Joan of Arc and the Xena Princesses:
Election Newspaper Coverage of Female and Male Prime Ministers in Canada and New Zealand

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Introduction

When New Zealand's first woman Prime Minister, Jenny Shipley, ran against Labour party leader Helen Clark in the 1999 election, both women were depicted as strong, competent, aggressive leaders who "crossed swords", attempted "knockout blows" and engaged in a "shooting war".[3] Indeed, references to the two women party leaders as Xena princesses or warriors were not uncommon in press coverage and editorial cartoons (Fountaine 2002, 5). Canada's Kim Campbell was called the "Joan of Arc" for a beleaguered party when she entered the race to replace Progressive Conservative leader (and Prime Minister) Brian Mulroney. In the ensuing 1993 election, Campbell "squared off" against Liberal leader Jean Chrétien, and newspaper coverage had the two leaders "fighting", "pounding", "hammering", "rattling sabers", "sensing blood" and staging "blitzes".

Are these snapshots of news commentary about powerful women accurate portrayals of their election-time coverage? Certainly the bulk of the research on media coverage of female politicians in Canada, the US, Australia, New Zealand and the U.K. provides evidence of sex bias, suggesting women politicians struggle to make it onto the news agenda, and when they do garner press coverage the media gaze often focuses as much on their looks and private lives as on their leadership qualities. So what happens when women confront social expectations about gender by seeking and gaining political power as party and government leaders? The very limited amount of research conducted to date suggests that, while female government leaders do contend with gender biases in media coverage, they are subject to less overt sex stereotyping by the press than are "ordinary" female legislators (Norris 1997b).

This paper investigates the possibility that political power and career success mitigates gender effects in media coverage of female political leaders by comparing election-time newspaper coverage of the women who have served as Prime Minister in Canada and New Zealand with coverage of their closest male counterparts.[4] Canada and New Zealand are among the as yet relatively few western industrialized nations to have elected women as their government leaders and they provide good cases for comparison. They share Westminster-style parliamentary systems and multi-party systems featuring two major parties that compete to hold office at the national level. National and Labour governments prevail in New Zealand; Liberal and Conservative in Canada. A few key differences must be noted. New Zealand changed its electoral system from SMP to MMP prior to the 1996 election. Also, while New Zealand political parties choose their leaders within the parliamentary party, Canadian national parties elect

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[3] Unless otherwise specified, the words and phrases in quotation marks are from the newspaper articles used in this study.
[4] This is a segment of a larger project examining newspaper coverage of the leaders at four defining phases of their political careers: ascension to party leadership, election(s), governance and retirement.

theirs via delegated conventions or direct voting of party members. Yet the career paths of their first woman prime ministers are similar. Kim Campbell and Jenny Shipley won the job of prime minister through party leadership changes while their parties held office but subsequently lost at the polls. Helen Clark bested Shipley in the 1999 New Zealand election, and Kim Campbell was defeated by Jean Chrétien in the 1993 Canadian Election. A key difference between the two countries is the success of New Zealand's Helen Clark, who has held office since 1999, winning three elections in total. Clark's longevity as first minister will allow us to determine whether the print media frame female "winners" differently than their less successful counterparts.[5]

This study examines election campaign newspaper coverage, specifically the 1996 and 1999 New Zealand elections and the 1993 Canadian election. Helen Clark deposed Labour leader Mike Moore in 1993, becoming leader of the opposition, but narrowly lost the 1996 New Zealand general election to incumbent National Prime Minister Jim Bolger. The country did not have to wait long for its first female Prime Minister, as in November 1997 Jenny Shipley toppled Bolger in a leadership coup. Clark and Shipley led their respective parties into the 1999 campaign, and Clark emerged victorious. By contrast, Canada's experience with a female Prime Minister was fleeting. Kim Campbell had to call a general election a few short months after became Prime Minister by virtue of winning the leadership of the governing Progressive Conservative Party. Her party suffered a devastating defeat in the 1993 election, losing to Jean Chrétien's Liberal Party. In sum, we have two male-female comparisons: Helen Clark versus Jim Bolger in New Zealand's 1996 election and Kim Campbell versus Jean Chrétien in Canada's 1993 election. We also have a female-female comparison in the 1999 New Zealand election as it featured an incumbent female PM (Shipley) and a female challenger (Clark). Using content and critical discourse analysis, we compare newspaper coverage of male and female leaders in these elections, assessing differences in the amount and tone of media coverage, and the presence and extent of gendered frames and gender-based evaluative schema.

The paper begins with a brief overview of the literature on media coverage of female politicians. We then describe the methodologies and sampling techniques employed in our study. Our various measures of visibility, framing and evaluation are described, hypotheses for each posited, and findings are presented in each of these three categories. While we find evidence of gendered mediation, we conclude that the women leaders were not unduly privatized or domesticated by the coverage. In fact, we show that they were masculinised by gendered news frames and metaphors.

Female Politicians and the Media

Research conducted in several countries has revealed sex differences in media coverage of women contesting elections and party leadership positions.   Women politicians seem to receive less attention, and are treated to qualitatively different kinds of attention, by the press. Several studies indicate women politicians receive less media coverage than do men (Carroll and Schreiber 1997; Heldman, Carroll and Olson 2005; Kahn 1992, 1994, 1996; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Norris 1997b; Sampert and Trimble 2003). For instance Norris found that, with a few exceptions, female Prime Ministers and Presidents received a smaller amount of press coverage in the week after their appointment/election than did equivalent male leaders (1997b: 158). On the other hand, some studies indicate sex may not be a liability to political aspirants, with female candidates garnering as much if not more attention in newspaper

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[5] Indeed, Helen Clark is ranked by *Forbes* magazine as the 20th most powerful woman in the world.

articles than equivalent male candidates (see Bystrom, Robertson and Banwart 2001 and Bystrom et. al. 2004; Trimble 2007).

