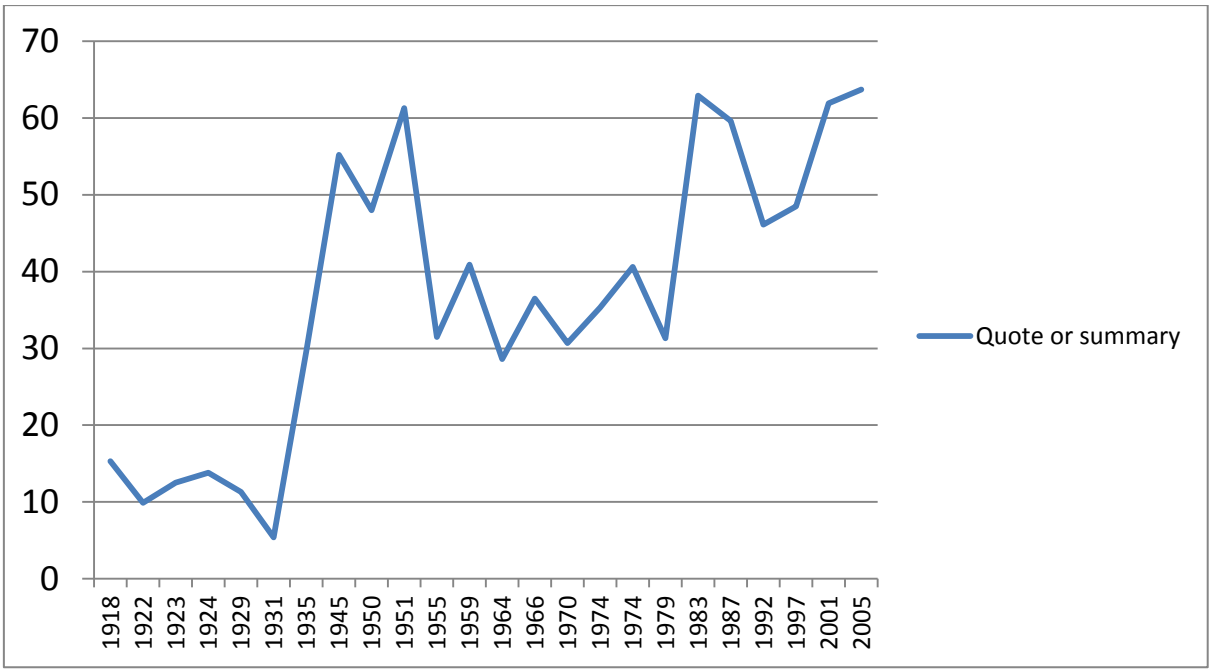


Figure 5.4 shows that during the interwar period women voters were rarely constructed as actively engaged citizens. This changes dramatically after the Second World War and reflects the large volume of reader's letters which were included in the *Daily Mirror* during its 'Vote for Him' campaign (see Pugh, 1998; Beers, 2010). During the 1950s to the 1970s the proportion of items where voters are constructed as active remains between 30 and 45% before once again increasing during the 1980s (see Appendix E.4 for full details). These findings are particularly interesting because they illustrate that there has been a steady increase in the construction of women as active citizens across the sample

period, although as the previous discussion has indicated this is often confined to specifically gendered aspects of the campaign. The second way of analysing women's construction as active citizens is the extent to which their voices are present in the discourse. Figure 5.5 shows the percentage of items where women voters are either directly quoted or have their remarks summarised across the sample period.

Figure 5.5: Percentage of Items where voters are quoted or summarised 1918-2005



The graph clearly demonstrates that the extent to which women voters are given a voice has increased over time so that by 2005, 63.7% of items about voters actually include their voices (see Appendix E.5 for the actual percentages on p.296). It is important to state that early elections may have featured fewer women's voices due to reporting conventions rather than for sexist reasons but the progress is nevertheless clear. As has been alluded to already though, simply quoting women's remarks in the news item in itself does not guarantee that women will be constructed as engaged citizens. This will now be discussed in more detail.

Women's Voices

The continuum of political engagement of citizens in the news developed by Lewis et al (2005) is particularly useful for analysing the use of women's voices in election reportage. The authors suggest that citizens making proposals is the most engaged category followed by, citizens responding to politicians; citizens commenting on an issue without making proposals for action; citizens speaking about personal experiences or as consumers and the least active category is citizens speaking about sports, celebrity or entertainment (which is not relevant here since all stories analysed are about the election.) The results from the content analysis showed that the extent to which women voters are constructed as active in the electoral discourse and the extent to which they are given a voice has broadly speaking, increased over the sample period.

During the interwar years women's voices were relatively few and far between and were mainly confined to the occasional reader's letter such as this example from 1935: "As a mother, I shall support the candidate who advocates a sane policy of education, infant and maternity welfare, the abolition of slum areas and the provision of more playgrounds for children. As a woman, I shall support the candidate who stands for peace abroad and improved social conditions – less taxation, less unemployment, more houses at cheaper rents, decreased living cost. As a citizen, I shall vote for the candidate who demands an adequate British Navy and Air Force to maintain collective security" (*Daily Mirror*, 1935a). This very complex list of political concerns hints at the multiple identities that women voters may have considered themselves to occupy but ultimately the news coverage still remained traditionally focused on their familial roles and domestic duties. This example comes from the most politically active end of the Lewis et al continuum because the voter made explicit political proposals; which therefore presents this voter as politically engaged.

The content analysis also showed a dramatic increase in the inclusion of women's voices in the 1945 election. This is largely to do with the *Daily Mirror's* 'Vote for Him' campaign which was basically designed to encourage women voters to vote according to the views of their husband's and sons who had not yet returned home from the war (Pugh, 1998). The campaign basically manifested itself as a series of reader's letters which were mainly

authored by women explaining which party they intended to vote for on behalf of their male relations. The newspaper described this as a "sacred trust" (*Daily Mirror*, 1945c) or "a woman's ballot box duty" (*Daily Mirror*, 1945d) that women ought to fulfil in order to ensure that fighting men were represented in the election. This is particularly interesting because it suggests that women's citizenship is somehow secondary to their male counterparts. It also positioned women as mere proxy voters rather than as concerned citizens with their own political views. Seemingly vast numbers of women agreed however, since "wives, mothers, sweethearts from all over Britain have written to the '*Daily Mirror'* to say that they are going to vote 'for them" (*Daily Mirror*, 1945a). According to Thomas (2005) reader's letters made up 30% of the *Mirror's* entire election coverage that year perhaps accounting for the big increase in women's voices recorded in the content analysis. One example letter stated that: "I am a married woman, serving in the WAAF and shall vote Labour because I know that the future politics will decide whether I can afford to bring up one child or whether or not I shall get a house at a reasonable price, whether my husband will get a job at a living wage or not" (*Daily Mirror*, 1945b) which once again emphasises her familial role and her husband's breadwinner status and suggests that despite the increase in women's employment during the war, traditional roles would be restored after its conclusion. It is important to state however that this campaign demonstrated that women were actively engaged in politics and it also gave them the opportunity to speak for themselves. The women were responding to proposals made by others which represented women at the more politically engaged end of Lewis et al's (2005) continuum.

After the war, reader's letters remained a feature of the election coverage. One woman confessed that "I'm trembling while I write this. (I've left my wash-tub to do it)" (Roberts, 1951) because she had never written to the newspaper before but was keen to express her views. Another woman complained that "politicians canvassing for votes are promising jam to everyone – except the single woman. After twenty-five years at work I earn £4 16s a week...I live in a bed-sitter in someone else's house and pay a high rent. How about a little jam for me – a living wage and a council flat?" (Derby, 1955). This is a rare example of a woman not conforming to the dominant social expectations and instead emphasising her role as an unmarried employee and tenant. It is also rare

because she is making political proposals, which means this example represents the most active form of citizenship on Lewis et al's (2005) continuum.

The post war years also saw an increase in the number of items where women voters were directly quoted whilst they spoke to politicians on the campaign trail. For example one woman was quoted speaking to then Chancellor Rab Butler: "'You're welcome to do my exchequer next week.' Laughing Mr Butler replied: 'if I could advise you after the election I would be quite glad. But perhaps you could advise me. You probably know more about it than I do" (*Daily Mail*, 1955a). Similarly, in 1979 "a 43-year-old housewife, Mrs Rita Boot, who comes from a strong Labour family in Devonshire put the Prime Minister on the spot. She said: 'many longstanding Labour voters are thinking of abstaining or voting for another party in anger at Left-Wing extremism. What assurances can you give me and others that these power-houses will not take control when the time comes for you to retire?" (Bevins, 1979). These examples represented women voters as being at the active end of the Lewis et al (2005) continuum of political engagement since they were responding directly to politician's campaign messages. These examples represent women actively intervening either on the campaign trail or in the form of a readers' letter. When women's views were solicited by journalists, however their political engagement is less likely to be at the most active end of Lewis et al's (2005) continuum.

During the 1960s onwards women began to be asked for their political views directly by journalists for example "Maureen Price, 23, housewife of Birmingham...I get my housekeeping on Friday and I am broke by Tuesday" (*Daily Mirror*, 1964) and "Angel Coleman, a miner's wife" (Moncur, 1987) is quoted saying "it is just shoved down your throat all the time,' she said. 'I don't vote, they are all a lot of liars" (ibid). Both these examples present negative views of politics and the economy and furthermore introduce the women in question as "wives" rather than as citizens in their own right. This period was also when newspapers began to include items featuring panels of readers who were called upon to give their views about the election or politics generally. In 1979, the *Daily Mail* featured a "panel of housewives" (Coolican, 1979) who they asked to "monitor the campaign" and give their verdict. The popular newspapers in particular employed these types of items regularly: "Michelle Marsh, 18 from Oldham, Greater Manchester, is equally keen to see a change in power... 'I think the Lib Dems are the party of the future. I

am fed up of the pathetic way this country is run. On education, health and law and order, we need a shake-up" (Bowness, 2001) and "Art teacher Angela Faunch, 31, says: 'I voted Labour at the last election, but it was tactical voting. This time I'm voting Lib Dem.'" (*The Sun*, 2001b). The proliferation of items which feature pre-selected panels of readers expressing their views perhaps reflects the growing personalisation of politics that has been noted elsewhere throughout this thesis. On the surface these responses construct voters as actively interested in politics but the women are mainly reacting to the agenda of politicians and talking about their personal experiences rather than making their own political proposals, which fall at the less engaged end of Lewis et al's (2005) continuum. This would seem to suggest that as time has passed and women voter's political discussions become increasingly personalised, they also become less politically engaged according to the continuum proposed by Lewis et al (2005). This suggests that voters were more likely to be constructed as politically engaged when newspapers focus upon their interventions than during the panel of reader items which feature heavily in the coverage of more contemporary elections.

Despite the content analysis suggesting an increase in citizens being represented as actively engaged across time, the discourse analysis revealed that the way citizens are constructed and the way women's voices are used in reportage serves to qualify the extent to which women are depicted as actively engaged because for the most part women are depicted as responding to the agenda of politicians rather than making their own proposals. On the other hand, despite women merely responding to the established agenda it is important that their views and opinions are represented in the news coverage and the fact that this has increased over time is still significant.

Another important means in which voters' activism and political engagement was constrained by the electoral discourse was the persistent idea that women's voting intentions were unpredictable and incomprehensible.

"Women are an unpredictable lot"[9]: From unknown quantity to floating voters

Throughout the entire sample, the newspapers have expressed concern that the voting intentions of voters are unclear and that they are unpredictable as a result. During the interwar period, this was largely due to the fact that women were a novelty since many were voting for the first time, particularly in the 1918 and 1929 elections. The *Daily Telegraph* declared that "in the big stakes of tomorrow's election the woman voter is the dark horse" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1918) because they "added the unknown factor to the power of the polls" (ibid). The *Daily Mirror* similarly suggested that voters were "the sphinx in the general election" (Walker, 1922). Since women had never voted before, political parties were constructed as showing a particular interest in how they might vote: "there is still one mystery perplexing the organisers of all political parties – how women will vote" (*Daily Mail*, 1922b). These fears were raised once again after the equalisation of the franchise meant that millions of young women who had not previously voted before were added to the voting register: "if the political experts are more puzzled than they ever have been...because of the incalculable influence of the newly enfranchised" (*Daily Mirror*, 1929).

The construction of voters as particularly unpredictable remained a feature of the discourse long after women had become routinely involved in the newspaper coverage of elections. In 1951 for example, the *Daily Mail* claimed that "local organisers wish they knew what the women were thinking" (Wakeford, 1951) in order to judge the potential outcome more effectively and in 1974 "The big mystery all the political parties would give their right hands (strong or weak) to solve is how women are going to vote tomorrow" (Proops, 1974c). During the post war period women's unpredictability was defined in two ways. Firstly they are frequently constructed as being unwilling to engage in or speak about voting and politics in general. *The Sun* claimed in 1964 that "women were the pollster's problem, according to Mr Taylor. They tended to be more conservative, both with a capital and with a small 'c', but were reluctant to express views on political subjects" (Suich, 1964); this contradictory statement suggests that pollsters were unable to predict women's political views because they refuse to speak about politics whilst simultaneously asserting that they tend to be politically conservative. This seems to

[9] *Daily Mail*, 18th June 1970, p.9

suggest that pollsters and by extension their political masters consider women to be conservative despite there being little or no evidence of women's actual preferences. The journalist in question makes no attempt to question such assumptions meaning that its validity is implicitly supported. This is yet another example of what Lewis et al (2005) would call an inference about public opinion whereby news coverage reports citizens' attitudes without providing evidence.

Goot and Reid (1984) argue that such assumptions are more easily made about women because in voting studies men who consistently vote Conservative across elections are defined as voting according to conviction, women who do the same are said to be naturally conservative. During the same election the *Guardian* claimed that it was "a baffling group of 'won't say' women who will decide the election" (*The Guardian*, 1964) which further reinforces the notion that women are reluctant to discuss political matters. By the late 1990s and 2000s, however newspapers were concerned more about women's apathy towards politics than merely their unwillingness to discuss it: "apathetic women make Labour nervous" (Travis, 2001).

The second way they were depicted as unpredictable is that they were frequently constructed as floating or undecided voters who still need to make up their minds. The *Daily Mail* included a feature in their coverage of the 1955 election where "Flo Vote, the typical floating voter" (*Daily Mail*, 1955b) toured "the constituencies for three weeks to decide where she should put her 'X'" (ibid) and reported back for the benefit of women voters. She was described as a typical "housewife who could not make up her mind" (ibid) implying that she was representative of a number of female readers who were still deciding. Women were furthermore compared unfavourably with their male counterparts for being "more reluctant than men to take the big decision" (Carroll, 1974) because "of the remaining 'Don't Knows' 2,365,000 – or 58 per cent – are women" (ibid). During the 1990s and beyond voters continue to be constructed as unpredictable and undecided voters but the increased use of political marketing techniques means that the parties increasingly segment women voters by constructing their political profile according to their consumer habits and socioeconomic background; resulting in target groups such as "Worcester Woman and her undecided friends" (Freedland, 1997) or

“Take a Break woman” (Toynbee, 2005) becoming ubiquitous in the newspaper coverage (Harmer and Wring, forthcoming).

These undecided women were often depicted as unengaged and apathetic and need to be persuaded to vote: “working class women who are potential Labour voters but are the least likely of any social group to make it to the polling station...party strategists are also privately anxious about how to reach and persuade poorer working class women in particular to get to the polls” (Travis, 2001). Constructing groups of women in this way reinforced the persistent discourse that women are largely undecided and uninformed about formal politics. Goot and Reid (1984) suggest that women are defined as floating voters not because they are changing their priorities due to personal circumstances but because they are perceived as fickle voters. Throughout this whole discussion about the unpredictability of voters, women have spoken about by journalists rather than for themselves and their views are all too often inferred without any substantive evidence being provided to support these claims. Such discussion limits the activism of voters as it portrays them as passive rather than active for the most part.

Concern for women’s unpredictability as citizens perhaps stems from the impact on the election outcome that women had and indeed continue to have. During the 1920s and 1930s the newspapers constantly reminded their audiences that women would have a massive impact on the election, for example: “eight million women over 30 (wives of electors or independent occupiers) ought to vote on November 15. The result of the election is in their hands” (*Daily Herald*, 1922b) and “women hold key to result” (*Daily Mirror*, 1922). These suggestions intensified after the 1928 Representation of the People Act came into force because it meant that women formed the majority of the electorate. The *Daily Herald* stated that “the women of Great Britain are the majority of the electors; and it is in their hands that the decision of the country next Thursday must largely rest” (*Daily Herald*, 1931). The newspapers construed this as “women, for good or evil, have now the determining vote” (*Daily Mirror*, 1929). The insertion of a qualifying phrase (“for good or evil”) suggests there was a level of unease about women’s newly gained political power. The fact that women continued to dominate the electorate meant that such attitudes dissipated. This example from the 1935 election shows that women’s impact was not entirely negatively constructed; it declared that “this is the women’s election. Its

trend today will be decided by women and its canvassing has largely been accomplished by women. Women's influence is enormous. And so it should be, for every time it is the housewife who suffers most from the depression, from unemployment, from high taxes, and most of all from war" (Bloom, 1935). This example explicitly links women's contribution to the election campaign and to society as a whole to their political power presenting it as legitimate and desirable that women have a stake in public life.

During the post war years it remained routine for newspapers to suggest that women have the power to decide the election: "it seems it will be the women who make the decision" (*The Guardian*, 1951a), "women could hold the key to the outcome of the election" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1974a) and "the future of Britain will be decided next week by the women – whether the men like it or not" (*Daily Mirror*, 1979). This last example once again qualified its original statement by suggesting that men might not be happy with the choice made by women voters which serves to construct women and men as opposing groups with different political priorities. The use of the phrase "whether men like it or not" demonstrated a sense of unease at this situation and attributing it to men in general allows the journalist to present this as someone else's view rather than their own. The trend for depicting women as crucial to the election continues into the 1990s and 2000s with the discussion being dominated by the importance of "the floating female voter, turned off by election campaigns that attack and counter-attack rather than giving straight answers to crucial questions" (Morris, 1992).

These broader concerns about women's power and unpredictability in the election stem from the idea that women are somehow a discrete group or constituency with similar concerns and opinions. Constructing women in this fashion ignores differences among women such as social class, ethnicity, age, sexuality, disability and so forth. Instead of representing women in their diversity, the tendency was to construct women in traditional and stereotypical ways. This point is made eloquently by the *Guardian* in 1979: "politics and voting are not simple and assumptions that women vote as women rather than as members of an age group, a class or a workforce are highly suspect. Nevertheless politicians, pollsters and academics have for years rather assumed that women are more conservative than men, they personalise their politics more, that they follow their husband's political preferences and that – latterly – a nod at women's issues is necessary

for the party that wants to scoop up women's votes" (Mackie, 1979). The tendency to construct women in this way allows journalists to make inferences about the women's political priorities and also perhaps reflects the need of journalists to provide a coherent and ordered impression of women's political views when the reality is more complex. This would conform to the way public opinion is often presented in the news according to Lewis et al (2005).

Conclusion:

The content analysis results show that the way newspapers have constructed women as voters has been subject to surprisingly few changes. Voters and their political views have consistently been constructed in largely domestic roles, as mothers and housewives throughout the sample period and that their political priorities are largely informed by their familial obligations which are very similar to the modes of representation employed in the 2010 General Election (and analysed in the previous chapter). This focus on how the private lives of women inform their political priorities reflects the traditional expectations of women in patriarchal societies. Despite gaining access to the public sphere as citizens, women seemingly continue to be tied to the private sphere and its responsibilities. Furthermore, the persistence of such traditional discourses which confine women to the private sphere fails to recognise the extent to which women have made political, economic and social gains throughout the century. The newspaper coverage of women voters seems to be lagging behind when attempting to portray the political realities of many women's lives, especially given that many more women are unmarried and childless or are single parents than might have been the case earlier in the century. This means that women are not being represented adequately which has negative implications for women who may find it difficult to have their political priorities recognised within political institutions but also for democracy because it means that over half of the electorate is not being sufficiently represented.

On the other hand, despite the negative aspects of newspaper coverage of voters during the election, the historical analysis does show that journalists and political parties alike have made some effort to explicitly include women in the public discourse surrounding

politics. Moreover, there are large numbers of women whose familial situation plays some role in their political priorities (see Campbell, 2006) and it is important that this is recognised in the public discussion about politics.

The main policy areas that voters were constructed as caring about throughout the sample period were the economy; health and welfare; equality and international affairs. It is important to note that such policy areas may well reflect the issues that were important for each election, especially given the broad categories used, however it is difficult to escape the conclusion that they represent gendered ideals. Although the focus on these policy areas does not in itself reflect women's gendered familial roles, the way in which these issues are discussed in the news coverage is heavily gendered. For example, the largest category associated with women (accounting for 34.7% of all policy themes) was the cost of living which implies that voters were predominantly concerned about the price of food and its impact on family budgets. The later concentration on health and welfare also cast women as concerned mothers worried about the impact of NHS provision on their relatives. This reinforces the earlier suggestion that women's political priorities are constructed as reflecting their relationship to the patriarchal private sphere. Furthermore, these examples demonstrate that although women have gained much in the past century, the dominant representations of their roles in society in electoral coverage have changed very little.

This example from the *Daily Herald* provides a neat illustration of the way that voters and their political priorities have been constructed for the vast majority of the sample period:

> "The housewife who leave politics alone and thinks that the Government has no connection with her job in the home has much to learn. She is afraid her husband may lose his job. She is worried about her children's future. She is tired of waiting for a council house which, when it is ready, she will probably have to reject because the rent is too high. She grumbles at the price of milk and the price of bread...a minute's reflection should be enough to show her that these things are determined by politics" (Sutherland, 1935).

The implicit assumption in this quotation is that women are not political in a traditional sense because they are perceived to care about matters which pertain to their roles in

the private sphere. On the other hand, the quotation also demonstrates that the inclusion of women in the political sphere widens the definition of political affairs so although there is an expectation that women will continue their private responsibilities as before, there is also a recognition that women can contribute to decision making through active citizenship and that this is desirable.

The area where there has been some change is the extent to which women are portrayed as being actively engaged in the election. As Figure 5.4 demonstrated, there was an increase from around 20% of items that construct voters as actively engaged during the interwar years; to between 50% and 60% of items in the late 1980s onwards. This shows that over time women have been increasingly portrayed as actively involved in the election coverage over time. The data also indicates that voters are also increasingly quoted over time (see Figure 5.5) which is a positive development that perhaps suggests that women have become increasingly incorporated into political coverage. By representing women as both engaged and willing to discuss political issues, the newspapers are recognising the importance of including women in democratic politics. The increase in women journalists covering electoral politics may have some impact upon this as they might seek out different sources to male colleagues. Alternatively, it might also reflect the importance of attracting women readers to ensure continued sales of newspapers.

On the other hand, although women have been increasingly included as citizens in political coverage, a closer analysis of women's interventions according to the continuum of engagement proposed by Lewis et al (2005) and discussed earlier, reveals that the extent to which they are portrayed as actively engaged decreased over time. This means that although women are increasingly depicted as interested in politics and furthermore increasingly asked for their personal views on the issues, the range of issues and the opportunities for them to speak have become narrower. This may be due to changes in political journalism whereby women (and possibly voters generally) have become more likely to be portrayed as individuals expressing their views through panel of reader items while letters authored by readers have decreased. Such items tend to portray voters as individualistic and self-interested and rarely engage in detailed policy discussion. This suggests that although women are increasingly portrayed in a citizenship capacity in a

higher percentage of items as time goes on, the level of political engagement in these items decreased.

Lewis et al's (2005) work is useful here because it illustrates the extent to which the newspapers have largely made inferences made about voters and their concerns during the entire sample period. Too often they have been spoken about by journalists rather than been allowed to speak for themselves. Furthermore, these inferences about women have very rarely been substantiated by evidence which suggests that for the most part the construction of voters is based upon supposition and assumptions about the priorities of women.

One possible explanation for this development might be that the way citizens in general are perceived by elites such as news media professionals and political figures has been altered by the increasingly professionalised political marketing techniques which increasingly segment voters along demographic lines in the same way as consumer marketing, hence voting blocs like Worcester Woman and so on emerging in the 1990s. If elites perceive voters as consumers this is bound to be reflected in the public debate which is dominated by their voices. This is also pertinent since voters are also consumers of newspapers so the distinction becomes less pronounced. Representing women primarily as consumers is particularly unhelpful given the fact that they have always been associated with consumption (private sphere) as opposed to men who were associated with production in the public sphere (MacDonald, 1995). Calling upon modes of representation which remind readers of women's association with the private sphere serves to reinforce the gendered expectations of women in patriarchal society.

Where women are portrayed as active citizens, their concerns rarely display the characteristics of the more engaged end of the continuum of political engagement outlined by Lewis et al (2005) which means they are hardly ever portrayed as making political proposals. Those that are more active tend to be depicted as responding to the agenda of politicians, which suggests that women voters are somewhat passive, and react to the agenda of the political elite rather than have any bearing on the development of the political discussion. What is particularly striking is the extent to which this has become increasingly the case over time due to an intensification of coverage focused on

the personal experiences of individual women voters or specific voting demographics. These findings are very much in line with those from the 2010 election (see Chapter 4) suggesting that this pattern shows no sign of being disrupted in the news coverage of future elections. There are no doubt difficulties in representing voters in newspaper coverage of elections due to the fact that elections tend to be dominated by politicians and also because there are so many voters with different priorities and opinions. This however does not excuse the poor representation of women in electoral coverage even if it might go some way to explain it. Furthermore such explanations do not help to illuminate why women voters tend to be constructed as an undifferentiated sex based mass in a way male voters would never be. A more plausible explanation for this would be women's historical exclusion from politics whereby the model citizen was constructed as male. Therefore when women finally became admitted to the political sphere, they did so still imbued with the obligations of the private sphere which means they did so on unequal terms with men (Lister, 1997). Since women do not conform to the original masculine citizenship model, they are perceived as different and therefore become constructed as an undifferentiated mass in opposition to the ideal masculine citizen. This mode of representation will have to change if women are to achieve more favourable political coverage in the future.

Chapter 6: Standing for Office: the Politicians and Candidates

The Representation of the People Act 1918 may have enfranchised approximately seven million women voters but it was not clear whether it actually allowed them to stand for election to Parliament (Cowman, 2010). Seemingly, although most male MPs were content to appease female suffrage campaigners with the vote, a number of them fiercely opposed women's entry into parliament. A number of prominent women forced the issue by submitting nomination papers endorsed by the Labour Party and eventually a bill was introduced to end the confusion which resulted in the Eligibility of Women Act 1918 (Beddoe, 1989). This legislation allowed women to stand for election on equal terms with men meaning that women could become elected members of a parliament nine years before they were eligible to vote for it (Cowman, 2010). Since the bill only became law three weeks before the election it was difficult for women to find a seat let alone a winnable one. As a result only one woman was elected in the 1918 general election, Constance Marcievicz who as a Sinn Fein candidate refused to take up her seat and was actually in prison at the time (Beddoe, 1989). Nancy Astor became the first woman to take up her seat in parliament when she was elected in a by-election in 1919, when she was asked to stand in her husband's former constituency after he became ennobled. In 1924, Margaret Bondfield became the first woman member of the government as a parliamentary secretary at the Ministry of Labour and she went on to become the first woman cabinet minister in 1929 (Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 2001). The number of women candidates standing increased considerably over time but the numbers that were elected remained stubbornly small (Cowman, 2010) until the late 1990s. The current parliament has 142 women MPs which is the largest proportion in history but they only constitute 21.9% of all members (Campbell and Childs, 2010).

Scholars researching the representation of female politicians in the news have focused almost exclusively on contemporary women and since much of this literature has been produced during the 1990s and 2000s this means that there is a lack of scholarship which attempts to place this into historical context. The literature asserts that women politicians are marginalised and trivialised in contemporary coverage and tends to

assume that this has always been the case whilst offering no evidence to support this assumption. This chapter aims to rectify this lack of historical context. Since the elections between 1992 and 2005 have been analysed qualitatively by the existing and highly robust literature rehearsed below (and in Chapter Two), the discursive construction of women during these elections is not systematically analysed in this chapter; however the chapter does offer a quantitative analysis of all news coverage between 1918 and 2005 to track the overall trends in content across time.

Scholars who have analysed the mediated representation of women politicians have noted that women candidates tend to be framed in specific ways. Firstly, they are often depicted as breaking through social convention which is viewed as a positive step for women generally (Norris, 1997). They are often portrayed as political outsiders, which can have positive and negative consequences; they can be represented as naïve and inexperienced or alternatively they might be portrayed as agents for change who can alter the way that politics is conducted (Braden, 1996; Norris, 1997). There are also drawbacks to being presented as agents for change because when said change is not forthcoming, it can lead to accusations of weakness or ineffectiveness. This is what happened after the record intake of Labour women MPs in the 1997 election (Adcock, 2010). Since women candidates are often perceived as unlikely political actors when they first break through they are often given a lot of news coverage because of their novelty value. Research from the United States in particular suggests that women are often associated with certain policy areas which are perceived as gendered such as child care and women's rights (Herrnson, 2003). This can have positive consequences if appealing to a certain constituency of voters who care about these issues or negative ones if the most prominent issue in the campaign has traditionally masculine connotations such as foreign policy (ibid).

The tone of news coverage is perceived to be very different to that about their male colleagues (Ross, 2002). Women believe their appearance and sartorial style is commented upon by the press and furthermore that this is linked to evaluations of their political performance (ibid). They also stress the extent to which their age and family arrangements are frequently cited despite it having little bearing on their professional role and argue that their male counterparts are never asked about their childcare

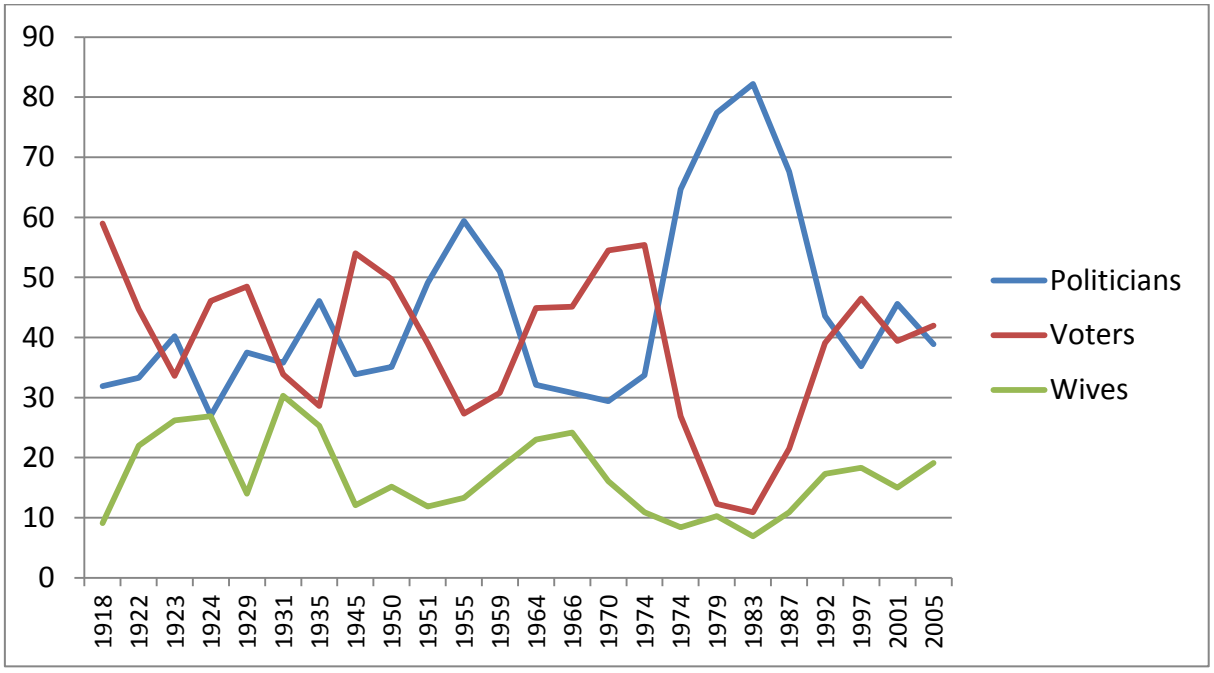
arrangements and so on. Women candidates who do not conform to traditionally feminine stereotypes are often subjected to harsh criticism of their appearance and clothing styles (Gill, 2007; Parry-Giles, 2000). In terms of electoral politics, women's voices are consistently marginalised in favour of their male colleagues (Deacon et al, 2005). The elections between 1992 and 2005 displayed a number of these features, particularly the marginalisation of women and the attention to personal style and appearance.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse to what extent the features that have been identified about contemporary politicians have always been present in electoral coverage about politicians and to what extent the coverage might have changed over time. The chapter will begin by discussing the prominence of politicians compared to the other groups of women analysed, before moving on to analyse the extent to which policy coverage is gendered. The chapter will then present evidence that the way politicians are evaluated has changed across time. This will be followed by an analysis of the extent to which women are given a voice in the news items about them and will then analyse the extent to which the coverage is personalised and the gendered implications of such coverage.

Prominence

Analysing the prominence of politicians in comparison to the other women in the study shows that politicians compete with voters for the largest proportion of the coverage for the entire historical sample period between 1918 and 2005, as Figure 6.1 demonstrates:

Figure 6.1: Percentage of coverage about Politicians, Relatives and Voters 1918-2005



Politicians are particularly prominent during the 1950s and almost completely dominate the coverage during the late 1970s and the 1980s. As will be discussed in more detail later, the presence of Margaret Thatcher as Conservative leader and then as Prime Minister means that she is the reason for this massive increase in the prominence of politicians. She accounted for 77.7% of items about politicians during the 1979 election, 76.8% in 1983 and 81.1% in 1987. These findings suggest that while Thatcher was so prominent during this period, other women politicians were marginalised in the electoral discourse. The graph also indicates that Thatcher's prominence also impacted on the representation of women voters who received the lowest proportions of the coverage that they had ever achieved throughout this period. What is particularly noteworthy is that politicians consistently account for a larger proportion of coverage than the relatives' category in every election during the sample period suggesting that the 2010 election, where relatives overtook politicians, is either an anomaly or perhaps the beginning of a new trend. A detailed breakdown of these figures is provided in Appendix E.1 (p. 292).

Policy

The existing literature suggests that women candidates tend to be associated with traditionally feminine policy areas such as childcare and education (Herrnson et al, 2003). Analysing the policy themes which politicians have been associated with historically shows that in the British context, politicians have mostly been portrayed as commenting on or campaigning about the economy, international affairs, health and welfare and employment. These four themes account for 70.5% of all policy themes between 1918 and 2005.

Table 6.1: Policy themes of items about politicians for 1918-2005 elections combined

Policy Theme	Percentage
Economy	24.7
International Affairs	21.6
Health and Welfare	13.3
Employment	11
Education	6.1
Equality	6.1
Housing	5.4
Constitutional Affairs	4.2
Other	2.5
Family and Children	1.9
Race and Immigration	1.8
Law and Order	1.4

This is an interesting finding because aside from perhaps health and welfare, these policy areas would not be described as traditionally feminine policy areas. What is worth noting, is that three of the four most prominent themes are the same as the most prominent themes for voters discussed in the previous chapter. The analysis of voter policy coverage suggested that discussions about the economy were heavily gendered, with the focus

mainly being the cost of living. The subtheme breakdown for politicians does not conform to this pattern, as Table 6.2 demonstrates.

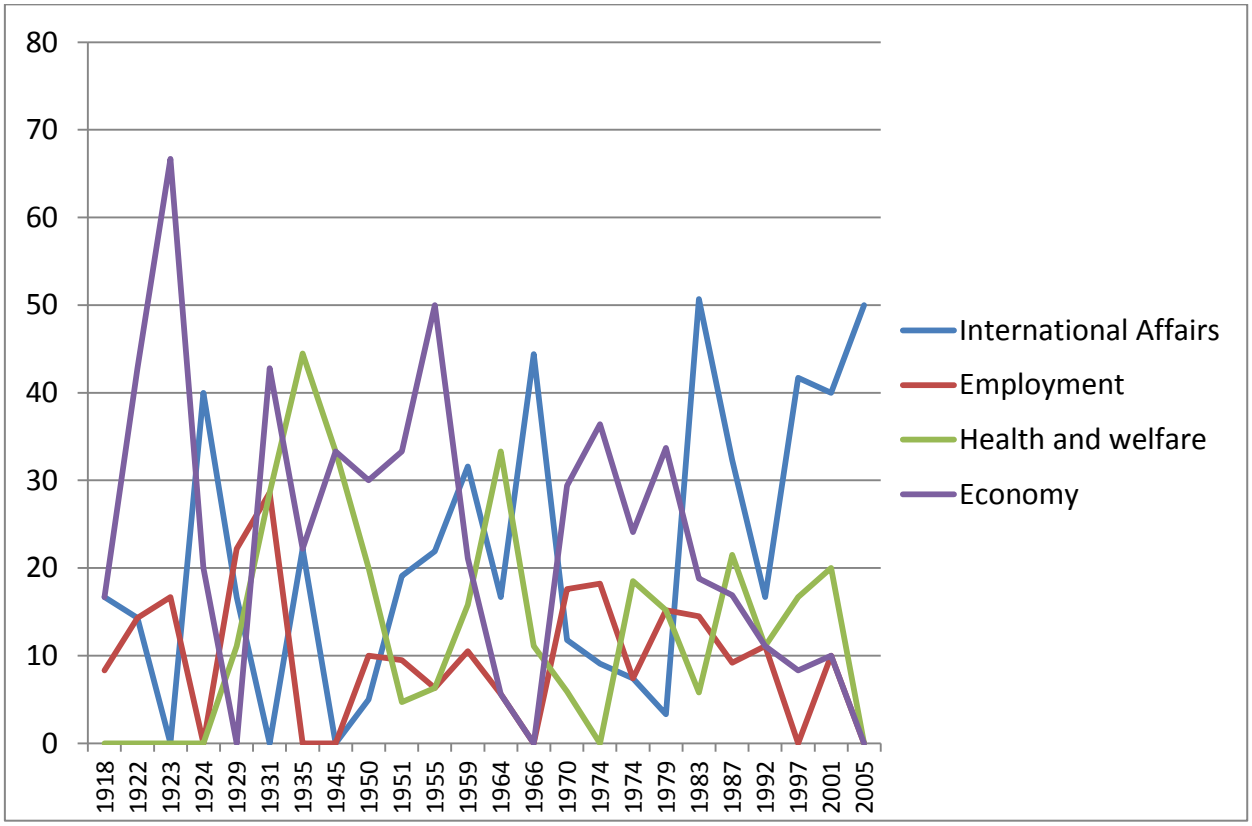
Table 6.2: Economy Subthemes breakdown

Economy Subthemes	Percentage of Economy category
Business and Trade	50.3
Cost of Living	37.6
Taxation	12.1

The Table shows that around half of the economy items were about business and trade while only 37.6% addressed the cost of living. This perhaps reflects the importance of such issues to the election generally suggesting that the policy areas that these politicians are reported as commenting upon are not necessarily designed to appeal to the traditional concerns of women voters specifically. Furthermore, just 32.4% of items about politicians actually featured any mention of policy, with the remaining items focusing on the electoral process which undermines their status as potential formal political actors.

Analysing the prominence of these four main themes over time shows that the economy tended to be the dominant policy area discussed in items about politicians during the interwar period and the immediate post war period. It also dominates the 1970s.

Figure 6.2: Four main policy themes for politicians 1918-2005



International affairs became the dominant theme from 1983 until 2005. This theme category incorporates war and peace as well as international relations and Europe which might explain its predominance during this period, firstly due to high profile conflicts such as the Falklands and Iraq wars and also because of the importance of increased integration with the European Union at this time (see Appendix E.6 for a detailed breakdown). This analysis of British elections suggests that there is little evidence that women candidates are more likely to be associated with traditionally feminine policy areas, particularly because policies to do with families and children account for just 1.9% of items about politicians where policy is discussed. On the other hand, simply because the policy areas women are associated with are not obviously gendered does not mean that the way they are portrayed when discussing policy is not, which will now be discussed in more detail.

Public Sphere, Private Sphere

When politicians initially started to appear in the coverage, they were constructed as being an important means for women voters and their concerns to be represented in the political sphere. The *Daily Herald* argues that "the standpoint of women would be better expressed through women members than through the most sympathetic male representative" (*Daily Herald*, 1922a). This logic suggested that women had common concerns which would be best looked after by women members and was pervasive throughout the newspaper coverage, for example the *Daily Mail* stated that "only a woman can really know and understand the problems which face women in the home" (*Daily Mail*, 1935b) and male representatives "cannot achieve half so much effect as this kindly woman can chatting with the womenfolk on the doorsteps and in the kitchens of cottages about things which seriously affect women" (ibid). This demonstrates the extent to which women candidates were constructed in a predominantly domestic fashion, communicating most effectively with women voters. Labour candidate Jenny Adamson was perceived to have "won the support of hundreds of women by her exposure of the increase in malnutrition and maternal mortality during the lifetime of the 'National' Government" (*Daily Herald*, 1935). Susan Lawrence also targeted women by "addressing short meetings in practically every residential street, summoning the housewives from their work with a ringing bell" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1922c). This was seemingly a popular tactic for politicians to interest their female constituents, as Wring (2005) describes Jessie Steven using similar methods to campaign to working-class women in Wakefield during the 1922 election.

These early representations of politicians as largely appealing to women confine them to the domestic side of political affairs which is portrayed as desirable and natural. Such interventions are generally described in positive terms by journalists. Their gender is explicit in that they are specifically depicted as woman whose role it was to represent women voters and their concerns rather than as simply politicians. In other words, their acceptance in the public sphere as candidates is premised on their ability to represent the interests of the private sphere. This in itself is not problematic because it is a necessary part of democratic representation however when they are confined to this role in

electoral discourse rather than presented as interested in a variety of areas, this could lead to them being stereotyped into traditionally feminine areas of government.