The literature also provides evidence of gendered mediation. Mediation refers to the tendency of news coverage to go beyond merely reporting the "facts" by offering interpretations, analysis and evaluations. Mediation is gendered when it reflects sex-based norms and assumptions, or when the sex of the political actor is highlighted regardless of whether this is relevant to the story. Gendered mediation can be particularly visible in news framing. Frames are the interpretive structures and devices that give meaning and order to the news (Norris 1997a: 2). The literature suggests that male and female politicians are framed differently because of their sex; as well, news frames are applied differently to male and female politicians because of their sex.

The most overt gender frame is that which makes explicit reference to female politicians' sex (Helman, Carroll and Olsen 2000: 8; Sreberny-Mohammadi and Ross 1996: 109). Gendered framing goes well beyond noting the sex of the politician to emphasize their gender-specific attributes and behaviours, including stereotypically feminine roles, characteristics and bodily attributes. The news media often situate female politicians as women first, politicians second, by highlighting their marital status, sexuality, appearance and domestic roles (Carroll and Schreiber 1997; Devitt 1999; Fountaine 2000, 2002; Fountaine and McGregor 2003; Haines 1992; Heldman, Carroll and Olson 2005; Hurst 1993; Jenkins 1996, 1999; McGregor 1996; Motion 1996; Robinson and Saint-Jean 1991, 1996; Van Acker 1999). However, it should be noted that female politicians may choose and even promote such framing. For example, in the 1999 New Zealand election, Jenny Shipley "appears to have deliberately highlighted her status as a mother, in an attempt to influence the media framing of her and Clark's leadership styles" (Fountaine 2002, 13). Indeed, Fountaine and McGregor noted that "the motherhood theme was closely linked to the women's (Clark in particular) perceived ability to lead the country" (2003, 4), and Fountaine (2002, 14) argues that Helen Clark's childlessness has been a constant reference point for the media throughout her political career.

It is widely acknowledged that news media frame political life, especially elections, as games, by focusing on leaders or frontrunners, strategic concerns, polling data and explanations for wins and losses (Cappella and Jamieson 1997: 37-57; Patterson 1994: 53-93; Trimble and Sampert 2004). Women candidates often fall on the margins or even outside this game frame because they are not typically the leaders of parties or the frontrunners in leadership contests (Gilmartin 2001; Sampert and Trimble 2003; Scharrer 2002; Ross 1995). The metaphoric construction of political contests as wars, races, battles and bouts may be used to position women as outsiders and unlikely contenders (Gingras 1997; Norris 1997b; Sampert and Trimble 2003). As Gidengil and Everitt's analyses of male and female party leaders' debate behaviour and resultant press coverage in the 1993, 1997 and 2000 Canadian national elections illustrate, the game frame places female leaders in an awkward position. If they try to fit in, women leaders are portrayed as overly combative, yet if they fail to conform to this script they "are likely to suffer benign neglect" by the press (Everitt and Gidengil 2003, 208; also see and Gidengil and Everitt 1999, 2000, 2003). Once women leaders win office, especially at the national level, they should be considered "in the game". Fountaine and McGregor (2003) show that during the 1999 New Zealand general election, the game frame was not substantially altered by the presence of a female incumbent Prime Minister (Jenny Shipley) and a female opposition leader (Helen Clark). Feminized versions of the classic war metaphors included references to the "catfight" between the "Xena warriors" (ibid).

Finally, there is evidence that women politicians are evaluated differently than are men. Because gender-based assumptions structure much of the news framing applied to female politicians, it follows that newspaper assessments of women's capability and electoral viability reflect sex-based assumptions. As a result, the evaluative criteria applied to female politicians in news coverage may be harsher than those applied to male politicians (Kahn 1992, 1994; Everitt and Gidengil 2003; Gidgenil and Everitt 1999, 2000, 2003; Jenkins 1996; McGregor 1996; Robinson and Saint-Jean 1991, 1996). Evaluations of women politicians tend to act as "de-qualification" devices, positioning them as inexperienced or atypical politicians (Carroll and Schreiber 1997: 145; Norris 1997b: 161-163; Jenkins 1996, 2003). Lack of visibility coupled with gendered framing generates negative viability coverage for female politicians; in other words, they are less likely than male contenders to be portrayed as winners (Heldman, Carroll and Olson 2005; Gilmartin 2001; Ross 1995; Scharrer 2002). Ross (2002b, 69) argues that, for women politicians, "the media's expectations (and therefore, the ways in which they direct their audiences) make them doubly damned: on the one hand, journalists focus on their sartorial style, the extent of their femininity (or lack of it) and their domestic arrangements, while on the other hand, they complain that they are not leadership material because they are too feminine". As a result, women's very legitimacy as political actors, and capacity to govern effectively if elected, is called into question. For instance, Jenkins examined press coverage of pioneering women politicians in Australia, including Premiers and territorial Chief Ministers, and found evaluative schema promoting the established gender order and situating women's political authority as aberrant (1996, 1999, 2003). Similarly, Fountaine (2005) found evidence of a derisory "girl power" frame in news treatment of women's successes in New Zealand politics. According to Devere and Davies (2006), a post-debate comment by National leader Don Brash during the 2005 New Zealand election gave the news media license to frame Helen Clark as strident, feminist, domineering and childless, thus as a strong but dangerous leader.

Studies from Canada and New Zealand illustrate that stereotypes and gender-based frames have been used to describe women in political leadership positions in these countries (Fountaine and McGregor 2003; Everitt and Gidengil 2003; Gidengil and Everitt 1999, 2000, 2003; McGregor 1996; Tremblay and Bélanger 1997; Trimble 2007). Certainly female politicians decry the intense and unfair nature of gendered mediation they confront. For instance, New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark has been very critical about press attention to, and criticism, of her appearance. During the 1996 election campaign, she said women politicians were judged by criteria that would never be applied to men: "The obsession with appearance and clothing. I'm just waiting for the day whole articles are written about Bill Birch's big nose and big ears" (*The Dominion*, 27 Sept. 1996). Former Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell believes unconscious ideals and expectations of women unfairly shaped reporters' assessments of her activities and persona during the 1993 leadership and election races (Powell 2003). According to McGregor (1996, 183) the New Zealand "news media appear to be searching for some sort of gendered ideal in political women. They desire a Beehive[6] bimbo-Boadicea who combines political energy and power with a stereotypical femininity expressed in conventional prettiness."

However, these observations and allegations have not been tested in the two countries. There has not yet been a systematic comparative content analysis of news coverage of male and female party and/or government leaders during election campaigns.[7] Women who succeed in winning power and

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[6] The 'Beehive' is the popular name for the Executive Wing of the New Zealand parliamentary complex because of the building's shape.

[7] However, it should be noted that Everitt and Gidengil (2003) and Gidengil and Everitt (1999, 2000, 2003, 2003) examined media coverage of Canadian male and female party leaders' performances in national election debates.

establishing themselves as political leaders disrupt taken-for-granted ideas about sex roles, leadership traits, and male dominance of political life. Therefore, once they gain and consolidate power as party and government leaders, women politicians may be described and assessed by the press in ways that are less explicitly marked by sex-stereotypes and gendered norms of political evaluation than those applied to women seeking power. This expectation is suggested by Norris's study of newspaper coverage of female heads of state during their first week in office, which revealed very few examples of overt bias or sex-stereotyping (1997b).

Methodology

As summarized in the introduction, we analyze two election contests featuring male-female comparisons: Helen Clark versus Jim Bolger in New Zealand's 1996 election and Kim Campbell versus Jean Chrétien in Canada's 1993 election. We also examine an election with two female competitors, as the 1999 New Zealand election featured an incumbent female PM (Shipley) and a female challenger (Clark).

Both content analysis and critical discourse analysis are used to examine newspaper coverage of the five politicians included in our study. Content analysis employs "objective and systematic counting and recording procedures to produce a quantitative description of the symbolic content in a text" (Neuman 2000: 293). A detailed coding framework was developed, including precise coding notes, to ensure that all variables were carefully operationalized and ambiguities were eliminated. Three researchers coded the articles. Thorough coder training, practice coding and co-coding maximized interaction among coders, identified coding problems to be resolved, developed common standards of judgement for classifying the content, ensured consensus among coders about the application of coding principles and promoted consistency in coding (Manheim 2005). We agree with van Zoonen (1994, 73) about the limitations of content analysis, thus we employ critical (feminist) discourse analysis to examine open-ended questions about gendered framing in the news texts. We listed any reference to the leader's sex, sexuality, appearance, marriage, children and any gendered metaphors or images used to describe them, and subjected these to a qualitative analysis. This approach not only served as a check for consistency and accuracy in the content analysis, it also allowed us to determine what was being said and, as importantly, who was saying it. Content analysis summarizes what is written in the news article and the frequency with which it appears, and discourse analysis analyses what it means. For instance, content analysis can measure whether or not news articles describe the leader with a gendered metaphor or image, and critical discourse analysis can analyze what the metaphor or image conveys about gender, power and political legitimacy.

Articles about the female and male leaders from English language newspapers in their respective countries were analyzed for this study. The Canadian national newspaper *The Globe and Mail* was used for both Kim Campbell and Jean Chrétien. We also included their "home town" newspapers; the *Vancouver Sun* in the case of Campbell, and the *Montreal Gazette* for Chrétien. Because New Zealand does not have a national newspaper, the following dailies were chosen for sampling: the capital city (Wellington) papers, the *Dominion* and the *Evening Post*; Auckland's *New Zealand Herald*, which has the largest circulation of any daily in the country; and the main South Island paper, Christchurch's *The*

Press (see Cross and Henderson 2004, 143-144).[8] News texts analyzed for this study include hard news, columns, opinion pieces, features and editorials. Unfortunately, the electronic data base used to gather the New Zealand stories[9] did not include information about the type of story or location of the story and thus we are unable to compare coverage on the basis of these structural variables.

Sampling techniques reflected differences in the Canadian and New Zealand electoral systems and media environments. A feature of the mixed member plurality electoral system used in New Zealand since 1996 is that it takes time for a government to be formed after the votes are counted. This is a key part of the electoral process, and to capture the crucial post-vote coalition-building phase of electoral contests in New Zealand, we began the story search from the day the writ was dropped and ended the search on the day after a coalition government was formed. For Canada, the dropping of the writ initiated the search, which was extended to five days after the vote to allow for analysis of post-mortem coverage. As well, because of observed differences in the length and headline construction of news stories in the two countries, we had different sampling criteria. We discovered through initial searches that Canadian news stories were, on average, considerably longer than those printed by the New Zealand papers. As well, Canadian party leaders are more likely than their New Zealand counterparts to be named directly in news headlines (see Trimble and Sampert 2004). For Canada, we gathered all news stories over 500 words in length that both named the leader in headline and devoted at least 50 per cent of the story to the leader. This approach would have yielded precious few stories for New Zealand leaders, even during election campaigns; thus for New Zealand, we included stories over 250 words that mentioned the leader in the headline *or lead paragraph* and devoted at least 50 per cent of the story to the leader.

Measures and Hypotheses

To measure the visibility and prominence of each of the leaders in the election coverage, we compared the overall number of election stories mentioning the leader's name with the number of stories that met our search criteria, outlined above. As well, we counted how often the leaders were mentioned by name and by position in each news story, and how often they were quoted. Because of their news value as "first" women leaders/Prime Ministers, we expected female politicians to be as visible and prominent as their male counterparts.