In contrast post war coverage of women candidates was much more likely to recognise their involvement with a number of less traditionally gendered political affairs however they continued to be perceived as important for communicating with women voters. During the 1945 election, Edith Summerskill was quoted saying that "Labour will work especially hard for the care of Britain's mothers and their children – children's allowances and school medical and feeding services, better maternity and child welfare benefits" (*Daily Herald*, 1945). Similarly, during the 1979 general election, the *Sun* reported that the Prime Minister Jim Callaghan "backed up his message by producing two housewives who claimed Tory spending cuts would damage family life" (McHugh, 1979). These so-called housewives were then introduced as Labour candidates "Pat Hollis, who is standing in Great Yarmouth" (ibid) and "Anne Davies, Labour candidate for Bromsgrove and Redditch" (ibid) and reportedly claimed that "cuts in public services would hit women more than men" (ibid) and that "plans to increase VAT would hit the family budget" (ibid). Labelling these candidates as housewives instead of political actors works to portray them as ordinary women who are in touch with the views of other women. This might be a useful political strategy for parties, however such representation in a news report seems to demote them from their role as candidates and also reinforces their subordinate role to that of the male Prime Minister. Other examples of women candidates appealing to women voters come from the *Daily Mail* and *Telegraph*, "Shirley Williams knows exactly who her floating voter is – a woman living in rural Hertfordshire, looking for a champion on the prices issue" (Southworth, 1974) whilst "Mrs Greenaway is concentrating on door-to-door canvassing and the home. She is well equipped to answer any housewife's or mother's problem with five children of her own" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1964a).

This domestication is also exacerbated by the language applied to them which continues to position women in domestic situations. For example, during the 1974 October election Margaret Thatcher "has been chosen to present the real goodies in the campaign tuck box" (Bevins, 1974) in introducing an affordable "9 ½ per cent mortgage rate" (Lancaster, 1974); according to the *Daily Mirror*: "What she has done is to produce the political

equivalent of a supermarket's loss leader" (ibid). The first example alludes to a school mistress or matron-like figure who is distributing sweets to grateful children whilst the second example alludes to supermarket consumption. Both activities would have been traditionally performed by women and this mode of representation reinforces the discursive construction of women as carers and consumers. Other women candidates are also subjected to these modes of representation, Grace Colman is described as "once a college lecturer, she has a sobering, sixth-form mistress air about her, and maintains strict discipline in her classes – I beg her pardon, meetings" (Churchill, 1951); and in the same item her opponent Irene Ward reportedly "exudes a cosy feeling of 'home to mum for fun and hot crumpets'" (ibid). Thatcher's 1979 election campaign is depicted in similarly gendered terms. The *Daily Mirror* suggested that Thatcher "travelled 3000 miles on a calf-cuddling, tea-tasting, supermarket-shopping, broom-sweeping substitute for a political campaign" (Lancaster, 1979). The emphasis on caring, shopping and cleaning reinforce negative stereotypes about women politicians' inability to contribute to the public sphere due to their association with the private sphere.

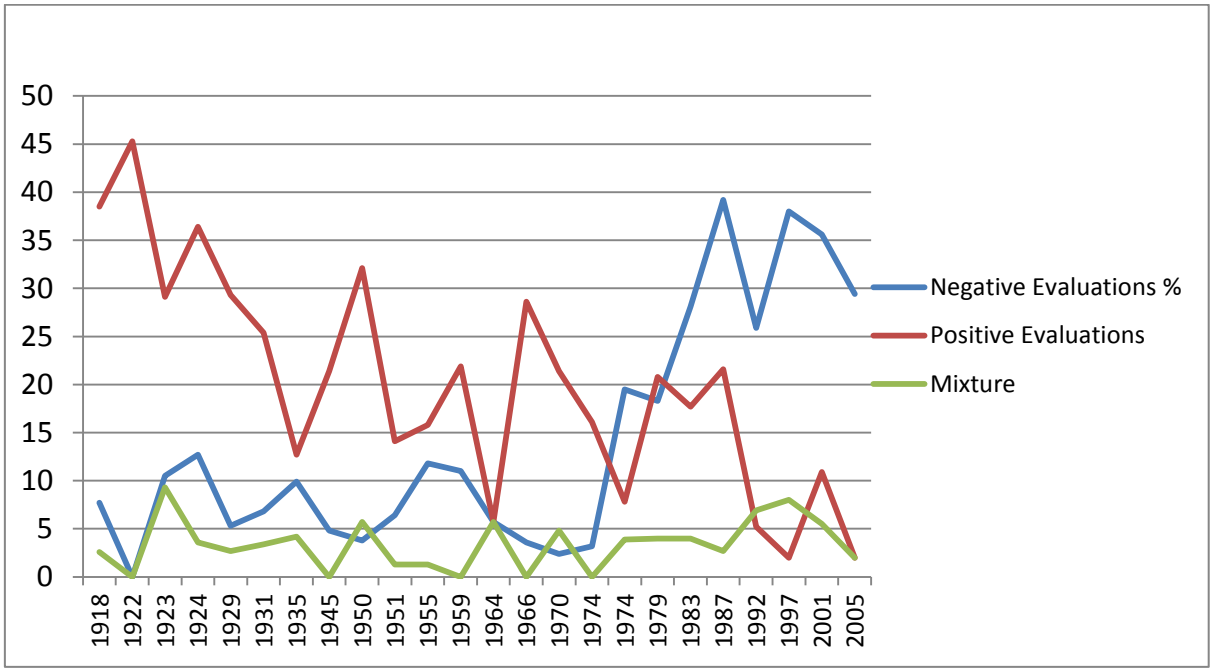
Candidates themselves were also reported as adopting gendered language in their remarks, Ann Spokes was directly quoted during the 1966 election: "Wilson window dressing is cleverly designed, but there is nothing in the shop except empty shelves lined with white papers and a shop soiled scheme for Nationalisation they've tried to flog at every bargain sale but which nobody will buy" (*The Sun*, 1966a). This consumerist metaphor for Wilson's economic policy reinforces women's relationship to the domestic sphere and was therefore perhaps designed to appeal directly to housewives. The complicity of women candidates in such gendered coverage illustrates the complexity of women's mediated representations.

Reception

The previous scholarship that analyses the importance of mediated representations to women in politics suggests that voters' views of politicians can be affected by stereotyping in the media (Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993; Hernnson et al, 2003). Moreover, politicians are concerned that they received different treatment by reporters to that

experienced by their male counterparts (Ross, 2002). Although this study cannot address such matters due to its focus on women, there is some evidence to suggest that women candidates ought to be concerned about their mediated representation due to the increase over time in negative evaluations they receive in electoral coverage. The content analysis revealed that as time has passed there has been an increase in the number of items that offer negative evaluations of women politicians.

Figure 6.3: Percentage of items offering some evaluation of politicians 1918-2005

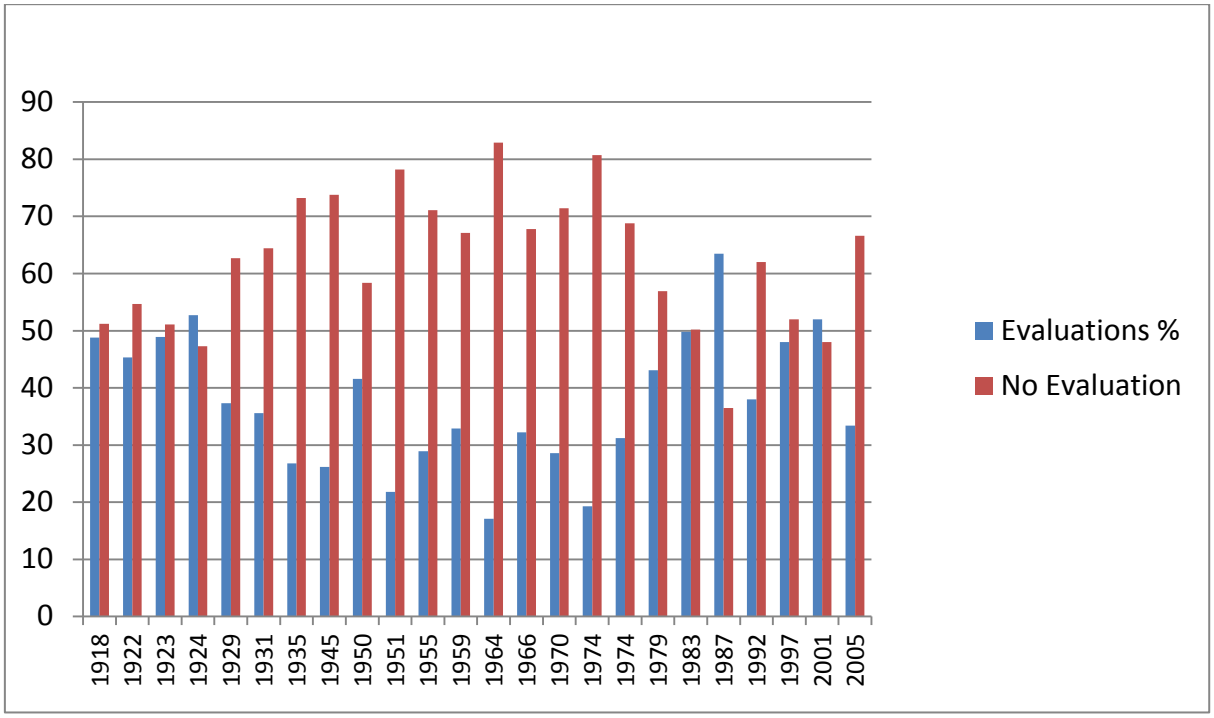


During the interwar and post war periods, the percentages of items which offered a negative evaluation of the women featured in the item was very low only rising above 10% in four elections between 1918 and February 1974. After this period, there is a dramatic increase reaching its peak in 1987 when 39.2% of items about women politicians featured some negative evaluation. After this, the percentage never again drops below 25% (see Appendix E.7 for a full breakdown). This finding is perhaps indicative of the decline in deferential coverage that characterised the earlier period of political coverage or it may be a consequence of the weakening in the political partisanship of the newspapers (Curran and Seaton, 2010; Conboy, 2004). Not only has there been a sharp increase in the proportion of items which negatively evaluate

politicians, there has also been marked decline in the percentages of items which offer a positive evaluation over the same period. Figure 6.3 shows this trend quite clearly.

It is also important to remember that there were large numbers of items where no evaluative comment was offered as Figure 6.4 illustrates.

Figure 6.4: Percentages of Items which evaluate politicians 1918-2005



For the first four elections, almost half of the items contain an evaluation. From 1929 onward however there are significantly fewer evaluations which do not begin to gain parity with the proportion of items that do not evaluate women politicians again until approximately 1979. The 1924, 1987 and 2001 elections were the only examples where there were a higher proportion of items containing evaluations than those that did not. It is interesting that a change coincides with Thatcher's election as Prime Minister in 1979. In order to determine whether her dominance of the coverage had an effect on the levels of evaluations the items about Thatcher were removed. Figure 6.5 shows the results.

Figure 6.5: Percentage of items offering some evaluation of politicians 1918-2005 (without Thatcher)

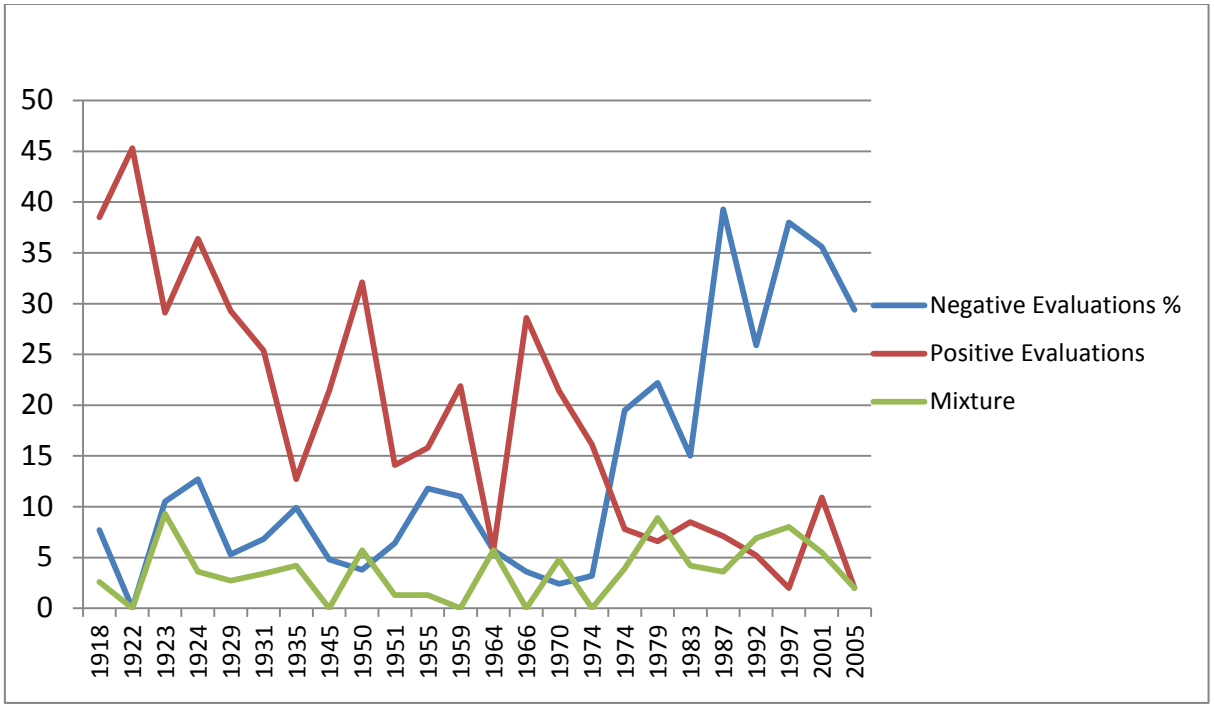


Figure 6.5 displays the same data with Thatcher's items removed from the 1979, 1983 and 1987 election when she dominated the coverage as Prime Minister. Comparing Charts 6.3 and 6.5 shows that when the Thatcher data is removed from the analysis the number of positive evaluations decreases substantially. In the 1979 coverage, excluding Thatcher decreases the percentage of items featuring positive evaluations from 20.8% to just 6.6%, whilst in the 1983 coverage it decreases from 17.7% of items to 8.5% and in the 1987 coverage it decreases from 21.6% to just 7.1%. This indicates that Thatcher is responsible for inflating the extent to which women politicians are evaluated positively in the press during these elections. This also highlights the extent of Thatcher's popularity in the press, especially given that removing the Thatcher data has not impacted on the overall trend of negative evaluations.

Although it is unclear the extent to which the increasingly negative evaluations of politicians is due to their sex, there are numerous examples of evaluations which have a sexist dimension to them.

Sexism

The experience of prejudice or sexist remarks from politicians and voters on the campaign trail seems to have been a consistent feature in the historical coverage. In the early years the newspapers captured a certain amount of resistance to the changes that women's enfranchisement and ability to stand for parliament brought to the campaign trail. The *Daily Mail* declared in 1923 that "it is twice as easy to be a man candidate as to be a woman candidate" (*Daily Mail*, 1923c) due to incidents such as "when a woman candidate dared to mention as one of the planks of her platform such homely things as the improvement of the kitchen sink and the determination to secure a purer milk supply, a garrulous old Rip Van Winkle in the front seat got up and said, 'but you must talk about Free Trade and Home Rule for Ireland. I've been voting since 1878 and I've never before heard such things as you mention at a political meeting'" (Bell, 1918). This male voter's bewilderment that such domestic issues were being discussed in an electoral context illustrates the way that women's experiences and priorities had not necessarily been conceptualised as political before. The voter's insistence that the candidate address his own concerns instead works to trivialise these domestic issues, which may have been aimed at women voters in the audience. This implies that women and their concerns are an unwelcome intrusion into the political sphere, at least as far as one man was concerned, although the newspaper coverage in this case is sympathetic to women through its treatment of this man's complaints.

There were some explicitly sexist examples of the resistance to the inclusion of women candidates. At one of Ray (Rachel) Strachey's meetings in 1918, one of her opponents "declared that Mrs Strachey should stay at home and mind her children" (*Daily Mail*, 1918d) rather than seek to be a Member of Parliament. The *Guardian* reported the same incident stating that "her retort was logical: 'it is to look after my children that I want to go to Westminster" (*The Guardian*, 1918c). These openly sexist remarks from her opponents suggest that there was also some resistance to the introduction of women candidates from their male colleagues and opponents. The reportage of such anecdotes distances the newspapers and journalists from such sexist sentiments because it allows them to present them as the views of other people which they have just reproduced rather than a view supported by them. This was also evident in an item about Helen

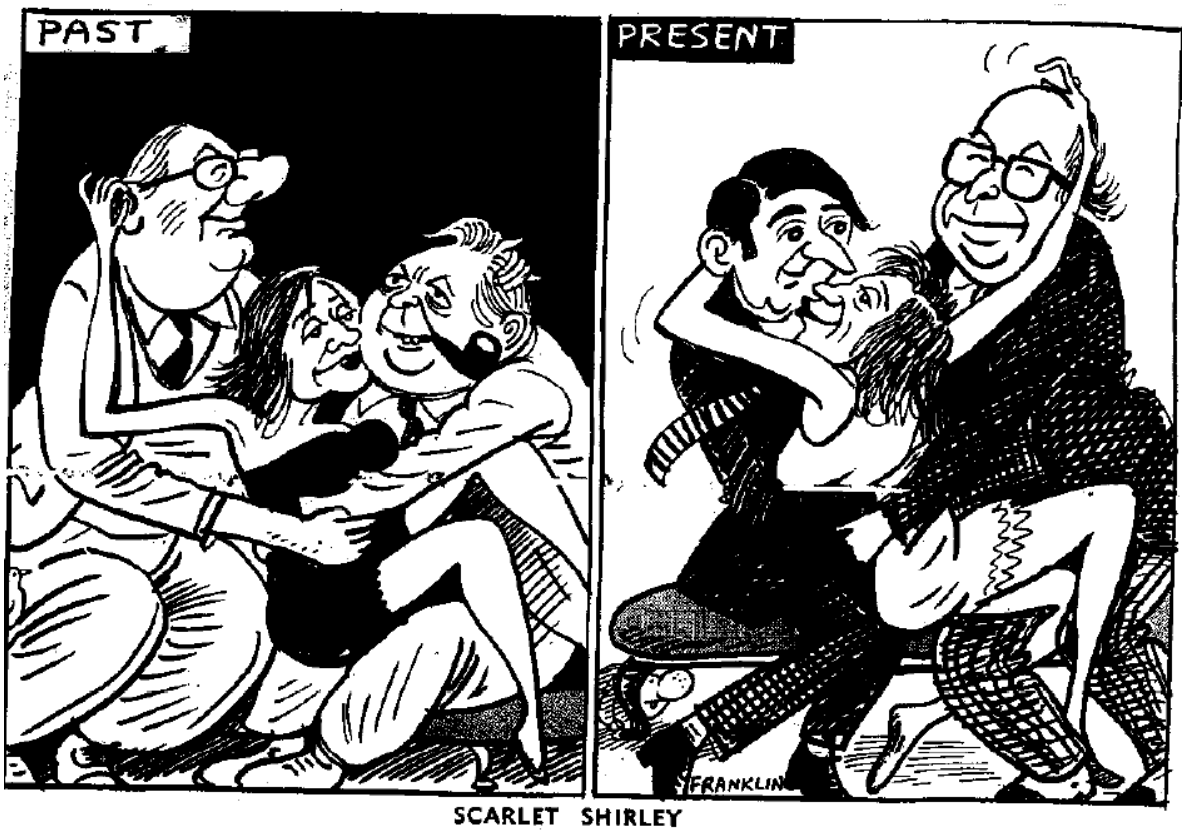
Gwynne-Vaughan when it was suggested that "the manner in which she is breaking down the prejudice against the candidature of women is little short of marvellous" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1922b). Once again the prejudice is carefully constructed as emanating from somewhere other than the newspapers, which are careful to maintain distance from such views. By 1935, the *Guardian* declared that such prejudice was no longer a factor when it noted that "they had in the Labour Party many women who were high above the average ability of Members of Parliament. They had lived down sex prejudice, and there were definite reasons for altering the old point of view about women in public life" (*The Guardian*, 1935b). This sentiment was echoed by the *Daily Mail* who commented that "the interesting thing about this election...is that for the first time women candidates are being received by their constituencies on exactly the same terms as men" (*Daily Mail*, 1935c). This coverage is generally positive and is at pains to suggest that women have become accepted in their political roles.

Unsurprisingly, the evidence of prejudice against women as politicians persists after the war. For the most part, instead of the newspapers distancing themselves from sexist attitudes by attributing them to someone else, it is the actual tone of the coverage that betrays sexist attitudes. This kind of representation takes a number of different forms, one example being the use of the term 'girl' to describe parliamentary candidates: "The girls, Anne Mallalieu and Helen Middleweek, were as articulate as they were attractive" (Mount, 1974), the reference to their youth and physical attractiveness subtly disempowered them by foregrounding their femininity. This distracts attention away from their serious role as candidates by equating them with children. Similar references include: "Tory ex-pin-up girl, Pat Hornsby-Smith" (*Daily Herald*, 1950a) and "a left-wing Labour dolly bird candidate who preaches the virtues of nationalisation" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1974b). Such discursive work is also evident when the *Daily Mail* states that "Diane Abbott is being a good girl" (Johnson, 1987a) by not causing controversy for the Labour Party during the 1987 election. It is difficult to imagine any male politician being described as a 'boy' in the same way. These quotations worked to trivialise the candidates immediately, ensuring that their political messages are secondary to their gender and reinforcing the impression that women are outsiders in the political sphere.

Related to this are other linguistic devices which represent politicians in a specific way. Words attributed to their behaviour reveal subtle sexist attitudes. One example would be the way Clare Short is constructed here: “Rightwingers, led by campaign chief Peter Mandelson, are worried about her outbursts on legalising cannabis, scrapping Trident and raising taxes” (*Daily Mail*, 1997). Here Short is described as having “outbursts” which imply that her views on drugs, defence and economic policy are somehow irrational and emotional which fail to fit with political discourses that favour rational, dispassionate decision making. Childs (2008) noted similar patterns of emotional adjective usage during the news coverage of Estelle Morris’ and Clare Shorts’ resignations in 2002 and 2003 respectively. Moreover, Ross (2002) notes that women parliamentarians in Britain, Australia and South Africa themselves reported that their actions were often described in highly emotional terms.

A feature of later coverage is the increase in openly misogynistic language aimed at politicians. Margaret Thatcher is dismissed early on as “seem[ing] to have little to offer but a charming taste in hats” (Levin, 1970) which served to trivialise her by drawing attention to her personal style and implying that this is all women have to offer. Shirley Williams was also subjected to misogynistic coverage during the 1983 election, after she and three other high profile Labour politicians broke away and formed the Social Democratic Party and contested the election in alliance with the Liberal Party. *The Sun* lambasted her for portraying herself as “pouring out charm and sweet reason, denouncing Labour’s wild men. She is the image of modernisation, a by-word for commonsense” (*The Sun*, 1983) while “the trouble is that the little angel has a shady, scarlet past” (ibid). This article appeared on the same page as a cartoon (see Image 6.1) which depicted Williams first in a sexual embrace with Callaghan and Wilson under the caption “past”, and then in a similar position with Roy Jenkins and David Owen in the box labelled “present”. Furthermore, her “love affair with Labour was no passing fling. She was a member of the party for more than 30 years” (ibid). This mode of representation actively works to impose a sexualised image on Williams, recalling the threatening nature of women’s untamed sexuality and is intended to discredit her. Interestingly, the male politicians in this scenario receive no such censure in the article which concentrated purely on Williams and her perceived defects.

Image 6.1: Scarlet Shirley, *The Sun* 7th June 1983, p.6



Another example of misogynistic language comes from the *Daily Mail* where Labour candidates are described as "screaming, spitting lesbians and sex perverts who want to turn Britain's classrooms into indoctrination centres" (Johnson, 1987a) for objecting to the enactment of Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1986. As well as being blatantly homophobic this language once again sought to portray the women concerned as irrational and emotional and engaged in illegitimate behaviour that put children at risk. Such double standards did not go unnoticed in the newspapers as the *Sun* remarked that "if women shouted verbal abuse like the men they would be denounced as harridans" (*The Sun*, 1966d). Women candidates themselves were keenly aware of the sexism involved in the campaign: "both women admit that it's a tough life in politics. Said Mrs Short: 'we are regarded as slightly inferior, and not considered to have the sort of brains that digest papers" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1964a) which is neatly demonstrated by a male

constituent in the same article remarking that “of course there’s nothing to choose between them – they’re both ruddy women,’ said the man in the Wolverhampton bus queue” (ibid). *The Guardian* suggested that sexist male voters might prevent Thatcher winning the election in 1979, remarking that “the male chauvinist pig vote could be the forgotten factor in deciding whether Mrs Thatcher becomes Britain’s first woman Prime Minister” (*The Guardian*, 1979).

The gendered nature of political discourse is especially visible when the *Daily Mirror* reflected that “at a time of crisis, Harold Wilson once remarked bitterly that Barbara Castle was the best man in the Cabinet” (*Daily Mirror*, 1970) and that “she certainly took on a man-size job as Labour’s Minister for Employment and Productivity” (ibid). Although this is supposed to be a positive evaluation of Castle, suggesting that she is an effective politician, it reinforces the notion that men are naturally superior and that women have to be exceptional in order to outperform them in the political sphere. This same gendered logic was at work when it was claimed that when Margaret Bondfield was given responsibility for the Means Test it was because "there was not a man in the Socialist Government who was willing to take it on. They had to give the job to a woman" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1935). In this example, the male politicians are being criticised for failing to take responsibility and instead delegating the job to a woman. The implication is that Bondfield only got the job because her male colleagues refused it rather than because she was the best candidate. This once again reinforces the perception that women politicians are inferior to their male colleagues.

The performance of women politicians has always been linked to their sex. In 1922 the *Daily Herald* remarked about the first few women MPs that “the argument cannot avoid turning to the performance of the two pioneers, for the failure on their part would – in practice, if not in logic – have seriously compromised their successors at the hustings” (*Daily Herald*, 1922a) based on the fact that they are women. Thatcher was also important in this respect because “back in 1979, [it was] predicted that if she turned out to be a failure as a national leader, it would rebound on all women in public life since her inadequacies would be put down to the fact that she was a woman” (Phillips, 1983). These quotations illustrate the way that women politicians are judged not simply on their ability to perform their political role but also because they are women.

A Minority Interest

A related theme which appeared throughout the sample period was items which discussed the number of women candidates standing in the election or possible explanations for the lack of women candidates being elected to Parliament. This is also important for the public perceptions of women candidates because it can impact on the perceived legitimacy of their presence in the public sphere.

The *Daily Mirror* noted that "only 23 women were elected to Parliament in February – the lowest total since the election of 1951" (*Daily Mirror*, 1974b). The pre-war *Daily Mirror* claimed that "many people who might have voted to get women into Parliament remember the rascality of the suffragettes in their campaign of violence. That alienated all who had hoped for the enfranchisement of the sex miscalled 'gentle'. As a result we have few women in Parliament today" (*Daily Mirror*, 1935b). Such an explanation places the blame for their own lack of representation firmly on women themselves for alienating potentially sympathetic voters by failing to act in a traditionally feminine way. This ignores the structural inequalities involved in the selection process for a parliamentary seat. The *Daily Telegraph* also suggests that women are responsible for their own lack of numbers stating that "women, first admitted to the House of Commons in 1918, still show little eagerness for membership. At this election the number of women candidates, though a record, is no more than 125" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1950a).

Whereas many reports constructed the lack of women candidates as a matter of individual choice rather than structural or social inequalities, *The Guardian* challenged this by pointing out that "strong complaints have been made by women's non-party organisations that the women candidates adopted had not been given a fair chance. They had been put up, as a rule, to fight constituencies where the odds were against them" (*The Guardian*, 1924b). The paper was unusual in foregrounding and recognising the difficulties women candidates faced in the selection process so early. Similar sentiments are also expressed much later. *The Sun* claimed that "neither lack of suitable women nor Parliamentary timetables are to blame for the shortage of women candidates. I have attended several selection conferences, only to be told confidentially that any woman has to be twice as good as any man to be selected. Many believe in the culturally nurtured

myth that a woman candidate loses 100 votes before she starts" (Miller, 1966). By 1987 there was some suggestion that this may have changed when the Guardian claimed that "in the past few years there has been a change of attitude in the selection committees of all parties. They have been more prepared to pick women not only in the hopeless seats, where most have languished in the past, but in seats that a party already holds or in marginals" (Linton, 1987). Even though women clearly improved their numerical representation during the 1990s, there were concerns that "despite a record number of women candidates, males in grey suits have dominated national platforms and the media buses following the main candidates" (*The Guardian*, 1997) suggesting that politics was still being constructed in gendered terms. As has already been noted elsewhere, attempts by the Labour Party to improve the selection process for women candidates has been met with widespread disapproval, leading to allegations that women selected from an all-woman short-list are inferior members (Cowley and Childs, 2003; Ward, 2000).

Marginal Voices

Another important aspect of women's representation in press coverage of elections is whether they are given a voice in the news items that are about them. This might be another area where politicians ought to be concerned about their mediated representation because there is some evidence that politicians' voices have become marginalised from electoral coverage in recent years. The analysis recorded whether the women were directly quoted, whether they had their remarks summarised by the report or whether they were simply mentioned (or pictured as far as photographs were concerned). The first two categories quite clearly afford these women a voice whilst the final category does not. For the purposes of this analysis the first two variables have been amalgamated to establish whether the women were given a voice or not.

Figure 6.6: Percentage of Items where politicians are quoted; summarised or neither 1918 - 2005

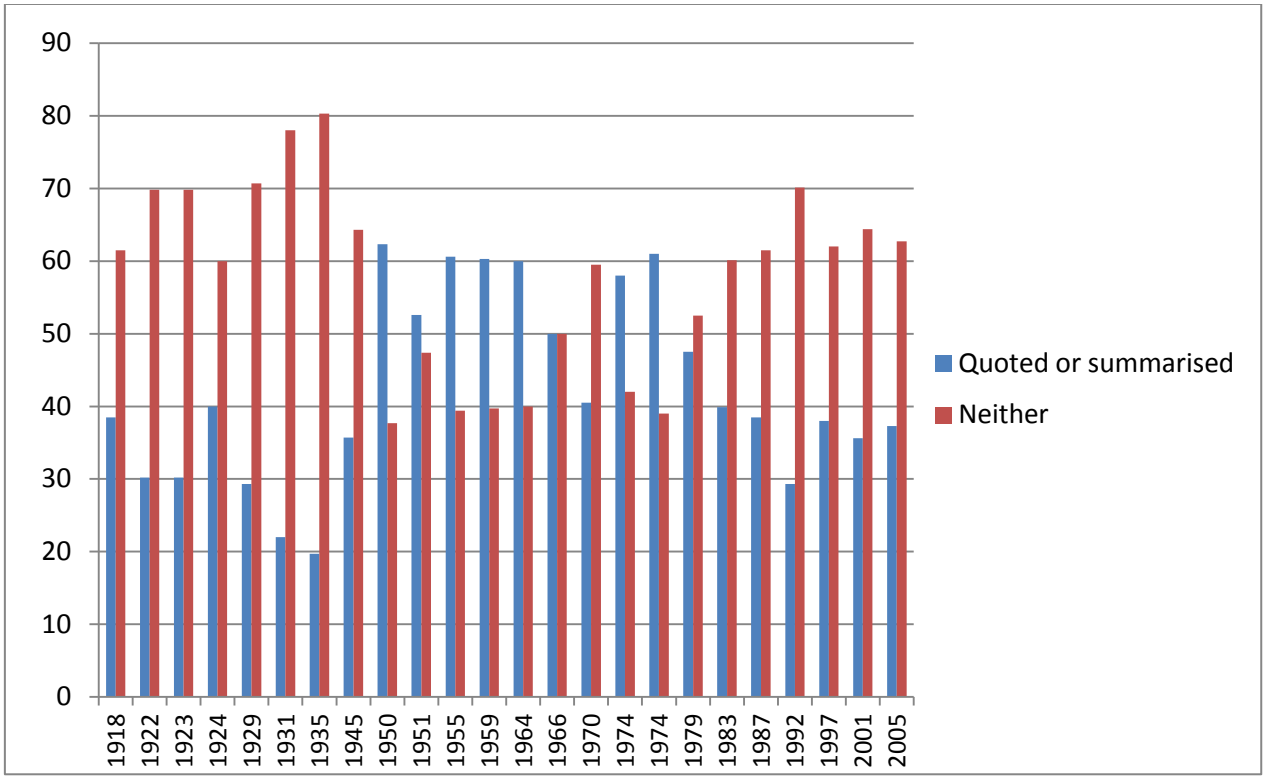
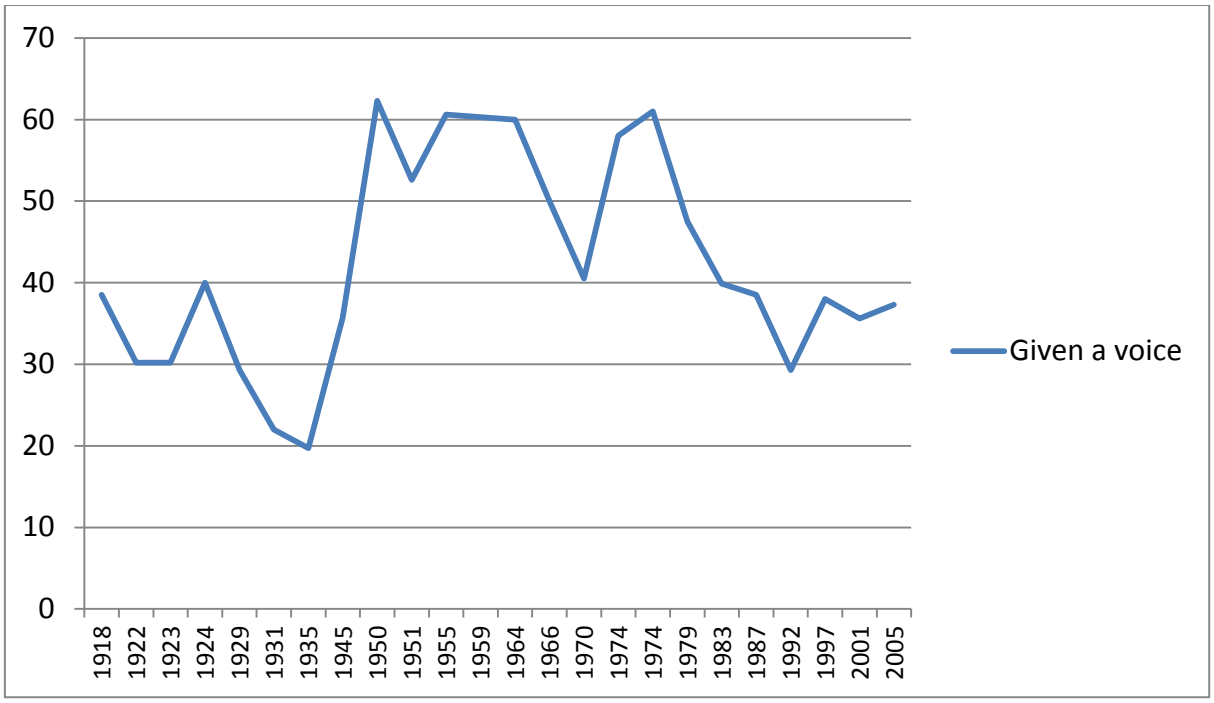


Figure 6.6 shows the results over time. During the interwar period the majority of items failed to allow women politicians to speak directly. This changed in the immediate post war period when the percentage of items allowing women a voice overtakes those that do not. This is once again reversed from 1979 onwards. This reversal is particularly interesting because it appears to happen at the moment where Thatcher becomes the most high profile figure in British politics. The dominance of Thatcher in the coverage is of key importance here also. It could be that as Prime Minister she would be more likely to be referred to in passing than any other politician thus accounting for the sheer number of items that she features in or there could be another explanation. Langer's (2007) investigation into the personalisation of British Prime Ministers in press coverage between 1945 and 1999 indicated that although Thatcher scored highly on overall visibility compared to her male predecessors and successors, she was more likely to be referred to by personal pronouns such as 'she' than by her official title when compared to her male equivalents. Langer furthermore suggests that this implicitly demotes her

because her name and post have to be inferred which subtly afford her a more background role. Something similar could be at work here, meaning that although Thatcher dominates the coverage in terms of visibility as the Prime Minister the policy discussion might have been attributed to her government who were overwhelmingly male, or she may be mentioned merely in passing rather than quoted making policy pronouncements. Figure 6.7 shows the trend of allowing politicians to speak more clearly (see Appendix E.8 for the full breakdown).

Figure 6.7: Percentage of items about politicians which quoted or summarised their remarks 1918-2005

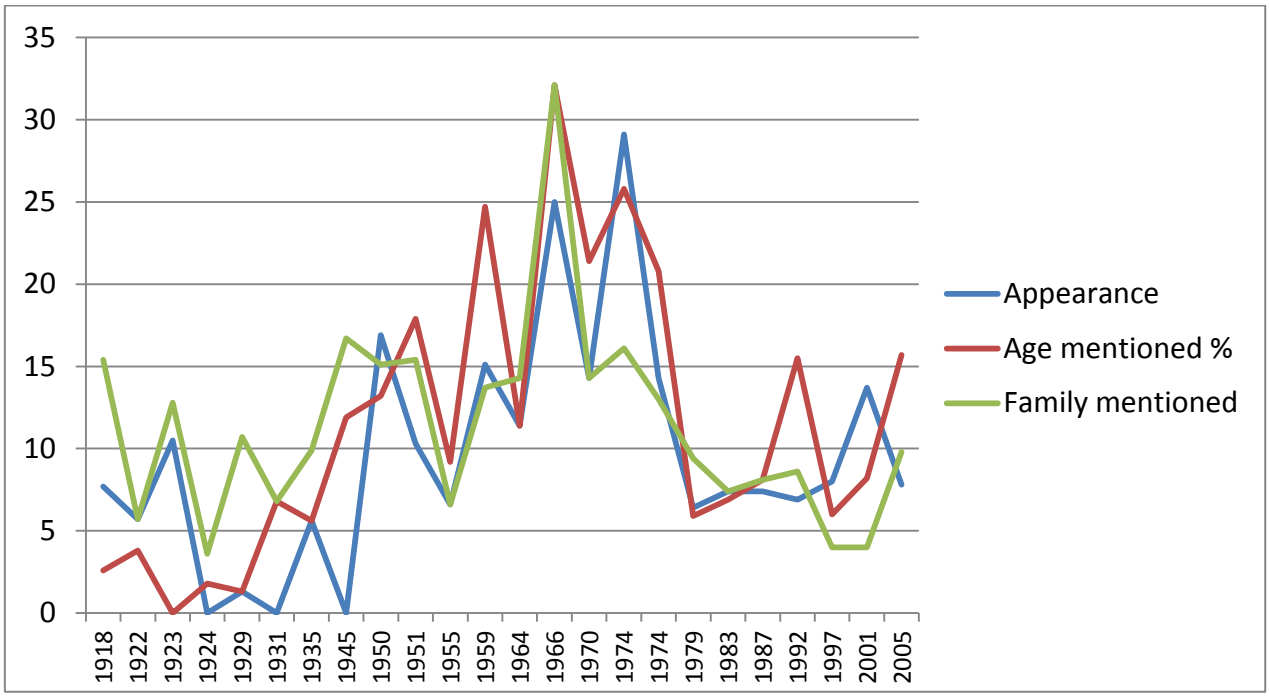


As has already been made clear, politicians' voices were featured in between 40 and 60% of items from 1950 to 1979. After this period, there is some decline so that politicians have their voices represented in less than 40% of items between 1983 and 2005. This suggests that women during this period were about as likely to be quoted or have their remarks summarised as their colleagues during the interwar years, when there were relatively few women standing for parliament.

Personalisation

The results of the content analysis revealed that in the context of British general elections, some of the aspects of the coverage of female politicians that were identified in the existing literature have not always been such important features in the coverage they received historically. Firstly, taking the entire sample of newspapers as a whole, the presence of references to their physical appearance and clothing, their age and their family situation seem to increase over time before declining once again in the late 1970s. Figure 6.8 shows the percentages of items about female politicians which make reference to these three aspects of their personal lives (see tables E.9, E.10 and E.11 in Appendix E for a detailed breakdown).

Figure 6.8: Percentage of Items which feature references to personal characteristics of politicians 1918- 2005



Generally, such references appear in a low percentage of items during the interwar period before increasing after the war. These references then appear to decline again during the 1980s before beginning to increase once again. The dominance of one politician, Margaret Thatcher in the items during this period may perhaps explain this dip

in personalised coverage. She accounted for 78.3% of all items about politicians between 1979, when she was elected Prime Minister until 1987, her last election[10]. Although she made up such a large percentage of the items about women politicians during this period, it would seem that she may have received less personalised coverage than her female colleagues. This subject will be returned to shortly.