Framing was assessed with several variables. For each news story, we determined whether or not any of the following aspects of the leader's gendered persona were mentioned: sex, sexuality, appearance, marital status, and children (or childlessness). We also listed any reference to the leaders' sex, sexuality, appearance, marriage, children and any gendered metaphors or images used to describe them, and subjected these to a qualitative analysis. As well, if a gendered metaphor or image was used to describe the leader, we determined whether the image was masculine, feminine or both. The literature led us to hypothesize that the female leaders would be marked more often and more overtly by gendered references and descriptions, for instance, by mentions of looks and family life. However we also hypothesized that, due to the ubiquity of game framing in election coverage, the female leaders would be

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[8] *The Press* was not available on Factiva prior to 1997, so news articles from *The Press* were not included in our analysis of the NZ 1996 election.
[9] Factiva was used for the New Zealand papers and for Canada's national paper, the *Globe and Mail*. Canadian Newsstand was used to gather articles from the *Vancouver Sun* and *Montreal Gazette*.

as likely as their male competitors to be described with masculine metaphors and depicted as deploying aggressive tactics during the campaign. As well, we did not expect game framing of New Zealand election coverage to be modified in any substantial way by the presence of two female leaders in the 1999 election (Fountaine 2002, 5).

Finally, evaluations of the leaders were measured in two ways. First, we determined whether or not the leader's electoral viability (ability to win the election) was assessed in the story, and if so, whether it was assessed positively or negatively. Secondly, we adopted Scharrer's (2002, note 2) measure of tone of story, and ranked the overall evaluation of the leader presented in the story on a 5-point scale from very negative (1) to very positive (5).[10] While the literature suggests women are evaluated more harshly than are men, this hypothesis needs to be nuanced by factors such as the competitiveness of the leading parties, the electoral outcome, and the dominance of the electoral game frame. Game framing of elections should lead reporters and columnists to evaluate the viability of victors more positively than that of losers. However, we expect overall leader assessments to reflect gendered mediation by evaluating combative female leaders more negatively than their equally antagonistic male competitors (see Everitt and Gidengil, 2003). The presence of aggressive game language (i.e. "attacked") in the story was noted, and in our discourse analysis, we determined whether the leaders were associated with these words and phrases, and if so, whether they were the initiators or the recipients of the rhetorical aggression.

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[10] *1 (very negative)* = Story contains clear and blatant words connoting a sense of disapproval or disregard, accusations or unflattering comments, or words or phrases that portray the subject in a bad light throughout.
2 (negative) = Story contains examples of negativity or is subtly negative.
3 (neutral) = Story contains no indication of a positive or negative tone, or is balanced in tone, with equal numbers of negative and positive comments.
4 (positive) = Story contains examples of positive comments or is subtly positive.
5 (very positive) = Story contains clear words to connote praise, approval, flattery, or any angle that portrays the subject in a good light throughout.

Findings

Leader visibility and prominence

H^1: *Female leaders will be as visible and as prominent in the election news stories as their male counterparts.*

The data support our hypothesis. As Table 1 shows, the overall number of stories per leader per election is very similar, and the only subtle difference in visibility is evident in the 1993 Canadian election. Although Chrétien was mentioned by name in a greater number of stories than was Campbell (1025 versus 997) he was less likely than she to feature prominently in the stories (57 stories compared to 78 for Campbell). As the sitting Prime Minister and the first woman to hold the position, Campbell attracted slightly more attention than her male competitor. In New Zealand, there were no statistically significant differences in news prominence between leaders in either election. Bolger and Shipley, as Prime Ministers, were slightly more likely to appear in the headlines than was Helen Clark, as Leader of the Opposition.

Table 1: Search Dates and Number of Stories by Country and Election

	New Zealand Elections				Canadian Election	
	1996		**1999**		**1993**	
Search dates	12 Sept. – 11 Dec.		27 Oct. – 7 Dec.		8 Sept. – 30 Oct.	
	Bolger	Clark	Shipley	Clark	Chrétien	Campbell
Overall number of stories mentioning the leader	449	445	553	644	1025	997
Number of stories that met sampling criteria[11] (%)	70 (16%)	73 (16%)	78 (14%)	88 (13%)	57 (6%)	78 (8%)
Leader named in headline (%)	48 (67%)	45 (62%)	44 (56%)	37 (42%)	n/a	n/a

We also counted how many times each leader was mentioned, by name and by position, in each of the stories, and tallied the number of times they were quoted. Table 2 shows the results, and these also support the hypothesis that high profile male and female leaders will be equivalently visible in election news stories. The only statistically significant differences reflect the tendency of New Zealand news stories to mention Prime Ministers more often by their position, regardless of their sex, than to indicate the position of the Leader of the Opposition.

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[11] For Canada, we gathered all news stories over 500 words in length that both named the leader in headline and devoted at least 50 per cent of the story to the leader. For New Zealand, we included stories over 250 words that mentioned the leader in the headline *or lead paragraph* and devoted at least 50 per cent of the story to the leader.

Table 2: Mean Scores on Visibility Measures by Election and Leader

Mean number of times leader is:	New Zealand 1996 election		New Zealand 1999 Election		Canada 1993 election	
	Bolger	**Clark**	**Shipley**	**Clark**	**Chrétien**	**Campbell**
Mentioned by name	5.81	5.18	5.67	5.38	13.0	12.64
Mentioned by position	1.56**	.9**	1.32*	.99*	2.00	1.83
Quoted	1.6	1.92	2.12	2.28	5.21	5.24

  * p <.05
** p <.01

Framing: Sex, Gender and Domestication

H^2: *The female leaders will be marked more often and more overtly by gendered references and descriptions.*

Table 3 provides only modest support for our hypothesis, but gendered mediation is revealed, albeit subtly, by the qualitative analysis of the words and phrases used to describe these leaders. The sex of the leader was mentioned relatively equally for leaders in the New Zealand 1999 election and the 1993 Canadian election. The only statistically significant difference is shown in the 1996 New Zealand election. National leader Jim Bolger was *never* framed by his sex; in contrast, ten stories about Labour leader Helen Clark included her sex as a point of discussion. Six of these employed the "first woman" frame (see Norris 1997b), by pointing out that Clark would, if elected, become New Zealand's first female prime minister. In the 1999 New Zealand election, the sex of the two female leaders was mentioned even more often than was Clark's in 1996 (19% for Shipley, 24% for Clark). News articles made much of the "campaign that pits two women leaders against each other for the first time", with "two strong women" in the running to be the "first woman elected Prime Minister". But an even higher level of focus on the sex of the leader is seen in the 1993 Canadian election; 28 per cent of the stories about Chrétien and 27 per cent of the stories about Campbell made overt reference to their sex. Almost half of the references to sex in Campbell's case reflected the "first woman" frame; that she was the "first female prime minister" was mentioned in 10 of the 21 stories noting her sex. While for Campbell the stories noted the fact of her sex, for Chrétien the references were about the *type of man* he was – "p'tit gar de Shawinigan", a "practical man", a "man of experience", "Teflon man", "yesterday's man" or "Trudeau's hatchet man".

Table 3: Sex/Gender Measures by Election and Leader

Mentioned in story: *N (%)*	New Zealand 1996 election		New Zealand 1999 Election		Canada 1993 election	
	Bolger	**Clark**	**Shipley**	**Clark**	**Chrétien**	**Campbell**
Leader's sex	0 (0%)**	10 (14%)**	15 (19%)	21 (24%)	16 (28%)	21 (27%)
Leader's sexuality	0 (0%)	2 (3%)	2 (3%)	5 (6%)	0 (0%)*	7 (9%)*
Leader's appearance	0 (0%)**	8 (11%)**	6 (8%)	8 (9%)	11 (19%)	10 (13%)
Leader's marital status	5 (7%)*	0 (0%)*	5 (6%)	7 (8%)	9 (16%)*	3 (4%)*
Leader's children[12]	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	4 (5%)	5 (6%)	3 (5.3%)	0 (0%)

* p <.05
** p <.01

Table 3 shows that the male leaders, Bolger and Chrétien, were never sexualized by the coverage. Comments that inferred a sexual identity or proclivity were limited to the female leaders, but these were rare and, in Canada, were typically prompted by the behaviour or statements of the leader herself. For example, Kim Campbell made a few ribald comments and told reporters she missed having a sex life.[13] Two of the articles discussed her famous "sexy" bare-shouldered photograph. New Zealand election news reporters used the metaphor of the sexual relationship to describe coalition-building between parties. For example, a story about the 1999 election said NZ First leader Winston Peters "spurned Clark's advances"; meanwhile, Jenny Shipley let Peters "keep her dangling as he made overtures to Labour". Helen Clark's sexuality was highlighted by two stories that mentioned her "toned Auckland body", and another two stories that quoted Winston Peters; "This woman would make my heart flutter," he told reporters.

The literature suggests there should be observable differences in media attention to the appearance of male and female candidates, differences we simply did not find. While the 1996 New Zealand election results show no discussion of Bolger's looks and a small amount of attention to the appearance of Helen Clark, much of the discussion of Clark was not about her clothing, hair, or body. Rather, reporters commented on her transformation from awkward TV presenter (complete with "off-putting, tight smile") to competent, poised and approachable speaker. However, the coverage of Clark's "metamorphosis" was gendered by references to "Cinderella Clark" and especially by the headline "Clark changes from ugly duckling to canny swan". In the 1999 New Zealand election, a handful of news articles discussed the two women leaders' looks, hair and wardrobe choices, and a few of these speculated that either Helen Clark's campaign photo was "airbrushed" or the Labour leader had had a lot of "work" done. Still, fewer than 10 per cent of the stories profiling Clark or Shipley talked about their looks or clothing. A higher percentage of the Canadian coverage paid attention to appearance, but the male leader's looks were as much of an issue during the election coverage as was the appearance of the female Prime Minister. The Conservative Party attack ads that drew attention to Jean Chrétien's partially paralyzed face were discussed in the newspapers, accounting for much of the attention to the Liberal leader's appearance. Chrétien's clothing – specifically his tendency to wear a blue denim shirt - was as likely as Campbell's to be mentioned, and three of the ten references to Campbell were about her

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[12] Or childlessness, in the case of Clark and Campbell.
[13] Campbell "said that she checks her schedule every day for 'le hanky panky', but woe, it's never there".

"visible" fatigue. In short, the female leaders were not overtly stereotyped or privatized by excessive attention to their physical personas.

Similarly, the women leaders were not more likely than the men to be domesticated by a focus on their marital status and family lives. Indeed, there was more attention to the families and children of the *male* leaders. Helen Clark's marriage and childlessness were never mentioned in the 1996 coverage. Similarly, Kim Campbell's childlessness was not discussed, and the few times the press mentioned she was single was because Campbell herself raised it. In contrast, the wives and children of the men, Bolger and Chrétien, were discussed. Both men talked about their wives with reporters, praising them for their emotional and campaign support. This trend of families becoming an issue because the political leaders themselves made it an issue is illustrated very clearly by the 1999 New Zealand election, when Clark's decision not to have children was raised as a matter of concern by the National Party, which contrasted Clark's childlessness with Jenny Shipley's role as a mother. "I'm a politician, but I'm also a Mum", Jenny Shipley told reporters. Helen Clark chastised Shipley for advancing the "Mum angle", saying it was "irrelevant to the election campaign."

Based on these findings, it is difficult to argue that the women leaders were privatized or domesticated by press coverage of their election campaigns. However, while the male leaders were never sexualized by the coverage, and Bolger's appearance was never raised, the female leaders' sex was an issue. The women were subjected to overt, though unsurprising, "first woman" framing, and their looks were occasionally discussed in a manner that highlighted their femininity (i.e. Helen Clark as a "vision of loveliness"; Kim Campbell's sexy bare-shoulder photograph). The New Zealand newspapers used the "courtship" coalition-building frame to sexualize Shipley and Clark, mark their gender, and diminish their stature by placing them in the position of having to "spurn" men's advances or be left "dangling". That the media do not initiate scrutiny of the domestic lives of the women is illustrated by the fact that their families were discussed less often than those of the men, and the references that did occur were initiated by the women themselves (Campbell, Shipley) or by their female competitor (Shipley's campaign highlighting Clark's childlessness in 1999).