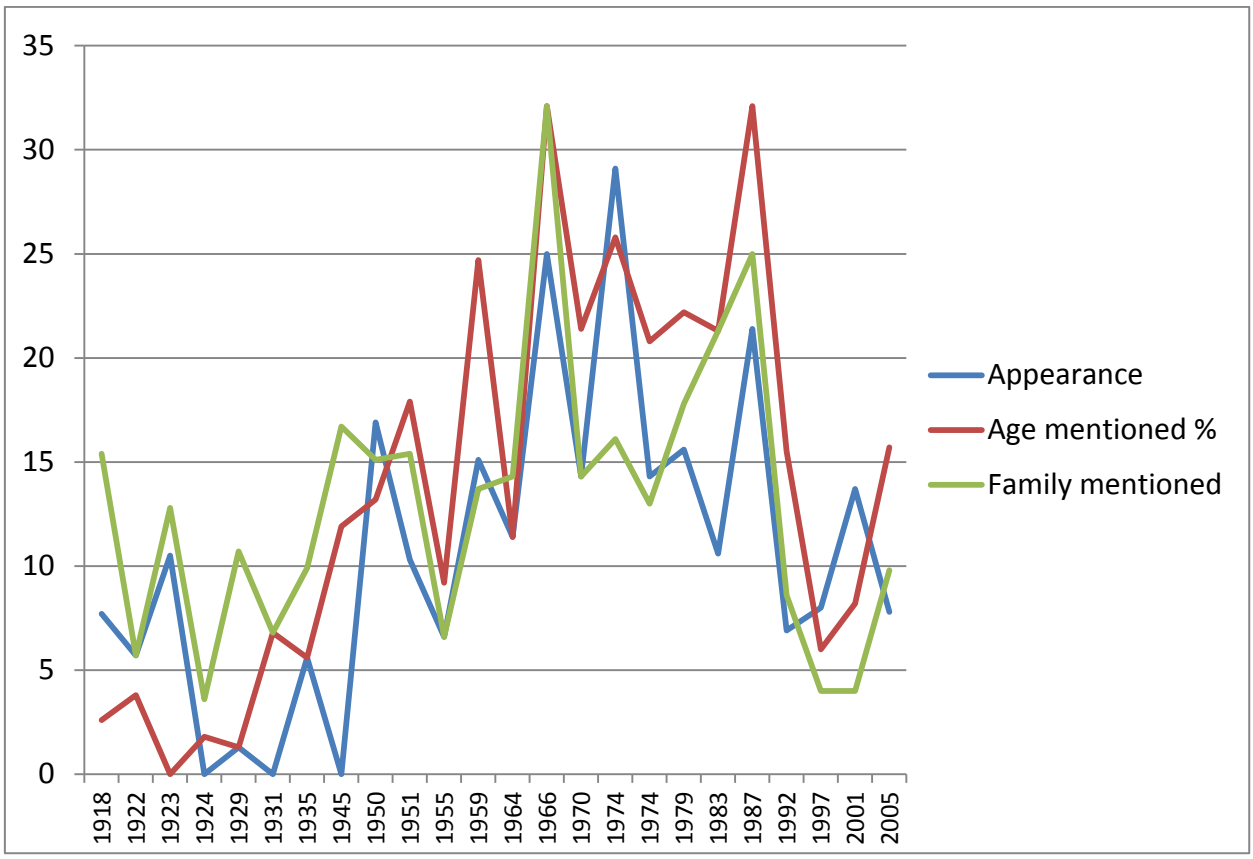
Taking each aspect of personal coverage separately, there are a number of interesting trends. As Figure 6.8 demonstrates, references to their familial situation are present in a higher percentage of items during the interwar period than the other variables. This may be explained by the fact that many female politicians at this time were the wives or daughters of former members of Parliament, such as Nancy Astor and Megan Lloyd George (Cowman, 2010) so their family connections were considered an important aspect of their appeal. This would conform to global historical trends where women have been helped into political careers by family ties (van Zoonen, 2005; Murray et al, 2010).

These references then increased after the war reaching their peak in 1966 when they featured in 32.1% of all items about politicians. These references then declined during the 1970s and 1980s until they are actually featured in similar levels to those of the interwar period. References to the physical appearances of women politicians present a more straightforward pattern. Although such references appeared in just over 10% of items in the 1923 election, generally such references appear in a very low proportion of items about these women during the interwar period; furthermore there were three elections: 1924, 1931 and 1945 where no such references appeared. After the war, references to physical appearance increase until they peak at 29.1% in the February election of 1974. After this, there is a sharp decline in such references during the Thatcher years and then they begin to increase again slightly during the 1990s. References to age follows a very similar pattern, increasing steadily through after the war before dropping off again during the Thatcher years only to increase once again afterwards. In order to determine whether or not Thatcher's dominance of the newspaper coverage of election between 1979 and 1987 has had an impact on the sample, the items which referred to other women politicians were isolated and analysed

[10] She accounted for 77.7% of items about politicians in 1979, 76.8% in 1983 and 81.1% in 1987.

separately for gendered coverage. Figure 6.9 shows the results for this period without Thatcher.

Figure 6.9: Percentage of Items which features references to personal characteristics 1918- 2005 (without Thatcher)



Although this eliminates a large number of items from the sample, it basically shows that when Thatcher was removed there was an increase in personalised coverage across all three variables suggesting that she did not receive the levels of gendered coverage that other women politicians were subjected to during the 1980s. References to age in particular increased dramatically when Thatcher's data was removed, increasing from being present in just 8.1% of all items when Thatcher was included to 32.1% when she was excluded. Thatcher's lack of personalised coverage is fascinating given the extent to which she used her personal image as a marketing tool during her career as leader of the Conservative Party and later as Prime Minister (Webster, 1990). The findings suggest that the level of personalised coverage which the existing literature is concerned about, were

much higher during the 1960s and 1970s than today, at least as far as electoral coverage is concerned. The 2010 figure however might suggest that such coverage is once again on the increase because 28% of items about politicians contained a reference to their appearance which is a dramatic increase from the 2005 percentage.

Appearance

As has previously been discussed the increased personalisation of news coverage of women candidates is highly gendered. Although this is a common complaint in the literature about women, politics and news; there is conflicting evidence about how prevalent this is. Interestingly, Norris (1997) argues that her study comparing women and male leaders from 10 different countries showed very little sex stereotyping when it came to physical appearance. A more recent and perhaps more detailed study which focused on women political leaders or aspiring leaders (Murray et al, 2010) suggested that there was evidence to suggest that women receive more attention about their appearance than male counterparts. Politicians themselves are certainly under the impression that their physical appearances and style are under scrutiny (Ross, 2002). This research suggests that in the context of British general elections, these references have actually decreased from their peak in the 1970s.

There were a multitude of examples which refer to the physical appearance of women candidates across the sample. Such references can be presented as merely incidental descriptions of their appearance for example, Miss Phipps is represented as “a little woman with thoughtful brown eyes, quietly dressed in unobtrusive brown” (*Daily Mail*, 1918c) or the description of Vanessa Redgrave “in a woolly hat pulled down to her eyebrows and her yellow scarf” (Lee-Potter, 1974). These references appear as harmless details but subtly work to reinforce the notion that women’s visual representation is a key factor in their political appeal. This is further reinforced by constant reminders that a woman candidate’s appearance can be an advantageous resource for her campaign. “The smile of Miss Murray rests on no adventitious aid. It glows and beams and spreads in its own light” (*Daily Mail*, 1918b) which makes her seem friendly and engaging to her voting audience. Similarly, “Miss Ward is buxom and beaming, wears shoulder length

curls" (Churchill, 1951) and Jill Knight was described as "an example of beauty allied with brains" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1959).

A woman candidate's appearance can also be constructed as being disadvantageous, for example the *Daily Mail* suggested that "the porcelain fragility of her complexion, the wistfulness of her great grey-blue eyes, and the delicacy of her exquisite dress are so strange a contrast in a colliery constituency that one feels Miss Parsons suffers many disadvantages" (*Daily Mail*, 1923a). This early example highlights the importance of social class in the perception of candidates. Where women candidates are concerned, their style of dress appears to connote their class identity. The Countess of Warwick also had to deny "an accusation that she wore diamond earrings and expensive pearls" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1923) on the campaign trail to play down her privileged roots. Here, Parsons and Warwick's middle or upper class style looks out of place in their modest constituencies whilst later Sally Oppenheim is keen to display her middle-class identity: "Tory housewives' vigilante Sally Oppenheim is out canvassing Gloucester in her curlers" (Martin, 1974) keeping "her cool blonde good locks with rollers hidden under a scarf" (ibid) "not that she wants to play down her middle-class blue-rinsed Conservatism. She's proud of that" (ibid). Oppenheim is constructed as being comfortable with her middle class identity because this is part of her appeal to Conservative voters, although it is also notable that this could be alienating to other voters. During the 1979 election whilst speaking to voters in her constituency "she looked like a million dollars – a fact that hardly went unnoticed when she confronted a group of working class mums collecting their children from a junior school" (Callan, 1979). Such examples reinforce the extent to which women's personal clothing choices are portrayed as active political choices.

The attractiveness of women candidates is another area which received much comment. Joan Quennell was described as being "certainly the most attractive Parliamentary private secretary a Minister of Transport ever had" (*The Sun*, 1966c) whilst Shirley Williams was once described as being "highly attractive without being much bothered about her appearance" (*The Sun*, 1974). Furthermore, "Win or lose today, 25-year-old Helene Middleweek has to be top of the election poll for beauty" (*Daily Mail*, 1974). The coverage also tended towards sexualising younger women candidates: "She's blonde, she's striking and she is candidate for the North London constituency of Finchley. Apart

from that, any similarity between Michelle Vincent and Margaret Thatcher is purely coincidental. Michelle, 23, who yesterday chose a black latex outfit to launch her campaign" (*Daily Mail*, 1987). This item was accompanied by a large photograph of Vincent. She was an independent candidate but her political motivations were not discussed at the expense of her outfit. The comment is couched in humorous terms which work to preclude any criticism they might receive for trivialising the candidate. Helene Middleweek is also described in a sexualised fashion where the focus was on "her tight jeans, clinging sweaters, and shoulder length hair" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1974b) which apparently "provide a beguiling appearance" (ibid). Ross (2002) suggests that "the objectification of women politicians as subjects for the male (sexualised) gaze is symptomatic of the way in which women's bodies are commodified in mainstream society" (Ross, 2002: 93).

This focus on physical appearance can also act as criticism, although this tends to be confined to the later years of the study. Shirley Williams is portrayed as "a disorganised woman. She shows it in her eccentric dress" (*The Sun*, 1983). This is particularly interesting because not only is a comment about her appearance used as a means of criticism but it is also linked to her personal characteristics suggesting that women politicians display their political credentials in their style of dress. It is frequently noted that "it's obvious that she doesn't care or at least that she doesn't think her appearance is THAT important" (Callan, 1979). Other women who fail to conform to mainstream beauty ideals are also heavily criticised: "Ann Widdecombe sticking her top half out of a D-reg pick-up truck and looking like Queen Boudicea's ugly sister is no way to woo voters" (*The Sun*, 2001a) which serves to further reinforce the idea that the physical appearance of women politicians is central to their appeal. The invocation of a powerful and ruthless female leader from history coupled with her perceived unattractiveness emphasised her transgression from acceptable femininity in politics. Not only is she a formidable politician and strong character, she is also not physically attractive and is therefore threatening to the established idea that women in the public sphere ought to have a visual appeal.

Bodies

Body shape, height and weight were also regular features in the coverage. Bessie Braddock was described as "the Labour Party's largest asset – she weighs 14st 12 lbs – comfortably overflowed a chair in her office yesterday" (*Daily Mail*, 1959c) and it was similarly noted that Irene Ward was "a large, forthright lady" (Hall, 1970) and Celia Fletcher was "a large, jolly woman with an infectious laugh" (Chippindale, 1974). It is notable that these examples represent older, more established politicians whilst the sexualised representations were reserved for the younger candidates. There were exceptions though, Barbara Roche was described as "a plump, middle-class, Oxford educated barrister" (Leslie, 1987) despite being in her early thirties. Body weight rarely featured in representations of younger candidates except when they were being complimented for losing weight. One example from the *Daily Mail* described "Jolly little Mrs Mabel de la Motte (5ft. 3in.), Conservative candidate for Fulham," (*Daily Mail*, 1959b) as "tubby when I met her during the 1955 election" (ibid) but during the 1959 election "she is a good-looking shadow of her former self" (ibid). Her electioneering is constructed as an aid to weight loss since after the initial interview "she spent another two hours losing ounces and winning votes" (ibid). This attention to bodyweight relies on the traditional construct that weight loss and gain are important concerns to women and also serves to emphasise that these women fail to fit the conventional body shape of a politician since that is ordinarily a man's body. The last quotation also emphasised the height of the candidate, again her lack of height marks her out as exceptional because she is much shorter than many male politicians. This is also evident here: "at 4ft 9in, Jennie Gibbs, Liberal candidate for the Ogmore division in South Wales, thinks she is probably the smallest woman fighting in the General Election" (Steele, 1966).

Remarkably, there is very little criticism of the mode of representation which emphasises the physical appearance of women politicians. An early exception comes from the pre-war *Daily Mirror* that noted how "the physical attributes of the would-be masculine MP are notoriously ignored by the newspapers" (*Daily Mirror*, 1923).

Age

As the content analysis showed the proportions of items where the age of women candidates was mentioned also rose over the sample period before declining. The age of a female politician is never the main focus of an item (unlike a reference to their appearance) but seems to appear frequently in any introductory statements. Shirley Williams was described as "44 and divorced" (Bevins, 1974) and Barbara Roche is introduced as "33-year-old Mrs Barbara Roche" (Leslie, 1987), Marjorie Jalland "thirty years of age and a barrister" (*The Guardian*, 1945) and Ann Taylor was labelled "a 26-year-old Open University tutor" (Johnson, 1974). An example from the interwar period suggested that candidates were not always so well known, one reporter remarked about a Miss Murray that "I do not know her age, except that she confesses to be more than 30 and less than 40" (*Daily Mail*, 1918b) which corresponds with the content analysis data that showed an increase in the mention of a candidates age across time. Later candidates are praised for appearing younger than they actually were, Barbara Castle "looked ten years younger" (*Daily Mail*, 1959b) than her 48 years whilst Irene Ward's "heavy walk is the only thing that betrays her age" (Hall, 1970).

Family

The proportion of items which refer to a woman politician's family is a much steadier feature of the coverage across the sample period as the results from the content analysis demonstrate. Many early examples emphasised the fact that a number of women candidates were ushered into political life due to their relationships with male politicians: "the Unionists of Kensington have unanimously adopted as Unionist Coalition candidate Mrs Lucas, the widow of the former candidate" (*The Guardian*, 1918d) as was the case for Nancy Astor, the very first female MP elected in a by-election in 1919 (Musolf, 1999). This phenomenon was not exclusively confined to the interwar period as this quotation about Lena Jeger "who succeeded her husband as MP" (*Daily Mail*, 1959a) demonstrates. Megan Lloyd George, daughter of the former Prime Minister was often compared to her father when she first entered politics contesting the constituency of Anglesey in 1929, the *Guardian* noted that she "has the spirit and much of the forcefulness of her father" (*The*

Guardian, 1931) and "on the platform she is an enchantress ('her father over again' the elders say)" (*The Guardian*, 1951b). Other women candidates made use of their familial relationships on the campaign trail, Anne Fremantle took her child with her whilst she campaigned: "this is her first election, and she solves the problem of whether or not to kiss elector's babies by taking her own around in her pram" (*Daily Mail*, 1935c) whilst Jennie Lee makes a political point by invoking her family background when she was quoted saying "I'm a miner's daughter and I know what I'm talking about" (*Daily Mail*, 1950).

Margaret Thatcher also invoked her role in her family during the 1974 election: "Dennis Thatcher played mum yesterday while his famous wife Margaret and their children shared an afternoon at home. It was the first time since the election campaign started that the blonde Tory Housing Spokesman has spent a full day with her family" (Hinton, 1974). Here she is constructed in a domestic setting, enjoying afternoon tea with her husband and children during the campaign. The presence of the media implies that this is part of a political strategy to present her as an ordinary woman with a family, the motivation for this is revealed when the reporter claims later in the item that she "frets about the 'frosty' image people have of her" (ibid). Furthermore, she is constructed as performing traditionally feminine tasks as well as her political ones: "after cooking lunch, Mrs Thatcher wrote a couple of political speeches" (ibid). The sequence of events which constructs her as cooking for her family and then continuing her political role suggests that it is the natural order of things for her to put her family first and her career second. Shirley Williams on the other hand "is one of the few politicians known to agree to a television interview- providing a baby-sitter is thrown in with the deal" (Rose, 1974); thus reflecting the suggestion that as women candidates they "wish to serve. Late hours and families would not deter us" (*The Sun*, 1966d). Other women candidates such as Cathy Wilson and Marilyn James were similarly domesticated by referring to them as "a Newport housewife" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1979b) and "a blonde Northampton housewife" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1979c) respectively. Pat Hollis was also labelled a "housewife" (*The Sun*, 1979a) and "mother of two Mrs Hollis" emphasising her children as well as the fact that she was married. Other women politicians whose marital status was mentioned in items about them were "Doreen Gorsky, [who] is 37, the second wife of a London doctor, who

is himself standing as Liberal candidate for the City and Westminster. She has two children and two step-children" (Churchill, 1950) and Shirley Williams "44 and divorced, has a young daughter" (Bevins, 1974).

An item in the *Daily Telegraph* in 1959 highlighted the families of women politicians in an interesting way. It seemed to imply that since the women were out canvassing their husbands and children would be subjected to "haphazard meals and general home chaos" (Jackson, 1959) reinforcing the social expectation that women are responsible for household chores and therefore should not be pursuing a political career unless she can guarantee that "her husband and home are not being neglected" (ibid). Such references reinforce women's problematic relationship with the public sphere by suggesting that women ought to attend to their private duties before attempting a political role.

The content analysis revealed an increase and then subsequent decline in the proportion of election items which make explicit reference to the appearance, age or familial status of politicians between 1918 and 2005. Although the percentage of items featuring this sort of coverage had been in decline recently the 2010 election showed a large increase again. The increased personalisation of political coverage has particularly gendered implications since men can derive political advantage from showcasing their family for example while women struggle to avoid being associated with the private sphere (van Zoonen, 2006).

The results from the content analysis demonstrated that Margaret Thatcher seems to have experienced much lower proportions of personalised coverage during her period in office as Conservative leader and Prime Minister. When the election coverage she received before she gained high office is analysed however, she seems to receive gendered coverage like her female colleagues. Potential reasons for this unexpected outcome will be discussed in the concluding section of this chapter.

"The Thatcher Factor"[11]

[11] From Phillips, M. 'The Politics of sex', *The Guardian*, 8th June 1983, p.12

The mediated representation of Margaret Thatcher changed quite dramatically when she became party leader. Prior to this, despite her prominence as a member of Heath's cabinet, she was constructed in similar terms to her female counterparts; as has already been demonstrated her family and physical appearance are scrutinised and she is in many ways just like any other woman candidate: "Mrs M Thatcher (Conservative candidate or Finchley) is also a barrister. She and her company director husband have relied on a series of meals from friends during this election, except for breakfast, which she does cook for her husband and twin son and daughter" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1959). Once again she is domesticated as an ordinary mother and wife which was an important aspect of her party leadership campaign (Webster, 1990). This type of coverage was not always a positive development for her political career as she would sometimes be dismissed as "the Grantham grocer's daughter with the plummy voice and the Tory garden party hats" (Lancaster, 1974) rather than a credible leader. Interestingly, before she became elected leader of the Conservative Party *The Sun* reported that "Mrs Thatcher, 49 next Sunday, neatly fends off the inevitable tip that she will become Prime Minister, by saying: 'the Premiership needs 100 per cent dedication, which a wife and mother would find hard to give' "(*The Sun*, 1974); which explicitly domesticated herself by design and she apparently remarked "that there will not be a woman Premier from any party in her lifetime" (Bevins*,* 1974).

When she eventually became a serious contender for Prime Minister however her construction shifted to being much less personalised, as has already been demonstrated by the content analysis results. This is not to say that she received gender neutral coverage as her significance to women's position in society is emphasised. On the one hand she was praised for achieving the ultimate position of authority but was simultaneously positioned as anti-feminist. Whilst the *Guardian* expressed concern that "there was much anxious muttering that she might be a woman but she wasn't a sister" (Phillips, 1983); the *Daily Mail* seemed gratified by the fact that Thatcher "didn't approve of the extremists lib view, which seemed to hate men and was contemptuous of any woman content to be a wife and mother" (*Daily Mail*, 1979). Thatcher's widely reported comments that "I don't like strident females" (*The Sun*, 1979a); "I like people with ability. You get somewhere because of ability not sex" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1979a) and "I didn't get

here by being a strident female" (ibid) confirmed her antifeminist stance. *The Guardian* accused her of "playing for all she was worth the part of Mrs Average Suburban Housewife. Most women in politics go to some lengths to distance themselves from the patronising, little-woman image. Not so Mrs Thatcher, whose main concern in 1979 was that voters might think she was too remote from their daily experience" (Phillips, 1983) which emphasises the constructed nature of her political persona.

Her antifeminist rhetoric combined with the neoliberal economic policy pursued by her government were constructed by the *Guardian* as being detrimental to women: "with poverty widening and deepening, with intolerance and hatred rampant and with women on the front line of attack" (Phillips, 1983) and led to her being constructed as "a strong, forceful leader who is, in consequence, unfeeling and heartless about ordinary people" (Johnson, 1987b). Her approach was foreshadowed by the *Daily Mirror* in 1974 when it claimed her plan for cut price mortgages would impact the most vulnerable: "You get something cheap – or at least the lucky owner occupiers do – and in return you have to pay for it in other ways when the money is taken from hospitals and schools and the disabled" (Lancaster, 1974) and could similarly have been referring to the Right to Buy scheme which allowed council tenants to buy the homes they occupied, implemented by Thatcher's government in 1980. Sympathetic newspapers later sought to counter her image as an uncaring leader by painting her a "The Iron Lady...with a soft centre" (Kay and Potter, 1983) whose "voice cracked with emotion when she talked of the personal and emotional pain when people described her as hard and uncaring" (Deans, 1987).

The Guardian expressed the concerns of a number of feminists when it asked "is Mrs Thatcher really a man? This is not another election smear. The question arises out of the miserable, frustrated, teeth-clenched bafflement of all those women who used to dream of how much better a place the world would be if only we were led by women rather than men" (Phillips, 1983) claiming that "while she may enthuse the jam-making battalions of the Tory party conference, she reduces many other women to despair" (ibid) because "the gender factor seems to have been utterly erased by the Thatcher factor, a phenomenon undreamed of in feminist philosophy" (ibid).

Thatcher's exceptional circumstances as the only female party leader and Prime Minister in British history seem to have impacted upon the coverage she received. Her forceful personality and political style also undoubtedly affected the type of election coverage she was subjected to. Thatcher famously exploited her family background and femininity to her advantage in her leadership campaign (Webster, 1990) which makes it all the more odd that her electoral coverage when she had gained the leadership was so devoid of personalised references compared to other female MPs of the time.

Conclusion:

The content analysis indicates that a number of changes to the coverage take place between 1918 and 2005. During the interwar period the coverage of women politicians lacked many of the specifically gendered features identified in the literature about contemporary news coverage of women politicians. The news coverage instead tended to be generally positive and deferential towards them and there were relatively few references to their appearance and age and only a reasonable amount of coverage about their families. Positive evaluations of politicians and their contribution to politics were at their height during this period, although this is also when their voices were more marginal in the reportage. One possible explanation for this generally positive coverage could be that the novelty value of women candidates provoked interest from the newspapers which were keen to reflect the impact of women on the campaign trail. Also, newspapers tended to be more deferential during this period which might have kept some criticism of them in check (Conboy, 2004). There were also relatively few women standing for election during this period which suggests that those who had managed to be selected for a seat were strong politicians who were well qualified for the role. Women's voices may have been marginal due to the reporting conventions at the time which tended to quote news actors less frequently than in contemporary coverage.

The post war period witnessed a number of changes. Firstly, the personalised references to politicians' appearances and ages began to increase. This focus on the personal lives and attributes of women politicians suggests that the coverage became gendered due to the presence of more references to their clothing choices and hairstyles at the expense of

policy discussion. This type of coverage peaked during the 1960s and 1970s. The coverage also began to be dominated by a narrower spectrum of women politicians who had gained positions in the shadow and actual cabinets. Women like Edith Summerskill, Barbara Castle, Shirley Williams and Margaret Thatcher start to feature prominently. Negative evaluations also started to increase significantly during the 1970s. Once again these changes might be explained by changing reporting conventions and the decline in deference to political actors. The increased discussion of women's personal lives and appearances provides evidence for the increased personalisation of political coverage at this time (see Langer, 2012; Stanyer, 2007). This chapter also provides evidence that the tendency towards drawing upon the personal attributes of politicians for press coverage and political campaigning involves unique risks for women. Focusing upon their personal lives reminds audiences of their historical relation to the private sphere which might render them less attractive political candidates (see van Zoonen, 2005 and 2006). Furthermore, the way in which personalised coverage of women is focused upon their appearance also serves to trivialise them in a way that might be damaging to their political career. Such coverage provides risks for women which are not necessarily present for their male counterparts which serve to reinforce the patriarchal stereotype of politician as male.

Between 1979 and 1987 the presence of the first woman party leader and subsequently the first woman Prime Minister had an enormous impact on the nature of the coverage of women politicians. Thatcher completely dominated this period, as the content analysis showed and as a result the coverage features very few other women generally let alone other women politicians. What is particularly interesting about this period is that the coverage about Thatcher featured remarkably little personalised coverage and therefore managed to avoid the traditional gendered elements identified in the literature which women leaders are often subjected to in contemporary analysis.

This finding was unexpected not only because it contradicts much of the existing literature discussed in Chapter Two but moreover because early examples of Thatcher's media coverage and indeed her own political strategies employed deeply gendered modes of representation such as the Tory lady in the hat and references to 'handbagging' political opponents (Webster, 1990). These findings may indicate that electoral coverage

is less typical of political reporting than might be expected. As party leader and then Prime Minister, Thatcher would have been extremely visible throughout the political calendar so that focusing upon her personal life during elections was not necessary as these aspects of her life would already be familiar to readers. Another explanation might be the fact that during elections, party leaders are frequently referred to in very incidental ways throughout the coverage which might mean there is no space or value to alluding to her appearance or familial role within these items. This means that the dominant modes of representation which were employed to discuss Thatcher might not be typical of the coverage of women politicians generally.

The coverage of Thatcher was interesting in another way. She was simultaneously constructed as an important figure in terms of women's political advancement and as fiercely anti-feminist which is problematic for the political and mediated representation of women politicians generally because her insistence that women must advance in politics on merit ignores the systematic barriers which prevent women from gaining equality with men and reinforces patriarchal assumptions about gender roles. Associating such anti-feminist sentiments with a successful and powerful woman serve to undermine feminist discourses which aim to improve the position of women in politics.

The results from the content analysis therefore show that the main changes over time relate to the changes in personalised coverage over time; the fluctuation in the proportion of items that allow women politicians to speak and the increase in negative evaluations and decline of positive evaluations.

The existing literature notes the propensity of news media for focusing on the appearance, age and familial roles of women politicians and this analysis supports the findings of other studies to some extent; however it is important to note that during electoral coverage contemporary women received fewer references to these personal characteristics than their forebears during the 1960s and 1970s which suggests that there has been some improvement from a feminist perspective despite the documented rise in personalised coverage of male leaders (Langer, 2012). This might be a consequence of women in politics becoming perceived as more normal which therefore means differential coverage has decreased. The increased presence of women journalists may

also have had a positive impact on the mediated representation of women in politics which would be an important development for equality. On the other hand, another explanation which is not positive for women is the increased focus upon party leaders, who are almost always men, at the expense of other politicians (see Langer, 2012) which would be damaging to women. It is also worth noting that the proportion of coverage which made references to the appearance of politicians during the 2010 election (28%) is much higher than recent elections and in fact displays a similar level of personalisation as the peak figures in the 1960s. This may indicate that these modes of representation might be on the rise once again (which suggests a cyclical pattern of personalisation) or this could signal a new upward trend that could be problematic for women. Alternatively, it could be the product of this particular election which was far from typical with its lack of policy discussion and focus on the first party leaders' debates.

Interestingly, the proportion of items which featured the voices of politicians either through direct or indirect quotations follows a similar pattern to that of the personalised references. Politicians rarely had their voices reported during the interwar years but after the war they began to be quoted in the majority of items about them. This is probably due to women politicians gaining more political power in the form of cabinet positions as the century progresses which means they might be more frequently quoted. These levels of quotation then dropped off again in the late 1970s. Therefore, contemporary politicians were less likely to be quoted than their forebears despite the fact that during the 1980s, Britain had a female Prime Minister. Once again Thatcher's dominance of the coverage may explain this trend to some extent. Since Thatcher was Prime Minister she would have appeared in many news items which mentioned her in passing but did not directly or indirectly quote her. This therefore may explain the decline in this period and suggests that this may not be a specifically gendered phenomenon. It does not however explain why the women during the 1990s and 2000s are less likely to be quoted that their post-war forebears. This might be explained instead by the increased attention on male party leaders during elections (Deacon and Wring, 2011) and the tendency to ignore other politicians. This is problematic for women because it limits their ability to speak directly to voters and also to be portrayed as competent and engaged politicians.

The way that politicians were evaluated in the news coverage has also been subject to change. Although it is important to state that in 20 of the 24 elections, the majority of items did not contain any evaluative statements whatsoever; across time the proportion of items which contain positive evaluations of women and their contribution to politics has declined significantly whilst the proportion of items which evaluated them negatively has increased since the late 1970s. This is probably due to reporting conventions which are increasingly critical of politicians generally which means that part of this trend is not necessarily gendered but there are gendered implications since negative evaluations can remark upon their physical appearance as well as political competence (which is evident in this chapter and Chapter 4) which reinforces sexist stereotypes about women in public life.

As well as a number of changes to the way politicians were represented over time, there were also a number of continuities. Firstly, women tended to be associated with similar policy areas across time: the economy; international affairs; health and welfare, and employment. The existing literature expressed concern that women might be stereotyped into traditionally feminine policy areas. Apart from health and welfare, this analysis showed that women politicians are not confined to gendered policy areas in British election coverage. This might reflect British parliamentary democracy where parties share policy goals and priorities and the personal political issues of the candidates are less obvious in the campaign than say the United States, where much of literature that makes these claims comes from.

Interestingly, politicians were associated with three of the same top four policy themes as voters but they were not explicitly gendered in the same way as voters. This perhaps suggests that these policy areas are those that are important to women generally but also might reflect the issues which are more frequently discussed during elections. Despite not being confined to feminine policy areas which focus on the private sphere, the way they are constructed in the news coverage was gendered because the language used to describe them and their campaigning styles worked to domesticate them throughout the sample period by consistently invoking their role of representing women voters specifically. They were also continually constructed as appealing to women voters in gendered ways, such as appealing to their concern for children or prices. It is of course

acceptable and indeed desirable for women politicians to be seen as representing their female constituents since this is one of their functions as political representatives (Childs, 2008) however there may be a danger in this being the primary mode of representation because it is also important for democratic purposes that they are seen to represent their male constituents in some way also. Constructing them as responsible for the political representation of women differentiates them from their male counterparts and furthermore reinforces the notion that women are a distinct group with similar concerns and politics. This presents women as outsiders and reinforces the dominant discourse that politics is the domain of men.

This is also evident in the presence of sexism in the historical discourse. Sexism is a continuous feature of the election coverage about politicians. Early examples tended to report the negative remarks of male politicians or voters. The news coverage of this period was fairly sympathetic by presenting sexism as coming from elsewhere and as largely unwelcome. Later examples of sexism actually became more likely to come directly from journalists in the form of criticism or sexualised references to the candidates. This means that despite the increase in the number of women candidates across time, the barriers to achieving equality with their male counterparts persist. While early examples of sexism were blatant and were perpetrated by other politicians and voters, women should be troubled that as time has gone on they are more likely to receive such treatment at the hands of national newspapers. It is difficult to explain why this development has occurred although undoubtedly the increased negativity towards politicians in general may have contributed to this.

The number of women candidates or their lack of representation in parliament is also a steady feature of the coverage. The relatively small proportion of women who successfully gained a seat in Parliament tended to be blamed on the reluctance of individual women to come forward rather than on structural inequalities in public life generally as well as in the selection process. This made it easy for newspapers to undermine the authority of women candidates who were selected through some means of positive discrimination like Labour's all-women shortlists. This has been discussed at length by other authors (see Ward, 2000; Cowley and Childs, 2003).

What is perhaps most striking about the representation of politicians from 1918 until 2005, is the fact that the relatives category consistently accounts for a much smaller proportion of the election coverage than they do. This means that 2010 is the first time that women who are present on the campaign trail merely because they are related to a politician account for a higher proportion of the coverage than women candidates who play an active and important role in the political sphere. Although it is difficult to say whether this is the beginning of a new trend or just the consequences of an atypical election it is clear that this development has implications for the mediated and political representation of women. The marginalisation of women candidates from electoral discourse is problematic because it serves to undermine their ability to communicate with citizens and prevents them from becoming seen as a normal and acceptable presence on the campaign trail by making them seem extraordinary. It is also problematic because it may prevent other women coming forward to stand for election because they may feel that politics is not the normal place for women. This could have a negative impact on the representation of women and for democracy in general.

Chapter 7: From "Ideal election wife"[12] to "just another political wife"[13]: the changing profile of relatives

The informal involvement of women in the political process had already begun long before they were extended the rights to vote for and stand in General Elections. There are in fact examples of women engaging in political activity throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which addressed a range of social issues such as education for girls as well as the campaign for universal suffrage (Cowman, 2010). Women's political activity increased throughout the nineteenth century when organisations like the Primrose League and the Women's Liberal Federation encouraged women to become active in party politics (ibid). Female relatives of politicians soon became an established feature of any election campaign. Gladstone's wife Catherine was thought to be the first to establish the idea that wives should follow their husbands on the campaign trail and sit with him on the platform when he spoke (Lawrence, 2009) which meant that the role of the wife was one of passive observer to the proceedings; although there were reported exceptions such as Jennie Churchill (Winston's mother) who became famous for giving lively speeches and canvassing voters during the 1885 election (ibid).

The presence of female relatives in the election campaign continued throughout the interwar period where they were considered to provide an important means of communicating with the new women voters. Throughout this period the relatives of candidates were portrayed as supportive political companions who willingly engaged in political campaigning on the candidate's behalf. The political activities of these women were constructed as legitimate and indeed necessary to win votes. The importance of such women is highlighted by the fact that the first three women elected to Parliament were the wives of former Members who were selected for their seats because their husbands had either been elevated to the Lords, died or were somehow disqualified from office. These women were Nancy Astor, the first woman MP and a Conservative elected in 1919, Margaret Wintringham of the Liberal Party elected in a by-election in 1921 and Mabel Philipson another Conservative elected in 1923 (Cowman, 2010). Some historians

[12] The title of an article about Clementine Churchill in the Daily Mail, 3rd December 1923, p.10
[13] *Daily Mail*, 12th April 2010, p.7

have argued that being the wife of a politician was a significant factor in the early electoral success of women candidates because it allowed them to present themselves as a reasonable female equivalent to their husbands rather than a dangerous feminist vanguard (Harrison, 1986). It also may have helped in a practical sense because it gave them an opportunity to contest a winnable seat which would have eluded them otherwise (Cowman, 2010). This is arguably part of a global phenomenon where women have been enabled into political positions through family ties in a number of political systems throughout the world (Van Zoonen, 2005; Murray et al 2010).

After the war the construction of politicians' relatives began to change. Female relatives continued to be reported in the context of the campaign but they became more likely to be described as merely being present on the campaign trail rather than focused upon in any detail, as the results from the content analysis will illustrate. This decline in overtly political behaviour is replaced by an increase in personalised coverage which emphasises their personal lives and experiences as politician's relatives. The increased focus on party leaders during this period (Rosenbaum, 1997; Lawrence, 2009; Langer, 2007) also translated into an increased focus on the wives of these leaders.

This increased attention on the personal lives and experiences of the wives of politicians continues into the late 1980s and 1990s but it is coupled with a renewed interest in the political views of certain party leaders' wives. In stark contrast to the earlier period where these women's political interventions were considered to be a legitimate and desirable part of the campaign trail, these women had their motives questions and were ultimately viewed with suspicion for being perceived as having or desiring too much influence. Those wives who continued to construct themselves as supportive and loyal received favourable coverage whilst those who were deemed too interfering were subjected to harsh criticism. This perhaps goes some way to explaining the deliberately stylised presentation of the leaders' wives by each political party during the 2010 campaign.

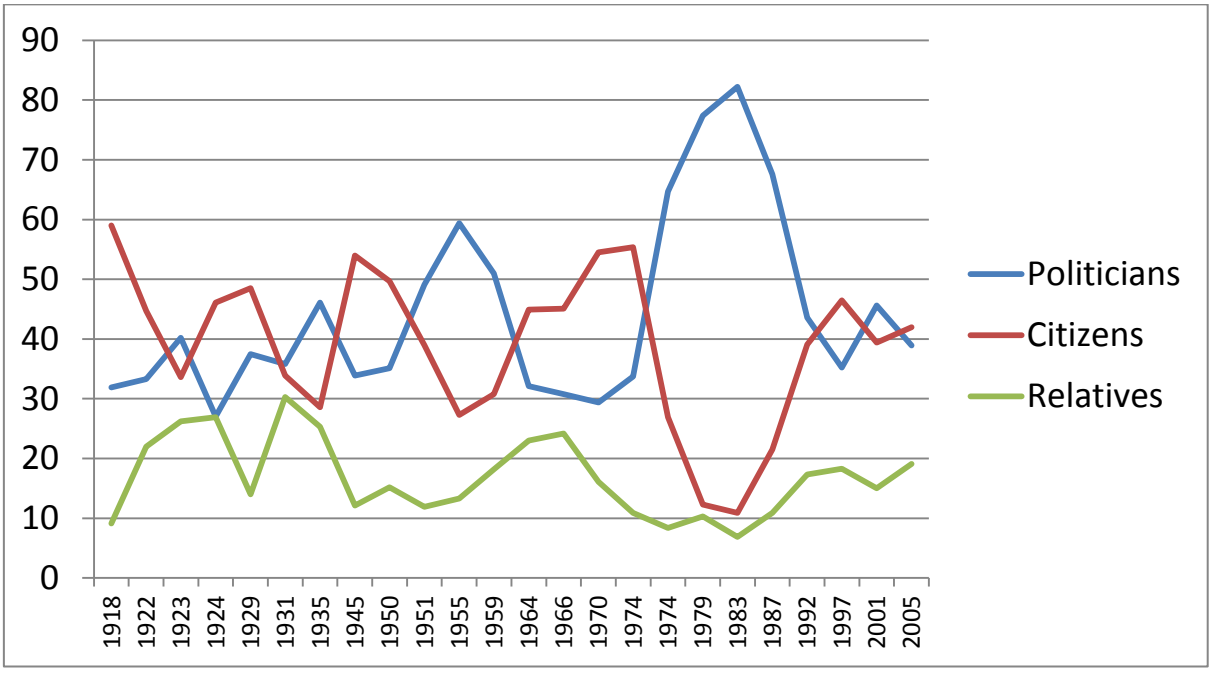
As this chapter will demonstrate, the relatives of politicians are an intriguing category in their own right. Although they have no official political role in the process of elections except as private citizens; it is clear that they do fulfil a political function in terms of the candidate's campaign and therefore attract the attention of journalists. The purpose of

this chapter is to demonstrate that the relatives have not always been constructed in the very limited and negative capacity which they were subject to during the coverage of the 2010 campaign. Firstly, the results from the content analysis will be discussed with particular attention paid to the development of the mediated representation of these women over time. The chapter will then analyse the nature of the newspaper coverage first looking at the changing role of female relatives and then at the increased personalisation of the coverage and its gendered consequences.

Prominence

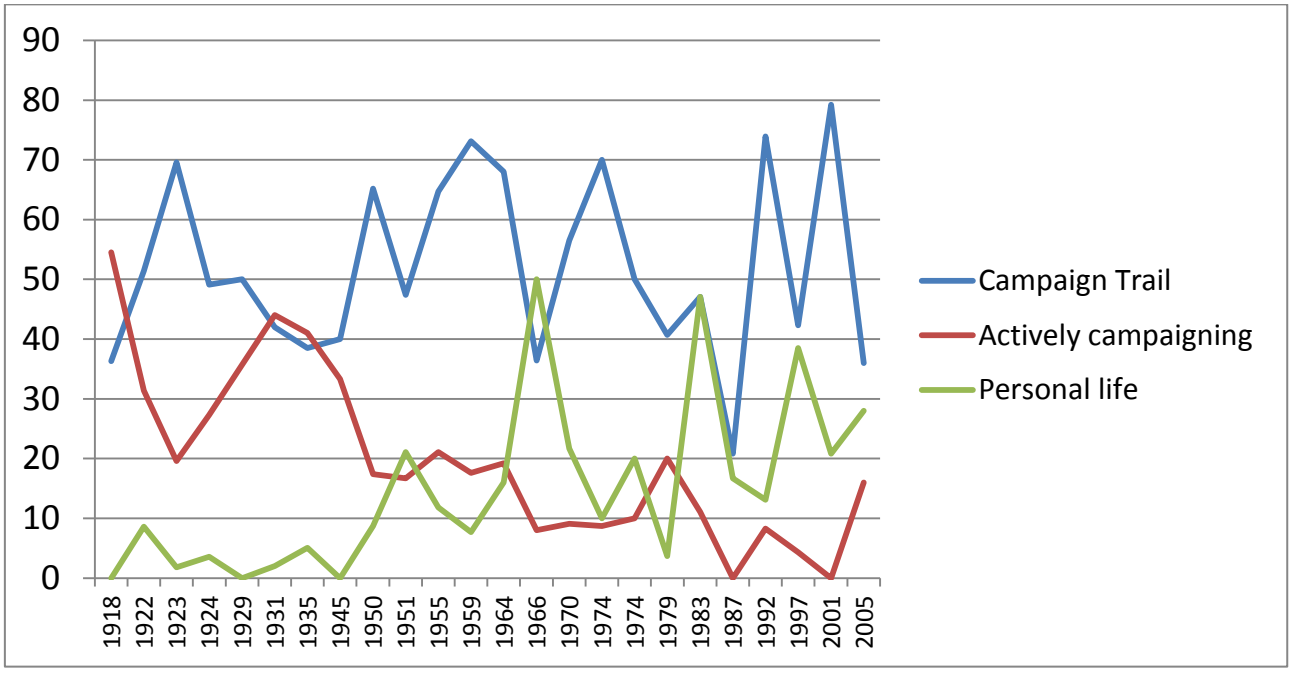
The results of the content analysis reveal a number of interesting trends. Taking the entire sample as a whole, it is clear that the relatives' category is consistently the smallest category across the 24 elections studied. This is in contrast to the 2010 results, discussed earlier in the thesis where this category received a higher proportion of coverage than politicians. As Figure 7.1 shows the proportion of coverage they received has fluctuated over time; peaking in 1931 and then declining until the 1959 election, increasing during the 1960s and once more declining between 1966 and 1983. After this time, the proportion of coverage they received has stayed fairly consistent. See Table E.1 in Appendix E for the full breakdown of figures represented here.