Gender and the Game Frame

H^3: *The female leaders will be as likely as their male competitors to be described with masculine metaphors and depicted as deploying aggressive tactics during the campaign.*

Table 4 shows that there were more gendered metaphors overall in the Canadian context. Within their respective countries, male and female leaders were equally likely to be described with masculine metaphors. For instance, in 1996, 16% of the stories about Bolger and 16% about Clark portrayed them in a masculine manner. In the 1993 Canadian election, the female and male leaders were almost even in terms of the prevalence of masculine metaphors; 42% for Chrétien and 41% for Campbell. Thus the data support our hypothesis that female leaders are as likely as their male competitors to be described with masculine metaphors. Not surprisingly, the majority of the masculine metaphors were linked with an aggressive game frame in the story. Bolger was a "groggy heavyweight" who engaged in "scuttling" and "lashing out". Clark was also part of this game as she "went on the offensive", "attacked sexism" and was portrayed as someone who "doesn't mind who gets steam-rolled in her path". In 1999, many of the masculine metaphors revolved around the "battle" between Clark and Shipley. The two women

"crossed swords" and "attacked" each other. In the 1993 Canadian election, Campbell and Chrétien "attacked", "fought", "sniped", and "fired" at each other.

Table 4: Gendered Metaphors by Election and Leader

Mentioned in story: *N (%)* [#]	New Zealand 1996 election		New Zealand 1999 Election		Canada 1993 election	
	Bolger	**Clark**	**Shipley**	**Clark**	**Chrétien**	**Campbell**
Gendered metaphor is used to describe leader	12 (17%)*	20 (27%)*	30 (39%)*	19 (22%)*	25 (44%)	41 (53%)
Masculine metaphor	11 (16%)	12 (16%)	19 (24%)	10 (11%)	24 (42%)	32 (41%)
Feminine metaphor	1 (1%)	2 (3%)	5 (6%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	5 (6%)
Mixed metaphor	0 (0%)	6 (8%)	6 (8%)	7 (8%)	1 (2%)	4 (5%)

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
[#] Based on total sample

Even with the presence of female leaders there were relatively few feminine metaphors. Both feminine and mixed metaphors were used sparingly to describe Kim Campbell in the 1993 election coverage. She was referred to as "Kim of Green Gables" and likened to Oprah and Mae West; she was also called "a woman Bill Clinton". In the 1996 New Zealand election there were only two stories about Helen Clark that contained feminine metaphors, and just one for Jim Bolger. In 1999, the number of stories with feminine metaphors remained the same for Clark at two (2%), while Shipley had five (6%). Clark's 1996 feminine metaphors included her metamorphosis from a "political ugly duckling" into a "swan" and being referred to as Labour's "favourite sister". In 1999, Clark's lack of sewing proficiency and the role of New Zealand First Leader Winston Peters as "queen-maker" were the only feminine metaphors to be found. Shipley's feminine metaphors were in some sense self-imposed as she referred to herself as a "good Presbyterian girl", and her emphasis on her motherhood was picked up by the media when they referred to her as the "mother of the nation", and discussed her "tendency to lecture audiences in the manner of an exasperated mother".

What is particularly interesting about the use of gendered metaphors is that there were more than twice as many stories containing mixed imagery (8% in 1996 and 1999 for Clark; 8% for Shipley) than feminine metaphors, which suggests gender confusion on the part of the media. In other words, the use of both masculine and feminine imagery in the same story indicates that the media were not quite sure how to frame these strong women. Hence we see the use of "combatants" that circle as "wary cats", or "two Xena princesses" who "battle it out". A good example of this gender confusion is an article in which Clark is portrayed as a "woman of steely resolve" who is as "tough as old boots", but at the same time is a "beautifully tempered samurai sword" and a "hardy warrior queen" whose idea of fun is conquering Mt. Kilimanjaro. Another article quotes a fellow female MP suggesting "Clark and the cockroaches would be the only survivors of nuclear holocaust", but then goes on to suggest that Clark has had "more image makeovers than Madonna" and "perhaps the Katherine Mansfield look is a fitting style for the shy bookish girl." These types of articles were also present for Shipley. In the same article she was depicted as a "perfumed bulldozer' and "Cyclone Shipley" who dumped "Bolger so ruthlessly", but who "on a good day…oozes maternal warmth".

Thus the New Zealand cases demonstrate that men and women were just as likely to be framed with masculine images or metaphors, and in some cases the women leaders were portrayed as even more masculine than the male leaders. For instance, Clark "demonstrated coolness under pressure and steely ability to withstand assaults that would have felled most men". In addition to the masculine metaphors, women leaders were portrayed with feminine and mixed metaphors where their male counterparts were not. The novelty of two women "battling" out an election was reflected in an increase in the overall number and intensity of gendered metaphors, particularly of a masculine or mixed nature. This ramping up of masculine imagery masculinised the women in a way that effectively erased feminization devices such as references to their gender or appearance.

H^4: *Game framing of election coverage will be largely unaffected by the presence of two female leaders in the 1999 election in New Zealand.*

Aggressive game metaphors or language (i.e. "attack", "fight", and "hammer") appeared in many of the news stories in our sample. The hypothesis that the presence of two women leaders of major parties would not deter news media from their application of the game frame is supported by Table 5; game language appeared as often in stories about the 1999 New Zealand election as it did in news coverage of the 1996 election. But were the women leaders "in the game" - - that is, described as being at the centre of the fight - - or were they watching the "bout" from the sidelines?

We listed the aggressive words and phrases appearing in each story and determined whether they involved the leader. For instance, a Canadian election story recounting the "Liberal's final blitz" was not counted as aggression by, or toward, the Liberal leader. We then determined whether the leader who was the focus of the story was positioned as the attacker or as the recipient of the attack. For instance, "Chrétien continued to pound" clearly places the Liberal leader in the active position while "Campbell levelled a blistering attack on Mr. Chrétien" positions him passively, as the person being assailed. While the overall number of stories containing aggressive game language is significantly higher for Campbell than Chrétien (61 stories and 78% of the sample versus 27 stories and 47% of the sample for Chrétien), these leaders were equally likely to be depicted as the instigator or recipient of the aggression. Campbell was the aggressor 56% of the time; Chrétien 59% of the time. Both were on the receiving end of the attack 33% of the time. In other words, no significant differences were found between the two leaders with respect to the rates of attacking and receiving attacks.

In New Zealand we found a similar result to that in Canada. In the 1996 New Zealand election, Clark was just as likely as Bolger (both at 35%) to be the aggressor in the story. Interestingly, though, she was less likely to be the recipient of aggression (43% for Bolger; 13% for Clark). Indeed, Bolger was more often the victim of aggressive game language than were any of the women. As our hypothesis suggests, the presence of a game frame did not diminish when two women were contesting the election. In fact, the percentage of stories including aggressive game language was substantially higher for Shipley (44%) than Bolger (33%), and Clark's increased slightly from 32% in 1996 to 34% in 1999. Additionally, the percentage of times that the leaders were depicted as the aggressors in these stories also increased noticeably, from 35% for both leaders in 1996, to 74% for Shipley and 60% for Clark in 1999. Furthermore, the number of articles featuring direct battle images between the two leaders increased from two in 1996 to twelve in 1999. Thus, not only did the presence of two women *not* feminize the

game frame, but actually seemed to reinforce and amplify it. This served to further masculinise, rather than feminize, the women.

Table 5: Use of Aggressive Game Language by Election and Leader

Mentioned in story: N (%)	New Zealand 1996 election		New Zealand 1999 Election		Canada 1993 election	
	Bolger	**Clark**	**Shipley**	**Clark**	**Chrétien**	**Campbell**
Aggressive game language or image included in story[#]	23 (33%)	23 (32%)	34 (44%)	30 (34%)	27 (47%)**	61 (78%)**
Leader is the aggressor[+]	8 (35%)	8 (35%)	25 (74%)	18 (60%)	16 (59%)	34 (56%)
Leader is recipient of aggression[+]	10 (43%)	3 (13%)	5 (15%)	2 (3%)	9 (33%)	20 (33%)
Leader not associated with the game language[14+]	7 (30%)	12 (52%)	4 (12%)	10 (33%)	3 (11%)	13 (21%)
Stories containing a direct battle between the leaders[+]	2		12		n/a	

* $p<.05$
** $p<.01$
# Based on total sample.
+ Based on stories containing aggressive game language.

Evaluation

H^5: *The viability of victors will be evaluated more positively than the viability of losers; as such, in New Zealand, Bolger's viability will be assessed more positively than Clark's in 1996 and Clark's more positively than Shipley's 1999. In Canada's 1993 election, Chrétien's ability to win the election will be evaluated more positively than Kim Campbell's.*

This hypothesis is, unsurprisingly, supported by the findings for the Canadian election (see Table 6). Campbell's loss was described as "the most stunning federal electoral defeat in Canadian political history" as the party was reduced to two seats in the House of Commons. Campbell's ability to win the election was assessed positively in only four election stories (22% of the evaluations) compared to Chrétien whose viability was assessed positively in 17 stories (81% of his viability evaluations). Similarly, Helen Clark, the victor in 1999 in New Zealand, was described as the likely winner in 75% of the stories that evaluated her viability, while only two stories about Jenny Shipley said she could win (18% of viability assessments). Clark's campaign was strong from the start and "no poll during the campaign showed National ahead".

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[14] Percentages may not add up to 100% because categories are not mutually exclusive; i.e. stories could include more than one type of aggressive game metaphor.

Table 6: Viability Evaluations by Election and Leader

	New Zealand 1996 election		New Zealand 1999 Election		Canada 1993 election	
	Bolger	**Clark**	**Shipley**	**Clark**	**Chrétien**	**Campbell**
Leader's viability evaluated N (%) [#]	27 (39%)	23 (32%)	11 (14%)	12 (14%)	21 (37%)	18 (23%)
Positive viability assessment [+]	2 (7%)	9 (38%)	2 (18%)	9 (75%)	17 (81%)	4 (22%)
Negative viability assessment [+]	11 (39%)	6 (25%)	9 (82%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	12 (67%)
Neutral or balanced viability assessment [+]	15 (54%)	9 (37%)	0 (0%)	3 (13%)	3 (14%)	2 (11%)

[*] p <.05
[**] p <.01
[#] Based on total sample.
[+] Based on stories that evaluated the leader's viability.

In contrast, the results for the 1996 New Zealand election suggest the opposite; the viability of the loser (Clark) was assessed more positively than the viability of the election winner (Bolger). Jim Bolger was assessed positively in only 7 per cent of the stories that evaluated his ability to win the election (2 stories), while nine stories said Helen Clark would emerge victorious (38%). This is because Clark could have become Prime Minister if coalition talks had ended differently, and she was ranked as the stronger performer in the campaign. After Clark's successful performance in the debate,[15] Labour jumped in the polls and Clark was described as "an entirely convincing prime ministerial candidate" with the "qualities needed for the ninth floor of the Beehive". Most importantly, New Zealand's first MMP election could have led to a Labour-led coalition had New Zealand First leader Winton Peters decided to side with Labour instead of National. In short, Helen Clark's viability was positively assessed despite her loss because she could have been Prime Minister had the coalition talks ended differently.

H[6]: Overall leader assessments will, when women are competing against men, reflect gendered mediation by evaluating combative female leaders more negatively than their equally antagonistic male competitors.

As we have seen, both Helen Clark and Kim Campbell were as likely as their male counterparts to be described with aggressive game language and masculine metaphors. That Kim Campbell was cast as the aggressor as often as Jean Chrétien may have contributed to negative evaluations of Campbell, who was indeed portrayed more negatively than was Jean Chrétien in the 1993 Canadian election. Table 7 reports the mean scores on the five point "tone of story" scale. Kim Campbell's score was the lowest of all the leaders (2.23), well below the neutral score of 3; in contrast, evaluations of Jean Chrétien were in the positive range, at 3.07. However, this was not the case for Helen Clark in the 1996 New Zealand election. Helen Clark was evaluated positively in 1996, with a mean score of 3.10 (the highest in our sample). Bolger's score was in the negative range, at 2.61. That she was a strong woman putting in an authoritative campaign performance did not disadvantage Clark. For example, her performance in the

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[15] "Clark Triumphs in TV Joust with Rival Political Leaders" concluded a headline in the *New Zealand Herald*.

television debate had enough "punch" to "draw blood", but instead of criticizing Clark, reporters appraised her "crisp" and "determined" speaking style as skilled and "authoritative".