Figure 7.1: Percentage of coverage about Politicians, Relatives and Voters 1918-2005



The coverage of the relatives was at its lowest during the 1970s and 1980s when female politicians received by far the largest proportion of the coverage about women mainly due to Margaret Thatcher's dominance of this period. Relatives received some of their highest proportions of the coverage during the interwar period. Figure 7.2 shows the top three theme codes applied to the relatives' category across time; incidents from the campaign trail, relatives actively campaigning and information about their personal lives.

Figure 7.2: Percentage of Items about the three most prominent themes 1918-2005



The graph shows the percentages of items coded about the relatives by theme (for the full breakdown across newspapers, please refer to Table E.12 in Appendix E). Clearly items which gave details of incidents from the campaign trail were fairly consistently the most prominent across time. This theme was applied when the woman or women in question were discussed or pictured at a meeting or some other campaign event but were not actually presented as actively canvassing or speaking on behalf of their candidate. This shows that the relatives of politicians have always been present during the campaign. In contrast the two other theme codes follow different trends. Between 1918 and 1950 the proportion of relatives presented as actively campaigning for either their husband or relative or other candidates, is fairly high and peaked during the first election before dropping off dramatically during the next two elections but rallied again in the 1930s. After the war, incidents of relatives campaigning began and continued to decline, although such incidents were only completely absent from the coverage of the 1987 election showing that some relatives have remained active campaigners. Conversely, instances of coverage referring to the private lives of relatives have increased over time. This code accounted for a low proportion of items about the relatives between 1918 and 1945, with no instances of this being coded during the elections of 1918, 1929

or 1945. After the war there is an overall increase in this type of item, peaking dramatically in 1966 before declining somewhat until 1983. Although this fluctuates wildly at times, Figure 7.2 shows quite clearly that there has been an increase in the proportion of items which discuss the private lives of these women.

Leaders' Wives

In the 2010 election (discussed in Chapter 4), the relatives who featured in the campaign coverage were predominantly the wives of the leaders of the main political parties. It has been argued that this is evidence that British politics is becoming increasingly presidential (Higgins and Smith, forthcoming). Such assessments can only be substantiated by analysing the prominence of these particular relatives over time. Figure 7.3 shows the percentage of the coverage about relatives which is about the wives of the main party leaders represented in parliament.

Figure 7.3: Percentage of the coverage of relatives dedicated to party leaders' wives 1918-2005

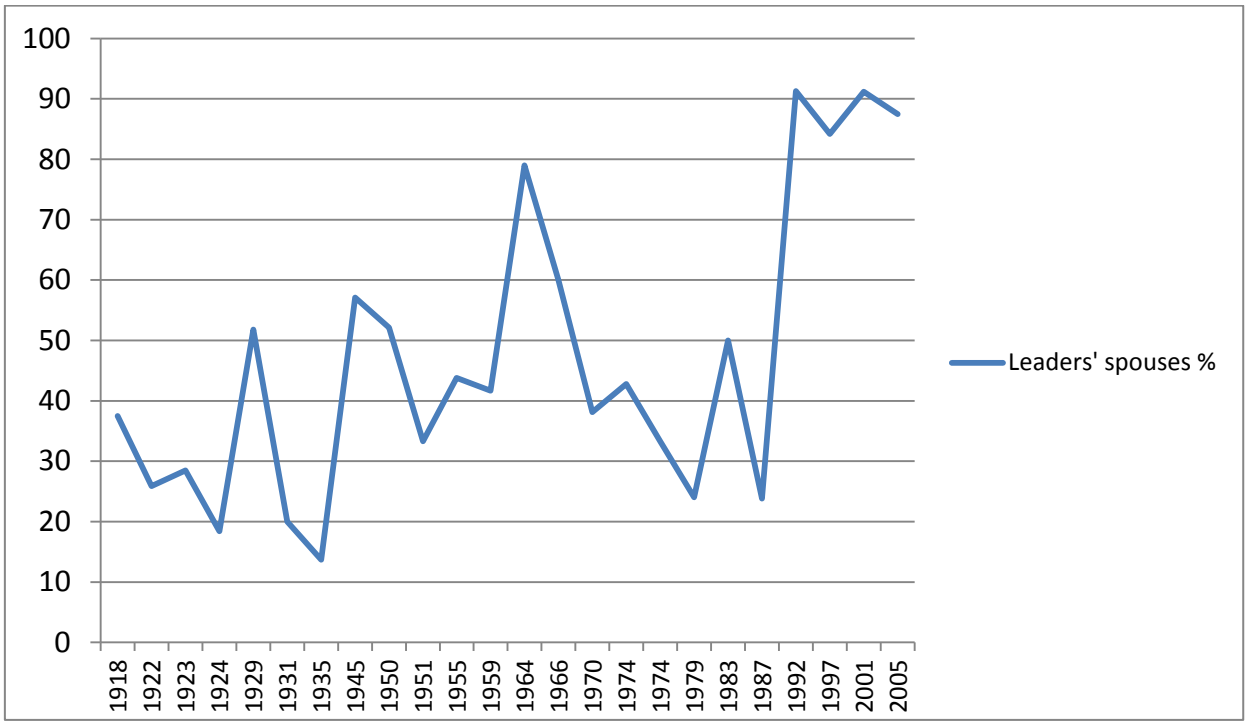


Figure 7.3 shows that apart from in 1929, the percentage of relatives' coverage about the wives of party leaders remained below 40% during the elections of the interwar years, with the lowest proportion occurring in 1935. Further analysis shows that for the seven elections which occurred during this period, a party leader's wife was the most prominent woman (in terms of percentage of the coverage of relatives) in only three elections, Margaret Lloyd George in 1918 and Lucy Baldwin in 1923 and 1929.

During the 1945 election, Clementine Churchill alone accounted for 57.1% of the coverage about female relatives and after this election there was an increase in the prominence of leaders' wives during the 1950s and 1960s. The 1964 election in particular saw a dramatic increase in the concentration on leaders' wives since they accounted for 79% of the coverage about relatives, with Mary Wilson alone featuring in 42.1% of these items. There was some decline in the 1970s and 1980s. This is probably due to the fact that Conservative leader Ted Heath (for the 1966, 1970 and both 1974 elections) was unmarried and of course Margaret Thatcher's partner was male and therefore not counted in the sample.

There were also some interesting incidents which meant the wives of other prominent politicians were particularly visible during this period. In 1979, for example Mary Wilson accounts for 44% of the relatives' coverage despite no longer being the Labour leader's wife. Some comments that her husband had made about her admiration for Thatcher's achievements as a female leader led to some speculation that she would vote for her. Also, in 1987 then Shadow Foreign Secretary Dennis Healey's wife Edna accounted for 65.2% of the coverage of relatives after it was revealed that she had paid for a private hip replacement. This was portrayed as scandalous by the conservative press due to Labour's rhetoric about the importance of the NHS.

During the 1990s and beyond however the focus on the party leaders' wives became more significant and consistent so that these women accounted for in excess of 84% of the coverage about relatives in the elections between 1992 and 2005. The 2010 figure (not included in the graph) also demonstrates that the trend is on-going since the leaders' wives accounted for 92.9% of the coverage about relatives.

Overall only 6 out of the 25 elections feature a higher proportion of mentions about a woman that is not a party leaders' wife, 1922, 1924, 1931, February 1974, 1979 and 1987. Four of these occurred when at least one of the party leaders did not have a wife and furthermore four of them happened before 1945. Therefore, after 1945, there was only two occasions when the most dominant relative was not a wife of a party leader (and both of these occurred when Thatcher was one of the party leaders). Interestingly, the Prime Minister's wife is only the most mentioned relative in 8 elections; 1918, 1929, 1945, 1950, 1959, 1970, 1974 October and 2005. Mary Wilson was the most visible woman in four elections (1964, 1979, 1974O and 1979) despite only being the Prime Minister's wife during two of these campaigns. Clementine Churchill was the most visible during three elections (1935, 1945 and 1951) and she was only the Prime Minister's wife for one of these campaigns.

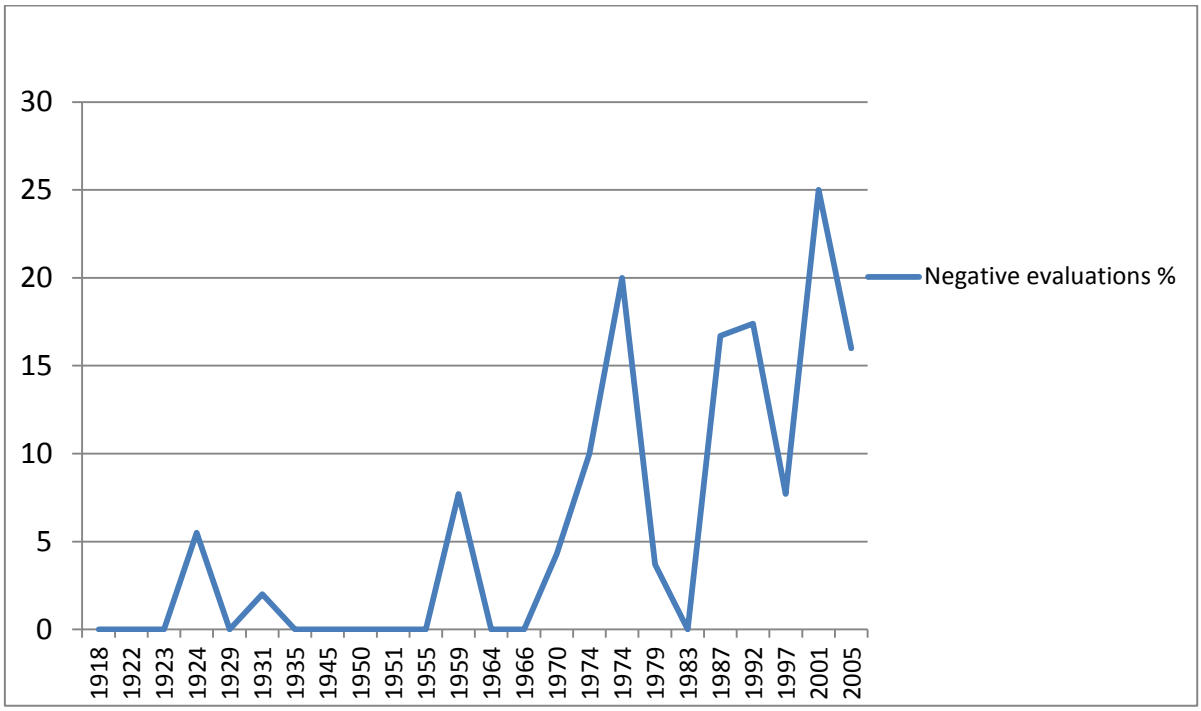
These results show that the wives of party leaders have become increasingly more prominent across the sample period, particularly in the last twenty years. This provides some evidence to support the suggestion that political communication has become increasingly focused on party leaders and specifically that political campaigns have

become more focused on the private lives of politicians (Langer, 2011) since the wives of party leaders have become increasingly prominent in election coverage in the latter part of the century.

Reception

Along with the substantially increased focus upon the wives of party leaders that occurs during the 1990s and beyond, the newspaper coverage of the relatives of politicians during this period changed in another important sense, in the form of increased negative evaluations. Although there had been negative evaluations made about relatives in the past; the number of negative evaluations increased throughout the 1970s and peaked in 2001, as Figure 7.4 demonstrates. Refer to Table E.13 in Appendix E for a more detailed breakdown (p.308).

Figure 7.4: Percentage of relatives' coverage containing negative evaluations 1918-2005



It is important to state that the vast majority of items about the wives throughout the entire sample offered no evaluation of them whatsoever, so the increase in negative

evaluations is subtle but is nonetheless noticeable. What is perhaps most interesting is the degree to which these negative evaluations were attributed to the wives of Labour Party leaders rather than other leaders' wives, as Table 7.1 makes clear.

Table 7.1: Negative Evaluations of female relatives 1987-2005

Election Year	Negative Evaluations Total	Negative Evaluations of Labour relatives
1987	4	4
1992	4	4
1997	2	1
2001	6	6
2005	4	4

Table 7.1 illustrates that for all of the elections between 1987 and 1992, all negative evaluations of relatives were about the family members of the leader of the Labour Party. Furthermore, Glenys Kinnock inspired all of the negatives evaluations made about female relatives during the 1992 election whilst Cherie Blair accounted for all negative evaluations in 2001 and 2005. Possible explanations for this negative perception of Labour leaders' wives will be offered later in the chapter.

The content analysis therefore makes clear that throughout the sample period, the representation of the relatives' category has been complex and fluctuating. Broadly speaking, they have accounted for a fairly consistent proportion of the coverage compared to politicians and citizens but their role in the coverage has changed over time. These changes will now be explored in more detail.

Personalising the Political

The discourse analysis similarly revealed that the role of relatives in electoral politics and its coverage has changed drastically over the sample period. During the interwar years these women enjoyed an overtly political role whilst campaigning actively on behalf of

their relatives. After the Second World War the coverage of relatives became increasingly personalised and privately focused. At the end of the 1980s, newly political relatives emerged who receive much criticism in the press for being perceived as too political and in some cases too feminist.

1918 – 1945: "Ideal political wife"[14]

When women were enfranchised in 1918, relatives were perceived as important conduits for the promotion of party political agendas to female citizens. The shift away from passively supportive relatives like Catherine Gladstone was made explicit in *The Guardian*: "a generation ago it was thought desirable for the wife of a candidate to make a personal tour in her husband's constituency...it was an appeal from woman to woman; an appeal based entirely on sentiment, heedless of reason and of policy" (*The Guardian*, 1923a) since women could not vote themselves and could only encourage their husbands; "but it is no longer enough for her to look charming. She must understand the issues and be able to explain and justify her husband's policy" (ibid). The sentiment that politicians' wives had an important role in communicating with women voters was shared by the *Daily Mail* which argued that women voters "feel instinctively that they will learn more about their candidate by studying the sort of woman he has married than by listening to his devastating lists of import and export statistics" (*Daily Mail*, 1923d).

During the interwar period there were a multitude of newspaper reports chronicling the activities of wives and occasionally mothers and daughters of candidates when they addressed women's only campaign meetings. Examples included "Mrs C.F.G Masterson [who] had a friendly reception from a crowded meeting of women electors" (*The Guardian*, 1924a) when she addressed them about "the danger of a tariff on food" (ibid); or Lady Diana Cooper (wife of Alfred Duff Cooper) who reportedly "faced an audience of 4000 women yesterday at Oldham, where she is helping her husband" (*Daily Mail*, 1924a). They were also granted space in newspapers to address women voters directly, such as "the wife of the Minister of Transport and one of the most active women workers in the Conservative Party" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1929) who wrote an article addressed to

[14] The title of an article about Clementine Churchill in the Daily Mail, 3rd December 1923, p.10

women urging them to think "seriously how they intend to vote tomorrow. For the first time many women have now the privilege of citizenship...accorded to them by the Conservative government" (ibid). Many of them publicly discussed party policy and were portrayed as being well versed in the important issues of the day. One example was "Mrs Barclay [who] attacked the Conservative Party vigorously for their educational economies and finished up with a hope that 'the grave of Protection will this time be dug so deep that its corpse will not be dug up again by any Conservative body snatchers" (*The Guardian,* 1923c). Furthermore Lady Ernest Simon reportedly lambasted "the government's treatment of education, which I feel to be the most fundamental of all social questions" (*The Guardian*, 1935a). The results from the content analysis reveal that female relatives of politicians campaigned actively on a range of policies from the cost of living and housing to unemployment and social welfare benefits.

These interventions were largely construed as positive and important campaign events in the newspapers which praised their campaigning capabilities for example; "Mrs Asquith seems to have performed a notable feat in the way of quelling rowdyism (sic) at one of her brother's meetings on the Clyde" (*The Guardian*, 1923b) and also Clementine Churchill whose grasp of economics encouraged the *Daily Mail* to comment that "the British fiscal system does not sound a bright topic for a woman speaker till Mrs Churchill puts on her cooking sleeves and begins to make rissoles of Mr Baldwin's programme" (*Daily Mail*, 1923d). Despite the generally positive construction of female relatives, the gendered nature of their construction is inescapable. As this last quotation demonstrates the contribution made by these women was couched in gendered terms by using the language of domesticity. Mrs Churchill's argument against the economic policy espoused by the Conservative leader is represented in a food preparation metaphor which reminds readers of the traditional domain of a wife. This type of language was also attributed directly to those women who made political speeches such as when Mrs Norton-Barclay declared that Sir Edwin Stockton's speech which left out an important contemporary issue like Free Trade "reminded her of the girl who tried to make Irish stew. She left the meat out" (*The Guardian*, 1923c) and when Mrs Masterson remarked about proposed tariff reforms that "you can no more give Imperial Preference without taxes on food than you can make tea without hot water" (*The Guardian*, 1924a). According to Bingham

(2004: 112) “attempts were made to develop new forms of political discourse that would engage the female voter, which usually involved translating issues into the language of housewifery or motherhood” and perhaps the inclusion of these references in the women’s remarks represents the implementation of such a strategy.

1950 – 1983: “On the platform in the background”[15]

After the war relatives continued to be constructed as helpful companions but there is an increase in items where relatives simply accompany their husbands or fathers on the campaign trail, rather than indulging in explicitly political behaviour. An example would be Violet Attlee who “contrived to arrive everywhere looking immaculate. The secret was a small travelling iron, with which she pressed her clothes each night and renewed the crease in the Prime Minister’s trousers” (*Daily Herald*, 1950b). Similarly, Dora Gaitskell is described as “ready for anything. Yesterday morning she spent an hour having a special hair-do. Then, with a brand new red ribbon round her hat, she joined her husband on his rounds” (Cook, 1959). As these examples demonstrate the gendered coverage continues unabated with much attention given to their domestic responsibilities and their credentials as ideal companions on the campaign trail in contrast to the former focus on their political appeal. The decline in women only meetings during this period may account for the drop off in their actual campaigning and as well as the subsequent reporting of their political activities (Lawrence, 2009).

What is perhaps most striking about this period is the increased attention given to these women’s private lives and their experiences as the wife of a Prime Minister or party leader. Clementine Churchill and Violet Attlee were both interviewed by the *Daily Mail’s* Virginia Leigh about life as a party leader’s wife. The author pays more attention to aspects of their private lives than their role in the campaign. The familial responsibilities of both women were emphasised: “as well as being a wife, she [Clementine Churchill] has been a mother. There were Randolph, Diana, Sarah and Mary to be managed! But these are comparatively easy tasks, if you can imagine it. Her main concern has always been that Winston himself should not be overworked” (Leigh, 1950). Violet Attlee on the other

[15] Mary Wilson quoted in Daily Mirror, 25th March 1966, p.17.

hand “told me frankly that it had been difficult bringing up her children also (three girls, one boy) while their father was in public life all the time” (ibid). This piece plays down their political views and instead concentrates on their roles as dutiful wives to important politicians and caring mothers to their children. The distinctly non-political role of the women is further exemplified by the assertion that “rarely do the Attlees at home discuss politics, they usually talk about books and literature” (ibid). Violet Attlee’s own political views were in fact quite opposed to her husband’s as she voted Conservative but this was not reported at the time (Seaton, 2003) perhaps to reinforce her role as dutiful wife. In a much similar way Mary Wilson was interviewed in the *Daily Mirror* in 1966 about her experiences as the Prime Minister’s wife. She too received highly personalised coverage. She was praised for being “reflective, sensitive, self- analytical” (Proops, 1966) and for being a “passionately devoted mother” (ibid). Mary Wilson is constructed as being very clear that her role as Prime Minister’s wife is not a political one, she stated that “there are plenty of people around to advise him and discuss things with him...that’s not for me to do” (ibid) thus presenting herself as a traditional wife who is there to support her husband rather than have her own political views or agenda.

The role of the politicians’ wife was frequently discussed by the newspapers during this post war period. “There are two main activities for candidates’ wives – canvassing and making little speeches from the platform. The first is said to be invaluable” (Mayhew, 1959) according to one politician’s wife. She also warned that speeches could be hazardous and that it was important to avoid “simpering how delightful your husband is and therefore how excellent a representative he will be” (ibid). Wives were ultimately meant to “boost your husband’s image at all times” (Leslie, 1974) which invariably meant “project[ing] an image of happy domesticity” (ibid) and ensuring that they looked presentable at all times because arriving anywhere “windblown and dishevelled” (Mayhew, 1959) would render them “no credit to the candidate at all” (ibid). Mary Archer claimed in the *Daily Mail* that “mostly you’re just required to sit on a platform and smile” (Leslie, 1974). This sentiment was shared by Clarissa Eden who remarked about her role during the 1955 general election that: “all I had to do was keep smiling” (quoted in Booth and Haste, 2005, p.17). The behaviour of post-war politicians’ wives was summed up somewhat derisively by the *Daily Mail* as a “cliché-uttering, hand-shaking, all-smiling, all-

purpose wind up political doll: brand name *The Candidate's Wife*" (Leslie, 1974) who "needn't know much about politics, but she must know her place...a few discreet and worshipful places behind her husband" (ibid), a sentiment which would not have looked out of place in the 2010 election coverage.

1987 – 2005: "The Spectre of Lady Macbeth"[16]

The idea that politicians relatives were passive and loyal supporters who refrained from actively involving themselves in presenting political messages had become so well established in newspaper discourse that when women emerged who were deemed to transgress this norm they received negative responses from the press. Despite evidence of previous criticism of female relatives; in a number of cases during the late 1980s and 1990s this turned into hostility. This was particularly the case when it came to certain women expressing their own political views or actively involving themselves in the campaign. Relatives who chose to take a merely supportive nonspeaking role on the campaign trail were celebrated as the ultimate political companion; neatly illustrated by Lynda Lee-Potter of the *Daily Mail* when she remarked that Norma Major and Cherie Blair had "been on the election trail from dawn 'til dusk, but have continued to look radiant, immaculate, merry-hearted, confident, loving and loyal. They have kept their opinions to themselves and bestowed smiles on friends and foes alike" (Lee-Potter, 1997). Cherie Blair was also presented in this positive sense by the *Daily Mirror* in 1997 by commenting that she "has been with him almost all the way, taking leave of her brilliant legal career to support her husband, sit through his speeches and follow him into the crowds at every campaign stop" (Williams, 1997). Similarly positive coverage praised Ffion Hague for being "a strong, clever woman who is also in many ways a traditional wife" (Lee-Potter, 2001) who "may rarely open her mouth in public (the playwright David Hare has memorably described her as an entrancing, mute geisha)" (Glover, 2001); a description that is not challenged by the newspaper and if anything seems to add to the appeal of the "lustrous, delightful Ffion" (ibid). Sandra Howard was similarly depicted as coy and unassuming on the campaign trail: "dressed in a pink suit to match her husband's tie"

[16] 'The week the first ladies went mad', The Guardian, 5th May 2005, p.10

(Thomson, 2005) and therefore following her husband's choice of clothes rather than choosing her own and "smiles shyly when the women in the hairdresser's give him [her husband] the thumbs up" (ibid).

These quotations clearly indicate that the idealised role of a party leader's wife has begun to be constructed as one where the women in question follow their husbands around on the campaign trail, keeping their political opinions to themselves; whilst instead loyally supporting her husband's political ambitions. Furthermore, Cherie Blair received generally positive coverage when she was presented this way during the 1997 election campaign.

Although the way politicians' wives behave and conduct themselves is constructed as an important part of her husband's personal appeal, the newspapers are highly critical of attempts to cultivate an image which they perceive to be somehow inauthentic. Interestingly such criticism was reserved almost exclusively for Cherie Blair after her initial success in gaining positive coverage during the 1997 election campaign. During the 2001 and 2005 elections she was derided for "conjur[ing] an image of the dutiful housewife keeping the children quiet as Daddy worked hard in the study, while seeming to forget that she has a job too" (Freeman, 2005) or as the *Daily Mail* put it "Mrs Blair...dropped the wigged Cherie Booth QC side of her identity" (Letts, 2005) in order to present herself as an ordinary wife. There were also some strong objections to the way that she used her private life for the campaigns: "the Prime Minister and his wife succumbed to a long list of bizarre, hypocritical and jaw-droppingly vulgar disclosures" (ibid) about their private relationship. She was described as "a woman who used to complain about intrusion into her family's personal life [who] suddenly can't stop revealing details that none of us wanted to know" (Freeman, 2005) in the pursuit of electoral success for her husband. This point was made with rather more hostility by Richard Littlejohn in *the Sun*: "the Wicked Witch went mental when someone took a photo of Damien [his derogatory nickname for Leo Blair] in the street. But there she was last week posing with someone else's" child on the campaign trail (Littlejohn, 2001). Such behaviour is characterised as being merely a "display" (Freeman, 2005) designed for "smoothing down of her voter-scaring sharp edges" (ibid).

An inherent part of the criticisms levelled at Cherie Blair is the perception that she is too political and is therefore wielding illegitimate power over the democratic process. The fact that she "already had firm political convictions by the time she met Tony" (Evison, 1997) and that "she stood as a Labour candidate in the Kentish marginal Thanet North in 1983" (ibid) were constructed as negative attributes. Coupled with the notion that she was "a feminist with Left-wing leanings" (ibid); the press began to construct her as a political liability. "She of the notorious freebies and uber-feminist views" (Letts, 2005) was transformed from being "every inch a budding Prime Minister's wife" (Maung, 1997) in 1997 to "the Conservative Party's single greatest vote-winner...demonstrating what a political liability she is to Labour" (Letts, 2005) by 2005. The perception of her negative impact on voters was given credence by the *Daily Telegraph's* claim that she "used to be viewed as an electoral asset to the Prime Minister. Yet a YouGov poll in 2002 placed her four times more likely than Sandra Howard to turn voters away from her husband" (Hollingshead, 2005). Cherie Blair ultimately came to be constructed as "somewhat overbearing, forever barging into the conversation and letting some new clanger drop from that infamous mouth" (Letts, 2005).

As was revealed by the number of negative evaluations discussed earlier, another wife to cause anger for having her own political views was Glenys Kinnock. She was criticised in the *Daily Mail* for embarking on her own tour of constituencies in the 1992 election. "During the last four weeks she has visited well over 30 constituencies. She's campaigned relentlessly on her own" (Lee-Potter, 1992). The appearance that a leader's wife would have her own political views and agenda was presented as suspect behaviour that ought not to be tolerated. During the 1987 election campaign she was forced to laugh off "suggestions that she had been 'kept quiet' during her husband's campaign" (*The Sun*, 1987) in case she embarrassed him. Glenys Kinnock was also mocked for her political beliefs because she was apparently "anxious to tell us she quit CND in 1991. She was a member of this pacifist organisation in the years when Stalin-style Communists threatened to destroy us. She leaves it when the Soviet Union ceases to menace. And Glenys is supposed to be the bright one in the Kinnock household" (*Daily Mail*, 1992). This insult is clearly designed to construct her husband Neil as a poor choice for Prime Minister by attacking his wife. This strategy is also evident in the following example when

Neil Kinnock was mocked for being "so confident his campaign will end at No. 10 that Glenys has probably sent all their celebrity friends change of address cards" (*The Guardian*, 8th April 1992, p.1).

These wives with political views of their own were constructed as somehow dangerous not only to their husband's political careers, as previously discussed, but also to democracy. Throughout this period there was a growing tendency to equate confidence and intelligence in a politician's wife with notions of manipulation and ambition for power in their own right. The *Daily Mail* columnist Lynda Lee-Potter illustrated this with her remark that Glenys Kinnock is "the possessor of what an interviewer in a Labour newspaper described as 'staggering self-assurance.' It's the quality in her that disturbs me the most" (Lee-Potter, 1992). Embedded in such discourses was the underlying suspicion that these women would have undue influence over their partners if elected. Lee-Potter explicitly stated "under no circumstances can I vote for the Kinnocks, and make no mistake about it, we don't just consider Kinnock the man but Kinnock the woman, because Glenys's (sic) voice at Number 10 would be loud and forceful" (ibid) because she "almost certainly wants...power, a voice, her own way" (ibid) and furthermore Neil Kinnock would be too weak to prevent her from getting her own way because "as far as her husband is concerned, she's always had it" (ibid).

Cherie Blair was similarly accused of "being aloof, too highbrow and the real power behind 'our Tone'" (Evison, 1997). Since she once stood for election, although "her own political ambitions have been thwarted, Cherie is anxious to involve herself" in political causes (Williams, 1997) which some of the newspapers found an inappropriate and illegitimate activity for the Prime Minister's wife. Moreover, Cherie Blair's own high profile legal career brought some criticism from those who sought to suggest that she had overstepped her authority. Richard Littlejohn's assertion that "the Wicked Witch and her mates at Nonces R'Us get £5 million from the taxpayer as a result of 'human rights' laws brought in by her husband without anyone actually voting on it" (Littlejohn, 2001) plays upon these assumptions suggesting that she directly profited from the laws enacted by her husband. Coupled with the implication that these laws were detrimental to public safety and instead protected unworthy criminals, this comment suggests not only that there was some level of illegitimacy to the laws but that this is made even more so

because Cherie Blair benefited from them. Such coverage reinforces Reyes (2003: 36) argument that throughout Blair's time in office "the right wing media has consistently presented Cherie as a 'highly political and public spouse, deploring her left-of-Tony past and her career as a QC 'profiteering' from the Human Rights Act" and argued that this mode of representation was employed in order to discredit Blair's government. Such coverage reveals the ease with which "the spectre of Lady Macbeth is eerily invoked by the press" (Freeman, 2005) and echoes the extent to which women like Hillary Clinton have been vilified in the US for their activism and unwillingness to behave like a traditional wife (Brown and Gardetto, 2000; van Zoonen, 2005).

Clearly throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the role of being a party leader's spouse has changed considerably since Margaret Lloyd George or Lucy Baldwin stood up and addressed hundreds at constituency meetings. The newspapers were keenly aware that from now on "the media will always be a fickle beast for political spouses" (Hollingshead, 2005) and that their treatment throws up a host of contradictions which women are particularly susceptible to; being a politician's wife is "a role that shows up more than any other the quite frankly ridiculous standards to which women in the public eye are held: if they are silent they are dull; if they talk, they are risky loose cannons. If they are successful career women, they are not supportive of their husband; if they are mutely adoring, they are dull and old fashioned" (Freeman, 2005) which is neatly demonstrated by reports that "Jeremy Paxman suggested that Ffion was a patronised, silent wimp trailing around meekly after" (Lee-Potter, 2001) her husband during the 2001 election; and the recollection that "Norma Major was famously sneered at for looking a bit miserable" (Freeman, 2005) on the campaign trail.

Across the twenty four elections studied the construction of the role performed by politicians' relatives in the campaign coverage changes from one where they are portrayed as active political campaigners, well versed in policy detail and an asset to any candidate's political ambitions; through to loyal and supportive wives who avoid making political statements and back again to politically engaged but this time distrusted and disdained electoral liabilities. This later treatment of such women is the best explanation for understanding the way the leaders' wives were discursively constructed in the news coverage of the 2010 election because appearing as loyal and non-political is more

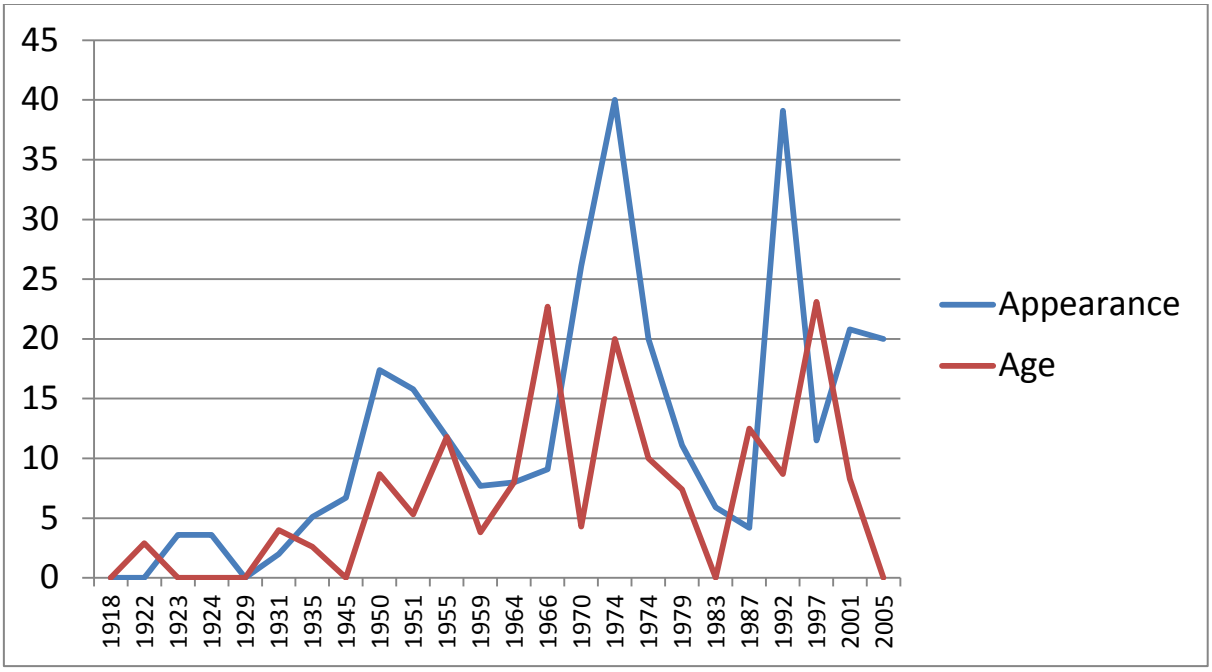
beneficial to the candidate's public perception. Apparently, newspapers respond more positively to the image of a re-traditionalised wife who is supportive of her husband at the expense of her own views or career showing the extent to which post-feminist discourses pervade the news media as well as more popular forms of media (see McRobbie, 2009 and Mendes, 2011).

What is particularly striking is the attitudinal change inherent in the newspapers where once an intelligent and politically engaged wife was viewed as an asset to help them understand and to communicate with women voters but now it is viewed as dangerously undemocratic for unelected women to espouse political views or attempt to assist her husband in any way. Perhaps the increase in female politicians who are supposed to take on the role of representing and communicating with women voters has meant that relatives are no longer seen as legitimate political actors in their own right.

Politicising the Personal

The results from the content analysis demonstrated that after the war there was increased coverage of the private lives of the relatives of politicians. This is perhaps indicative of the increased personalisation or 'intimization' of political coverage (see Stanyer, 2007; Langer, 2007) since as has just been demonstrated, these women are seen as extensions of their relatives' political campaigns. There is further evidence of increased personalisation in the data from the content analysis. Figure 7.5 shows the percentages of items which made some reference to the age and the physical appearance of the relative in question.

Figure 7.5: Percentage of Items that mention the age and appearance of relatives 1918-2005



As Figure 7.5 clearly shows, the occurrence of these kinds of references follow a similar pattern, from being quite rare (appearing in under 5% of items about the relatives) in the interwar period to being included in peaks of over 20% of the coverage in 1966 and 1997 for the age variable; and 40% and 39.1% of items in the February election of 1974 and 1992 respectively for the appearance variable (see Tables E.14 and E.15 in Appendix E for a detailed breakdown). On a related note, an examination of the type of items which make up the coverage of the female relatives also shows an increase over time in the proportion of items which are photographs or are accompanied by photographs. Of course the changes in technology and newspaper content over time mean that this particular finding must not be overstated.

Figure 7.6 Percentage of Items with an accompanying photograph 1918 - 2005

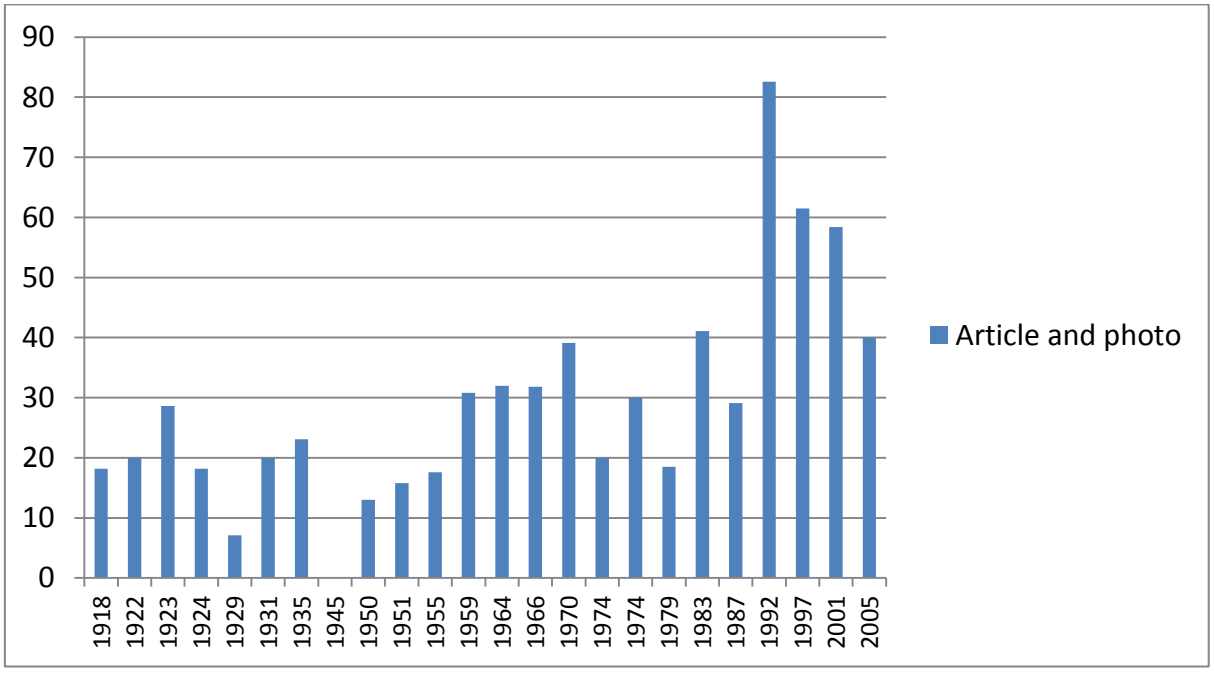


Figure 7.6 shows the increase and highlights the fact that the number of photographs of these women becomes very high from 1992 onwards (including of course the 2010 election where 90.2% of items about relatives was either a photograph or an article with accompanying photograph). These percentages are displayed in more detail in Table E.16 in Appendix E (p.311). Coupled with the newspapers' preoccupation with the physical appearance of these women, this suggests that an important part of the presence of relatives in the coverage is their visual representation.

Personal Lives, Political Interpretations

As previously discussed, after the war the newspapers began to focus specifically on the wives of the leaders of political parties and this is probably a logical development related to the well documented increase in the prominence of party leaders (Lawrence, 2009; Langer, 2007) and the increasing attention paid to their personalities and private lives throughout this period (Langer, 2007). This increased focus on the private lives of the leaders' wives is an important factor in their de-politicisation. As the focus on them shifts

from being about their role as political and public actors, exemplified by Mrs Barclay and Mrs Churchill's interventions discussed earlier; it returns them to the private and personal sphere which is the traditionally established and acceptable domain of women. This highlights the uneasy relationship that women have when trying to exploit their private lives for political gain which has been most notably discussed in relation to women politicians (van Zoonen, 2005; 2006). Although these women are not seeking political office for themselves, their mediated representation is important because it contributes to gender biased newspaper coverage of elections which seems to have re-established the idea that the public domain is for male politicians whilst women belong in the private sphere.

An important aspect in the construction of the relatives is the focus on their personal lives. For some women this manifested itself in discussions of their own background; Cherie Blair's childhood was described as being "brought up in the grimy back streets of Liverpool where her mum Gale, a former actress, had been forced to take work in a fish and chip shop after being abandoned by Cherie's father" (Evison, 1997) before working her way up to "a high flying career as a QC and junior judge" (ibid). This creates a sympathetic view of her as a hardworking person from an ordinary background. The careers of these women are also referred to but never impinge on their duties as wives and mothers. Mary Archer "is a mother of two small boys, a slim, pretty woman with a...wry wit, and an Oxford First and a brilliant career as a research chemist" (Leslie, 1974). Her role as a mother was the first descriptor listed and is therefore positioned as being the most important. Ffion Hague receives similar treatment when it is asserted that despite having "a powerful career as a City head hunter... she often puts out his clothes, makes sure [Hague] wears the right colours as he's colour blind" (Lee-Potter, 2001). Moreover, her traditional domestic credentials are reaffirmed by the suggestion that "she's a great cook" (ibid) and "bakes wonderful Welsh cakes" (ibid). In the 1997 incarnation of Cherie Blair she too was constructed as putting her family first which is demonstrated by the suggestion that "everyday domestic life in the Blair household seems so ordinary" (Kavanagh and Roycroft-Davis, 1997). Therefore as well as having a successful career, she manages to maintain a desirable home life for her family. Mary Wilson and Marion Thorpe are similarly domesticated by their appreciation for artistic

past times, Mary Wilson "writes poetry" (Proops, 1966) whilst "as a private woman" Marion Thorpe's "interest is music" (Gaskell, 1974).