Our data provide mixed results and thus we cannot conclude that female politicians are evaluated more harshly because they are women playing a man's game. Evaluations of the leader may reflect leadership style and performance or they may reflect the overall success of the campaign. It is possible that strong, gaffe-free campaigns such as Helen Clark's will be portrayed in a positive light while campaigns marked by problems and bad strategic decisions, as was Kim Campbell's, will be evaluated more negatively. Analysis of the qualitative data is necessary to tease out leader evaluations from campaign evaluations.

Table 7: Mean Scores on Tone of Story by Election and Leader

Mean score (5 point scale with 3 as balanced/neutral)	New Zealand 1996 election		New Zealand 1999 Election		Canada 1993 election	
	Jim Bolger	**Helen Clark**	**Jenny Shipley**	**Helen Clark**	**Jean Chrétien**	**Kim Campbell**
Tone of story	2.61**	3.10**	2.81**	3.06**	3.07**	2.23**

** p<.001

Table 8: Tone of Story by Election and Leader

	New Zealand 1996 election		New Zealand 1999 Election		Canada 1993 election	
	Jim Bolger	**Helen Clark**	**Jenny Shipley**	**Helen Clark**	**Jean Chrétien**	**Kim Campbell**
Leader evaluated *negatively*	30 (43%)	6 (8%)	18 (23%)	8 (9%)	10 (18%)	56 (72%)
Leader evaluated *positively*	3 (4%)	12 (16%)	3 (4%)	12 (14%)	15 (26%)	2 (3%)
Leader evaluated in a *neutral or balanced* way	37 (53%)	55 (75%)	57 (73%)	68 (77%)	32 (56%)	20 (26%)

Conclusions

This study analyzed newspaper coverage of New Zealand and Canadian elections featuring women leaders who were, or became, Prime Minister. We examined the 1993 Canadian election, where Canada's first and as yet only female Prime Minister, Kim Campbell, lost to Liberal leader Jean Chrétien. As well, we compared coverage of the 1996 and 1999 New Zealand elections. In 1996, a male incumbent Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, prevailed against Labour leader Helen Clark. In 1999, two women sought the top job and National Prime Minister Jenny Shipley lost to Helen Clark. From the entire universe of newspaper articles about each leader, we chose stories that named them in the headline (or first paragraph in the case of New Zealand) and devoted at least 50% of the story to them. Content and discourse analysis techniques were used to determine whether the female leaders were subjected to gendered news framing and evaluation.

Overall, we found that the female leaders in this study were not disadvantaged, in comparison with their male counterparts, by less media coverage overall or by inappropriate levels of attention to their sex, sexuality, appearance and domestic lives. When the female leaders were marked by their sex it was typically because of the "first woman" frame. Moreover, Jean Chrétien's sex was mentioned slightly more frequently than that of Kim Campbell. While there were more references to appearance and sexuality for the female leaders in New Zealand, these references appeared in fewer than 10% of the total stories. In Canada, Jean Chrétien's appearance was more of an issue than the looks of Kim Campbell. Domestic circumstances – marriage and children – were more often mentioned in relation to the male leaders than the female leaders. In general, while some of the discussion of the female leaders' sex, sexuality and appearance was highly gendered, the women were not overly privatized or domesticated by the coverage.

On the other hand there were some differences in between the men and the women with respect to gender and game framing. When aggressive game language was used to describe leaders' actions, the women were depicted as the aggressors as often if not more often than the men. Ironically, it was the 1999 New Zealand contest between two powerful women leaders, Shipley and Clark, which prompted the most aggressive game imagery. Having women in the election 'game' amplified the rhetorical aggression. In this sense, the game was not feminized; rather, the female leaders were masculinised. While there were a few feminine metaphors, these were usually contradicted with masculine imagery (i.e. "warrior queen").

The idea that combative women leaders may be critiqued for their "unfeminine" behaviour was supported by the results from Canada, but not from New Zealand. That Kim Campbell was cast as the aggressor as often as Jean Chrétien may have contributed to negative evaluations of Campbell, who was indeed portrayed more negatively than was Jean Chrétien in the 1993 Canadian election. However, Helen Clark's coverage was quite positive in comparison to evaluations of both Bolger and Shipley. Further investigation of the ways in which leadership norms and expectations are articulated and applied to male and female leaders is necessary to determine whether or not female Prime Ministers are evaluated by gendered leadership norms that require them to adopt (and perhaps adapt) masculine behaviors.

This paper's comparison of election-time newspaper coverage of the women who have served as Prime Minister in Canada and New Zealand with coverage of their closest male counterparts provides subtle support for the hypothesis that political power and career success mitigates gender effects in media coverage of female political leaders. We found that women who seek, or hold, the top job are not as feminized by the newspaper coverage as is suggested by the literature. But the fact that they are masculinised by metaphors, descriptors, and aggressive game language indicates that women leaders are written into the election news scripts as pseudo-males. It may well be the case that any deviation from this script, including Kim Campbell's attempt to 'do politics differently' by importing a feminine leadership style, and Jenny Shipley's 'I'm a Mum of my three children and mother of the nation' campaign strategy, prompts harsher evaluations of their leadership. Qualitative analysis of the leadership norms communicated by the press and their (potentially differential) application to male and female political leaders will help us assess the meaning and impact of this masculinisation trend.[16]

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[16] The next stage of our research project will be to analyze the words and phrases used to describe and evaluate the leaders' skills, characteristics and performances.

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