Furthermore, the coverage is personalised in its focus on their personal experiences on the campaign trail. There are a number of examples of the wives of the main party leaders being asked to comment on their experiences of the election campaign which choose to emphasise similarly apolitical responses: "The wives of the three party leaders went on BBC television last night to tell of the trials of an election campaign" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1964b) and "Lady Douglas-Home said that keeping her husband fit was not proving a problem" (ibid) whilst "Mrs Wilson said she was 'a little tired,' and had promised herself a day in bed when the campaign was over" (ibid). The newspapers frequently discussed the women's difficulties in enduring the constant criticism or insults that were levelled at their husbands. Jill Craigie, wife of Labour party leader Michael Foot mentioned that "she 'can't bear' the personal criticism of her husband" (*The Guardian*, 1983). Sandra Howard expressed similar feelings during the 2005 election when she "admitted she has been upset by the personal attacks on her husband during the campaign" (*Daily Telegraph*, 2005) and apparently "was particularly upset by posters portraying the Tory leader – the most high profile Jewish figure in British politics –as Fagin" (*Daily Mail*, 2005). The same year Cherie Blair "was asked how she felt about Tory leader Michael Howard branding her husband a liar over the Iraq war. She said: 'Sad. Sad that it had got that low and personal" (*The Sun*, 2005).

These personal comments were also constructed as criticism of their abilities as wives. Jill Craigie apparently found the famous "criticism of her husband's dress particularly hard to bear" (*The Guardian*, 1983) because she explained that "I buy his clothes and it is therefore a reflection on me" (ibid). Such sentiments were shared by another wife Cicely Mayhew when she stated "woe betide the wife who allows her candidate to appear with a hole in the heel [of his sock]. It will be seized upon by the opponent's female supporters with as much glee as a major political gaffe" (Mayhew, 1959). Once again the women are explicitly domesticated by references to the traditional notion that wives are responsible for cleaning, repairing and buying their husband's clothes. Such behaviour was elevated to a virtue when Ffion Hague was described thus; "she often puts out his clothes, makes sure he wears the right colours as he's colour blind" (Lee-Potter, 2001). What is perhaps

most striking about the focus on the personal lives of these women is the extent to which they are depicted as traditional wives whose responsibilities in the private sphere are emphasised above any other role they might fulfil. This is also presented as a desirable situation since it enhances the appeal of their husbands whose abilities in the public sphere are unrestricted because their wives have everything under control.

Visual Appeal: as long as she "looks every inch a budding Prime Minister's wife"[17]

The increase in personalised coverage of female relatives of politicians manifested itself most obviously in the attention paid to their physical appearance. Although there has always been some attention from the newspapers to the appearances of female relatives the content analysis determined that such references were quite rare during the interwar period and have increased in proportion over time. Despite some dramatic fluctuations throughout the post-war period, references to their physical appearance have remained an important aspect of their newspaper coverage. Discussions of the days political events from the campaign were scattered with casual references to how the female relatives looked or what they were wearing; for example "Mrs Lucas, slim and vivacious, who has bustled around the hustings with her husband" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1950b) or Mrs Churchill "with her elegant figure, delicate hands, and fine features she is truly lovely" (*Daily Mail*, 1950a). Ffion Hague was celebrated as "that curvaceous embodiment of Tory womanhood with a Wendy Craig nose" (Letts, 2001a) whilst Mary Wilson "has a soft and pretty face and sexy legs" (Proops, 1966).

Even early coverage emphasises the advantages that a wife's appearance can have on the campaign trail because "meetings of modern Parliamentary candidates are not complete without an attractive woman sitting on the other side of the chairman" (*Daily Mail*, 1923d).Their choice of clothing was constructed as being of particular importance; "dress is a matter of extreme importance, and here Mrs Churchill excels. Her platform frocks have an irresistible style, combined with a schoolgirl simplicity" (ibid). Simplicity of dress was a significant factor which was also noted in reports of Ramsay MacDonald's daughter Ishbel when she was campaigning on behalf of her brother Malcolm; she "dressed with

[17] Taken from Maung, C. A. (1997) 'My Cherie Amour', Daily Mirror 29th April, p.3

extreme simplicity in a green woollen jumper and a rough grey tweed skirt, she spoke slowly and distinctly in a clear voice" (*Daily Mail*, 1935a). Perhaps this simplicity was a virtue in order that "every woman in the audience... sees exactly what is done and can achieve the same result herself directly she gets home" (*Daily Mail*, 1923d) which is perhaps the same reason that the coverage of the 2010 female relatives in the 2010 election featured items informing readers where Sarah Brown and Samantha Cameron had purchased certain items of clothing (Wilson and Hartley, 2010). Simplicity of dress may also have been important to minimise class and wealth differences. Lawrence (2009: 120) notes an occasion when working class women spat in the face of a "be-pearled Clementine Churchill [when she] sought to deputize for her convalescing husband at a series of rough meetings" in Dundee. Clearly, the style of dress adopted by female relatives on the campaign trail was perceived as an important means for appealing to (or at least not alienating) the electorate.

Relatives were constructed as being conscious of this and adapting their styles accordingly. Cherie Blair "threw out her old clothes, cut her hair and plunged into a diet and keep-fit regime" (Evison, 1997) in order to meet the expectations of the press revealing a "stylish new image" (Maung, 1997) which saw her eschew her normal look consisting of "tailored suits with no-nonsense hairdo" (ibid) for an improved "casual but chic approach" (ibid) to dressing on the campaign trail. This change in her physical appearance is constructed as preferable to the "power-dressing that has become her trademark" (Kavanagh and Roycroft-Davis, 1997). Similarly almost 70 years previously Diana Chamberlain "collected a band of her special girl friends, including her cousin, Miss Dundas" (*Daily Telegraph*, 1931) and "dressed them all in bright blue frocks and hats with white ties" (ibid) whilst campaigning on behalf of her father Austin Chamberlain in his Birmingham constituency. Mary Wilson told an interviewer that "she'd bought three new outfits for the campaign" (Proops, 1966).

Their looks are important not only to convey that they are loyal and loving wives but also because it is desirable for these women to be considered attractive. Quentin Letts' descriptions of Ffion Hague provide the best examples of this tendency: "When she alighted from the battle bus in her grey trouser suit and floaty strawberry blouse I thought an old granny in front of me might explode with excitement. Damn near joined

her myself" (Letts, 2001a); her "blond hairdo" (Letts, 2001b) and "exquisite curves... enwrapped in a suit of cool, pale purple" (ibid) are constructed as important and appealing to the ordinary voter and journalists alike.

Quite clearly, these women are being constructed in a traditionally feminine manner with much attention paid to their appearances. Although there are some examples which construct their mode of dress as a political statement (the examples of Clementine Churchill and Ishbel MacDonald) there is nowhere near the same level of analysis that was prevalent in the 2010 coverage discussed earlier about the political intentions of their clothing choices. This suggests that such coverage is a recent development whereas previously it may have been simply a means of commenting on their personal lives, it has now become politicised. It is important to note however that both motivations have deeply gendered consequences for the portrayal of women in political coverage, emphasising their traditional association with the private rather than the public sphere.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that throughout the entire sample period between 1918 and 2005, the relatives' category consistently accounted for the smallest proportion of electoral coverage. This means that the 2010 election was the first election where relatives had overtaken one of the other groups of women, indicating that this was either an exceptional case or that this is a new development which might have profound consequences for women in the future.

The marginalisation of politicians in favour of these women means that news coverage presents politics as a male sphere where women predominantly relate to it through their relationship with men. This reinforces the gendered divisions between the private and public spheres and presents women as apolitical, supportive, domestically oriented spectators rather than as capable, ration political actors. This is clearly a gendered phenomenon since the husbands of candidates are given very little attention in the news coverage.

This undermines feminist claims that women can engage with politics in the same way as men by presenting women as relating to politics differently. Marginalising women candidates also reduces the potential to normalise women's political representation in the mainstream discourse and could discourage women from coming forward if they feel that politics is a particularly difficult climate for women. As has been previously discussed, it is unclear whether or not relatives will continue to receive more coverage than politicians or whether it is as a result of an atypical election which was dominated by party leaders (all male) at the expense of other politicians.

The mediated representation of the relatives of politicians has changed considerably between 1918 and 2005 and in sometimes unexpected ways. The function of these women in the coverage changed considerably, during early elections a number of relatives were portrayed as active political campaigners and they received a favourable response to their political undertakings on behalf of their respective candidates. These women would have been portrayed in this fashion because women's political activism before they gained the vote is well documented (Cowman, 2010) and therefore this would possible have been seen as normal to contemporary audiences and journalists who were used to organisations such as the Primrose League campaigning on behalf of their respective political parties. Moreover, relatives would have probably been viewed as an important means of appealing to women voters, especially given the relatively low numbers of women candidates standing for parliament during this period (ibid), which means they were an important part of the campaign.

During the interwar years they were constructed as being important political messengers for the newly enfranchised women voters. After the war, their representation becomes increasingly more personalised and de-politicised with the emphasis shifting to their personal experiences of being on the campaign trail and indeed in public life generally with their relatives' rather than their political views. Furthermore, the coverage became much more focused on the wives of the party leaders during this period rather than the more general set of relatives present earlier. This is perhaps due to the increased focus on party leaders and also due to the increased importance of the personal lives of politicians and by extension that of their families in political communication (see Langer, 2012 and Stanyer, 2007). These women were celebrated for their largely supportive and

non-political role as wives accompanying their spouse on the campaign trail rather than as political campaigners. The decline in women's only meetings where female speakers were particularly valued may also have contributed to the decline in the depiction of relatives as activists (Lawrence, 2009).

By the late 1980s and 1990s the newspapers once again constructed these women as politically engaged however, the tone of the coverage is different from earlier examples. Instead of their political interest being greeted as helpful to their relatives' political ambitions, their political views were portrayed as dangerous and undesirable. The political activism of Glenys Kinnock and Cherie Blair in particular was represented as an illegitimate activity for the mere relatives of politicians. The threat they supposedly pose as unelected influences on their spouses was moreover constructed as an issue of public concern in certain newspapers. Such discourses were mainly confined to tabloids like the *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* but nevertheless demonstrate that historically there has been some unease about the role of relatives in politics. The way in which the mainstream parties sought to present their relatives as supportive followers rather than political campaigners during the 2010 elections perhaps suggests that this concern has been heeded by political elites. The 2010 version of party leaders' wives could not be accused of being too political or too feminist with the focus on their familial roles and clothing choices which suggests a conscious effort to distance these women from women like Cherie Blair. Similar observations were made about the wives of presidential candidates in the US who sought to present themselves as less threatening than Hillary Clinton (Brown and Gardetto, 2000).

The changes to press constructions of politicians' female relatives seem to have a curiously incongruous relationship to the accepted timeline of British feminist activism with the most political women being reported before the onset of the so-called Second Wave. It seems that just when women were supposed to have been becoming more political, the female relatives of politicians retreated back to the domestic sphere. This might be due to the increasing numbers of women politicians who may have taken on the task of acting for and communicating with women voters. It might also reflect changes in reporting conventions and the increased interest in the personal lives of politicians (which includes interest in their families).

The increase in personalised coverage which sought to construct the personal experiences, appearances and family roles of politicians' wives rather than their political views over time is perhaps evidence that they became more interesting for how they could represent the private lives of party leaders than as activists. This increased personalisation seems to have affected the representation of these women because audiences are reminded that these women have largely domestic roles in the private sphere which are traditionally perceived as incompatible with demands of the public sphere. In a sense, their de-politicisation in terms of formal politics was accompanied by a re-politicisation as symbolic socially conservative resources through which male politicians can demonstrate their personal credentials. This same phenomenon seems to be evident once again in the coverage of the 2010 election where the leaders' wives were presented as re-traditionalised and non-political supporters of their husbands' political ambitions.

What remains unclear is why the attitudes of the press have changed so much. Why was being a politician's wife who gave active, party political support accepted and indeed admired during the initial period when women became voters, when their contemporary equivalents who take an active interest in political affairs are distrusted and mocked? It is clear that further research will be necessary in order to more fully understand this phenomenon. What this chapter has made clear however, is that the representation of relatives in political coverage deserves more attention from academic research that it currently receives as they clearly perform some kind of role in electoral politics as far as politicians and newspapers are concerned.

Chapter 8: Gendered Election Coverage: Conclusions

The purpose of this thesis was to analyse the ways in which women as voters, politicians and relatives of politicians have been represented in newspaper coverage of General Elections between 1918 and 2010. A detailed analysis of the most recent election demonstrated the way that each group of women are currently represented and the remainder of the thesis shows the journey and developments which have occurred since their enfranchisement in 1918.

There are a number of dichotomies which have presented themselves in this research which mirror the gendered nature of electoral politics; firstly the distinction between the public and private domains which has tended to militate against women more fully participating in politics given their historical confinement to the private sphere rather than the public domain. This distinction marks women's political engagement as secondary to that of men. Related to this is the way that the personal is constructed in opposition to the political despite the interventions of feminists. This thesis has demonstrated that for women, the political is always linked to the personal, whether it is because women voters are thought to vote on issues concerning their family or politicians are more prone to being filtered by personalised coverage. This personal and political dichotomy in electoral discourse also renders the participation of women in politics as problematic. The final dichotomy that appears in this study is between passive and active political engagement. The representation of women as predominantly subjects of political discussions and news coverage rather than active participants has the potential to render them passive recipients of political messages. All three distinctions reflect the division between male and female that is implicit within electoral discourse.

This final chapter will firstly discuss the changes in prominence of voters, politicians and relatives over time. It will then summarise and attempt to explain the main findings for each group of women before bringing them together in order to demonstrate that women share certain representations in electoral discourse regardless of their status as voter, relative or politician. The chapter will finally conclude by reflecting on the contribution and limitations of this study and outline some research areas which would

add to the analysis of this topic area. The final section will also reflect on the possible implications of this thesis for feminism and media studies.

Prominence

Previous research in this area has tended to focus on how prominent women candidates are in comparison to their male counterparts (see Gidengil and Everitt, 2003; Carroll and Schreiber, 1997). This study on the other hand highlights the importance of comparing between different groups of women who perform different functions in the discourse such as politicians and relatives.

The analysis of the 2010 election showed that women featured prominently in just 12.1% of election coverage in the five newspapers (*Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, Daily Mail, Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Herald/The Sun*) sampled for this thesis. Women voters accounted for the largest proportion of this coverage, followed by relatives and politicians received the smallest proportion. Voters accounted for 45.5% of election items about women, relatives accounted for 31.5% of the election coverage while politicians only accounted for 23%.

Although it was expected that voters would be prominent due to their overrepresentation as ordinary people in news coverage generally; the marginalisation of politicians was more unexpected given that politicians are political actors with the capacity to affect decisions while the female relatives have no formal political role. This phenomenon was observed in all of the studied newspapers, the *Guardian* dedicated exactly the same proportion of items to relatives and politicians whilst the other four featured more coverage of relatives. The historical analysis showed that this was the first time that this phenomenon had occurred in election coverage because for the other 24 elections studied the relatives' category had consistently received the smallest proportion of the coverage. Less than 30% of the coverage of women in every election between 1918 and 2005 was about relatives.

When the electoral coverage of women was placed in historical context, politicians and voters competed for prominence across time. Voters were most prominent in the 1920s,

the early 1950s and the 1960s and early 1970s while politicians featured more prominently in the 1930s, mid to late 1950s and the 1980s. Voters were at their most prominent during the first election in 1918 accounting for 59% of the total coverage, due largely to their novelty value as new voters and the fact that there were very few women candidates standing that year. Politicians accounted for the most coverage during Thatcher's premiership in the 1980s. Historically then voters dominated the coverage of twelve of the elections studied between 1918 and 2005 while politicians dominated the other twelve.

This suggests that 2010 election was an exceptional case because it is the first time that women who are present on the campaign trail merely because they are related to a politician account for a higher proportion of the coverage than women candidates who play an active and important role in the political sphere. Although it is difficult to say whether this is the beginning of a new trend or just the consequences of an atypical election it is clear that this development has implications for the mediated and political representation of women. The marginalisation of women candidates from electoral discourse is problematic because it serves to undermine their ability to communicate with citizens and prevents them from becoming seen as a normal and acceptable presence on the campaign trail by making them seem extraordinary. It is also problematic because it may prevent other women coming forward to stand for election because they may feel that politics is not the normal place for women. This could have a negative impact on the representation of women and for democracy in general. This marginalisation of politicians is despite the fact that representation in parliament has increased for women over the twenty-first century and the 2010 parliament elected a record number of 142 women, an increase of 14 from the 2005 parliament (Campbell and Childs, 2010). Appendix D shows the number of women candidates and elected members for each election since 1918.

Voters

The 2010 election showed that voters were characterised in two ways, as subjects of politics who were spoken about rather than with, and as citizens. At first sight the largest

proportion of items constructed women as citizens (62.3%) but it soon transpired that 46 of the 101 items that constituted the citizens category were about the same person, Gillian Duffy, and her encounter with Gordon Brown. Once these items were taken into account, the results showed that 52.6% of items about women other than Mrs Duffy depicted them as subjects while 47.4% portrayed them as citizens. Voters were designated subjects if they were talked about in the abstract as floating voters or as policy victims but were labelled citizens if they were depicted as engaging in political discussions or giving their views on the election. Gillian Duffy experienced mixed representation as both politically engaged for asking unsolicited questions but also as a hapless victim of the Prime Minister's remarks. Although a slim majority of items portrayed voters as subjects, almost half did represent women as actively engaged voters. This is a positive finding as it demonstrates that women are being incorporated into the mainstream electoral discourse to some extent.

Items which treated voters as subjects tended to discuss women as floating voters like 'Take a Break Woman' who needed to be won over by political parties or as potential or actual victims of policy decisions. These items portrayed women as passive and caring mainly about issues which impact upon their domestic situation thus emphasising the distinction between the public and private domains. Items depicting women as citizens fell into two broad categories: 'vox pops', where women were invited to give their opinions about political parties and the leaders' debates, or activism such as Gillian Duffy's intervention on the campaign trail. These items although at first seemed to show women as actively engaged in politics, were revealed to portray women as making vague statements about their political priorities and presented them as having an individualist and self-interested approach to political matters. They were also largely portrayed as responding to an agenda set by politicians and the media which tended to give the impression that voters are only passively engaged with politics. These findings are largely in line with the findings of Lewis et al's (2005) study of media representations of public opinion in news media which has been discussed extensively throughout the thesis. This thesis also adds a much needed gendered dimension to Lewis et al's (2005) important work.

The historical analysis showed that the way newspapers constructed women as voters has been subject to surprisingly few changes. Voters and their political views have consistently been constructed in largely domestic roles, as mothers and housewives throughout the sample period and that their political priorities are largely informed by their familial obligations which are very similar to the modes of representation employed in the 2010 General Election. An analysis of the percentage of items which made reference to voters' families showed that these allusions were a consistent feature of the coverage. They were most prominent in between 1945 and 1955 and then become similarly frequent in the 1980s and then again in 2005. An example of this would be the *Daily Mirror's* 'Vote for Him campaign in 1945 which called upon mothers, wives and sweethearts to vote according to the political views of their missing loved ones (discussed in Chapter 5).

This focus on how the private lives of women inform their political priorities reflects the traditional expectations of women in patriarchal societies. Despite gaining access to the public sphere as citizens, women seemingly continue to be tied to the private sphere and its responsibilities. Furthermore, the persistence of such traditional discourses which confine women to the private sphere fails to recognise the extent to which women have made political, economic and social gains throughout the century. The newspaper coverage of women voters seems to be lagging behind when attempting to portray the political realities of many women's lives, especially given that many more women are unmarried and childless or are single parents than might have been the case earlier in the century. This means that women are not being represented adequately which has negative implications for women who may find it difficult to have their political priorities recognised within political institutions but also for democracy because it means that over half of the electorate is not being sufficiently represented.

On the other hand, despite the negative aspects of newspaper coverage of voters during the election, the historical analysis does show that journalists and political parties alike have made some effort to explicitly include women in the public discourse surrounding politics. Moreover, there are large numbers of women whose familial situation plays some role in their political priorities (see Campbell, 2006) and it is important that this is recognised in the public discussion about politics.

Policy

The focus upon the political priorities of voters on the whole failed to translate into policy discussion. The majority of items in both the 2010 and historical analyses made no mention of any policy areas whatsoever. Instead most items made reference to the electoral process rather than specific political issues. The analysis of the 2010 election showed that voters tended to be associated with issues which related to their familial role such as health care and the married couples tax allowance.

Historically voters and politicians tended to be associated with very similar policy areas; the economy, health and welfare, international affairs (such as war and peace) and equality. These broad policy areas accounted for 76.3% of the total coverage about voters across time. Furthermore, these policy areas were constructed in particularly gendered ways because voters were consistently portrayed as housewives eager to ensure healthy and affordable food for their families, or as worried about their welfare. Their association with health and welfare was largely as victims, or the mothers of victims, of healthcare policies or cuts which rendered them passive observers of politics. This also featured in the 2010 coverage voters where voters also tended to be depicted as victims of policy decisions like the proposed married tax allowance and as mothers who care ostensibly about issues such as the economy, immigration and the NHS due to the potential impact on their families.

It is however important to note that such policy areas may have been prominent because they reflected the issues that were important for each election, especially given that the categories used are fairly broad, however the analysis in Chapter 5 showed that it is difficult to escape the conclusion that they represent gendered ideals. Although the focus on these policy areas does not in itself reflect women's gendered familial roles, the way in which these issues are discussed in the news coverage is heavily gendered. For example, the largest category associated with women (accounting for 34.7% of all policy themes) was the cost of living which implies that voters were predominantly concerned about the price of food and its impact on family budgets. The later concentration on health and welfare also cast women as concerned mothers worried about the impact of NHS provision on their relatives. This reinforces the earlier suggestion that women's

political priorities are constructed as reflecting their relationship to the patriarchal private sphere. Furthermore, these examples demonstrate that although women have gained much in the past century, the dominant representations of their roles in society in electoral coverage have changed very little.

Active Citizens?

One aspect where there has been some change is the extent to which women are portrayed as being actively engaged in the election. As Figure 5.4 demonstrated, there was an increase from around 20% of items that construct voters as actively engaged during the interwar years; to between 50% and 60% of items in the late 1980s onwards. Voters' were reported as being most active in 1987 and it remained fairly high throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s. This shows that over time women have been increasingly portrayed as actively involved in the election coverage.

The data also indicates that voters are also increasingly quoted over time. Both these developments might have positive implications for women because it suggests that they have become increasingly incorporated into political coverage and therefore are becoming an accepted aspect of the political sphere. In the 2010 election voters tended to be quoted in items where the opinions of ordinary women were solicited by journalists. Voters tended to be constructed as responding to the political agenda of politicians or making vague statements about policy areas which were of most concern to them, rather than making any direct political proposals of their own or discussing issues in detail.

Historically, the inclusion of women's voices in the discourse in the form of direct or indirect quotation has increased over time. Voter's voices were rarely included during the interwar years as they appeared in consistently less than 20% of items throughout this period. The proportion of items increased during the 1945 election and afterwards so that by the 1980s, voters were quoted or had their remarks summarised in over 45% of items. This suggests that voters have increasingly been constructed as actively engaged as time has gone on; however it must be noted that voters have consistently been more likely to be spoken about by politicians or journalists than they are to be quoted directly in reportage which somewhat limits their ability to be perceived as active citizens. Voters

were depicted as especially vocal during the early 1950s, the late 1980s and early 1990s, and in 2005.

By representing women as both engaged and willing to discuss political issues, the newspapers are recognising the importance of including women in democratic politics. The increase in women journalists covering electoral politics may have some impact upon this as they might seek out different sources to male colleagues. Alternatively, it might also reflect the importance of attracting women readers to ensure continued sales of newspapers.

In contrast, despite women seeming to be increasingly included as citizens in political coverage, a closer analysis of women's interventions according to the continuum of engagement proposed by Lewis et al (2005) and discussed earlier, reveals that the extent to which they are portrayed as actively engaged may have decreased over time. This means that although women are increasingly depicted as interested in politics and furthermore increasingly asked for their personal views on the issues, the range of issues and the opportunities for them to speak have become narrower. This may be due to changes in political journalism whereby women (and possibly voters generally) have become more likely to be portrayed as individuals expressing their views through panel of reader items while letters authored by readers have decreased. Such items tend to portray voters as individualistic and self-interested and rarely engage in detailed policy discussion. This suggests that although women are increasingly portrayed in a citizenship capacity in a higher percentage of items as time goes on, the level of political engagement in these items decreased.

Lewis et al's (2005) work is useful here because it illustrates the extent to which the newspapers have largely made inferences about voters and their concerns during the entire sample period. Too often they have been spoken about by journalists rather than been allowed to speak for themselves. Furthermore, these inferences about women have very rarely been substantiated by evidence which suggests that for the most part the construction of voters is based upon supposition and assumptions about the priorities of women.

Where women are portrayed as active citizens, their concerns rarely display the characteristics of the more engaged end of the continuum of political engagement outlined by Lewis et al (2005) which means they are hardly ever portrayed as making political proposals. Those that are more active tend to be depicted as responding to the agenda of politicians, which suggests that women voters are somewhat passive, and react to the agenda of the political elite rather than have any bearing on the development of the political discussion. What is particularly striking is the extent to which this has become increasingly the case over time due to an intensification of coverage focused on the personal experiences of individual women voters or specific voting demographics. These findings are very much in line with those from the 2010 election (see Chapter 4) suggesting that this pattern shows no sign of being disrupted in the news coverage of future elections.

One possible explanation for this development might be that the way citizens in general are perceived by elites such as news media professionals and political figures has been altered by the increasingly professionalised political marketing techniques which increasingly segment voters along demographic lines in the same way as consumer marketing, hence voting blocs like Worcester Woman and so on emerging in the 1990s. If elites perceive voters as consumers this is bound to be reflected in the public debate which is dominated by their voices. This is also pertinent since voters are also consumers of newspapers so the distinction becomes less pronounced. Representing women primarily as consumers is particularly unhelpful given the fact that they have always been associated with consumption (private sphere) as opposed to men who were associated with production in the public sphere (MacDonald, 1995). Calling upon modes of representation which remind readers of women's association with the private sphere serves to reinforce the gendered expectations of women in patriarchal society.

There are no doubt difficulties in representing voters in newspaper coverage of elections due to the fact that elections tend to be dominated by politicians and also because there are so many voters with different priorities and opinions. This however does not excuse the poor representation of women in electoral coverage even if it might go some way to explain it. Furthermore such explanations do not explain why women voters tend to be constructed as an undifferentiated sex based mass who share the same political priorities.

A more plausible explanation for this would be women's historical exclusion from politics whereby the model citizen was constructed as male. Therefore when women finally became admitted to the political sphere, they did so still imbued with the obligations of the private sphere which means they did so on unequal terms with men (Lister, 1997). Since women do not conform to the original masculine citizenship model, they are perceived as different and therefore become constructed as an undifferentiated mass in opposition to the ideal masculine citizen.

Politicians

The results from the 2010 sample showed that many of the items trivialised politicians by concentrating on their mediated feuds with other candidates or their personal lives. There were also some scathing, and at times hostile, comments about politicians who were perceived as too feminist (like Harriet Harman) or otherwise unsuited to the role of MP. The analysis showed that politicians were only depicted discussing policy in 12.2% of items about them which indicates that they were not being depicted as politically active despite their obvious status as political actors. The majority of items about politicians were instead concerned with electoral process stories, such as the discussion of an argument between two candidates on Twitter.

The historical analysis showed that this is part of an historic trend because across the entire sample period just 32.4% of items about politicians mentioned any policy discussion whatsoever while the remainder concentrated on the electoral process. Politicians tended to be associated with similar policy areas across time: the economy; international affairs; health and welfare, and employment. These policy areas accounted for 70.5% of all policy themes between 1918 and 2005. Although the existing literature expressed concern that women politicians might experience some issue stereotyping based on their gender, this does not seem to apply in this study. Apart from perhaps health and welfare, the analysis showed that women politicians are not confined to gendered policy areas in British election coverage. This might reflect British parliamentary democracy where parties share policy goals and priorities and the personal political

issues of the candidates are less obvious in the campaign than say the United States, where much of literature that express this concern comes from.

Interestingly, politicians were associated with three of the same top four policy themes as voters but they were not explicitly gendered in the same way as voters. This perhaps suggests that these policy areas are those that are important to women generally but also might reflect the issues which are more frequently discussed during elections. Despite not being confined to feminine policy areas which focus on the private sphere, the way they are constructed in the news coverage was gendered because the language used to describe them and their campaigning styles worked to domesticate them throughout the sample period by consistently invoking their role of representing women voters specifically. Their sex is frequently fore-grounded in the coverage when they were described as 'women politicians' and they were constructed as representing women and campaigning to them in gendered terms such as appealing to their concern for children or prices. Early examples in particular sought to emphasise this aspect of politicians' roles in the campaign as a means of appealing to the new female electorate. Throughout the historical coverage they were frequently portrayed as being uniquely able to identify with the political needs of women voters in particular, due to their shared experiences of the demands of families. Moreover, the language used to describe them and their campaigning activities used gendered metaphors and labels that served to emphasise their domestic responsibilities.

It is of course acceptable and desirable that women politicians are seen as representing women generally since this is one of their functions as political representatives (Childs, 2008) however there may be a danger in this being the primary mode of representation. Firstly, because it is important that they are seen to represent the political priorities of their male constituents and secondly confining them to representing women differentiates them from their male counterparts and reinforces the notion that women are a distinct group with similar concerns and politics. This presents women as outsiders and reinforces the dominant discourse that politics is the domain of men.

<u>Evaluations</u>

The way that politicians were explicitly evaluated in the news coverage changed over time. Although it is important to state that in 20 of the 24 elections, the majority of items did not contain any evaluative statements whatsoever; across time the proportion of items which contain positive evaluations of women and their contribution to politics has declined significantly whilst the proportion of items which evaluated them negatively has increased since the late 1970s. During the interwar period politicians received generally positive coverage and positive evaluations peaked in 1922 with 45.3% of items evaluating politicians positively. This declined steadily over time so that during the 1997 and 2005 elections less than 5% of items evaluated politicians positively. Conversely, during the earlier elections there were very few negative evaluations so that between 1918 and February 1974 consistently less than 15% of items featured some negative evaluation. After October 1974 however such evaluations increased significantly, peaking in 1983 with 39.2% of items evaluating politicians negatively. After this point negative evaluations remained above 25% of the coverage of politicians.

This increase in negative evaluations is probably due to reporting conventions which are increasingly critical of politicians generally which means that part of this trend is not necessarily gendered but there are gendered implications since negative evaluations can remark upon their physical appearance as well as political competence (which is evident in Chapters 4 and 6) which reinforces sexist stereotypes about women in public life.

Active Voices?

The proportion of items that quoted or summarised politicians during the interwar years fluctuated between around 20% and 40%. This then increased significantly during the 1950s and remained at around 60% throughout the 1960s and 1970s (excepting the 1970 election). This is probably due to women politicians gaining more political power in the form of cabinet positions as the century progresses which means they might be more frequently quoted. These levels of quotation then declined back to similar levels as the interwar years. This suggests that contemporary politicians have much less opportunity to speak in electoral coverage than their post war forebears despite the fact that during the entire 1980s, Britain had a female Prime Minister. The implication is that the ability of

politicians to communicate directly with the public in their own words has become more limited since the 1970s. During the 1990s and beyond, politicians were quoted in less than 40% of items which shows a notable regression because contemporary politicians are less likely than their forebears from the post war period to be quoted in electoral coverage.

Although it seems counterintuitive, the dominance of Margaret Thatcher in the news coverage during the 1980s may offer some form of explanation for this trend. Since Thatcher was Prime Minister she would have appeared in many news items which mentioned her in passing but did not directly or indirectly quote her. This therefore may explain the decline of quotations in this period and suggests that this may not be a specifically gendered phenomenon. It does not however explain why the women during the 1990s and 2000s are less likely to be quoted that their post-war forebears. This might instead by a result of increased attention on male party leaders during elections (Deacon and Wring, 2011) and the tendency to ignore other politicians. This is problematic for women because it limits their ability to speak directly to voters and also to be portrayed as competent and engaged politicians and furthermore serves to construct politics as the business of men rather than a diverse array of representatives.

Personalisation

The analysis of the 2010 election demonstrated that there were a significant proportion of items which made some reference to the physical appearance or personal style of politicians, 28% of items over all. Such references served to trivialise these political actors and reinforced traditional notions of femininity which present the candidacy of women as problematic in public life.

An analysis of the historical data showed that politicians began to receive the most attention about their personal lives and physical appearances during the 1960s and 1970s. The percentage of items which referred to their physical appearance remained between 10 and 30% during this period and then declined between the late 1970s and 2000s to less than 10% of items (with the exception of 2001). This thesis has argued that the

dominance of Margaret Thatcher during the 1980s contributed to this perceived drop in personalised coverage. Between 1979 and 1987 the presence of the first woman party leader and subsequently the first woman Prime Minister had an enormous impact on the nature of the coverage of women politicians. Thatcher completely dominated this period and as a result the coverage features very few other women generally let alone other women politicians. What is particularly interesting about this period is that the coverage about Thatcher featured remarkably little personalised coverage and therefore managed to avoid the traditional gendered elements identified in the literature which women leaders are often subjected to in contemporary analysis. As discussed in Chapter 6, when items about her were removed from the analysis, it showed that the decline in personalised coverage happened much later and therefore she seems to have received less coverage of her personal life than other female members and candidates (see Chapter 6).

This finding was unexpected not only because it contradicts much of the existing literature discussed in Chapter 2 but moreover because early examples of Thatcher's media coverage and indeed her own political strategies employed deeply gendered modes of representation such as the 'Tory lady in the hat' and references to 'handbagging' political opponents (Webster, 1990). These findings may indicate that electoral coverage is less typical of political reporting than might be expected. As party leader and then Prime Minister, Thatcher would have been extremely visible throughout the political calendar so that focusing upon her personal life during elections was not necessary as these aspects of her life would already be familiar to readers. Another explanation might be the fact that during elections, party leaders are frequently referred to in very incidental ways throughout the coverage which might mean there is no space or value to alluding to her appearance or familial role within these items. This means that the dominant modes of representation which were employed to discuss Thatcher might not be typical of the coverage of women politicians generally.

The existing literature notes the propensity of news media for focusing on the appearance, age and familial roles of women politicians and this analysis supports the findings of other studies to some extent; however it is important to note that during electoral coverage contemporary women received fewer references to these personal

characteristics than their forebears during the 1960s and 1970s. This means that the 1990s, the period when the existing literature about the representation of politicians was particularly concerned about the gendered effects of personal coverage, witnesses relatively low levels of such coverage compared to the post war period. This decline might be a consequence of women in politics becoming perceived as more normal which therefore means differential coverage has decreased. The increased presence of women journalists may also have had a positive impact on the mediated representation of women in politics which would be an important development for equality. Perhaps this indicates that there has been some improvement from a feminist perspective despite the documented rise in personalised coverage of male leaders (Langer, 2012).

On the other hand, it is also worth noting that the percentage of personalised coverage during the 2001, 2005 and 2010 elections suggests that references to family and physical appearance may once again be on the increase. During the 1990s such references were recorded in less than 15% of the coverage while in 2010 (where 28% of items about politicians featured a reference to their physical appearance) displays a similar level of personalisation as the peak figures in the 1970s. This study contributes to the understanding of personalisation by showing that, at least as far as women are concerned, rather than there being a straightforward increase of such coverage over time, it may instead be cyclical as there have been times when personalisation has been higher than contemporary electoral coverage. The 2010 coverage might also signal a new upward trend that could be problematic for women or alternatively, it could be the product of this particular election which was far from typical (discussed earlier).

The increased discussion of women's personal lives and appearances provides evidence for the increased personalisation of political coverage at this time (see Langer, 2012; Stanyer, 2007). This chapter also provides evidence that the tendency towards drawing upon the personal attributes of politicians for press coverage and political campaigning involves unique risks for women. Focusing upon their personal lives reminds audiences of their historical relation to the private sphere which might render them less attractive political candidates (see van Zoonen, 2005 and 2006). Furthermore, the way in which personalised coverage of women is focused upon their appearance also serves to trivialise them in a way that might be damaging to their political career. Such coverage

provides risks for women which are not necessarily present for their male counterparts which serve to reinforce the patriarchal stereotype of politician as male.

Relatives

As was discussed earlier, the historical analysis of the news coverage of relatives demonstrated that throughout the entire sample period between 1918 and 2005, the relatives' category consistently accounted for the smallest proportion of electoral coverage. This means that the 2010 election was the first election where relatives had overtaken one of the other groups of women, indicating that this was either an exceptional case or that this is a new development which might have profound consequences for women in the future.

What was particularly interesting about the 2010 results was the extent to which the coverage of relatives was dominated by the wives of the three main party leaders, Samantha Cameron, Sarah Brown and Miriam Gonzalez Durantez. They accounted for 92.9% of the coverage about relatives in this election. When this was placed into historical context, the results suggested that this concentration upon the wives of party leaders had increased over time but had become particularly prevalent during the 1990s. During the interwar years, the coverage contained a mixture of relatives which was indicated by the fact that less than 50% of items about relatives during this period were about party leaders wives (except in 1929). Their proportion of the coverage increased during the 1960s before declining again in the 1970s and 1980s, when at least one of the party leaders at any one time did not have a wife. In the post-Thatcher period from 1992 onwards this trend for covering the activities of party leaders' wives was cemented with these women accounting for between 84% and 91% of the coverage of relatives. This indicates the extent to which politics has become increasingly focused on party leaders and the expansion of the use of their personal lives in political campaigns. Moreover, men's dominance of the leadership of all mainstream political parties in the British parliament means that their elected female counterparts are marginalised in news coverage of elections.

The 2010 election portrayed relatives as non-party political adornments to the male dominated campaign. Relatives were largely depicted as apolitical and trivial figures who loyally contributed to their husband's campaigns through their private role as wives. They were presented in traditionally feminine terms occupying the private and personal sphere and thus allowing their partners to participate in the public and political realm, despite the fact that the three women who made up 92.9% of the relatives coverage all had well respected and successful careers behind them.

Historically relatives were represented in much more active terms. During the interwar period these women were represented as actively political and campaigning for their husbands by making policy statements and speeches. This means they were more likely to be portrayed and indeed celebrated as active political campaigners. These women would have been portrayed in this fashion because women's political activism before they gained the vote is well documented (Cowman, 2010) and therefore this would possible have been seen as normal to contemporary audiences and journalists who were used to organisations such as the Primrose League campaigning on behalf of their respective political parties. Moreover, relatives would have probably been viewed as an important means of appealing to women voters, especially given the relatively low numbers of women candidates standing for parliament during this period (ibid), which means they were an important part of the campaign.

After the Second World War, the coverage became increasingly personalised and de-politicised and the news coverage began to concentrate on their private experiences on the campaign trail and in public life generally, rather than their views as political campaigners. Relatives became confined to a more passive and supportive role during the 1950s and 1960s. Furthermore, the coverage became much more focused on the wives of the party leaders during this period rather than the more general set of relatives present earlier. This is perhaps due to the increased focus on party leaders and also due to the increased importance of the personal lives of politicians and by extension that of their families (see Langer, 2012 and Stanyer, 2007).

By the late 1980s and 1990s the newspapers once again constructed some these women as politically engaged however, the tone of the coverage is different from earlier

examples. Instead of their political interest being greeted as helpful to their relatives' political ambitions, their political views were portrayed as dangerous and undesirable. The political activism of Glenys Kinnock and Cherie Blair in particular was represented as an illegitimate activity for the mere relatives of politicians. The threat they supposedly pose as unelected influences on their spouses was moreover constructed as an issue of public concern in certain newspapers. Such discourses were mainly confined to tabloids like the *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* but nevertheless demonstrate that historically there has been some unease about the role of relatives in politics. Simultaneously those relatives (mainly party leaders' wives by this stage) who continued to act as loyal followers of their male relatives were celebrated for their personal style and physical appearances. The way in which the mainstream parties sought to present their relatives as supportive followers rather than political campaigners during the 2010 elections perhaps suggests that this concern has been heeded by political elites. The 2010 version of party leaders' wives could not be accused of being too political or too feminist with the focus on their familial roles and clothing choices which suggests a conscious effort to distance these women from women like Cherie Blair. Similar observations were made about the wives of presidential candidates in the US who sought to present themselves as less threatening than Hillary Clinton (Brown and Gardetto, 2000).

This shift in the role of the relatives is also indicated by the increase in negative evaluations across time which was noted in Chapter 7. Between 1918 and 1966 there were very few if any examples of relatives being explicitly evaluated negatively in the coverage; this is perhaps due to newspaper coverage being generally more deferential and also because these women were the least prominent in comparison to voters and politicians. During the 1970s negative evaluations increased substantially and with the exception of 1983 these have remained a steady feature of the coverage. Negative evaluations then peaked in 2001 and were present in 25% of items about the relatives. This seems to coincide with the increase in concentration on the wives of the party leaders and as the discourse analysis showed most of these negative references were directed at particular women, Cherie Blair and Glenys Kinnock.

The changes to press constructions of the roles of politicians' female relatives seem to have a curiously incongruous relationship to the accepted timeline of British feminist

activism with the most political women being reported before the onset of the so-called Second Wave. It seems that just when women were supposed to have been becoming more political, the female relatives of politicians retreated back to the domestic sphere. This might be due to the increasing numbers of women politicians who may have taken on the task of acting for and communicating with women voters. It might also reflect changes in reporting conventions and the increased interest in the personal lives of politicians (which includes interest in their families).

Personalised Coverage

Personalised coverage of relatives has increased dramatically over time and has remained a significant feature of the coverage into the twenty first century. This was particularly the case in the 2010 election where the coverage of relatives was largely concerned with their personal lives, physical appearances and their activities on the campaign trail. 46.4% of items about relatives made some reference to their physical appearance in the text, which is the highest proportion of such references recorded across the entire sample period. Furthermore, 90.2% of items about relatives were either a standalone photograph or were accompanied by an image which suggests that their visual appeal was a significant reason for their inclusion in the coverage.

The historical analysis showed that over time, there had been an increase in personalised coverage, particularly in terms of references to the physical appearance of the relatives. During the interwar years such references appeared in less than five per cent of items but by 1974 this had increased to around 40% of items about relatives. After this there was some decline during the 1980s before another increase during the 1990s. This increasing attention paid to the physical appearance of the relatives reinforces the notion that part of the role of women in political coverage is to provide visual appeal. This is furthermore reinforced by the increase in photographs of these women over time.

The increase in personalised coverage which sought to construct the personal experiences, appearances and family roles of politicians' wives rather than their political views over time is perhaps evidence that they became more interesting for how they

could represent the private lives of party leaders than as activists. This increased personalisation seems to have affected the representation of these women because audiences are reminded that these women have largely domestic roles in the private sphere which are traditionally perceived as incompatible with demands of the public sphere. In a sense, their de-politicisation in terms of formal politics was accompanied by a re-politicisation as symbolic socially conservative resources through which male politicians can demonstrate their personal credentials. This same phenomenon seems to be evident once again in the coverage of the 2010 election where the leaders' wives were presented as re-traditionalised and non-political supporters of their husbands' political ambitions. The somewhat limited existing literature that addresses the role of relatives in political communication fails to recognise the important early role of relatives as active campaigners (see Stanyer, 2007 and Seymour-Ure, 2003). These authors focus primarily on post war relatives and exclusively on the wives of Prime Ministers. This study contributes to this area of study by not only analysing the presence and news coverage of different relatives such as daughters and sisters; but crucially brings the later more passive role of party leaders' wives into historical context and suggests that the activism of more recent wives such as Glenys Kinnock and Cherie Blair has some historical precedent; the only difference being the press reaction to them and their activities.

More recently relatives were depicted largely as extensions to their male relative and were seen as enhancing his political appeal. Although the nature of their depiction changes from overtly political actors who assist their relations by providing a woman's perspective to merely reflecting their personal lives; the relatives are by definition portrayed as complimenting the political appeal of a male politician. Their presence in the campaign coverage shows that the distinction between public male politicians and private female supporters has been a long standing feature of electoral coverage although the portrayal of relatives has changed over the sample period. It even seems to have gained more credence in later elections where outspoken relatives suffered scathing press attention in contrast to the passive relatives who were celebrated.

What remains unclear is why the attitudes of the press have changed so much. Why was being a politician's wife who gave active, party political support accepted and indeed admired during the initial period when women became voters, when their contemporary

equivalents who take an active interest in political affairs are distrusted and mocked? It is clear that further research will be necessary in order to more fully understand this phenomenon. What is clear however is that the representation of relatives in political coverage deserves more attention from academic research than it currently receives as they clearly perform some kind of role in electoral politics as far as politicians and newspapers are concerned.

Emerging Themes

This thesis revealed a number of continuities and changes for each group which have been described and analysed in the previous chapters. There were a number of themes which have emerged in relation to all three groups of women and these findings will now be brought together in order to assess the electoral coverage of women as a whole. These themes fall into three broad areas. The first is media presence which includes prominence and looks at which women have dominated the coverage the most over the sample period; the active-passive dichotomy which examines the degree to which women are depicted as politically engaged and furthermore, the extent to which women are directly or indirectly quoted in the coverage. The second area is policy coverage which encompasses both the policies which women were most often associated with and the gendered implications of such associations, and the way women were domesticated in the electoral coverage by being constructed as bound to the private sphere through familial relations and the impact on women's political priorities. The final area is perception which discusses the increased personalisation of politicians and relatives as well as the increasingly negative evaluations these women experience sometimes as a result.

<u>Presence</u>

Political scientists emphasise the importance of women's presence in political institutions and decision making processes, whilst media scholars stress the significance of women's mediated representation for how they are perceived. This study has drawn together both

these strands by arguing that it is important that women are present in the public discourse about electoral politics for them to be represented effectively. There are three ways that the presence of women in the news coverage can be assessed; in terms of how prominent they are, the extent to which they are portrayed as engaged citizens and the extent to which their voices are included.

Prominence

As has already been demonstrated above, voters and politicians were the most prominent women in electoral coverage between 1918 and 2005, with each group dominating half of the 24 elections included in the historical sample. The prominence of voters in a number of elections demonstrates that they have become an important facet of electoral discourse. The 2010 election was the first time that politicians accounted for the smallest proportion of the newspaper coverage. Instead the newspapers preferred reporting on the activities of the relatives (and especially the wives of the three main party leaders.)

The implications of this new development could be that female politicians have become increasingly marginalised in electoral discourse whilst women who are married to male leaders are receiving greater coverage despite having no formal political role. This suggests a change in the role of relatives in the campaign. In the early elections they were active political campaigners before being confined to the domestic role as supportive followers during the 1950s and 1960s. When more politically active relatives emerged once again in the late 1980s and 1990s, the press vilified their behaviour casting it as an illegitimate incursion into the political sphere. The 2010 relatives on the other hand seem calculated to portray their male relatives (in most cases, their spouses) in the most favourable light, humanising them or counteracting allegations of being too privileged and out of touch with the electorate. The consequences of such a shift are that politicians' wives are considered by political parties, and indeed the press who seem largely to have accepted this state of affairs, to be a more effective means of appealing to the electorate than female politicians who have some substantive ability to represent voters.

Marginalising politicians in favour of women who are presented as traditionally feminine inhabitants of the private domain poses an important challenge to the achievements of

feminism because it serves to reinforce the idea that women do not belong in the political sphere. Moreover, this marginalisation means that news coverage presents politics as a male sphere where women predominantly relate to it through their relationship with men. This reinforces the gendered divisions between the private and public spheres and presents women as apolitical, supportive, domestically oriented spectators rather than as capable, ration political actors. This is clearly a gendered phenomenon since the husbands of candidates are given very little attention in the news coverage.

This undermines feminist claims that women can engage with politics in the same way as men by presenting women as relating to politics differently. Marginalising women candidates also reduces the potential to normalise women's political representation in the mainstream discourse and could discourage women from coming forward if they feel that politics is a particularly difficult climate for women. As has been previously discussed, it is unclear whether or not relatives will continue to receive more coverage than politicians or whether it is as a result of an atypical election which was dominated by party leaders (all male) at the expense of other politicians.

The mere presence of women in the coverage is not the only concern of feminist media studies. It is also important that women appear in news discourse as active and engaged citizens and political representatives in order to demonstrate that women are more than just bystanders to the political process.

Active or Passive?

Feminists have been concerned for some time about the propensity of the mediated representation of women to portray them as passive subjects rather than actively engaged political actors who are invested in political discussion and debate. The findings from this study offer a mixed picture of the way women's levels of activism are constructed.

Over time voters have become increasingly portrayed in more active terms. Early reporting tended to discuss the voting intentions and political priorities of voters in the abstract whilst post war coverage began to incorporate individual women's concerns into

their coverage. Recent elections have seen the rise items which ask panels of readers to give their opinions directly. Politicians on the other hand also experienced an increase in the reportage of their activities but, as has already been discussed, the rise of the relatives' category and the increased concentration on male party leaders in recent elections has served to marginalise them. The coverage of relatives has altered dramatically in the same time period. Early relatives were reported and celebrated as active campaigners before becoming increasingly personalised. More recent relatives who have been portrayed as explicitly political have received scathing coverage from a suspicious press. This thesis has argued that this media response resulted in the 2010 relatives' coverage which was preoccupied with the physical appearance and personal style choices of the party leaders' wives.

The study showed that politicians, who ought to be seen as active participants in politics, had their agency downgraded by the propensity of newspapers to focus on the trivial and party political machinations. Voter's political engagement on the other hand increased over time; however the way they were incorporated into the news tended to dwell on their passivity by limiting the extent to which they were presented as citizens. Relatives have become increasingly depicted as passive over time. Given that these women received a higher proportion of coverage than politicians in 2010, this could have some worrying consequences for the portrayal of women in electoral discourse as far as feminists are concerned (which has already been addressed).

The differences between the three groups of women demonstrate that being portrayed as actively political in newspaper coverage of women can be difficult depending upon on the role of the woman in question. This suggests that merely making the distinction between whether women are portrayed as active or passive is deeply problematic. An additionally important means of measuring of how politically engaged women are depicted in the news coverage is the extent to which their voices are incorporated into the reportage of election news in the form of direct and indirect quotations.

Voices

Feminist scholars have long recognised the importance of including women's voices in news coverage. Studies which have analysed the extent to which women are used as

sources tend to show that men are more likely to be featured as a source than women (see Ross, 2007; Shoemaker and Reece, 1996; Zoch and Vanslyke Turk, 1998). Although this study has not compared the voices of women to the voices of men, it does show that some women are invited to speak more than others which will have profound consequences for the political representation of women.

The propensity of newspaper coverage to include the voices of women in electoral discourse has changed over time. Although voters have become increasingly likely to have their remarks included in the coverage, politicians have become less likely to be quoted since the 1950s and 1960s. This reinforces the findings from previous studies which show that women are more likely to be represented as news sources when they are ordinary members of the public than when they are in positions of authority (Ross, 2007; Adcock, 2010). This mixed picture demonstrates that voters have become increasingly represented in the coverage while politicians have become marginalised more recently.

Representing women as actively engaged citizens and politicians who have a means of speaking for themselves is not enough. It is also important that women are given the opportunity to contribute to the public debate about a variety of topics and political concerns so that their views and interests are represented in all aspects of public policy.

Policy

Previous academic work has suggested that women candidates tend to be associated with stereotypically feminine policy areas such as childcare policy and education (Herrnson et al, 2003; Kahn and Gordon, 1997) and are assumed to have feminine personal traits which can limit or increase their appeal to voters (Huddy and Tekildsen, 1993). It should be noted that the majority of this literature focuses on politicians from the United States which might go some way to explaining the lack of issue stereotyping for politicians that was found in this study.

The historical analysis showed that despite politicians and voters being most commonly associated with three of the same main policy areas (economy, international affairs and

health and welfare) their treatment in the coverage was quite different. Voters were portrayed in specifically gendered ways which emphasised their familial roles; politicians were not subjected to this treatment. What was particularly striking was the extent to which both groups of women tended to be present in items which discussed the process of the election rather than policy. Process coverage dominated all of the elections studied demonstrating a lack of policy discussion generally.

The findings from this thesis demonstrate that not only is the 2010 coverage very similar to that which went before but more importantly that being confined to specific stereotypical policy areas is not necessarily problematic in British electoral coverage. Instead it is the way in which women were described in their everyday campaign interactions, which is instrumental in preserving the distinction between private and public that has pervaded political discourse. This emphasises the complexity of assumptions made about women and their roles in political decisions and shows that it is not necessarily the policy area but the way they are discussed in relation to politics that counts in the British context. Researchers might also consider this point when they seek to analyse the issues which voters are reported as placing most emphasis on.

The stereotyping of women and their political interests in electoral discourse is one dimension of gendered political coverage. The other, as has been alluded to already, is the way women are persistently associated with the domestic sphere and its inevitable political priorities.

Domesticity

The most recent election in 2010 portrayed all three groups of women as women first and political actors second, with women's connection with the domestic sphere being made explicit in the discourse. Voters' political concerns were frequently associated with their familial roles and politicians and relatives were subjected to highly personalised coverage which emphasised their physical appearance. Historically, voters have traditionally been portrayed as concerned mothers and housewives whose political priorities derived from their position in the domestic sphere and politicians were similarly portrayed as acting on behalf of women due to their shared domestic burdens. Relatives by their very definition were firmly located in the domestic realms. The increased

personalisation of relatives over time served to marginalise their political role in favour of their private one.

The historical coverage shows that this domestication of women in electoral discourse has been a long standing feature in press coverage. This was manifest in the language used to refer to all three groups of women. Voters and relatives were explicitly and consistently linked to their male partners and their children. The domestication of women in electoral coverage shows that although women have made important gains in the public spheres of politics and the work place, women appear to be unable to shake their traditional roles which saw them confined to the private domain. Women's involvement with politics seems to be constructed as informed by their personal and private experiences in a way that would probably never be the case for their male counterparts. It seems that women's admission to the public and political domains still encumbered by their private responsibilities continues to be problematic despite the passage of time and the legal and social achievements of feminism. Moreover, the fact that many women do not have husbands or children for a variety of reasons seems to be completely absent from the electoral discourse which raises questions about their inclusion in the public debate.

Policy areas (for voters) and the domestication of all groups of voters, politicians and relatives are not the only heavily gendered features identified in electoral coverage. The highly personalised mode of representing relatives and politicians displays a preoccupation with their physical appearance and personal style which reinforces the perceived differences between men and women in the political sphere.

Perception

There is a burgeoning field of literature which suggests that political coverage generally has become more personalised and focused on party leaders in recent years (Langer, 2011; Stanyer, 2007). This has been muted as an explanation for the increased presence of leaders' wives in electoral coverage (Higgins and Smith, forthcoming). Increased personalisation in political news is particularly problematic given that it tends to

emphasise women's femininity at the expense of their public role (van Zoonen, 2006). Feminist media scholars emphasise that the representation of women as politicians is distinctly gendered due to personalised references such as focus on their physical appearance, personal characteristics and familial roles (Ross, 2002; Childs, 2008; Gill, 2007). Such representations of women can lead to them being perceived as political outsiders and therefore unusual and undesirable political actors.

Personalisation

This analysis of the 2010 election showed that the coverage of politicians and relatives featured high levels of personalised coverage. The historical analysis however shows that although both groups are subjected to personalised coverage there was a different trajectory for politicians and relatives across time.

During the interwar years there were relatively few personalised references to politicians and relatives, although there were some allusions to their familial roles. The immediate post war period (1950s and 1960s) saw an increasing amount of references to the physical appearance and age of these two groups of women. There was also an increasing interest in the lives of these women outside of politics. For politicians, such references declined towards the end of the 1970s and have remained at similar levels to the interwar period in more recent elections during the 1990s and early 2000s. Relatives on the other hand have been subjected to relatively high levels of personalised coverage throughout the latter part of the century. The data from 2010 however demonstrates that references to personal appearance and clothing rose dramatically for both groups of women.

Personalised coverage refers to any reference which focuses on an aspect of the subject's personal life such as their appearance, age or familial situation. Such references are gendered because they serve to remind the reader that women were historically confined to the private sphere and therefore have a problematic relationship with the public sphere, because they entered it still imbued with their private responsibilities. It also reinforces stereotypical assumptions that women in the public eye need to be more attractive than their male counterparts to receive attention. Personalised coverage is difficult for politicians because they struggle to be taken seriously and the increase in this

coverage observed during the 2010 election could be problematic if it continues to be so heavily gendered in future campaigns.

As the analysis in Chapters 6 and 7 revealed, much of the personalised coverage was explicitly evaluative, making reference to their clothing choices and personal appearances as political messages. Explicit evaluations are another aspect which pervaded the coverage of relatives and politicians in the electoral coverage.

Evaluations

The presence of explicit evaluations of key actors like politicians and relatives is also an important factor in the representation of women in electoral discourse. Evaluations could refer to either a positive statement about the performance of a candidate, for example describing Barbara Castle as "brave, tough and realistic, she makes her opposite number Mr Robert Carr, seem absurdly inadequate" (Levin, 1970). A negative evaluation on the other hand would be: "I can't tell you what her plans are because I don't think she really knows herself" (Lee-Potter, 1974). The findings from the 2010 analysis showed that both politicians and relatives were subjected to a significant amount of hostile or negative coverage which seemingly criticised everything from their clothing choices to their political views. Negative evaluations also frequently referred to the physical appearance of relatives and politicians, as has been demonstrated earlier in the thesis. The historical analysis shows that both politicians and relatives have been subjected to an increased proportion of negative evaluations over time, although it must be noted that items making overt evaluations were for the most part in the minority across the entire sample.

This increase in negative commentary for both groups over time suggests that electoral discourse has become increasingly difficult for women. Although anecdotal evidence suggests that the increase in negative evaluation of elite figures is not in itself gender dependent, the form in which such evaluations take might well be gendered in consequence, for example male politicians are much less likely to be criticised for their haircut or choice of shoes where as women face such censure regularly as this thesis demonstrates.

Reflections on the study

This thesis has contributed to the study of women, media and politics in a number of important ways. It is the first study which systematically analyses electoral coverage between 1918 and 2010 and the first study to systematically analyse the representation of women as voters and relatives of politicians in electoral coverage over time. Therefore this study has brought an important historical dimension which was lacking from the existing literature in this area. Analysing electoral coverage using a longitudinal approach has allowed this study to show that the representation of voters, politicians and relatives has changed over time to varying degrees. Furthermore, by concentrating on women in their own right this study has highlighted the importance of comparing the news coverage of different groups of women rather than simply comparing women with men. Without this focus, the fact that relatives received a higher proportion of coverage than politicians for the very first time in the 2010 election would not have come to light meaning that the implications of such a shift in electoral coverage could not be further interrogated. Taking an historical approach has also allowed this study to demonstrate that contrary to accepted wisdom, the relatives of politicians were politically active campaigners during the interwar period and only began to be represented as apolitical women of the domestic sphere during the immediate post war period; and moreover that this role was accepted and celebrated by contemporary press coverage. This shows that more recent concerns about the political activities and influence of women like Cherie Blair are a new phenomenon that ignores historical precedent.

This study has also contributed to academic enquiry into the increased personalisation of political communication by demonstrating that as far as women are concerned, the picture is more complex than previously thought, at least in the case of electoral coverage. Politicians for example tended to receive more personalised references about their appearance and family background during the 1960s and 1970s than more recent elections; however the dramatic increase in references to their appearance during the 2010 campaign suggests further that such coverage might in fact be cyclical rather than the accepted notion that it has increased over time. The study does show on the other hand that coverage of the relatives has become increasingly personalised across the sample period. This once again highlights the importance at looking across different

groups of women. The study also shows that negative coverage of women as politicians and relatives has increased over time. The study furthermore shows the extent to which the coverage of relatives has become increasingly focused on party leaders' wives across time.

The study contributes to the study of the mediated representation of women in politics by demonstrating that the news coverage of such women has become increasingly negative and restrictive to politicians voices; but it has also become less personalised than previous decades. The study shows that conversely women as voters have become increasingly more likely to be quoted and have their views included across time. The study has also contributed to this literature by showing that contrary to the findings of studies from the United States; historically British politicians have not confined to stereotypically feminine policy areas like childcare and education in electoral discourse. Voters on the other hand are historically much more likely to have their political priorities explicitly connected to their familial role and this has remained the case in more recent elections.

Although this research provides a detailed analysis of the gendered nature of election coverage from 1918 until 2010, there were of course areas which were inevitably omitted from the study due to the limitations of time and space. It would have been particularly interesting to find some means of comparing these women with their male counterparts to confirm whether or not men and women receive different kinds of political coverage. This is most achievable by comparing specific individuals due to the disparity in numbers of politicians of each sex and also because male voters tend not to be identified as such historically. Furthermore, there were very few instances of male relatives being identified in the coverage. This would be an important means of discovering both the extent to which the coverage of women in political contexts is harmful to their plight as candidates and voters and furthermore it might help to identify ways of improving the coverage of women in politics by providing a template for removing discrimination.

This study has focused on newspapers for the reasons outlined in the methodology chapter but it would have been very insightful to analyse other forms of media across time to see if this offers a different account of the historical representation of women in

electoral discourse or whether it would simply reflect the findings discussed here. Radio and television coverage (albeit accounting for many fewer elections than newspapers) would be obvious media to tackle. It would also have enhanced the study if there had been time and space to analyse the visual elements of the coverage such as photographs and cartoons in a systematic way, as this would offer more insight into the function that women perform in newspaper coverage of elections.

A further means of adding to this particular area of study would be to analyse the representation of these three categories of women outside of an electoral context although this would obviously be much easier to achieve for politicians and relatives who may be more easily identified during normal news coverage. Of course it is also hugely important to continue monitoring the representation of women in this way in future elections to keep track of the developments.

Implications

The unspoken assumption underpinning this thesis has been that this research will in some way contribute to the feminist project by highlighting the importance of securing electoral coverage which does not marginalise, alienate or trivialise women in all their diversity so that all women are able to contribute to democratic politics on equal terms with men. This research has highlighted that contemporary election coverage is embedded with gendered stereotypes and assumptions which portray women in narrow and old fashioned ways despite claims from political parties and media that women today enjoy political equality with men. Women in all groups are constantly linked to their role in the private sphere either through their role as mothers and wives or as public figures that have insight into this area. Furthermore the historical tendency to personalise the politicians and relatives in a gendered fashion by referring to their physical appearance, bodies and familial relations moreover serves to reinforce the idea that women are nothing more than what Norris (1997: 149) referred to as “a splash of color” in the landscape of political news.

Despite this study not systematically analysing men and their representation in news coverage, it is clear that women are marked out as distinct from them because firstly, there is no discussion whatsoever of the 'male vote' and very little that explicitly links men's political concerns with their families. Furthermore, there are few examples of men taking to the campaign trail to support their wives' pursuit of a seat in the Commons and there are even fewer examples of men being constructed as representing the interests of male voters. Gendered news coverage such as that which has been discussed in this thesis, which consistently and explicitly portrays women as women first rather than as voters, relatives and politicians, reinforces the assumption that women are outsiders in politics which in turn makes it difficult for women to be seen as serious and legitimate political actors. On the other hand, despite these persistently gendered features of the coverage, the study has also demonstrated that there have been a number of changes across time which offers some hope that women might receive more equal coverage in future elections if feminists continue to campaign for it.

There are also some key implications for political science and media studies. Since this study analyses the media coverage of women in every election that they have been able to participate in as voters and as candidates, it highlights the importance of studying women and politics in historical contexts. Although both political science and media studies tend to emphasise the importance of comparative work across different spaces (countries, regions and so on) they have been less keen to compare across time. This thesis shows that this is important in order to properly understand the contemporary. This study also argues for the systematic analysis of media texts rather than looking at each election in isolation like some media scholars and also argues against using media in an incidental way like political scientists and some historians have been known to in the past.

References

Primary Sources

Allan, M. (1945) 'These are the issues for women', *Daily Herald* 4th July, p.4

Ashley, J. (2010) 'Where are all the women?', *The Guardian* 10th April, p.10-11

Battle, B. (2010) 'Mums' Labour pains', *The Sun* 4th May, p.28-29

Beattie, J. (2010) 'Widows in fury at Cameron plans', *Daily Mirror* 29th April, p.6-7

Beckford, M. (2010a) 'Shamed MP to make £177,000 on home funded by tax-payers', *Daily Telegraph* 8th April, p.7

Beckford, M. (2010b) 'The Mumsnet set must be won over to tax break cause', *Daily Telegraph* 10th April, p.4

Beckford, M. (2010c) 'Parties failing female voters, say feminists', *Daily Telegraph* 16th April, p.7

Bell, M. (1918) 'Backward male electors', *Daily Mail* 13th December, p.4

Betts, H. (2010) 'So who wins the sartorial debate?', *Daily Telegraph* 21st April, p.25

Bevins, A. (1974) 'A slog to the top', *The Sun* 4th October, p.7

Bevins, A. (1979) 'Jim in TV row over Left threat', *Daily Mail* 28th April, p.9

Bloom, U. (1935) 'Women! Today it's up to you', *Daily Mirror* 14th November, p.10

Bradshaw, D. (1987) 'Kids pledge woos mums', *Daily Mirror* 9th June, p.2

Bowness, M. (2001) 'Jack's on board with us', *The Sun* 4th June, p.6

Burton, P. (1979) 'Mums the word on prices!', *Daily Mirror* 27th April, p.7

Callan, P. (1979) 'The OTHER women at the heart of the election', *Daily Mirror* 1st May, p.16-17

Carroll, R. (1974) 'Sun readers plump for Labour', *The Sun* 10th October, p.1

Carter, H., Wainwright, M. and Clifton, H. (2010) 'Lifelong Labour voter who may bring down PM', *The Guardian* 29th April, p.4

Chapman, J. (2010) 'Demonised: The granny who dared to utter the I-word', *Daily Mail* 29th April, p.1-2

Chilvers, S. (2010) 'Stylewatch: Labour in the pink', *The Guardian* 13th April, p.12

Chippindale, P. (1974) 'Rich farm village sees red light of socialism', *The Guardian* 5th October, p.6

Churchill, R. (1950) 'So "Gorgeous Gorsky" carries the banner', *Daily Mail* 20th February, p.2

Churchill, R. (1951) 'Battle of the ladies in grey', *Daily Mail* 19th October, p.7

Churchill, R. (1959) 'Jolly Mrs de la Motte fought back', *Daily Mail* 7th October, p.7

Churchwell, S. (2010) 'Return to the edge of reason', *The Guardian* 17th April, p.31

Conn, D. (2010) 'Stigmatised as shirking scroungers, but you try living on £65.45 a week', *The Guardian* 30th April, p.13

Cook, A. (1959) 'Gaitskell looks up his train', *Daily Mail* 8th October, p.7

Coolican, D. (1979) 'Housewives' final choice', *Daily Mail* 2nd May, p.4

Corless, F. (1992) 'Born into despair..is today a new dawn for Julie and her little baby Paul?', *Daily Mirror* 9th April, p.2-3

Cousins, J. (1979) 'Housewives' choice for a better deal', *Daily Mirror* 3rd May, p.5

Daily Herald (1922a) 'Why we want women MPs', *Daily Herald* 9th November, p.4

Daily Herald (1922b) 'How women can win the fight for peace and happy homes', *Daily Herald* 11th November, p.3

Daily Herald (1923) 'How Tor-Libs raided housewife's purse', *Daily Herald* 4th December, p.1

Daily Herald (1924) 'Women's Party is Labour', *Daily Herald* 24th October, p.8

Daily Herald (1931) 'A word to women', *Daily Herald* 22nd October, p.8

Daily Herald (1935) 'Her plea is "save the mother"', *Daily Herald* 8th November, p.15

Daily Herald (1945) 'We have fought for years', *Daily Herald* 30th June 1945, p.1

Daily Herald (1950a) 'Notebook', *Daily Herald* 17th February, p.4

Daily Herald (1950b) 'Notebook', *Daily Herald* 20th February, p.2

Daily Mail (1918a) 'Women's Charter', *Daily Mail* 10th December, p.4

Daily Mail (1918b) 'A woman's smiles', *Daily Mail* 12th December, p.5

Daily Mail (1918c) 'Miss Phipps converts in Chelsea', *Daily Mail* 12th December, p.6

Daily Mail (1918d) 'Woman's appeal to women. Politics only ordinary life', *Daily Mail* 13th December, p.6

Daily Mail, (1922a) 'Costly home life', *Daily Mail* 9th November, p.6

Daily Mail (1922b) 'Women's power', *Daily Mail* 14th November, p.9

Daily Mail (1923a) 'Platform Chivalry', *Daily Mail* 1st December, p.10

Daily Mail (1923b) 'Premier and women voters', *Daily Mail* 3rd December, p.6

Daily Mail (1923c) No title, *Daily Mail* 3rd December, p.9

Daily Mail (1923d) 'Ideal election wife', *Daily Mail* 3rd December, p.10

Daily Mail (1924a) 'Lady Diana Cooper', *Daily Mail* 23rd October, p.6

Daily Mail (1924b) 'Premier's speech to women', *Daily Mail* 23rd October, p.10

Daily Mail (1931) 'Appeal to Women', *Daily Mail* 23rd October, p.14

Daily Mail (1935a) 'Mr M MacDonald's Hustle', *Daily Mail* 9th November, p.7

Daily Mail (1935b) 'Smile that us shaking a tradition', *Daily Mail* 12th November, p.12

Daily Mail (1935c) 'Women's election drive: Kissing babies "not part of campaign"', *Daily Mail* 13th November, p.7

Daily Mail (1950) No title, *Daily Mail* 21st February, p.7

Daily Mail (1955a) 'Butler and Housewife: You can advise me', *Daily Mail* 24th May, p.4

Daily Mail (1955b) 'Flo Vote chooses the Right road', *Daily Mail* 25th May, p.4

Daily Mail (1959a) No title, *Daily Mail* 2nd October, p.9

Daily Mail (1959b) No title, *Daily Mail* 7th October, p.7

Daily Mail (1959c) 'Bessie wants to spank Hailsham', *Daily Mail* 2nd October, p.9

Daily Mail (1970a) 'How much in our pockets? How big a hole in the bank?', *Daily Mail* 15th June, p.1

Daily Mail (1970b) 'Tories go for the wives' vote', *Daily Mail* 15th June, p.2

Daily Mail (1970c) 'Heath woos the wives', *Daily Mail* 18th June, p.1

Daily Mail (1974) 'Top of the beauty poll', *Daily Mail* 10th October 1974, p.1

Daily Mail (1979) 'Maggie woos the mothers', *Daily Mail* 27th April, p.9

Daily Mail (1987) 'The eye catcher who's after Thatcher', *Daily Mail* 9th June, p.8

Daily Mail (1992) 'Odd timing', *Daily Mail* 9th April, p.6

Daily Mail (1997) No title, *Daily Mail* 29th April, p.12

Daily Mail (2005) No title, *Daily Mail* 4th May 2005, p.8

Daily Mail (2010a) 'No, I'm not glamorous says Labour girl Gloria', *Daily Mail* 17th April, p.8

Daily Mail, (2010b) 'Figures show Cameron's family crusade is vital', *Daily Mail* 17th April, p.12

Daily Mail (2010c) 'Minute by minute, in words and pictures, Brown's most humiliating day', *Daily Mail* 29th April, p.6-7

Daily Mail (2010d) 'Labour are the real immigration bigots', *Daily Mail* 29th April, p.14

Daily Mirror (1922) 'Whirlwind finale today to election struggle', *Daily Mirror* 14th November, p.3

Daily Mirror (1923) 'Women who stand for Parliament: good looks as a means of catching votes', *Daily Mirror* 4th December, p.7

Daily Mirror (1929) 'How will women vote this week?', *Daily Mirror* 27th May, p.7

Daily Mirror (1931) 'Let Women Consider', *Daily Mirror* 27th October, p.7

Daily Mirror (1935a) Untitled Letter, *Daily Mirror* 9th November, p.14

Daily Mirror (1935b) 'Women in Parliament', *Daily Mirror* 13th November, p.11

Daily Mirror (1945a) 'I'll vote for them', *Daily Mirror* 30th June, p.1

Daily Mirror (1945b) Untitled Letter, *Daily Mirror* 30th June, p.2

Daily Mirror (1945c) 'Your sacred trust', *Daily Mirror* 30th June, p.2

Daily Mirror (1945d) 'Churches call on people of Britain', *Daily Mirror* 2nd July, p.1

Daily Mirror (1951) 'Housewives, beware!', *Daily Mirror* 23rd October, p.12

Daily Mirror (1964) 'Look what's happened to the Tory £', *Daily Mirror* 14th October, p.9

Daily Mirror (1970) 'Woman or man, who are you putting your money on?', *Daily Mirror* 17th June, p.3

Daily Mirror (1974a) 'The unacceptable face of Mr Barber', *Daily Mirror* 21st February, p.2

Daily Mirror (1974b) 'Women in Power', *Daily Mirror* 10th October, p.17

Daily Mirror (1979) 'Women Care! That's why their vote is so vital', *Daily Mirror* 27th April, p.1-2

Daily Mirror (1992) 'Remember Me: "We must stop the Tory rot before it's too late", *Daily Mirror* 8th April, p.10-11

Daily Mirror (1997) 'My 25p insult', *Daily Mirror* 26th April, p.6

Daily Mirror (2001) 'Stuart saved by new health line', *Daily Mirror* 6th June, p.6

Daily Mirror (2010) 'Cameron wins over Mums', *Daily Mirror* 19th April, p.5

Daily Telegraph (1918) 'Women and their vote. Question of apathy', *Daily Telegraph* 13th December, p.5

Daily Telegraph (1922a) 'Independent Wives', *Daily Telegraph* 10th November, p.11

Daily Telegraph (1922b) 'North Camberwell', *Daily Telegraph* 10th November, p.14

Daily Telegraph (1922c) No title, *Daily Telegraph* 14th November, p.9

Daily Telegraph (1923) 'Lady Warwick's Jewels', *Daily Telegraph* 5th October, p.9

Daily Telegraph (1929) 'Women and their vote', *Daily Telegraph* 29th May, p.10

Daily Telegraph (1931) 'Miss Chamberlain's blue and white brigade', *Daily Telegraph* 23rd October, p.7

Daily Telegraph (1935) No title, *Daily Telegraph* 11th November, p.4

Daily Telegraph (1950a) 'Forfeited Deposits', *Daily Telegraph* 23rd February, p.4

Daily Telegraph (1950b) 'Holing Out', *Daily Telegraph* 23rd February, p.7

Daily Telegraph (1959) 'Colourful Candidate', *Daily Telegraph* 5th October, p.17

Daily Telegraph (1964a) 'And may the best woman win!', *Daily Telegraph* 9th October, p.13

Daily Telegraph (1964b) 'Party Leaders' wives waiting for a rest', *Daily Telegraph* 13th October, p.29

Daily Telegraph (1970) 'Votes from women…', *Daily Telegraph* 9th June, p.13

Daily Telegraph (1974a) 'Housewives hold key to election, says Thorpe', *Daily Telegraph* 7th October, p.9

Daily Telegraph (1974b) 'Socialist's nationalisation platform may save Welwyn Tories', *Daily Telegraph* 8th October, p.9

Daily Telegraph (1979a) 'I am no strident female', *Daily Telegraph* 27th April, p.1

Daily Telegraph (1979b) 'Constituencies', *Daily Telegraph* 27th April, p.11

Daily Telegraph (1979c) No title, *Daily Telegraph* 27th April, p.11

Daily Telegraph (2005) No title, *Daily Telegraph* 4th May, p.6

Daily Telegraph, (2010a) 'Women admire political WAGS', *Daily Telegraph* 15th April, p.8

Daily Telegraph, (2010b) 'A torrid time behind enemy lines', *Daily Telegraph* 27th April, p.5

Daily Telegraph, (2010c) 'Mrs Duffy bursts Brown's bubble', *Daily Telegraph*, 29th April, p.25

Daily Telegraph, (2010d) 'Pledge over son's death "was empty promise"', *Daily Telegraph* 3rd May, p.4

Deans, J. (1987) 'The people who must vote for me, by Maggie', *Daily Mail* 6th June, p.15

Derby, O. (1955) 'Who'll help a working girl?', *Daily Mirror* 21st May, p.2

Evison, S. (1997) 'Britain's First Lady', *The Sun* 1st May, p.31

Fawcett Society, (2010) 'The issues missing from the election debate', *The Guardian* 5th May, p.37

Fox, I. (2010a) 'Stylewatch: The Campaign Cardigan', *The Guardian* 8th April, p.7

Fox, I. (2010b) 'Stylewatch: Trenchcoat Trend', *The Guardian* 27th April, p.16

Freedland, J. (1997) 'Eggs and insults draw smile as nation watches', *The Guardian* 1st May, p.15

Freeman, H. (2005) 'The week the first ladies went mad', *The Guardian* 5th May, p.10

Freeman, H. (2010) 'Meet the voters: Esther on the um, stump', *The Guardian* 13th April, p.15

Gaskell, J. (1974) 'The question that really stopped Marion Thorpe in her tracks…', *Daily Mail* 26th February, p.7

Gentleman, A. (2010) 'Women candidates upstaged by wives', *The Guardian* 21st April, p.20

Gimson, A. (2010) 'Brown's only hope now is to go for the sympathy vote', *Daily Telegraph* 29th April, p.3

Glover, S. (2001) 'The Last Stand', *Daily Mail* 2nd June, p.13

Gold, T. (2010) 'Where is the mythical Beast of Redditch', *Daily Telegraph* 19th April, p.9

Hall, U. (1970) 'Dame Irene, mother of Mother of Parliaments', *The Sun* 8th June, p.7

Hardy, F. (2010) 'I just want to see my sons grow up', *Daily Mail* 10th April, p.34-35

Hartley, C. (2010) 'Cameron is toughest on knife crime...Labour did not crack it: says Brooke Kinsella', *The Sun* 28th April, p.6-7

Hinton, L. (1974) 'Time for a nice cuppa for Mrs T', *The Sun* 7th October, p.7

Hollingshead, I. (2005) 'A quiet life on the fringes of power', *Daily Telegraph* 3rd May, p.15

Hunt, L (2010) 'Style over substance', *Daily Telegraph* 14th April, p.22

Iggulden, C. (2009) "Politicians need to Net our votes", *The Sun*, 21st November, p.24-25

Jackson, W. (1959) 'Electioneering wives have helpful husbands', *Daily Telegraph* 5th October, p.9

Johnson, D. (1974) 'Labour insists it can win in Bolton', *The Guardian* 27th February, p.7

Johnson, P. (1987a) 'The sinister conspiracy of silence', *Daily Mail* 5th June, p.6

Johnson, P. (1987b) 'Who cares? If you compare the deeds of Maggie with the words of Kinnock there's one clear answer', *Daily Mail* 9th June, p.6

Jones, T. (2010) 'Her style is so cutting wedge', *The Sun* 14th April, p.6

Kavanagh, T. (2010) '3 words that tell full truth on PM', *The Sun* 29th April, p.4

Kavanagh, T. and Roycroft-Davis, C. (1997) 'The Blair Necessities', *The Sun* 29th April, p.8-9

Kay, J. and Potter, C. (1983) 'Soft side of the Iron lady', *The Sun* 6th June, p.9

Kay, R. (2010) Untitled, *Daily Mail* 6th May, p.43

Kirkup, J. (2010a) 'We've lost the will to work, says Cameron', *Daily Telegraph* 28th April, p.6

Kirkup, J. (2010b) 'Brown wants to do charity work', *Daily Telegraph* 5th May, p.5

Lake, M. (1970) 'Tories pin hopes on housewives', *The Guardian* 18th June, p.1

Lancaster, T. (1974) 'Remember the February Men', *Daily Mirror* 7th October, p.16-17

Lancaster, T. (1979) 'What would life be like…under Mrs Thatcher's broomstick?', *Daily Mirror* 2nd May, p.1-2

Lawrence, M. (2005) 'Labour is working', *Daily Mirror* 2nd May, p.38

Lee-Potter, L. (1974) 'A 10p ticket to watch Vanessa play the rebel', *Daily Mail* 23rd February, p.8

Lee-Potter, L. (1992) 'Glenys flirts, but her eyes are cold', *Daily Mail* 8th April, p.7

Lee-Potter, L. (1997) 'Winning Wives', *Daily Mail* 30th April, p.11

Lee-Potter, L. (2001) 'For the love of Ffion', *Daily Mail* 5th June, p.16-17

Leigh, V. (1950) 'The leading ladies of the poll', *Daily Mail* 23rd February, p.4

Leslie, A. (1974) 'The Candidate's wife', *Daily Mail* 8th October, p.12

Leslie, A. (1987) 'The dogs who don't bark', *Daily Mail* 6th June, p.6

Letts, Q. (2001a) 'Like a butcher bawling pork belly prices at market wives', *Daily Mail* 1st June, p.8

Letts, Q. (2001b) 'Amid the aggro, Mr Hague was beaming and relished the scrap', *Daily Mail* 6th June, p.7

Letts, Q. (2005) 'The man who took this country to war chatted about how many times a night he can manage to have sex with Cherie', *Daily Mail* 5th May, p.6-7

Letts, Q. (2010a) 'She was magnificent, she was eloquent. And she spoke, I suspect, for millions', *Daily Mail* 29th April, p.8

Letts, Q. (2010b) 'Spare us, sister', *Daily Mail* 1st May, p.42

Levin, B. (1970) 'Bernard Levin at the Election', *Daily Mail* 18th June, p.8

Linton, M. (1987) 'Giving the fair sex more of a fair look-in', *The Guardian* 6th June, p.6

Littlejohn, R. (2001) 'Mud, sweat and smears', *The Sun* 6th June, p.8

Lloyd, T. (2010) No title, *Daily Telegraph* 30th April, p.27

Lyons, J. and Ward, V. (2010) 'The mother of murdered Sally Anne Bowman condemns Tory policy on DNA database as...SUICIDE', *Daily Mirror* 10th April, p.7

MacKenzie, K. (2010) 'Has Gillian from Rochdale killed the Labour party?', *The Sun* 29th April, p.13

Mackie, L. (1979) 'How the parties woo women', *The Guardian* 1st May, p.9

Martin, G. (1974) 'Sally hates cover-up labels', *Daily Mail* 23rd February, p.9

Maung, C. A. (1997) 'My Cherie Amour', *Daily Mirror* 29th April, p.3

Mayhew, C. (1959) 'The candidate's wife', *The Guardian* 2nd October, p.8

McHugh, P. (1979) 'My key to happy families, by Jim', *The Sun* 27th April, p.7

McSmith, A. (2009) "Meet cyberwoman, the battleground for the next election", *The Independent,* 18th November, p.18

Miller, M. (1966) 'Why so few women want your vote', *The Sun* 30th March, p.4

Moir, J. (2010a) 'War of the Wives', *Daily Mail* 8th April, p.7

Moir, J. (2010b) 'Sam goes solo...but did she really need to call on Daddy?', *Daily Mail* 9th April, p.9

Moir, J. (2010c) 'Now pass me that boulder, compadre', *Daily Mail* 12th April, p.7

Moir, J. (2010d) 'Was it the kisses or the cleavage that terrified the babies, Cherie?', *Daily Mail* 16th April, p.12

Moir, J. (2010e) 'Sam Cam's got a new election role...as a latter-day Princess Diana', *Daily Mail* 21st April, p.10-11

Moir, J. (2010f) 'When Sarah's not by his side, out pops the cloven hoof', *Daily Mail* 30th April, p.10-11

Moir, J. (2010g) 'No wonder Sam Cam's hair is standing on end!', *Daily Mail* 3rd May, p.8-9

Moncur, A. (1987) 'Sheltering from verbal fall-out', *The Guardian* 5th June, p.5

Moore, J. (2005) 'I'll vote…but it's hard to give a XXXX', *The Sun* 4th May, p.11

Morris, R. (1992) 'Who is the fairest of them all?', *The Guardian* 7th April, p.37

Mount, F. (1974) 'Tele-Election', *Daily Mail* 22nd February, p.9

Newton Dunn, T. (2010) 'Tragic mum backs Tory', *The Sun* 17th April, p.2

Oborne, P. (2010) 'Whatever happened to female politicians in this election?', *Daily Mail* 17th April, p.45

Oliver, J. (2009) "PM bites the biscuit and names favourite", *The Sunday Times*, 18th October, p.3

Oliver, J. (2010) "The Obama Election.", *The Sunday Times*, 4th April, p.11

Palmer, J (1997) 'Vote for her…And a better NHS', *Daily Mirror* 1st May, p.3

Parsons, T. (2010) 'Magnificent Mrs Duffy restores faith in Britain', *Daily Mirror* 1st May, p.13

Pascoe-Watson, G. (2001) 'Docs and Sirs blast Blair', *The Sun* 1st June, p.8

Phillips, M. (1983) 'The politics of sex', *The Guardian* 8th June, p.12

Phillips, R. (2010) 'Sam 'n get it', *The Sun* 14th April, p.6

Pierce, A. (2010a) 'Catfight leaves ladies all a-twitter', *Daily Mail* 27th April, p.9

Pierce, A. (2010b) 'Acid attack model is dragged into row over CCTV', *Daily Mail* 29th April, p.11

Platell, A. (2010) 'Have Cameron's Cuites really got what it takes to transform politics?', *Daily Mail* 8th April, p.58

Porter, A. and Winnett, R. (2010) 'Tories to give 4m married couples a tax break', *Daily Telegraph* 10th April, p.1 and 4

Potter, C. (1979) 'Mrs T isn't up to it, says Jim', *The Sun* 3rd May, p.7

Poulter, S. (2010) 'Primark shamed into axing padded bikinis for girls of 7: Budget chain attacked for "disgraceful" sexualisation of children', *Daily Mail* 15th April, p.11

Prince, R. (2010) 'A Prime Minister undone by widow out buying bread', *Daily Telegraph* 29th April, p.2

Proops, M. (1966) 'Ssh...he's having a little nap in the other room', *Daily Mirror* 24th March, p.17

Proops, M. (1974a) 'Which way will the middle jump?', *Daily Mirror* 25th February, p.4

Proops, M. (1974b) 'Your Vital X', *Daily Mirror* 28th February, p.17

Proops, M. (1974c) 'We must all make our mark…', *Daily Mirror* 9th October, p.9

Rayner, G. (2010) 'Land Girl "betrayed and treated worse than an animal"', *Daily Telegraph* 28th April, p.5

Richard, J. (2010) 'Is Sarah Brown the PM's wife or his nurse?', *Daily Mail* 17th April, p.21

Roberts, B. (2010) 'PM thought Gillian had said f-word', *Daily Mirror* 30th April, p.7

Roberts, M. (1951) 'A young woman warns the women of Britain', *Daily Mirror* 23rd October, p.6-7

Rose, P. (1974) 'A tuck box of votes', *The Sun* 4th October 1974, p.7

Routledge, P. (2010) 'What are you going to do for us, Yvette?' *Daily Mirror* 12th April, p.24-25

Shrimsley, A. (1970) 'A 7% boost for Labour', *The Sun* 18th June, p.1

Sloan, J. (2010) 'Goodbye, Gord', *The Sun* 16th April, p.8-9

Smithers, R. (1997) 'Lib Dems' pledge to women', *The Guardian* 25th April, p.12

Smithers, R. and Harding, L. (1997) 'Labour pledges to bring in crime bill in first year', *The Guardian* 26th April, p.2

Southworth, J. (1974) 'Shirley wants farm-gate control', *Daily Mail* 23rd February, p.9

Steele, A. (1966) '"We're Tories", the whisper in the heart of Dockland', *Daily Telegraph* 30th March, p.15

Suich, M (1964) 'A puzzle of pollsters', *The Sun* 9th October, p.10

Sutherland, M. E. (1935) 'Defend your shopping basket', *Daily Herald* 9th November, p.10

Swaine, J. (2010) 'Yes, you can call me sexy, says Mrs Clegg', *Daily Telegraph* 13th April, p.7

Sylvester, R. (2009) "This election will be won at the school gate", *The Times*, 17th November, p.25

The Guardian, (1918a) 'Two years of progress', *The Guardian* 9th December, p.6

The Guardian (1918b) 'The women voters', *The Guardian* 11th December, p.4

The Guardian (1918c) 'Candidate's Children', *The Guardian* 14th December. P.6

The Guardian (1918d) 'Late candidate's widow to be nominated', *The Guardian* 14th December, p.8

The Guardian (1923a) 'The problems of the election. Is there a woman's point of view?', *The Guardian* 30th November, p.6

The Guardian (1923b) 'Miscellany', *The Guardian* 30th November, p.7

The Guardian (1923c) 'Mrs Barclay's explanation of an "unnecessary election"', *The Guardian* 1st December, p.13

The Guardian (1924a) 'Women and food taxes. Mrs Masterson's address at Levenshulme', *The Guardian* 23rd October, p.11

The Guardian (1924b) 'The Women Candidates: their chances of success', *The Guardian* 25th October, p.8

The Guardian (1931) 'Food Taxes: Miss Ll. George's strong warning', *The Guardian* 23rd October, p.12

The Guardian (1935a) 'Lady (Ernest) Simon's decision', *The Guardian* 9th November, p.15

The Guardian (1935b) '14-year-old speaker', *The Guardian* 11th November, p.13

The Guardian (1945) 'Prospects at Mossley', *The Guardian* 3rd July, p.3

The Guardian (1951a) 'The Undecided. Women's votes key to Leicestershire', *The Guardian* 20th October, p.2

The Guardian (1951b) 'Tory threat in Anglesey', *The Guardian* 23rd October, p.3

The Guardian (1964) 'The woman voter – a political enigma', *The Guardian* 13th October, p.2

The Guardian (1979) 'A man's life at No. 10', *The Guardian* 30th April, p.4

The Guardian (1983) 'The wife who would not set Foot in No. 10', *The Guardian* 7th June, p.4

The Guardian (1992) No title, *The Guardian* 8th April, p.1

The Guardian (1997) 'Women in the right place. Politically, it's still a long way off', *The Guardian* 26th April, p.18

The Guardian, (2010a) 'The Voters' Verdict: "They need to start asking us what we'd like them to do"', *The Guardian* 13th April, p.14

The Guardian, (2010b) 'Women and the election: fairer sex', *The Guardian*, 19th April, p.30

The Guardian (2010c) 'A Duffy day at the office', *The Guardian* 29th April, p.36

The Sun (1966a) 'Back benchers in the front line', *The Sun* 25th March, p.4

The Sun (1966b) 'Mr Butler taking on Mr Heath at Bexley', *The Sun* 25th March, p.8

The Sun (1966c) 'Politics so polite in Petersfield', *The Sun* 25th March, p.8

The Sun (1966d) No title, *The Sun* 26th March, p.4

The Sun (1974) 'The women who brought life to a dead-end election', *The Sun* 10th October, p.6

The Sun (1979a) No title, *The Sun* 27th April, p.7

The Sun (1979b) 'Whose hand is in your pocket?', *The Sun* 28th April, p.1-2

The Sun (1979c) 'I'll slash prices, Jim promises mums', *The Sun* 1st May, p.7

The Sun (1983) 'The two faces of Sister Shirley', *The Sun* 7th June, p.6

The Sun (1987) No title, *The Sun* 10th June, p.5

The Sun (2001a) 'The Widde-mobile', *The Sun* 1st June, p.6

The Sun (2001b) 'Eight women tell us how they'll vote – and why', *The Sun* 6th June, p.23

The Sun (2005) 'My Tony is NOT a liar', *The Sun* 4th May, p.6

The Sun, (2010a) 'Clegg wins snog vote', *The Sun* 10th April, p.7

The Sun, (2010b) 'My great-great Gran was jailed FIVE times to get us the vote. Don't let it be in vain', *The Sun* 21st April, p.40-41

The Sun (2010c) 'Save these girls from the dole tomorrow', *The Sun* 5th May, p.3

Thompson, D. (1979) 'Winning way with women', *Daily Mirror* 3rd May, p.5

Thomson, A. (2005) 'Howard in a hurry to win his own place in history', *Daily Telegraph* 4th May, p.6

Topping, A. (2010) 'The Voters' Verdict: "We just have to go with the best of a bad bunch"', *The Guardian* 12th April, p.8-9

Toynbee, P. (2005) 'Take a Break made me a voter', *The Guardian* 5th May, p.6

Travis, A. (2001) 'Apathetic women make Labour nervous', *The Guardian* 1st June, p.18

Tyler, A. (2010) 'Miriam's our ideal woman', *Daily Mail* 19th April, p.39

Wainwright, M. (2010) 'From the TV sofa to the election doorstep: meet Labour's rising star', *The Guardian* 24th April, p.18

Wakeford, G. (1951) 'Wives hold the key to last 'ifs', *Daily Mail* 20th February, p.5

Walker, A. (1922) 'The sphinx in the general election: women not captured by mere party appeal', *Daily Mirror* 11th November, p.7

Walker, P. (2010) 'Greens hope big waves in Brighton will bring first seat', *The Guardian* 15th April, p.16

Walker, T. (2010) 'Berger happy to be uncommitted', *Daily Telegraph* 17th April, p.8

Wallace, M. (1924) 'Why women must use their votes. How politics affects life in the home', *Daily Mirror* 29th October, p.5

Walter, N. (2010) 'Women have gone missing, and new sexists are dusting off old theories', *The Guardian* 28th April, p.36

Watkins, F. (1923) 'Mothers and the next parliament. Feminine influence on legislation', *Daily Mirror* 30th November, p.5

Watkins, N. (2010) 'Parties reveal their womanifestoes', *The Sun* 5th May, p.44

Watt, N. (2010) 'Cameron unveils £150 tax incentive for married couples', *The Guardian* 10th April, p.8

Wilkes, D. (2010) 'Inhumane betrayal of Land Girl left to die in squalor on NHS ward', *Daily Mail* 28th April, p.8

Williams, J. (1997) 'Cherie is my rock', *Daily Mirror* 1st May, p.23-25

Willoughby, F. (1922) 'Armistice Day and its lessons: how it should inspire the voter this week', *Daily Mirror* 13th November, p.7

Wilson, G. (2010a) 'Mums' anger at porn plan', *The Sun* 26th April, p.6

Wilson, G. (2010b) 'Gillian only popped out for a loaf. She came back with...BROWN TOAST', *The Sun* 29th April, p.1

Wilson, G. and Hartley, C. (2010) 'No-tie Gord knot cool…but wife is', *The Sun* 26th April, p.7

Winnett, R. (2010a) 'Vote for me, asks Tory ladies' man', *Daily Telegraph* 14th April, p.4

Winnett, R. (2010b) 'In the line of ire: loyal aide who is taking the flak', *Daily Telegraph* 29th April, p.2

Wintour, P. and Edemariam, A. (2010) 'Women voters are "discerning" rather than floating', *The Guardian* 17th April, p.12

Wintour, P. and Curtis, P. (2010) 'Brown "penitent" after bigot gaffe torpedoes campaign', *The Guardian* 29th April, p.1

Woollett, E. (1950) 'Equal Rights', *Daily Mirror* 20th February, p.2

Young, S. (1992) 'We have a big job to do in those inner cities', *Daily Mirror* 6th April, p.16-17

Secondary Sources

Adcock, C. (2010) 'The Politician, The Wife, The Citizen, And Her Newspaper: Rethinking women, democracy, and media(ted) representation', *Feminist Media Studies*, 10(2): 135-159.

Beddoe, D. (1989) *Back to Home and Duty*, Glasgow: Pandora

Beers, C (2010) *Your Britain: Media and the making of the Labour Party*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Bennett, W. L (1990) 'Towards a Theory of Press-State Relations in the United States', Journal of Communication 40(2): 103-125

Berger, A. A. (2000) *Media and Communication Research Methods: An introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches*, London: Sage

Billig, M., Deacon, D., Golding, P. and Middleton, S. (1993) 'In the hands of the spin-doctors: Television, politics and the 1992 General Election, in Miller, N. and Allen, R. (eds.) *It's Live – But Is It Real? Proceedings of the 23rd University of Manchester Broadcasting Symposium*, London: John Libbey: 111-121

Bingham, A. (2002) 'Stop the Flapper Vote Folly': Lord Rothermere, the *Daily Mail*, and the Equalization of the Franchise 1927-28, *Twentieth Century British History* 13(1):17-37

Bingham, A. (2004) *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press in Inter-war Britain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Bird, S. E and Dardennes, R. W (1997) 'Myth, Chronicle and Story: Exploring the Narrative Qualities of News', Berkowitz, D. (ed.) *Social Meanings of News: A Text Reader*, London: Sage

Braden, M. (1996) *Women politicians and the media*, Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Booth, C. And Haste, K. (2005) *The Goldfish Bowl: Married to the Prime Minister 1955-1997*, London: Vintage

Brookes, R., Lewis, J. and Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2004) 'The media representation of public opinion: British television news coverage of the 2001 general election', *Media, Culture and Society* 26(1): 63-80

Brown, M. E. and Gardetto, D. C. (2000) 'Representing Hillary Rodham-Clinton: Gender, Meaning and News Media', Sreberny, A and Van Zoonen, L (eds) *Gender, Politics and Communication*, Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press

Bruley, S. (1999) *Women in Britain since 1900*, Basingstoke: MacMillan.

Busby, R. (2009) *Marketing the Populist Politician: The Demotic Democrat*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Campbell, R. and Childs, S. (2010) 'Wags, Wives and Mothers…But what about Women Politicians, Parliamentary Affairs 63(4): 760-777

Campbell, R. and Lovenduski, J. (2005) 'Winning Women's Votes? The Incremental Track to Equality' in Norris, P. and Wlezien, C. (eds.) *Britain Votes 2005*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 181-197.

Campbell, R. (2004) 'Gender, Ideology and Issue Preference: Is there such a Thing as a Political Women's Interest in Britain?', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 6: 20-44.

Campbell, R. (2006) *Gender and the Vote in Britain*, Colchester: ECPR Press

Carroll, S J. and Schreiber, R. (1997) 'Media Coverage of Women in the 103rd Congress', Norris, P. (eds.) *Women, Media and Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 131-148.

Carter, C., Branston, G. and Allan, S. eds. (1998) *News, Gender and Power*, London: Routledge.

Childs, S. (2004) *New Labour's Women MPs: Women Representing Women*, London: Routledge.

Childs, S. (2005) 'Feminising British Politics: Sex and Gender in the Election' in Geddes, A. and Tonge, J. (eds.) *Britain Decides: The UK General Election 2005*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan: 150-167

Childs, S. (2008) *Women and British Party Politics: Descriptive, substantive and symbolic representation*, Abingdon: Routledge

Coleman, S. and Ross, K. (2010) *The Media and the Public: 'Them' and 'Us' in Media Discourse,* Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell

Collins, J. (2008) "Is this news to you, Prime Minister?" Media Agendas, news management and a campaign interaction in the 2005 UK General Election', *Javnost- The Public* 15(1): 57-70

Conboy, M. (2004) *Journalism: A Critical History*, London: Sage

Coote, A. ed. (2000) *New Gender Agenda: Why women still want more*, London: IPPR.

Cowman, K. (2010) *Women in British Politics, c.1689-1979*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan

Curran, J. (2002) *Media and Power*, London: Routledge

Curran, J. and Seaton, J. (2010) *Power Without Responsibility: Press, broadcasting and the internet in Britain*, 7th Edition, London: Routledge

Dahlgren, P. ed. (1993) *Communication and Citizenship: journalism and the public sphere*, London: Routledge.

Day, B (1982) 'The Politics of Communication, or the Communication of Politics', in Worcester, R. M and Harrop, M. (eds.) *Political Communications: The General Election of 1979*, London: George Allen and Unwin

Deacon, D., Wring, D., Billig, M., Downey, J., Golding, P. and Davidson, S. (2005) *Reporting the 2005 UK General Election*, Loughborough: Loughborough Communication Research Centre

Deacon, D. Wring, D. and Golding, P. (2006) 'Same Campaign, Differing Agendas: Analysing News Media Coverage of the 2005 General Election, *British Politics* 1(2): 222-256

Deacon, D., Pickering, M., Golding, P. and Murdock, G (2007a) *Researching Communication: A practical guide to methods in media and cultural analysis*, 2nd Ed., London: Hodder Arnold.

Deacon, D. Wring, D. Golding, P. (2007b) 'The Take a Break Campaign? National Print Media Reporting of the Election', in Wring, D. et al (eds.) *Political Communications: the British General Election Campaign of 2005*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Deacon, D. and Wring, D. (2011) 'Reporting the 2010 General Election: Old Media, New Media – Old Politics, New Politics, in Wring, D., Mortimore, R. and Atkinson, S. (eds.) *Political Communication In Britain: The Leader Debates, the Campaign and the Media in the 2010 General Election*, Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillian: 281-303

Douglas Vavrus, M. (2000) 'From Women of the Year to 'Soccer Moms': The Case of the Incredible Shrinking Women', *Political Communication*, 17: 193-213.

Douglas Vavrus, M. (2002) *Postfeminist News: Political Women in Media Culture*, Albany: State University of New York Press.

Eldridge, J (1995) 'Ill news comes often on the back of worse', Eldridge, J (ed.) *Glasgow Media Group reader Volume 1: News Contents, Language and Visuals*, London: Sage

Ettema, J. S, Whitney, D.C and Wackman, D.B (1997) 'Professional Mass Communicators', in Berkowitz, D. (ed.) *Social Meanings of News: A Text Reader*, London: Sage

Falk, E., & Kenski, K. (2006) 'Issue saliency and gender stereotypes: Support for women as presidents in times of war and terrorism', *Social Science Quarterly*, 87: 1–18.

Fowler, R. (1991) *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press*, London: Routledge

Frances, M. and Zweiniger-Bargielowska, I (1996) *The Conservatives and British Society 1880-1990*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Franklin, B. (2004) Packaging Politics: Political Communications in Britain's Media Democracy, Second Edition, London: Arnold

Gaber, I (2011) 'The Transformation of Campaign Reporting: The 2010 UK General Election, Revolution or Evolution?', in Wring, D., Mortimore, R. and Atkinson, S. (eds.) *Political Communication In Britain: The Leader Debates, the Campaign and the Media in the 2010 General Election*, Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillian: pp.261-280

Gallagher, M. (2010) 'Foreword', in Macharia, S., O'Connor, D. and Ndangam (ed.) *Who makes the news? Global Media Montoring Project 2010*, London: World Association for Christian Communication.

Gauntlett, D. (2008) *Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction*, London: Routledge.

Geddes, A. and Tonge, J. eds. (1997) *Labour's Landslide*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Gill, R. (2007) *Gender and the Media*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gidengil, E. and Everitt, J. (2003) 'Talking Tough: Gender and Reported Speech in Campaign News Coverage', *Political Communication*, 20: 209-232.

Goot, M. and Reid, E. (1984) 'Women: if not apolitical, then conservative', in Stiltanen, J. and Stanworth, M. (eds.) *Women and the Public Sphere: A critique of sociology and politics,* London: Hutchinson, 122-136

Graves, P.M. (1994) *Labour Women: Women in British Working Class Politics, 1918-1939*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Hansen, A., Cottle, S., Negrine, R. and Newbold, C. (1998) *Mass Communication Research Methods*, New York: Palgrave

Harmer, E. and Wring, D. (forthcoming) Julie and the Cybermums: marketing and women voters in the UK 2010 General Election, *Journal of Political Marketing*

Harrison, B. (1986) Women in a men's house: the women MPs, 1919-1945, *The Historical Journal* 29(3): 623-654

Herrnson, P. S., Lay, J. C., & Stokes, A. K. (2003). Women running "as women": Candidate gender, campaign issues, and voter-targeting strategies. *The Journal of Politics*, 65: 244–255.

Higgins, M. and Smith, A. (forthcoming) 'My husband; my hero': selling the political spouses in the 2010 general election, *Journal of Political Marketing*

Higgins, M (2008) *Media and Their Publics*, Maidenhead: Open University Press

Hinjosa, M. (2010) 'She's not my type of blonde': Media Coverage of Irene Sáez'a Presidential Bid, Murray, R. (ed) *Cracking the Highest Glass Ceiling: A Global Comparison of Women's Campaigns for Executive Office*, Santa Barbara CA: Praeger, 31-48

Holland, P. (1998) 'The politics of the smile: 'Soft news' and the sexualisation of the popular press', Carter, C., Branston, G. And Allan, S. (eds.) *News, Gender and Power*, London: Routledge: 17-32.

Holtz-Bacha, C. (2004) Germany: How the private life of politicians got into the media, Stanyer, J. and Wring, D. (ed.) Public Images, Private Lives: An Introduction, *Parliamentary Affairs* 57(1): 41-52.

Huddy, L. and Terkildsen, N. (1993) Gender Stereotypes and the Perception of Male and Female Candidates', *American Journal of Political Science* 37(1): 119-147

Iyengar, S., Valentino, N. A., Ansolabehere, S. and Simon, A. F. (1997). Running as a woman: gender stereotyping in women's campaigns, Norris, P. (ed) *Women, media, politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 77-99.

Jarvis, D (1994) Mrs Maggs and Betty: The Conservative Appeal to Women Voters in the 1920s, *Twentieth Century British History* 5(2): 129-152

Kahn, K. F. and Gordon, A, (1997) How Women Campaign for the US Senate , Norris, P. (ed) *Women, media, politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 59-76

Kavanagh, D. and Cowley, P. (2010) *The British General Election 2010*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan

Krijnen, T., Alvares, C. And Van Bauwel, S. eds. (2011) *Gendered Transformations: Theory and Practices on Gender and Media*, Bristol: Intellect.

Krippendorff, K. (2003) *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology* 2nd Ed., London: Sage

Krook, M.L, Lovenduski, J. and Squires, J. (2009) Gender Quotas and Models of Political Citizenship, *British Journal of Political Science* 39: 781-803.

Kuhn, R. (2004) 'Vive la difference'? The Mediation of politicians' public images and private lives in France, Stanyer, J. and Wring, D. (ed.) 'Public Images, Private Lives: An Introduction', *Parliamentary Affairs* 57(1): 24-40.

Lammers, J, Gordijn, E. H amd Otten, S. (2009) Iron ladies, men of steel: The effects of gender stereotyping on the perception of male and female candidates are moderated by prototypicality, *European Journal of Social Psychology* 39: 186-195

Langer, A. I. (2007) A Historical Exploration of the Personalisation of Politics in the Print Media: The British Prime Ministers (1945-1999), *Parliamentary Affairs* 60(3): 371-387

Langer, A. I. (2012) *The Personalisation of Politics in the UK: Mediated Leadership from Attlee to Cameron*, Manchester: Manchester University

Law, C. (1997) *Suffrage and Power: the women's movement 1918-1928*, London: Tauris

Lawrence, J. (2009) *Electing Our Masters: The Hustings in British Politics from Hogarth to Blair*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Lazar, M. M. (2005) 'Politicising Gender in Discourse: Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis as Political Perspective and Praxis', in Lazar, M. M. (ed.) *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Gender, Power and Ideology in Discourse*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Lewis, J., Inthorn, S., and Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2005) *Citizens or Consumers? What the Media tell us about Political Participation*, Maidenhead: Open University Press

Liebler, C.M. and Smith, S.J (1997) 'Tracking Gender Differences: A Comparative Analysis of Network Correspondents and their Sources, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 41: 58-68

Lister, R. (1997) *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*, Basingstoke: MacMillan

Livingstone, S. and Bennett, W. L (2003) 'Gatekeeping, Indexing and Live Event News: Is Technology Altering the Construction of News?', *Political Communication* 20: 363-380

Lloyd, J. (2004) *What the Media are doing to Our Politics*, London: Constable and Robinson

Lovenduski, J. and Norris, P. ed. (1996) *Women in Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Lovenduski, J. (1997) 'Gender Politics: a breakthrough for women?', *Parliamentary Affairs* 50(4): 708-719.

Lovenduski, J. (2005) *Feminizing Politics*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

MacDonald, M. (1995) *Representing Women: Myths of Femininity in the Popular Media*, London: Arnold

Marton, K. (2002) *Hidden Power: Presidential Marriages that Shaped Our History*, New York: Anchor Books.

McCombs, M. E. and Shaw, D. L . (1995) 'The Agenda-setting Function of the Mass Media', in Boyd-Barrett, O. and Newbold, C. (ed.) *Approaches to Media: A reader,* London: Arnold

McRobbie, A (2009) *The Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, Culture and Social Change*, London: Sage

Melman, B. (1988) *Women and the Popular Imagination in the Twenties: Flappers and Nymphs,* Basingstoke: MacMillan.

Mendes, K. (2011) *Feminism in the News: Representations of the Women's Movement since the 1960s*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan

Meyer, T. (2002) *Media Democracy: How the Media Colonize Politics*, Cambridge: Polity Press

Murray, R. (2010a) Introduction: Gender Stereotypes and Media Coverage of Women Candidates, Murray, R. (ed) *Cracking the Highest Glass Ceiling: A Global Comparison of Women's Campaigns for Executive Office*, Santa Barbara CA: Praeger, 3-27

Murray, R. (2010b) Madonna and Four Children: Ségolène Royal, Murray, R. (ed) *Cracking the Highest Glass Ceiling: A Global Comparison of Women's Campaigns for Executive Office*, Santa Barbara CA: Praeger, 49-68

Murray, R. (2010c) 'Second Among Unequals? A Study of Whether Frances' 'Quota Women' are Up to the Job', *Politics and Gender* 6: 93-118.

Murray, R. ed. (2010) *Cracking the Highest Glass Ceiling: A global comparison of women's campaigns for executive office*, Santa Barbara: Praegar

Musolf, K. J. (1999) *From Plymouth to Parliament: A Rhetorical History of Nancy Astor's 1919 Campaign*, New York: St. Martins Press

Negrine, R. (1994) *Politics and the Mass Media*, London: Routledge

Norris, P. (1997a) 'Women Leaders Worldwide: A Splash of Colour in the Photo Op', Norris, P. (ed.) *Women, Media and Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University press

Norris, P. ed. (1997b) *Women, Media and Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Norris, P. (1999) A Gender-Generation Gap?, in Evans, G. and Norris, P. (ed.) *Critical Elections: Voters and Parties in Long-Term Perspective*, London: Sage.

Norris, P. and Wlezien, C. eds. (2005) *Britain Votes 2005*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Nym Mayhall, L. E. (2003) *The Militant Suffrage Movement: Citizenship and Resistance in Britain, 1860-1930*, New York: Oxford University Press

Page, R. E. (2003) 'Cherie: Lawyer, wife, mum': contradictory patterns of representation in media reports of Cherie Booth/Blair, *Discourse and Society* 14(5): 559-579

Parry-Giles, S. J. (2000) 'Mediating Hillary Rodham Clinton: Television News Practices and Image Making in the Postmodern Age, *Critical Studies in Media Communication,* 17 (2): 205-226.

Peake, L. (1997) 'Women in the Campaign and in the Commons' in Geddes, A. and Tonge, J. (eds.) *Labour's Landslide*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 165-177.

Piscopo, J. M (2010) Primera Dama, 'Prima Donna? Media Constructions of Christina Fernandez de Kirchner in Argentina', Murray, R. (ed) *Cracking the Highest Glass Ceiling: A Global Comparison of Women's Campaigns for Executive Office*, Santa Barbara CA: Praeger, 197-220

Pugh, M. (1998) 'The *Daily Mirror* and the Revival of Labour 1935-1945', *Twentieth Century British History* 9(3): 420-438

Reyes, O. (2003) 'Cheriegate! Celebrity, scandal and political leadership', *Mediactive* 2: 26-43

Richardson, J. (2007) *Analysing Newspapers: An approach from critical discourse analysis*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan

Riffe, D., Lacy, S and Fico, F. G (2005) *Analysing Media Messages: Using quantitative content analysis in research*, 2nd ed. London: LEA

Rosenbaum, M. (1997) *From Soapbox to Soundbite: Party Political Campaigning in Britain since 1945*, Basingstoke: Macmillan

Ross, K. and Sreberny, A. (2000) 'Women in the House: Media Representation of British Politicians', Sreberny, A. and Van Zoonen, L. (eds.) *Gender, Politics and Communication*, Cresskill: Hampton Press, pp.79-99.

Ross, K. (2002) *Women, Politics, Media: Uneasy Relations in Comparative Perspective*, Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press

Ross, K. (2007) 'The journalist, the housewife, the citizen and the press: Women and men as sources in local news', *Journalism* 8(4): 449-473

Ross, K. (2010) *Gendered Media: Women, Men and Identity Politics*, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Ross, K. (2011) 'Silent Witness: News Sources, the Local Press and the Disappeared Woman', Krijnen, T., Alvares, C. And Van Bauwel, S. (eds.) *Gendered Transformations: Theory and Practices on Gender and Media*, Bristol: Intellect.

Ross, K. and Carter, C. (2011) 'Women and news: A long and winding road', *Media, Culture and Society* 33(8): 1148-1165

Scharrer, E. and Bissell, K. (2001) Overcoming Traditional Boundaries, *Women and Politics* 21(1): 55-83.

Schlesinger, P. (1989) 'From Production to Propaganda', *Media, Culture and Society* 11(3): 283-306

Seaton, J. (2003) Public, Private and the Media, *The Political Quarterly* 74:174-183

Seymour-Ure, C. (2003) *Prime Ministers and the Media: Issues of Power and Control*, Oxford: Blackwell

Shoemaker, P. J. and Reece, S.D (1996) *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influence on Mass Media Content, 2nd ed*, White Plains: Longman.

Sreberny, A. and Van Zoonen, L. ed. (2000) *Gender, Politics and Communication*, Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press

Sreberny-Mohammadi, A. and Ross, K. (1996) 'Women MPs and the Media: Representing the Body Politic, *Parliamentary Affairs* 49(1): 103-115

Sreberny-Mohammadi, A. and Ross, K. (1996)'Women MPs and the Media: Representing the Body Politic', Lovenduski, J. and Norris, P. (eds.) *Women in Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stanyer, J. (2007) *Modern Political Communication*, Cambridge: Polity Press

Stanyer, J. and Harmer, E. (2010) 'Celebrity First Families? A Comparative Examination of the Mediated Visibility of National Leaders' Spouses and Children in Seven Advanced Industrial democracies'. Paper presented at the Political Studies Association Annual Conference, Edinburgh, 30th March-1st April

Stanyer, J. and Wring, D. (2004) Public Images, Private Lives: An Introduction, *Parliamentary Affairs* 57(1): 1- 8

Steiner, L. (1998) 'Newsroom accounts of power at work', Carter, C., Branston, G. And Allan, S. eds. (eds.) *News, Gender and Power*, London: Routledge, pp.145-159.

Stephenson, M.A (1998) *The Glass Trapdoor: Women, politics and the media during the 1997 general election*, London: Fawcett.

Stiltanen, J. and Stanworth, M. (1984) 'The politics of private women and public man', in Stiltanen, J. and Stanworth, M. (eds.) *Women and the Public Sphere: A critique of sociology and politics*, London: Hutchinson, 185-208.

Street, J. (2001) *Mass Media, Politics and Democracy*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Taylor, P. M. (1997) *Global Communications, International Affairs and the Media since 1945,* London: Routledge

Thomas, J (2005) *Popular Newspapers, the Labour Party and British Politics*, Abingdon: Routledge

Tibballs, S. and Adcock, C. (1997) *What Women Want on Politics*, London: Women's Communication Centre.

Titscher, S., Meyer, M., Wodak, R. and Vetter, E. (2000) *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis*, London: Sage

Trimble, L. and Treiberg, N. (2010) 'Either way, there's going to be a man in charge': Media Representations of New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, Murray, R. (ed) *Cracking the Highest Glass Ceiling: A Global Comparison of Women's Campaigns for Executive Office*, Santa Barbara CA: Praeger, 115-136

Tuchman, G., Kaplan Daniels, A. and Benet, J. ed. (1978) *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in Mass Media*, New York: Oxford University Press

Van Zoonen, L. (1993) 'A tyranny of intimacy? Women, femininity and television news, Dahlgren, P. (ed.) *Communication and Citizenship: journalism and the public sphere*, London: Routledge, pp. 217-235.

Van Zoonen, L. (1994) *Feminist Media Studies*, London: Sage

Van Zoonen, L. (1998a) 'One of the girls?: The changing gender of journalism, Carter, C., Branston, G. And Allan, S. (eds.) *News, Gender and Power*, London: Routledge, 33-46.

Van Zoonen, L. (1998b) 'The Ethics of Making Private Life Public', in Brants, K., Hermes, J. and van Zoonen, L. (ed.) *The Media in Question: Popular Cultures and Public Interests*, London: Sage, 113-123

Van Zoonen, L. (2000) 'Broken Hearts, Broken Dreams? Politicians and Their Families in Popular Culture', Sreberny, A. and Van Zoonen, L. (eds.) *Gender, Politics and Communication*, Cresskill: Hampton Press, 101-119.

Van Zoonen, L. (2005) *Entertaining the Citizen*, Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield

Van Zoonen, L. (2006) 'The personal, the political and the popular: A woman's guide to celebrity politics', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 9(3): 287-301

Van Zoonen, L. and Harmer, E. (2011) 'The visual challenge of celebrity politics? Female politicians in Grazia', *Celebrity Studies* 2(1): 94-96

Ward, L (2000) 'Learning from the 'Babe' experience: how the finest hour became a fiasco', in Coote, A (ed.) *New Gender Agenda: Why women still want more*, London: IPPR: 23-32

Ward, R. J. (2002) 'Women representatives and women voters: taking account of 'Worcester Woman' in the 2001 general election' in Geddes, A. and Tonge, J. (eds.) *Labour's Second Landslide: The British General Election 2001*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp.238-254.

Webster, W. (1990) *Not a Man to Match Her: The Marketing of a Prime Minister*, London: The Women's Press

Williams, K (2003) *Understanding Media Theory*, London: Arnold

Wimmer, R. and Dominick, J. (2006) *Mass Media Research: an introduction*, 8th Ed. California: Wadsworth Publishing

Winfield. B. H. (1997) The First Lady, Political Power, and the Media: Who Elected Her Anyway?, Norris, P. (ed.) *Women, Media and Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press pp.166-179.

Winfield, B. H. and Friedman, B. (2003) Gender Politics: News coverage of the candidates' wives in campaign 2000, *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 80(3): 548-566

Winter, N. (2007) Cowboys and "Girlie-men": Gender Imagery and the Evaluation of Political Leaders, presented at Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago.

Wodak, R. and Meyer, M. (2001) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, London: Sage

Wring, D. (2002) 'The "Tony" Press: Media Coverage of the Election Campaign, in Geddes, A. and Tonge, J. (eds) Labour's Second Landslide, Manchester: Manchester University Press: 84-100

Wring, D. (2005) *The politics of marketing the Labour Party*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan

Wring, D. Green, J., Mortimore, R. and Atkinson, S. eds.(2007) *Political Communications: the British General Election Campaign of 2005*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Wring, D., Mortimore, R. and Atkinson, S. (2011) *Political Communication in Britain: The Leader Debates, the Campaign and the Media in the 2010 General Election*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan

Zoch, L. M. and Vanslyke Turk, J. (1998) 'Women making news: Gender as a variable in source selection and use', *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 75(4)pp. 762-775.

Zweiniger-Bargielowska, I. (1996) Explaining the Gender Gap: The Conservative Party and the Women's Vote, 1945-1964, in Frances, M and Zweiniger-Bargielowska, I (ed.) *The Conservatives and British Society 1880-1990*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press: 194-223

Zweiniger-Bargielowska, I. (2001) *Women in Twentieth Century Britain*, Harlow: Pearson Education

Zweiniger-Bargielowska, I. (2002) *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls, and Consumption 1939-1955*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Appendix A:

The table below gives the exact dates coded for each election in the historical sample.

Exact Coding Dates 1918-2005

Election	Dates Coded
1918	9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th December
1922	9th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 15th November
1923	30th November, 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th December
1924	23rd, 24th, 25th, 27th, 28th, 29th October
1929	24th, 25th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th May
1931	21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 26th, 27th October
1935	8th, 9th , 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th November
1945	29th, 30th June, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th July
1950	17th, 18th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd February
1951	19th, 20th, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th October
1955	20th, 21st, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th May
1959	2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th October
1964	9th, 10th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th October
1966	25th, 26th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st March
1970	8th, 9th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th June
1974 February	22nd, 23rd, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th February
1974 October	4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th October
1979	27th, 28th, 30th April, 1st, 2nd, 3rd May
1983	3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th June
1987	5th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th June
1992	3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th April
1997	25th, 26th, 28th, 29th, 30th April, 1st May
2001	1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th June
2005	29th, 30th April, 2nd, 3rd, 4th 5th, May

Exact Coding Dates 2010

This table give the exact dates coded for the 2010 sample (including polling day on 6th May)

2010	Coding Dates
Week 1	8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 13th, 14th April
Week 2	15th 16th, 17th, 19th, 20th, 21st April
Week 3	22nd, 23rd, 24th, 26th, 27th, 28th, April
Week 4	29th, 30th, 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th May
Polling Day	6th May

Appendix B:

Theme Codes for Content Analysis

Policy Themes:

1. International Affairs (including war/peace/security/foreign affairs/international relations and Europe

2. Equality (includes rights for women and minority groups, abortion, gay rights and disability rights and social inequality)

3. Health and Welfare (including social care and standard of living and benefits)

4. Economy (including cost of living, trade, business, industry and taxation)

5. Housing (includes homelessness)

6. Employment (includes industrial relations, wages, working conditions and unemployment)

7. Education

8. Law and Order (includes crime)

9. Culture/media/sport/ heritage

10. Transport

11. Immigration

12. Scottish/Welsh/Northern Irish regional politics (includes devolution)

13. Constitutional Affairs

14. Farming/agriculture/rural affairs

15. Environment/animal welfare

16. Race relations/racism

17. Family and Children (includes 'morality', divorce reform and child care)

Electoral Process Themes:

18. Incidents/experiences from the campaign trail

19. Voting Stories/Election trivia

20. Practical voting advice

21. Speculation about election result/polling results

22. Media Coverage

23. Constituency Profile

24. Evaluating government record

25. Speculation about post-election changes

26. Assessing the campaign

27. Comparing with previous elections

28. Speculation about women's voting intentions

29. Women engaging with the election

30. Campaigning or appealing to women voters

31. Encouraging women to vote a certain way

32. Encouraging women to vote generally

33. Trivialising/criticising women voters

34. Apathy

35. Undecided/floating voters

36. Issues important to women

37. Women's views on or attitudes to the election/politics

38. Women's importance to the election outcome

39. Importance of women's views/experiences in politics (includes role of women in politics/election)

40. Perceptions of/attitudes towards women voters

41. Specific women's views on election/party/candidate

42. Supporting a certain candidate or party

43. Voting according to loved one's wishes/interests

44. Evaluating politicians

45. Weighing up chances of being elected

46. Attack on/negative view of politician

47. Politicians' comments or behaviour (includes sleaze and corruption/scandal)

48. Lack of or number of women candidates/MPs

49. Achievements/Importance of women MPs (includes controversy over AWS and women transforming politics)

50. Politician profile

51. Popularity if politician (includes influence and image)

52. Campaigning style

53. Comparing politicians

54. Role of politicians wives in the campaign

55. Actively campaigning

56. Personal life (includes death)

Appendix C

Inter-coder reliability

Approximately 10% of items from the sample were coded by a second coder to ensure the consistency of categories over time. 400 items were taken from the historical sample and 40 items were taken from the 2010 sample.

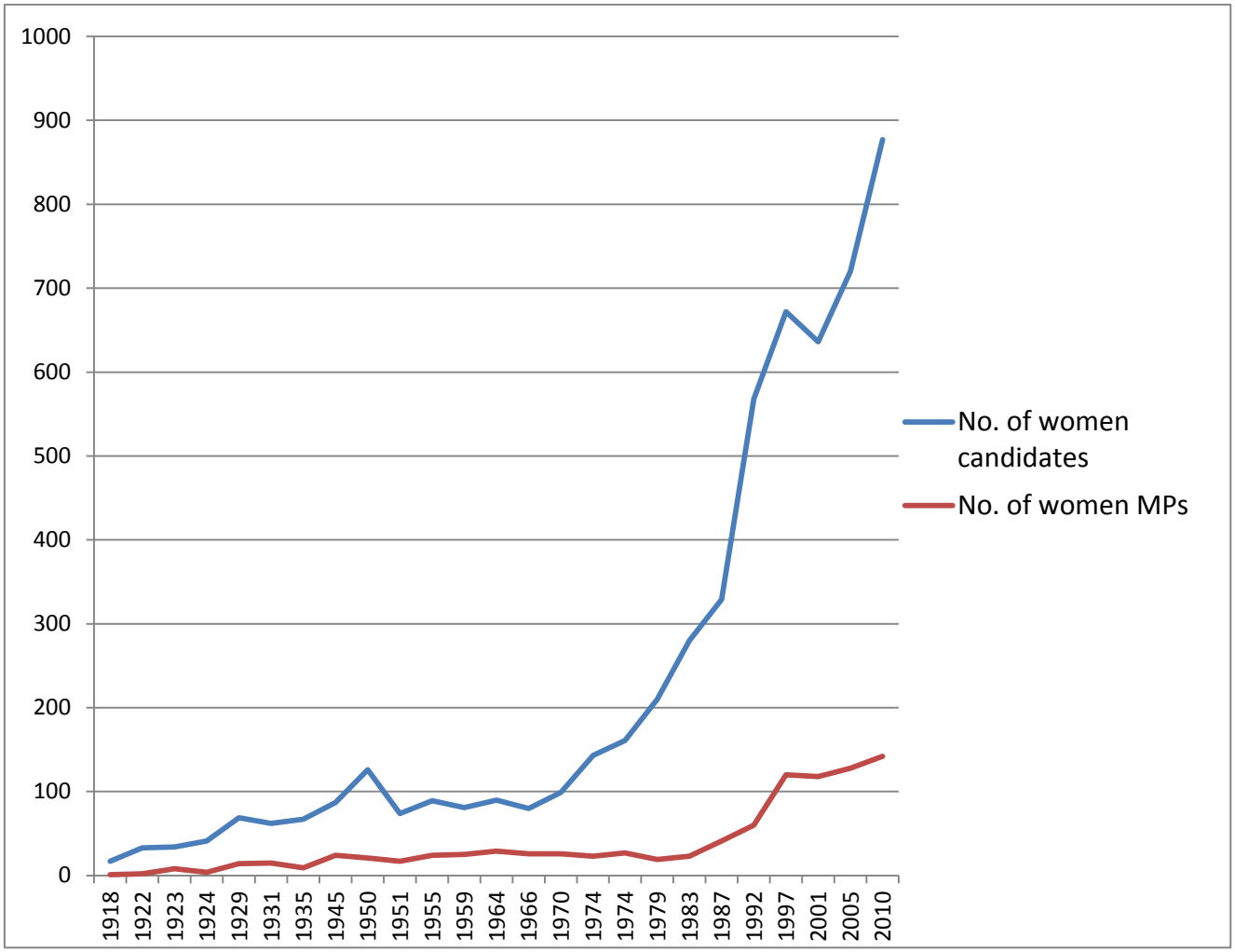
All sample items were taken from the *Daily Mirror* and the *Guardian* digital archives. The table below shows the percentage of agreement between the author and the second coder.

Variables

	Percentage of inter-coder reliability
Date	100% (400)
Newspaper	100% (400)
Page No	100% (400)
Type of Item	100% (400)
Category of woman	96% (384)
Theme 1	90% (360)
Theme 2	89% (356)
Sex of Author	100% (400)
Evaluation of woman	94% (376)
Mention of appearance	99% (396)
Mention of age	100% (400)
Mention of family members	100% (400)
Level of political activity	92% (368)
Given a Voice	100% (400)

Appendix D:

Number of women candidates and MPs 1918-2010



1918 – 1992 data taken from Butler, D. and Butler, G. (1994) *British Political Facts 1900-1994*, Basingstoke: MacMillan

1997 – 2005 data taken from Centre for Women and Democracy (2010) Election 2010: Where the Women Candidates Are, Leeds: Centre for Women and Democracy, available from: http://www.cfwd.org.uk/uploads/pdfs/WomenCandidatesApril2010.pdf (accessed 17th August 2012)

2010 data taken from UK Parliament website: http://www.parliament.uk/about/faqs/house-of-commons-faqs/members-faq-page2/ (accessed 17th August 2012)

Appendix E:

Technical Appendix

All totals (in bold) appear in their respective figures in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

E.1

Percentage of items about Politicians, Voters and Relatives 1918-2010 (Broken down by newspaper)

Key: P = Politician; V = Voter and R = Relative

	Daily Mirror			The Guardian			Daily Telegraph			Daily Mail			Sun/Herald			**Total**		
	P	V	R	P	V	R	P	V	R	P	V	R	P	V	R	**P**	**V**	**R**
1918	11.4	82.9	5.7	36	44	20	25	71.4	3.6	55.9	35.3	8.8	N/A	N/A	N/A	**31.9**	**59**	**9.1**
1922	11.1	66.7	22.2	35.3	47.1	17.6	28.3	43.4	28.3	37.5	35	27.5	52.4	42.8	4.8	**33.3**	**44.7**	**22**
1923	46.1	29.2	29.2	53.1	24.2	22.7	25.6	46.5	27.9	35.7	23.8	40.5	38.5	48.7	12.8	**40.2**	**33.6**	**26.2**
1924	22.2	63	14.8	26.3	47.4	26.3	20	45	35	9.3	58.1	32.6	48.2	28.6	23.2	**27**	**46.1**	**26.9**
1929	30	65	5	46.6	42.5	10.9	27.5	45	27.5	27.8	55.6	16.6	38.8	51	10.2	**37.5**	**48.5**	**14**
1931	12.5	56.2	31.3	44.8	36.8	18.4	32.4	29.4	38.2	20.6	35.3	44.1	51.2	25.6	23.2	**35.8**	**33.9**	**30.3**
1935	47.8	47.8	4.4	70.6	5.9	23.5	29.7	32.4	37.9	32.1	25	42.9	50	37.5	12.5	**46.1**	**28.6**	**25.3**
1945	0	100	0	47.4	31.6	21	61.8	14.7	23.5	11.1	88.9	0	55	30	15	**33.9**	**54**	**12.1**
1950	9.5	90.5	0	46.4	39.3	14.3	51.2	24.4	24.4	33.3	50	16.7	22.6	64.5	12.9	**35.1**	**49.7**	**15.2**
1951	8.6	87	4.4	78	17.1	4.9	52.5	27.5	20	52	24	24	33.3	60	6.7	**49.1**	**39**	**11.9**
1955	45.5	54.5	0	70	12.5	17.5	72.2	16.7	11.1	39.1	39.1	21.8	44.4	50	5.6	**59.4**	**27.3**	**13.3**
1959	20	60	20	43.8	37.5	18.7	71.2	3.8	25	44	40	16	37.5	58.3	4.2	**51**	**30.8**	**18.2**
1964	0	66.7	33.3	48.4	35.5	16.1	48.2	33.3	18.5	12.5	54.2	33.3	19	57.2	23.8	**32.1**	**44.9**	**23**
1966	12.5	50	37.5	23.8	38.1	38.1	53.1	28.1	18.8	0	83.3	16.7	27.8	55.5	16.7	**30.8**	**45.1**	**24.2**
1970	29.2	62.5	8.3	39.5	36.8	23.7	29.7	56.8	13.5	11.1	66.7	22.2	27	61.5	11.5	**29.4**	**54.5**	**16.1**
1974F	18.2	77.3	4.5	43.6	53.8	2.6	30	60	10	34.8	34.8	30.4	25	62.5	12.5	**33.7**	**55.4**	**10.9**
1974O	31.3	68.7	0	81.6	13.2	5.2	67.8	14.3	17.9	56.5	30.4	13.1	64.3	35.7	0	**64.7**	**26.9**	**8.4**
1979	72.5	50	7.5	77.2	8.9	13.9	85.7	4.8	9.5	69.2	18	12.8	77.5	17.5	5	**77.4**	**12.3**	**10.3**
1983	75.9	13	11.1	84.7	7.1	8.2	85.4	9.1	5.5	85.4	14.6	0	80.9	12.8	6.3	**82.2**	**10.9**	**6.9**
1987	58.3	33.3	8.4	79.8	11.2	9	59	26	15	61.8	25.5	12.7	56.4	28.2	15.4	**67.6**	**21.5**	**10.9**
1992	42.9	39.3	17.8	60.8	31.4	7.8	40.8	37.5	21.7	25	39.3	35.7	30.8	53.8	15.4	**43.6**	**39.1**	**17.3**
1997	17.6	67.7	14.7	39.7	47.1	13.2	40	40	20	58.8	23.5	17.7	30.4	30.4	39.1	**35.2**	**46.5**	**18.3**
2001	63.9	27.8	8.3	56	34	10	52.5	27.5	20	29.4	44.1	26.5	30	52.5	17.5	**45.6**	**39.4**	**15**
2005	36.8	47.3	15.9	42.5	47.5	10	50	27.3	22.7	37	40.8	22.2	26.1	43.5	30.4	**38.9**	**42**	**19.1**
2010	17.6	56.9	25.5	30.1	39.8	30.1	22.8	44.5	32.7	21.7	34.8	43.5	19.2	59.6	21.2	**23**	**41.5**	**31.5**

E.2

Percentage of items which refer to the families of voters 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	20.7	9.1	30	25	N/A	**22.2**
1922	33.3	43.8	35	21.4	33.3	**33.8**
1923	28.6	37.5	40	0	36.8	**31.9**
1924	11.8	38.9	33.3	20	31.2	**26.6**
1929	15.4	22.6	33.3	50	20	**25.8**
1931	22.2	28.6	30	16.7	18.1	**23.2**
1935	36.4	0	33.3	0	41.7	**29.5**
1945	88.1	0	20	12.5	66.7	**64.2**
1950	42.1	36.4	20	13.3	45	**33.3**
1951	55	42.6	54.5	33.3	44.4	**48.4**
1955	33.3	80	50	33.3	44.4	**45.7**
1959	33.3	25	0	10	35.7	**25**
1964	50	45.5	55.6	23.1	16.7	**34.7**
1966	25	25	0	20	10	**14.6**
1970	26.7	35.7	14.3	33.3	31.3	**26.9**
1974F	23.5	33.3	24	37.5	0	**27.5**
1974O	27.3	20	50	14.3	0	**21.9**
1979	50	57.1	33.3	57.1	14.3	**43.8**
1983	28.6	28.6	27.5	57.1	16.7	**33.3**
1987	25	70	54.5	50	63.6	**51.1**
1992	54.5	43.8	38	9.1	42.9	**38.5**
1997	30.4	37.5	40	50	57.1	**37.9**
2001	50	29.4	22.8	20	38.1	**33.3**

2005	22.2	57.9	66.7	63.7	20	**47.3**
2010	64.5	36.4	55	68.1	70.2	**58.5**

E.3

Percentage of items about voters' four main themes 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

Key: I = International Affairs; Eq = Equality; H = Health and Welfare and Ec = Economy

	Daily Mirror				The Guardian				Daily Telegraph				Daily Mail				Daily Herald/The Sun				**Total**			
	I	Eq	H	Ec	I	Eq	H	Ec	I	Eq	H	Ec	I	Eq	H	Ec	I	Eq	H	Ec	**I**	**Eq**	**H**	**Ec**
1918	42.9	14.3	14.3	14.3	0	50	25	0	50	14.3	0	7.1	0	66.7	0	33.3					**35.7**	**25**	**7.1**	**10.7**
1922	0	14.3	0	57.1	40	40	0	0	12.5	25	12.5	25	0	20	0	80	50	33.3	16.7	0	**19.4**	**25.8**	**6.5**	**32.3**
1923	16.7	0	0	83.3	0	0	20	60	0	0	11.1	77.8	25	0	0	75	8.3	8.3	16.7	50	**5.6**	**5.6**	**11.1**	**66.7**
1924	0	0	0	66.7	0	41.7	0	41.7	0	12.5	0	75	15.4	15.4	0	61.5	0	0	11.1	66.7	**3.9**	**15.7**	**1.9**	**60.8**
1929	0	0	0	100	25	16.7	16.7	16.7	0	0	100	0	0	25	0	25	0	40	30	10	**10.3**	**24.1**	**20.7**	**20.7**
1931	0	0	0	100	25	50	12.5	12.5	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	11.1	66.7	**7.1**	**14.3**	**7.1**	**64.3**
1935	50	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	33.3	0	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	22.2	0	11.1	55.6	**31.3**	**0**	**12.5**	**37.5**
1945	47.1	11.8	0	5.9	0	100	0	0	33.3	66.7	0	0	0	0	50	50	20	20	40	0	**34.5**	**24.1**	**10.3**	**6.9**
1950	0	31.6	10.5	42.1	0	14.3	14.3	71.4	0	0	16.7	50	0	0	0	83.3	12.5	6.3	18.8	31.3	**3.7**	**14.8**	**12.9**	**48.1**
1951	38.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	12.5	12.5	75	0	0	0	100	16.7	0	41.7	16.7	**27.5**	**15**	**15**	**32.5**
1955	0	0	0	33.3	25	0	0	50	0	25	0	75	0	0	0	100	0	0	28.6	42.9	**4.5**	**4.5**	**13.6**	**59.1**
1959	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	100	0	25	0	75	11.1	0	33.3	33.3	**10.5**	**5.3**	**21.1**	**36.8**
1964	0	0	0	50	50	50	0	0	0	0	33.3	0	0	20	20	60	0	0	0	25	**5.6**	**11.1**	**11.1**	**33.3**
1966	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	25	0	0	0	50	0	0	33.3	33.3	0	66.7	0	0	**0**	**25**	**8.3**	**25**
1970	0	0	22.2	44.4	0	12.5	12.5	62.5	0	0	0	54.5	0	0	0	85.7	0	0	0	80	**0**	**2.5**	**7.5**	**62.5**
1974F	0	18.2	9.1	63.6	10	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	80	0	0	50	50	**3.3**	**6.7**	**13.3**	**53.3**
1974O	0	60	0	20	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	33.3	0	33.3	0	0	0	50	**0**	**28.6**	**0**	**50**
1979	0	57.1	0	28.6	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	20	0	80	**0**	**29.4**	**5.9**	**52.9**
1983	0	25	0	0	50	0	0	25	60	0	0	15	66.7	0	0	33.3	66.7	0	0	0	**42.9**	**7.1**	**0**	**14.3**

1987	12.5	37.5	25	0	0	16.7	50	16.7	0	0	55	0	0	14.3	14.3	42.9	0	0	0	0	**3.7**	**22.2**	**22.2**	**14.8**
1992	0	0	27.3	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	64.5	0	0	33.3	33.3	0	0	0	66.7	0	**0**	**4.2**	**37.5**	**0**
1997	12.5	0	62.5	0	0	21.4	35.7	0	0	0	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**5.6**	**8.3**	**41.7**	**0**
2001	0	0	80	20	16.7	33.3	16.7	16.7	0	0	64.1	0	10	0	80	10	0	0	44.4	0	**6.7**	**6.7**	**56.7**	**10**
2005	0	40	60	0	44.4	11.1	33.3	0	100	0	0	0	50	0	40	0	0	0	0	0	**34.5**	**10.3**	**34.5**	**0**
2010	0	0	34.1	11.1	0	10	20	10	0	0	36.6	0	0	0	48.1	0	0	0	33.3	0	**0**	**2.5**	**51.5**	**5**

E.4

Percentage of Items about voters where they are presented as active 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	31	9.1	0	0	N/A	**13.9**
1922	16.7	25	15	14.3	11.1	**16.9**
1923	14.3	6.3	25	40	15.8	**19.4**
1924	47.1	27.8	16.7	12	25	**24.5**
1929	30.8	12.9	33.3	10	28	**22.7**
1931	0	21.4	20	16.7	18.1	**16.1**
1935	54.5	0	41.7	28.6	33.3	**38.6**
1945	71.4	50	40	37.5	50	**61.2**
1950	78.9	18.1	20	40	60	**49.3**
1951	95	42.9	36.4	16.7	66.7	**62.9**
1955	50	20	16.7	33.3	33.3	**31.4**
1959	50	8.3	0	80	57.1	**45.5**
1964	0	36.4	22.2	69.2	16.7	**34.7**
1966	50	37.5	33.3	40	60	**37.3**

1970	60	28.6	23.8	25	37.5	**34.4**
1974F	29.4	38.1	30	75	0	**34.4**
1974O	18.1	20	50	42.6	60	**59.3**
1979	25	42.9	66.7	57.1	0	**68.1**
1983	57.1	57.1	54.1	57.1	66.7	**59.3**
1987	50	80	70	57.1	91	**68.1**
1992	18.1	43.8	44.4	72.7	57.1	**48.1**
1997	43.5	53.1	55	25	57.1	**48.5**
2001	70	29.4	38.8	86.7	57.1	**58.7**
2005	66.7	63.2	50	45.5	60	**58.2**
2010	62.5	58.1	42.5	57.1	55	**62.3**

E.5

Percentage of items where voters are quoted or summarised 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	31	9.1	5	0	N/A	**15.3**
1922	16.7	12.5	10	0	11.1	**9.9**
1923	14.3	12.5	5	30	10.5	**12.5**
1924	29.4	16.7	5.6	4	18.8	**13.8**
1929	15.4	9.7	0	10	20	**11.3**
1931	0	7.1	10	0	9.1	**5.4**
1935	54.5	0	33.3	0	25	**29.6**
1945	64.3	50	40	25	50	**55.2**
1950	78.9	0	40	33.3	60	**48**

1951	95	28.6	36.7	16.7	66.7	**61.3**
1955	66.7	0	16.7	33.3	33.3	**31.5**
1959	50	8.3	0	70	50	**40.9**
1964	0	18.2	22.2	61.5	20	**28.6**
1966	25	50	22.2	30	50	**36.5**
1970	60	21.4	19	33.3	25	**30.7**
1974F	29.4	33.3	30	75	0	**35.3**
1974O	27.3	20	50	57.1	60	**40.6**
1979	12.5	42.6	66.7	57.1	0	**31.3**
1983	71.4	57.1	61.5	57.1	66.7	**62.9**
1987	50	80	45	42.9	72.7	**59.6**
1992	27.3	43.8	44.4	72.7	42.9	**46.1**
1997	43.5	53.1	58	25	57.1	**48.5**
2001	70	29.4	56.2	86.7	66.7	**61.9**
2005	66.7	57.9	83.3	63.6	60	**63.7**
2010	57.1.	55	58.1	45	48.5	**55.5**

E.6

Percentage of items about politicians' four main policy themes 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

Key: I = International Affairs; Em = Employment; H = Health and Welfare and Ec = Economy

	Daily Mirror				The Guardian				Daily Telegraph				Daily Mail				Daily Herald/The Sun				**Total**			
	I	Em	H	Ec	I	Em	H	Ec	I	Em	H	Ec	I	Em	H	Ec	I	Em	H	Ec	**I**	**Em**	**H**	**Ec**
1918	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33.3	0	0	0	0	33.3	16.7	0	16.7					**16.7**	**8.3**	**0**	**16.7**
1922	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	50	0	0	0	0	33.3	0	33.3	**14.3**	**14.3**	**0**	**42.8**
1923	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	25	0	50	0	16.7	0	66.7	0	33.3	0	33.3	**0**	**16.7**	**0**	**66.7**
1924	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	44.4	0	0	22.2	**40**	**0**	**0**	**20**
1929	0	0	0	0	20	30	20	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	**16.7**	**22.2**	**11.1**	**0**
1931	0	0	0	0	33.3	0	0	66.7	0	0	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	50	50	0	**0**	**28.6**	**28.6**	**42.8**
1935	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	50	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	75	0	**22.2**	**0**	**44.5**	**22.2**
1945	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	**0**	**0**	**33.3**	**33.3**
1950	0	0	0	100	0	0	50	25	0	0	11.1	33.3	0	0	0	0	25	50	25	0	**5**	**10**	**20**	**30**
1951	0	0	0	0	14.3	14.3	0	14.3	28.6	14.3	0	42.9	20	0	0	60	0	0	0	0	**19.1**	**9.5**	**4.7**	**33.3**
1955	0	25	25	25	27.3	0	0	54.5	36.4	9.1	0	45.5	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	50	**21.9**	**6.3**	**6.3**	**50**
1959	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	36.4	9.1	9.1	36.4	0	0	0	0	40	20	20	0	**31.6**	**10.5**	**15.8**	**21.1**
1964	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.5	0	37.5	12.5	25	12.5	25	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	**16.7**	**5.6**	**33.3**	**5.6**
1966	0	0	0	0	66.7	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	**44.4**	**0**	**11.1**	**0**
1970	0	0	0	100	16.7	0	0	0	0	33.3	16.7	50	0	100	0	0	33.3	0	0	33.3	**11.8**	**17.6**	**5.9**	**29.4**
1974F	0	0	0	100	14.3	14.3	0	14.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100	0	0	**9.1**	**18.2**	**0**	**36.4**
1974O	0	0	25	50	4.5	13.6	18.2	18.2	6.3	6.3	18.8	18.8	25	12.5	12.5	12.5	0	0	25	50	**7.4**	**7.4**	**18.5**	**24.1**
1979	0	0	26.7	46.7	13	8.7	4.3	43.5	0	25	0	25	0	20	10	30	0	21.1	15.8	26.3	**3.3**	**15.2**	**15.2**	**33.7**
1983	43.8	12.5	12.5	12.5	51.7	17.2	0	20.7	45.5	0	12.5	0	57.1	14.3	0	14.3	50	10	0	30	**50.7**	**14.5**	**5.8**	**18.8**
1987	0	20	46.7	13.3	38.7	6.5	19.4	12.9	0	0	15	0	38.5	7.7	0	38.5	66.7	0	16.7	0	**32.3**	**9.2**	**21.5**	**16.9**
1992	0	40	0	20	16.7	0	16.7	16.7	0	0	22.2	11.1	0	0	50	0	50	0	0	0	**16.7**	**11.1**	**11.1**	**11.1**
1997	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	12.5	10	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	50	0	0	0	**41.7**	**0**	**16.7**	**8.3**
2001	50	0	0	0	75	0	0	0	16.7	0	12.1	0	0	0	50	0	0	33.3	33.3	33.3	**40**	**10**	**20**	**10**
2005	0	0	0	0	44.4	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	33.3	0	0	0	**50**	**0**	**0**	**0**
2010	0	0	50	0	0	50	50	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	30	**0**	**10**	**20**	**0**

E.7

Percentage of items offering some evaluation of politicians 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

Key: P = Positive; N = Negative and M = Mixed

	Daily Mirror			The Guardian			Daily Telegraph			Daily Mail			Daily Herald/The Sun			**Total**		
Evaluation	P	N	M	P	N	M	P	N	M	P	N	M	P	N	M	**P**	**N**	**M**
1918	25	50	0	33.3	0	11.1	28.6	14.8	0	47.4	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	**38.5**	**7.7**	**2.6**
1922	0	0	0	58.3	0	0	30.8	0	0	33.3	0	0	72.7	0	0	**45.3**	**0**	**0**
1923	20	50	10	17.1	5.7	11.4	9.1	0	0	26.7	6.7	20	80	6.7	0	**29.1**	**10.5**	**9.3**
1924	0	0	0	30	0	0	12.5	12.5	12.5	0	25	0	59.3	18.5	3.7	**36.4**	**12.7**	**3.6**
1929	33.3	0	0	23.5	2.9	5.9	18.2	0	0	20	0	0	47.4	15.8	0	**29.3**	**5.3**	**2.7**
1931	50	0	0	23.5	0	11.8	18.2	18.2	0	0	14.3	0	36.4	4.5	0	**25.4**	**6.8**	**3.4**
1935	0	54.5	0	4.2	0	4.2	9.1	0	0	22.2	0	11.1	31.2	6.3	6.3	**12.7**	**9.9**	**4.2**
1945	N/A	N/A	N/A	33.3	11.1	0	14.3	4.8	0	0	0	0	27.3	0	0	**21.4**	**4.8**	**0**
1950	0	0	0	7.7	0	7.7	38.1	4.8	4.8	40	0	10	57.1	14.3	0	**32.1**	**3.8**	**5.7**
1951	50	50	0	9.4	3.1	0	19	9.5	0	7.7	7.7	7.7	20	0	0	**14.1**	**6.4**	**1.3**
1955	0	20	0	3.6	7.1	0	26.9	15.4	0	11.1	22.2	11.1	37.5	0	0	**15.8**	**11.8**	**1.3**
1959	0	0	0	0	7.1	0	21.6	16.2	0	22.2	11.1	0	66.7	0	0	**21.9**	**11**	**0**
1964	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	6.7	0	0	7.7	15.4	0	0	0	50	0	0	**5.7**	**5.7**	**5.7**
1966	0	0	0	20	0	0	35.3	5.9	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	20	0	0	**28.6**	**3.6**	**0**
1970	0	0	14.3	33.3	0	0	18.2	9.1	0	0	0	50	28.6	0	0	**21.4**	**2.4**	**4.8**
1974F	25	0	0	5.9	0	0	0	0	0	37.5	12.5	0	0	0	0	**16.1**	**3.2**	**0**
1974O	0	40	0	0	19.4	6.5	0	26.3	0	15.4	15.4	0	44.4	0	11.1	**7.8**	**19.5**	**3.9**
1979	0	31	13.8	4.9	27.9	3.3	18.5	13	3.7	62.9	7.4	0	38.7	6.5	0	**20.8**	**18.3**	**4**
1983	2.4	51.2	2.4	6	33.7	6	0	0	0	34.1	7.3	2.4	42.1	13.2	2.6	**17.7**	**28.1**	**4**
1987	0	95	0	2.8	42.3	5.6	0	45	0	50	17.6	0	59	9.1	0	**21.6**	**39.2**	**2.7**
1992	16.7	41.7	0	0	19.4	12.9	0	11.1	0	14.3	0	0	0	50	0	**5.2**	**25.9**	**6.9**
1997	0	50	33.3	3.7	18.5	7.4	0	0	0	0	70	0	0	57.7	0	**2**	**38**	**8**
2001	4.3	60.8	0	7.1	25	14.3	0	0	0	10	30	0	33.3	16.7	0	**10.9**	**35.6**	**5.5**
2005	0	42.8	0	5.9	17.6	5.9	0	18.2	0	0	50	0	0	33.3	0	**2**	**29.4**	**2**
2010	0	45	0	0	16.7	0	0	37.5	0	0	48.1	0	0	44.4	0	**0**	**42.5**	**0**

E.8

Percentage of items where politicians are quoted or summarised 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	50	44.4	0	47.4	N/A	**38.5**
1922	50	8.3	38.5	26.7	45.5	**30.2**
1923	10	31.4	36.4	33.3	33.3	**30.2**
1924	66.7	30	25	25	44.4	**40**
1929	33.3	38.2	18.2	0	26.3	**29.3**
1931	0	23.5	18.2	28.6	22.7	**22**
1935	0	20.8	9.1	44.4	25	**19.7**
1945	N/A	44.4	28.6	100	36.4	**35.7**
1950	100	53.8	52.4	90	57.1	**62.3**
1951	50	43.8	57.1	53.8	70	**52.6**
1955	60	60.7	57.7	55.6	75	**60.6**
1959	100	50	64.9	36.4	66.7	**60.3**
1964	N/A	53.3	61.5	66.7	75	**60**
1966	100	60	41.2	N/A	60	**50**
1970	42.9	40	36.4	0	57.1	**40.5**
1974F	50	58.9	55	62.5	50	**58**
1974O	80	77.4	52.6	30.8	55.6	**61**
1979	69	41	46.3	44.4	45.2	**47.5**
1983	56.1	41	36.3	31.7	28.9	**39.9**
1987	38.1	45.1	45	29.4	31.8	**38.5**
1992	25	35.5	22.2	14.3	25	**29.3**
1997	33.3	40.7	40	40	28.6	**38**
2001	26.1	42.9	36.6	40	33.3	**35.6**

2005	14.3	58.8	36.4	20	33.3	**37.3**
2010	16.7	36.6	25	29.1	20	**27.5**

E.9

Percentage of items which mention the appearance of politicians 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	0	0	0	15.8	N/A	**7.7**
1922	0	8.3	0	13.3	0	**5.7**
1923	10	8.6	9.1	20	6.7	**10.5**
1924	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
1929	0	0	0	20	0	**1.3**
1931	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
1935	18.2	0	0	22.2	0	**5.6**
1945	N/A	0	0	0	0	**0**
1950	0	0	19	40	14.3	**16.9**
1951	0	9.4	19	7.7	0	**10.3**
1955	0	3.6	3.8	22.2	12.5	**6.6**
1959	0	0	18.1	36.4	0	**15.1**
1964	N/A	20	7.7	0	0	**11.4**
1966	100	20	23.5	N/A	20	**25**
1970	0	13.3	18.2	0	28.6	**14.3**
1974F	25	11.8	0	62.5	50	**29.1**
1974O	0	12.9	5.3	15.4	44.4	**14.3**
1979	6.9	9.8	7.4	3.7	0	**6.4**

1983	7.3	7.2	7.2	7.3	7.9	**7.4**
1987	9.5	5.6	7	11.8	4.5	**7.4**
1992	0	9.7	8.2	14.3	0	**6.9**
1997	16.7	7.4	10	10	0	**8**
2001	26.1	7.1	11.1	0	16.7	**13.7**
2005	14.3	5.9	9.1	10	0	**7.8**
2010	0	32	21.7	46.7	30	**28**

E.10

Percentage of items that mention the age of politicians 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	0	0	0	5.3	N/A	**2.6**
1922	0	16.7	0	0	0	**3.8**
1923	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
1924	0	10	0	0	0	**1.8**
1929	0	2.9	0	0	0	**1.3**
1931	0	11.8	0	14.3	4.5	**6.8**
1935	9.1	8.3	0	11.1	0	**5.6**
1945	N/A	33.3	4.8	0	9.1	**11.9**
1950	0	15.4	14.3	10	14.3	**13.2**
1951	0	28.1	19	0	10	**17.9**
1955	20	10.7	11.5	0	0	**9.2**
1959	0	21.4	32.4	27.3	0	**24.7**
1964	N/A	20	7.7	0	0	**11.4**

1966	0	40	35.3	N/A	20	**32.1**
1970	28.6	20	27.3	0	14.3	**21.4**
1974F	25	23.5	25	25	50	**25.8**
1974O	20	16.1	26.3	15.4	33.3	**20.8**
1979	6.9	8.2	9.3	0	0	**5.9**
1983	2.4	13.3	5.5	2.4	2.6	**6.9**
1987	4.8	9.9	9	8.8	4.5	**8.1**
1992	16.7	19.4	14.1	0	12.5	**15.5**
1997	0	3.7	2.5	20	0	**6**
2001	17.4	7.1	5.5	0	0	**8.2**
2005	14.3	11.8	27.3	20	0	**15.7**
2010	5.5	0	6.8	0	2.2	**3.5**

E.11

Percentage of items that mention the family of politicians 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	0	11.1	14.3	21.1	N/A	**15.4**
1922	0	16.7	7.7	0	0	**5.7**
1923	0	11.4	9.1	20	20	**12.8**
1924	0	0	0	0	7.4	**3.6**
1929	0	14.7	9.1	20	5.3	**10.7**
1931	0	17.6	0	0	4.5	**6.8**
1935	0	8.3	0	33.3	12.5	**9.9**
1945	0	22.2	14.3	0	18.1	**16.7**

1950	0	15.4	9.5	30	14.3	**15.1**
1951	50	28.1	4.8	7.7	0	**15.4**
1955	20	3.6	11.5	0	0	**6.6**
1959	50	14.3	8.1	18.1	22.2	**13.7**
1964	N/A	6.7	23.1	0	25	**14.3**
1966	0	40	41.2	N/A	0	**32.1**
1970	14.3	13.3	27.3	0	0	**14.3**
1974F	25	11.8	15	25	0	**16.1**
1974O	20	0	15.8	7.7	55.6	**13**
1979	6.9	9.8	11.1	3.7	12.9	**9.4**
1983	7.3	9.6	8.8	7.3	2.6	**7.4**
1987	0	9.9	7.2	8.8	9.1	**8.1**
1992	0	3.2	12.5	42.6	12.5	**8.6**
1997	0	0	4	10	14.3	**4**
2001	4.3	3.6	2.5	10	0	**4**
2005	14.3	5.9	27.3	0	0	**9.8**
2010	9.1	0	0	14.7	5.5	**4.5**

E.12

Percentage of items about the relatives which feature the three prominent themes 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

Key: CT = Events on the Campaign Trail; AC = Actively Campaigning and PL = Personal Life

	Daily Mirror			The Guardian			Daily Telegraph			Daily Mail			Daily Herald/The Sun			**Total**		
	CT	AC	PL	CT	AC	PL	CT	AC	PL	CT	AC	PL	CT	AC	PL	**CT**	**AC**	**PL**
1918	50	50	0	60	20	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	**36.3**	**54.5**	**0**
1922	25	75	0	66.7	0	33.3	53.8	38.5	0	54.5	27.3	9.1	0	0	100	**51.4**	**31.4**	**8.6**
1923	85.7	14.3	0	80	13.3	0	58.3	33.3	0	64.7	17.6	5.9	60	20	0	**69.6**	**19.6**	**1.8**
1924	75	0	0	40	10	0	57.1	35.7	0	57.1	35.7	0	30.8	30.8	15.4	**49.1**	**27.3**	**3.6**
1929	0	100	0	62.5	25	0	36.4	45.5	0	66.7	33.3	0	60	20	0	**50**	**35.7**	**0**
1931	40	60	0	71.4	28.6	0	46.2	38.5	0	33.3	53.3	6.7	30	40	0	**42**	**44**	**2**
1935	100	0	0	25	37.5	0	35.7	46.2	7.1	50	41.7	0	25	50	25	**38.5**	**41**	**5.1**
1945	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	50	0	50	37.5	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	33.3	0	0	**40**	**33.3**	**0**
1950	N/A	N/A	N/A	50	25	25	60	20	0	80	0	20	75	25	0	**65.2**	**17.4**	**8.7**
1951	100	0	0	100	0	0	12.5	37.5	25	50	16.7	33.3	100	0	0	**47.4**	**16.7**	**21.1**
1955	N/A	N/A	N/A	71.4	0	28.6	25	50	0	80	20	0	100	0	0	**64.7**	**21.1**	**11.8**
1959	50	0	50	100	0	0	69.2	23.1	7.7	50	50	0	100	0	0	**73.1**	**17.6**	**7.7**
1964	50	0	50	80	0	0	40	20	40	75	12.5	12.5	80	0	20	**68**	**19.2**	**16**
1966	0	0	66.7	25	25	50	66.7	0	33.3	50	0	50	33.3	0	66.7	**36.4**	**8**	**50**
1970	100	0	0	66.7	11.1	22.2	20	0	40	25	25	25	100	0	0	**56.5**	**9.1**	**21.7**
1974F	0	100	0	100	0	0	40	10	10	71.4	0	14.3	100	0	0	**70**	**8.7**	**10**
1974O	N/A	N/A	N/A	100	0	0	60	0	40	0	66.7	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	**50**	**10**	**20**
1979	66.7	0	0	54.5	9.1	9.1	16.7	33.3	0	20	0	0	50	0	0	**40.7**	**20**	**3.7**
1983	33.3	0	66.7	62.5	0	25	45.5	9.1	28.1	N/A	N/A	N/A	33.3	0	66.7	**47.1**	**11.1**	**47.1**
1987	33.3	0	66.7	12.5	12.5	12.5	50	0	50	14.3	14.3	14.3	33.3	0	0	**20.8**	**0**	**16.7**
1992	60	20	20	75	0	25	62.5	11.1	9.1	80	0	10	75	0	0	**73.9**	**8.3**	**13.1**
1997	40	0	60	66.7	0	11.1	45	0	28	0	0	100	33.3	0	44.4	**42.3**	**4.3**	**38.5**
2001	100	0	0	80	0	20	67.5	0	16.7	77.8	0	22.2	71.4	0	28.6	**79.2**	**0**	**20.8**
2005	33.3	33.3	33.3	25	25	0	75	0	25	50	25	25	14.3	14.3	57.1	**36**	**16**	**28**
2010	44.4	0	44.4	36	0	25	45.5	0	22.2	52.5	0	47.5	44.4	0	33.3	**58**	**0**	**27.7**

E.13

Percentage of items about relatives offering some evaluation of them 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

Key: P = Positive; N = Negative and M = Mixed

	Daily Mirror			The Guardian			Daily Telegraph			Daily Mail			Daily Herald/The Sun			**Total**		
Evaluation	P	N	M	P	N	M	P	N	M	P	N	M	P	N	M	**P**	**N**	**M**
1918	0	0	0	20	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	**45.5**	**0**	**0**
1922	25	0	0	0	0	0	7.7	0	0	18.2	0	0	0	0	0	**11.4**	**0**	**0**
1923	0	0	0	13.3	0	6.7	16.7	0	0	5.9	0	0	40	0	0	**12.5**	**0**	**1.8**
1924	25	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38.5	23.1	0	**12.7**	**5.5**	**0**
1929	100	0	0	0	0	0	9.1	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	**10.7**	**0**	**0**
1931	0	0	0	0	0	0	23.1	0	0	13.3	0	0	10	10	0	**12**	**2**	**0**
1935	0	0	0	0	0	12.5	0	0	0	26.7	0	0	25	0	0	**12.8**	**0**	**2.6**
1945	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	0	0	25	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	33.3	0	0	**26.7**	**0**	**0**
1950	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	30	0	0	20	0	0	75	0	0	**30.4**	**0**	**0**
1951	0	0	0	0	0	0	12.5	0	0	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	**15.8**	**0**	**0**
1955	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	25	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	**11.8**	**0**	**0**
1959	0	50	0	0	0	0	23.1	7.7	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	**15.4**	**7.7**	**0**
1964	50	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	37.5	0	0	0	0	0	**20**	**0**	**0**
1966	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	**9.1**	**0**	**0**
1970	0	0	0	11.1	0	0	0	0	0	50	25	0	0	0	0	**13.1**	**4.3**	**0**
1974F	0	0	0	0	0	0	36.6	0	0	42.9	14.3	0	100	0	0	**40**	**10**	**0**
1974O	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	33.3	66.7	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	**10**	**20**	**0**
1979	0	0	0	9.1	0	0	16.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**3.7**	**3.7**	**0**
1983	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	**0**	**0**	**0**
1987	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28.6	0	0	33.3	0	**0**	**16.7**	**0**
1992	40	0	0	0	25	0	9.1	0	0	10	20	0	0	25	0	**13**	**17.4**	**0**
1997	40	0	0	0	11.1	0	15	5.5	0	66.7	33.3	0	22.2	0	0	**23.1**	**7.7**	**0**
2001	0	33.3	0	0	20	0	0	19.2	0	55.6	22.2	0	0	28.6	0	**20.8**	**25**	**0**
2005	0	0	0	0	25	25	0	20	20	50	33.3	0	28.6	0	0	**20**	**16**	**8**
2010	23.1	30.7	0	10	20	0	21.7	21.7	0	16.7	40	0	18.1	36.3	0	**16.7**	**38.1**	**0**

E.14

Percentage of items about relatives that mention their appearance 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	0	0	0	0	N/A	**0**
1922	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
1923	0	6.7	0	5.9	0	**3.6**
1924	0	0	7.1	7.1	0	**3.6**
1929	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
1931	0	0	7.7	0	0	**2**
1935	0	0	7.1	8.3	0	**5.1**
1945	N/A	0	12.5	N/A	0	**6.7**
1950	N/A	0	10	40	25	**17.4**
1951	0	0	12.5	33.3	0	**15.8**
1955	N/A	28.6	0	0	0	**11.8**
1959	0	0	7.7	25	0	**7.7**
1964	50	0	0	12.5	0	**8**
1966	33.3	0	0	50	0	**9.1**
1970	50	33.3	0	50	0	**26.1**
1974F	0	100	36	42.9	0	**40**
1974O	N/A	50	0	33.3	N/A	**20**
1979	0	9.1	33.3	0	0	**11.1**
1983	16.7	0	5.5	N/A	0	**5.9**
1987	0	0	2	14.3	0	**4.2**
1992	60	0	22.2	60	0	**39.1**
1997	40	0	0	0	11.1	**11.5**
2001	0	0	0	55.6	0	**20.8**

2005	33.3	25	40	0	14.3	**20**
2010	23.1	40	39.4	60	72.7	**46.4**

E.15

Percentage of items about relatives that mention their age 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	0	0	0	0	N/A	**0**
1922	0	0	7.7	0	0	**2.9**
1923	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
1924	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
1929	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
1931	0	0	7.7	6.7	0	**4**
1935	0	0	7.1	0	0	**2.6**
1945	N/A	0	0	N/A	0	**0**
1950	N/A	25	0	0	25	**8.7**
1951	0	0	12.5	0	0	**5.3**
1955	N/A	14.3	25	0	0	**11.8**
1959	0	0	7.7	0	0	**3.8**
1964	0	0	20	12.5	0	**8**
1966	66.7	12.5	16.7	50	0	**22.7**
1970	0	0	20	0	0	**4.3**
1974F	0	0	5.5	28.6	0	**20**
1974O	N/A	0	0	33.3	N/A	**10**
1979	0	9.1	16.7	0	0	**7.4**

1983	0	0	0	N/A	0	**0**
1987	0	12.5	0	14.3	16.7	**12.5**
1992	0	0	0	10	25	**8.7**
1997	40	11.1	0	33.3	22.2	**23.1**
2001	0	20	0	11.1	0	**8.3**
2005	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
2010	0	0	4.3	0	0	**0.9**

E.16

Percentage of items about relatives which have an accompanying photo or are a standalone photo 1918-2010 (broken down by newspaper)

	Daily Mirror	The Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Daily Mail	Daily Herald/The Sun	**Total**
1918	100	0	0	0	N/A	**18.2**
1922	50	0	0	45.5	0	**20**
1923	57.1	6.7	8.3	58.8	0	**28.6**
1924	25	0	0	42.9	23.1	**18.2**
1929	0	0	0	33.3	20	**7.1**
1931	60	0	23.1	26.7	0	**20**
1935	100	0	21.4	41.7	0	**23.1**
1945	N/A	0	0	N/A	0	**0**
1950	N/A	0	10	0	50	**13**
1951	0	0	0	50	0	**15.8**
1955	N/A	14.3	0	40	0	**17.6**
1959	100	16.7	30.8	0	100	**30.8**
1964	50	20	20	37.5	40	**32**

1966	66.7	0	33.3	50	66.7	**31.8**
1970	100	11.1	20	25	66.7	**39.1**
1974F	0	0	30	14.3	100	**20**
1974O	N/A	50	20	33.3	N/A	**30**
1979	0	18.2	16.7	20	50	**18.5**
1983	50	37.5	0	N/A	33.3	**41.1**
1987	66.7	0	14.3	28.6	50	**29.1**
1992	100	50	0	100	50	**82.6**
1997	40	44.4	36	66.7	88.9	**61.5**
2001	66.7	40	0	88.9	28.6	**58.4**
2005	33.3	50	40	50	28.6	**40**
2010	100	96	78.8	90	100	**90.2**